



OP HERRICK

Operational Guide

20



The purpose of this handbook is to support our preparations for Op HERRICK 20, and to inform our actions and decisions once we deploy. It is therefore useful not only before but also throughout our tour of Afghanistan.

The end of this campaign will be characterised by change and uncertainty at many levels, but this book helps us to understand the physical and human context in which we will operate. It will help us understand the situation paragraph of orders: the weather; the ground; and the red, white and green actors. The Operational Guide is not a tactical guide and it does not cover the blue forces situation; these are covered in other publications. By giving us a short and readable history, this book will also help us to understand how we arrived at the current situation. It will make the unfamiliar a little less daunting than it might be otherwise.

The Op Herrick 20 Operational Guide is short, easy to read and well-written. Its authors are experts, and they have gone to great effort to ensure it is accurate. As the final Op Herrick Guide, the authors have had plenty of opportunity to refine and amend it, leaving only what is most useful. In short, it is the Lonely Planet Guide to Op Herrick, and all commanders are to read and use it.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Cpl James Dunsby, a LIFC(A) analyst and TA soldier who was pivotal to this and previous guides, but who sadly died in summer 2013 whilst giving it his all on a very arduous exercise on the Brecon Beacons.

Brigadier J F P Swift OBE
Commander 20th Armoured Brigade,
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Land Forces Intelligence Centre - Afghanistan

British Forces are deployed in Afghanistan as part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), to support the democratically elected Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). UK efforts were previously prioritised into a counter insurgency campaign in six key districts in Helmand Province, namely; Lashkar Gah, Gereshk, Sangin, Musa Qaleh, Now Zad and Garmsir.

However, a coalition troop uplift in 2009 has seen the US taking responsibility for the majority of Helmand Province including Garmsir, Now Zad, Musa Qaleh and Sangin. British forces are currently deployed in a rapidly decreasing number of bases in central Helmand. In Spring 2013, our Afghan colleagues took full lead security responsibility - we will continue to support them.

The UK intent, in conjunction with our allies, is to assist in the promotion of the Afghan Government, both in presence and capability within our areas of responsibility. The UK will endeavour to achieve this through creating a safe and secure environment in order to help improve the lives of the Afghan people.

This handbook has been created in order to assist you in understanding the complex environment that you are about to deploy to. It provides an overview of the geography, history, society and current conflict in Afghanistan as

well as familiarising you with the operations, organisation, and tasks associated with UK's contribution to ISAF. It will allow you to place your Pre Deployment Training into context and further your understanding of the operational environment.

This product is divided into two parts. Part One is an overview of Afghanistan in general, covering topics from history to the economy and infrastructure, whilst Part Two focuses on Helmand Province. The aim of this handbook has been to place greater emphasis on issues relevant to troops deploying to Helmand. The ground and history chapters have been significantly updated to focus on issues post World War Two that continue to have a direct impact on the political, cultural and social dynamic within Helmand Province.

As this product is written at PM RESTRICTED, to ensure a wide circulation, there is data regarding Insurgents that has been omitted. This will be briefed to your J2 staff as their relationship with the LIFC(A) grows. Should you require additional information, HERRICK Operational Guide editor, [REDACTED] will be able to assist. Additionally, a recommended reading list is provided at the back of this book to augment your understanding of Afghanistan and the insurgency.



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Topography

Afghanistan shares borders with Pakistan in the south and east, Iran in the west and the Central Asian States of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan in the north. A narrow strip of land in the extreme northeast, leads to a short border with China. With an area of 647,500 square kilometres, it is slightly larger than Spain and Portugal combined. Most of Afghanistan is between 600 and 3,050 metres in elevation.

Relief

Approximately 75% of Afghanistan, largely the central and eastern areas, is mountainous. The highest mountains, the Pamirs, are found in the Wakhan Corridor (the narrow panhandle in the north-east between Pakistan and Tajikistan) with peaks reaching over 7000 metres. The highest peak in Afghanistan is Nowshak, at 7485 metres (24 557 feet). Altitude generally decreases in a south-westerly direction so that towards Kabul, in the east, peaks range between 4500 to 6000 metres, while in the west they range from 3500, to 4000 metres. The dominant geographical feature in Afghanistan is the Hindu Kush, a sub-range of the Himalayas. This range extends from the Wakhan Corridor to the south-west uplands. Remote high passes exist throughout

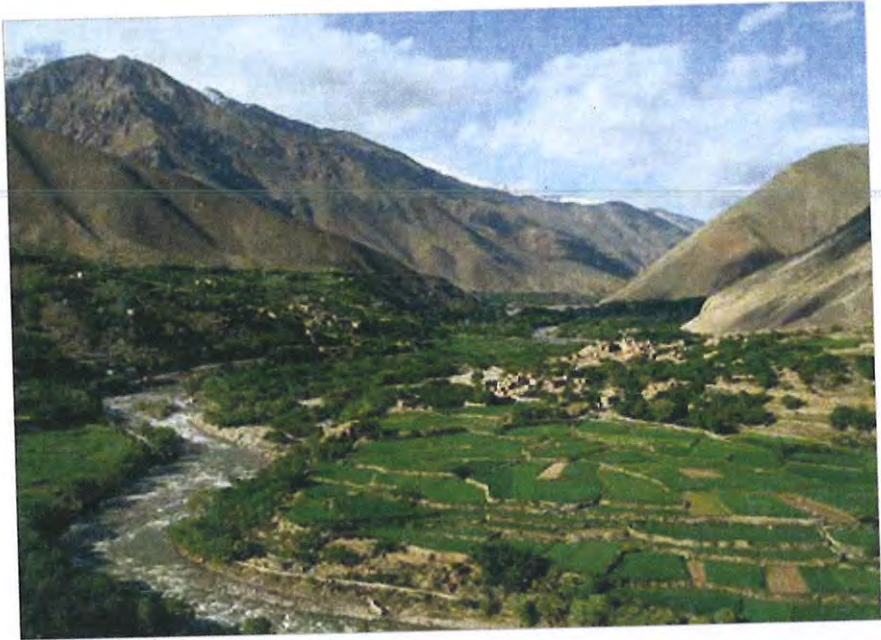
the range which are impassable in winter. Although technically all part of the Hindu Kush, only the mountain range to the north-west of Kabul is referred to as the Hindu Kush Mountains. The range to the southwest is divided between various mountain chains such as the Koh-e Baba and Sulaiman Ranges.

Terrain

20% of the country is comprised of two arid plains:

Northern Turkestan Plains. These areas, also called the Amu Darya or Turkestan Plains, slope northwards away from the Hindu Kush and towards the Karakum Desert, descending from approximately 1000 metres, to Afghanistan's lowest point of 260 metres (855 feet). The terrain becomes less fertile and increasingly arid northwards. Several major river valleys intersect these plains, draining water northwards from the mountains. West of Kunduz, the rivers peter out in the sands before the Karakum Desert. Between these major valleys, the rolling terrain is dissected by gullies and ravines with shifting sand and salt flats in some areas. An area of loess (wind blown sand) exists on the northern plain with typical areas of shifting sand dunes up to 20 metres (66 feet) high.





The Lush vegetation of the Panjshir Valley

South-western Plains. This area extends south and westwards from the foothills of the southern mountain ranges to the Pakistan and Iranian borders. The Helmand River dissects the region, splitting it into two deserts - The Dasht-e Margo to the north, and the Ragistan to the south. Also within this arid area is the Sistan Depression, a generally flat area containing dunes, salt marsh and lakes.

Vegetation

Due to its predominantly rocky relief and dry climate Afghanistan has little vegetation and that which does exist has been heavily influenced by man. The north-east to south-west trending mountains are particularly barren above 3000 metres. Sub-alpine vegetation and grassy meadows appear in the higher valleys with some stunted trees and bushes, while in the

mountain basins and lower valleys trees are more abundant.

There are generally three types of tree cover in Afghanistan: forests of mixed oak and conifers; open woodlands; and river side (riparian) forests. Tree cover tends to be continuous along the eastern border with Pakistan where precipitation is higher and less erratic. Only 1-2% of the land is forested. Forest type is governed by altitude progressing through deciduous, mixed and coniferous forest as altitude increases.

In the Kabul area deciduous forest (dominated by oak) exists between 1300-1800 metres, mixed forest exists between 1800-2000 metres and coniferous forest (pine, cedar and birch) is found between 2000-3000 metres. This tends to be replaced by juniper at higher elevations, which then gives way to alpine meadows. The greatest areas of forest are

found in Kunar, Nuristan, Paktia and Paktika for conifers, and Badghis and Takhar for Pistachio forest. However, Afghanistan is subject to rapid deforestation due to the inaccessibility to alternative sources of fuel.

In the lower basins of the foothills areas are predominantly cultivated with crops such as date palms, cereals, cotton, vineyards and poppies.

The high steppes of the northern area are generally grass covered with isolated woods. Hillsides may contain low scrub and thorny thickets while valley floors are sometimes cultivated with cotton, cereals and vegetables. The lower steppes, further northward, are mainly grassland turning to semi-desert where sandy soils inhibit vegetation growth. The major river valleys may have dense thickets of reeds and shrubs and large irrigated areas of cultivation.

In the south-western deserts natural vegetation is sparse and restricted to low grasses and drought resistant shrubs. Areas along the

Helmand River are heavily cultivated. Scattered oases support some cultivation. The lakes of the Sistan Depression support areas of swamp which are surrounded by orchards and fields. The swamps are usually impassable.

Water Features

The country has a number of water features including rivers, river basins and lakes (248,187 hectares of water). The four major river systems within Afghanistan are:

The Amu Darya. Known historically as the Oxus River, the Amu Darya's source lies on the north side of the Hindu Kush and is fed by tributaries only in its higher reaches. Further along its course it forms the border with Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan and eventually turns north-westwards to flow into the landlocked Aral Sea. The river averages 500-1200 metres wide with a maximum width of 2300 metres between Mazar-e Sharaf and Termez.



Many islands are located along its course. The riverbed tends to be sandy, and banks are low and flat. Highest water levels occur from June to August.

The Helmand. The Helmand River is the longest river in Afghanistan, stretching for 1,150km. It rises in the Hindu Kush Mountains, about 80km west of Kabul and crosses south-west through the desert of Dasht-i Margo, to the Hamun-i-Helmand lake region around Zabol at the Afghan-Iranian border. The river has no outlet to the sea and ends in an area of marshland on the Afghanistan- Iran border.

The Harirud. The Harirud River flows 1100km from the mountains of central Afghanistan to Turkmenistan, where it dissipates into the Karakum desert. In western Afghanistan the Harirud River flows to the south of Herat. After Herat, the river turns northwest, then north, forming the northern part of the border between Afghanistan and Iran.

The Kabul. The Kabul River is the main river in the eastern part of Afghanistan. It flows 700km before joining the Indus River near Attock. It is the only river system in Afghanistan that, via the Indus, leads to the sea. The Kabul River itself is little more than a trickle for most of the year, but swells in summer due to melting snows.

Three major dams harness these rivers for

irrigation and hydroelectric purposes. One of these, the Kajaki Dam, is located approximately 100km north east of Gershk in Helmand, and was the focus of a large ISAF operation during Op HERRICK 8 to transport a new turbine to the dam.

Water throughout the country is generally scarce unless near the permanent snowfields and glaciers in the northeast. Rivers are characterised by marked seasonal variations in discharge (fluctuations are marginally limited by the dams). Stream widths range from less than 180m in the mountainous areas to over 300m in the lower courses. The banks are generally high and steep.

Seismic Activity

The northeast portion of Afghanistan is one of the most seismically active areas in the world. Earthquakes are common, particularly in the eastern Hindu Kush. The epicentres of most of the strongest magnitude earthquakes occurring in the last 100 years have been located south of Faizabad. The risk of earthquakes decreases from east to west with the areas east of 68°E most likely to suffer major damage, and areas 66-68°E, plus along the Hari River Valley to Herat and the Iranian border, liable to have moderate damage. Other areas (the northern plains and the south-west deserts) are likely to have



Band-e-Amir, a series of six lakes in Bamyan Province, was declared Afghanistan's first national park in 2009 (USAID).



A Generalized seismic hazard map of Afghanistan, showing the Chaman Fault line and the different levels of activity.(USAID).

minor or no earthquake damage. There were at least 3 moderate earthquakes (+5.5 on Richter Scale) in 2009 with a number of people killed. In the mountainous areas of Afghanistan the earthquakes can cause large landslides to occur.

Climate

General

Afghanistan's climate is typically arid with cold winters and dry summers although extremes of climate, both daily and seasonally, vary widely as a result of relief. Aridity and temperatures increase as altitude decreases making the deserts in the south and the plains to the north experience the hottest and driest conditions with temperatures reaching over 50°C.

Annual rainfall averages approximately 30 cm (12 inches) most of which falls in the winter between October and April. Annual mean precipitation increases eastwards where the majority falls as snow. Average annual precipitation in the eastern Hindu Kush is approximately 40 cm (16 inches). Rain becomes more common than snow as altitude decreases. The mountains along the Pakistan border protect Afghanistan from the effect of the Indian monsoon.

Above 5000 metres (16,400 feet) severe winters occur with average daytime temperatures only reaching between -15 to -25°C, and lower at night. In the summer, temperatures in the mountains remain below zero at night but can reach up to 25°C during the day. As altitude decreases conditions become less harsh, winters become shorter and summers warmer. The Hindu Kush, at a lower altitude to the mountains in the east, possesses a milder climate.



Temperature Extremes

Central Highlands. In the central highlands winter temperatures may plummet to -37.5°C at higher elevations. In the summer, it is possible to go from freezing temperatures at 3,000m, to more than 38°C at 1,500m elevation.

Northern Plains. In the northern plains winters are mild with occasional frosty nights. Summers are hot reaching up to 35°C (night temperatures remain hot reaching 25°C) and very dry. Rain is rare in the summer and dust haze is a common feature reducing visibility to 3-4 km. The Karakum Desert fringes, around Andkhy, are hotter still in the summer but can be cold enough to experience frost and even snow in the winter.

South-western Plains. The deserts in the south-west experience only two seasons – summer and winter. Summer temperatures range between 25-40°C but can reach 50°C. Winter temperatures range between 25-35°C in the day and can drop to -15°C overnight. Any rain in these areas tends to be short, heavy downpours.

Kabul. The daily temperature averages -5°C minimum and 3°C maximum during January; in July, the corresponding figures are 20°C and 31°C.

Afghanistan International Boundaries



Produced by OGA, Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom 2005
 For further information, visit: www.gov.uk (UK) or www.defence.gov.uk (US)
 or www.gov.uk (US) or www.defence.gov.uk (UK)

Geographic Support Map Editing DOC, G105 12691, Edition 1, January 2005 1995 OP18296



Afghanistan-Pakistan

The Afghan-Pakistan border is marked by the Durand Line which was defined by an agreement between the British and Russian Empires in 1893. Afghanistan and Pakistan have a long running dispute over the alignment of the Durand Line where it cuts through Pashtun tribal areas, and even through villages, dividing the homelands of the Pashtun tribes. The majority of tribes resident in the area have not accepted the legitimacy of the boundary. Some factions have called for an entirely new state called Pashtunistan. The 2415 km (1500 miles) boundary generally runs (from south to north) through the Registan desert, across the Hindu Kush and to the High Pamirs following no obvious natural features. The border crossings of Boldak (in the south) and Torkham (at the end of the Khyber Pass) handle the bulk of legal cross-border traffic. Another twenty border crossings are manned by customs officials and tribal police. There are also over 300 'unfrequented' (illegal and known) and unmanned crossing points and many more uncharted foot paths used by smugglers, locals and nomads. Villages that are dissected by the border, such as Bahram Char, offer a relatively easy way of crossing the border. In recent years Pakistan has erected controversial fences along parts of the border in order to control cross-border movement. In Nov 2011 Pakistan closed the Borders into Afghanistan for all ISAF traffic due to the death of Pakistani soldiers as the result of US air strikes.

Relations with Pakistan

Afghanistan's relationship with Pakistan is unstable and is based on a history of mistrust. Despite relative tranquillity after the fall of the Taliban, relations deteriorated in 2006 after



The official border crossing point into Afghanistan at Chaman, Pakistan

Karzai repeatedly accused Pakistan of sheltering insurgents. This occasionally led to border exchanges between security forces resulting in the death of civilians. Afghanistan has also accused elements of the Pakistan intelligence agency of supporting the insurgency and taking part in several attacks. Since 2008 relations have improved as a result of the establishment of a civilian government in Pakistan and the signing of a declaration of increased co-operation between the two Presidents.

Helmand shares a border with Pakistan's Baluchistan province, which is largely unmonitored and considerably porous. The main point of guarded entry is the Chaman/Spin Boldak crossing point in neighbouring Kandahar Province. In early 2007, Pakistan attempted to introduce biometric identification in Chaman to further control cross-border movement - an initiative which has gained little traction and done little to stem the flow of illegal crossings into both countries. The importance of this route is often overlooked as its closure can often lead to supply disruptions within the AO. In recent months Pakistan has begun to actively target the splinter groups of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (Pakistani Taliban), along with members of the Afghan Taliban residing in Quetta and other safe havens. The large scale arms procurement and trafficking that occurs across the Helmand-Pakistan border is a concern for the Afghan and Pakistan authorities, as one of the main supply routes for insurgents is through the south of Helmand.

To the south of Helmand, the border town of Bahram Chah represents the most commonly used access point to Helmand from Pakistan, sitting astride a key transit route from Dalbandin in Baluchistan to the Helmand river valley. However, there are multiple unmonitored crossing points all along the porous border, utilised by nomads, criminals, insurgents and traffickers alike.

For the Taliban, Pakistan is an important source for funds and supplies, and a centre for recruiting and propaganda efforts, particularly from the Quetta region within Baluchistan, which houses the Quetta Shura and is one of the key supply routes for drug smugglers. Pakistan has cracked down on Al Qaeda and foreign fighters based in the country, and has arrested some key Taliban figures; yet their operations to date have had little discernible impact on the momentum of the insurgency in Helmand.

Ground Lines of Communication

ISAF forces have utilised the Ground Lines of Communication (GLoC) through Pakistan since major operations began. The GLoC comprises of two main routes both originating in Muhammad Bin Qasim Port, south east of Karachi. The Northern GLoC (coloured blue on map below) heads north of Karachi, before then heading west, passing through Peshawar, before finally entering Afghanistan through the Khyber Pass and Torkham Gate customs facility. The Southern



The Ground Lines of Communication through Pakistan

GLoC (coloured red in map below) heads north west out of Karachi, passing through Baluchistan, Quetta and then enters Afghanistan via the customs facility at Charman.

The GLoC as a whole has proved remarkably resilient until a US air strike which killed 24 Pakistani Soldiers forced the Government of Pakistan to close the GLoC to ISAF traffic in Nov 2011. Although the closure had minimal impact on the UK's ability to sustain its forces in theatre, the GLoC remains a key component of the UK's drawdown strategy.



Afghanistan-Iran

The 830 km (516 miles) boundary between Afghanistan and Iran is fully demarcated. The alignment recognized by the UK is that of the boundary delimitations of 1891 (McLean Line), 1903 (McMahon Line) and the 1935 Altay Award. The boundary runs (from north-south) from the Zulfaqar Pass, along the Hari River, overland to Lake Namakzar, across country to Lake Hamun, along a short section of the Helmand River, and then crosses the Sistan Basin to finish at Koh-i-Malik Siah (the Pakistan tri-point). The two official border crossing points are located at Milak (near Zaranj) and Islam Qalah (on the road from Herat) but the border is extremely porous. Locations have been identified for twenty-five border control posts

Relations with Iran

Geography, along with ethnic, linguistic and religious ties dictate that the bulk of Iran's financial investment and reconstruction assistance has been focused on western and northern Afghanistan. However, the southern provinces, with their predominantly Baluchi and Pashtun-speaking population, have a more

volatile relationship with Iran. Both the Taliban and Sunni Baluchi separatists are active in the region and Iran considers them a significant security concern.

Nevertheless, Tehran retains interests in the south and a diplomatic presence through the Iranian consulate in Kandahar. Iran is particularly concerned over the quantity of opiates grown and processed in Helmand and southern Afghanistan and exported into Iran, approximately 40% of Afghan opiates are transported through Iran. Heroin addiction in Iran's urban areas is a significant social problem of which the Iranians are acutely aware. In recent years, Tehran has become increasingly disillusioned with ISAF's ability to tackle the narcotics issue and has focused their effort on attempting to strengthen their border security measures.



Northern Distribution Network (NDN)

There was considerable disruption in Iran after the elections, President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad blamed this discontent in his own country and the troubles in Afghanistan on the presence of foreign troops in the region. He met with President Hamid Karzai in March 2010 with both sides agreeing that ministerial level meetings between the two countries would occur monthly. Improving trade and security issues were the main topics of their meeting, Iran being the fourth largest economic investor in Afghanistan.

Another issue is to ensure that the Helmand River continues to flow in sufficient volume via Nimruz into Lake Hamun, as stipulated by a 1973 treaty, from whence it supplies the eastern Iranian town of Zabol (not to be confused with the southern Afghan province of Zabul) and the agriculture of the surrounding area. The Taliban, on occasion, have cut the water supply in the past. The Nimruz town of Zaranj would also like to retain more of the water by means of a dam. This could become a contentious issue in the future, especially considering the severe droughts experienced in Helmand in the last few years.

Northern Lines of Communications

The Northern Lines of Communications (NLoC) is the term used to describe the logistical route into Northern Afghanistan through the Central Asian Republics (CARs), three of which are mentioned below. The NLoC is but one small component of the larger Northern Distribution Network (NDN). The land element begins in Riga, Latvia, and flows through Russia, Kazakhstan and finally into Uzbekistan before crossing the border into Afghanistan at the Hairiton Border Crossing Point. At present this route is only open to the one way flow of traffic into Afghanistan, although it is hoped that it will soon be able to take on the reverse supply needs of ISAF as drawdown approaches.



Afghanistan-China

Afghanistan and China share a short fully demarcated border of 73 km (45 miles) at the end of the Wakhan Panhandle. The boundary, put in place to separate British India from Russia, was agreed in 1895. An official agreement was not signed until 1963, and the demarcation protocol followed in 1965. The boundary follows watersheds along its course, running along high ridges between the Aksu River, Wakhan River and Kara Chukur Su River. There is a slight discrepancy concerning the precise location of the tri-point with Pakistan as the boundary point does not correlate with the same point as described in the Pakistan-China boundary agreement. Due to its location in the uninhabited high mountains it has not been a cause for concern. There are no official border crossing points between the two countries. The only mountain pass on the border is the Wakhjir Pass (4,923m), which has no road and is closed for at least five months. China has recently been granted limited exploration and mining rights in northern Afghanistan.



Afghanistan-Tajikistan

Afghanistan and Tajikistan share a 1210 km (752 miles) border which is fully demarcated. The boundary was defined by the British and Russian Empires in 1872-83 with subsequent minor amendments. The border (from west to east) runs from the Uzbek/Tajik/Afghan tri-point, then follows the courses of the Amu Darya, Panj and Pamir Rivers up to their source at Lake Sari Qul and beyond to meet the Chinese border at the eastern end of the Wakhan Corridor. There are a series of bridges across the Amu Darya/Panj River system connecting Afghanistan and Tajikistan. These bridges have increased the flow of trade between the two countries by replacing the previously limited barge services. Official border crossing points are located at Nusai (the most northern point in Afghanistan), Shighnan, Ishkashim, Demorgan and Sherkan Bander. Construction of a new border post at Ai Khanem, in Takhar Province, began in April 2009. The crossings between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, official and unofficial, are popular routes for drug smuggling and policing the border is difficult.





Afghanistan-Turkmenistan

The border between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan is 720 km long and fully demarcated. The Anglo-Russian Protocols of 1885 and 1887 in the west and the Anglo-Russian exchange of notes of 1872 and 1873 and the Afghan-Soviet Boundary Treaty of 1946 in the east form the legal basis for the Afghanistan-Turkmenistan boundary.

The boundary runs from the Zulfaqar Pass, in Iran, through hilly terrain south of the Karakum desert, crosses the Kushk and Murghab rivers, and then follows the Amu Darya until it meets the border of Uzbekistan. Official border crossings are found at Imamnazar and Torghundi. In May 2009 the US announced it would be funding the construction of more border-crossing stations across the boundary.



Afghanistan-Uzbekistan

The Afghanistan - Uzbekistan border is 135 km long and was agreed between the British and Russian Empires. The Anglo-Russian exchange of notes of 1872 and 1873 and the Afghan-Soviet Boundary Treaty of 1946 form the legal bases for the Afghanistan-Uzbekistan boundary.

It was further clarified in 1958 by the Afghan-Soviet Treaty. The boundary runs for approximately 85 miles from the Turkmenistan tri-point in the west to the Tajikistan tri-point in the east, following the median line of the Amu Darya River for its entire length. The only official border crossing point is the Friendship Bridge located at Hairatan which connects Afghanistan to the Uzbek city of Termiz. Uzbekistan is a major transit route for NATO supplies through what is collectively known as the Northern Distribution Network.



Pre-Colonial History

Afghanistan is located at a crossroads where numerous civilizations have interacted and often fought, and was an important site of early historical activity. Through the ages, the region today known as Afghanistan was ruled by Aryans (Indo-Iranians: Indo-Aryans, Persians, Medes, Parthians, etc.). It has also been invaded by a host of different nations, including the Greeks, Mauryans, Kushans, Hephthalites, Arabs, Mongols, Turks, British and Soviets.



Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. 180 BCE

Many ancient empires have controlled Afghanistan and have utilised the rivers, strips of fertile land, trade routes and the natural protection that the terrain affords to establish city states with their own hinterlands such as Kabul, Herat and Kandahar. Under the Persian Empire of Darius I, Afghanistan was divided up into provinces known as satrapies and these form many of the political and administrative units that we know today. Alexander the Great arrived in Afghanistan in 330Bc. After he died his empire was broken up between warring factions and Afghanistan became part of the Seleucid Empire. Afghanistan's diverse ethnic dynamics owes much to arrival of migrants from different occupations over the next two thousand years. The demise of the Seleucid Empire was followed by the Greco-Bactrian Empire, and then by the Mauryan Empire from Northern India.

The Islamic conquest of Afghanistan began in the middle of the seventh century with the capture of Herat by invading Arabs. However, due to the independent character of those living in Kabul and in the mountainous regions to the east, it took a further 500 years before Afghanistan was completely converted to Islam under the Ghaznavid Empire.

Afghanistan was invaded by Mongols under Genghis Khan in the early 13th century and the country remained in the hands of his descendants including Timur, with a new capital established at Herat. Over the next 100 years Afghanistan began to grow wealthy through trade transit and the rebuilding of many cities destroyed by Genghis Khan. In the 16th century the steppe cavalryman, Babur seized Kabul and used it as a base to raid the Indian sub-continent. Babur captured Delhi in 1525 and created what we recognise today as the Mughal Empire.

The Great Game

The expansion of the Russian empire in Central Asia began in 1734, giving rise to the Great Game, the British and Russian struggle for influence along the unsettled northern frontier of British India. Afghanistan was caught in the midst of this contested area between two empires.

Russia described her motives in the Great Game as simply to abolish the slave trade and to



Afghan Tribesmen armed with Jezails

establish order and control along her southern border. The British, however, felt threatened by the presence of a large, expanding empire near India and suspected different Russian motives.

First and Second Anglo Afghan War

British forces invaded Afghanistan during the First Anglo Afghan War (1839-1842), to counter Russian influence. After hard fighting and an expensive occupation the British withdrew, though one brigade was wiped out as it retreated east towards Jalalabad, leading to the formation of a British 'Army of Retribution' which destroyed the great bazaar of Kabul. In 1878, the arrival of a special Russian diplomatic mission to Kabul led to another British invasion and the Second Anglo-Afghan War. Having defeated the Afghan Army and a vast uprising around Kabul, a reduced and isolated British brigade found itself enveloped and defeated at Maiwand.

Nevertheless the British Army, after an epic forced march from Kabul crushed the Afghan Army once again. The Treaty of Gandamak, which ensured British control of key passes and Afghan foreign policy, and the installation of a compliant ruler enabled the British to restore Afghanistan as a buffer zone.

Duran Line

In 1893, Sir Mortimer Durand, Foreign Secretary of the colonial government of India, and the ruler



The last stand of the 44th Foot, (now part of the Royal Anglian Regiment), at Gandamak on 13 January 1842.



of Afghanistan, Emir Abdur Rahman Khan, agreed on a 1610 mile border between Afghanistan and the British Indian Empire. The Durand line followed the natural barrier formed by the Sulaiman mountain range and remains a source of regional conflict today. Currently Afghanistan considers the line, which divides the ethnic Pashtun population, to have lapsed. Pakistan, however, still recognises it.

Third Anglo Afghan War

In 1907, the Russians agreed that Afghanistan lay outside its sphere of interest and agreed to confer with Britain on all matters relating to Russian Afghan relations. In return, Britain agreed not to occupy or annex any part of Afghanistan nor interfere in the internal affairs of that country. Although the Amir of Afghanistan refused to recognise the treaty, Russia and Britain agreed to its terms and honoured them until 1919 when Afghan troops crossed into British India, seized territory and attempted to raise a popular revolt in the area. The British counter attacked in the Third Anglo-Afghan War.

To maintain better relations in the future, Britain gave Afghanistan its full independence.

The Last Monarchy

In 1929 King Amanullah Khan attempted to modernise Afghanistan as rapidly as possible, but this provoked violent resistance from much of the population and he was overthrown in 1929. The leader of the rebel forces Habibullah Kalakani attempted to undo the reforms of Amanullah including closing down women's schools and abolishing western attire. He was later captured and executed by the forces of Nadir Shah who was then succeeded by Mohammed Zahir Shah when Nadir was assassinated by a disaffected student. Mohammed Zahir Shah ruled from 1933 until a coup forced him to abdicate in 1973. Afghanistan's foreign policy from 1919 until 1978 balanced the demands of her immediate neighbours, and external powers such as the United States, Germany and Great Britain.

Civil War

Normal relations with her northern neighbour, the Soviet Union, led to increased Soviet investment and presence in Afghanistan. In April 1978, a small leftist group of Soviet-trained Afghan officers seized control of the government and founded the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, a client state of the Soviet Union. Nur M. Taraki, a Marxist was installed as president and announced sweeping programmes of land distribution, changed status for women and the destruction of the old Afghanistan social structure. Disregarding Afghan social expectations, the new government enjoyed little popular support and soon met increasing armed resistance, as the Mujahideen formed and became more organised. In 1978, religious leaders, in response to popular uprisings across Afghanistan, issued statements of jihad (holy war) against the communist regime. The combat effectiveness of the Army of the Democratic

Republic of Afghanistan plunged as government purges swept the officer corps. Soldiers, units and entire regiments deserted to the resistance and by the end of 1979, the actual strength of the Afghan Army was less than half of its authorized 90,000. In March 1979, the city of Herat rebelled and most of the Afghan 17th Infantry Division mutinied and joined the rebellion. Forces loyal to Afghan president Taraki reoccupied the city after the Afghan Air Force bombed the city and the 17th Division. Thousands of people reportedly died in the fighting, including some Soviet citizens.

1838 - 42 - British forces invade, install King Shah Shujah. He is assassinated in 1842. British and Indian troops are massacred during retreat from Kabul.

1878 - 80 - Second Anglo-Afghan War. A treaty gives Britain control of Afghan foreign affairs.

1919 - Emir Amanullah Khan declares independence from British influence.

1926 - 29 - Amanullah tries to introduce social reforms, which however stir civil unrest. He flees.

1933 - Zahir Shah becomes king and Afghanistan remains a monarchy for the next four decades.

1953 - General Mohammed Daud becomes prime minister. Turns to Soviet Union for economic and military assistance. Introduces social reforms, such as abolition of purdah (practice of secluding women from public view).

1963 - Mohammed Daud forced to resign as prime minister.

1964 - Constitutional monarchy introduced - but leads to political polarisation and power struggles.

1973 - Mohammed Daud seizes power in a coup and declares a republic. Tries to play off USSR against Western powers.

1978 - General Daud is overthrown and killed in a coup. Start of armed revolt.

Soviet Intervention

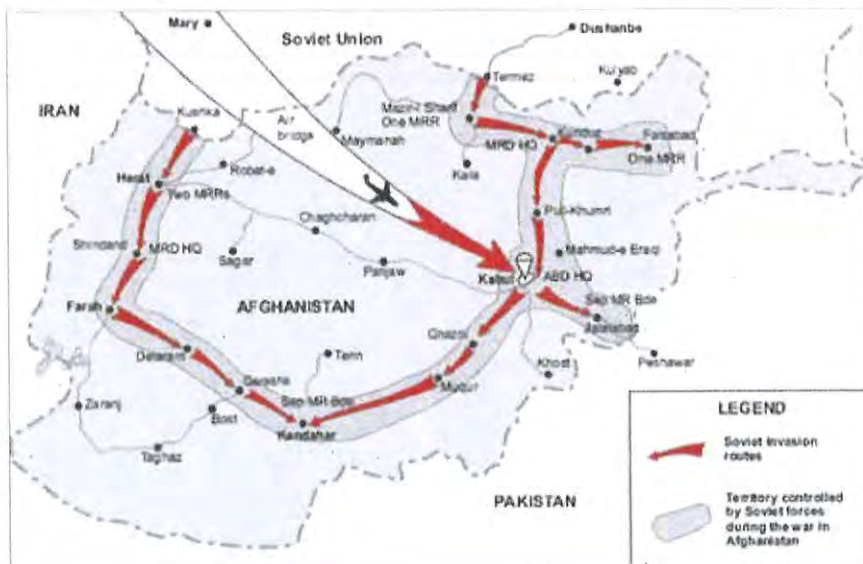
In September 1979, Taraki's Prime Minister, Hafizullah Amin, seized power and murdered Taraki. However Amin's rule proved no better, and the Soviet Union grew concerned as this new communist state collapsed. Leonid Brezhnev, the aged Soviet General Secretary, saw that direct military intervention was the only way to prevent his client state from disintegrating into complete chaos and intervened. However, Afghanistan was at the time embroiled in a civil war and a Soviet backed coup would only gain control of the central government, not the countryside. Although participating military units were briefed at the last minute, the Soviet Christmas Eve invasion of 1979 was well planned and executed.

The Soviets seized the capital Kabul, killed the President and put their own man in his place. According to some Russian sources, they planned to stabilize the country, strengthen the army and then withdraw the majority of Soviet forces within three years. The Soviet General

Staff planned to leave all fighting in the hands of the army of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. But the dispirited Afghan Army soon disintegrated

In the Soviet Union, there were no clear explanations of how the campaign should be conducted, the Afghan mission and no clear strategy for counter-insurgency.

General Secretary Brezhnev died in November 1982 and was succeeded by the ailing Yuri Andropov, who himself lasted less than two years and was in turn succeeded by the faltering Konstantin Chernenko in February 1984 who died in March 1985. Although the military leadership kept recommending withdrawal no one was making any major decisions as to the conduct and objectives of the war in Afghanistan. The war thus continued at its own pace. Finally, Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985. His first instinct was to order military victory in Afghanistan within a year. Following this the bloodiest year of the war, Gorbachev realized



that the Soviets could not win in Afghanistan without unacceptable international and internal repercussions and began to look for a way to withdraw with dignity.

Mujahideen and the nature of the war

At the start of its creation, the Mujahideen was comprised solely of local nationals who took arms and banded together into large, rather unwieldy, forces to seize the local district capitals and equip themselves. The Afghan Army countered these efforts where it could and the Mujahideen began to coalesce into much smaller groups centred on the rural districts. These small groups were armed with a variety of weapons from swords and flintlock muskets to British bolt-action rifles and stolen/captured Soviet and Soviet- bloc weapons. The Mujahideen commanders were often influential villagers who already had a leadership role in the local area, but few had any professional military experience. Rebellion was wide-spread, yet uncoordinated since the resistance was formed along tribal and ethnic lines.

The strategic struggle for Afghanistan was often an attempt to strangle the other's logistics. The Mujahideen targeted the Soviet lines of communication - the crucial road network over which the Soviet supplies had to travel.



A Soviet Tank acts as over watch for a logistics convoy

The Soviet attack on the Mujahideen logistics was done in two phases. From 1980 until 1985, the Soviets sought to eliminate Mujahideen support in the rural areas by 'rubbilisation'.

They bombed granaries and villages, destroyed crops and irrigation systems, mined pastures and fields, destroyed herds and launched sweeps, conscripting young men and destroying the infrastructure. The Soviet leadership, noting Mao Tse Tung's dictum, that the guerrilla lives in the population like a fish in water, decided to kill the fish by draining the water. As a result, Afghanistan became a nation of refugees as more than seven million rural residents fled to the relative safety of neighbouring Pakistan and Iran or to the cities of Afghanistan. This Soviet effort denied rural support to the Mujahideen, and fighters were forced to carry their weapons

1979 December - Soviet Red Army invades and props up communist government.

1980 - Babrak Karmal installed as ruler, backed by Soviet troops. But anti-regime resistance intensifies with various mujahideen groups fighting Soviet forces. US, Pakistan, China, Iran and Saudi Arabia supply money and arms.

1985 - Mujahideen come together in Pakistan to form alliance against Soviet forces. Half of Afghan population now estimated to be displaced by war, with many fleeing to neighbouring Iran or Pakistan.

1986 - US begins supplying mujahideen with Stinger missiles, enabling them to shoot down Soviet helicopter gunships. Babrak Karmal replaced by Najibullah as head of Soviet-backed regime.

1988 - Afghanistan, USSR, the US and Pakistan sign peace accords and Soviet Union begins pulling out troops.

1989 - Last Soviet troops leave, but civil war continues as mujahideen push to overthrow Najibullah.

and ammunition and materials of war.

The Mujahideen responded by establishing logistics bases inside Afghanistan. The second Soviet phase from 1985 to their withdrawal was to find and destroy these bases

The Soviet invasion changed the character of the initial anti-government resistance.

Afghanistan's [REDACTED] nervously regarded the advance of the Soviet Army to their borders and began providing training and material support to the Mujahideen. The United States, People's Republic of China, Britain, France, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates began funnelling military, humanitarian and financial aid to the Mujahideen through Pakistan. This aid distribution gave the Afghan religious leaders unprecedented power in the conduct of the war. It also undermined the traditional authority of the tribal and village leaders.

Soviet Withdrawal

United Nations negotiators provided the means to negotiate a final settlement and by 15 October 1988, the first half of the Soviet withdrawal was complete.

The Soviet withdrawal was generally executed efficiently, as the Soviets negotiated ceasefires with local mujahideen commanders.

The People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) government, headed by Mohammad Najibullah, remained in power, but looked isolated and weak. After the Soviet withdrawal, U.S. intelligence agencies expected the PDPA regime to collapse within three to six months. This estimation did not take into account the continued support from the Soviet Union, including large quantities of military hardware, the presence of Soviet military advisors in Afghanistan and massive financial aid (valued between two and six billion dollars a year).

This considerable amount of support, plus

a massive defeat of the mujahideen in Jalalabad was sufficient to keep the insurgency at bay.

On 15 February 1989, the last Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan.

Soviet force commitment, initially assessed as requiring a few months, lasted over nine years and required considerable forces. The Soviet Union reportedly killed 1.3 million people and forced 5.5 million Afghans (a third of the pre-war population) to leave the country as refugees. Another 2 million Afghans were forced to migrate within the country. The country has yet to recover.

Civil War

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The U.S. tended to favour the Afghan resistance forces led by Ahmed Shah Massoud, and U.S. support for Massoud's forces increased considerably during the Reagan administration. Despite military successes against the mujahideen, the communist regime was still plagued by its traditional internal divisions. Afghanistan was completely dependent on Soviet aid, but by 1991, the Soviet economy was itself faltering, preventing the Soviets from fulfilling their commitments. The loyalty of the pro-government militias began to waiver and after negotiations between Abdul Rasheed Dostum and Massoud, Dostum's Jozjani militia defected to the Mujahideen. This reversal of fortunes effectively turned the tables in favour of the rebels. With the end of the Soviet Union, Najibullah's regime lost all credibility, and led entire government units to defect to the various Mujahideen factions.

In mid-January 1992, Massoud reached a political agreement with Dostum and another major militia leader, Sayyed Mansour. These northern allies consolidated their position and their coalition covered nine provinces in the north and northeast. As turmoil developed within the



Soviet Troops withdrawing from Afghanistan, 1988

government in Kabul, there was no government force standing between the northern allies and the major air force base at Bagram, some seventy kilometres north of Kabul. By mid-April the air force command at Bagram had capitulated to Massoud. With no army to defend it, Kabul had become completely defenceless.

Najibullah had lost internal control immediately after he announced his willingness on 18 March 1992 to resign. Despite the plan to make way for a neutral interim government, the old regime broke down into several factions and Najibullah fled Kabul on 17 April 1992.

The different Mujahideen groups entered Kabul from different directions. Hezb-i-Islami forces under the command of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar made the first move and entered the city from the south but they were unable to take key points of the city and many other important government offices. Massoud's Jamiat-e Islami forces entered from the north and quickly took control of these strategically important locations. After suffering heavy casualties, Hezb-i-Islami forces abandoned Kabul.

The capital thus came completely under Jamiat-e Islami control on 30 April 1992, but the situation was far from stable. With the government institutions either collapsing or participating in the faction fighting, maintaining order in Kabul became almost impossible. The

U.N. reported that 1,800 civilians died in rocket attacks between May and August 1992 and 500,000 people fled the city.

Amidst the emerging civil war, some factions agreed to a new government, with a Supreme Leadership Council, and an interim presidency. This was given to Sibghatullah Mojaddedi for two months, after which Burhanuddin Rabbani was to succeed him. The new government introduced increasingly strict Islamic laws based around a harsh interpretation of Sharia Law as laid out in the Qu'ran. Strict punishments according to this interpretation of Sharia law were alien to the people of Kabul who were already suffering from Hezb-i-Islami rocket attacks.

On 3 January 1993, Burhanuddin Rabbani, the leader of the Jamiat-e Islami party, was sworn in as President. However Rabbani's authority remained limited to only part of Kabul; the rest of the city remained divided among rival Mujahideen factions. Under the March accord, brokered by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, Rabbani

1992 - Najibullah's government toppled. Civil war follows.

1996 - Taliban seize control of Kabul and introduce hard-line version of Islam, banning women from work, and introducing Islamic punishments, which include stoning to death and amputations.

1997 - Taliban recognised as legitimate rulers by Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. They control about two-thirds of the country.

1998 - US launches missile strikes at suspected bases of militant Osama bin Laden, accused of bombing US embassies in Africa.

1999 - UN imposes an air embargo and financial sanctions to force Afghanistan to hand over Osama bin Laden for trial.

2001 September - Ahmad Shah Masood, leader of the main opposition to the Taliban - the Northern Alliance - is assassinated.



Mohammad Najibullah Ahmadzai, the fourth and last President of the Soviet-backed Democratic Republic of Afghanistan

and Hekmatyar agreed to share power until elections could be held in late 1994. Hekmatyar was named Prime Minister, but by November he had not entered Kabul because of continuing opposition from forces loyal to Massoud and Dostum. The cease-fire broke down again on 11 May 1993, and although the parties agreed to a new peace accord in Jellalabad on 20 May that year, by mid-November the power struggle remained unresolved.

Rise of the Taliban

The Taliban movement, which had been a minor mujahideen faction began to increase in significance, with the stated goal of liberating Afghanistan from the warlords in order to establish a fundamentalist Sharia state.

By October 1994 the Taliban had [redacted] [redacted] which saw in the Taliban a way to secure trade routes to Central Asia and establish a government in Kabul friendly to its interests. Pakistani traders quickly became some of the Taliban's strongest financial backers. Pakistan also wished for a stable government to take hold in Afghanistan, regardless of ideology, in the hope that the 3 million Afghans who for 15 years had taken refuge in Pakistan would return to their homeland.

In September 1996 Taliban militia seized control of Kabul and soon after government forces abandoned the shattered capital. In its first

action, the Islamic militant group executed former President Najibullah and his brother from a tower. All key government installations appeared to be in Taliban's hands within hours, including the presidential palace and the ministries of defence, security and foreign affairs. Massoud was forced to retreat to the North. He began to obtain military assistance from Russia as well as Iran and the Northern Alliance was reconstituted in opposition to the Taliban. Mullah Omar was proclaimed the Amir-ul-Momineen (Commander of the Faithful).

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted], and other strategic allies, the Taliban developed as a politico-religious force, and by the end of 1996 had captured 90% of the country, apart from the Afghan Northern Alliance strongholds primarily found in the northeast in the Panjshir Valley. The Taliban sought to impose a strict interpretation of Islamic Sharia law and gave safe haven and assistance to individuals and organizations that were implicated as terrorists, most notably Osama Bin Laden's Al Qaeda network. The Taliban's spiritual centre became Kandahar and remains a key objective for them today.

During the Taliban's rule the population faced massive restrictions of freedom, and were subject to brutal human rights violations. Women were fired from jobs and girls forbidden to attend schools or universities. A variety of punishments were utilised for those who resisted. Public executions for minor offenses were common and torture was routine.

The Northern Alliance

The Northern Alliance was a term used by the Western media, Taliban and Al Qaeda to identify

the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UIF), a military-political coalition of various Afghan groups fighting against the Taliban and supported by Russia and Iran before the 9/11 attacks. President Burhanuddin Rabbani was the notional head of the UIF, however most power resided with the Defence Ministers;

Ahmed Shah Massoud and later Mohammed Fahim. The Mujahideen predecessors of the United Islamic Front forces previously showed themselves unable to rule effectively, turning on each other after they took control of Kabul in 1992 from the Soviet backed regime.

Three ethnic groups dominated the UIF; The Tajiks, who make up 25% of Afghanistan's population and are the second largest ethnic group. The Hazara, who make up 18% and the Uzbeks, who make up about 6% (Note these figures vary dependant upon the source). From the Taliban conquest in 1996 until November 2001, the UIF controlled roughly 30% of Afghanistan's population. This control spread through several northern provinces and during the campaign against the Taliban, the Northern Alliance's fortunes fluctuated, and neither side succeeded in gaining a major advantage. Ahmed Shah Massoud was by far it's most visible and powerful figure. He personally commanded around 10,000 of the UIF's estimated 40,000 troops. Massoud's were reported to be the best trained and equipped, and the most combat effective.

On 9 September 2001, Ahmed Shah Massoud was killed, following an attack by Al Qaeda assassins posing as journalists. Mohammed Fahim the second ranking Tajik commander succeeded Massoud a few days later.

Al-Qaeda and Post 9/11

Al-Qaeda had sought refuge in Taliban controlled areas of Afghanistan in the mid 1990s and had subsequently constructed terrorist training camps. It was from here that the 9/11 plan to



President Burhanuddin Rabbani

attack the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon and White House in Washington DC was hatched. The United States issued an ultimatum to the Taliban to handover the Al-Qaeda leadership, which was ignored. Massive bombing and the invasion of the country by the United States and its allies followed, bringing about the Taliban's downfall.

In response to the September 11 attacks the US instigated Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) which began on 7 October 2001, with the US and British aerial bombing of Taliban positions and known terrorist training camps; this weakened the Taliban, who were then quickly defeated by the Northern Alliance.

In late 2001, major leaders from the Afghan opposition groups met in Bonn, Germany, and agreed on a plan for the formulation of a new government structure that resulted in the inauguration of Hamid Karzai as interim President. In August 2003 NATO gradually took over responsibility for security from the United States in its first 'out of area' mission. Its role was to lead the United Nations mandated International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), an international force of some 90,000 troops from 44 different nations.

NATO's mission lays out the essential elements of the task of stabilising and rebuilding the country; train the Afghan Army, Police and Judiciary; support the Government in counter narcotics efforts; develop a market infrastructure;

and suppress the Taliban. This was to be achieved in a four step process:

Stage One (2003 - 04)

NATO took control of Kabul and the Northern Provinces. French, Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish and German troops now patrol these areas.

Stage Two (2005 - 06)

NATO moved into the western provinces where Italian and Spanish forces now form the core of troops.

Stage Three (July 2006 - October 2006)

The deployment of 16 (Air Assault) Brigade into Helmand marked the start of Stage 3 and extended NATO's area of operations into southern Afghanistan.

Stage Four (October 2006 - Present)

NATO took control of the entire country when the US gave control of the eastern provinces to HQ ISAF.

History beyond 2005

Hamid Karzai was elected as Chairman of the Afghan Interim Authority (AIA) in December 2001. The Loya Jirga (a traditional council of regional delegates) chose Karzai to assume the title of President of Afghanistan in June 2002. As the country continues to rebuild and recover, it is still struggling against widespread poverty, the continued existence of warlords, a collapsed infrastructure, possibly the largest concentration of land mines and other unexploded ordinance on earth, as well as a sizable illegal poppy and heroin trade. Afghanistan also remains subject to occasionally violent political jockeying, although the nation's first genuinely free presidential elections were successfully held in 2004 and 2009, with Karzai winning a landslide victory in 2004 followed by a contested victory in 2009.

2001 October - US-led bombing of Afghanistan begins following the September 11 attacks on the United States. Anti-Taliban Northern Alliance forces enter Kabul shortly afterwards.

2001 December - Afghan groups agree deal in Bonn, Germany for interim government
Hamid Karzai is sworn in as head of an interim power-sharing government.

2002 January - Deployment of first contingent of foreign peacekeepers - the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) - marking the start of a protracted fight against the Taliban.

2002 April - Former king Zahir Shah returns, but makes no claim to the throne and dies in 2007.

2002 June - Loya Jirga, or grand council, elects Hamid Karzai as interim head of state. Karzai picks members of his administration which is to serve until 2004.

2003 August - NATO takes control of security in Kabul, its first-ever operational commitment outside Europe.

2004 January - Loya Jirga adopts new constitution which provides for strong presidency.

2004 October-November - Presidential elections. Hamid Karzai is declared winner.

2005 September - Afghans vote in first parliamentary elections in more than 30 years.

2005 December - Parliament opens with warlords and strongmen in most of the seats.

2006 October - NATO assumes responsibility for security across the whole of Afghanistan, taking command in the east from a US-led coalition force.

2008 September - US President George Bush sends an extra 4,500 US troops to Afghanistan, in a move he described as a "quiet surge".

2009 February - NATO countries pledge to increase military and other commitments in Afghanistan after US announces dispatch of 17,000 extra troops.

2009 March - US President Barack Obama unveils new strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan. An extra 4,000 US personnel will train and bolster the Afghan army and police and there will be support for civilian development.

2009 August - Presidential and provincial elections are marred by widespread Taliban attacks, patchy turnout and claims of serious fraud.

2009 October - Karzai declared winner of August presidential election, after second-placed opponent Abdullah Abdullah pulls out before the second round.

2009 December - US President Obama decides to boost US troop numbers in Afghanistan by 30,000, bringing total to 100,000. He says US will begin withdrawing its forces by 2011.

2010 February - NATO-led forces launch major offensive, Operation Moshtarak, in bid to secure government control of southern Helmand

2010 July - Whistleblowing website Wikileaks publishes thousands of classified US military documents relating to Afghanistan. General David Petraeus takes command of US, ISAF forces.

2010 August - Dutch troops pull out. Karzai says private security firms - accused of operating with impunity - must cease operations. He subsequently waters down the decree.

2010 September - Parliamentary polls marred by Taliban violence, widespread fraud and a long delay in announcing results.

2010 November - NATO - at summit in Lisbon - agrees plan to hand control of security to Afghan forces by end of 2014.

Despite logistical problems, and some instances of voter intimidation and fraud, the Parliamentary elections in 2005 helped to further stabilize the country politically. The 2009 elections were considered to have been a success, however, elections were marred by violence on the day and allegations of large scale electoral fraud.

In August 2009 the second Presidential elections took place. This was seen by the International community as a key event for Afghanistan to prove that it was able to conduct free and fair elections. Throughout Afghanistan ISAF were heavily involved in providing the security for the election which became the main target for disruption by the Taliban. Attacks and the threats of attacks on polling stations were wide spread and resulted in a significantly low voter turn out.

In addition, significant levels of election fraud further delayed the results, and the disqualification of huge amounts of votes by the independent Electoral Complaints Commission led to the need for a second round of voting.

This however did not take place due to Karzai's main opponent, Dr Abdullah Abdullah, withdrawing from the election.

This gave victory to Karzai for a second term albeit through a flawed election. This has weakened Karzai's position and credibility not only within Afghanistan but also on the world stage. The results for the September 2010 Parliamentary elections were announced in November after a delay due to investigations regarding widespread fraud complaints. Karzai lost a great deal of support within the lower house, with a reduced Pashtun turnout leading to a reduction in the amount of Pashtun seats. However some former Karzai supporters who did lose their position were elevated to the Meshrano Jirga (upper house/council of elders). Karzai has also been attempting to ensure Afghanistan

becomes a player in regional affairs. Both he and his foreign ministers have met with the leaders of Pakistan and Iran frequently to discuss security and economic issues.

ISAF forces are engaged in a process of transition, where ANSF will assume responsibility for security. Local government is being developed, alongside economic reconstruction, in order to build the foundations of a new country. By 2015, the Afghans will be fully responsible for all areas of governance, security and the economy and ISAF will act in support of the Afghan government.

2012 January - Taliban agree to open office in Dubai as a move towards peace talks with the US and the Afghan government.

2012 February - At least 30 people are killed in protests about the burning of copies of the Koran at the US Bagram airbase. US officials believed Taliban prisoners were using the books to pass messages, and that they were extremist texts not Korans. Two soldiers are also killed in reprisal attacks.

2012 April - Taliban announce "spring offensive" with attack on the diplomatic quarter of Kabul. The government blamed the Haqqani Network. Security forces kill 38 militants.

2012 May - Nato summit endorses the plan to withdraw foreign combat troops by the end of 2014. New French President Francois Hollande says France will withdraw its combat mission by the end of 2012 - a year earlier than planned. Arsala Rahmani of the High Peace Council is shot dead in Kabul.

2012 July - Tokyo donor conference pledges \$16bn in civilian aid to Afghanistan up to 2016, with US, Japan, Germany and UK supplying bulk of funds. Afghanistan agrees to new conditions to counter corruption.

2012 September - US hands over Bagram high-security jail to the Afghan government, although it retains control over some foreign prisoners. Taleban attack the nearby Bagram air base the following day. The US also suspends training new police recruits in order to carry out checks on possible ties to Taliban following series of attacks on foreign troops by apparent police and Afghan soldiers.

Overview

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world and relies heavily on donor grants to fund development and security spending. The withdrawal of most international troops is expected to have a deep and lasting impact on the country's economy and development. The drawdown is likely to be accompanied by an eventual decline in international development assistance on which Afghanistan has relied heavily since emerging out of conflict in 2001. Afghanistan's international partners have pledged continued support through to 2016. The medium-term economic outlook is affected by political and security uncertainties, which are expected to limit private-sector growth.

Both the ISAF mission and international development spending have helped drive strong economic growth, partly by creating demand for goods and services which would not otherwise have existed. The Afghan Government will have to take greater responsibility for both security and development spending, possibly whilst also facing growing financial pressures as the future level of foreign budget grants is uncertain beyond 2016, and Afghanistan has limited scope for foreign borrowing. Bolstering domestically-earned government revenues is therefore vital, and some progress has been made in recent years to improve customs and tax administration. Further increases in government revenues are expected once mining operations begin in Aynak and Hajigak, oil and gas production scales up in Northern Afghanistan, and with the introduction of a value-added tax in 2014. However, government expenditures will also increase rapidly in the coming years due to higher security spending (as ISAF troops leave the country), the roll out of pay-and-grading reforms for the civil service and rising recurrent obligations from large donor-supported projects. It is likely that Afghanistan's government will be reliant on large

volumes of international aid for some time. But even when the Afghan government has financial resources, it often lacks the capacity to utilise them. This is shown by the low execution rate (actual expenditure as a proportion of planned expenditure) of under 50 percent with respect to the government's 2010/11 development budget. The inability to spend money impedes more rapid progress towards economic development and poverty reduction.

Afghanistan is burdened by both poor governance and a large illicit sector. Conflict, endemic corruption and the narcotics trade have undermined the rule of law, the effectiveness of government institutions, and have contributed to a poor business environment. The Kabul Bank crisis of 2010 - involving massive banking fraud - is a prominent example of the damaging effects that corruption has on the country. The scandal triggered a decline in banking assets from US\$5.5bn in 2010 to US\$4.4bn in 2012.

Nearly 80 percent of the population live in rural areas and 60 percent of the population obtain their main source of income in agriculture, but the agriculture sector accounts for only about one third of Afghanistan's economy (excluding the illicit drug sector). Services made up over 45% of economic activity in 2012. Whilst the service sector has driven much of the economic growth in Afghanistan during the last decade, driven primarily by security spending and the needs of post-conflict reconstruction, inflation-adjusted GDP growth of 12% in 2012 can be largely attributed to a bumper harvest following favourable weather conditions, as well as the boost that the developing mining sector gave to growth. The share of mining in GDP tripled from 0.6% of GDP in 2011 to 1.8% in 2012. GDP growth is expected to fall to around 3% in 2013, bringing GDP per person to about US\$636, amongst the lowest in the world.

Aid and the challenge of transition

Afghanistan faces the challenge of a drawdown of most international military forces by 2014. The 2012 Chicago and Tokyo conferences saw the international community pledge sufficient funding for basic sustainment of security, development and governance through to 2016 in return for Afghan progress on key governance reforms. Donors might extend their commitments when the 2014 ministerial review takes place. A decline in external assistance would have widespread political and economic ramifications for Afghanistan.

Aid has underpinned much of the progress since 2001 - including that in key services, infrastructure, and government administration - but it has also been linked to corruption, fragmented delivery systems, poor aid effectiveness, and weakened governance. Reflecting steep increases after 2005, civilian aid and spending on the ANSF in 2010/11 (both henceforth classified as "aid") together came to an estimated US\$15.7 billion - about the same as GDP. While the bulk of this was security spending, civilian aid is estimated to be more than US\$6 billion a year, or nearly 40 percent of GDP. Most aid is directly delivered by donors outside the government budget but under the Tokyo process this could change. The Afghan government and the international community have agreed to channel at least 50 percent of external aid through the government budget. But it will be extremely challenging for the Afghan authorities to develop the necessary administrative capacity to absorb and spend these additional funds. The impact that falling aid flows will have on the wider economy will depend on the nature of those aid flows and is not straightforward. The World Bank distinguishes between spending 'in' Afghanistan and spending 'on' Afghanistan. An example of spending 'in' Afghanistan would be a construction project

such as the building of a new school, which would have direct benefits to the local economy. But much of the aid spent on Afghanistan is not spent in the country; for example foreign military equipment provided by donor nations to the Afghan National Security Forces has no direct impact on the Afghan economy. A study by the Peace Dividend Trust estimated that the overall local impact in Afghanistan from donor aid is 38%, which suggests that for every pound of aid that is withdrawn, 38 pence would impact on the economy, through reduced direct salary payments, household transfers or purchase of local goods and services. The same study estimated that 10% of the working population benefitted in one form or another from employment created or sustained by aid in 2010. This suggests that the drawdown of aid will have a significant impact on the economy, but that the effect will be less than that suggested by a simple comparison of current aid flows to the size of Afghanistan's GDP.

Agriculture

Opium poppy production and the opium trade continue to have a significant monetary share of the country's agricultural economy although some farmers have taken advantage of opportunities to produce and market licit alternative crops. Licit commercial agriculture is playing a significant role in increasing the income of rural populations. The major food crops produced are wheat (which accounts for about 60% of agricultural output), corn, rice, barley, vegetables, fruits, and nuts. The major industrial crops are: cotton, tobacco, madder, castor beans, and sugar beets. Agricultural production is constrained by an almost total dependence on erratic winter snows and spring rains for water; irrigation is largely primitive, though Helmand province is somewhat of an exception (see chapter on Helmand's economy). Relatively little

use is made of machines, chemical fertilizer, or pesticides.

Poppy is relatively straightforward to cultivate and opium is easily transported. Afghanistan produced approximately 74% of the world's illicit opium in 2012. A UN assessment of opium poppy cultivation trends in Afghanistan in 2013 suggested that such cultivation is likely to increase in the main opium producing regions. Much of Afghanistan's opium production is refined into heroin and is either consumed by a growing regional addict population - notably in Iran and Afghanistan - or to a lesser degree exported, primarily to Western Europe, but also to the United States, East Africa, Russia and South East Asia. The UK departmental responsibility for counter-narcotics will transition from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to the Home Office in 2014 and a new strategy is currently under discussion. The revised GIRoA National Drug Control Strategy (2012-2016) is committed to tackling the root causes of the drug economy. The strategy has six overall goals: reduce poppy cultivation; support a shift in cultivation from poppy to licit crops; increase drug treatment capacity; increase the drug seizure rate; increase the number of drug traffickers convicted; and expand public awareness.



Farmers in Balkh Province at work during the wheat harvest (USAID).

Natural Resources

Afghanistan is endowed with natural resources, including extensive deposits of natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, chromite, talc, barites, sulphur, lead, zinc, iron ore, salt, and precious and semiprecious stones. Estimates vary, but Afghanistan's mineral reserves have been estimated to be worth over US\$1 trillion, and possibly as much as US\$3 trillion. Ongoing instability in areas of the country, remote and rugged terrain, and an inadequate infrastructure and transportation network have made mining these resources difficult. Historically, the most important resource has been natural gas, first tapped in 1967. Natural gas sales peaked in the 1980s when they accounted for US\$300 million a year in export revenues (56% of the total). Ninety percent of these exports went to the Soviet Union to pay for imports and debts. However, during the withdrawal of Soviet troops in 1989, Afghanistan's natural gas fields were capped to prevent sabotage by the mujaheddin. Some gas production has subsequently resumed and the limited output is currently used for domestic consumption, with further exploration activity underway.

The Afghan government has awarded a number of tenders for the exploration and development of oil, gas and mineral deposits since



Farmers receive wheat seed and fertilizer as part of a USAID assisted counter-narcotics programme (USAID).

2007, and in 2012 the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation commenced oil production from the Amu Darya oil fields in Northern Afghanistan. Negotiations are continuing between the Afghan government and a Chinese firm over development of the Aynak copper deposit in east-central Afghanistan, an international investment valued at over \$2.5 billion; the Steel Authority of India for the development of an iron ore deposit at Hajigak; and with foreign investors over a number of copper and gold concessions in central and northern Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum plans to move forward with further mineral tenders in the second half of 2013, although progress has been delayed by the passage of a new minerals law through parliament. In order fully to exploit the long term economic potential of these reserves, Afghanistan will require political stability, security and improved transport infrastructure.

The Illicit Economy in Afghanistan

Afghanistan's illicit sector is estimated to be in the range of one third to one half of the country's GDP. The largest illicit activities in Afghanistan are narcotics and corruption. Smuggling, fraud, extortion and arms trading also generate significant proceeds. These activities are all crimes in Afghanistan.

Narcotics

In terms of production and share of GDP, opium's importance has been declining since 2007, when it reached a record production of 8,200 tons. The UN estimated in 2012 that production was likely to be closer to 3,700 tons, which amounted to 3.3 percent of GDP in farm-gate value, or 7-8 percent in export value. The decision to cultivate opium is strongly correlated with conflict and access to markets; however, there is also an inverse price correlation mainly with the subsistence crop wheat (more opium is produced when the price of

wheat falls and vice-versa). The large profits earned by producers and traffickers are spent both inside and outside the country. In addition to funding regular consumption and investment spending, the profits are also used to buy patronage, influence and services, to reinvest in illicit cultivation and to finance investments outside the country. The narcotics trade provides an important funding stream to anti-government elements (AGE) who collect a share of the narcotics revenue, akin to a tax.

Corruption

Together with North Korea and Somalia, Afghanistan ranked joint bottom (out of 176 countries) in Transparency International's 2012 Corruption Perceptions Index. Afghans paid an estimated US\$3.9 billion in bribes to public officials in 2012 (20 percent of GDP) and approximately US\$600 million was paid to non-public sector entities (e.g. village elders, the Taliban, NGOs and International Organisations). Half of Afghanistan's citizens claimed to have paid at least one bribe to a public official during the year. The scale of corruption, combined with the large illicit sector, continues to undermine governance and development in the country.

Selected Economic Indicators

The table below summarises key economic indicators for the Afghan economy. It is important to stress the limitations of economic data on Afghanistan. Official statistics are known to be incomplete. Estimates of population, GDP and trade vary by source, often quite dramatically. The opium trade does not generally figure in official statistics, though it is included as part of 'Memorandum Items' in the World Bank's estimates below. More broadly, the informal economy which covers subsistence, bartering, smuggling and opium, accounts for a significant proportion of all economic activity, but is not recorded in the statistics.

(% of GDP, unless stated otherwise)

	1386 2007/08	1387 2008/09	1388 2009/10	1389 2010/11	1390 2011/12	1391 2012/13
Real Sector						
Nominal GDP (excl. opium: billoin Afs)	490	519	615	730	864	<u>1,023</u>
Nominal GDP (excl. opium: billoin US\$)	9.8	10.2	12.5	15.9	18.0	19.8
Real GDP growth (%)	13.7	3.6	21	8.4	7.0	11.8
GDP per capita (US\$)	338	342	408	507	557	595
Money and Prices						
CPI inflation (period average, %)	12.9	26.8	-12.2	7.7	10.2	6.4
Core inflation (excl ¹ fuel & cereals, %)	4.3	10.6	1.7	9.8	14.6	6.6
Broad money (M2)	24.4	31.3	36.8	38.2	36.8	33.1
Government finance /1*						
Domestic Revenue	6.8	8.0	10.3	11.0	11.3	10.6
o/w: tax revenue	5.1	5.5	8.4	9.1	8.7	7.8
Donor grants	10.9	10.1	10.2	11.0	10.8	16.2
Total Core Budget expenditure	19.5	22.8	22.1	21.1	23.0	24.6
Operating	10.3	13.9	14.5	15.2	17.4	17.7
Development	9.2	8.9	7.6	5.9	5.7	6.9
Operating balance	1.2	0.3	1.2	3.3	0.9	2.1
Overall Core balance (incl. grants)	-1.8	-4.3	-1.6	0.9	-0.9	2.1
Security spending	5.1	6.0	7.3	8.8	10.0	10.7
Fiscal sustainability ratio	66.1	57.3	71.3	72.7	65.0	60.2
External Sector						
Exports FOB (billion US\$) /2	1.85	2.46	2.52	2.64	2.75	<u>2.61</u>
Imports FOB (billion US\$) /2	7.39	8.95	9.47	9.95	10.62	11.17
Trade balance	-56.3	-63.6	-55.7	-45.9	-43.6	<u>-43.1</u>
Current account balance (incl. grants)	5.2	5.3	1.6	2.8	2.2	<u>3.9</u>
Current account balance (excl. grants)	-60.6	-66.0	-58.6	-45.9	-45.9	<u>-44.9</u>
Gross reserves (million US\$)	3,007	3,565	4,312	5,560	6,193	7,162*
Gross reserves (months of imports)	4.9	4.8	5.5	6.7	7.0	7.7*
Total External debt						
Total debt stock (billion Afs) /3	96.6	107.1	106.2	100.8	114.3	112.2*
Debt-to- GDP Ratio (%)	19.7	20.6	17.3	13.8	13.2	11.0*
Memorandum items						
Nominal GDP (incl. opium: billion Afs)	519	541	633	747	904	1,106
Population (millions)	29.1	29.8	30.6	31.4	32.4	33.4
Exchange rate, average (Afs / US\$)	49.8	50.9	49.3	45.8	47.9	51.6
Exchange rate, end-year (Afs / US\$)	49.5	51.9	48.0	45.3	49.5	52.5

* indicates values as of December 2012. Underlined numbers indicate forecasts or projections

/1: Fiscal indicators for 2012 have been projected over 12 months to facilitate comparison with previous years.

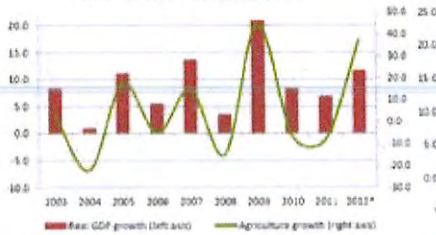
/2: indicates both official and unofficial trade (smuggling): estimates

/3: official statistics by Mof

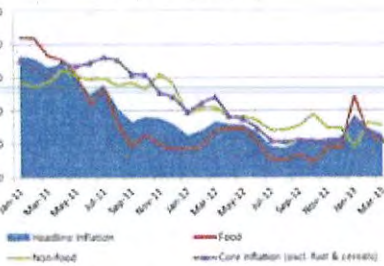
Source: The World Bank

The Afghan Economy at a Glance

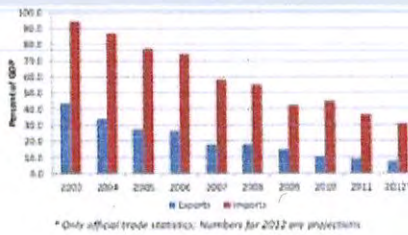
Growth has been strong, but volatile...



...and inflation is declining.

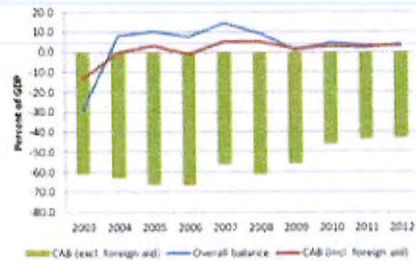


Trade is decreasing...

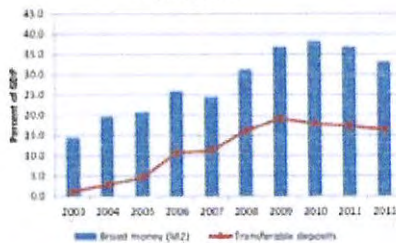


* Only official trade statistics. Numbers for 2012 are projections.

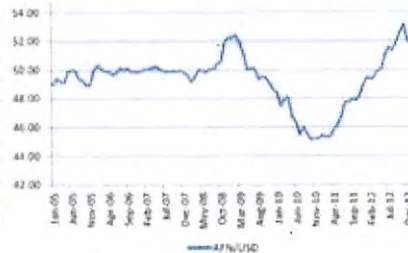
...but the current account is in balance thanks to large foreign aid inflows



Monetary indicators have degraded since the Kabul Bank crisis in 2010...



...and the exchange rate is depreciating.



Source: The World Bank

Water

With low and erratic rainfall, rivers and streams are crucial as a source of water. The melting of snow and glaciers feeds rivers in the spring and early summer. Dams are constructed along rivers in order to collect surface water and control its flow downstream. There are dams on the Kunduz, Kabul, Arghandab, and Helmand rivers. Despite these dams and reservoirs, Afghanistan lacks the adequate infrastructure to control its water or the water flow into neighbouring countries and it is reported that Afghanistan uses less than one third of its potential water. Considerable donor investment has gone toward repairing damaged irrigation systems but little has been invested in increasing efficiency.

The most important dams and reservoirs in Afghanistan are the Kajaki Reservoir on the Helmand, the Dahla Dam on the Arghandab River, the Sardeh Dam on the Ghazni River, and the Kelagay Dam on the Darya-ye Qonduz tributary of the Amu Darya. The principle reservoirs are rapidly losing their storage capacity as a result of high rates of sediment influx and accumulation.

Agriculture accounts for 95% of the country's water consumption. Only a small percentage of irrigated land uses properly engineered systems - the majority rely on traditional methods. The Helmand River supports the largest irrigated area in the country. Afghanistan's ground water resources lie in a number of aquifers from which water is extracted through wells and karezes. Karezes are gravity-based irrigation systems, requiring no mechanical devices, where gently sloping tunnels deliver water to the surface down-slope from underground aquifers (these can be several kilometres away). Typically the karez runs into a ditch near its destination which runs to cropland nearby. The location of karezes often defines the social regions of settlements with more prosperous people living in the upper reaches of the karez outlet where water quality

is best. Downstream of the outlet, water runs through surface canals (jubs) which run downhill to carry water further afield. Unregulated deep well drilling is potentially depleting aquifers that are essential to these traditional irrigation systems.

Roads

The road network in Afghanistan consists of approximately 34,700km of roads and tracks, of which 8,200km are paved and 26,500 km unpaved. Twenty five years of war have left much of the country's road system in poor condition. A major national road rebuilding project, funded by foreign governments and agencies was started in 2002, is still ongoing.

The main rebuilding effort is concentrated on Afghanistan's major national route, the 'Ring Road', which incorporates part of Highway 1 (also known as Route 1). This entails joining routes 1, 2, 5, 337 and 501. The 2,237km route circles the country and passes through the major cities and towns of Kabul, Kandahar, Herat, Meymaneh, Mazar-e-Sharif and Kunduz. It is estimated that 66% of the population live within



Map showing the Highway One Ring Road.
(Asia Development Bank)

50km of the Ring Road. When complete, it will have a two-lane, all-weather, asphalt surface and be capable of carrying commercial traffic at speeds up to 60mph.

Apart from the main highways, Afghanistan has very few hard surfaced roads and only a sparse network of minor roads and tracks. In most cases, these are unpaved and should be treated as cross-country routes. In the more mountainous regions, roads are liable to be impassable during the winter. In the flat southern plains, drifting sand causes reduced visibility and can hinder vehicle movements. River crossing points are also a potential hazard, particularly during winter snow melt; these are primarily fords or rudimentary bridges. Lack of alternative routes means paved roads and highways are heavily used.

Roads in Afghanistan can be categorised into 5 types:

Regional. Foster trade between neighbouring countries. Includes the ring road and principle roads connecting to neighbouring countries. These are generally paved.

National. Connect capitals of all provinces to regional highway network. Generally paved.

Provincial. Connect provincial capitals to district headquarters. May be paved or gravel.

Rural. Roads inside districts. May be paved, gravel or cobblestone.

Urban. Roads within urban areas. May be paved or gravel.

In areas of steep terrain roads and tracks run through innumerable mountain passes, tunnels, gorges and hairpin bends giving rise to potential choke points which can be used for ambushes. A major bottleneck over the Hindu Kush is the Salang Pass Tunnel, on the Sher Khan to Kabul highway.

Minor tracks and trails are often temporary and often shift with the season. Roads in desert areas, particularly in the northern steppes, can



The entrance to the Salang Pass Tunnel

become temporarily blocked by shifting sand dunes. Undiscovered minefields are hazards when finding alternative routes.

Railways

Landlocked Afghanistan has limited functioning railways, but the Amu Darya (Oxus) River, which forms part of Afghanistan's border with Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, has barge traffic. During their occupation of the country, the Soviets completed a bridge across the Amu Darya. The Shirkan Bandar bridge, reconstructed with U.S. assistance, reopened in 2007 and has opened vital trade routes between Afghanistan and Tajikistan.

The Hairatan to Mazar-e-Sharif railway project was completed in late 2011. The project aims to increase trade between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan, reduce transport costs, increase vehicle operation savings, and create job opportunities in the project area.

Airports

As with all other infrastructure, Afghanistan's airports have suffered due to years of conflict but renovation and upgrading work is ongoing with help from international agencies. The two international airports are at Kabul and Kandahar. There are four major domestic airports that serve principal cities and 16 regional airports that serve the more remote areas.



Khandhar International Airport

Bost Airfield, near Lashkar Gah, is the only completely civilian airfield in southern Afghanistan. The newly refurbished airfield opened in early June 2009 and is the new gateway to Helmand Province. The airfield, and agricultural centre being constructed nearby, are part of a counter-narcotics strategy aimed at providing access to domestic markets.

Afghanistan's national airline, Ariana, operates domestic and international routes, including flights to New Delhi, Islamabad, Dubai, Moscow, Istanbul, and Tehran. Civil aviation has been expanding rapidly and several private airlines now offer an alternative to Ariana and operate a number of domestic and international routes.

Power

Access to electricity

The percentage of the population with access to electricity in Afghanistan is among the lowest in the world. The Ministry of Energy and Water estimates that about 30% of Afghans have access to electricity from grid-based power, micro-hydro or solar panel stations. The situation has improved significantly in the major urban population centres along the critical North East corridor between Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul, following the import of power from Uzbekistan and the rehabilitation of three hydro plants (Mahipar and Sarobi completed, and Naghlu

ongoing). Increasing parts of some urban centres, for example in Kabul, Herat, Mazar-e-Sharif and Pul-e-Khumri, now have 24-hour power supply for the first time in decades.

For nearly three decades, the availability of secure energy supplies in Afghanistan was significantly disrupted by conflict. Much of the country's power generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure was destroyed, and what remained was stretched far beyond capacity. More than 90% of the population had no access to electricity. In January 2009, with the help of the Asian Development Bank and the Indian Government, electricity began to flow into Kabul along a newly constructed transmission line running from neighbouring Uzbekistan. For the first time in more than a generation, the majority of the capital's four million people enjoy the benefits of power.

The international community has provided considerable assistance to help develop new electricity generation capacity and provide 24-hour power in key cities including Kabul, Lashkar Gah, and Kandahar. Major projects carried out include refurbishment of power generation capacity at Kajaki Dam in the south and opening the Kabul power plant. The Afghan Government has transferred all assets, liabilities, and personnel from the troubled, state-run power utility Da Afghanistan Breshna Mosesa (DABM)



Transmission towers in the Salang Pass, delivering imported power from neighbouring countries to Kabul (USAID).

to the new corporatized national electricity utility Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS). The move was a significant breakthrough in Afghan Government and donor efforts to modernize and begin to commercialize the national electricity sector. Reliable, affordable electricity is vitally important to Afghan economic growth, prosperity, and stability. The energy infrastructure continues to be a priority for international donor nations.

Telecommunications and Media

Mobile telecommunications and internet services were first provided in 2002 by the Afghan Wireless Communication Company. There are now various competing companies offering telecommunication services.

3G services are currently provided by UAE-based Etisalat in Kabul. The company recently announced that it was providing services in Jellalabad.

Afghanistan's mobile phone sector has been one of the country's economic success stories in the post-Taliban era, and contributes significantly to government revenues. Mobile phone ownership is widespread, even in rural areas where traditional fixed line services are non-existent. In 2011 the Afghan government announced plans to offer licences to provide 3G services to customers. This required service providers to upgrade their networks if they wished to provide the bandwidth required for enhanced internet-based services. In March 2012 Etisalat was awarded the first 3G licence and immediately started to offer services within selected areas of Kabul. It has since expanded to provide services to Jellalabad and has expressed a desire to expand services rapidly to other cities. In June 2012 MTN-A won the second licence and has announced plans to provide services soon. The Afghan Wireless Communications Company (AWCC) and Roshan have not announced plans to obtain licences but are likely to do so in the

near future. Additionally, on 1 July 2012 Aftel, the national fixed line service provider, sought tenders to install 3G equipment at its sites and appears to be entering the GSM/3G mobile market. Given that it is state-owned it is likely to be granted a license, without paying a fee, by the government.

Analysis and Outlook

Despite the security situation, the Afghan population has enthusiastically taken up 2G mobile services, which provides voice calling, text and limited internet access. Service providers are now looking to provide a wider variety of internet based services such as web surfing, social networking, shopping etc which will have the potential to generate considerably more revenue than voice calls, while requiring a minimal upgrade to their networks.

This will have a number of benefits for Afghanistan. Greater profits from 3G networks should result in higher tax revenues for the Afghan government. Additionally, greater internet access within the wider population provides numerous opportunities for the government to message the population and increase its control and influence over remote areas, which are currently without a physical government presence. Improvements in mobile networks could create economic opportunities in other areas of the Afghan economy, with business seeking to use the new 3G capabilities to offer services to their customers. This could result in higher revenues and employment opportunities.

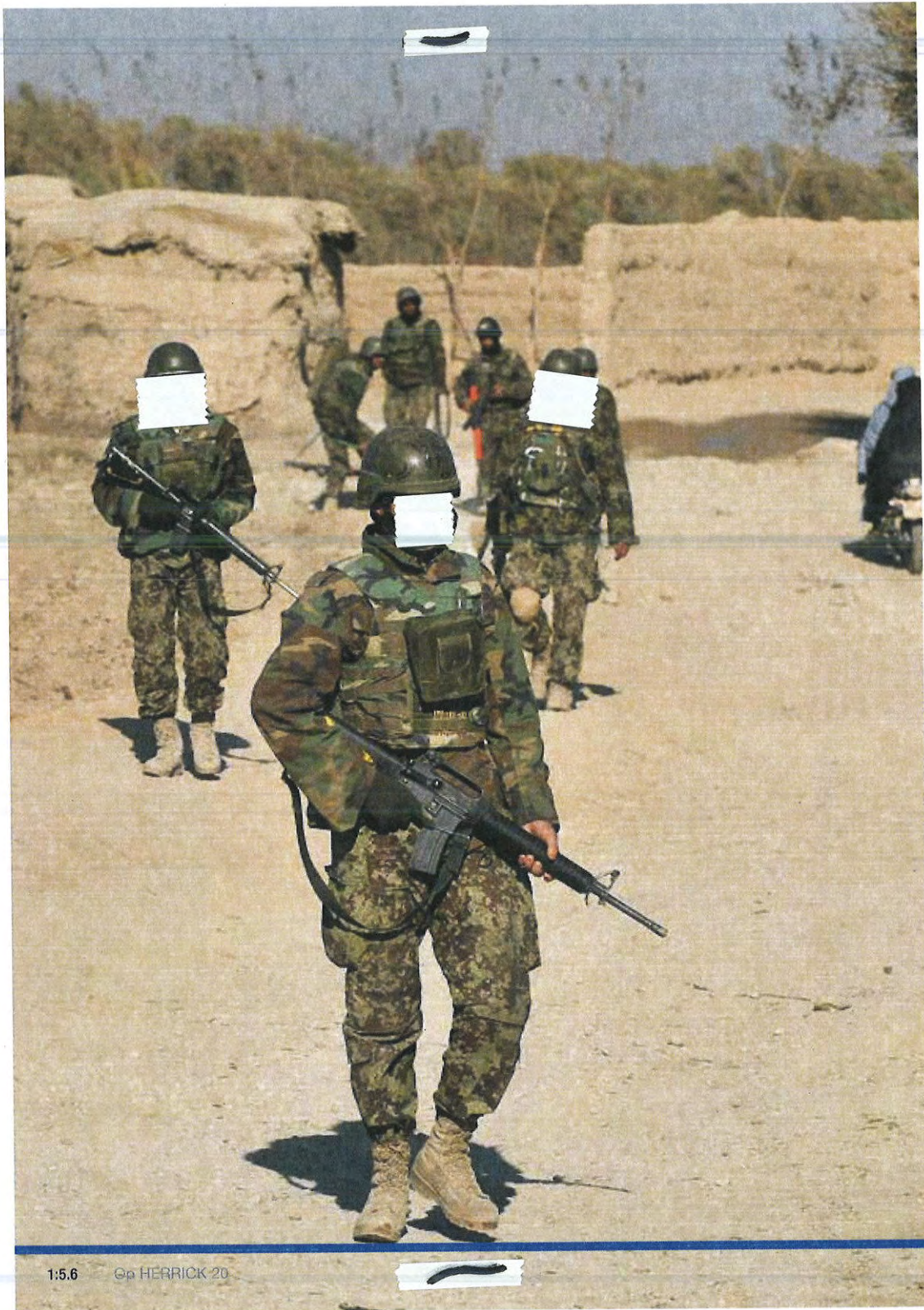
There are at least seven TV stations broadcasting in Afghanistan including one government-run central television station in Kabul. Satellite television also provides access to foreign channels. The national radio broadcaster is Radio Afghanistan which reaches approximately 50% of the country. Major cities also have independent FM stations. Radio

stations broadcast in Dari, Pashto and English. Various foreign radio stations are also relayed to Kabul including the BBC World Service (89.0FM). ISAF advertises on Afghan television and radio as part of its campaign to win 'hearts and minds'. Messages regarding human rights, health, agriculture and Western development assistance are broadcast.

Over 170 newspapers and magazines are printed in Afghanistan. The main government newspapers are Anis, Hewad and Arman, each with an estimated circulation of between 5000 and 8000. The independent Kabul Weekly is printed in English, French, Dari and Pashto.



Community radio stations provide news and information to rural populations (USAID).



Government and the Political Context of Afghanistan

According to the UK National Security Strategy published in October 2012, the UK faces a real and pressing threat from international terrorism, particularly that inspired by Al Qaeda and its affiliates. Our Armed Forces are fighting in Afghanistan because of this threat. The UK and its allies are supporting the Government of Afghanistan to prevent Afghan territory from again being used by Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups as a secure base from which to plan attacks on the UK or our allies. To achieve this the UK are supporting an Afghan-led process to develop the Afghan security forces and build a more effective Afghan state that can control its own security and, ultimately, achieve a lasting political settlement.

On the 22 March 2011, during a speech at the National Military Academy in Kabul, President Karzai formally began the process of transition – the conditioned-based process, set in a political context, for transferring the lead for all security operations in all provinces in Afghanistan by the end of 2014. The formal process of transition was outlined and agreed at the NATO

Lisbon summit in November 2010 in the 'Joint Framework for Inteqal (Transition)'. As with all NATO partners, UK operations in Afghanistan are now conducted within the political framework of Inteqal (Transition) and the security framework of 'Security Force Assistance' (SFA).

In October 2011, COMISAF, General Allen, issued a revised campaign plan that changed ISAF's mission. The mission changed from one of conducting counterinsurgency operations in partnership with the government of Afghanistan, to supporting the government of Afghanistan in the conduct of counterinsurgency operations. Consequently, the ISAF campaign has progressed from coalition-led operations, to one which supports the development of the Afghan security forces (the intelligence services, the military, and the police) enabling them to conduct independent operations. Security force assistance (SFA) is defined as the unified action to generate, employ, and sustain Afghan security forces to support the government and people of Afghanistan. Therefore, security force assistance (SFA) is the way in which ISAF will support the



Afghan women display their ink-stained fingers after casting ballots in the historic parliamentary elections in Lash Kar Gah, Helmand Province, Sept. 18, 2005

Afghan military and police to deliver security.

Consequently, UK military forces in Afghanistan are part of the NATO-led security force assistance mission that supports the Afghan government, security forces and international community in creating and maintaining the conditions within which political transition (in teqal) can occur.

Select Political Timeline

1. October 2001, Air Offensive begins.

US-led coalition begins bombing of Afghanistan following the terrorist attacks of 11 September in New York.

2. December 2001, Bonn Accords.

Following the fall of the Taliban at the end of 2001, some Afghan leaders met in Bonn along with representatives of the international community to set out a roadmap towards the creation of a legitimate and representative government in Afghanistan.

3. December 2001, Afghan Interim Authority.

From 22 December 2001. Unelected government of largely self-selected Afghan power-brokers led by Hamid Karzai.

4. June 2002, Emergency Loya Jirga.

Traditional council of regional delegates selected members of the Afghan Transitional Administration, still led by Karzai.

5. December 2003, Constitutional Loya Jirga.

Representative council met to consent to a new framework of government and to agree to a new Afghan National Constitution.

6. October 2004, Presidential election.

October 2004. Hamid Karzai swept to victory with a huge winning margin over his nearest challenger, Younis Qanuni.

7. September 2005, Parliamentary and provincial elections.

Flawed but acceptable electoral process sees the creation of the first representative democratic institutions since the 1960s.

8. October 2006, NATO assumes command.

NATO security forces assume responsibility for security across all of Afghanistan, taking over from the US-led coalition.

9. October 2009, Presidential election.

Hamid Karzai is re-elected as president of Afghanistan after his opponent, Abdullah Abdullah, pulls out before the second round of voting.

10. December 2009, US troop surge.

President Obama announces an extra 30,000 US troops, bringing the total in the country to 100,000.

11. February 2010, Operation Moshtarak.

NATO undertakes the operation to secure Afghan



government control in southern Helmand.

12. November 2010, Lisbon Summit. NATO partners and the Afghan government agree that the responsibility and authority for security in Afghanistan should transition to the Afghan government and security forces by the end of 2014.

13. November 2011, Diplomatic agreement with US. President Karzai signs an agreement with the US that will see some US military presence in Afghanistan remain in the country post-2014.

14. January 2012, Taliban peace talks. The Taliban agree to open an office in Dubai as a step towards participating in peace and reconciliation talks with the Afghan and US governments.

15. May 2012, NATO campaign plan. NATO and national contingent leaders endorse the plan to remove all foreign combat troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

16. July 2012, International development aid. In the Tokyo conference, the UK, US, Japan, and Germany agree to provide \$16bn in aid to Afghanistan up to 2016.

Afghan Government

The Afghan central government comprises a directly elected executive presidency; an appointed cabinet of ministers heading government departments; and a two chamber parliament (the lower house, or Wolesi Jirga and upper house, or Meshrano Jirga). Outside Kabul, each of the 34 provinces is directly administered by a governor appointed by the Independent Directorate of Local Governance and approved by President Karzai, alongside an elected provincial

council. During the transitional period of the Bonn process, representative central government was achieved through the assignment of a large number of ministerial posts across factional groups. Government positions were often assigned not on the basis of merit, professional suitability or ideology, but mainly on the basis of achieving a diverse ethnic and political representation. Whilst the resultant cabinet was unwieldy and prone to factionalism, the wide representation that the system achieved was crucial in bestowing legitimacy on the interim administration and in gaining broad acceptance from the majority of the Afghan population before the 2004 and 2005 elections. In October 2004, Karzai won the presidency in the country's first nationwide democratic election.

Winning a convincing 55% of the national vote, Karzai was the only candidate to demonstrate an ability to attract voters from across ethnic lines and was elected on the first round of voting. Many of the other leading candidates struggled to win a majority of the votes of their own ethnic groups. The Tajik runner-up, Younis Qanuni was subsequently elected as the Speaker, or Chairman, of the Wolesi Jirga in January 2006.

Following his electoral victory in 2004, Karzai's style of government has matured. Having achieved a popular mandate, he moved to appoint a cabinet of his own choice, largely formed of members owing political allegiance to him. The 27 strong cabinet sidelined the previously dominant warlords with their own vested interests in maintaining the status quo and influence in the provinces. This process was continued in March 2006 when Karzai carried out a reshuffle, reducing the number of ministers to 25 and diminishing the influence of the former Mujahideen still further. The presidential elections took place in 2009 resulting in Karzai's re-election as the president of Afghanistan. These



elections were fraught with poor security, low voter turnout and large scale electoral fraud and corruption. In total, there was an estimated 35% voter turnout, dropping as low as 10% in some districts in Helmand province. Electoral fraud consisted of false voting, the selling of ballot papers, intimidation at voting stations and the offering of bribes. The final results of the presidential election were as follows: Karzai won with a majority of 49.7% of the vote with Dr Abdullah on 30%, resulting in a second round campaign. However, with the large scale fraud that occurred during the first round, Dr Abdullah conceded, resulting in Karzai's re-election. Dr Abdullah's withdrawal from the second round run off caused some concern over whether Karzai was democratically re-elected.

Wolesi Jirga

The Parliamentary and Provincial elections in September 2005 produced results largely along national ethnic lines. The Parliamentary Wolesi Jirga was formed of 249 MPs elected from all 34 provinces, and was comprised of 48% Pashtuns, 21% Tajiks, 12% Hazaras, 8% Uzbeks and 11% others, including Arabs, Baluchis, Aimaks and Turkmen. In accordance with the national Constitution, 68 MPs are female (some 27% of the total). The September 2010 parliamentary elections saw a massive upheaval of the political status quo with neither Karzai nor Dr Abdullah

achieving the political objectives they had hoped for. The number of Pashtuns seats was reduced from 120 to 94 directly effecting Karzai's core supporter base and the number of Hazara seats also increased possibly due to low voter turn out amongst Pashtuns in Ghazni. This has caused Pashtun grievances to come to a head as they feel their majority was lost due to fraud. Two former Taliban figures, Mullah Salam Rocketi and Musa Wardak were also unseated; however Wardak was assured a place in the Meshrano Jirga as compensation. A number of militia leaders also won seats in the lower house as well as other Mujahideen era figures.

Meshrano Jirga

In the Meshrano Jirga, one-third of the 102 seats have been appointed by Karzai, while the remaining 68 seats are filled by two representatives each from the 34 provincial councils. The upper house also broadly reflects the national ethnic balance, but wields less power than the lower house. According to the Constitution, the Wolesi Jirga has the authority to pass any legislation with a two-thirds majority, even in the face of opposition from the Upper House and the President. Members of both houses of Parliament possess a variety of backgrounds. There are many former jihadi or ex--Mujahideen fighters, together with intellectuals, a few former communists and many tribal representatives.

The composition and role of the 34 elected provincial councils are less clear. They themselves have little formal power, but comprising many senior tribal and ethnic representatives, their support and participation will be needed by many of the centrally-appointed provincial governors in imposing effective control in the more remote regions. In addition, under current arrangements, each council selects two of their number to sit in the parliamentary upper house.

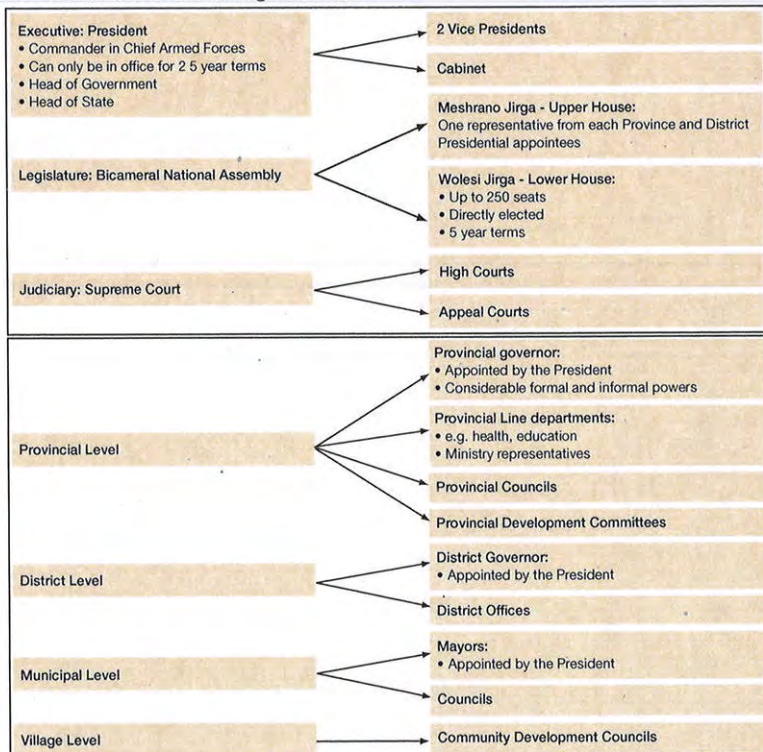
The Constitution

The Constitution of 2004 is Afghanistan's 6th Constitution since 1923. The Constitution provides a framework for the establishment of the rule of law, consistent with the beliefs of Islam. It also provided the framework for the Presidential and Parliamentary elections. The inclusion of clauses on human rights, women's equality and unprecedented rights to minority languages demonstrates some of the national and international influences at work. In determining the Afghan national identity, the Constitution recognised the contribution and importance of

all the ethnic minority groups. The Constitution mandated a highly centralised unitary state with a President as Head of State and a bicameral legislature that represented all the provinces and districts.



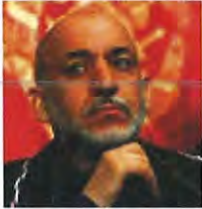
Government Structure in Afghanistan



Key Political Personalities

President

Hamid Karzai - Pashtun



Leader of Afghanistan in multiple positions since the fall of the Taliban in December 2001, Hamid Karzai was democratically re-elected in November 2009. An ethnic Pashtun and the hereditary head of the Popalzai clan of the Durrani tribe, he speaks a number of languages well - including Dari, Pashtu, Persian, Urdu, Hindi, English and French. He supported the Mujahideen against the Soviets throughout the 1980s and was an initial Taliban supporter when they emerged in the 1990s, but he renounced them when they fell under the influence of foreign fighters. He has proven to be the most acceptable leader across all ethnic groups, although he relies heavily on the Pashtun vote.

Vice President

Mohammed Qasim Fahim - Tajik



Mohammed Qasim Fahim is currently the First Vice President, taking up post following the Presidential Election in 2009. He was a powerful Mujahideen commander who served under Ahmad Shah Massoud. He was the

Defense Minister during the Afghan Transitional Administration from 2002 and has previously served as a Vice President from June 2002 to December 2004.

Vice President

Karim Khalili - Hazara



Karim Khalili was active in the anti-Soviet resistance, responsible for co-ordinating external support and for fostering unity among the various Mujahideen groups. Later he became the leader of Hizb-e-Wahdat Islami Afghanistan (Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan), which represents the Shi'a Hazara minority. Wahdat was the second most powerful military party in opposition to the Taliban and was backed by Iran, who founded the party in the 1980s

Building Effective Governance

Overall, the reach of the central government and the President's authority remains limited to Kabul and the major cities throughout the country. Disarmed militia, criminals, and those involved in the narcotics industry, contribute to general lawlessness in many parts of the country, whilst regional warlords, senior tribal figures and local leaders continue to resist central government authority in favour of localism. Although progress has been made in the removal of many uncooperative regional warlords and administrators, the implementation of government initiatives is almost entirely dependent on the will of local officials and people of influence outside of the government.

Karzai has shown an increasing willingness to remove or reassign problematic Provincial Governors and replace them with more competent and loyal individuals. Some figures however, particularly in the north, possess such a strong powerbase that he has been unable or unwilling to challenge their authority. At the local level, powerful individuals may or may not be affiliated with or sympathetic to the central government, but nonetheless play a significant role in local politics that may not always be clear. Moreover, many incompetent, disloyal and corrupt administrative and security officials below governor level remain in post, forming an obstruction to reform and effective regional governance. The key strategic challenge to the long term stability of government is therefore the development of sustainable and robust state institutions.

Without a functioning, transparent and accountable government bureaucracy, sustainable progress in Afghanistan will be slow. UK efforts to aid the training and mentoring of civil service staff, assist with the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, and work to give provincial development advice, all contribute towards the establishment of effective state institutions.

It is recognised that empowerment and development at the local community level are also essential ingredients to building up state institutions and human security. The National Solidarity Programme (NSP) developed in 2003 by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development sought to re-establish relations between local communities, government agencies, NGOs and donors to improve local community access to services and resources. The NSP has overseen the election and establishment of nearly 30,000 Community Development Councils (CDCs) throughout Afghanistan.

The CDC's representatives are able to prioritise, plan, manage, finance and monitor their own development and reconstruction projects. Local communities have been empowered by their access to resources and ability to determine the development of their physical and social infrastructure in their local area. This programme, alongside other projects that support Afghan governance institutions aims to build up the legitimacy of the government and improve the quality and efficiency of governance in Afghanistan.

Transition (Inteqal)

Inteqal - the Dari and Pashtu word for transition - is the process by which security responsibility for Afghanistan is gradually transferred from NATO/ISAF to Afghan leadership. Within the bounds of Afghan sovereignty, the objectives of the Inteqal (Transition) Framework are to strengthen Afghan ownership and leadership across all functions of government and throughout the territory of Afghanistan. Transition is a political process that is led by the Afghans and since late 2010 has been chaired by Dr Ghani, and is supported by the international community and ISAF.

Transition is a process and not event: the aim is that all transition be irreversible and sustainable, therefore the transition of full security responsibility to the Afghans is underpinned by adequate Afghan provincial capacity and enabling of ISAF and international community resources to support governance and development. Once the conditions for the initiation of the process have been met, ISAF gradually reduce support relative to the increase in the capabilities of the Afghan security forces and as threat levels remain constant or diminish. Transition will be completed by 31 Dec 2014 when the ISAF mission ends and the NATO follow on mission commences. The decade of 'Transformation' begins at the

end of the NATO mission and continues until 2024.

The Joint Afghan-NATO Inteqal Board (JANIB) was designed to play a central role in managing transition, and its periodic meetings are key milestones in the progression of transition. The JANIB is responsible for selecting candidate provinces and districts to commence the transition process; creating implementation plans with specific milestones for all aspects of transition in the selected districts and provinces; and providing oversight of transition progress.

On 22 March 2011, based on the joint decision-making process, President Karzai announced the first set of Afghan provinces, districts and cities to start transition. These first areas accounted for between 20-25% of the Afghan population. On 27 November 2011, based on the joint decision-making process, President Karzai announced the second set of Afghan provinces, districts and cities to start transition. With this new step, Afghan security lead expanded to cover more than 50% of the Afghan population. On 13 May 2012, President Karzai announced the third set of areas to enter the transition process, covering 75% of the

Afghan population. Following the announcement of tranche three, most of Helmand province is considered in the process of transition.

The transition process, which can take up to 18 months in each area to complete, sees the Afghan forces gradually taking on more and more combat responsibility from ISAF. As the Afghan National Security Forces move to the fore, the ISAF mission evolves gradually from leading combat operations to providing training, advice and assistance. Once transition in a given area is complete, the Afghan forces will have taken full security responsibility there, with ISAF's role having evolved to a support mission. NATO has pledged its continued commitment to Afghanistan beyond 2014. This will include training, advising, assisting and contributing funds to sustain the ANSF.

Successful transition requires that Afghan National Security Forces, under effective Afghan civilian control, are fully capable of tackling security challenges on a sustainable and irreversible basis. Until such time, NATO, together with its ISAF partners and as part of the broader international community's effort, will continue to provide support to the Afghan forces beyond transition completion.

Ethnicity & Religion

ETHNICITY

Ethnic Breakdown

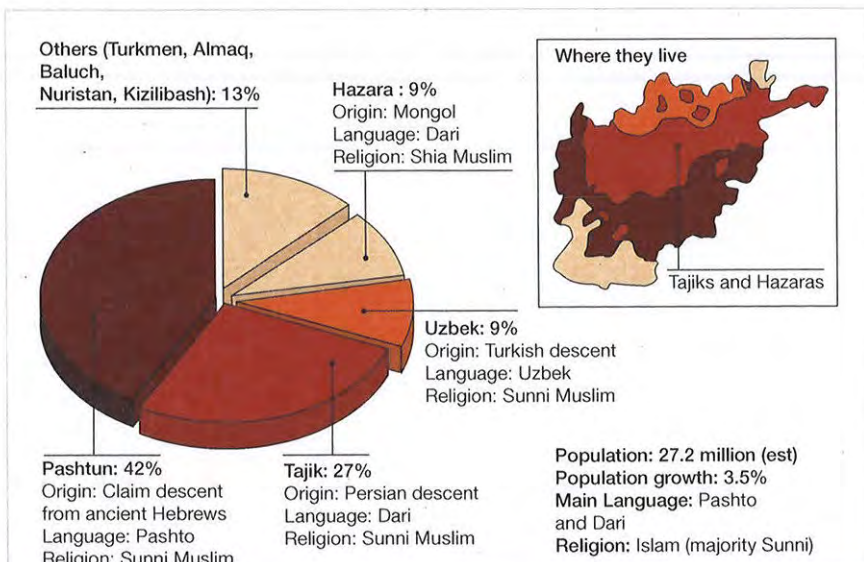
Afghanistan has a population estimated at 30.4 million (CIA World Factbook - August 2012) with over 2 million refugees in Pakistan and 700,000 in Iran (UNHCR). It is estimated that 42.3% of the population is under the age of 14. Afghanistan's population density is 38 people per square kilometre compared to 248 per square kilometre in the UK. The high mountains of the central part of the country and the deserts in the south and southwest are either sparsely populated or completely uninhabited. An estimated 80% of all people live in rural areas. There are also more than 2 million refugees outside of Afghanistan predominantly located in Pakistan and Iran. Since the fall of the Taliban, the International Community has repatriated 2 million refugees to Afghanistan. The repercussions of this displacement include fractured social structures,

population concentration in agricultural areas, and the young forming a constituency for the INS.

Approximately 42% of Afghans are Pashtun, about half of whom are of the Durrani tribal group and the other half of the Ghilzai group. Tajiks are the second largest ethnic group with 25% of the population followed by Hazaras at 10% and Uzbeks at 8%. Other smaller groups including Turkmen, Qizilbash, Kazakhs, Aimaq, Wakhi's, Nuristani's, Baluchis, Kyrgyz, Sikh's, Hindus, and Jews, constitute the remaining 13% of the total population.

Ethnic Groups

Afghanistan is not only ethnically diverse, but also ethnically fragmented. As a country, Afghanistan lacks a real coherent identity at the state level that supersedes ethnicity and unites the different ethnic groups. An Afghan's



individual identity is derived from belonging to an ethnic group. Afghans do not generally think of themselves as citizens of Afghanistan, but rather as Pashtuns, Uzbeks, Tajiks, or Hazaras.

Pashtuns The Pashtuns are the largest single ethnic group and have been the country's dominant political group for many years. Afghanistan's Pashtuns migrated from what is now Pakistan, starting in the 13th century AD. Pashtuns have generally proven themselves adept at warfare and conquest by defeating many invaders over the centuries. They perceive themselves as resistant to colonisation. Afghanistan's Pashtuns are divided primarily into two groups: the Ghilzai and the Durrani, with



Ethnic Pashtun



Baluch



Tajik

the Ghilzai residing predominantly in the eastern mountainous region of the country, and the Durrani generally present in the southern region centred on Helmand and Kandahar; President Karzai is a Durrani Pashtun.

The key underpinnings of Pashtun culture derive from a code of conduct known as Pashtunwali, some of the main elements of which are exchange (Badal), hospitality (Melmastia), and honour (Namus). As the term suggests, these concepts are closely identified with Pashtuns. However, elements of the code tend to be reflected similarly throughout many of the country's other ethnic groups, particularly that of honour and the duty to extend hospitality. It is no exaggeration that even the most destitute refugee may well feel compelled to offer a complete stranger his last piece of bread or tea and feels proud to do so.

The Pashtuns have negative views of and relations with the Hazaras, whom they believe are second-class Afghans, and of the Punjabis, the dominant ethnic group in Pakistan.

Baluch The traditional homeland of the Baluch is in the south western desert region of Afghanistan, and the group is particularly numerous in Helmand and the north western area of Farah provinces. An estimated 70% of Baluchis reside in Pakistan. The majority of Baluch speak a language of the same name, which is related to Farsi. A significant proportion of the Baluch population speak a language called Brahui. Some commentators regard these speakers as a separate ethnic group. Many Baluch are also fluent in Dari and Pashtu.

Tajiks The Tajiks are at least 25% of Afghanistan's population. They refer to themselves as the earliest inhabitants of the land, dating back to the 4th Century B.C. They are most numerous in the relatively densely

populated northern part of the country as well as in the cities of Kabul and Herat, where they are sometimes referred to as Farsi wan (meaning simply 'Persian speakers'). Like most Afghans, the Tajiks derive the bulk of their livelihood from agricultural pursuits. Tajiks speak Afghan Persian, known as Dari, and are mainly Sunni Muslims of the same Hanafi 'school' as the Pashtuns.

Hazaras The Hazaras are the third largest Afghan ethnic group. Their name means 'Thousand' in Persian and refers to their descent from the soldiers of Genghis Khan who were organised in groups of one thousand when they invaded Afghanistan in the 13th century. Modern-day Hazaras still resemble their Mongol forbears, though intermixing with the indigenous Afghan population has occurred since. Their homeland is in central Afghanistan, and is often referred to as the Hazarajat. The combination of their facial features, their minority Shi'ite religion, and often the generally poor quality of the land they occupy has fixed Hazaras at the bottom of the Afghan social scale. The Hazaras speak a form of Persian known as Hazaragi, which is differentiated from Dari by its words of Mongol origin.



Hazara Family



Uzbek Elder

Uzbeks Uzbeks comprise only about 8% of the population, but they have played an important role in Afghanistan's history. The Uzbeks are found throughout northern Afghanistan, particularly in Faryab and Jowzjan provinces. Afghan Uzbeks and Afghan Tajiks have often joined forces together against the Pashtuns, but this is more out of convenience than out of any historical friendship between the two groups.

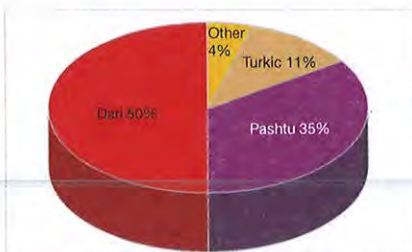
This ethnic group speaks a dialect of Uzbek, and its members are generally practising Sunni Muslims.

Languages

Although there are thirty-two languages spoken in Afghanistan, the two official languages are Pashtu (35%), which is an Indo-Iranian language, and Dari (50%) (Afghan Persian). Within Afghanistan the majority of the country's educated population is in fact bilingual. Dari should also be considered a more urban language through which business is most frequently conducted.

There are two major dialects of Pashtu: Western Pashtu spoken in Central Afghanistan and in the capital, Kabul, and Eastern Pashtu spoken in North-eastern Pakistan. Most speakers of Pashtu speak these two dialects. Other dialects are also distinguished, including Southern Pashtu, spoken in Baluchistan (western Pakistan and eastern Iran) and in Khandahar.

Both Dari and Pashtu are written using adaptations of the Arabic script. In written



Languages in Afghanistan by percentage of population

form, Dari and Pashtu are similar, but they are not similar in speech. Schools use whichever language is most common in the area, and often teach others as core subjects. The variation in spelling of the language's name (Pashtu, Pukhto, etc.) stems from the different pronunciations. In general, however, one speaker of Pashtu readily understands another. Given the complicated and diverse makeup of Afghanistan's languages, careful consideration must be given to identify a suitable interpreter for the area that operations will be undertaken.

Religion

Religion in Afghanistan has a more dominant role than religion in the UK. Religious practices, religious figures and institutions are much more visible in Afghan society. Religion plays an important and influential part in Afghan politics and legal systems. Soldiers on operations need to understand religion in Afghanistan in order to improve their knowledge of the local Human Terrain. In Afghanistan this knowledge is vitally important for soldiers operating amongst the population, alongside the ANSF and when engaging with insurgents.

In this section of the Op HERRICK Guide the reader will find an introduction to what Islam is, the main features of the religion, how it is practised in Afghanistan and a basic guide to relevant terms. This introduction to Islam will allow the reader to engage Muslims in

Afghanistan with an appreciation of their way of life and a greater understanding of the Human Terrain. Overall, a basic knowledge of Islam will enhance operational effectiveness.

Islam

Islam is the religion followed by over one billion Muslims across the world in all nationalities, languages and ethnic backgrounds. Islam for a true Muslim is about living a clean life which revolves around fairness and equity, encouraging honesty and truthfulness, refraining from arrogance and boastfulness, and incorporating humility and modesty into every aspect of one's life. Spirituality, moral development and continual appraisal of oneself are important virtues for Muslims.

Main Features

Muslims believe that God created everything and he has no partners or children. Jews, Christians and Muslims who speak Arabic call God 'Allah'. All Muslims refer to Him by this name. Muslims believe that they worship the same God as Jews and Christians.

Muhammad The Prophet Muhammad is also referred to as the Messenger of God. He lived in Arabia 1,400 years ago and is still the most prominent figure in the lives of Muslims who hold him in the highest regard. The Prophet delivered God's message and his life serves as an example to all Muslims. His practices and behaviour are imitated by Muslims and they profess to love him more than any other person. Disparaging remarks and images of the Prophet Muhammad are very offensive.

Prophets Muslims believe that God sent many prophets, or messengers, to guide mankind. Muslims recognise all of the prophets mentioned in the Bible; and Muslims believe in their miracles and accept the truth of their message. Muslims hold all of God's prophets in the highest regard

and would never speak ill of any of them. When Muslims say the name of a Prophet, it is usually followed by 'Peace Be Upon Him (PBUH)', as an act of respect. For example, Muhammad (PBUH) or Jesus (PBUH).

Jesus Muslims believe that the birth of Jesus was a miracle; that he performed miracles; and that he brought God's Truth to mankind. Muslims believe he will return to lead mankind to salvation. Muslims' view of Jesus differs from Christians on two issues: they do not believe he was the son of God, nor that he was crucified. Jesus is called Eesa in Arabic and this is how Muslims refer to him.

Books Muslims believe that God revealed the Torah (Jewish holy book), the Bible (Christian holy book) and the Qur'an (Muslim holy book) to guide mankind to the Truth. Muslims believe that these are sacred texts and treat all of them with the greatest respect. The Qur'an is written in Arabic and remains unchanged since it was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Many Muslims have memorised it entirely and this remains a key educational goal throughout Afghanistan.

Most Afghans are able to read the Arabic text of the Qur'an but are unable to understand it and rely on religious scholars to explain and interpret its meanings. The Qur'an is usually found wrapped in cloth and stored in a high place because Muslims believe that as it is the Word of God it must be treated with the utmost respect and dignity. It is considered an act of violation and contamination for a non-Muslim to touch it.

Mosques The mosque is a building or a designated area for communal prayer and is referred to as masjid in Afghanistan. Mosques are kept clean and tidy and used as schools for religious education. It is offensive to enter a mosque while wearing shoes or without invitation. Mosques may be recognised by the presence of a tall thin tower called a minaret or



The Shrine of Hazrat Ali in Mazar-e Sharif, also known as the Blue Mosque. The town grew up around the shrine of the prophet Mohammed's son-in-law, Ali, and is subsequently the holiest city in Afghanistan.

a niche protruding from the South West of the building. A call to prayer is recited loudly 5 times a day from the mosque. Local guidance should be sought to determine locations of mosques

Purpose of Life

Muslims believe that the purpose of life is to be a good person; to preserve dignity, property and liberty; to worship God and obey His commandments; and to uphold justice.

The Five Pillars of Islam

There are Five Pillars which guide the worship of all Muslims:

1. Declaration of Faith To be a Muslim one is required to believe and state that there is 'no god but God and Muhammad is the Messenger of God'. This declaration of faith is called Shahadah. Extended prayers during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan are performed after the fifth prayer and may last up to two hours. A large communal prayer is held in the morning to celebrate Eid, twice a year.

2. Prayer Prayer is referred to as namaaz in Afghanistan. Muslims are required to pray five times a day. This can be done anywhere, except in unclean places or cemeteries, as individuals or

groups. Communal prayer is normally performed in Mosques and lead by an Imam. The first prayer is in between dawn and sunrise, the second in the early afternoon, the third in the late afternoon, the fourth precisely at sunset and the fifth after dark. Each prayer can last up to 10 minutes. The time that the sun rises and sets throughout the year and local advice should be sought regarding actual timings. Islam recognises the characteristics of war and allows flexibility in prayers for soldiers if the tactical situation requires it. Commanders should consult with ANSF partners and consider prayer timings when planning operations in order to meet the needs of their faith. Additional notable prayers include the weekly Friday early afternoon prayer, called Jummah, to which all men must attend. In practice, however, not all men can attend and in urban areas it is known for them to be broadcast by loudspeaker. Funeral prayers are attended by



Muslim prayer beads known as 'Tasbeeh'

those who can and, with the key funerary rites, must take place within 24 hours.

3. Religious Tax Religious Tax is called Zakaat and is collected by religious leaders and government officials. This tax is collected annually from savings that have not been spent for over a year and is set at 2.5%. Crops and livestock are also liable to be taxed. The proceeds are distributed by mosques and religious organisations for social welfare. The essence of Zakaat lies in the sharing of one's wealth with the most destitute of society.

4. Fasting Muslims all over the world observe fasting during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, pronounced as Ramzaan in Afghanistan. This involves no eating, drinking, smoking or sexual activity during daylight hours. In this month Muslims try to improve their spiritual relationship with God and to gain an appreciation of those who are hungry and thirsty due to famine, drought, war, natural disaster, poverty or through displacement. It is normal to entertain guests at sunset when the daily fast is broken with a communal meal, called iftar. Fasting should not prevent the ANSF from conducting operations; however, commanders must take the effects of Ramadan into account when in consultation with their Afghan partners.

5. Pilgrimage Those who can afford to do so and are able to travel must perform the Pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, at least once in their lifetime. The pilgrimage is called the Hajj and all who have been there are given the title 'Haji'. All Muslims face towards the Holy Mosque in Mecca, while praying. Over 2 million pilgrims attend the annual Hajj every year.

The Islamic Calendar

The Islamic calendar is based on the lunar cycle. It is different to the western calendar which is based on the solar cycle. This means that festivals move from year to year. Each month in the



Pilgrims gather at the Holy Mosque in Mecca for the Hajj

Islamic calendar begins and ends with the birth of the new moon and there are 12 months in the Islamic calendar.

The Afghan calendar is based on an ancient Persian calendar, which is younger than both the Islamic and western calendars. 2011 AD equates to 1431 of the Islamic calendar, and 1390 of the Afghan calendar.

Fridays are holy days in Islam and mark the end of the week.

TERMS

The following terms are commonly used by Muslims:

- Al Hamdulillah: Used when Muslims praise God in various situations, meaning 'Thank God'.
- As Salaam U Alaikum: Islamic greeting, meaning 'Peace be upon you'.
- Caliph / Amir-al-Mu'mineen: Leader of a Muslim community.
- Eid: This is a day of celebration. There are two Eids which are nine weeks apart. The first signifies the end of Ramadan and the second is at the time of the Hajj.
- Fatwa: Usually religious regulations or edicts made by religious scholars.
- Halal: Permissible according to Islamic law. With regard to food, it would be similar to the Jewish notion "kosher."
- Hajj: Annual pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina - the fifth pillar of Islam.

- Haraam: Forbidden in Islamic law.
- Imam: A Muslim religious leader, the leader of prayer in a mosque.
- Insha'Allah: Used when Muslims talk about the future, meaning "God willing".
- Islam: Submission or surrender to the will of God.
- Jihad: Literally, an "exertion" or "struggle" or "striving" - but usually refers to war in defence of religion, land, liberty and honour.
- Madrassa: A school, often a religious school.
- Maulvi: A religious leader. Same as Mawlawi or Mullah.
- Mullah: A religious leader. Same as Maulvi.
- Sallallahu Alaihi Wassallam: Used after speaking the name of Prophet Muhammad as a sign of respect, meaning 'Peace be upon him'.
- Sharia: The path, or the way in Islam, encompassing the way a Muslim should live and behave. Also can be used to mean the Law of Islam, hence Sharia Law.
- Shia (or Shi'ite): Follower or member of the Shia who are one of the two main sects in Islam.
- Shukran: Arabic for 'Thank you'.
- Sunni: Follower of the Sunna (the way of the Prophet), the largest sect (83% of Muslims worldwide) within Islam.
- Surah (or Surat): A chapter of the Qur'an.

For further reading refer to:
 Defence Intelligence Report 'Religion in Afghanistan' Dec 2010 available from
 Defence Intelligence Human Factors
 (Tel: [REDACTED])

**Afghan National and Religious
Holidays 2013 and 2014**

15-17 Oct 2013
Eid-al-Adha

13 Nov 2013
Ashura

13 Jan 2014
Prophet's Day

15 Feb 2014
Liberation Day

21 Mar 2014
Afghan New year (Nauruz)

28 Apr 2014
Victory Day

During the lunar month of Ramadan that precedes Eid al-Fitr, Muslims fast during the day and feast at night and normal business patterns may be interrupted. Some disruption may continue into Eid al-Fitr itself. Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha may last up to several days, depending on the region. At such times there are likely to be public gatherings, family and communal meals, presents, and celebratory gunfire.

Security Forces



The Afghan National Army (ANA)

Afghanistan has had numerous professional armies since 1880, however the creation of the modern ANA commenced on 14 May 2002. It was assembled, under the Ministry of Defence (MOD), from the remnants of regional and warlord militias, with many of the officers professionally trained during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

The Army effectively began operations in its current guise in September 2004 with the appointment of Corps commanders and their staff. The aim is for the ANA to be able to carry out joint operations with members of the coalition forces and to be increasingly capable of conducting independent operations.

Organisation

In April 2010, the ANA was arranged into 6 regional Corps: 201, 203, 205, 207, 209 and 215 whose Area of Operations (AO) is co-terminous with ISAF Regional Commands (RC). A seventh formation - 111th Capital Division - continues to be raised with the intention of taking over security operations in Kabul province, allowing 201 Corps to concentrate on counterinsurgency efforts in eastern Afghanistan.

Each Corps consists of either three or four Brigades which are made up of six Kandaks (Kdk), which are the equivalent of a Battalion: four Infantry, one Combat Support (CS) and one Combat Service Support (CSS) Kdk. In addition to this, each Corps has a Commando Kdk assigned to it, however the Commando Kdks remain

under the command of the ANA Special Operations Command (ANASOC).

Corps HQ Locations

Corps HQs have been established at the following locations:

201 Selab Corps - Kabul Regional Command (Centre)

The 201 Corps is charged with operations in eastern Afghanistan, including: KABUL, LOGAR, KAPISA, KONAR and LAGHMAN. Its battlespace includes KABUL as well as vital routes running north and south and valleys leading from the Pakistani border into AFGHANISTAN.

203 Tandar Corps - Gardez RC (East)

The 203 Corps man the GARDEZ regional command garrison.

205 Atal Corps - Kandahar RC (South)

The 205 Corps has the responsibility for the provinces of KANDAHAR, ZABUL and URUZGAN.

207 Zafar Corps - Herat RC (West)

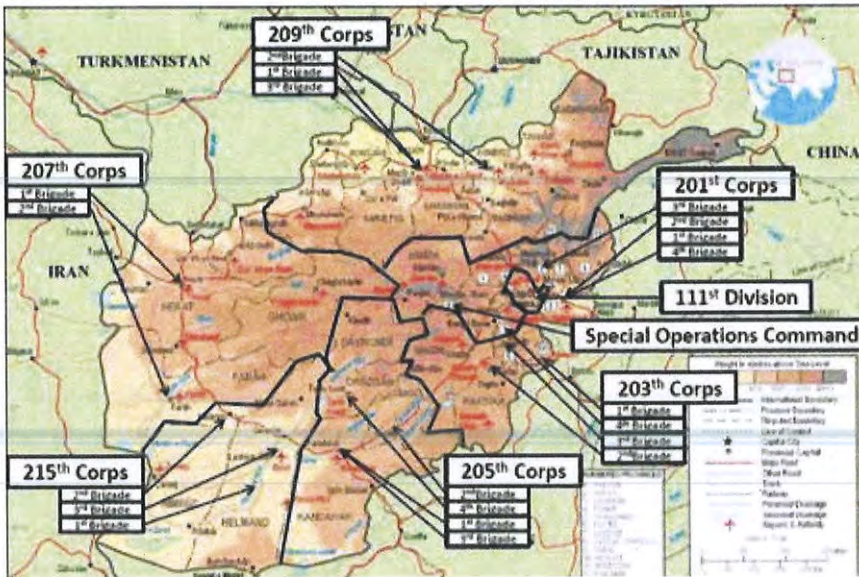
The 207 Corps is based in HERAT with its 1 Bde at HERAT, 2 Bde at FARAH and elements at SHINDAND.

209 Saheen Corps - Mazar-e-Sharif RC (North)

The 209 Corps is based at MAZAR-E SHARIF with a second Bde in KUNDUZ.

215 Maiwand Corps - Shorabak Helmand RC (South West)

The 215 Corps was stood up on 1 April 2010 and is based in Camp Shorabak (SBK). The Corps was raised when a need was identified for additional ANA forces to better safeguard HELMAND and NIMRUZ. The Corps consists of 3 Brigades: 1 Brigade is in GARMSIR; 2 Brigade



ANA Deployments by Area

based in DELARAM; and 3 Brigade is partnered with Task Force HELMAND (TFH) with its headquarters based in Camp Shorabak.

Training

Basic Training takes place in KABUL Military Training Centre (KMTC) and 6 Regional Military Training Centres (RMTC). The training programme has undergone numerous changes since it was first introduced and now consists of 9 weeks of initial Basic Warrior Training (BWT) focusing on basic soldier and infantry skills.

A RMTC, was opened at Camp Shorabak, adjacent to Camp Bastion, in April 2011 with the aim of training ANA soldiers deploying as part of 215 Corps. Following basic training, Warriors deploying to 3/215 Brigade would attend a further 5 week long course at Shorabak Training Centre (STC), which is based upon an RSOI style theatre specific programme.

NCO courses are run at KMTC and RMTC level, with NCO candidates selected on the basis of leadership skills demonstrated when performing with their Kdks during field operations or whilst undergoing basic training.

Equipment

The Afghan National Army Air Force (ANAAF) has a variety of different airframes including gunship, attack and transport helicopters, light aircraft and C-27 transport aircraft. The ANAAF, as at June 2013, have almost 7000 personnel and intend to have over 8000 by 2016.

The ANA continue to rely on foreign airlift and on foreign close air support, although this is lessening with the reduction of mentoring assets. The MOD plans to decrease the number of soviet era aircraft and increase some of the more modern equivalents.



Afghan National Police (ANP)

From a standing start in 2002, as of May 2013, the ANP have grown to a manning figure of approximately 150,000 personnel. The ANP consists of 4 main policing branches all controlled by the Ministry of Interior (MoI). These forces include the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP), which is responsible for general police duties. The Afghan Border Police (ABP), who guard (supposedly) the borders and airports of Afghanistan. The Afghan National Civil Order Police, who are used in times of civil unrest and in more high threat areas and the Afghan Anti-Crime Police (AACP), which consists of a number of specialised and technical branches, including the Directorate of Police Intelligence (DPI), Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Anti Terror Police. For the ANP to build on their progress, they must take ownership of training, and produce their own high calibre police

instructors. Another area of improvement is the tribal make-up of the police. For example, the Noorzai have been strongly represented in the Helmand AUP and this has caused tensions with local nationals who are members of other tribes. It is hoped a more varied tribal mix of officers will ease tensions across the tribal spectrum. There should be more emphasis on traditional policing duties rather than more military activities, to gain more LN consent. Police units also need to be unit driven and not personality dominated, as this has led to inefficiency and corruption. Most importantly, the ANP need to be seen as fair and professional by local nationals in order to gain their respect and encourage them to conform to the rule of law. Overall, the ANP have made steady progress since their inception but will only be truly successful once endemic corruption has been eliminated.

History

During the Soviet intervention, the Afghan police were organised based on the Soviet model with a 2-track system of career officers and short-term conscripts who served for 2 years as patrolmen as an alternative to joining the military. Officers were educated at a police academy; conscripts were untrained and often mistreated by their superiors. During the subsequent civil war among Mujahideen commanders, and the period of Taliban rule, there was no national civilian police force in Afghanistan.

Officials in the Afghan Interim Authority recognised that international assistance would be required to create a new professional ANP, with educated officers and trained career non-commissioned officers and patrolmen. Germany was selected as the lead nation for training and equipping an ethnically balanced force, that was familiar with human rights standards, modern police methods and capable of operating in a

democratic society. Given Afghanistan's size and ethnic make up, constructing a reliable police force has proven to be a challenge.

Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP)

The AUP are a standard law enforcement organisation. Their remit includes manning CPs in their AOs, patrolling to areas within their constituency in order to engage with LNs, provide a visible uniformed presence, stop crimes from being committed and provide a baseline level of armed security for an area.

Afghan Local Police (ALP)

The Afghan Local Police is a temporary village focussed initiative to establish a security presence in an area where there is none, often remote areas. This security is achieved by recruiting and training local appropriately aged males from the area. As at May 2013, the ALP have 22,364 personnel.

Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan (CNPA)

The CNPA was created as the specialist counter narcotics law enforcement department of the MoI. CNPA units have been established, trained and supported in KABUL, JALALABAD, KANDAHAR, LASHKAR GAH, HERAT, MAZAR-E SHARIF, KUNDUZ and FAYZABAD. A specialist CNPA drug detection team has been established in KABUL. The CNPA is responsible for the National Interdiction Unit and the Mobile Detection Teams.

Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP)

The ANCOP is a nationally deployable resource under command and control of the MoI. It has a remit for providing civil order policing and tactical support for policing operations, as determined by the MoI. Their use in HELMAND

and the south is to bolster ANP forces in different areas. They receive 16 weeks training, double that of the AUP, and received double the pay of the AUP. They are formed units that possess the required communications and logistics equipment to allow them to insert to areas on a temporary basis, rather than the AUP who are wholly reliant on fixed infrastructure.

Afghan Border Police (ABP)

The Afghan Border Police are responsible for policing Border Crossing Points (BXP), Inland Customs Depots and airports. The ABP receive a higher quality training course than the AUP, and are better equipped and paid. The ABP are a national asset and can also operate up to 50km within Afghanistan if required to work in depth or coordinate with other ANP organisations or units.

Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF)

The APPF is a security service provider initially established in 2009. The intention was to replace the protection services provided by Private Security Companies (PSC) by a state controlled guard force that would be responsible for protecting people, infrastructure, facilities and construction projects.

Organisation

AUP units are often dissected into a Precinct or Tolay system, which usually follows geographical boundaries, rather than manning figures. This allows the District Chief of Police (DCoP) to control his police via the Precinct or Tolay commanders. Organisation can vary from District to District and Province to Province. It is usually up to the commanders to show discretion and organise their units how they see fit. More specialist units are often controlled by the MoI in KABUL, regardless of where in the country they operate.



Training Equipment

In 2003, the US State Dept established a police-training centre in KABUL to provide 'in-service' training for Afghan police currently serving in the capital. The KABUL site served as a prototype for 7 regional training centres that were constructed around the country.

The training of all Police has been increasing, in both quality and volume. Whilst not commanded or controlled by ISAF, interaction occurs on a daily basis through the Operational Coordination Centres (OCC). As part of a major pay and rank reform programme, ISAF is helping the ANP leadership to build a merit-based leadership and discipline structure to assure that the Police become a widely respected public service.

Equipment

The primary vehicle of the ANP is the 4-wheel drive Ford Ranger. There are also a variety of other 4 x 4 vehicles. Many areas are now receiving limited quantities of armoured Humvees. Standard rifles used by the ANP include: AK-47, AKM, AMD 65 (which can be modified with an Underslung Grenade Launcher (UGL)). Support weapons include; RPKs, PKMs and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs).

Afghanistan Enemy Forces

Introduction

The threat to ISAF's mission comes from a variety of different sources in many different forms. The situation is volatile, unpredictable and above all complex. The Taliban are not the only threat with national and international terrorist organisations, warlords, drug traffickers (narcos) and local criminal elements all contributing to regional instability.

The insurgency in Afghanistan has at least six major insurgent groups - the Taliban, the Haqqani network, Hezb-Islami Gulbuddin (HiG), Tehreek-e-Nifaaaz-e-Shariat-Mohammadi (TNSM), and the Pakistani Taliban. Countless smaller tribal and local insurgent groups also exist with a variety of competing goals.

Taliban

The Taliban are an Islamic fundamentalist movement in Afghanistan that controlled most of the country from September 1996 to November 2001. Members largely subscribe to a fundamental interpretation of Sunni Islamic law, derived from the Deobandi School of thought. The name Taliban translates as 'students' or 'seekers of knowledge'. The Taliban promotes itself as a force for peace and unity gaining support from many war weary Afghan people, particularly Pashtuns. There are a number of foreign fighters in their ranks, who originate from the wider Middle East and have been trained externally.

The Taliban remains a persistent operational threat throughout its traditional strongholds in the south and south-east of the country; Kandahar is their vital ground. Coalition forces and bases have been a common target, though insurgent forces are increasingly striking at softer targets, posing a threat to Afghan government personnel and those perceived to be connected to international aid and reconstruction efforts. As the Kabul government asserts itself, the

type of targets available to the extremist forces multiply, including Afghan National Army, Police and international aid workers dispersed around the country. Outside Pashtun dominated areas, the Taliban have only a minor presence. Pakistani border areas and some major cities continue to be a safe haven and a source of new recruits.

Taliban presence in Balochistan is largely confined to Pashtun areas along the border; however, the city of Quetta is important both as a location for a Taliban Command Shura. Suburbs of Quetta, such as Satellite Town and Pashtunabad are notorious for their Taliban presence and many areas are considered de-facto no-go for the security forces. Refugee camps and madrassas are used as safe havens by the Taliban and places to train, recruit and receive medical treatment. Periodically Pakistan has increased its efforts against Taliban in the region in response to Western pressure.

Haqqani Network

The Haqqani network is an insurgent entity centred around the Zadran tribal leaders and the Haqqani family. The group is headed by Jalaluddi Haqqani, whose rose to prominence during the 1980s, receiving weapons and funds from the CIA and Saudi Arabia to fight Soviet forces occupying Afghanistan. Effective leadership of the group has passed from the ailing Jalaluddin, who is in his 70s, to his eldest son, Sirajuddin. The group shares the same ideology as the Taliban, but has different aims and objectives. Based in North Waziristan, Pakistan, its main areas of operations are GIROA targets in Kabul, and the provinces of Paktia, Paktika and Khowst in RC(E). Elements have also been known to operate in Zabul and some logistical routes will transit through RC(S). It is unlikely that any fighters from the Haqqani network will operate in Helmand.

Hezb-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG)

Hezb-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) was founded in 1977 by its leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a radical Islamic extremist who was part of the original Peshawar 7 Afghan Mujahedeen confederation that fought the Soviet occupation and was supported and funded by the US, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia during the Soviet War. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Hekmatyar temporarily served as the Prime Minister in 1993-94 with the Tajik led government of Burhanuddin Rabbani, but quickly fell out with the Tajiks. HIG is known for exacerbating the civil war and the bombardment of Kabul in 1994 that led to 25,000 deaths. HIG was routed out of Kabul by the Taliban in 1996 and many HIG commanders joined the Taliban. Currently, HIG is aligned with the Taliban against NATO forces.

Tehreek-e-Nifaaz-e-Shariat-Mohammadi (TNSM)

Tehreek-e-Nifaaz-e-Shariat-Mohammadi (TNSM) or Movement for the Promotion of Islamic Law was founded by its religious hardliner Sufi Mohammad Khan. Khan a native of Swat, Pakistan also spent the 1980s fighting Soviet occupation like so many of Pakistani Pashtun colleagues and developed close ties with the ISI. Upon closure of the Soviet conflict in Afghanistan, the TNSM moved back to Swat and began to advocate Shria Law in the Swat Valley. After 9/11 and Coalition action against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, Khan and TNSM took 10,000 men into Afghanistan to fight alongside the Taliban against pro-US forces in Afghanistan. As a result of this action, then President Musharraf ordered TNSM to be banned and Khan imprisoned. Khan's imprisonment led to Sufi's son-in-law, Fazlullah, to take control of TNSM in

2004. TNSM under Fazlullah tried to implement Sharia Law in the Swat Valley, but TNSM's rule in Swat led to a great deal of brutality and loss of freedom's for Swat's inhabitants. Realising the cruelty being inflicted upon its citizens, the Pakistan military took military action in early 2009 to drive out TNSM from Swat. Since being driven out of Swat in 2009, TNSM continues to conduct guerilla warfare against the Pakistani Army in Swat Valley and has developed strong alliances with the Taliban against the US.

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

The Pakistan Taliban or Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is the umbrella movement that commands most of the Taliban groups throughout Pakistan's tribal areas of North and South Waziristan, the hub of insurgent activity in Pakistan's tribal border regions. The Tehrik-e-Taliban was formerly led by Baitullah Mehsud, the supreme leader of Pakistan's Taliban. Mehsud, a militant in his 30s made attacks inside Pakistan his top priority from 2007-2009, including the famous Red Mosque incident of December 2007 in Islamabad as well as the alleged assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the former Pakistani prime minister. Mehsud was killed by U.S. drone attack in August 2009 and a power struggle ensued after Mehsud's death among the leadership of the TTP. The Tehrik-e-Taliban are notorious for having close ties with the Taliban and Al Qaeda leadership and have hosted many foreign fighters in their territory, including Uzbeks and others from Central Asia, and continue to run training camps to indoctrinate suicide bombers. The Pakistani Taliban are also well known extortionists by kidnapping hostages for ransom.

Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda was formed by Osama Bin Laden in 1988 as a haven for Islamic Mujahideen, and the name translates as 'The Base'. It was

developed from the Maktab al-Khadamat 'MaK', a Mujahideen resistance organisation fighting the Soviet forces in Afghanistan in the 1980's. Bin Laden fell out with Abdullah Azzam the co-founder of MaK over the future of the organisation and Azzam was assassinated.

Osama Bin Laden wanted to extend the conflict to non-military operations across the world.

Links with Afghanistan were formed early in the history of the organisation. In early 1997 the Taliban discovered what they claim was a Saudi plot to assassinate Osama Bin Laden. The Taliban, who by then controlled about two-thirds of Afghanistan, invited Osama Bin Laden to move to Khandahar for his own security. Osama Bin Laden agreed and fostered his relationship with Taliban's upper command by funding huge military purchases, building mosques and buying cars for the leadership. Osama Bin Laden set up a system to cream off the elite from the existing training camps to Al Qaeda. His aides would pick the most promising and send them to more specialized camps where, instead of basic infantry techniques, they had psychological and physical tests, combat trials and finally instruction in the skills of the modern terrorist. Within a year, Osama Bin Laden had

created a sophisticated terrorist group. Although responsible for the attacks on US embassies in Africa and the attack against the USS Cole, it was the attacks on the World Trade Centre in New York that brought Al Qaeda to international attention. The US/Northern Alliance invasion of Afghanistan was in response to the Taliban refusal to handover Osama Bin Laden to the Americans. With the international export of this brand of religious extremism, Al Qaeda has evolved into a loose connection of similar groups operating under one banner, rather than a close network of insurgents with a distinct command structure.

Al Qaeda is a group which provides motivation for extremist groups and facilitates various factions to conduct its work. It is likely that Al Qaeda is providing expertise to some of the insurgent groups in Afghanistan in regards to terrorist tactics and enabling links between the global jihad community and Afghan insurgents to aid in logistics and finance. US missile strikes in their safe havens in FATA in the last three years have put the organisation under significant pressure and it is unlikely that AQ operatives have a significant impact on ISAF troops inside Afghanistan.



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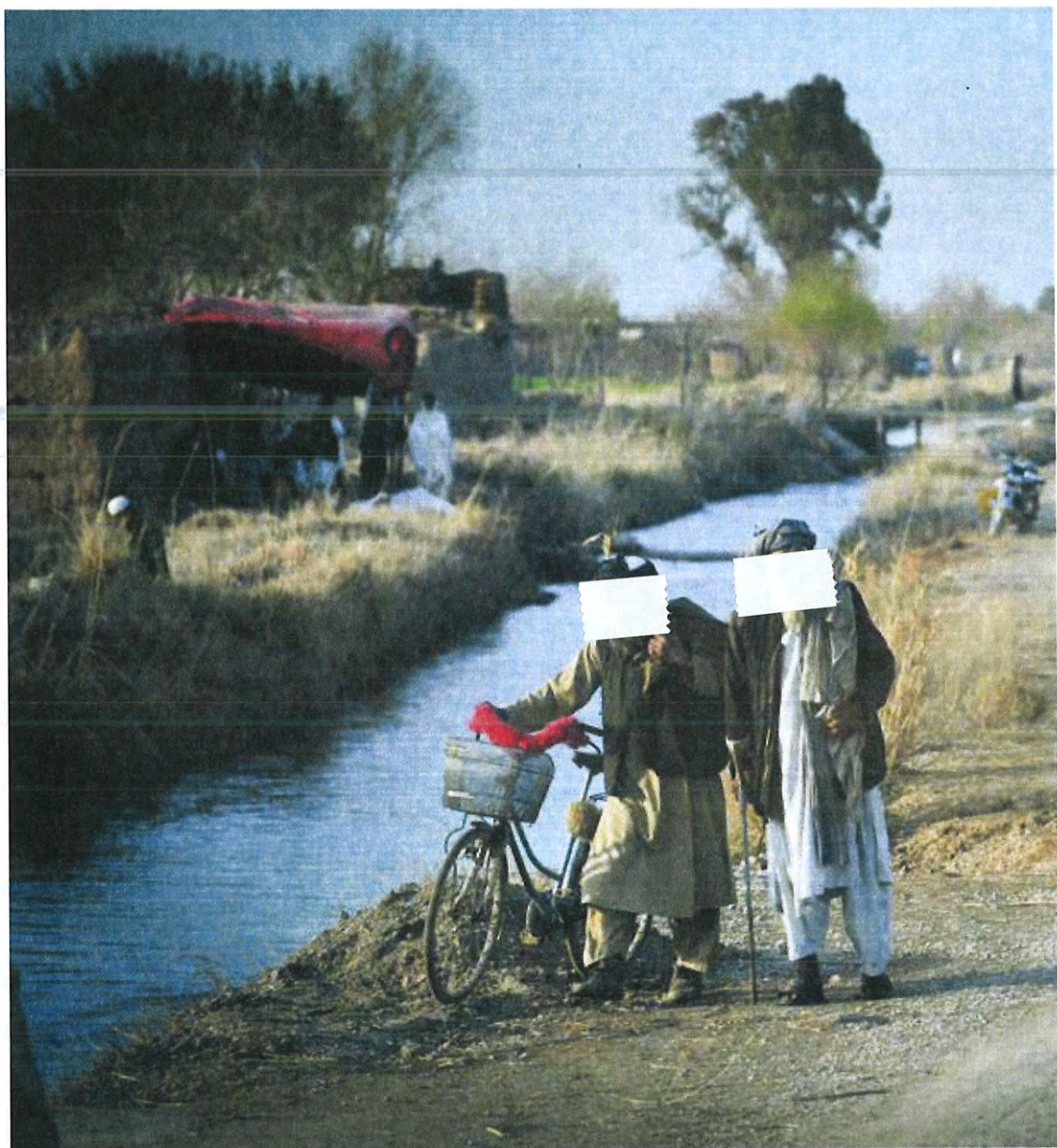
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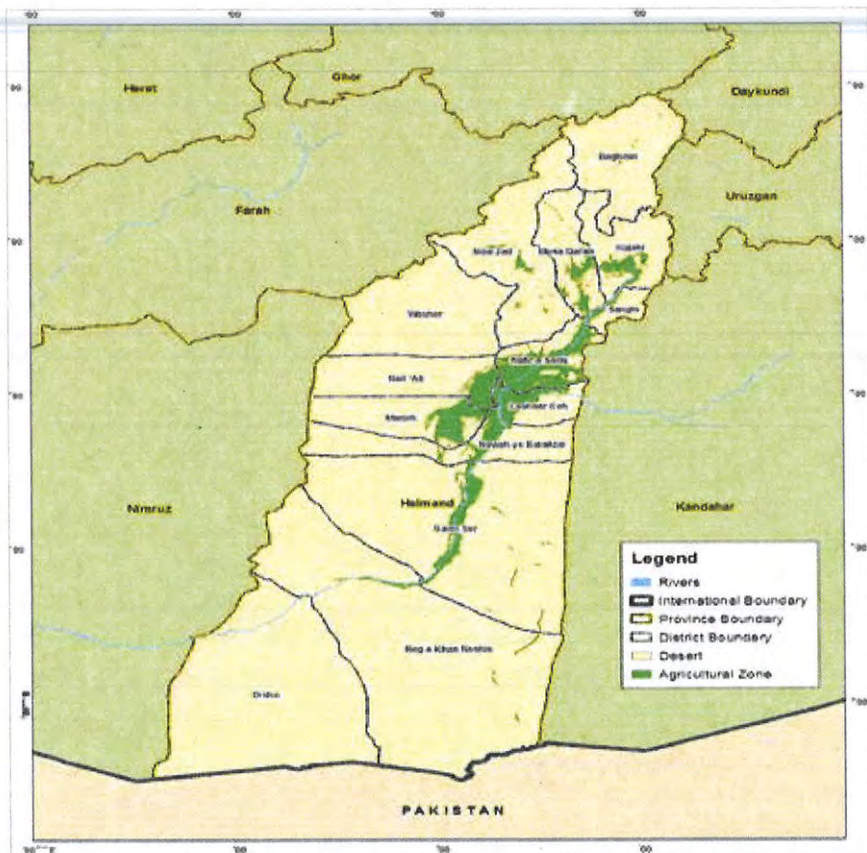
Helmand Introduction

The following chapters provide greater understanding of Helmand Province. Particular attention should be paid to chapter 7 as this deals specifically with Task Force Helmand (TFH) and the different AOs to which British troops are currently deployed.

Helmand Province is dominated by the Helmand river valley which cuts through the Dasht-i Margo ("desert of death"). The province has long been a relatively prosperous and well-populated area, dominated by agriculture, though in political and economic terms it has

traditionally been overshadowed by neighbouring Kandahar. Helmand consists of three distinct regions; a Baluch/Pashtun high desert plateau in the south, an agricultural and Pashtun-dominated central river basin, and a mountainous Pashtun north. Helmand Province is the largest of Afghanistan's 34 provinces with an area of approximately 59 000 km² and a mainly rural population.

It is bordered by the provinces of Nimruz, Farah, Ghor, Daykundi, Uruzgan and Kandahar, and the international boundary with Pakistan to



the south. Bahram Chah in the south is a major border crossing point, and is virtually porous, as people can move freely between Helmand and Balochistan in Pakistan.

The population of Helmand is estimated to be between 860 000 and 1.5 million people, of which roughly half the population is under the age of 15 and most of the other half is of working age, aged between 15 and 60. The majority of the population, about 90%, live in rural areas with the remainder split between the urban centres of Lashkar Gah and Gereshk (5.5%) and seasonal Kuchi nomads (4.5%). Around 80% of the province's households have access to arable land, either as land owners, tenants or sharecroppers.

The provincial capital is Lashkar Gah, which is situated between the Helmand and Arghandab rivers on the site of ancient city of Bost. The town has an estimated population of 125 000. Gulab Mangal, a Pashtun from Paktika Province, has been Governor of Helmand Province since March 2008.

British Forces have been active in Helmand Province since January 2006 and the UK took over the management of the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in May 2006.

Geography & Climate

Topography

Helmand Province is located in southern Afghanistan and bordered to the west by the provinces of Nimruz and Farah, to the north by Ghowr province and to the east by the provinces of Daikondi, Uruzgan and Kandahar. Helmand shares a 160km long border to the south with the Pakistani province of Baluchistan. Its topography is dominated by irregular highlands which increase in height in the south and the north.

The mountainous north is heavily dissected by valleys and ravines. In the extreme north-east corner of the province the peaks reach about 3200m and the area experiences heavy snowfall in the winter. Going south, terrain gives way to open gently rolling foothill plains, grading slightly towards the Helmand River that runs through the province. The area is heavily dissected by numerous intermittent rivers and irrigation canals, with isolated hilly ridges and occasional isolated rocky hills. The terrain becomes flat semi-desert or desert. The Dasht-e Margo desert to the west is characterised by numerous deep intermittent and dry rivers; dry lake beds, which can remain dry for several years; and steep benches, which are the remains of ancient lake and river terraces.

The Registan desert to the east and south of the Helmand River is an arid sandy plateau with large crescent-shaped dunes up to 40m high. Travel across the dunes and loose mobile sand is difficult. High quality marble is mined in the Dishu district of the Registan.

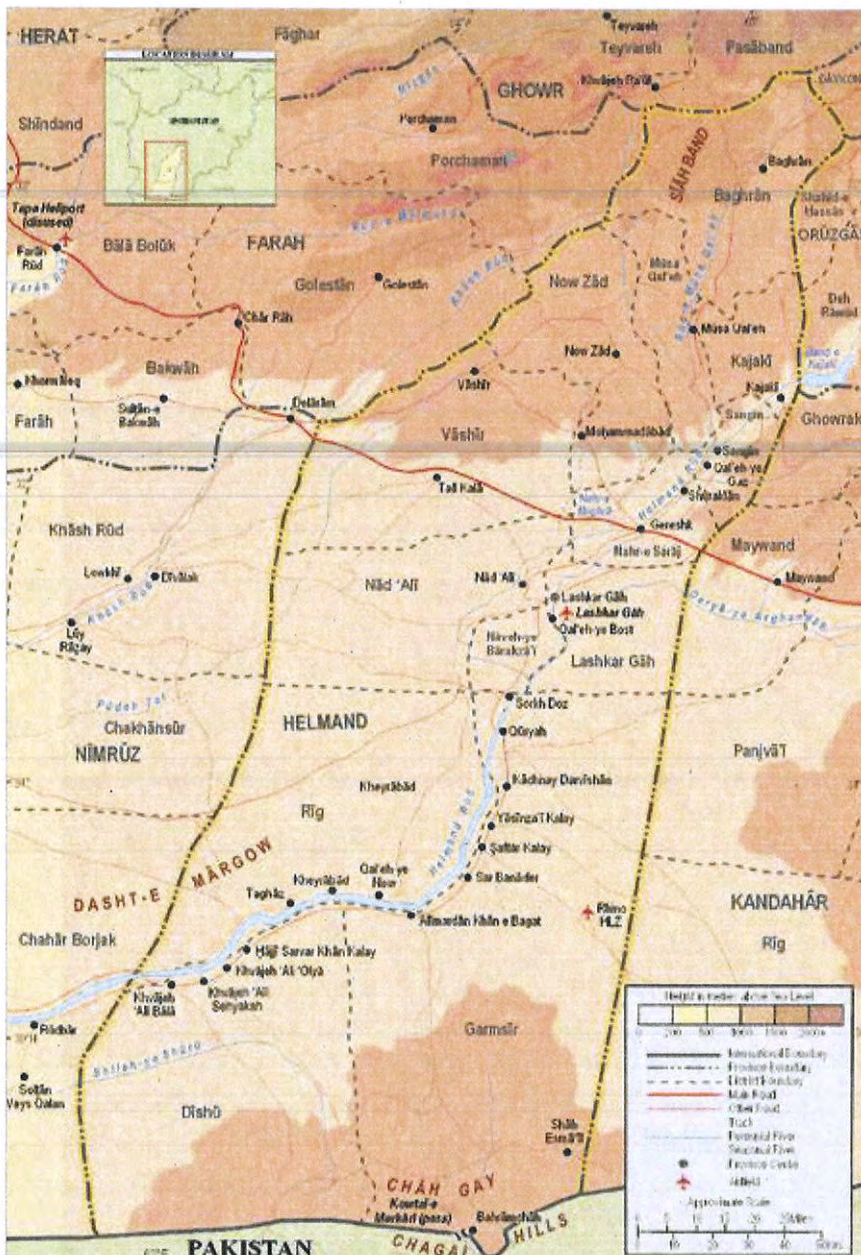
In the north of the province, mountain areas are dominated by high prairie land vegetation consisting of drought-resistant grasses with occasional bushes, such as locoweed, and areas of sparse woodland of wild pistachio and juniper trees. In the plains, vegetation is semi-arid and very sparse, and is made-up of clumps of tough grass, low shrubs and bushes, such as saltwort and camel's thorn. Tamarisk and acacia grow

along the rivers and dry lake beds. West of Khan Neshan, along both banks of the Helmand, there is a large natural forest used as a grazing area for livestock by farmers and kuchi. From March to mid-May, the plains are covered by mixed grasses and flowers. Further south vegetation becomes very sparse.

Water

Helmand Province is relatively rich in water resources, with the Helmand River and the Arghandab River flowing through its territory. Both rivers are a source of domestic water supply, supplemented by wells and agricultural ditches in rural areas. All natural water supplies are heavily polluted by untreated waste-water and agricultural run off, which has resulted in very high instances of water-borne diseases.

The River Helmand flows north to south before turning west in north Garmsir. It is fed by mountain run-off from the Hazarajat Mountains in the north via tributaries that flow south-east. The river is generally shallow at only 0.5m to 2m deep and silting is common. The river is very winding with many islands that move with each flood. The river flow varies significantly over the year with peak flow occurring between March and June swelled by rain and melt water coming from the mountains; it is significantly wider, deeper and faster at this time, than at the rest of the year. Flooding leads to the formation of lakes along the river basin that dry out to leave a salt-clay crust that is impassable to heavy vehicles. Numerous irrigation ditches are dug into the banks to carry water to villages and fields aside the river. This creates the lush 'Green Zone' either side of the river which can extend for several kilometres into the desert. Most of the inhabitants live in the river valley and the desert quickly re-asserts itself away from the irrigation ditches.



Flow rates of rivers within the province will vary depending on the amount of seasonal rain and/or snowmelt draining off the higher elevations. The width of the Helmand River after the convergence of the Helmand and Arghandab rivers is, in places, in excess of 100m. The width of each river prior to merging is considerably less. There is no information on the average depth of the rivers. The beds of the rivers are assessed to be rocky.

Climate

Helmand experiences hot and dry summers, with generally cool or cold winters featuring outbreaks of rain and snow over the higher ground. Autumn and spring see very variable conditions and temperatures. There is an ever present risk of dust storms and extensive dust haze, reducing visibility sometimes to fog limits, from the very strong north to northwest winds.

Seasons

Spring - March to May. This is the season of marked changes, with an increasing number of fine days but also occasional periods of disturbed weather. Rainfall becomes less frequent, but outbreaks of snow still occur over the mountains, especially during March. Large variations in temperature can take place during March, and to a lesser extent in April, with the areas still liable to cooler spells followed by much warmer weather. During April and May, although generally fair and with temperatures showing seasonal increases, showers and thunderstorms, possibly with hail, can develop particularly over the mountains. Visibility is good except when a strong north to north-westerly wind is blowing in the west, when visibility is reduced as dust storms and dust haze extends east. This is the period of snowmelt and rivers can burst their banks and flood wide areas especially in April. Mountain snow has usually melted by the end of May.

Summer - June to September. Summer is very hot, dry and almost cloudless. Other than in the mountains of Helmand, where temperatures are a good deal lower, daytime temperatures usually exceed 38°C (100°F) and maximum temperatures of over 50°C have been recorded. Nights are usually warm and sometimes hot. The heat is alleviated to some extent by the very dry air.

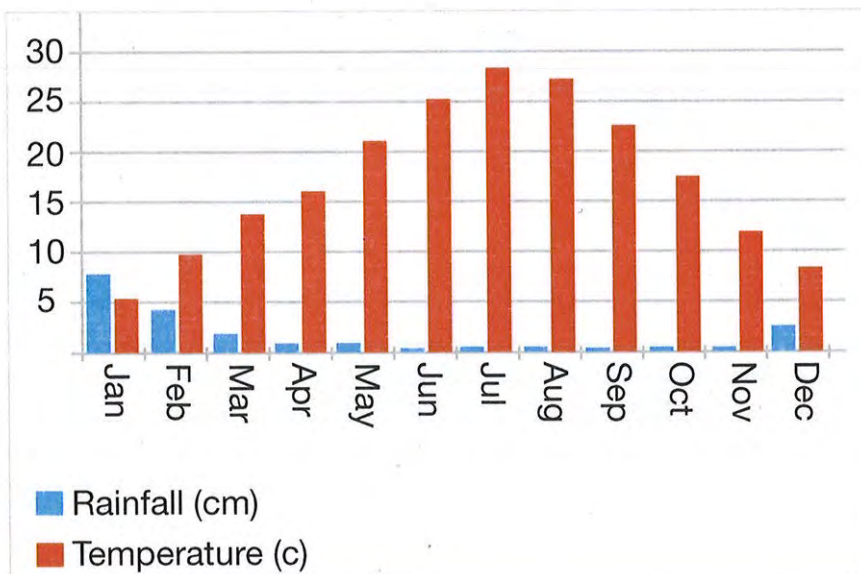
Autumn - October and November. Over much of the region the weather is mainly fine, with occasional rain or showers. Days are often warm but nights become increasingly cool. Fine spells, broken at intervals by the passage of cold fronts from the north, give outbreaks of showery rain which become more frequent during November. Over the mountains of Helmand there are occasional falls of snow, which become more frequent during November as the snow line begins to fall below 10,000ft. During disturbed weather, cloud covers the mountains, sometimes accompanied by strong to gale force winds. Temperatures continue to fall so that by the end of October the highest ground is becoming frost bound. Visibility is usually very good, except when dust storms develop from any strong north-to-north-westerly winds blowing.

Winter - December to February. Although there are some winters with comparatively little in the way of rain or snow, disturbed weather usually affects the area around four or five times a month. These spells are punctuated by periods of fine and dry conditions. The fine spells are likely to occur more often and last longer across the more low-lying areas than over the higher ground of the north. Outbreaks of rain are, on the whole, light, with occasional moderate showery bursts. Snow rarely falls over the plains, and disappears quickly when it does. Snowfall is more frequent in the mountains, and is often associated with cold fronts moving south from Russia. In general, daytime temperatures rise

to around 15°C, with a night time minimum of around 0°C, although in the occasional cold spells, minimum temperatures can fall to below -10°C or so. On the other hand, during fine spells daytime temperatures can also rise quite markedly, reaching 20-25° on occasions. Beyond those areas affected by any dust storms caused

by the strong to gale force winds, visibility is generally very good and winds usually light. During periods of disturbed weather, the mountains are often in cloud for long periods, occasionally accompanied by strong winds or gales and it usually remains very cold.

Average temperature and rainfall in Helmand



Helmand: History

Reference: History of Helmand.

Early History

Like much of Afghanistan, Helmand's history has been marked by the passage of conquering empires. Alexander the Great arrived in the area in 329 B.C with his Macedonian army and was followed over the next millennia by the Hindu Mauryans, Seleucids, Parthians, Scythians, Persians, and the Arab Muslims at the end of the 7th Century A.D. The city of Qalai Bost, near the present-day city of Lashkar Gah, was established as a winter capital by the Ghaznavid kingdom around 1000 A.D. (Ghazni was their summer capital). Qalai Bost had a short history of prosperity, being looted and burned by invading Ghawrids in 1151, and then a second time by Genghis Khan in 1220. The city and the extensive irrigation system along the Helmand River were destroyed by Timur in the 14th Century. By this time the neighbouring city of Kandahar had become a prominent and prosperous regional trade hub, and the political and economic centre of gravity shifted to Kandahar, where it has remained ever since.



Qalai Bost - A 10th Century winter capital near Lashkar Gah

Modern Helmand

Until Helmand was officially made a province in 1940, its history had been tied to that of neighbouring Kandahar. However, in 1910 with the reconstruction of the Saraj canal, Helmand's importance as an agricultural centre began to be recognised. The canal gave the district its present day name when it was created in the 1960s (Nahr means large canal or waterway). What was previously desert was then populated with non-Helmandi ethnic and tribal groups,

including refugees who had recently fled the Soviet revolutions in central Asia. For this reason, many of the villages along the canal are named after kinship groups - Uzbek, Turkmen, Popolzai. The government planned to continue developing the area during the 1920s, but was distracted by internal unrest caused by Amanullah's social reforms. Once the Musahiban dynasty had ascended to the throne in 1929, the government was able to start building another Helmandi canal in 1936 - the Nahr-e bughra.

In the absence of the British subsidy, the Afghans planned on using US financial and technical assistance to build the canals and balance Russia's influence to the north: the US would be taking over Britain's historical position. Unfortunately, the Afghan government was rebuffed by the Americans, causing them to ask for the German and Japanese governments for their help, which they gave. The Bughra project regularly had up to 7,000 workers and ran concurrently with other small scale developments in the area. Roads, bridges and telephone wires connecting the major settlements sprang up, marking the first externally-advised development of Helmand. However, with the onset of World War 2, the British insisted the foreign engineers were expelled and the government had to continue the project themselves. The culmination of World War 2 was marked by further applications for US assistance, but US government dithering resulted in the Afghan government privately contracting the US firm Morrison-Knudsen (MK) in 1945 to survey a Helmand-wide dam and canal system. The government's aims were ideologically focussed on modernisation and, in a rather rushed fashion, and without the appropriate soil surveys, construction began in 1946. Within a short period, problems had become evident - the dam at the start of the Bughra had caused the water

table to rise, creating a surface salt crust.

What were at first solvable technical issues became compounded by cross-cultural human factors. To save money, the Afghan government had agreed to do administrative and drainage work that they were not technically competent to do, but neglected to admit this to the Americans to avoid losing face. For their part, the Americans had difficulty in recruiting employees who understood the language and culture of Helmand, particularly how to 'deal' with Helmandis. The costs rose and the project looked set to discontinue, if for no other reason than that the Afghan government could no longer afford it. This combination of ignorant external influence and Afghan governmental honour (face) was not conducive to generating the best result for the Helmandis.

The Helmand Valley Project

Events were overtaken when US President Truman announced his Point IV programme in 1949, namely 'a bold new program ... for the improvement ... of [worldwide] undeveloped areas'. US aims were not only to counter Soviet influence, but to reshape the world as more

developed something the king, Zahir Shah immediately took advantage of. It was hoped that development would make the world less susceptible to hunger, poverty, war and of course, communism. To the US, these were technical and engineering problems rather than human ones, resulting in 'development myopia' to the exclusion of other problems (that is, using resources to achieve external influence at the expense of group identity). The lessons of the first Bughra project were ignored and in 1952, the government created the Helmand Valley Authority (HVA), modelled on the US Tennessee Valley Authority, to manage a project which was becoming enormous.

In northern Helmand, the 320 foot Kajaki dam was built to provide electricity and irrigation water and several concrete-lined canals were built or extended for the soon-to-be developed regions - the Bughra for Nad-e Ali and Marjah, the Shamalan for Bolan, Aynak and Nawa and the Darweshan for Garmsir. For hydrological reasons, the dam was built in Alizai territory, even though, as a group, they benefitted the least from the canal project. The most striking aspect of the project was the two new areas of Nad-e Ali and



The Kajaki hydroelectric Dam is located 55 miles north-west of Kandahar City in Helmand province. The dam has a dual function, to provide electricity and to irrigate some 650,000 acres of farm land.

Marjah that would be reclaimed from the desert and settled with non-Helmandi population. This was the largest increase in agricultural land that Afghanistan, let alone Helmand, had ever seen, yet the settlement of non-Helmandi groups threatened to upset the province's existing inter-group dynamics.

It was the most expensive project that the Afghan government had ever attempted - a fifth of government expenditure went to HVA in the 1950s and 60s and the President of HVA received cabinet status however, yet again, corners continued to be cut and the appropriate surveys were not commissioned.

The government of Afghanistan aimed to settle nomads, who it saw as backward and extra-legal. Through settlement, they could be subject to development, control and taxation, eventually making them government clients. The unstated aim was that it would disempower tribal groupings that had caused problems for previous governments. Thus, the majority of settlers were Ghilzai, for example the Kharotei in Nad-e Ali and the Daftani in Marjah (whereas the government of the time was almost exclusively Durrani-Barakzai).

This was external influence on a massive scale, but accompanied with sufficient incentive. The indigenous Helmandis on the outskirts of the project (mainly Barakzai) would receive water from the new irrigation system that would enable them to double crop; for those groups that immigrated, each family was given thirty jereeb, house material, an ox, implements, seed, food and loaned money. Thus, where Amanullah had failed, the Musahibans tried to use a land incentive to disempower kinship groups, even so some of the nomadic families had to be forced into settling against their will. Nad-e Ali was the first area to be settled in 1954. Most of the newcomers were settled in villages in cohesive, homogenous groups of fifty to hundred families

(for example, Shin Kalay). Other settlements were tribally or ethnically heterogeneous (for example, Zhargoun Kalay). Ironically, the kinship groups that were settled homogeneously (like the Kharotei in Nad-e Ali) found their political voice - the exact opposite of government intentions. Those settled heterogeneously often experienced problems between kinship groups.

Thus, especially in the post-2006 violence, one can see that those areas that are homogenous either side with the government or the Taliban (that is, they are a strong cohesive group able to make and enforce their own decisions), whereas heterogeneous communities are often the site of a struggle for influence between the two sides (neither side is able to appeal to the entire community). In this first wave of settlements, about two thousand five hundred families were settled, twelve hundred of them nomadic.

Many families stayed less than a few months. The land was as profoundly unsuitable for farming as were the people. The lack of survey meant that HVA had failed to discover an impermeable substratum or to anticipate the raising of the water table causing excessive water logging. The inadequate drainage meant that the land rapidly acquired salt crusts. Again, technical problems were compounded by human factors: detailed cropping advice was not followed, or probably, not understood. On the fringes of the area, indigenous families were also to receive increased water flow rates, allowing them to double crop for the first time, however, this was exceptionally poorly advertised. When the first off-season water arrived, the farmers thought it was a 'gift from Allah'. The government had failed to understand the farmers' primitiveness: to the Helmandis, a dam was a metre tall and made of mud. The scale of the Kajaki dam was inconceivable and many of the traditional, self-built irrigation systems were damaged and yields plummeted. In some areas, agricultural

production had still not returned to fifty percent of pre-1950s levels by 1969. These problems combined to cause an exodus of settlers. The promised incentive had been shown to be false and by 1960, only thirty percent of the original settlers were still in Nad-e Ali.

In a further attempt to influence group structures and identity, the families were also informed that they could choose their own leaders called wakils. None chose to do so however, preferring to remain under their existing tribal leaders, thus showing the resilience of group identity in the face of external influence. Services, such as schools, were included and a higher proportion of the settlers had farming experience. US advisors, however, worked in separate American environments and very few spoke Pushtu, whilst many of the government officials were extra-provincial and only spoke Dari. Their education levels caused them to look down on the Helmandis as backward. Overall, and as before, technical problems were compounded by cultural and linguistic issues.

The canal projects had made Helmand even more important. Recognising this, 'Gereshk' province was created by subdividing Farah province in 1960. Gereshk was chosen as the capital to reflect the historical dominance and closeness to the monarchy of the Barakzai. It was a way of enshrining the power of the Helmandi Barakzai, which had been diluted as settlers arrived in the province. However, in 1964, under US pressure, the capital was moved to Lashkar Gah where the headquarters of the HVA were, and Gereshk Province was renamed Helmand Province.

The co-location of the HVA headquarters and the provincial government signalled that the canal project had become the province; indeed in the 1970s, the president of HVA was also governor of the province. The HVA president had so much patronage power (due to control of the

water supply) that were the offices separate, the provincial governor would not have been able to achieve anything that the HVA president did not agree to. The merger was about matching up the external (central government) influence, embodied by the provincial governor, with the water resources (ability to incentivise). It is an excellent demonstration of how patronage works in Helmand.

The old Barakzai district of Pusht-e rud or Gereshk was split into Nahr-e Saraj (the only 1st order district in the province), Lashkar Gah (the capital with its own rules for resourcing) and Nawa (4th order). The district boundary for Lashkar Gah was such that the mixed tribes of the urban area were in the minority compared to the Barakzai: the Nad-e Ali boundary was drawn along the edge of Barakzai territory in Bolan and a slice of Barakzai Babaji (north of the Helmand river) was included. Thus, even while accommodating US influence, the Barakzai central government managed to maintain control over the new capital of Helmand.

The district reorganisation was about the central government trying to influence the distribution of resources in Helmand; that is, the district boundaries encompassed areas of land and gave control of them to particular groups, whilst at the same time giving the groups a set level of resources to administer them. The weakness of the division was that whilst it recognised the Barakzai interests and population size, as should be done in a democracy, this was not the case with the other kinship groups in Helmand. Thus the external influence, with its own balance of fear, honour and interest upset the 'Helmandi balance' of these motivators. The historical Barakzai–non-Barakzai, central Helmand–non-central Helmand dichotomy was perpetuated.

The canal project increased in scope during the 1960s. As well as redoing much of the

work in Nad-e Ali and Marjah, adding drains, sanitation and reforestation, large scale USAID development projects were initiated. The Lashkar Gah hospital was built, as well as a schooling system for central Helmand up to high-school level. By 1968, thirty percent of boys province-wide were receiving education and Helmandis were being trained to run the project themselves. Due to American cotton lobby restrictions on USAID, the British government was asked to build a cotton processing plant (a gin) in Lashkar Gah during the 1970s. Finally, with the adoption of double cropping and the utilisation of tractors and fertiliser, yields in central Helmand started to rise and by 1966, they were increasing year on year. Some of the original settlers who had left, returned, applying for resettlement. Whilst a marked improvement, all of these factors developed central Helmand, at the expense of the outlying districts, thus altering the 'Helmandi balance' further.

In 1973, Daud Khan, Zahir Shah's cousin, staged a coup and abolished the monarchy, making himself president. As a relative of the king, little changed in patronage terms in Helmand. He oversaw a further expansion of the canal project, even while US-Soviet détente saw the US disengaging as rapidly as possible. For Daud Khan, the canal project was modernisation, and between 1973-8 the government settled a further four thousand families, creating new settlements in Darwishan and Shamalan and resettling families on two to ten jereeb plots from broken-up abandoned farms in Marjah and Nad-e Ali. The smaller plots were not big enough for subsistence and the new immigrants were forced to work on others' land. Worse, the settlement's accelerated nature meant that families were ethnically and tribally mixed, with few of the services that previous settlers had enjoyed. This brief, but intense, expansion of the project has left its legacy in the small-scale landowners who

still exhibit exhibiting disharmony with their neighbours.

The twenty years of the canal projects in Helmand left a legacy that can be entirely described through the three themes of resources, group identity and external influence. In technical terms, the project succeeded in creating a large agricultural base in southern Afghanistan - Nad-e Ali and Marjah represent modern farming systems. Land was given to ten thousand families, and on an individual community scale, those settlers who chose to remain in Helmand have benefited: by 1975, ninety-two percent of settlers were happy with their existence. Aside from the settlers, many indigenous communities in central Helmand, who were mainly Barakzai, benefited from the increased access to irrigation water, markets and services that the canal project brought. The improvement to many people's lives cannot be understated.

However, the external influence exerted by the canal project also deeply changed Helmandi society, particularly the identity and cohesion of kinship groups. At district scale, Nad-e Ali and Marjah were comprised completely of non-Helmandis, the central region was thirty percent comprised of settlers and further south, the Shamalan region was twenty-six percent settlers, and Darwishan forty percent settlers. This caused the Barakzai to lose influence centrally through sheer population dilution, although they managed to retain some of their previous influence due to the redrawing of the district boundaries. A similar situation befell the Noorzai further south. It also upset the balance between land and water and the groups or individuals that controlled those resources.

Communist Reforms

Helmand was a major target of the communist reforms. This was partly due to its association with the US, partly because of its

Barakzai links to the previous monarchy and partly because - thanks to the Durrani land grants over two hundred years before - some of the largest landholdings in the country were found in the Helmand Valley. The Barakzai Mohammadzai were a particular target. The lower limit for redistribution, thirty jereeb, was the largest plot given to settlers and so they were not a target. In fact, the communists found support in canal project zones, and party membership was high, generating the fourth largest Provincial Communist Party in the country excluding Kabul by 1980, and the only area of recruitment in the south of the country. This may well have had something to do with the fact that the reforms were weakening the indigenous landholders in Helmand, and so support for an external influence helped them in their settler-indigenous group dynamics.

These reforms caused many khans to flee or form resistance groups. In areas where the khans stayed to fight, their tenants often fought with them, even though they stood to gain from the redistribution. As they saw it, land redistribution was state theft and it was their Islamic duty to oppose it. In many areas of Helmand the absence of the Afghan Army in 1978 meant that government officials and supporters were chased out of the countryside, returning it to the de facto control of local groups. The army was then deployed and many khans were jailed, killed or destroyed on the battlefield, but it never managed to regain control of the countryside.

Helmandi Resistance to Reforms and Soviet Intervention

Helmand became flooded with weapons as groups sought supplies from resistance parties in order to protect themselves. This was as much from banditry and each other, as from the government. Where there were no khans to provide leadership, the power vacuum was

filled by others, mostly clerics. There were also other types of leaders, particularly in the canal zones, which demonstrated some of the group identities that had been created by the projects. There, group leadership could also be based on education or ideology. Nowhere was it possible, however, to command based solely upon these motivators - the support of either the khans or the clergy was still required.

By 1981, there was no evidence of central government control in Helmand outside of the urban areas of Lashkar Gah and Gereshk. Soon, the external nature of their very presence gave succour to those that had previously been fighting because of the Afghan government's communist reforms.

The Soviets did not see Helmand as a priority despite high party membership in the central region - at the peak of their power, the Russians held seventy to eighty percent of districts nationwide and hardly any of Helmand's districts were in that percentage. Seen from a national scale, Helmand (and particularly northern Helmand) was irrelevant. Their key aim, and the only one that was prosecuted until the end, was to keep the route from Herat to Kandahar open, allowing Gereshk to continue in its historical role as the gateway to Kandahar. For most of the 1980s, the Soviets only held Gereshk (a battalion for the ring road), Lashkar Gah (a regiment for legitimacy), Kajaki (an airmobile battalion in the immediate area around the dam) and Chah-e Anjir (to keep Lashkar Gah supplied from Gereshk). These were backed up by varying numbers of Afghan army units, and later, militias.

The Soviets also had two subsidiary aims. They planned to use the Helmandi plateaux as a staging area for any potential invasion of Pakistan, which would attempt to disrupt the support base for the mujahidin. This was only a realistic course of action until 1984, when the USSR decided not to extend the war to Pakistan

as it risked further increasing US involvement. Thus, Helmand slipped even further down the priority list. Least important of all was the war against the mujahidin in the Helmand valley. This aim was seen as supporting the other two aims, as the Soviets could see the inter-mujahidin group fighting and left them to it.

The Soviet intervention did have an impact on the canal project. The technical nature of farming in central Helmand, coupled with the random nature of government military operations, meant that farmers who stayed were not able to get the agricultural inputs required. Furthermore, the Soviets used the canals as a means to exert control, draining them to punish people. Thus, the farmers did little of the required maintenance, the canals silted up and more people left. By 1989 the Bughra was operating at fifteen percent of capacity causing depopulation in Nad-e Ali and Marjah. The south had the highest percentage of depopulation in the country and in Helmand, this was exploited by several Noorzai leaders who occupied abandoned land in the canal zone with their kinship groups, radically altering the balance of power in Helmand.

In 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev came into power in the USSR and gave the military one year to solve the war. Shortly after, a massive offensive was executed in Helmand to stop mujahidin groups from re-grouping, but it had the opposite effect. The operation was preceded by carpet bombing of suspected mujahidin positions killing hundreds, and was carried out by extra troops brought in from Herat and Kandahar.

The fighting lasted for months and caused most of the decade's total infrastructure damage. To soften the blow of the operation on the general population, the regime also carried out consent winning activities and political work including religious, female and medical engagement in a similar way to that carried out by US and British forces in Helmand post-2006.

The forces of the Helmandi militia commander Nasim were routed, but by this point he and other clerical leaders, such as Abdul Wahid, had expanded their madrassah networks to train not only military recruits for their mujahidin forces (Nasim's were known as the 'Sacrificers') but also a civil semi-professional clerical bureaucracy. These factors, along with the tribal basis of his support and massively increased poppy cultivation, allowed him some group resilience against external influence.

Poppy is a traditional crop in Northern Helmand. During the course of the 1980s, largely led by Nasim, its cultivation spread province-wide. It was vital: the drugs trade ensured survival due to the revenues it could generate thus buying a military edge in local disputes. On a societal level, the money could be used to ensure group cohesion through patronage. Although Nasim controlled the traditional opium growing areas, as the decade wore on, other mujahidin groups adopted the same practices in order to secure their financial independence. For example, Abdul Wahid was forced to generate alternative funding as Nasim was blocking supplies to him that ran through Hassanzai (Nasim's sub-tribe's) territory.

Soviet Withdrawal

Gorbachev's offensive failed to crush the insurgency and the Soviets decided to withdraw their forces in July 1986. Withdrawal was based upon a two pronged strategy. First, they shaped the political landscape through the selection of non-PDPA members to the provincial council, and through the distribution of land ownership documents, fertiliser and fuel in an attempt to reach out to communities. Development was extended as much as possible. In 1987, a locally influential figure, Shah Nawaz Helmandwal, rather than a party member, was chosen to be provincial governor, which met with success,

particularly with regards to reconciliation. The short-term aim was to gain local acquiescence for the Soviet withdrawal and so their external influence switched from supporting communist reform of the society, to reinforcing power centres within it. Short-term stability was to come at the price of long term cohesion.

There was, however, concern that the government would not be able to survive the Soviet drawdown, and so the second part of the strategy, starting in 1988, concerned the formation of militias, which diminished the resistance's recruitment pool and increased government forces. The militias were employed to defend population centres and government sites in Lashkar Gah and Gereshk, which were all that the post-Soviet government could realistically expect to hold.

The 1988 withdrawal of Soviet and regular Afghan government forces from Helmand was in the first phase of the Soviet withdrawal plan and was preceded by an offensive that matched that of 1985 in scale. Starting in February, six thousand regular troops and militias fought towards Kajaki; effectively, the central Helmandis were paid to fight the northern Helmandis, reinforcing the old North-South divisions. The aim was to provide a distraction for withdrawal later that year, and to allow the new militias breathing space.

Whilst the Soviet and regular Afghan forces held Kajaki, the few remaining district centres occupied by the government in the south (Garmsir and Nad-e Ali) were abandoned during August. Lashkar Gah was ceded to its militias. The last regular government force to leave Helmand was a Soviet spetsnaz battalion who withdrew from Kajaki to Herat at the end of October 1988; the dam was immediately occupied by Nasim's mujahidin and elsewhere, a number of pro-regime militias as well as mujahidin groups switched allegiance to Nasim.

Pro-resistance clergy across Helmand invited the mujahidin to suspend hostilities now that the foreigners had left, and in Nawa there was open pressure on the groups to stop fighting, but to no avail. Now that the Soviets, who were a focus for mujahidin action, had left and the communist-allied militias had little mobility outside of the two major urban centres of Lashkar Gah and Gereshk, the drugs war exploded.

The Rise of the Akhundzadas

The recent history of Helmand revolves around the often intertwined opium economy and powerful local family/tribal groups, particularly the Akhundzadas, who are Pashtuns of the Hassanzai Alizai tribe from Musa Qal'ah. Mullah Nasim Akhundzada led one of the most effective and feared mujahideen groups in Helmand during the war with the Soviets. They occasionally co-operated with other mujahideen groups in northern Helmand, Kandahar and Uruzgan. In one operation in October 1984, a combined force of 1,000 mujahideen from these provinces conducted an unsuccessful 45-day siege of the Soviet camp in Deh Rawod, Uruzgan. The disparate force was unable to exert effective coordination and unity in this conventional-style operation and was defeated.

Following the Soviet withdrawal, Akhundzada's men then came into conflict with fighters loyal to rival Pashtun warlord, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Akhundzada was affiliated with the Harakat-e Inqelab-e Islami (Islamic Revolutionary Movement), a Pashtun nationalist party which was one of the seven mujahideen political parties recognized by Pakistan. He also served as Deputy Defence Minister of the Interim Islamic Government of Afghanistan in 1989-1990.

Though himself from the Alizai tribe, Mullah Nasim Akhundzada used the wealth garnered from opium cultivation in the Helmand river valley to establish dominance over the



Sher Mohammad Akhundzada

detrIALIZED peasantry which was an increasingly important element within the province. In a 1987 interview he claimed to have established hospitals, clinics, and forty religious schools across the province. Opium cultivation expanded after the Soviet withdrawal in 1989, from its traditional growing areas in the mountainous north to areas in the south. The agricultural base of Helmand turned increasingly to opium cultivation. Mullah Nasim decreed that half of all land must be used to cultivate poppy and farmers who failed to meet production quotas had to pay the difference, driving some into debt. Mullah Nasim was assassinated in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1990 - possibly the result of a feud with rival drug traffickers from Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HiG) - and was succeeded by his brother Ghulam Rasul Akhundzada.

The Taliban

Almost immediately after taking control of Kandahar Province in late 1994, the Taliban began moving into neighbouring provinces. The Akhundzada family, now headed by Abdul Ghaffar Akhundzada, another brother of Nasim, and Ghulam Rasul, initially fought off the Taliban. Eventually, the Akhundzadas agreed to give up Lashkar Gah to the Taliban in return for retaining control over Musa Qal'ah. The Taliban failed to honour this agreement and after taking Lashkar Gah, fighting resumed.

The Taliban sought to break the stalemate by cutting a deal with Abdul Wahid, also

known as Rais Baghrani (literally 'the leader of Baghran'). Baghrani is an Alizai from a rival sub-tribe, the Khalozai, with a long rivalry with the Akhundzadas. With support from Baghrani, the Taliban were able to take the province by January 1995. Abdul Bari, an Alikozai tribesman was installed as Provincial Governor. Baghrani remained an important supporter of the Taliban until his entry into the reconciliation process in April 2005. Abdul Ghaffar Akhundzada and his fighters retreated into Ghowr province. Abdul Ghaffar was later killed and his place was taken by his son, Sher Mohammad, who had fled to Iran. By the mid-1990s, Helmand - and particularly the Chagai Hills area - had established itself as one of the largest narcotics production areas in the world. Helmand played (and continues to play) a key role in all aspects of the south-west Asian narcotics trade, including opium cultivation, narcotics refining, stockpiling and smuggling. In the 1990's cross-border smugglers often clashed with Pakistani border forces. The infrastructure to support smuggling also aided the Taliban and other extremist groups in moving people and money in the region. During this time, Helmand also became popular with royal families from Persian Gulf states who came to hunt migratory birds. To support their visits, an airstrip was built at Bibi Tera 190 km southwest of Kandahar in the Registan Desert; as Forward Operating Base Rhino it subsequently became a major coalition base before being supplanted by Kandahar.

Development work restarted in the province and by 1999, there were thirteen NGOs. Mercy Corps International (MCI) were big players and conducted the first major repairs to the canal project since the 1970s, gravelled Route 601 from Lashkar Gah and built several clinics province-wide, although there was no building in areas that had supported the Akhundzadas. As with the development work done in the early

1990s and in the post-2001 era, access for NGOs relied on collusion with the de facto power holders, thus those that were in power often directed development efforts to their own areas. Contrary to the within-group consensus politics practiced traditionally in Helmand, out-group politics has winners and losers. This is most often demonstrated by the exclusion of previous regimes' elements from patronage, causing resentment and fuel for their eventual attempt at regaining power.

Towards the end of the 1990s, people started to feel less positively about the Taliban government. The war in the north of the country between the Taliban and other mujahidin groups was interminable. And as well as running madrassahs to train young men to fight on the Shomali plain north of Kabul, the Taliban also conscripted, causing uprisings. Madrassahs are a common feature in the region and all the groups used them to recruit and train youngsters to fight, however the war in Kabul was too distant. It was not Helmand's war, and the Helmandis were not gaining anything from it. As the Taliban reign continued it became more and more of an imposition and what had been almost organic governance became to be seen as the actions of outsiders giving direction - an infringement of honour that the independent Helmandi groups were increasingly unable to stomach. The extensive drought and opium ban in 2000 hit Helmand very hard causing widespread hunger. But the government had enough opium in store to pay its soldiers and administrators. This, and other factors like conscription, drove a wedge between the Taliban government and the Helmandi society, from which it was born, laying the context for what happened after 11 September 2001.

Post 9/11

After the fall of the Taliban, a period of instability followed until the Akhundzadas returned to re-establish their control. Barakzai tribal forces, led by Hafizullah Jan, occupied Lashkar Gah on 7 December 2001. Two days later however, 500 fighters under Noorzai tribal leader Abdul Rahman Jan seized control of the city allowing the Akhundzada family and their Alizai supporters to quickly reassert dominance over central Helmand.

In 2002, Sher Mohammad Akhundzada (SMA) was elected Governor by a tribal shura, a decision which President Karzai (a close friend of the family and relation by marriage) endorsed. Meanwhile, Akhundzada's chief rival for influence and power in northern Helmand, Rais Baghrani, continued to exert power and influence in the region, acting more as a facilitator and supporter of the Taliban rather than an active leader in the movement. SMA set about settling old scores, reinforcing his links with the drugs trade and bolstering his family power-base. With his brother, Amir Mohammad Akhundzada (AMA) as Governor of Musa Qal'ah district, SMA rule over Helmand became a byword for misrule attracting growing criticism from the international community. In November 2005, Karzai finally agreed to replace Governor Akhundzada, who accepted a seat in the Meshrano Jirga (upper house of parliament). His replacement was Engineer Mohammad Daud. Originally from Gereshk, but having spent many years living outside Helmand, Daud started with some promise - vowing to tackle corruption and self-serving practices of public officials - but he was unable to sustain a significant poppy eradication effort in 2006. Unlike his predecessor, there was no evidence linking Daud personally to

corruption, narcotics or other illegal practices but he suffered from limited local or tribal links and support from the ministries in Kabul.

Constantly undermined by his predecessor, Daud was sacked in December 2006 and replaced by Assadullah Wafa, the former governor of Paktia and Konar provinces.

Though apparently well-intentioned and outwardly ambitious, Wafa quickly ran out of steam and showed little appetite for the hard work of government. In March 2008 he was replaced by Gulab Mangal, the former governor of Laghman and Paktia provinces.

The 2010 Parliamentary Elections saw eight new members of parliament elected for Helmand including two Pashtun females; Nasim Niazi and Habiba Nama. The other elected MPs were Shaikh Neamatullah Ghafari, the only non Pashtun and owner of a PSC in Lashkar Gah, Abdul Jabar an ex Mujhadeen commander, Haj Abdul Hai, Sher Mohammed Akhundzada's brother, Haji Mohammad Wali, Abdul Wadod and Masuod Khan.

Britain deployed troops to Helmand as part of the NATO expansion into the south of Afghanistan in 2006. Its mission was to bring increased security and stability to the province and to check the narcotics trade. The coup de grace was the British insistence that Sher Mohammad was removed from post before their deployment, thus slighting him. The British appeared to be unaware of previous Alizai-British relations, but Sher Mohammad was not, and told three thousand men of his militia to resist the British in the same way that Aktur Khan and Abu Bakr had before him - similar numbers of men to those raised by his forefathers when they fought the British. Sher Mohammad even told them to accept 'Taliban' payments - a fact

confirmed by the first UK Commander. Thus, they were acting in his interests, but under the Taliban franchise.

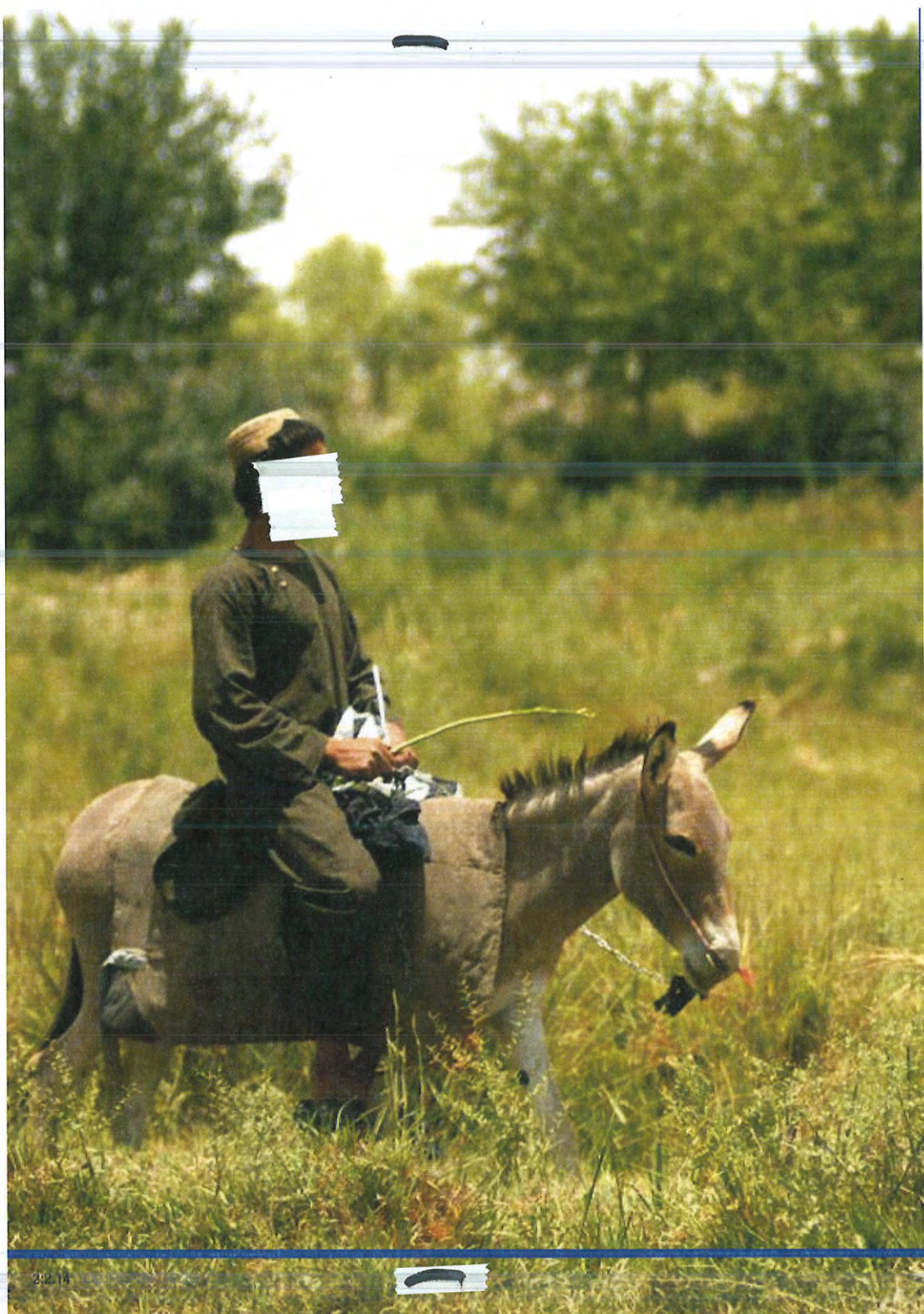
Sher Mohammad, the excluded powerbrokers and the cross-border elements simply played to the Helmandi feeling that the British were historical enemies and that the deployment was 'revenge for the Battle of Maiwand'. In a scenario that could have occurred 170 years earlier, the British had managed to align previously antagonistic groups again, and the uneducated population did not know any better than the narrative that 'They [the British] have come to oppress your wives, they are infidels'. Religious rhetoric was used to sharpen grievances felt.

British forces initially took on the responsibility of Helmand Province but this was later reduced to four main districts known as Task Force Helmand with the remainder being taken over by the US. In September 2011 TFH also took on the responsibility of the Upper Gereshk Valley (UGV) along with Nad-e Ali, Neraj Seraj, north and south and Lashkar Gah.

Key Dates in Helmand History

661	Bost and Zamindawar captured by the Arabs	1880	Battle of Maiwand where the British are defeated largely due to the intervention of an Alizai leader, Abu Bakr
976-1150	Ghaznavid Kingdom		
1220	Bost razed by Genghis Khan	1880s	Ishaqzai and Noorzai failed exodus to Turkestan
1468	Kandahar declares itself an independent state	1910	Beginning of construction of Nahr-e Saraj (canal)
1587	Malik Saddo chosen as leader of the Durrani	1919	Full independence from the British and end of subsidy; beginning of Amanullah's reign
1737	Nadir Shah captures Kandahar and initiates the Durrani land grants		
1747	Ahmad Shah Durrani establishes Durrani state	1923	Alizai rebellion in Zamindawar over proposed reforms
1826	Barakzai dynasty takes over in Kabul, altering power and patronage balance in Helmand	1936	Beginning of construction of Nahr-e Bughra (canal)
1839	British intervention and occupation of Gereshk	1938	Further Alizai rebellions
1841	Alizai rebellion led by Aktur Khan against the British / Barakzai	1945	MK employed to survey province-wide canal project; construction begins the following year
1842	British withdrawal	1949	US government becomes involved injecting huge amounts of money
1857	First British subsidy to Dost Mohammad	1954	Nad-e Ali settled
1878	British intervention and occupation of Gereshk	1957-9	Marjah settled
		1960	US government takes over project; Gereshk province formed

1964	Gereshk province renamed Helmand province; Capital moved to Lashkar Gah and district boundaries redrawn	1994	Taliban occupy Lashkar Gah
1960/70s	Darwishan and Shamalan settlements south of Lashkar Gah created	1995	Taliban consolidate control over rest of province
1973	Daud proclaims himself president and massively increases the rate of settlement in the province	2000	Taliban opium ban
1978	Communist takeover; Helmand ejects government from countryside; Security provided by local groups	2001	US invasion; establishment of Karzai Government; Sher Mohammad Akhundzada made Provincial Governor
1979	Soviet intervention	2005	Removal of Helmandi powerbrokers by International Community; collapse of Helmandi Government
1985	Large scale Soviet operations in Helmand	2006	British intervention
1988	Soviets leave Helmand		
1989	Nasim attempts unsuccessfully to capture Gereshk		
1990	Nasim assassinated; Rasoul takes control and captures Gereshk		
1991	Rasoul now controls 87% of the province		
1992	Communist Government collapses		
1993	Rasoul captures Lashkar Gah from ex-communist militias		



Overview

Although Helmand is a relatively wealthy province of Afghanistan (only Kabul and Kandahar have a higher level of consumption per person), by any global measure it is still extremely poor. Like many provinces in Afghanistan, Helmand does very badly on human development indicators, such as the female literacy rate, access to clean water, and immunisation rates among young children.

There are three main sources of income in the Helmand economy: licit agriculture, opium and foreign aid. DfID estimate that annually: licit economic output is worth around US\$620m; the opium value chain is worth in the region of US\$640-1,280m; and US\$500m of foreign aid is spent on Helmand, of which around US\$90-170m might be spent in Helmand. The ISAF presence has led to higher demand for local goods and enabled a number of Helmandis to find employment and income from contracts (e.g. construction, delivery and security work). Closure of bases and the draw-down of foreign troops in Helmand will inevitably result in a reduction in the demand for local goods and services.

Helmand's licit and illicit economy is predominantly agricultural. Helmand's cultivated area has been estimated to be around 300,000-350,000 hectares. Around 90% of the licit private sector agricultural value chain activity takes place around four broad value chains: meat; wheat; fruits and vegetables; and cotton. In Afghanistan, agricultural production can be volatile, as harvests vary significantly from one year to the next. The weather is a key determinant of yields, but the fact that the vast majority of Helmand's agriculture is irrigated rather than rain-fed means that variable levels of rainfall tend to have less of an impact than in the rest of the country.

Around 80-85% of households get their livelihoods from agriculture in whole or in part, and it has been estimated that up to 80-90%



Local farmers attend a meeting in Nad-e 'Ali District Centre to distribute farming equipment

of farming households in Helmand are involved in opium poppy cultivation. But many get some of their income from non-farm sources, such as construction, business, trade and services. Average household income in Helmand increased by over 20% during the period September 2010 -September 2012.

Although Helmand has a low level of unemployment (estimated to be around 4% in 2008), the main problem is the very high level of underemployment - around 82% of Helmand's population in 2008 would have worked more if they could find work. This is most likely due to the seasonal nature of agricultural employment. Daily labour rates are typically around US\$5-6, although they are higher (around double) during the poppy harvest as demand for labour increases significantly. Helmand's population is around 1 million and DfID estimate that around half are aged 15 or under.

Wealth distribution - poppy, insurgents and aid

Helmand province has the highest poppy cultivation (over 75,000 hectares) of all provinces in Afghanistan, and accounted for 49% of the country's total cultivation in 2012. The cultivation, processing and trafficking of opium provides



ANP personnel stand guard as 18 tonnes of drugs burn at Lashkar Gah, following successful raids by British and Afghan forces.

an important income to many local nationals, including corrupt government officials who take bribes. Perhaps most importantly, the drugs trade also provides a crucial funding stream for the insurgency. Most of the province's informal systems of finance, provided by landowners, traders, and shopkeepers, are primarily geared towards the cultivation of opium poppy.

It is estimated that 19% of Helmandis neither own nor are able to rent land. These resource-poor citizens are harder to reach with aid programmes that are targeted at those with at least some land or capital. More broadly, access to agricultural inputs is monopolised by those with access to the Government. Even though average incomes are rising, there are risks to having a marginalised minority who are not getting a share of the benefits. In particular, it is to this category of people that earn, say, US\$150 a month as an Anti-Government Elements (AGE) fighter is likely to be most appealing. This will be the case especially if the individuals have a cultural or ideological affinity with an insurgency movement.

Whilst opium prices fluctuate they remain consistently higher than any licit agricultural products, thus making poppy the most economically viable crop to cultivate. Financial gain is the biggest driver behind poppy cultivation. Communities are most likely to not cultivate poppy when given orders to that effect by local powerbrokers with sufficient influence and who have some ties to the Government. Powerbrokers can most readily demand that poppy is not grown by their communities when major markets can easily be accessed - providing alternative sources of income. Some farmers can be coerced or cajoled into giving up poppy cultivation even where there are inadequate alternatives. But if they see their standard of living fall as a result, this will very likely result in them becoming increasingly alienated from the Government, more likely to revert to poppy-growing and more likely to turn to the Taliban.

A strong security presence and focused interventions have led to a decrease in poppy cultivation in the canal command area. However at the same time poppy cultivation

increased in the dashte area north of the Boghra Canal. Growing poppy in the dashte may be unsustainable even without Government interventions. There are anecdotal reports of a falling water table and increasing salinity. In these circumstances, the expense of drilling wells, and the high cost of the diesel required to run water pumps, can make growing poppy an economically risky activity.

Without sufficient investment in the local infrastructure, enhanced local security and improved governance, opium cultivation will continue within Helmand for the foreseeable future. Drug trafficking organisations and insurgents operating out of Helmand are also likely to continue to undermine local governance, where possible, to forestall greater Government counter-narcotics efforts. Traffickers have shown a willingness to defend themselves by force if necessary when threatened.

Outlook - Constraints to growth and to improved livelihoods

In order to improve the economic situation and provide alternatives to criminal activity - including poppy and/or supporting AGE - economic growth and enhanced livelihood opportunities are needed. A survey of Helmand business attitudes at the end of 2010 revealed that the main impediments to further growth in Helmand were weaknesses in infrastructure, primarily insufficient access to reliable sources of electricity, and sewerage/waste problems. Security was not identified as a main impediment, which could be because it is taken for granted that it is a significant constraint, or because the

businesses canvassed were in Lashkar Gah and Gereshk, areas under government control. But survey data from the Helmand Monitoring and Evaluation Programme (HMEP) suggest that Helmandis tend to prioritise economic problems over security concerns. This might change as the ISAF footprint in Helmand diminishes.

Regarding the agricultural sector in Helmand, Denmark's International Development Agency identified a number of requirements that need to be met in order to improve agricultural value chains in Helmand. These included: improved access to legitimate (rather than opium-related) forms of credit; improved access to markets; and improved access to farm inputs and support services.

Helmand suffers from similar constraints to economic growth and investment as much of the rest of Afghanistan. A number of surveys and studies conducted across the country have highlighted the impediments to growth and the key determinants of investment. What their conclusions all have in common is that insecurity, corruption and the absence of property rights are the main challenges that are reducing economic growth in Afghanistan. A 2012 survey of larger Afghan businesses found that security was also cited as the first and biggest challenge which got in the way of doing business in Afghanistan, followed by corruption. Similarly, security was a key determinant of the location of investment projects. As noted above, if the security situation in Helmand deteriorates as a result of the ISAF drawdown, this will weigh heavily on the province's economic prospects.



Infrastructure

Water Facilities

There are two main dams in Helmand; the Kajaki Dam and the Gereshk Dam, both used for irrigation, hydroelectric power and drinking water. The Kajaki hydropower station currently has two operational turbines generating up to 33MW of power, supplying Musa Qal'ah, Sangin and Lashkar Gah. However, poor repair of distribution lines and substations and illegal tapping of power lines result in a fluctuating power supply.



The Kajaki Dam and reservoir

Inland Waterways

An extensive network of irrigation canals has been developed in Helmand to utilise the 40% of Afghanistan's water that flows through the province. Over the last 100 years, the ancient canal network has been reconstructed and extended by the Afghans with the help of foreign nations, including Germany and

Japan in the 1930s and 1940s, the USA in the 1950s and more recently the PRTs. During the Soviet invasion and ensuing warfare, maintenance on the canals was halted and the infrastructure deteriorated. Sections became silted up, canal banks eroded and structures fell into disrepair. Since 2004 work has begun to repair and clean the network. The system comprises of main canals with feeder (lateral

and sub-lateral) canals distributing water to ditches in the fields controlled by sluice gates.

Drains (both open and underground) return the water to the Helmand River. The canals are often banked by earthen levees 5-6m high and 4-5m wide and the main canals can be up to 50m wide with many gates.

Helmand has three major canal networks.

1. Boghra canal (Nahr-e Bughra). Intake on the Helmand River in the Gereshk district and flows through Gereshk to Nad e Ali, Marjah and Sistani.

2. Shamalan (Shamalan Wiyaleh) branch of the Boghra canal. Intake on the Helmand River in the Bolan Bridge area and flows through Nawa district.

3. Darweshan canal. Intake on the Helmand River in Darweshan and flows throughout Garmisir district.

The Karez Irrigation System

In addition to river water, rural areas also use the agricultural ditches fed by the karez irrigation system. Karez Wells, (or 'qanats'), are man-made, gravity-fed underground conduits that tap into aquifers to fill irrigation ditches. They have been used for many years to support agricultural irrigation throughout Afghanistan and indeed throughout Asia and the Middle East. In addition to carrying water, karez have historically been used by the Afghans as both a place of refuge and as an extension of the battlefield in times of war. During the Soviet-Afghan war, the mujahideen utilised the karez as a means of moving undetected to ambush sites, as well as digging caves in the sides of the tunnels for refuge and storage of weapons and supplies. In fact, the Afghan fighters reportedly used the karez so extensively that the Soviets developed specialised tactics and training to deal with them, much as the US forces did with the Vietnamese tunnel systems during the Vietnam War

Airfields

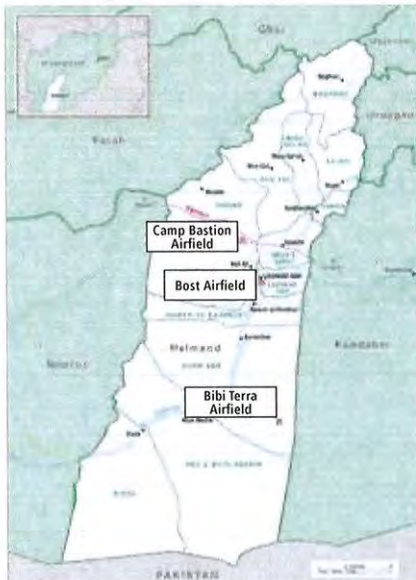
There are three operational airfields located within Helmand Province; Bibi Terra Airfield, Bost Airfield and Camp Bastion.

Camp Bastion Airfield

The airfield at Camp Bastion consists of two parallel runways. The original runway measured 1,700m long by 30m wide and was constructed from graded earth. This has since been developed and is now 3.35km long - enough to handle the largest passenger aircraft in the world.

This is also supplemented by a second, concrete-surfaced runway, 2,150m long by 30m wide.

Tactical air navigation (TACAN) equipment is also in operation at the airfield. The second runway is capable of supporting sustained operations by both C-130 and C-17 aircraft. A new state of the art air traffic control tower has also been constructed.



Locations of Airfields within Helmand Province

There are maintenance facilities at the airfield capable of servicing both fixed and rotary wing aircraft. These consist of dedicated maintenance aprons, several environmental shelters and a hangar. Other support infrastructure includes an emergency services building, an air traffic control tower, extensive fuel storage facilities and a large munitions storage area. The perimeter is entirely secured by a fence.

Bost Airfield

On 03 June 2009, Bost airfield (Lashkar Gah) was reopened following an \$11.5 million reconditioning that included the paving of a 2,000m runway. It was inaugurated by British and American ambassadors as well as Afghan officials including Helmand Governor, Gulab Mangal. The reconditioning was a result of a partnership between the US and the Afghan Ministry of Transportation and Civil Aviation (MoTCA). Built by an Afghan construction firm under US supervision, Bost airfield is expected to act as a catalyst for re-establishing commercial air service in Helmand. Following the reopening, a civilian air service was supplied to and from the airfield for the first time in almost 30 years, with daily flights operating to Kabul.

Bibi Terra Airfield (Dolangi/Rhino)

Bibi Terra Airfield is located 55km south west of Kandahar and is also known as the Desert Airstrip, Dolangi airfield and Rhino. It has a single, graded-earth runway, 2,100m long by 45m. There are turnarounds at both thresholds. The airfield is assessed as marginally capable of supporting sustained operations by C-130 aircraft only.

Surface Transportation

Road

Many of the major roads within Helmand Province are now black-topped. However many remain unpaved dirt roads, reinforced in places

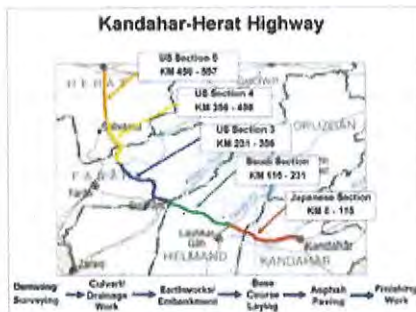
with gravel. There are also numerous tracks, often coinciding with nomadic caravan routes. In the mountainous north roads consist of unpaved dirt and pack-animal trails; below 2500m the passes usually remain open all year. Highway One is asphalt-paved and forms part of the ring road round Afghanistan. Highway One leads from Kandahar across the boundary into Helmand Province through Gereshk, where it crosses the Helmand River, on to Tall Kala and across the border into Farah Province and on through to Delaram.

Helmand has a number of minor routes and tracks that follow the settlements along the banks of the Helmand River, including its various tributaries north of the Ring Road. There are also roads which cross over Helmand provincial boundary into the neighbouring provinces of Daikondi, Farah, Ghowr, Kandahar, Nimruz and Uruzgan.

Apart from the Ring Road there are three other major important roads in Helmand province:

Route 601

Route 601 is the 49km road which runs south from the Ring Road to the provincial capital of Lashkar Gah. This road has been rebuilt.



Route 611

This route, approximately 90km long, runs north from the Ring Road via Sangin to the Kajaki Dam. The upgrading of Route 611 from a dirt track to an asphalt road has begun but progress has been hampered by the security situation and logistical problems.

Route Trident

Route Trident was completed in March 2010 following the success of Operation PANCHAI PALANG with additional extensions linking Gereshk and Lashkar Gah completed in April 2011.

Telecommunication & Broadcasting

The telecommunications sector is playing a crucial role in rebuilding Afghanistan. The Government aims to provide the country with a properly functioning communications infrastructure and to encourage private investment in the sector. Under the benign hand of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology the private sector has prospered. Attracting and managing foreign investment is one of the Ministry's many challenges. Its work is complicated by security concerns. Such problems are particularly acute in Helmand Province where telecom expansion has been restricted by criminal and insurgent activity.

National Infrastructure

Inter-provincial and long-distance communication from Helmand occurs via the Government Communication Network (GCN) and District Communication Networks (DCN). Lashkar Gah is linked to government departments, other provincial and most district capitals and local government offices by a combination of Very Small Aperture Terminals (VSAT), microwave radio relay links and fibre-optic cabling.



Public Switch Telephone Network (PSTN)

Until 2004 the country's fractured PSTN did not reach Helmand Province. By 2006 Lashkar Gah had a ten thousand line Call Division Multiple Access (CD MA) digital exchange using wireless local loop (limited mobility) technology. All traffic being routed via Kabul using a star-configured VSAT, Internet Protocol (IP) based network with an international connection through Hong Kong. In 2007 the Communications and Information Technology Ministry began to upgrade the network to enable full mobility operation.

Internet

Limited and fractured PSTN connectivity has meant internet based services have developed using wireless technology in Afghanistan. The Afghan Wireless Communications Corporation (AWCC) announced the completion of a General Packet Radio Services using its microwave network in February 2008. This mobile data service enables subscribers to access the internet from their mobile phone. Roshan (formerly Telecom Development Company Afghanistan Ltd) offers internet access using leased facilities under the "Ertebat" brand name. Public internet cafés remain the most widely used means of access by the general population. In Helmand Province, however, such facilities are largely confined to Lashkar Gah. Alternately, NGO public entrée rooms also provided access.

Cellular Mobile/Satellite Personal Mobile Communication System (GMPCS)

The cellular communications market has seen rapid growth since 2001. There are four mobile phone service providers now operating in Afghanistan. They are AWCC, Elisalat, Roshan and MTN Areeba. Of these, the first three are present in Helmand Province, but Roshan is the dominant provider. It has the most extensive network with facilities in Kajaki, Gereshk, Lashkar Gah, Musa

Qal'ah and Sangin, among others. Like other providers it uses microwave and VSAT links for backhaul transmission between coverage areas in other districts / provinces, and satellite switches for international connectivity.

There are a number of GMPCS service providers in Afghanistan. Both Thuraya (UAE) and Iridium (US) have footprints that cover Afghanistan and would allow any customers to make international telephone calls. Globalstar has also initiated service throughout the Central Asia region through its Russian service provider, Global-Tel. All of these systems are expensive. Use is probably limited to government entities, NGOs, the clandestine drug industry and the Taliban. In Afghanistan generally, the GMPCS provider of choice remains Thuraya.

Broadcasting

The Government is apprehensive about the increase in independent broadcasters in Afghanistan and has consistently attempted to regulate the sector. The principal issue of concern for the authorities is about control of programming in the insecure provinces, such as Helmand, and the possibility of dissident elements gaining control of a radio (media reporting states the Taliban have established FM radio stations called 'Voice of Shari'a' in the provinces of Ghazni and Paktika and in southern Kandahar and Helmand provinces but BBC Monitoring has been unable to verify these reports). Radio is the preferred medium for news and information and the only media widely available to the general population across the province.

Other issues constraining broadcasting development include a lack of access to electricity; the high cost of televisions and insufficient broadcast power. This has largely limited TV access to the major urban areas in Afghanistan. Threats from conservative political leaders and the insurgents cannot be discounted either. Two

radio stations have been destroyed in the past 18 months. Problems of censorship and physical threat will increase as broadcasting expands to more conservative rural areas like Helmand.

Radio

The Ministry of Information and Culture administers several radio stations in Afghanistan. Radio Afghanistan is accessible in Helmand and the state-run provincial Amplitude Modulation (AM) station is available in Lashkar Gah. This station has locally-produced programming, but its news and information comes from the national news agency Bakhar. Privately operated Radio Sabawoon, available in the provincial capital, broadcasts national news and, when it is not on air, carries the BBC World Service and Kabul-based station Radio Kelid. Radio Samun and Radio Tamadoon 107 also broadcasts in the provincial capital.

Foreign radio stations, or those stations funded internationally, are also widespread in Afghanistan. These include the BBC World Service, Radio France Internationale, US-funded broadcasts Radio Free Afghanistan and Voice of America, and Radio Azadi established by ISAF. In Helmand, radio stations broadcasting from neighbouring Pakistan and Iran (Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran, regional radio from Mashad on 684kHz) are also available on AM frequencies.

Television

Terrestrial TV is provided by the state-run Helmand TV. Additionally, terrestrial TV signals are received from neighbouring countries, such as Pakistan and Iran. Satellite TV is available throughout Afghanistan, but cable TV is rare and is not present in Helmand. Satellite TV service providers include international TV stations and private Afghan stations such as Afghan, Ariana and Tolo. Access to satellite television is reliant

on personal wealth; with both requiring monthly fees and an initial investment; as a result access to TV is extremely limited across the province.

Newspapers

There is one state and two private newspapers in Lashkar Gah. The state newspaper, a monthly called "Helmand," is overseen by the provincial Office of Information. It is published in Dari and Pashto and runs to four pages. The two private newspapers are a monthly called "Poya" and a quarterly called "Bagray" ("The Turban"). Both have limited distribution confined to the Provincial Capital.

Oil, Gas & Electrical Power

Helmand Province has no crude oil production capacity and no conventional oil refining capacity. Much of Afghanistan, including Helmand, meets its energy needs through utilizing traditional fuels (such as wood and agricultural waste). Diesel is consumed for power generation and in smaller quantities for road transportation. Imports of these products are by road tanker, most likely from Turkmenistan, Iran and Pakistan. Helmand possesses a small storage capability, located in Lashkar Gah. The province has no crude oil or refined product pipelines. There is no natural gas production or infrastructure.

Refined Product Imports

Afghanistan imports refined product in similar quantities from Central Asia (predominantly Turkmenistan), Pakistan and Iran. Reported refined product import routes for Afghanistan make it probable that Helmand receives imports from both Turkmenistan and Iran via Herat. Imports consist primarily of diesel for power generation and transportation. It is also likely that Helmand receives smuggled diesel and gasoline from Iran and possibly Pakistan. Very

small quantities of kerosene are also likely to be imported for domestic use.

Refined Product Storage Facilities

Helmand Province has four operational refined product storage facilities, all located in and around Lashkar Gah, with a combined capacity of 7,000 barrels. Three of these facilities support operations at power plants; the fourth is for industrial use. In addition there are a number of vehicle refuelling stations with a storage capacity of less than 1,000 barrels in Gereshk and Lashkar Gah. Most vehicles in Afghanistan run on diesel although a smaller number of vehicles have gasoline engines. There are also likely to be a number of lower capacity local storage facilities used in preference to larger facilities as they are less vulnerable to attack.

Electric Power Overview

Afghanistan's electric power system is fragmented and poorly maintained. Over 70% of the populace do not receive electricity. The country has no national grid and relies on point generation and regional grids. It is not self sufficient in electric power generation and relies on imports from its northern neighbours. The southern regional power grid serves the provinces of Helmand and Kandahar and is largely powered by the Kajaki dam and hydro-power plant.

Power Generation

Kajaki The Kajaki Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP), in the north of the province, is the largest generation facility in the southern grid and supplies Sangin, Lashkar Gah and Kandahar city. Kajaki's current operational capacity is 33 MW.

In addition, there are plans to install a third turbine, funded by USAID. Transportation of the third turbine to the Kajaki HPP was successfully completed in September 2008. Once installed

it will increase the capacity of the plant to 51 megawatts (MW). However, this element of the refurbishment program will not be possible until security around the power plant, and along the road leading to it, improves significantly. Even when this turbine is installed, the increased power generation will not be available to the wider region until the upgrade of transmission lines from the plant is completed.

Gereshk The hydroelectric power plant at Gereshk provides locally distributed power to the town. It has an installed capacity of 2.4 MW. The plant is a river crossing point and consequently, a focus of insurgent activity.

Lashkar Gah In 2003 USAID installed three 1.2 MW diesel generators in Lashkar Gah. The trailer-mounted sets provide localised generation to supplement the power transmitted via the dilapidated 110 kilovolts (kV) line from Kajaki. The cost of the diesel for supplying the generators was borne by USAID until aid for fuel purchases ceased in November 2006. Since then, the Afghan government has been responsible for buying fuel for the sets.

Transmission

Transmission lines (110 kV) run from the Kajaki hydropower plant switching station and supply Lashkar Gah, Kandahar, Tangye and Musa Qal'ah. A subsidiary line connects the lines to the Sangin transformer station which supplies the local area. The lines are prone to failure because of their poor condition. Due to damaged infrastructure the only point where power flow can be regulated is the dam switching station.

As part of the Kajaki dam reconstruction project, the transmission lines are to be refurbished and the line from Kajaki to Kandahar upgraded to 220 kV.

Traditional Infrastructure

Schools

Afghan schools often do not have their own separate buildings, but can consist of rooms in mosques, private houses, or simply outdoor locations. Classroom conditions are generally inadequate; classes of 40 students in one room are a common feature. However, in many districts, the majority of boys and girls do not attend school. Few teachers have sufficient training and there are wide scale regional interpretations of the national curriculum. However there have been some major advances within the educational system. There are several higher educational institutions in Helmand including a teacher training facility in Lashkar Gah, where there are currently over 400 students, including 195 women enrolled.

Religious and Cultural Facilities

Religion is an integral part of Afghan life.

The local Mullah is an important part of village life and can conduct the Friday sermon, prayers, marriages, funerals and often acts as the local school teacher.

The overwhelming majority of people throughout Afghanistan are of the Islamic faith with approximately 80% Sunni Muslims and 20% Shi'a Muslims. Helmand Province is no different



and has numerous identified mosques with the greatest number located in the Provincial Capital Lashkar Gah. Helmand also possesses numerous small village mosques, local shrines, tombs, and cemeteries throughout the province.

Medical Facilities

Health Care

Public health indicators in Afghanistan are slow to improve despite a somewhat better economic outlook. The country will require continued international support to improve its current health status. The Ministry of Public Health currently concentrates on planning, co-ordinating, monitoring and evaluating health care delivery, leaving implementation to NGOs, International Organisations (IOs) and donor countries in co-ordination with the Public Health Offices. According to the last National Vulnerability Survey (published Dec 2009), health facilities are available to 81% of communities within one hour by any means of transport. The quality of health care in Helmand Province remains among the poorest in the world. Infant and maternal mortality rates are high; under fives account for more than half of all deaths in Helmand.

Medical Personnel

Throughout Afghanistan there are inadequate numbers of qualified medical personnel. The government will need at least five years to train and hire sufficient numbers of qualified Afghan medical professionals.

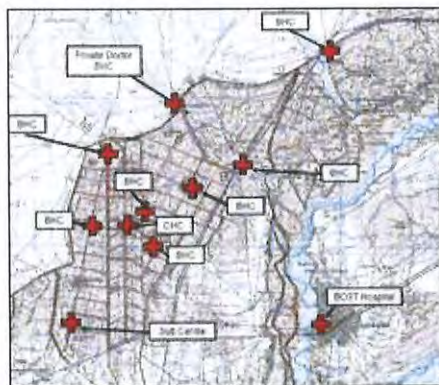
Medical Treatment Facilities

There is one provincial and two district hospitals and approximately 42 clinics in Helmand, which provide medical treatment facilities to an approximate population of one million. There is a shortage of purpose built accommodation for clinics and over 20 are based in local houses. The clinics are staffed mainly by Saudi NGOs.

The level of health care provided is far below Western standards. Patients requiring specialised care are referred to treatment facilities in Kandahar or Kabul. There is also an increasing need for a rehabilitation clinic for drug addicts as there has been a considerable increase in opium addiction in the province.

A new solid-build field hospital at Camp Bastion was opened in February 2008. With a fully equipped operating theatre supporting two operating tables, this medical treatment facility (MTF) also supports up to six beds for the most critically injured in an Intensive Treatment Unit (ITU). Two general wards handle patients with recovery needs and there are an additional two private rooms, supplying a total capacity of 37 beds, with room for expansion.

The new MTF also has state-of-the-art medical technology. The Radiography Department has a CT scanner allowing high-quality imaging of complex injuries, ensuring swift and accurate clinical decision-making. The pathology lab can conduct blood and sample testing as well as having the capacity to supply blood products for transfusion. Equipment normally only found in the National Blood Service, used to gather the blood platelets much needed in trauma recovery, is currently on trial at the MTF.



Medical treatment facilities in Helmand

Helmand Province Government

Governance

In the context of Helmand it is crucial to distinguish between governance and government. The formal government of Afghanistan is strongest in Kabul and the urban centres, including Lashkar Gah, the capital of Helmand Province. The reach and influence of the formal government diminishes further from Kabul and the large urban areas. Indeed, in much of the countryside of Helmand the formal government of Afghanistan is entirely absent. However, there are no ungoverned spaces in Helmand Province, rather, there exists adequate local governance throughout the countryside. Different from government, governance is the manner in which communities regulate themselves to preserve social order and maintain their security. Unlike in established Western states, in Afghanistan the central government has never been the unquestioned supplier of governance and services in the countryside. In rural Helmand, where the majority of the population resides, the norm is for communities to be autonomous and self-governing.

Consequently, implementing government policy at the local level is often a process of explanation and negotiation with the local and tribal leadership. The presence of the international community ensures broad compliance with Kabul's rule, but governance remains personality-led and inherently unstable. Historical experience of a predatory local government, decades of conflict and continued exposure to corrupt Afghan security forces have resulted in a distrust of central government and a preference for localised forms of decision-making.

In Helmand, the reach and competency of institutions of the state are improving in the urban population centres but remain nascent in the countryside, where attempts to connect the rural population to the primarily

city-based government are difficult and not always necessary or welcome. In the absence of viable government representation, jirgas undertake the functions usually associated with a formal government. Jirgas or shuras (usually all-male gatherings of elders) have been the main decision-making and dispute-resolution institutions in Pashtun life and remain the most relevant form of governance throughout Helmand. Jirgas may be ad hoc or somewhat regular and permanent, and are often based on geographic or tribal lines, or to address a specific grievance.

Given that formalised administrative structures in Helmand are immature, absent, ineffective or inappropriate, jirgas are generally preferred by the local people because they are accessible, efficient, culturally-attuned and primarily concerned with the cohesion of the local community. In addition to asking for decisions to be made and disputes settled by local elders and jirgas, the population - both urban and rural - frequently ask local Afghan police and army commanders to settle disputes. Consequently, if the formal civilian government of Afghanistan is to increase its relevance to the majority of the people of Helmand, it is necessary to build a fairer, representative and mutually empowering relationship between national and local institutions and the people for whom they govern.

Governance at the district and village level

The most relevant representative institutions for the majority of Helmandis are not the parliament in Kabul or even the Provincial Government in Lashkar Gah, but are the structures at the district and village level. The District Community Councils (DCC) in Helmand are proving to be an effective mechanism for translating national policies into actions appropriate at the local

level. Indicative of their importance is that election turnout for the district community councils were far higher in Helmand than any of the national elections. However, the DCCs were created as part of the Afghan Social Outreach Programme (ASOP) and are not mandated by the constitution - nevertheless, there are arguments for transforming the DCCs into the representative councils that are constitutionally required.

They typically comprise of thirty to forty elected individuals who are then divided into sub-committees responsible for security, social and economic development, and justice. The members of the council receive training, have a travel and attendance allowance, and are responsible for producing a 'district delivery plan'. In their three sub-committees they are a platform for reintegration; can implement small development projects (roads, bridges, water pumps and so on); solve minor criminal and civil disputes; provide support to traditional forms of dispute resolution; promote respect for human rights; and they take part in prisoner review shuras. Given the authority of the council and its access to development and other resources, its activities can fall victim to obscure local political rivalries that may result in violence.

The council is expected to be an interlocutor between the community and the District Governor and generally the relations between

the council and the governor have been cooperative. Nonetheless, given the tension between district governors seen as executive authority delegated from Kabul, the councils' perception of having greater local representation, and some council members acting as rival powerbrokers to the governor, there is a greater possibility of tension. However, antagonism is not inevitable and some tension is to be expected as political institutions settle and mature.

Crucial to strengthening the Afghan government is to build trust in the formal institutions of the provincial, district and municipal government. To do so it is imperative that local actors are involved in the implementation of policy at the local level. This is mutually reinforcing: making sub-national institutions relevant and responsive to the needs of the local community will increase the likelihood that local people will participate in, and trust, the formal state.

The lowest level of formal government institution is the community development council (CDC) which exists to represent a village or a small cluster of villages. These councils were created as part of an ongoing project from the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) called the National Solidarity Programme. The National Solidarity Programme is structured around two major village-level interventions: (1) the creation of a gender-balanced community development council (CDC) through a secret-ballot, universal suffrage election; and (2) the disbursement of grants, up to a village maximum of \$60,000, to support the implementation of projects selected, designed, and managed by the CDC in consultation with the village community. NSP thus seeks to both improve the access of rural villagers to critical services and to create a structure for village governance centred on democratic processes and the participation of



600 community elders gather to cast their votes to decide the 45 members of the Nad-e Ali District Community Council

women. The programme is funded entirely by multilateral and bilateral donors, with core support from the World Bank. They are designed to serve a conduit for external development funds to create public goods and services. For this reason, they may play a fundamental role in the provision of public goods in rural Afghanistan.

There are over 27,000 CDCs operating within Afghanistan to which more than \$600,000,000 have been distributed to pay for development projects. Community development councils are functioning in Nahr-e Seraj and Lashkar Gah and the Helmand National Solidarity Programme office rates 79 councils as operational and 99 as accessible.

While they were initially designed as an interim measure until such a time as local government are capable for providing comprehensive support to the local population, in 2007 a presidential decree made the councils permanent. Supporters of the CDCs argue that the initial grant is enough to accomplish projects but not enough to promote systemic corruption. However, the critique is that the amount is not enough for large projects and that once the money is exhausted the councils are likely to dissolve.

Conclusion

The formal institutions of the Afghan state are myriad; there are multiple levels of governance many of which claim similar or conflicting mandates and all compete for authority, resources and relevance. The confusion generated by multiple levels of governance is exacerbated at the provincial and district level by a lack of necessary resources, insufficiently trained personnel, and corrupt or simply absent officials. Where the formal government is absent, traditional institutions and the insurgency may fill the void.

Particularly in Helmand, the formal government remains uncertain about how to negotiate the implementation of its will, or even with who it should negotiate. In reality, the Afghan government and ISAF is compelled to deal with a wide range of individuals and social formations that vary from one location to another. The variety and particularity of local institutions can act as an antidote to the extremely centralised nature of the formal government, especially in light of Afghanistan having a political history that inclines towards decentralisation.



Population & Ethnic Composition

Ethnic Composition

Accurate population information on Afghanistan is difficult to obtain; numbers should be treated as approximates. Helmand Province has an estimated population of 1,442,000. There are 190,000 households in the province and each household on average has nine members.

Around 80% of the population of Helmand lives in rural districts while 20% lives in urban areas. Around 51% of the population is male and 49% is female. The population is largely Pashtun, although there is a significant minority made up of Balochi tribes. Pashtu is spoken by 92% of the population. The second most frequent language is Dari, followed by Balochi. Helmand Province also has a population of Kuchi nomads whose numbers vary according to the seasons.

Tribal Groups in Helmand

Ethnic groups can easily be segregated into their respective areas and groups, however, tribal groupings and dynamics are more complex, with between 60 and 70 tribes. Listed below are the prominent tribes within the Helmand Province.

Alizai. With a population of around 70,000, the Alizai inhabit the central and northern areas of Helmand, principally Musa Qal'ah, Baghran and Now Zad districts. There are five sub tribes; Shehzai, Dauzai, Pirzai, Hasanzai and Khalozai. Sher Mohammed Akhundzada is a senior Alizai member and assessed to be the tribal leader in Helmand. Alizais are the dominant tribe within provincial politics, however, they are judged to be the fourth or fifth largest tribe in terms of population out of all Pashtun tribes. The Akhundzada family has been prominent in Helmand politics for over 20 years with Sher Mohammed Akhundzada himself a former governor. The overall tribal leader of the Alizai tribe was assessed to be Habibullah Jan, who was shot dead by the Taliban in June 2008.



Alikozai. The Alikozai tribe has an estimated population of 80,000. Their native lands are in Kandahar, with elements in Baluchistan and Pakistan. Alikozais also inhabit Sangin, Baghran and the Now Zad districts of Helmand. The tribe is reportedly led by Mullah Naqeeb Alikozai.

Ishaqzai. The Ishaqzais are the fourth largest tribe in Helmand, with a population estimated to be around 50,000. The Ishaqzais reside in the Sangin, Now Zad, Garmsir and UGV areas of Helmand. There are two known sub tribes of the Ishaqzai; Mulikai and Tajik. Ishaqzais, along with Alizai and Alikozai are assessed to be involved with opium cultivation with some factions more aligned to insurgent groups than others.

Noorzai. Noorzai tribes are some of the most influential in southern Afghanistan, centred on Kandahar, Helmand and Zabul. Historically they have an antagonistic relationship with the Barakzai, Alozai and Popalzai tribes. Situated in the Nad Ali, Garmsir, Nawa, Washir and Now Zad

districts, they are geographically spread across the province, with an estimated population of 25,000. Abdul Raman Jan, a former PCoP, is a senior member and potential leader of the tribe. Mohammed Aref Khan Noorzai, former Minister for Tribal and Border Affairs, is commonly recognised as their leader. He has been implicated with drugs trafficking in the past. The Noorzai are the dominant ethnic force in Helmand ANSF make up and political representatives.

Barakzai. The Barakzai have been in Helmand since the 18th century and have access to the best irrigated land – this generally makes them more prosperous than recent arrivals. Land reallocation is therefore not in their interest. The Barakzai presence in Helmand is concentrated in three districts, Now Zad, Nahr-e Saraj and Nawa. The population is estimated to be 60,000 with no known sub tribes. The majority of Barakzais are assessed to be farmers, craftsmen and merchants; they also have a strong presence in Gereshk Bazaar. The former governor of Kandahar, Gul Agha Shirzai is a senior tribal elder. Malim Mir Wali is also a prominent figure in local and national politics, and has significant sway in appointment of officials.

Politics in the province is dominated by rivalries between the tribes. Allegedly the policies of the former governor - which reportedly favour his own tribe above others, have resulted in Barakzai tribal members being in a favourable position economically.

Tribal Dynamics

Although the population of Helmand is composed of many distinct ethnic groups, certain elements of their way of life are much the same. Characteristically, the family is the mainstay of Afghan society. Extremely close bonds exist within the family, which often consists of the members of several generations. The family is

headed by the oldest man, or patriarch, whose opinions and decisions shape the direction of the whole family. Family honour, pride, and respect toward other members are highly prized qualities. Among both villagers and nomads, the family lives together and forms a self-sufficient group. In the villages each family generally occupies either one mud-brick house or a walled compound containing mud-brick or stonewalled houses. The same pattern prevails among the nomads, except that tents replace the houses.

In the smaller villages there are no schools, no stores, nor any representative of the government. Each village has three sources of authority within it: the malik, the mirab, and the mullah. Commonly a khan will control the whole village by assuming the role of both malik and mirab or by having considerable influence over the individuals inhabiting those roles.

Traditional State Leaders in Helmand

Traditionally in rural areas 'political office' is occupied by mature males.

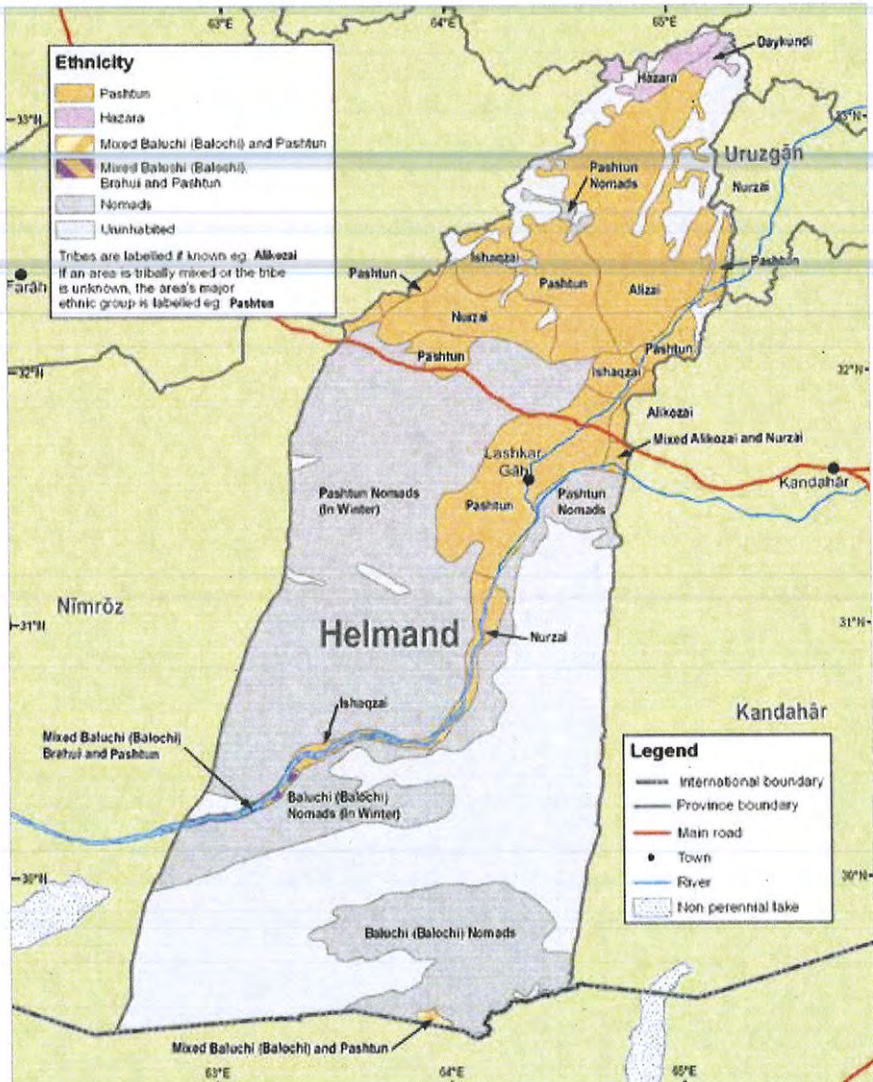
Khans and Maliks

In a rural setting the khan is the largest local landowner. The malik is usually the village head or primary elder. Although there are rare exceptions, typically the khan is more powerful and will own significantly more land. The khan will often take the form of an absentee landlord either having selected or leaving a malik to manage his interests and lands. As titles both khan and malik merely imply a claim to authority over others. Indeed as there are no formal institutions, individuals have to cast themselves as leaders and bolster their claims through the acquisition of followers.

The patronage system ensures that the greater the khan or malik the wider the range of individuals and families who will subordinate themselves to him. Followers are acquired through resources, reputation, alliances and

security. Subordinates need to recognise the patron-client relationship is to their advantage. Leaders thus compete with each other for compliance. Thus the khan or malik is less a passive recipient of social fate than an active

entrepreneur. The control of resources motivates khans and maliks, especially land, water, livestock, women and the maintenance of local political influence.



Mullahs

The title of mullah can and is frequently self-imposed. Mullah is a title usually linked to men 'learned' in Islamic theology who know and interpret the Qur'an. In Helmand this level of learning is far from consistent. In urban centers, for instance, a mullah who has undertaken periods of formal education, displays considerable linguistic skill, and demonstrates an awareness of global Islamic themes would be referred to as Maulawi. In remote rural locations mullahs will frequently be illiterate and display only a very superficial understanding of Arabic and the Qur'an. In the Sunni denomination there are few mechanisms for social control and there is limited clerical hierarchy. Each congregation is 'on its own', and its mullah has limited authority outside the social boundaries. The influence of any particular mullah is contingent upon his personality, biography, connections and perceived piety.

The mullah is not necessarily a man of authority in mundane matters. Often he is a person of minimal wealth and depends upon others for his livelihood. The mullah's subsistence needs, in the main food and accommodation, are met by the local community primarily through the mechanisms of zakat and ushr. Many khans, for instance, employ private mullahs whose presence in their compound endows an aura of piety. Mullahs are motivated through religious ideology, economics, patronage and the maintenance of local political influence.

Mirabs

The Mirab (often also recorded as 'miraw') has the approximate meaning 'water master'. Essentially the mirab manages the agricultural distribution of water and the operation and maintenance of the irrigation infrastructure. Mirabs are often 'appointed' through collective decision at the village level though in various places there is a hereditary nature to appointments.

In the agricultural zones of Helmand, water is life. Mirabs are appreciated for performing a crucial role establishing timetables for consumption according to need. This includes water for domestic and agricultural uses. Their assessments of need are informed by both incentivisation and social expectation. Mirabs are also often involved in the collection of local taxes. This is a considerable vehicle of influence. Moreover, the mirab has provided forms of local linkage with official state agencies such as HAVA (Helmand Arghandab Valley Authority). In general the mirab's motivations include resources, patronage and the maintenance of local political influence. Consequently mirabs are regularly perceived to be corrupt and avaricious.

CULTURE

Pashtunwali - The Way of the Pashtun

This is the indigenous pre- Islamic honour code of the ethnic Pashtun. Even though Pashtunwali has no root in Sharia Law it has some basic similarities, which is why some other groups within Afghanistan have adopted elements of Pashtunwali into their own every day life. Culture, honour, family and religion are important to all Afghans. Pashtuns often express religious devotion through the code.

Some of the main concepts are as follows:

Melmastia (Hospitality). Affording shelter and sanctuary to all is a social obligation, conferring honour on the host.

Hospitality is crucial to being a good Pashtun. This component of the Pashtunwali honour code often takes the form of a somewhat ritualised performance. Liberal hospitality is most visible on the receipt of guests in the compound. Entertaining guests is a great honour and a rare opportunity to show affection for others within an otherwise harsh context of rivalry and competition. The etiquette of hosting involves an enthusiastic greeting, efforts to ensure the

physical comfort of the guest (cushions and cots), and provision of refreshments (tea and the best food available). The host is expected to bestow unfaltering attention upon the guest. Nonetheless, there is an element of rivalry apparent in that when hosting each host attempts to express their dominance and strength through the performance.

When meeting, two men shake hands and then place the right hand on the heart. Direct physical contact is avoided between men and women. If they have not seen each other for a long time, friends and relatives hug, kiss, and speak polite phrases. When someone enters a room, people stand and greet him at length. When they sit down, more greetings are exchanged. It is considered rude to ask a factual question or inquire about anything specific early in the conversation. To express affection, it is customary to complain, sometimes bitterly, about not having received any news.

When food is served, the host waits until the guests have started eating to begin. As soon as the dishes are cleared, guests ask permission to leave unless they are spending the night.

Sabat (Loyalty). The code mandates devotion and loyalty to the Qawm and designated religious and political leaders (especially from their own tribe).

Ghayrat (Territorialism). Loyalty to the homeland is displayed through a willingness to defend tribal and personal territory, property and individuals. Although sometimes referred to as Jihad in Pashtun circles, a fight does not always need a religious basis.

Badal (Justice). It is considered honourable to respond to slights between individuals or tribes with reciprocation ('eye for an eye'). This can sometimes get out of control, unless arbitrators step in to seek resolution, often through the payment of compensation. This philosophy limits excessive violence between

tribes. Failure to take revenge is seen as shameful. Badal ('exchange' or 'revenge') shapes behaviour. Men seek to redress slights on their honour and that of their family. At an extreme level revenge homicide has a long-standing place in traditional village life and is considered an effective way of responding to offence. It is a major cause of violence among Pashtuns. Indeed badal is the crucial notion behind most social action and interaction in Helmand. Whoever commits an offence is liable to pay badal. It may be levied by intermediaries on the offender, or the offended person may take his own badal. The one who does not take his badal is considered a coward. The only successful defence of honour is revenge, equal to or beyond the extent of the original insult, so as to re-establish parity or gain advantage vis-a-vis one's rival. More recently, money is accepted in lieu of the exact crime. Although in some cases cash or commodities may only serve to bring reconciliation by delaying the pursuit of revenge. Badal is men's work. Even when women begin the badi ('feud' or 'hostility') men take the badal. Children also fight, but cannot do badal – their fathers do. However, it should be noted that badal is a complex system of exchange, of which blood revenge is only one part. For example, it can be an exchange of women in marriage arrangement, either to mend hostility or to create and seal a bond between two families.

Tureh (Bravery). Pashtuns consider defensive or security roles in warfare as shameful and insulting. However, conducting a surprise, hit and run-attack against a superior force, and other similar acts of bravado, brings honour to the fighter and his tribe.

Nanawati (Shelter). The right to shelter or asylum, which has additional connotations of forgiveness. It was this aspect of the Pastunwali code that afforded Osama Bin Laden sanctuary (although it could be argued that this was

Melmastai) from the US, as hospitality, must be granted to anyone who asks for it. It is an institution that greatly supports the favoured patron-client social relationship among Pashtuns, especially in the tribal areas, where many criminals go who escape from non-tribal areas. Permanent and semi-permanent immigrants cannot simply settle, but must become dependants on a landlord, or khan, requesting nanawati. Formerly these dependants were cast the landlord's strength, or even army, as they owed him unconditional loyalty and defensive support in return for his protection. Although the dynamic has changed, it is still to a landlord's advantage to create these ties with dependants. Today any professionals (e.g. doctors, engineers, mechanics) who seek the protection of a patron might work exclusively for the landlord who hosts them, adding to his prestige, because the community recognises landlord for possessing and controlling the occupational skill in question.

Gender Roles and Pattern of Life

The extended family, the major economic and social unit in the society, often replaces government in the absence of an adequate service infrastructure. Virtually all child socialization takes place within the family because of deficiencies in the education system. Thus, individual social, economic and political rights and obligations are usually found within the family which guarantees security to each man and woman, from birth to death.

In Helmand extended families are often characterized by residential unity, be it in a valley, a village or a single compound. Extended family households may contain three to four generations including the male head of family and his wife, his brothers, several sons and their families, cousins with their families, as well as all unmarried and widowed females. Nuclear family households geographically grouped within

extended family settings are also common. These will frequently accommodate elderly grandparents and single or widowed aunts. No matter how they may be spaced, these multigenerational units practice close economic cooperation and come together on all life-crisis occasions. This permits cohesive in-group solidarity to be maintained.

Most extended families reside in compounds. These compound residences comprise a range of activity areas and segregated zones. There are areas for food preparation, waste disposal, sleeping and eating and these are usually cross-cut with single and inter-sex zones. There are also private and public distinctions to space within the compound, which become important when guests are present.

Traditionally, the basic household consists of a man, his wives, his sons with their spouses and children, and his unmarried daughters. When he dies, the sons can decide to stay united or divide the family assets. Authority among brothers is largely based on age (maturity) but other relevant factors include social ability, economic skill, and personal prestige. Sometimes a brother asks for his share of the family wealth and leaves the domestic group while the father is still alive. As a rule of thumb residential unity implies shared domestic expenses.

The grandfather or father is the head of the Afghan family. If one of these is not present the eldest male in the family assumes the role. The role is naturally assumed and not directly appointed. Brothers are not treated as equals, and will be afforded increasing respect with age. In the event of the eldest brother assuming the role as head of the family, he will make all important decisions, but will generally leave the day to day running of the household to the mother. In practice it is often the case that both the eldest brother and the mother come to mutual rather than segregated decisions.

Male and female roles are strongly differentiated. The public sphere is the domain of men, and the domestic one is the realm of women. Women take care of young children, cook for the household, and clean the house. They may work a small garden and keep a few chickens. They weave and sew and in some areas make rugs and felt. Among nomads, women make tents and have more freedom of movement. In rural families men engage in the subsistence activities. They look after the sheep and goats, and plough, harvest, thresh, and winnow the crops. Among both rural and urban people, a man must not stay at home during the day. During social disruption women may take on some male duties; men who work abroad must learn to cook, sew, and do laundry.

Women have never participated publicly in decision making processes. They are admonished to be modest and obey the orders of their fathers, brothers, and husbands. Nevertheless, as guardians of family honour, women have a degree of power. Nomadic and urban women play an important role in the domestic economy and are often not secluded in the same way as women in rural and remote areas.

As well as adherence to the Pashtun code, the daily lives of men centre on the norms of kinship, residence and 'tribal Islam'. All these imply ties that are supposed, rhetorically, to transcend individuality. However, none of these four principles give rise to fully binding corporate group organisation. None provides a clear framework within which leadership status is unequivocally defined. Ties, while binding in theory, are frequently broken - and quite frequently manipulated by politically ambitious individuals.

The principle of kinship supplies the most significant institutions in the lives of most Afghans. Decent is universally patrilineal with membership organised in a segmentary lineage

system. Conflict arises over issues of leadership within the descent group. Barring some mental disability, the generationally senior male is acknowledged as having legitimate control over all those who descended from him except female offspring who have married. It is the patriarch who acquires or alienates land, initiates irrigation, negotiates client contracts, and arranges marriages. His death, however, leaves the family without specified procedures for succession to leadership. Although strict Islamic inheritance rules divide the patrimony into equal shares for sons (and lesser shares for wives and daughters), usually the senior son assumes material supremacy over the others. However, this does not always happen effortlessly. The situation can be complicated in polygamous marriages. Here there is increasing potential for disruption as antagonisms result between half-siblings according to generational blocks.

Some villages may incorporate more than one ethnic group, each with its own language and endogamous marriage preference. The affairs of each such cluster within a village are focused on its own mosque, where discussions of community interest typically follow daily prayers. As a consequence each mosque has its own *jirga* ('council') to which every extended family supplies a *spinzheeray* 'elder': literally 'white beard'. The *majles* is not a truly formal institution with specified rules of membership and procedure. Rather it consists of a loose collective of more or less politically important individuals who interact frequently in a variety of contexts and usually achieve consensus in an informal manner. Further, there is no fixed status as leader. This same *majles* arrangement recurs when representatives of the various intra-village mosque groups assemble for larger-scale discussions. Indeed, it reproduces itself on the ever-larger scale of village, valley, and region and so on.

Religion

The village mosque is the centre of religious life and is often used as the village guest house. In accordance with Sunni Islam men will pray five times a day. Men will travel to a mosque to pray if it is within walking distance. Prayer dictates the social and political rhythm of the village.

Islam is a central factor in cultural life, and virtually all aspects of existence testify to its pervasive influence. In this regard it is the strongest unifying force in Afghan society. However, again, its capacity for providing a unity of norms is more than offset by its failure to structure institutions through which authority can work. Generally each mosque congregation, with its own mullah has no authority beyond its social boundaries. Even with the congregation the mullah is not necessarily the man of authority in mundane matters as often he is a person of minimal wealth who depends for a livelihood on richer and more powerful individuals. Many khans still directly employ private mullahs to create an aura of piety.

TYPICAL DAILY ROUTINE

The following describes the daily routine in a typical compound in rural Helmand. The male day is focused upon. Despite seasonal fluctuations there is considerable conformity to the daily routine of those individuals residing in the compound. Nonetheless, the nature and intensity of male work varies according to the season, landholding and crop.

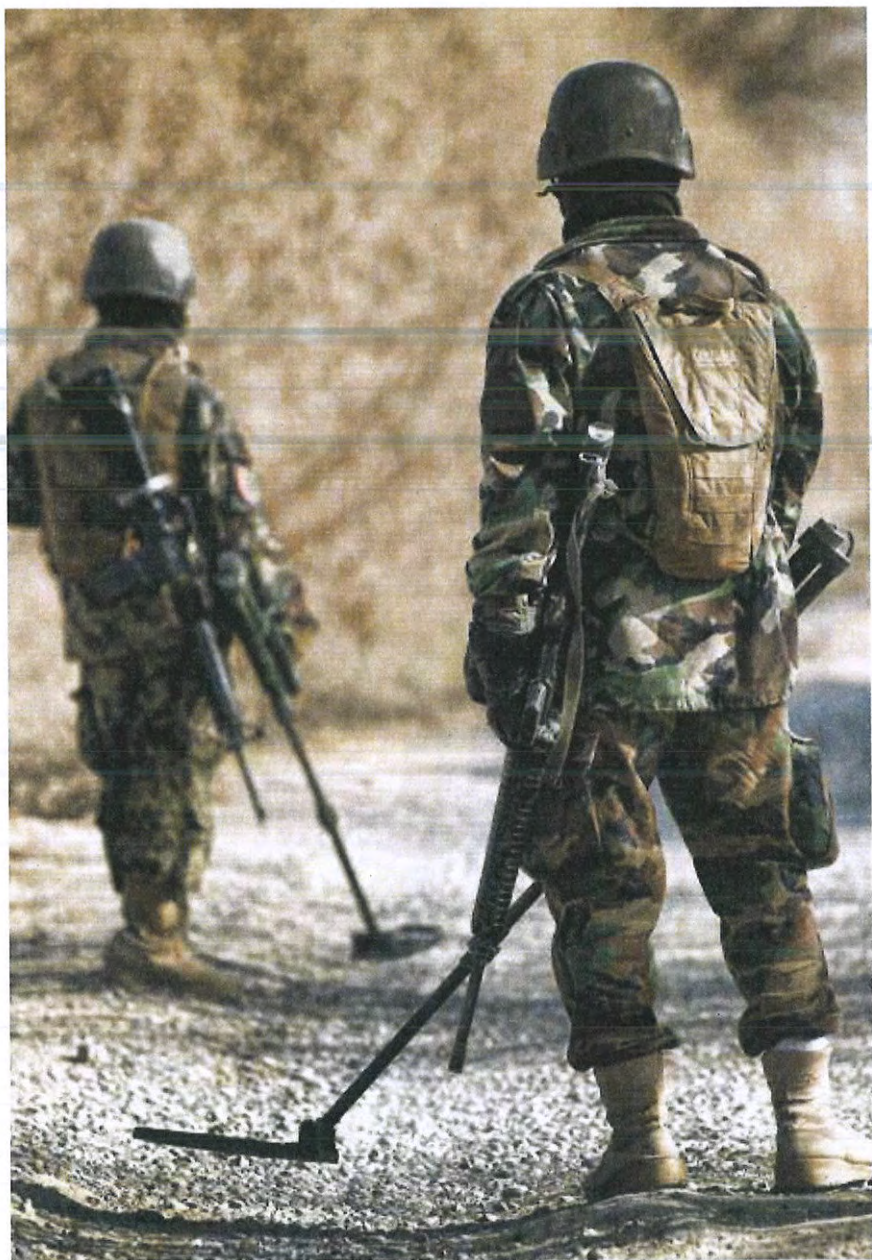
The day formally begins before sunrise when the azan gives the call to prayer. Often, however, the senior male will have woken the family in advance. The adult men make the walk to mosque, leaving the women to pray in the compound. After prayers and whilst the men are at mosque, a number of women prepare food as the other women and children milk the livestock, clear the livestock mess and sweep the communal areas. The men return from mosque and eat breakfast, usually consisting of flatbreads and sweet tea; although during more comfortable times eggs and milk might also be available. After the men have eaten the leftovers are consumed by the women and children.

After breakfast the men and perhaps a handful of children go to the fields where they will spend most of the day engaged in various agricultural activities and resting. The morning usually sees more physical activity than any other part of the day. The women continue with domestic chores in the compound; clearing up after breakfast and general cleaning. The senior women will check the food stores. Small children will play inside and outside the compound. In some communities children between the approximate ages of 10 and 12 go, usually in the morning, to the local imam for religious

instruction. This ensures they learn how to be good Muslims and their tuition focuses on the Qu'ran. Male children will also tend the livestock and during the day will take them to grazing land and water.

Mid-morning the women prepare some sweet tea which they send out via children to the men in the fields. The men work in the fields until around midday when they stop for a prolonged break, often two or three hours in duration. During this time the men may go back to mosque or the compound or simply pray and rest in some shade overlooking their land. Whatever the location another meal will be consumed. Again flatbreads will be eaten, perhaps with some yogurt or meat. Shurimbay, a drink made of milk, water, salt and spices, is also consumed. This local delicacy is widely believed to aid digestion and helps to keep you cool. Most men will sleep after food. Generally the afternoon will be lazier than the morning. Assuming there is not much work to be done the afternoon might also involve visiting other men and talking through local and community issues.

The men return to the compound in the evening for supper. Again flatbreads, meat and sweet tea are prepared by the women. The senior men take their food and further discussions take place about today's and tomorrow's activities. The women clear away the leftover food and they and the children eat. The women then do dishes and any final household chores. Generally the family will rest and sleep throughout the night. Sometimes the men may have to return to the fields during the night to perform essential agricultural duties, e.g. to ensure negotiated irrigation agreements are honoured.



Afghan National Security Forces in Helmand

THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY

Since 2006 the Afghan National Army (ANA) have helped man Patrol Bases in HELMAND and have supported the Afghan National Police (ANP) in static security and patrolling duties. The ANA in HELMAND offer a significant local situational awareness capability. During ANA operations there have been encouraging reports that the units are helping improve Local National (LN) support, whilst gathering information and processing it through their own intelligence departments. Over H17 there was a shift from partnering with the ANSF to enabling them to take the lead in operations. Transition of Lead Security Authority (TLSA) has continued in many areas and this has seen Transition Support Units (TSU) continue to liaise with ANSF units within their AOs and enabling them to take control of their areas in preparation for ISAF's withdrawal by 2015.

215 (Maiwand) Corps has an area of operations concomitant with Regional Command South West (RC (SW)), with most of its strength concentrated in HELMAND.

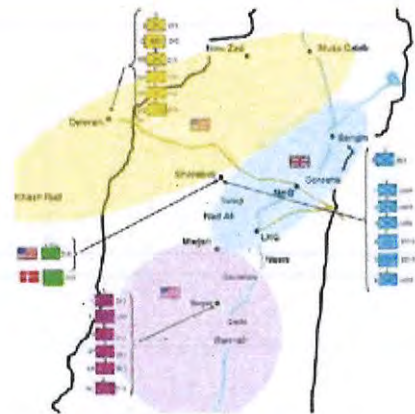
215 Corps has four subordinate Brigades. 1/215 Brigade is situated in Southern HELMAND, covering the areas of MARJEH, DWYER and GARMSIR. 2/215 Brigade is located in Northern HELMAND, covering MUSA QALEH, NOW ZAD, KHASH RUD and SANGIN. 4/215 Brigade is also located in Northern HELMAND and NIMRUZ

and is concentrated in DELERAM. 3/215 Brigade operates in Central HELMAND with its Brigade HQ in Shorabak (SBK), adjacent to Camp Bastion. It is 3/215 Brigade that are located within TFH.

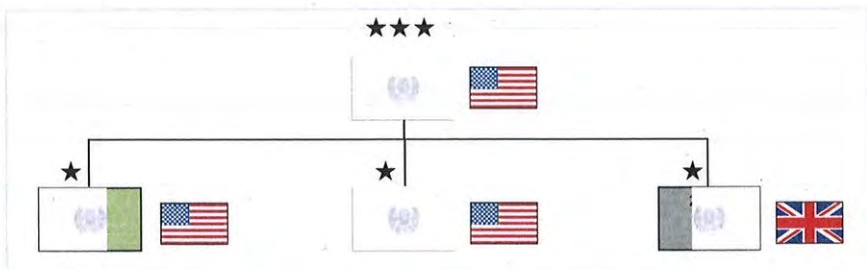
ANA Brigades are based on the US model of four Infantry Kandaks (Battalion) and integral CS and CSS Kandaks.

Each infantry Kandak contains a HQ Toly (Company), four Rifle Tolays as well as a Heavy Weapons Toly that may be armed with DShK, SPG9, and 82mm Mortar.

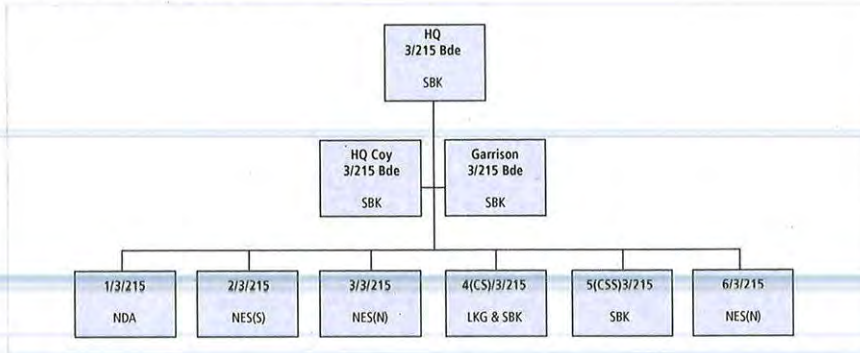
There are currently six Kandaks fielded from 3/215; 4 Infantry; one Combat Support; one Combat Service Support.



215 Corps Organisation



3/215 Brigade in Central Helmand



The six Kandaks are now heavily committed to manoeuvre operations and framework patrolling. The ANA operational areas are concentrated along Highway 1 and the central districts along the Helmand River. They also man numerous Check Points and Patrol Bases either close to District Centres or in some instances, where the tactical situation dictates, in isolated locations. An extensive rationalisation of ANA and ISAF battlespace, co-location and ANA boundary changes has occurred frequently with the current boundaries now closely aligned with those of ISAF.

Equipment

3/215 Brigade, as with most of the ANA, are equipped as light role Infantry. Transport is either the Ford Ranger Light Transport Vehicle (LTV) or the International 6 tonne Medium Transport Vehicle (MTV) lorry, with limited amount of armoured Humvees. The ANA also have access to legacy Soviet vehicles such as tanks and AFVs although many are unserviceable, and lack sufficiently trained crews & spares. These are predominantly found in the north and east of Afghanistan. The ANA are equipped with NATO Small Arms (M16-A2, M249, and M60). Significant shortfalls of equipment include maps

(with Dari or Pashto place names), compasses, hand held metal detectors, ECM and night vision devices. Dress is a digital pattern camouflage uniform.

Artillery

The Brigade's Artillery Toly is equipped with Soviet D-30 field guns (Range 10km). It is an intention to equip artillery units with the US M1 98 155mm gun.

Engineers

The Engineer Toly within 3/215 is part of 4 (CS) Kandak. Their primary function is to provide General Engineering and Force Support Engineering to the Brigade but can also act as a combat unit if required. As at August 2013, 4th Kandak are operating as a ground holding force in Ops Box RIKKI to the east of LKG. They are very good at the manual/light role engineer task and are capable of building Non Engineer Bridges, low level defences (wire and Hesco) and provide excellent close support for their own light dismounted infantry.

Reconnaissance

The Recce Toly is part of the Combat Support Kandak. The company has been deployed on both



mounted and dismounted operations and are now moderately well equipped with such items that are normally not available through the standard ANA chain.

Issues

S1 Soldiers are entitled to two periods of 15 days leave per year. Many of the Kandaks rotate a Tolay at a time to go on leave which has helped to ensure that soldiers get their leave and improve AWOL rates. AWOL rates are high, with personnel often going on leave and arriving back to their units after an unauthorised amount of absence.

S2 J2 low level information gathering is fairly

accurate and timely; however, the collation of information in any organised manner, and its exploitation is less effective. ANA S2 Officers see 'information as power' and are reluctant to share it with their peers. This leads to a situation where S2 staff will circumvent the CoC by using friends and contacts to establish and exchange information. Often commanders will know more about the intelligence picture than their S2 staff. Personal relationships, not the formal reporting chain, will determine how quickly actionable intelligence is passed along.

S3 Many HQ 3/215 staff have an awareness of the planning process and many key individuals are now able to apply it without advisory support. Though further development is needed, their progress is extremely encouraging. A great deal of work is being conducted by the Brigade Advisory Group to prepare for transition by supporting the ANA S3 staff to generate its own 'battle rhythm'.

S4 The ANA supply chain is adopted from the American system which utilises 10 classes of supply: Class 1; Rations. Class 2; General Stores. Class 3; POL. Class 4; Building Materials. Class 5; Ammunition and explosives. Class 6; Personal items. Class 7; Major End Items (vehicles, weapons, radios). Class 8; Medical Stores. Class 9; Repair parts and spares. Class 10; Non Military Stores. Logistic planning, awareness



of stock levels and maintenance are flawed due to lack of interest in S4, bureaucracy, organised theft, and the high levels of illiteracy prevalent amongst personnel in the S4 role.

S5 As the ANA are becoming more independent; the planning cycle for Ops is improving. There have been Ops where Brigades have operated outside of their AO in assistance to other Brigades. This unity of effort and deconfliction for such large scale Ops has largely been ANA planned and executed, which is a credit to the commanders in the higher echelons of 215 Corps.

S6 3/215 Brigade have made some notable CIS advances. Despite the pervasive use of mobile phones for C2, the ANA are effective at comms and have good quality comms equipment.

The Afghan National Police

The Afghan National Police (ANP) is the umbrella term for all police forces within Afghanistan. The Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) make up the majority of these forces and are responsible for general police duties such as community policing, basic security; usually by patrolling their areas from a series of base location Check Points and traffic policing/control.

The AUP in HELMAND is divided into 14 police districts, three of which sit within TFH AO. These districts are then sub divided into Precincts or Tolays, with manning varying considerably dependent on area.

In the past, few AUP in HELMAND had received much (if any) formal training, and literacy levels were low. The latest estimation is illiteracy levels of 95%.

Across the province AUP recruits are now attending the compulsory 8-week basic AUP course at LASHKAR GAH Training Centre (LTC), formerly known as the Regional Training Centre – South West (RTC-SW), which also runs an 8 week NCO cadre.



Afghan Uniformed Police graduate from the British-run training centre in Helmand province

The LTC currently has approximately 95 Mol instructors out of an authorised Tashkeil of 250, a significant improvement, with training receiving increasing investment. The majority of training within the LTC is Afghan led.

Further training courses are also available to those who pass the necessary exams and are willing to travel to KABUL.

Since the fall of the Taliban, the Provincial Chief of Police (PCoP) in HELMAND has changed a number of times. With direct access to the Provincial Governor, the PCoP is a powerful position which has been exploited in the past. The current Helmand PCoP is Brigadier General Hakim ANGAR (as at August 2013), who was appointed in July 2013. He has previously held the HELMAND PCoP position, before moving to KABUL, and is very well respected by the Local Nationals of HELMAND.

Afghan Border Police (ABP)

HELMAND Province has ABP on the ACPAK Border, policing Border Crossing Points (BXPs). ABP are generally more professional than AUP, having attended a longer training pipeline. They are also better equipped and armed than their AUP counterparts.



Afghan Border Police (ABP) practice firing a recoilless rifle at a range in Southern Afghanistan



ANCOP personnel during OP MOSHTARAK

Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP)
Elements from the ANCOP are currently deployed within Helmand Province, operating in DEC (N) and NAD-E ALI. ANCOP personnel are trained to deploy at short notice and deploy on a 3 month rotational cycle. They have more advanced levels of training than the AUP, attending a 16 week course compared to the AUP 8 week patrolman's course.

Afghan Local Police

The ALP initiative is a temporary village focussed programme that aims to provide local security, delivered by the local Afghan community, while the ANSF continues to grow in numbers and efficiency. The ALP are trained and organised into village 'watch teams' to serve as an early warning and initial village defence against insurgent activity. One of its aims is to provide a spring board for eligible personnel to take up full time employment with the ANSF. They also provide a personnel dividend that allows AUP to be moved to more kinetic areas. The main issue for their creation is the necessity for a local powerbroker to take ownership of the ALP and provide leadership and manpower. Being subject to local powerbrokers means they can be used as a method for elders to replace the INS as a

means to control local fighting age males. Local national opinion of the ALP varies considerably, from seeing them as support local police to a return to the days of local militias. It is worth noting that despite being called "police", they neither hold a warrant nor have the power of arrest. "Neighbourhood watch with guns" has been muted as an apt description.

Summary

Efforts to reform policing in Helmand are constrained by the absence of Afghan capacity. Unwillingness to delegate and a lack of staff with the necessary skills mean that even the lowest level tactical and operational support tends to be channelled through the Chief of Police personally, with little or no oversight from the provincial governance structure. Nepotism and the reinforcement of patronage networks are common place and serve to undermine the provincial government. For many LNs, district AUP commanders are the face of GfRoA and can, if effectively endorsed and supported, provide efficient dispute resolution and a sense of security.

On a more positive note, AUP training is increasing and the branches of the ANP are operationally capable in many areas, able to

organise and provide security for operations and events if they are whole heartedly committed to them, specifically in the main urban areas, such as LASHKAR GAH and GERESHK.

Professional training and close supervision by partners has improved the ANP's capability

and credibility in the eyes of the local population, although from a very low baseline. Much work still needs to be done, not least within the leadership and its ability to administer and supply itself. However the HELMAND ANP is improving increasingly.



The Insurgency

The Taliban in Helmand

Helmand and the bordering Kandahar Provinces are strategically important for the Taliban. Spiritually and historically Kandahar is more significant, however, Helmand remains important due to the narcotics industry and the historic familial links that a number of Taliban Senior Leadership (TBSL) commanders hold. As a result, the province continues to be one of their most energetic areas of operations and is a common source of sympathisers for their movement. A prominent role has always been played by Helmand Province in the Taliban's strategy for control of the southern provinces.

The Helmand Insurgency is a primarily Pashtun-Afghan based entity. Many of the Taliban rank and file in Helmand are not full time fighters, but instead are farmers and members of the local population who are sympathetic, financially motivated or coerced towards the Taliban cause. Local grievances motivate the majority of fighters, whether death of a family member, abuse from a local GIROA official or for the younger generation the opportunity for status (a motorcycle, AK and position in the local community) when there is no viable alternative.

The Helmand Insurgency has therefore been described as having three pillars. The ideological core of the insurgent we fight is categorised into

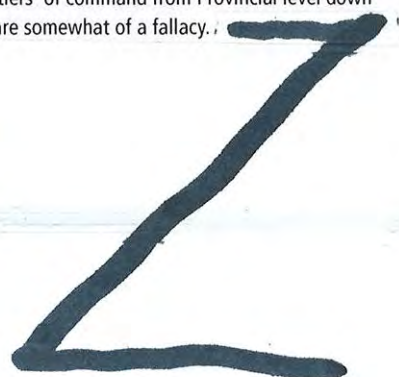
the 'full-time' but they are reliant on 'part time' reinforcement in the form of both fighters and enablers to support and sustain them. Due to the nature of the 'part time' element, it makes it extremely difficult to quantify exact insurgent numbers in a particular location or establish Battle Damage Assessment (BDA) in the aftermath of an engagement.

The 'full time' insurgent are assessed to be in the minority in Helmand and the removal of either, or both the other groupings would likely leave the full time insurgent more isolated and vulnerable. The removal of the 'full time' element would have an effect on the outlook and relevance of both part timers and enablers degrading insurgent capability within the respective areas.

Structure of the Taliban

Many Taliban command appointments are centred on historic family or tribal links, financial arrangements and personal associations, borne out of fighting in various campaigns over the last three decades.

Whilst levels of command do exist, structured 'tiers' of command from Provincial level down are somewhat of a fallacy.



The Strategic Level. The Rahbari (Senior) Shura (sometimes referred to as the Quetta Shura)

as the majority of the TBSL were assessed to be based in Quetta, Pakistan) is comprised of the senior Taliban commanders. These commanders who were senior figures during the Taliban rule of Afghanistan report directly to Mullah Omar and are responsible for issuing strategic direction to Provincial Commanders in the form of meetings, written instructions and audio tapes. A subsidiary part of this shura deals with military direction for Southern and Western Afghanistan. Instructions coming from this level are general, and take the form of messages encouraging fighters to conduct more IED attacks or to avoid antagonising the population.

Assessed Insurgent strategic objectives:

- a. Deny GIROA extension of governance and rule of law.
- b. Set the conditions for the return of Taliban rule.

The Operational Level. District level commanders and below are generally appointed as such due to their credibility and loyalty to the Taliban movement or because of their strong links to a particular community or area within Helmand. Many district commanders do not hold strong idealistic views, but are driven largely by tribal loyalties, financial incentives or because they have proven themselves adept at carrying out attacks and are still alive. Commanders at this level may not necessarily have been officially appointed, choosing instead to take up the fight following the death of a relative who previously occupied that position.

With the continued attrition, many of these unofficially appointed commanders have had to rely heavily on higher authority and their links to external sources to provide them with the training and components to facilitate any advances in capability or intent. Generally, the more effective tactical level Commanders have historic facilitation links, are well respected by

both the local community and the operational level commanders alike and maintain the trust of both.

Since 2009 onwards, and as a result of effective targeting of Taliban fighters, tactical level commanders have been directed to change their methods of attack from conventional 'face to face' tactics, to more asymmetric tactics (IEDs or 'shoot and scoot'). The shift in tactics was a result of attrition to Taliban ranks, with ISAF gaining momentum when engaging the Taliban in conventional 'fire fights'. Subsequently, Taliban emphasis was focused on IED attacks with, then evolving IED technology further to mitigate ISAF IED counter-measures in 2010 and 2011. These methods appear to be primarily to maintain a fighting force, while still upholding a relevancy in the local community.

It is common in Helmand to refer to the idea of a "localised insurgency". By this, it is implied that local commanders have considerable freedom to make decisions and can adapt what they do to suit the local conditions. Direction issued at the strategic level does not result in swift identifiable changes at the tactical level where there is almost complete autonomy.

Assessed Insurgent tactical objectives:

- a. Defeat the occupation at sub-district level through relentless kinetic and non-kinetic attack.
- b. Deny CF access to insurgent controlled areas.
- c. Generate insecurity to undermine or discredit GIROA and ISAF.
- d. Prevent Local Nationals (LNs) from engaging with GIROA / ISAF.
- e. Maintain Freedom of Movement (FoM) in insurgent controlled areas and increase FoM in GIROA / ISAF controlled areas.

Tactical Level Fighters. The insurgent fight against CF and GIROA is armed and organised

at the local level, although it is assisted by limited materiel support and coordination from higher-level commanders. At the local level, the ability of the insurgent to force project is limited. Weapons and ammunition have to be brought in and fighters accommodated in close proximity to the contested area.

Very few Taliban fighters are involved in the conflict for idealistic reasons. Many are poor and have no other source of income, many are pressed men and some have been coerced into fighting under assurances that their families will be kept safe, their land will not be taken from them and their debts will be paid off. For some, the stories told by their father and grandfather of fighting foreign invaders, especially the Russians and British, will resonate as now is the time to do "their bit". The majority are not educated, but through experience gained over the last three decades have become good fighters.

A particular relationship has to exist between this level of fighter and those individuals who lead them. The ideal is that a Taliban commander has to personally provide his fighters with arms and ammunition and the 'means to do the job'. He should also have a history of fighting (preferably having been wounded in battle) and must be with his men when they attack. Though this ideal is still present, most Taliban fighters in the current structure see very little of their commanders, and are directed to operate by proxy or runner. This has a debilitating effect on the fighters and suggests that they are being motivated by other methods such as threats of blackmail and fear or a rising of personal esteem, should they carry out a successful attack.

Insurgent Tactics Techniques and Procedures (TTPs)

This is a brief guide to emerging insurgent Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTPs). The current

intelligence picture, relevant to your specific area of operations, will be briefed throughout your Mission Specific Training (MST) and be provided by your J2 cell throughout your tour. For a full analysis of insurgent TTPs refer to the LIFC (A) Insurgents Tactics Handbook published on the LIFC (A) website.

The Operating Environment

Recent Op HERRICKs have inflicted significant attrition on the CHMD INS; its C2, its ability to generate manpower, and its facilitation. The intended 2011 spring/summer campaign Op BADR, failed to gather any traction or momentum. In 2012 and 2013, a more concerted effort was made to target ISAF, however the majority of kinetic activity has been focused in Northern Helmand, to protect traditional Taliban strongholds. In 2011 and 2012, TSU NDA and Malgir, due to the sustained and effective precision targeting of INS commanders and a series of successful joint clearance Operations in the Canal Zone resulted in a northerly migration utilising the NEB Canal as a natural boundary. These operations and the increasing CF focus have led to the INS consolidating their hold of the Northern and Western Dashte in order to maintain a foothold on the peripheries of the 'protected communities'.

"The Dashte, a frontier between GIROA ascendancy and INS dominated territory"

The INS presence within the Dashte areas would not appear to be as transitory as first assessed, and has become an INS haven where the INS have a great deal of support due to their promise of protecting livelihoods and the insincere attempts by GIROA to represent their needs. Although not quite universally accepted, many Dashte residents feel caught between ISAF / GIROA and the INS, and would prefer to be left alone by both sides.

Relations with the Local Nationals (LN)

The critical centre of gravity for the insurgents in Helmand is the LN population, as they need the population's support, or at least tolerance, in order to maintain FoM. There are very few areas of the TFH AO where the LN population genuinely support the insurgents, but they are tolerated almost everywhere else. LNs tolerate insurgent presence because of a combination of factors: insurgent intimidation; mistrust of ISAF and GIRoA; insurgent shadow governance, which is largely limited to the provision of justice; and a general wish to be left alone by any form of authority.

The most significant part of insurgent shadow governance is their ability to provide rapid, accessible and recognised justice to the population, based on Islamic sharia law. Minor grievances are generally settled at village level, but with more difficult issues LNs are often faced with a choice between insurgent justice and the official GIRoA judicial system. Insurgent courts are available all over the TFH AO; they can provide a decision in a day and will enforce the decision afterwards. This insurgent system contrasts sharply with GIRoA courts which are perceived to be rife with corruption and primarily based in the District centres, resulting in an expensive journey and a long wait for a decision.

Intimidation. The insurgents' ability to control the population's behaviour, whether it is through active support or through coercion, is one of their key strengths. Generally, intimidation aims to prevent any LN co-operation with ISAF, and is mostly present in the contested areas, where both insurgents and ISAF / GIRoA have a presence. Where ISAF and GIRoA are not present, there is no real requirement for the insurgents to undertake intimidation activity.

The localised nature of the insurgency means that local insurgent commanders have



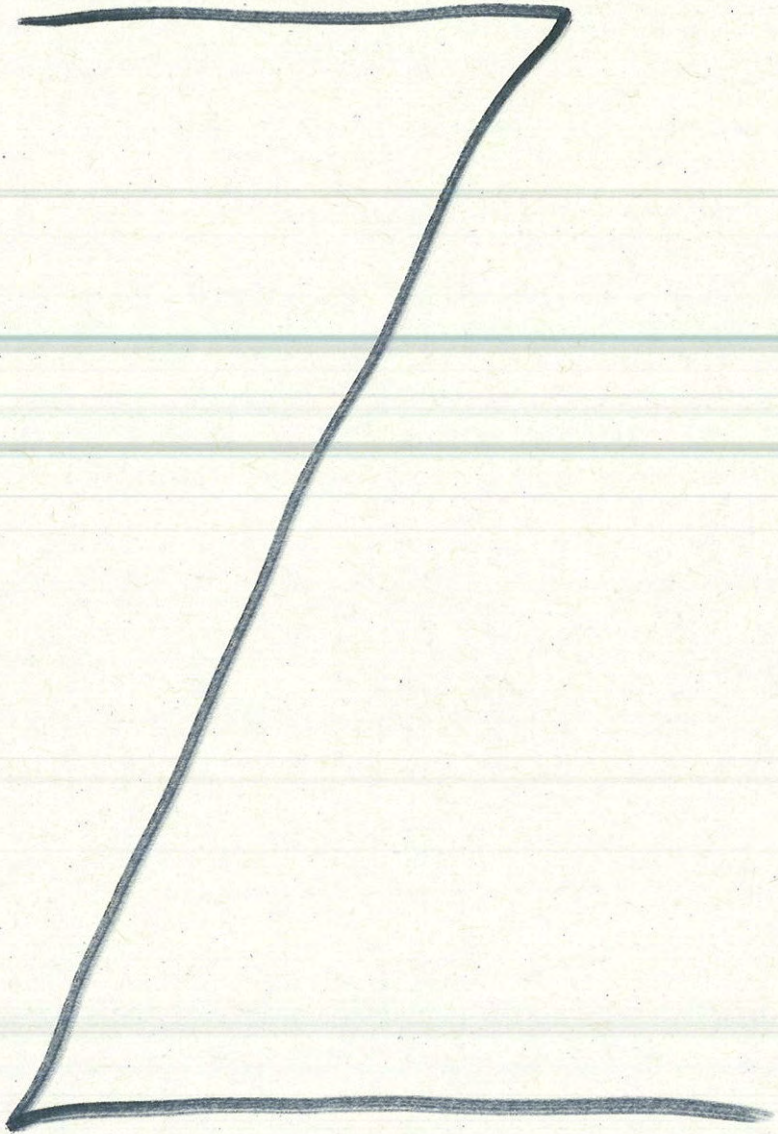
Example of night letter

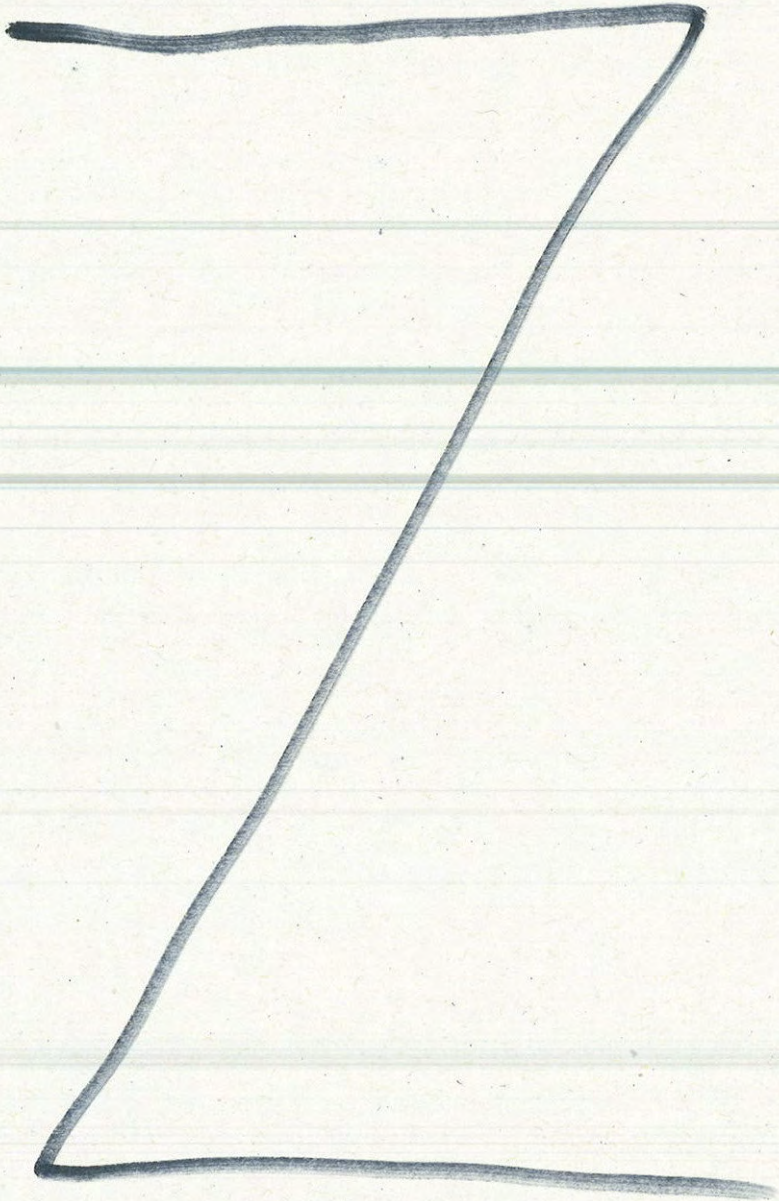
the freedom to make decisions about what to do in their AO. Insurgents will tailor levels of intimidation specific to local conditions and levels of LN support. Their understanding of the population allows them to tailor their approach in a way that is difficult for ISAF to achieve. There are numerous methods that insurgents can employ to intimidate the population, ranging from generalised threats to physical violence, to maintaining an overt presence in the area through the use of Illegal Vehicle Check points and Shabnamah (commonly referred to as night letters).

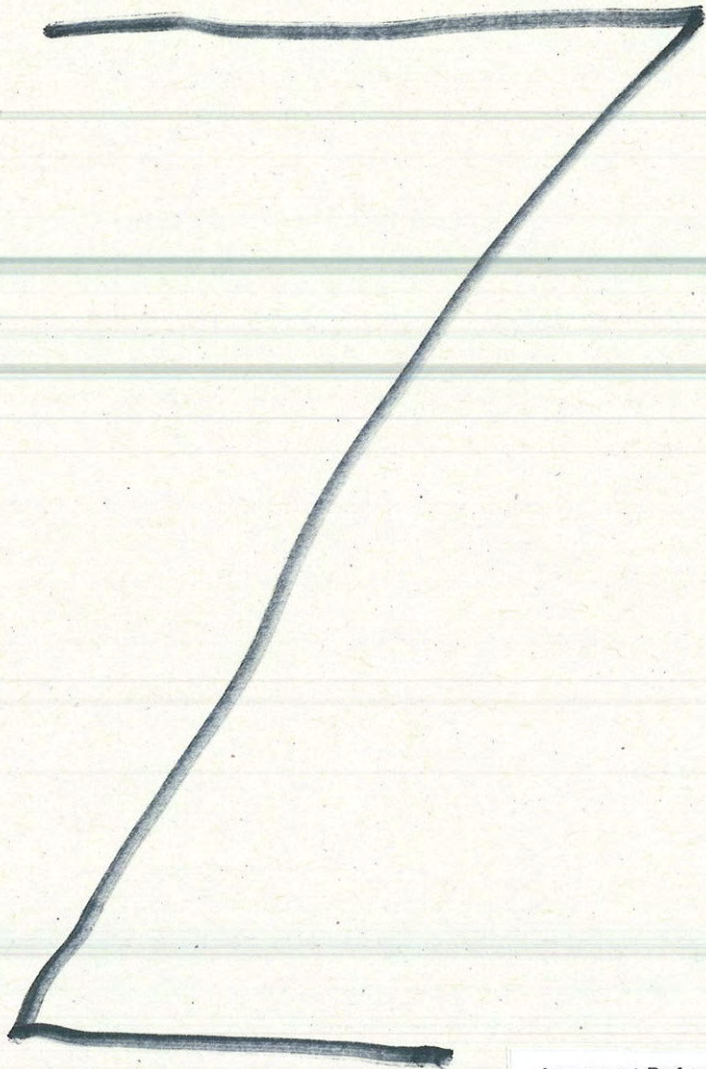
Insurgent Offensive Operations



11







Insurgent Defensive Operations

Offensive spirit is a predominant insurgent characteristic in all types of operations. The difference between an offensive operation and

a defensive operation conducted with offensive spirit is not always clear.

Intent. The insurgent will seek to DELAY, ATTRIT and DENY easy access to CF.

- a. **Offensive action.** Above all else the insurgent has an offensive spirit. He will conduct defence forward attacking ISAF forward of the defended area in order to DELAY but preferably DENY access to the defended area.
- b. **Layered defence.** The insurgent seeks to create depth by layering the defensive screen using obstacles and mobility. However he is often only capable of front loading his defences and cannot maintain real depth.
- c. **Channel the en approach / anticipate direction of en approach.** It seems obvious that the insurgent would prefer to adopt a principle of all round defence in order to anticipate an attack from any direction. However, Units have observed that insurgents prepare their defences in their anticipated direction of CF threat. CF have shown an ability to dislocate the insurgent by attacking from an unexpected direction; or by using RW to 'leapfrog' the insurgent defence, the insurgent is not able to be strong everywhere.
- d. **Maintain flexibility of defence.** The insurgent will be mobile and adapt to the observed ISAF approach. If the actual direction of approach is different from that anticipated then they will use the principle of offensive action to create a mobile layered defence.
- e. **Mutual Support.** The insurgent will use multiple FPs in order to increase the strength and breadth of the defence.

Enabling Operations

detailed picture of the group's arsenal. While a large proportion of this weaponry is likely to have come from caches on both sides of the Pakistan-Afghanistan border left over from the Taliban years in power (1996-2001), it is apparent that fresh supplies and new weapon systems have reached the insurgents since then. Component parts for improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are also regularly smuggled across the border from Pakistan. Weapons are easy to acquire in the region, and there are undoubtedly caches of small arms, rocket-propelled grenade launchers and 107 mm and 122 mm free flight rockets left over from the earlier phases of the Afghan conflict. At the same time, new weaponry and ammunition is also surfacing in Southern and Eastern Afghanistan.

Insurgent Casevac. Insurgents do not actively seek death as a general rule. This results in many examples of a robust insurgent CASEVAC chain, for both injured and dead fighters, which is particularly interesting as it demonstrates that the insurgents are, to an extent, bound by their duty to dead or injured fighters and the cultural requirement in Islam to show respect for dead bodies. Routes used for CASEVAC tend to be the same as those used for forward movement.

Facilitation (Sustaining the fight). Taliban fighters possess a range of small-arms and light weapons, with Afghan and ISAF forces uncovering a wealth of weapons caches during counter-insurgency operations that provide a

components, ammunition and weapon systems. Only safe havens or remote locations afford them genuine security resulting in an increase in the movement of small quantities to the 'front line'. The lethal aid is facilitated in tactical bounds through progressively smaller caches to the point of use, generally utilising a 'just enough - just in time approach'.

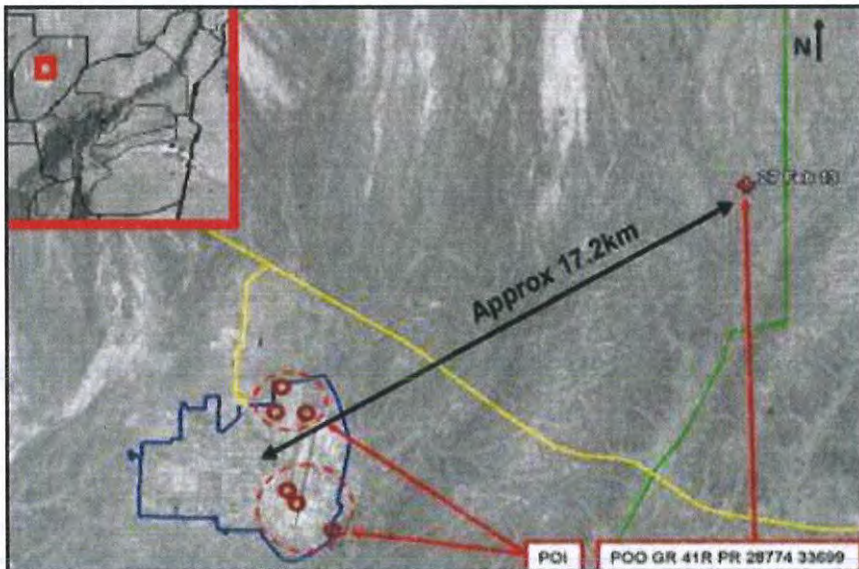
Taliban Weaponry

Typically, Insurgents are armed with Russian and Chinese-manufactured Kalashnikov-type assault rifles, RPK light machine guns and PKM general-purpose machine guns. Support weaponry consists primarily of RPG-7/Type-69 rocket-propelled grenade launchers; and 82 mm mortars. f

Firepower

Indirect Fire. With the Bastion, Leatherneck and Shorabak (BLS) complex being seen as one of the insurgents (INS) most prestigious targets, the indirect fire (IDF) threat remains extant. The INS maintain a permanent intent to attack, however they currently lack the capability. It is assessed that as the ISAF drawdown continues into 2014, this threat will increase.

The most recent attack onto the BLS complex was on the 29 Apr 13. This attack consisted of ten 122mm rockets being fired onto the complex, three of which landed within the airhead, three in Camp Shorabak and four to the North/North East of the BLS complex. The point of origin (POO) was given as 19km North East of the complex, locating it in Now Zad, an area with a minimal CF/ANSF footprint. Prior to this a similar



IDF attack targeting the BLS complex, 29 Apr 13.

attack was conducted on 27 Feb 13 which again involved ten 122mm rockets, six of which landed within the complex (see Fig. a). The POO for this attack was 17.2km to the North East of the BLS complex (see Fig. b), in a similar location to the attack in Apr.

Evidence recovered from the ground indicates that the type of rocket was most likely an ARASH-1, which has a range of 1.4km - 21km. Prior to 2013, the last 122mm rocket incident was on 4 Nov 12 which also utilised an ARASH 1.

Attacks on the BLS complex garner a higher degree of international publicity than attacks on other locations, increasing the INS perception of effects based success. The aforementioned coupled with the reduction of other viable targets as retrograde progresses will likely motivate them to attempt more IDF attacks in the future.

Direct Fire. The insurgents also possess Direct Fire (DF) assets as well as deploying marksmen able to lay down accurate high velocity shots. The marksmen currently operate within 200-300m of the intended target, although there are examples up to 800m, and often from schools and mosques. The accuracy of single shot firers did vary, though as it became a regularly employed tactic, individual CPs would report the full spectrum of skill. The weapon selection may depend on the type of firer, trained shots and sharpshooters may utilise AKs, Lee Enfield bolt action rifles or Soviet Dragunovs. There is also evidence of acquired SA-80 and M4

rifles being used against ISAF.

Op HERRICK 12 witnessed the introduction of and an increase in the use of UGL. An increase in usage was witnessed over Op HERRICK 14 in the DF role as it was assessed to be preferred to the RPG due to the ease of concealment. However, this tactic has been limited over H16, H17 and H18, which is attributed to limited stock levels amongst the insurgency.

Prestige Weapons. The heavier DF and IDF weapons such as the AGS-17 grenade launcher, DShK, and ZPU-1 AA gun are often reserved or in short supply, thus making attacks of this nature often uncommon. Within the Upper Gereshk Valley, SPG-9 recoilless rifle attacks have been common throughout 2012 and 2013, targeting ISAF locations. Due to the capability and limited access of these weapons, they are accorded a greater degree of protection by the insurgents. The weapons will be camouflaged in hides and in transit, will often be on mobile platforms to aid rapid movement/escape, and will be protected by an insurgent team.

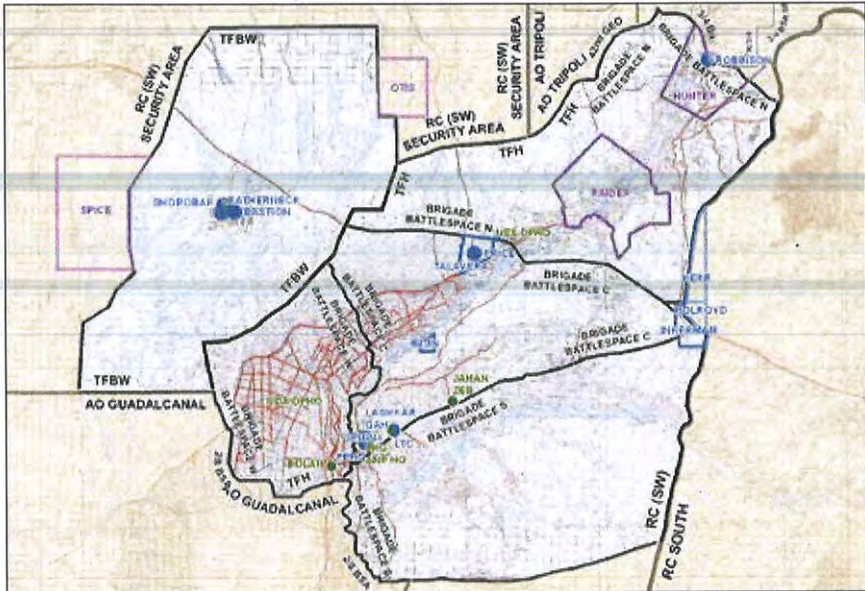
The presence of such equipment may also excite local interest and comment, and therefore be made known to CF or ANSF.



Task Force Helmand

Readers should note that Transition of Lead Security Responsibility to the ANSF has led to monthly revisions of boundaries and ownership of Patrol Bases.

As your Mission Specific Training continues, you will be updated with the current AO laydown.



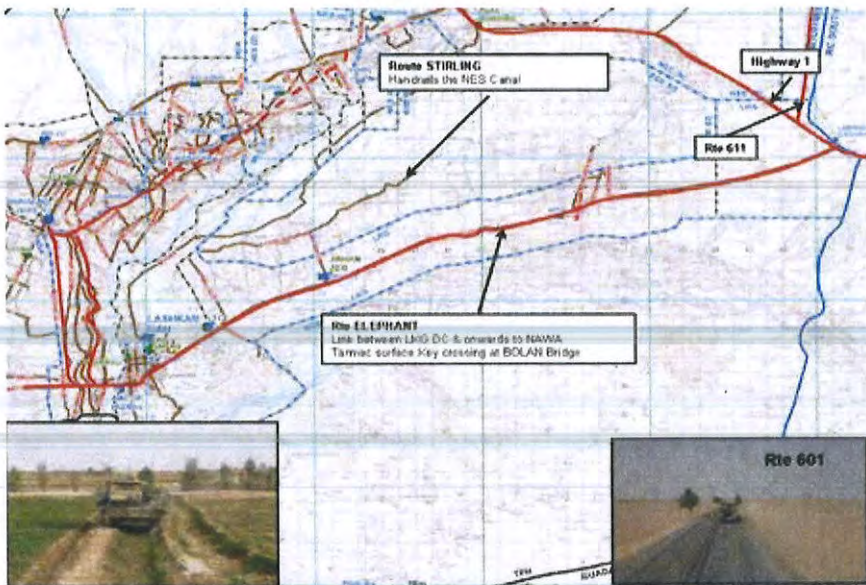
TFH Boundaries as at Sep 13

Ground

The Transition Support Unit (TSU) Lashkar Gah (LKG) area of operations (AO) is currently split into four reporting areas; AO West (encompassing BABAJI/BOLAN) AO Centre (LKG DC and immediate environs), AO 601 and AO DURAI (encompassing Patrol Base (PB) LKG DURAI (LKD)). The Northern area of the Brigade Battlespace (BBS) is known as the NES Dashte (Desert), which incorporates the NES canal which in turn supports the semi-Green Zone (GZ) and associated settlements. BBS to the South is known as the TALAW Dashte, which includes the River ARGHANDAB on the Northern bank and vast desert to the south.

In addition to the ARGHANDAB River and the NES canal, the River HELMAND (RHMD) is the dominating feature within the AO running North to South. It divides AO Centre from AO West and merges with the River ARGHANDAB at TOOP GHANDI.

The main route running through the AO is Route (Rte) ELEPHANT, more commonly known as Rte 601. This route connects the provincial capital of HELMAND (HMD) with Highway 1 (Hwy 1) and the rest of AFG. The route is black topped and holds a steady stream of traffic throughout the day. Rte 601 runs into LKG District Centre (DC) which connects with Rte MOOSE. This route runs



TSU LKG Main routes

North to South through the DC and past MOB LKG, former TFH HQ. The route is black topped and sees a large amount of LN traffic with congestion often seen around the bazaar to the south of the DC.

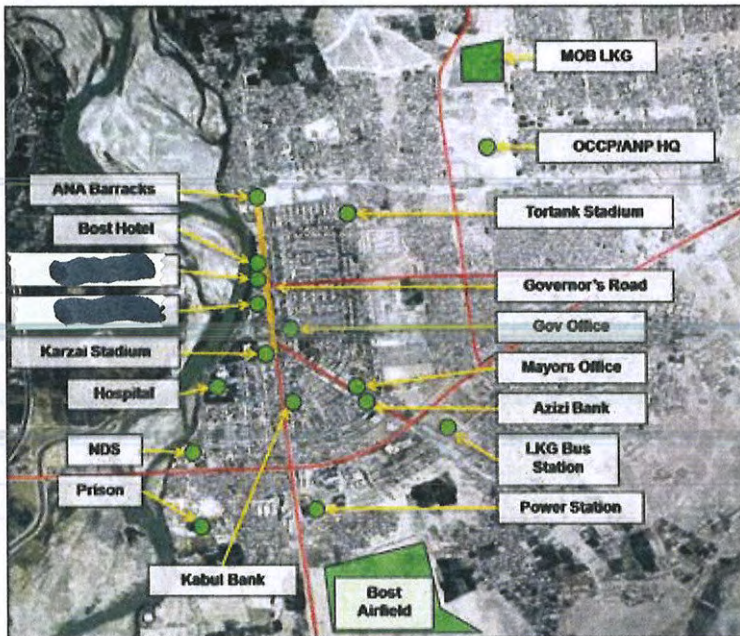
LKG DC

The security that surrounds the DC provided by the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) has seen the area prosper allowing the economy to thrive. As the provincial capital of HMD a number of government compounds and public services sit within the DC. Although a good sign of prosperity, it also makes the DC an attractive target for the Enemies of AFGHANISTAN (EOA). Compounds such as the Provincial Governor, The Mayor's Office, the National Directorate of Security and the Chief of Police are all located within the DC.

Human Terrain

TSU LKG has a broad tribal composition that manifests itself in a cosmopolitan tribally mixed DC. The surrounding environs are also very diverse but have clearer tribal boundaries demarked by historical links to the key population centres such as the Barakzai 'Watan' (fertile) areas of BOLAN.

The tribal lay down along Route 601 extends into the Bde Battlespace North and South of the Coy boundaries. The area has recently drawn many people from other areas including some displaced by coalition force (CF) Ops. As a result, the area has attracted LNs from numerous tribes who live in close proximity to each other with no reported conflicts. These people have been attracted to the area by the opportunity to farm the fertile land and often work as tenant farmers. Much of the farmland is owned by out of area landlords who live in LKG DC and take a percentage of the crops grown.



Governance

Both LKG and GERESHK (GSK) are considered to be municipalities, with Mayors officially appointed to assist in the running of the area. The municipal administration consists of a Mayor (Fazal Mohammed SAFI), Deputy Mayor (Eng Matiullah BAHER) and Heads of Ministry Line Departments. In LKG, Municipal Oversight Board (MOB) is in charged with managing financial and administrative responsibilities and collecting revenue in the form of taxes, rents and fees which remain in the municipality for expenditures. The MOB elections saw representatives elected for all areas including the often overlooked peripheries such as KHOSH KAWA which has facilitated the outreach of GIROA into these areas. The Route 601 Coy AO is divided between the municipalities of NAHR-E SARAJ (NES) and LKG, with much of the area south of Route 601 (KHOSH KAWA) being administered by LKG and much of the North (NES Dasht) being administered by NES.

LKG Mayor - Fazal Mohammed SAFI.

The Mayor, Fazal Mohammed SAFI, studied law at HMD University and in 2001 was employed by the NDS. In 2005, he became deputy director of the telecommunications line ministry in HMD and promoted to head of the department in 2006. The Deputy Mayor is Eng Matiullah BAHER of the Popalzai tribe and is from NAWA District, he holds a degree in civil engineering from KANDAHAR University. BAHER has worked for NGOs BARAK and the Mercy Corps and also the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation.



Economy and Infrastructure

In LKG DC, the well developed basic infrastructure, active industrial park, flourishing bazaar and international investment have driven economic growth. The LKG Bazaar is the bustling focal point of community activity with traders, shops and entrepreneurs. There is an industrial park South of the DC and a range of other cottage industries and small businesses including those that engage in processing, distribution and sale of agricultural raw material.

To the South of the DC in the QAL'AH BOST area, the ground is rich in nutrients and minerals and extremely fertile. The people in the area can grow a wealth of crops including wheat, tomatoes and grapes. Some of this produce is purchased by Pakistani traders and exported to PAKISTAN (PAK) for cold storage. During the off-peak season when these goods are more in demand, they are transported back to the large urban bazaars in LKG or GSK and re-sold.

In the rural areas of the AO, livelihoods are based on agriculture with farmers growing crops and rearing livestock. Most of these are tenant farmers that work the land of wealthy land-owners for a percentage of the crop which they can then sell. The economy is predominantly seasonal, based on selling at source to the customer.

The foremost industry along Route 601 is agriculture. The major crop in the AO is poppy; wheat is also grown but not to the same extent. The water table is salty and there is only limited irrigation largely sourced by the INS controlled NES Canal to the North. The limited irrigation requires the employment of diesel powered bore pumps in many areas

ANSF

The ANSF have the lead for security provision in LKG. Security within the DC transitioned in



2011, followed by AO West and AO 601 in 2012. Limited ANSF presence is seen throughout both the Northern and Southern Dashte which often results in limited support in these areas for the ANSF from the LNs.

ISAF now retain a limited mentoring role and support role in anticipation of ISAF withdrawal in 2014.

The ANA have a presence in the AO focussed around PB JAHAN ZEB, North of Route 601, and CPs in the NES Dashte (Ops Box RIKKI).

There is also an ANA QRF located in the DC.

The ANSF have an EOD capability with the Explosive Hazard Reduction Team (EHRT). The ANSF security infrastructure in the DC is focussed around the Provincial Police

Headquarters (PPHQ) and the Operational Coordination Centre - Provincial (OCC-P). The AUP has additional manpower in two Kandaks (KDKs), one on Route 601 providing security, and another in LKG DC as the Provincial Response KDK.

The NDS have a presence within the AO which consists of a strike force located in the DC designated Bost 170.

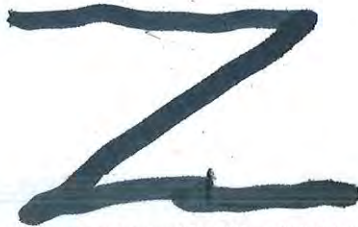
Insurgency

Within LKG DC the EoA are limited to conducting terrorist attacks such as SVBIEDs, however with the current security provided by the ANSF (known as the Ring of Steel) the insurgency is increasingly turning to assassinations, in

particular targeted at ANSF in an attempt to undermine the LN's perceptions of the ANSF.

The EoA presence in the DC is judged to be on a small scale and consisting of a number of independently operating cells, controlled from an external source, and supplied by dedicated networks reaching to PAK. Attacks in the Municipal Centre are generally directed against the ANSF, GIRoA officials or locations. This intent is reliant on media coverage of the aftermath of attacks. Thus INS attacks are generally conducted against targets which yield a high number of casualties, for example the Kabul Bank during Ramadan, or outside the OCC-P to target pattern setting by ANSF convoys.

In the Route 601 AO, the INS intent is to maintain their safe haven in the NES Dashte (IVO YAKCHAL and SUR SHAKH) and their facilitation areas in both the Northern Dashte and IVO the ARGHANDAB River Valley, specifically BAND-E TIMOR. EoA activity is more reactive in these areas, with CF operations and patrols usually drawing a robust INS response in under an hour. In terms of offensive activity, the INS continue to target ANSF transiting Route 601 with IEDs in addition to conducting SAF engagements against isolated CPs.



With the presence of Rte 601 and Hwy 1 in the AO, the EoA will target convoys either bound for ISAF / ANSF locations or those which will result in potential profit.

IEDs will often be used against mounted patrols (ANSF) with the EoA often exploiting

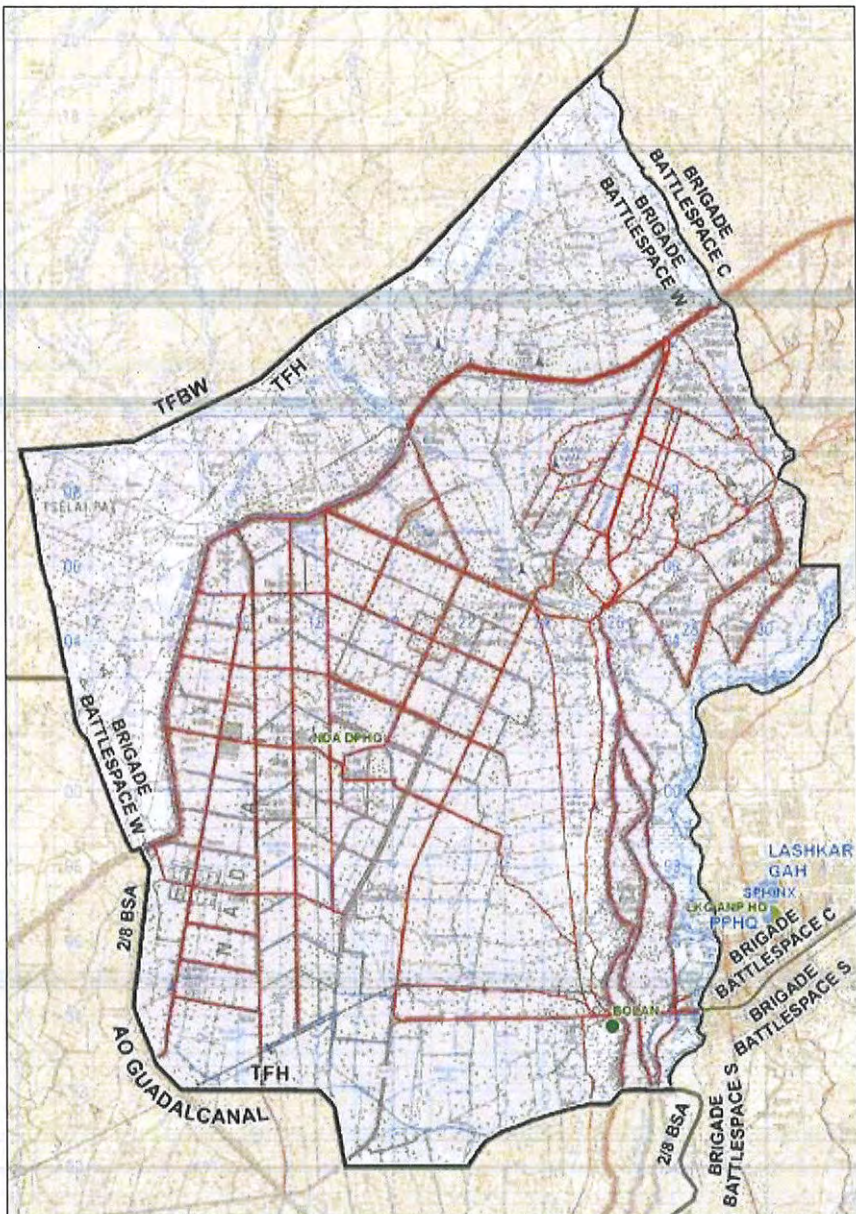
pattern setting through the use of local scouts. The EoA use the IEDs in an offensive and defensive role, often defending compounds or local caches.

Close quarter assassination (CQA) is a tactic often used within the DC in an attempt to target high profile ANSF or government officials. This tactic is both cost and man power effective, which also allows the EoA to instill a level of fear amongst the population.

Historically the IDF threat within LKG has remained minimal, however May-Jul 13 saw an increase in attacks against the DC. This threat has previously remained low due to the probability of collateral damage and injuries to LNs. This change in tactic is attributed to the current 'Ring of Steel' around the DC, this protection provided by the ANSF makes conducting a spectacular attack by the INS difficult. The use of IDF requires minimal manning and allows a greater stand of distance with IDF being launched from the Dashte outside of the DC immediate environs. Although currently inaccurate and limited, this tactic will likely continue to be employed in a harassing role in order to undermine the ANSF ability to provide security within the DC.

LKG DC will remain an INS target with the long term goal of successfully conducting a spectacular attack in an attempt to undermine the government's ability to secure the DC. The current security provision hinders this ability and it is likely that an increase in assassinations will be seen. With the drawdown of ISAF locations within the AO, the EoA will look to increase the pressure against the ANSF as they look to regain ground and continue the movement of facilitation through the AO. The ANSF however, retain the intent to conduct ops in such areas but they will likely see a robust response and it is likely that the ANSF will refrain from patrolling into areas away from main routes and urban areas.

Brigade BattleSpace West



Brigade BattleSpace (W) as at Oct 13

Ground NDA District is the largest district in Central HELMAND (HMD) stretching from the River HMD in the east to the NIMRUZ Province border to the West. NDA District is bordered by WASHIR to the North, NAHR-E SERAJ (NES) and LASHKAR GAH (LKG) to the East and TREK NAWA and BADULLAH QULP to the South. In Apr 10, President KARZAI announced that MARJEH would be separated from NDA and become its own district, in order to allow more focused governance. However, this section will concentrate solely on the TSU NDA AO, which from Sep 13 will be known as Brigade BattleSpace West, as it has been fully transitioned to Afghan governance..

NDA refers to the 180 km area of fertile, agricultural land sandwiched between the NAHR-E BUHGRA (NEB) Canal and the BOLAN desert. This area was artificially created by the Helmand River Valley Project (HRVP) irrigation scheme in the 1950s. This extensive project created a number of large canals, such as the NEB Canal that diverts water from the River HMD and feeds a series of smaller canals and numerous irrigation ditches. TSU NDA is bordered

to the North and West by the NEB Canal, to the East by the BOLAN Dasht, and to the South by Route SOMERSET and the Dasht on the southern edge of the Canal Zone (CZ). The areas of 31 WEST (31 W) and 31 EAST (31 E) are named due to them being divided by the SHAMALAN Canal which emanates from the 31st Sluice Gate, providing a physical boundary on the ground. 31W was previously known as the CHAH-E ANJIR Triangle (CAT) and 31E previously known as the BABAJI PEAR.

Water features. The TSU NDA area is defined by a number of significant canals built by the HRVP. These canals feed multiple irrigation channels, which interweave the entire NDA area, are in varying states of repair but are critical to the local economy. The constant supply of water to the area means that the land is particularly fertile which has resulted in a local dependence on agriculture. The flow of water is controlled by sluice gates in the NEB Canal. The large canals represent significant obstacles for CF movement (particularly vehicles) but do not pose significant obstacles for local nationals (LNs) and INS due to the number of foot, raft and pontoon crossings.

Routes. NDA is surrounded by several large roads including Route 603 (Route DORSET), Route 604 (a continuation of Route ELEPHANT) and Route NEPTUNE, which are generally compacted mud, though there are a number of routes now at various stages of blacktopping. Route NEWQUAY is one of these routes, which significantly connects NDA DC to Friendship Bridge, and as a result the broader NDA District, and also, via Route WESTBURY and the BOLAN Bridge, to the Provincial capital of LKG. Due to the progress of Route NEWQUAY, commerce has thrived with traders from LKG coming to the DC to sell goods. In addition, Route MORPHEUS has become blacktopped which has linked 31W



Dominant water features in CF NDA (arrows represent water flow)

and LKG, and provide a visible investment by GIROA in the area. Over the past few iterations of Op HERRICK, routes throughout NDA have been upgraded to the point where they were 'blacktopped'. This refers to creating metalled roads which are tough, sustainable and mostly all weather resistant.

The AO is interspersed with numerous other canal roads and small tracks that connect the main transit routes. These routes and tracks are generally bordered by deep irrigation ditches which channel vehicles and make it almost impossible to turn around. The Maximum Load Capacity (MLC) of these routes vary, however, their use is significantly lower than that of the major routes.

BOWRI. Bowri literally means pump, a reference to the inhabitants' requirement to pump water out of the NEB. The Dasht area north of the NEB has a reported population

of up to 40,000. The area is largely an area of secondary Green Zone (GZ) interspersed with compounds.

Dasht. The Dasht is an expanse of land to the western edge of the NDA CZ, incorporating partially irrigated land, which then becomes more arid the further west travelled. This area is inhabited by a large proportion of illegal settlers, with an assessed population of 30,000 - 40,000. The area is tribally mixed with the predominant tribes being Ishaqzai, Noorzai and Kakars. Scattered across the Dasht are several bazaars, functioning in legitimate and illegitimate trade. One of the most notable is the BARI GUL Bazaar. Its size and wide range of shops attracts LNs from across the district, however, due to its success and the limited CF presence, INS have used the area to influence the population through taxing and intimidation.



Bowri area IVO CP FOLAD (now transitioned to ANSF)

Human Terrain

The creation of NDA District in the 1950's ensures tribal issues in the AO, and much of the rest of HMD, particularly difficult to conceptualise. Despite the presence of kalays affiliated with a tribal name, tribal affiliation no longer determines where people settle or with whom they interact. Many villages, although dominated by one tribe are still deemed tribally heterogeneous. The village is the key social driver and institution and social dynamics are driven by shifting loyalties to powerbrokers and inter-village relationships; tribal links are but one identity an individual may choose to wear on any given day, depending on the situation. This lack of tribal allegiance and the breakdown of the Pashtunwali system has resulted in financial gain becoming a primary motivational factor for LNs. The final characteristic of LNs across NDA is that they are pragmatic in nature and are not indoctrinated or ideologically committed to a single point of view or narrative. They will choose to support whoever will provide the greatest opportunities, however, in some cases, they may not have such a choice and will have to support the dominant entity.

An historic division does exist between those who migrated into the area in the 1950 / 60s, (Kharotei (Ghilzai) / Hazaras) and those who came to the area due to drought or conflict (Noorzai, Popalzai and Ishaqzai (Durrani)). The Durrani tribes that migrated later are generally regarded as squatters by the Kharotei. There is particular resentment towards those that have settled more recently in the Dasht, as the Kharotei believe this land belongs to them and had intended to expand into it. This situation may explain why the Kharotei are often perceived as trying to maintain the status quo for fear of losing land to those Durrani that could claim it was traditionally theirs.

Along with water access, land ownership is one of the most contentious issues for LNs across NDA district. Several factors have led to a confused ownership system, consequently affecting access to GIROA initiated programmes. Several governments since the district's formation have issued several laws and decrees on the issue. These laws have primarily consisted of invalidating or reinstating previous laws adding confusion and duplication to land ownership. Subsequently, this has led to issues in NDA with several powerbrokers having legal documentation for a piece of land, but all under different government / authorities.

The local population is alienated from governance by the ongoing land rights issues, specifically GIROA's refusal to recognise Qawalas issued by previous administrations. For some there is a process to resolve this, however, there is a deeply engrained belief amongst the locals that GIROA exists to tax at every opportunity. The process of updating the Qawalas costs a standard fee, an annual payment that is not feasible for many LNs and [REDACTED]

Additionally there are a large number of local land owners that, under current GIROA legislation, have no legal rights to the land they have farmed for decades.

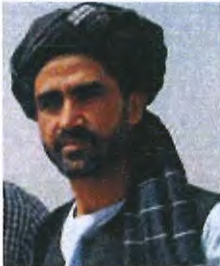
Governance

Governance in NDA improved dramatically over 2011 and 2012 with GIROA expanding and consolidating in areas previously uninfluenced, while furthering their capabilities in secure population centres. Over 2012, GIROA have consolidated in areas influenced over the 2011 period, with kalays such as LOY MANDEH seeing drastic improvements. These improvements are predominantly attributed to the increase in security across the district by CF, with the Afghan

Local Police (ALP) becoming more effective, while the INS footprint has diminished as a result of successful targeting Ops against INS commanders. The District Community Council (DCC) has progressed since its introduction in 2010 acting as a functioning body and bridging the gap between district and kalay governance. Although there are teething issues with corruption and self interest, it continues to make progress, but needs support from CF in order to progress further during 2012 and 2013. A key concern is the lack of support to district GIROA running up to 2014 and beyond, with the main fear being the PRT being able to operate without security from CF.

**NDA District Governor (DG)
- Mohammed**

IBRAHIM. Mohammed IBRAHIM (Noorzai) is a prominent member of a powerful family who reside in the LOY BAGH area of NAD-E



ALI. Although relatively young to hold an office as senior as District Governor, IBRAHIM appears to have the capability and tribal connections to be successful in his new post.

IBRAHIM was a former employee of the United Nations in LKG prior to his appointment as NDA DG in Sept 2012 to replace Habibullah KHAN and holds an Agricultural Degree from KDH university.


IBRAHIM's family and tribal links (FAREHI NOORZAI) extend extensively across both the ANSF and GIROA.

**NDA DCC Chairman
- Haji BARAKZAI.**

Haji BARAKZAI is from the Kharotei tribe and is Chairman of the NDA DCC. Immediately after the fall of the TB regime, BARAKZAI was appointed NDA

security chief by the district elders for a period of three months; however at that time the police consisted of both Kharotei and Noorzai elements. In late 05, Haji TOR JAN was appointed as a District CoP.





Economy and Infrastructure

Agriculture continues to dominate the economy, with the poppy harvest in 2011 attracting migrant workers. Approximately 90 % of the AO's employed workforce is occupied in agriculture. The remaining 10 % are GIRoA workers, bazaar workers and contractors. Unemployment across the AO is difficult to ascertain, however there have been certain instances where workers for Cash for Works (CfW) projects have been hard to find, suggesting that unemployment is not a significant problem (the peaks and troughs in labour demand owing to agricultural cycles would normally imply periods of unemployment throughout the year). However, double or triple cropping the land may smooth the workflow and keep more workers employed. There was no evidence of places where men seeking work would congregate in the hope of finding employment rather a tendency for local elders to allocate manpower for work as required. The bazaars in SAIDABAD (SBD), the DC and ZARGHUN Kalay, remain the key commercial hubs. After spontaneously re-opening at the beginning of Apr 11 for the first time after Op TOR SHEZADA, the SBD Bazaar has prospered. The bazaar in the DC remains the only one with fully registered shops as the NDA Mayor focuses on commercial development in NDA. The other key aspect to the economic prosperity is the Islamic Investment and Finance Cooperative that has loaned 27 million Afghanis to LNs in NDA and has 1,310 members. Further indicators of

development are increased road traffic and the taxation by GIRoA of increased numbers of petrol stations and bazaars.

In contrast, the poppy harvest for NDA in 2012 was generally poor, which followed suit to other districts across Central HMD. The main reasons for the poor crop were due to poppy bulbs being significantly smaller compared to other years. The ramifications of the poor crop has seen farmers in the Bowri and Western Dasht not being able to pay off their large debts, already accumulated due to extortionate land rent charged by landowners/powerbrokers.

The vast majority of communities within TSU NDA are poor with much of the income generated through agriculture, including poppy cultivation. The CZ area is comparatively richer than the Dasht area but poverty is still widespread. However, much of the area was historically affluent due to the high employment from the HRVP. The Helmand and Arghandab Valley Authority (HAVA) was the main employer and required skilled labour at all levels, however, the vast majority of locals are now farmers or work in associated industries. LNs in the outlying areas were much poorer, subsistence farmers at the time of the HRVP.

However over time, the balance of wealth has reversed and it is the farmers who are now relatively wealthy as they can support their own families and sell additional surplus produce. Many who worked for the HAVA owned no land and instead lived in government owned compounds in CJR; they are now amongst the poor as they survive on low paid farm work, still having no land to sustain themselves.

ANSF

The Afghan National Army boundaries in TSU NDA encompass the whole of the 1st Kdk, 3 Bde, 215 Corps (1 / 3 / 215) and elements of the 2th Kdk, 3 Bde, 215 Corps (2/ 3 / 215), predominantly

in the northeast of NDA (KOPAK). 1 / 3 / 215 Kdk is a 6 Toley Kdk, based in NDA District. It is a seasoned Kdk that has fought across HMD for the last six years. The Kdk is commanded by Lt Col ZELGAI who has been in post since 2009. Currently the Heavy Weapons Toley are the most capable and have been used as a manoeuvre Toley.

In the NDA elements of the AUP, ANCOP and ALP comprise the ANP forces within the district. In addition there are a number of specialist branches including the Directorate of Intelligence (DI), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Counter Terrorist Police (CTP or CT) operating out of DPHQ.

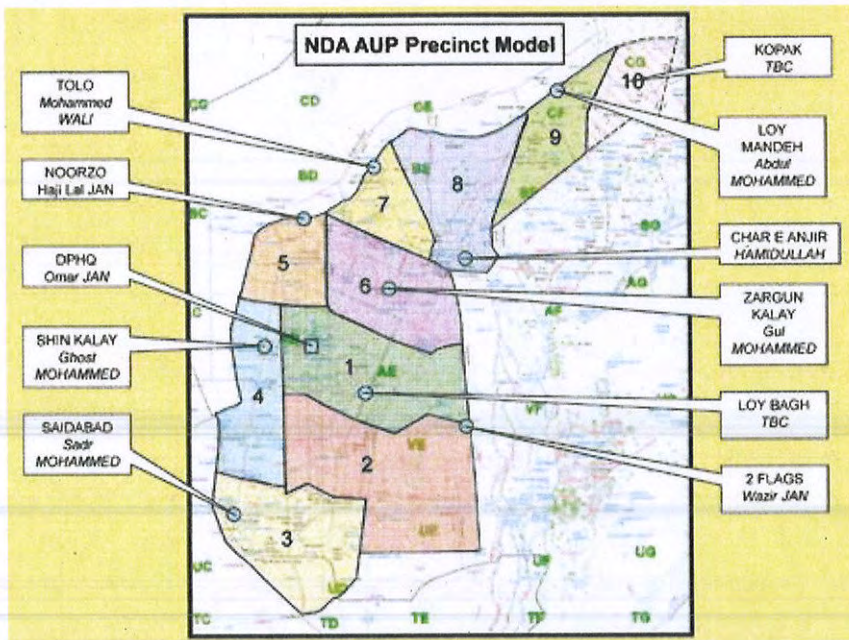
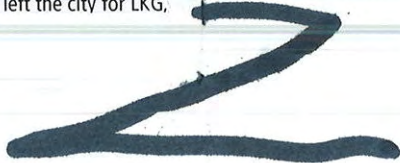
The district is divided into 10 precincts with a number of these having transferred to Afghan security forces lead. Each precinct, in theory, has a Precinct HQ with a Commander who is

responsible for the all the CPs within the precinct boundaries.

District Chief of Police (DCoP) - Haji Omar JAN.

Omar JAN was appointed DCoP on 19 Sep 2011.

After serving only a brief stint as DCoP for SANGIN (SGN), he was moved to GARMSIR (GMR) in mid Apr 10. Prior to 2008, he served as a CP Comd in MJH. He subsequently left the city for LKG,





towards the. This programme has now stalled in KOPAK and its tashkiel transferred to CJR. Currently the tashkiel for ALP in TSU NDA stands at 300.

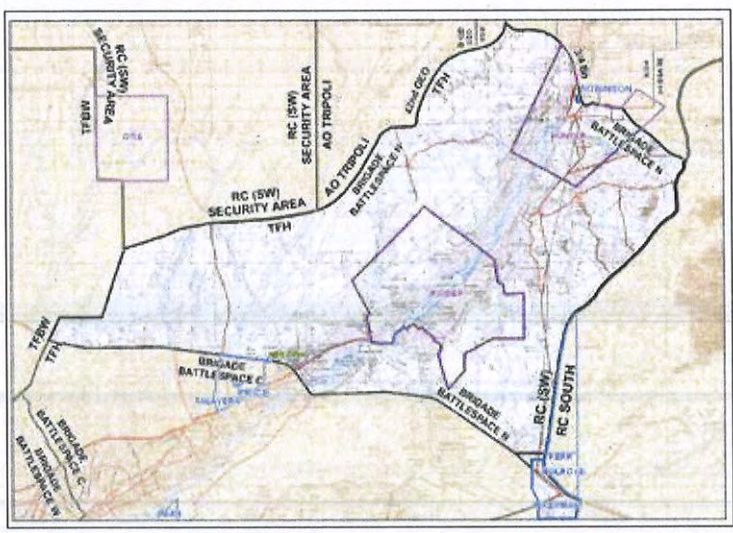
Afghan Local Police (ALP). The ALP initiative is a temporary village-focused programme that aims to target areas with limited or no ANSF presence, providing a security effect delivered by the local Afghan community while ANSF numbers grow. Overall LN opinion of the ALP scheme in NDA remains mixed, varying from place to place. The ALP has largely been a success in NDA South where INS overt activity has been low over the past 18 months. The attempt to recruit ALP members in KOPAK North and South pre and post 2012 poppy harvest has drawn disappointing results with the three designated ALP leaders sighting INS intimidation and LN indifference

Insurgency

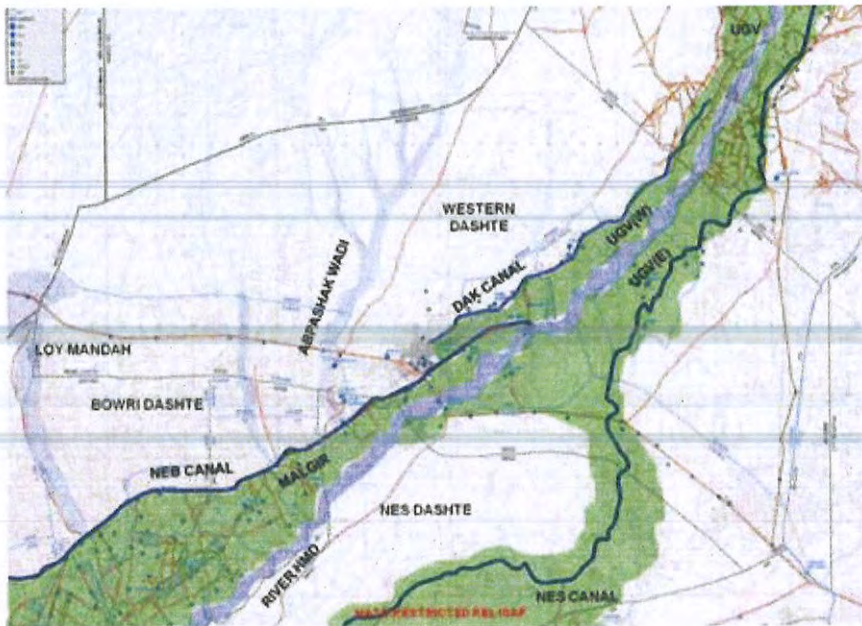
The insurgency in 2013 continues to operate on the peripheries of the Canal Zone, seeking to exploit any opportunities/weaknesses provided by GIROA. Clearance operations in Jan and Feb 12 pushed a large INS presence from 31 E and KOPAK into the Bowri and Dasht, decreasing kinetic activity in the area. However, as the security presence has reduced following the operation, INS have re-infiltrated into the area on a small scale, conducting influence and intimidation operations attempting to destabilise GIROA's campaign in the area.

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT UNIT NAHR-E SERAJ Ground

The Transitional Support Unit (TSU) Nahr -E Saraj (NES) area of operations (AO) can be



Brigade BattleSpace (N) as of Oct 13



Overview of the terrain and area of interest

broken down to include; MALGIR now referred to as DEC (S), the GERESHK (GSK) KAMMERBAND (Kammerband is Pashtun for defensive line); with the GSK District Centre (DC) being the heart of the AO, the UPPER GERESHK VALLEY (UGV) to the North now referred to as DEC (N) and the eastern and western deserts.

The district is bordered to the North by NOW ZAD (NZD) district, to the Northeast by SANGIN (SGN) district, to the East by MAIWAND (MWD) district (in KANDAHAR (KDH) Province), to the South LASHKAR GAH (LKG), NAD-E ALI (NDA) to the Southwest and WASHIR (WSR) to the West. GSK DC is located approximately 40 km West of the provincial border with KDH and 30 km to the Northeast of LKG.

The TSU NES AO is a rural and agricultural area almost entirely surrounded by natural and man-made water features. These include the

River HELMAND (HMD) which diagonally dissects the AO; the NAHR-E BUGHRA (NEB) Canal, a man-made feature that branches off of the River HMD and runs into NDA, the NES Canal, the most Eastern water feature and finally the DEH ADAM KHAN (DAK) Canal. In addition to the river and canal networks there are also two principal wadis in the AO, firstly the ABPASHAK Wadi to the East of MALGIR and secondly the LOY MANDEH Wadi to the West of MALGIR. Due to the abundance of water features the AO is extremely well irrigated which has resulted in large swathes of dense vegetation.

Other prominent features include Highway 1 (HWY1) (Ring Road South) which is the main arterial route running through HMD and wider AFGHANISTAN. HWY 1 links GSK with KDH and NIMRUZ (NMZ) and is the principle reason GSK DC is a thriving economical hub. HWY1 is used

extensively by both military and civilian traffic. In addition there are main transit routes that link GSK with the northern towns of SGN, MUSA QALEH (MSQ) and NZD, as well as routes that link GSK with the southern towns of NDA and LKG. In the area of MALGIR, Route TRIDENT acts as the spine of the Green Zone (GZ) and provides an important link to LKG.

The only bridge within NES that provides a crossing over the River HMD is Bridge TOM. The bridge is serviceable and in frequent use by TSU and Local National (LN) traffic, however it has been subject to recent repairs, in Jun 2013, conducted by US engineers. The two main crossing points over the NEB Canal are situated to the south of the DC; Bridge DICK and Bridge HARRY.

The draw down of CF Burma from a Battle Group (BG) location to a district enabling Company (DEC), prior to the H17/18 hand over (HOTQ), has seen responsibility being transferred to NES BG HQ in MOB PRICE (PCE). The closure of PB OULETTE (OUL) in Sep 13 has resulted in the UGV free of any ISAF influence, which will allow the INS to have completed unhindered FoM within that area of the AO.

This area is flanked by expanses of arid land. This ground to the North and South is mainly undulating desert plains, crossed with dirt tracks and wadis. Route 611 is the principal route from HWY 1 to SGN and KAJAKI (KJI). It runs approximately two kilometres to the East of the GZ within the eastern desert. The route is constructed of hard packed earth and has many culverts and stretches of a loose earth. It enters SGN district near FOB ROBINSON.

The open area of desert to the East of Route 611 provides the insurgent (INS) significant transit routes through the UGV. The lack of ISAF presence results in the opportunity for INS bed down locations (BDLs). Recent reporting indicates fighters transit Route 611 from North to South



Route 611



NES Canal



River HELMAND

and egress into the eastern desert.

The two major water features are the NES Canal and the River HMD which run roughly parallel to each other. The canal follows an undulating route, which forms a number of features such as the "Witches Hat" (GR 41R 64716 28774) (so called for its geographical shape), near HYDERABAD (HYD).

The area consists of a number of villages stretching the length of the GZ. There is no major urban area, however with the area looking to GSK and SGN for influence. The major villages are HYD, SHURAKAY (SKY) and QALEH YE GAZ (QYG).

HYDERABAD (HYD) CoM 41R PR 672 335. HYD consists of a concentration of approximately 300 compounds fringing the GZ east of the River HMD. Its importance is due to the number of crossings for the NES Canal in the area, thereby making it ideal for INS movement across obstacles whilst transiting to conduct attacks on CF patrols and static locations within TFH.

QALEH YE GAZ (QYG) CoM 41S PR 695 423. QYG is located on the western side of the River HMD in the UGV of NES District, South of the southern GZ. The area makes an ideal staging and planning area for the Ishaqzai Taliban (TB) members who operate in the southern GZ. QYG is primarily used as a BDL and planning and coordination area for TB commanders operating in the area. Additionally, TB commanders and fighters from southern SGN commonly displace to QYG to avoid CF targeting efforts.

SHURAKAY (SKY) 41R PR 665 360. SKY has typically been an area where INS have enjoyed relative FoM. It is linked to QYG for being home to a number of INS C2 personalities. Attacks into the PB RAHIM AO in TSU NES are often launched from this area.

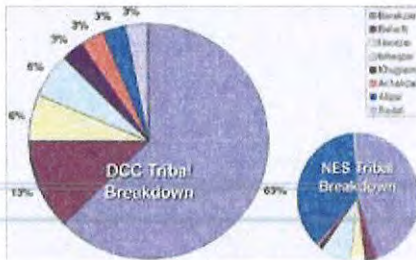
Human Terrain

Unusually in Central HMD, the population of the area is relatively homogenous with 75-80% of the population of NES assessed to be Barakzai. The tribe's dominance of the area pre-dates the immigration into the HMD river valley of the 1950s where different tribes settled in NES. There is no real tribal conflict in the area.

There are several key land owners within NES who continue to hold the power in the area. Haji Abdul Ali KHAN (HAAK) and his family are the main land owners in MALGIR (MGR), reportedly owning approximately 40-50% of the land. Many of the major land owners will also live in GSK or LKG.

Governance

Official governance in NES is predominantly focused on the DC and carried out by District Governor (DG) Mohammad FAHIM and the GSK Mayor, Said Ali DUR SHAH. Governance has progressively become more proactive in extending the reach of government to the smaller outlying villages in the UGV and a number of shuras in SKY have been organised in order to represent the LNs. However, presence to the North is very limited and representatives will only visit in protected convoys. The vast majority of the district is left ungoverned and under the influence of the 'Traditional' and 'Shadow' states. In locations such as KHAR NIKAH (KNK), RAHIM (RHM) and the group of villages known as the NOORZAI, DAIGAN and SAIDAN (NDS), LNs distance themselves from GiRoA and are subsequently self governed. This is not only due to a lack of knowledge and understanding of GiRoA but LNs failing to see the need for national politics, a result of decades of being

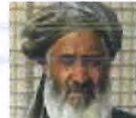


largely self sustained. Within MGR, GIROA outreach has increased considerably, with LNs becoming much more supportive of GIROA and District Community Council (DCC) representation.

The DCC comprises of 37 fulltime members all elected by 230 regional elders. The DCC breaks down into socio-economic, security and justice working groups, which are further sub-divided into main councils and sub-committees. The DCC is headed up by their chairman, Haji Bahlool KHAN. The Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) has put much work into improving the geographical and demographic spread of representation within the DCC and has thereby improved GIROA outreach into previously unrepresented rural areas in the UGV and HYD. This said what has been witnessed is a neglect by DCC members to representatives in their areas of responsibility. This is common in the areas North of the GSK KAMBERBAND however in MGR DCC representatives have been very proactive in interacting with LNs. The tribal breakdown of the DCC is approximately 63% Barakzai, 13% Baluch, with six minority tribes making up the last 24%.

NES District Governor - Mohammad FAHIM. FAHIM took over on 18 Mar 13 following the resignation of Ghairat WAZIRI. FAHIM is the son of Baktho KHAN, a General in the Ministry of Interior (MoI). At 24 years old, he is slightly younger than WAZIRI. [REDACTED]

GSK Mayor - Said Ali DUR SHAH. SHAH was appointed by former PG Wafa. SHAH was removed from his position as Mayor in Apr 11 but was reinstated in Oct 11.



Economy and infrastructure

Large numbers of LNs see poppy as their 'cash crop' due to the higher amount of money they can make from it compared to more conventional crops. Due to the location of the NES BOWRI, it is seen as a key facilitation node for narcotics, not only for poppy grown inside the AO, but also for narco-smugglers based in the North of the province transiting through.

Overall, the population in the NES AO are generally poor with agriculture as the main source of employment. It is reported that

approximately 80% of the population are farmers. The predominant crops found in the AO are wheat, maize and poppy. To a lesser degree there are other crops grown within the AO which include vines, animal feed and low growth crops (which are encouraged close to CF bases). The LNs are generally not interested in long-term crops such as the planting of fruit trees; instead the farmers predominately grow short term subsistence / cash crops. Recently there has been a migration of LNs from the GZ of MALGIR into the NES BOWRI due to the fact that the land within the BOWRI is now more fertile than the land in the GZ and furthermore the LNs have the ability to manually pump their own water whenever they choose.

The UGV economy is approximately 95% agriculture and 5% services. Due to the two considerable water features running through the UGV (River HMD and NES Canal), the conditions for agriculture in the area have always been favourable. The UGV has historically witnessed heavy poppy production due to its proximity to the abundant water supplies and its population's refusal to acknowledge legitimate GIROA structures. The narcotics trade is intrinsically linked to the area and its residents have become increasingly dependent on the financial benefits of poppy in order to survive.

Narcotics

The UGV is a key hub for Helmandi narcotics trafficking because of its proximity to excellent transport routes and relatively calm atmospherics within the GZ as ISAF do not have a presence in the area, allowing the growth and production of narcotics to be carried out with very little interference. Drugs and pre-cursor chemicals are moved between MJH, MALMAND CHINEH, MSQ and SARAVAN QALEH (SVQ) through the UGV. Major Ishaqzai and Alizai networks are active in SGN, tied to the INS, but they have somewhat

less influence to the south of the Valley. However - traffickers still provide funding to and receive protection from INS.

The wider GSK valley is too small to maintain the activities of the major narcotics networks and these networks will cross the HMD Provincial boundaries as required. Although there has been consistent cultivation of poppy in the UGV, this has historically been less successful than in the HAVA areas to the south, which enjoy superior irrigation infrastructure.

ANSF

The ANSF within NES is made up of elements from the Afghan National Police (ANP), Afghan National Army (ANA) and the National Directorate of Security (NDS).

AUP. The AUP within NES utilises the Tolay structure and is divided in to three. The 1st and 3rd Tolays are responsible for CPs in and around GSK DC and towards the PB line. The 2nd Tolay is responsible for the area South of GSK DC in the former NES (S) territory.

District Chief of Police - Capt HEKMATULLAH. Capt HEKMATULLAH took over from Col Shadi KHAN on 25 Mar 13. He is the son of Malim Mir WALI (MMW).



ANA. There are three Kandaks (Kdk) across CF NES. 2nd Kdk is located in MGR. The Kdk consists of five Tolays (Tly), however due to the Kdk boundaries differing to ISAF boundaries, only two Tly are within the TSU NES boundaries (3 Tly of the Kdk are in NDA). 6th Kdk is located on HWY 1. The Kdk consists of five Tly's along HWY

1 although due to the leave cycle only four Tly's are on the highway at any one time. 3rd Kdk is spread across the GSK KAMBERBAND. The Kdk consists of five Tly's which are all located within TSU NES boundaries.



6 Kdk CO - Col SBOOR. Col SBOOR has been Kdk comd since 2009.



ALP. Within NES there are currently five manned ALP schemes: MIRMANDAB, CHARKENDEZ, KHAR NIKAH, RAHIM and CHAR KUTSA and another area, BAYAZAO that has a tashkiel assigned to it, however is awaiting manpower. The overall tashkiel for NES stands at 325 of which they have manned 300. The tashkiel amount is unlikely to change due to the forthcoming transition.

Insurgency

It is likely that the INS will continue to protect and retain control of their support base in the NES and the BOWRI through the use of intimidation against LN contractors who work for or support GIRoA / CF, or other employees of the government. The migration of close quarter assassination (CQA) tactics has already been witnessed and these tactics will likely continue to be employed against GIRoA officials.

Prestige weapon holdings are assessed as significant with a number of DShK (12.7mm) heavy machine guns, ZPU (14.5mm) anti-aircraft guns and SPG type recoilless rifles. The Insurgency possesses both the intent and capability to use these weapons and are known to be aggressive and tactically astute in the nature of their attacks.

The INS main effort will continue to be retaining FoM within the UGV whilst attempting to FIX CF in base locations. The INS in YAK and

the UGV remain determined to protect their safe havens, primarily through disruptive IED seeding but also through the use of SAF, UGL and RPG. Moreover, with the ISAF drawdown, INS are likely to target heavily used routes including Rte 611 and HWY 1.

TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT UNIT BELLEAU WOOD

Ground

Task Force Belleau Wood (TFBW) is the area surrounding the BASTION, LEATHERNECK and SHORABAK (BLS) complex located in central HELMAND (HMD). The TF boundary covers four districts, NAHR-E SERAJ (NES), NAD-E ALI (NDA), WASHIR (WSR) and NOW ZAD (NZD).

Within the NES District the area to the south of the AO is relatively secure, the AUP being the main security provider, with the district centre (DC) itself being self-sustaining. To the north of the AO in District Enabling Company (North) (DEC(N)), is a contested area with the INS (INS) having good freedom of movement (FoM). Lethal aid (LA) can be moved in and out of the AO with relative ease providing a good facilitation chain for the INS into TFBW.

NDA district is a combination of canal zone (CZ) and Dashte area, the security within the CZ is relatively good, however, the INS have complete FoM within the Dashte. This impacts on TFBW as it allows LA to be facilitated into the area with relative ease. The mapped governance boundary is currently different to where the LNS and GIROA perceive the governance line that divides WSR and NDA, this can cause issues when dealing with the ground and population located in the middle, although the fact remains that GIROA does not acknowledge most of the TFBW area.

WSR is a strategic area for INS due to a lack of Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) / International Security Assistance Force (ISAF)

force density, poppy growth, mountainous terrain and routes into neighbouring states. WSR also provides an abundance of cache locations and bed down locations (BDL) for the INS with the local population often being passively supportive.

NZD has little impact on the TFBW boundary due to its location; however, it was the point of origin from which 122mm rockets were fired in Feb and Apr 13 onto BSN. There are key command and control (C2) nodes within NZD that are often responsible for decision making which impacts on TFBW.

TFBW is located on a desert plateau which gradually slopes towards the NAHR-E BUGHRA (NeB) Canal. The plateau is intersected by three wadis; the central, eastern and western. The wadis are now used as roads for regional and local traffic and can be relatively busy during daylight hours, although during the winter months the weather often reduces freedom of movement (FoM). There is little cover offered from the terrain with the majority of the area of operations (AO) being barren, although the land does become more fertile towards the NeB Canal. The ground to the north is soft and as such often presents problems for larger protected mobility (PM) vehicles. There is high ground to the east of the BLS complex that has previously provided the INS with good over watch positions and the opportunity to launch attacks. This has now been reshaped in order to better defend BSN.

There are a number of villages within the TFBW AO, with HABIBABAD being the most populated. SHORAB is the busiest kalay (village) due its bazaar which is frequented by the Locally Employed Civilians (LEC) and ANSF located in BLS, however, the population is completely transient. The bazaar has several restaurants, vehicle repair shops, and a bed and breakfast, the majority of the wares sold are from IRAN, PAKISTAN (PAK) and BLS. There is a large TAJIK and PASHTUN community in the AO, however,

they are relatively insular and do not integrate with other communities. The nearest towns of note are LASHKAR GAH (LKG) 53 km (33 miles) to the SE and GERESHK (GSK), 39 km (24 miles) to the E. The Main Supply Route (MSR) located nearest to BSN is Highway1 (HWY1), this runs East to West from KANDAHAR to HERAT approximately 5km to the North.

Economy

It is important to note that there are very few examples in this area of the traditional power model that is seen in most other areas of HMD as in TFBW power is financially based. The majority of the farming within TFBW is substance farming which requires a loan. In most cases the lender chooses the crop that the farmer must grow with poppy being favoured, therefore a large amount of poppy is grown in the Dashte regions of TFBW. The amount of poppy grown in 2013 has increased 20% from the previous year. Goods are sold throughout the year to LNs in return for poppy come harvest time as the LN are often unable to afford the monetary value.

Governance

The area of TFBW is geographically split in terms of governance, with half of the AO falling under NDAs control and half falling under WSRs control. Typically TFBW defers to the WSR elements as they appear to take more of an interest and consequently the District Governor (DG) and District Chief of Police (DCoP) are part of the WSR governance structure. There is no specific district community council (DCC) presence within TFBW. Previously, personnel in positions of power titled their friends and associates as DCC members, however, these were not recognised by GIROA nor were they particularly effective. The local nationals (LNs) look to the money lenders and village elders for dispute resolution and village elder shuras take place regularly.

District Governor

The DG is Mohammed Mufateh SHARIF who has recently transferred in from SANGIN (SGN) in a direct swap with Mohammad DAOUD; having been was in his previous post for three years. The DG is highly religious and openly practices his faith this is partially why he is seen as a very traditional elder. The DG has recently employed a new mayor, SHARIFULLAH, who appears to be very professional and proactive (NFDK).

District Chief of Police

The DCoP, HAJI MEHRDEL, is an experienced police officer with approx 10 years experience, beginning as a patrol officer and working his way through the ranks. Upon commissioning MEHRDEL was DCoP of MARJEH (MJH) for three to four years (NFDK).



ANSF

The majority of the Afghan National Army (ANA) within TFBW are located in camp SHORABAK (SBK) where they are mentored and advised by ISAF. The ANA is responsible for the security of HWY 1 and roving patrols around the BLS complex however there is very little reporting to support this and they do not patrol during hours of darkness. CP CONTROL is located North of BSN on HWY 1, the ANA reportedly staff it, however, there is insufficient reporting or evidence to support this. CP HOHKI KHOSHK (HKK) is located to the east of BLS South of HWY 1 and is staffed by ANA. The AUP have a CP in SHORAB who conduct regular patrols in the SHORAB village. The Afghanistan Public Protection Force (APPF) have two CPs along HWY1, they provide security for convoys travelling along HWY1 and utilise

the CPs as overnight locations before returning back to KANDAHAR (KDH). While there is always an APPF presence in these CPs they are not permanently based there. WSR DC did apply to KABUL (KBL) to be accepted into the Afghanistan Local Police (ALP) programme, however, they were turned down and this decision is unlikely to be revoked.

Insurgency

As ISAF withdraw from the districts and return to BLS, INS FoM will undoubtedly increase, consequently allowing greater facilitation of LA and positioning of rockets into firing positions. Currently UK Intelligence Reports often provide an early warning system, but these are likely to be reduced as the drawdown progresses. Due to the drawdown of ISAF bases the number of targets available for the INS to attack will reduce. This will effectively allow INS with key skill sets to move to the TFBW area from other areas to conduct training, which could potentially see an improvement in the accuracy and frequency of the rocket attacks. The rocket firing mechanism itself is easily broken down and therefore, transported in the back of trucks, cars and concealed within compounds in order to avoid ISAF detection.

HWY1 is the ideal area for intimidation, corruption of security elements and collusion.

Intimidation of LN and LEC convoy drivers is common place as the INS seek to increase their knowledge of ISAF and more specifically the BLS complex. Kidnapping has increased with LN often being held ransom, often for money and/or ammunition. A recent tactic involves INS patrolling HWY1 disguised as a taxi in order to facilitate the kidnapping of LN as they travel to SHORAB Bazaar. Additionally, close quarter assassinations (CQAs), hijacking and other criminal activities are rife although the ANSF do little to mitigate these threats and even appear to be becoming a more prominent target themselves.

SAF and IEDs are mainly focused around PB BOLDAK and the area of influence that it maintains. These are often reflective of the ISAF operations that take place to the south in the NDA district. IEDs have been used throughout the AO, primarily to target mounted patrols, logistic convoy patrols and ANSF. The IEDs are assessed to be placed to restrict CF FoM towards the Bowri Dashte, C2 nodes and weapon caches and also for the protection of the poppy crop. The attrition of LA in neighbouring areas does not appear to have any determinable impact on TFBW leading to the assessment that multiple facilitation nodes are in use.

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www.davidmansfield.org

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<http://www.hrw.org>

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Weekly updates of news that doesn't usually reach the international headlines

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Afghanistan Restricted reporting

Defence Intelligence Staff Products

Afghanistan Background Brief

Afghanistan Cultural Appreciation

Afghanistan Map Book

Afghanistan: Helmand Handbook

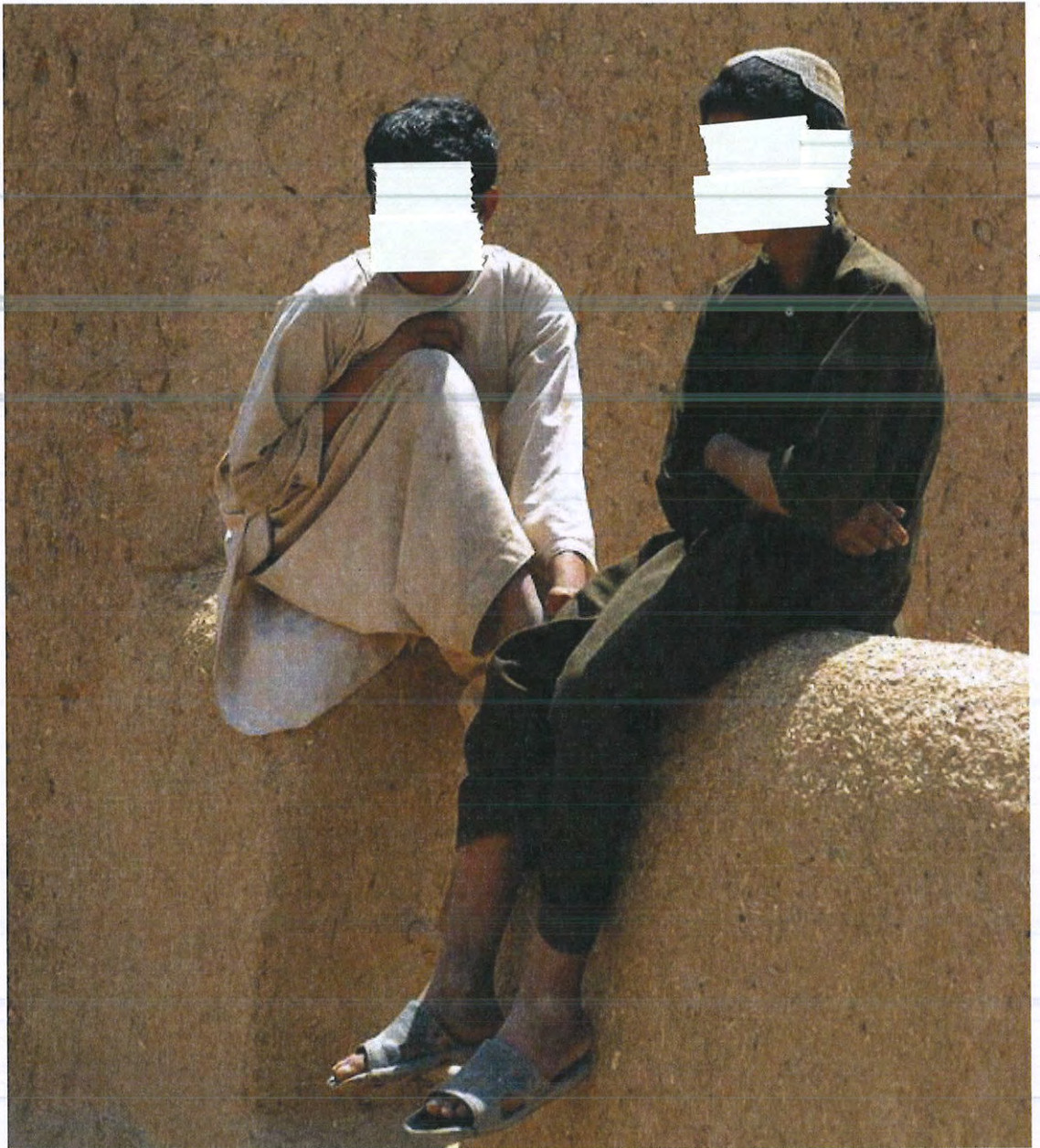
Afghanistan: The Insurgent Arsenal

Afghanistan: Political Neighbourhood Chart

The Afghan Personality Reference Guide

Current LIFC(A) products - Jan 13
 New AO Packs will be published by spring 2013

Title	Publication Date	Protective Marking
CF AO Get You In Packs		
NES(N) CF AO	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
	Jun 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
PB Khar Nikah	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Rahim	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
Highways/Kandak	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
OCC-D	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
NES(S) CF AO	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
	Jun 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
PB 1	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB 2	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB 3	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB 4	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB 5	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
NDA(N) CF AO	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
	Jun 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
PB Wahid (Estonian Coy)	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Khamaar	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Talandaa	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Shahzad	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
NDA(S) CF AO Pack	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
	Jun 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
PB Kalang	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Samsor	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
FOB Shawkat	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Pimon	Feb 12	SECRET REL ISAF
LKG CF AO Pack	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
	Jun 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
PB Nadiullah	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Super Sangar	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB School House	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
PB Attal	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
CF BURMA AO Pack	Mar 12	SECRET REL ISAF
	Jun 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
Helmand AO Pack	Jul 10	SECRET REL ISAF
Other Products		
TFH Insurgents' Tactics' Handbook (AC 71953)	May 12	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
The Helmand Valley River Project & its Impact	Jul 10	RESTRICTED REL ISAF
The Helmand Economy	Jul 10	SECRET REL ISAF
Farming Systems and Agricultural Practises in Helmand Province - Royal Agricultural College Cirencester on commission from LIFC(A)	Jun 10	UNCLASS
All products and, theatre reporting, are available via the LIFC(A) websites on the RESTRICTED and SECRET domains of the defence intranet.		



Abdali. Ancient name for the Pushtun Durrani tribal confederation in Afghanistan. Its population comprises 16% of the population of Afghanistan. Also see, Durrani.

Abu Bakr (Alizai). Leader of the 3-4000 man Zamindawari / Alizai uprising against the British / Afghan(Barakzai) government in 1879. His forces almost certainly swung the Battle of Maiwand against the British.

Abdul Rahman Jan (Noorzai). An insignificant player prior to the fall of the Taliban Government in 2001. Originally in the Communist era police, he then joined Jamiat, and possibly Hizb along the way. Born in Now Zad from a non-prestigious blood line; gained prominence through his martial prowess in leading the Noorzai militia / mujahidin. Helmand's Chief of Police from 2001-5, where he was rumoured to have stolen up to 20,000 jereeb of land in Marjah. Still exerts control over the police in Helmand through the domination of its rank structure by his relatives. Not to be confused with Abdul Rahman Khan (Alizai) or Amir Abdur Rahman (Barakzai).

Abdul Rahman Khan (Alizai). From the Pirzai sub-tribe of the Alizai. Originally from Kajaki and one of the few landowners to survive to fight the Russian backed regime. Fought under the Hizb franchise. Forced out of Kajaki in 1987 by Nasim Akhundzada, and then from Gereshk by Nasim's brother, Rasoul. Eventually settled in exile in France, where he was still living in 2005. Not to be confused with Abdul Rahman Jan (Noorzai) or Amir Abdur Rahman (Barakzai).

Abdul Wahid (Alizai). Known as Rais Baghrani - 'King of Baghran'. From the Khalozai sub-tribe of the Alizai. Has fought under Hizb, Jamiat, Taliban and possibly Harakat franchises, before reconciling with the Karzai government in 2005. There is no post-2001 government presence in Baghran, save for Abdul Wahid.

Abdur Rahman, Amir (Barakzai). Reign 1880 - 1901. Known as the 'Iron Amir' for his use of violence, under which Afghanistan became a defined state with borders. Exiled the Ishaqzai to Turkestan. Not to be confused with Abdul Rahman Jan (Noorzai) or Abdul Rahman Khan (Alizai).

Achakzai. Tribe that is part of the Zirak branch of the Durrani tribal confederation. Said to have been split from the Barakzai (of which they were a sub-tribe) by Ahmad Shah Durrani (a Popolzai) as he feared the power of the Barakzai. In Afghanistan, they mainly live in Spin Boldak in Kandahar, however they also live in the area to the south of Nad-e Ali and north-east of Marjah.

Afandi (Barakzai). Jamiat commander from Nawa and Allah Noor's brother-in-law. Joined Khano in an alliance to defend Lashkar Gah from Rasoul in 1992.

Ahmad Shah Durrani (Popolzai). Reign 1747 - 1772. Seen as the founding father of the Afghan nation by the Pushtun. Forged and held a vast empire including Peshawar and Delhi. Direct descendants form the monarchical lineage of Afghanistan from 1747 - 1818 : The Saddozais. Re-granted the Durrani tribes the land, in return for military service, that they are (largely) still living on in Helmand.

Aktur Khan (Alizai). Leader of the 3000 man Zamindawari / Alizai uprising against the British / Afghan government in 1841. National level the government was Popolzai led, however in the South it was still dominated by the Barakzai. Aktur Khan besieged Gereshk unsuccessfully until the Kandahari Barakzai force withdrew in 1842.

Al-Qaeda (AQ). lit. The Base. A global militant Islamist group founded by the late Osama bin Laden (OBL) in the late 1980s during the Jihad against the Russians. AQ and OBL were the prima facia reason for the US intervention in 2001, and AQ's recolonisation of Afghanistan remains one of the main reasons for the International Coalition remaining. There are little or no links between AQ and Helmand.

Alikozai. Tribe of the Zirak Branch of the Durrani tribal confederation. Related in ancestry to the Barakzai and Alikozai (Barak, Alak and Popol were bothers in antiquity). Mainly located in the Arghandab river valley in Kandahar province. There are few indigenous Helmandi Alikozai, however some Alikozai settled under the canal projects

Alizai. Major tribe of the panjpai branch of the Durrani tribal confederation. One of the three biggest tribes in Helmand (see Noorzai and Barakzai for others). Currently led by Sher Mohammad Akhundzada (Harakat), who is from the Hassanzai branch. Apart from the first Taliban government (1995-2001), have provided Helmand's Provincial Governors 1993 - 2005. Live in the north of Helmand, in the ancient district of Zamindawar (modern districts of Baghran, Musa Qala, Kajaki and northern Sangin). Used interchangeably with Zamindawari.

Allah Noor (Barakzai). Militia leader originally from Farah. Formed part of the warlord troika that ruled Lashkar Gah in the early 1990s. Since 2001, he has been Commander of the outer (militia) defence of Kandahar Air Field and a highway policeman under USPI. Generally seen as rapacious.

Amanullah Khan (Barakzai). Reign 1919 – 1929. From the Mohammadzai lineage. Reform minded monarch who was keen to progress Afghanistan. Unlike his father, did not have the British subsidy and was unable to maintain an army commensurate with his reformist zeal. Reign was marked by disturbances and rebellion in Helmand.

Amir Mohammad Akhundzada (Alizai). Sher Mohammad Akhundzada's younger brother. District Governor of Musa Qala in the post-2001 period, and Deputy Provincial Governor in 2005/6. Probably the heir to his brother.

Atta Mohammad (Ishaqzai). Mujahidin commander in Sangin in the 1980s. Originally affiliated with Jamiat, he later switched to Harakat as Nasim Akhundzada became more prominent in 1988/9. Died in Quetta in the late 1990s.

Aynak. Area in Lashkar Gah district on the west bank of the River Helmand, between Bolan and Nawa. Almost exclusively Barakzai.

Ayub Khan (Barakzai). Son of Sher Ali. Governor in Herat in the late 1870s. Fought against the British at Maiwand and defeated them severely with the help of Alizai tribesmen. Key figure in Afghan folklore for that reason.

Babaji. Area of Lashkar Gah district close to the three-way district boundary with Nad-e Ali and Nahr-e Saraj. Exclusively Barakzai.

Baghran. Most northerly district of Helmand Province, bordering with Ghor Province. Mountainous and inaccessible, it has been ruled by Rais Baghrani since the collapse of the Afghan state in 1978. Only formed as a district in 1964.

Baluch. Ethnic group that straddle the border between Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. Population about 9m, although only ~600,000 of those live in Afghanistan. Mainly in the south of Helmand, although pockets exist in the canal project zone. Speak Baluchi; most in Helmand speak Pushtu as well. Notorious for smuggling. ~2% of the Afghan population.

Barakzai. One of the three biggest tribes in Helmand (see Alizai and Noorzai). Mohammadzai branch provided the royal lineage from 1826-1973. Concentrated in central Helmand, they control Gereshk. Generally fought under the Hizb franchise during the Jihad in central Helmand.

Bolan. Area of Lashkar Gah district on the immediate west bank of the River Helmand. Bounded by Chah-e Anjir in the north and Aynak in the south.

Bost. See Lashkar Gah.

Bughra canal. The original and most extensive of the canals from the canal project. Construction started in 1936. Provides water for at least 100,000 people from Marjah, Nad-e Ali and parts of Nahr-e Saraj.

Charwaki. lit. (government) official. The rapacious nature of the government in Helmand over the past three decades has rendered other meanings onto charwaki including tax collector, policeman, bandit and robber.

Dad Mohammad (Alikozai). Jamiat Mujahidin commander in Sangin in the 1980, worked under the Akhundzadas, the Taliban and the Karzai government where he became head of the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS - see Khad). Infamous for his continued mistreatment of the Ishaqzai. Eventually killed (probably by the Ishaqzai) in 2009. His brother, Juma Gul, was District Governor of Sangin under the early Karzai administration.

Daftani. One of the major Ghilzai tribes that settled in Marjah (probably from Zabul province). Important in that area and hold the balance of power. Have representatives in the current Helmandi police from Abdul Rahman Jan's era as Chief.

Dari. Afghanised Persian language. The lingua franca in Afghanistan and the language of government, administration and defence. Sometimes an issue in Helmand when ANA troops only speak Dari and not Pushtu.

Darweshan canal. One of the major canals from the canal project. Provides water for Garmsir.

Daud Khan, Mohammad (Barakzai). Prime Minister of Afghanistan from 1953 - 1963 and President from 1973 (when he led a coup against his cousin, Zahir Shah) until 1978 when he was killed as part of the communist revolution.

Dost Mohammad Khan (Barakzai). Reigned 1826 - 1839 and 1842 - 1863. A strong ruler, was the first to receive the regular British subsidy forever changing the relationship between the monarch and his people. Contributed to the formation of the Afghan state, a process which was completed by Amir Abdur Rahman. Began the strengthening of the Helmandi Barakzai vis-à-vis the other tribes, defining modern enmities.

Durrani. Eminent Pushtun tribal confederation in Afghanistan centred on Helmand and Kandahar. Named after Ahmad Shah Durrani, who was entitled Durr-e Durran (Pearl of Pearls) upon his enthronement in 1747. See also, Abdali.

Ezmarai (Barakzai). Former Chief of Police of Gereshk 2009-11. A rich man who made his money as a highway policeman under a USPI contract. Former Khalqi police commander; father (also a Khalqi policeman in Gereshk) was killed by Hizb.

Farah. Province to the north west of Helmand. Before Helmand became a province in 1960, its area came under the administration of Farah province.

Garmsir. District in the south of Helmand and one of the original four districts of Pusht-e rud. Pre-canal project it was Noorzai and Ishaqzai dominated.

Gereshk. Most important economic centre and strategic point in Helmand. Controlled by the Barakzai (probably granted to them by Ahmad Shah Durrani for that reason, as the Barakzai and Popolzai were 'brother' tribes at that time). Now a serious smuggling centre. One of the few areas held by the Russians before they left. Occupied by the British several times in the 1800s.

Ghafoor Akhundzada (Alizai). Brother of Nasim and Rasoul Akhundzada. Was Provincial Governor for less than a year after Rasoul's death in 1994 and before the Taliban chased the Akhundzadas out at the beginning of 1995. Eventually shot, supposedly by the Taliban, in Quetta in March 2000.

Ghilzai. The second biggest Pushtun tribal confederation in Afghanistan after the Durrani. Lands between Kandahar and Kabul, but have fought with the Durrani for control of Kandahar over the ages, creating enmity. Not native to Helmand, however thousands of families settled during the canal projects.

Girdi Zangal. Refugee camp in Baluchistan province, Pakistan (opposite Helmand). Supposedly closed by the Pakistani government in 2007, it still has 40,000 people in it. Since its formation after the 1979 Russian invasion, it has provided a safe area for Helmandis from the violence in the province.

Habibullah Khan (Barakzai). Reign 1901 - 1919. Son of Abdur Rahman, the Iron Amir. Started the 3rd Anglo-Afghan war, which gained Afghanistan full independence from Britain, losing the British subsidy in the process. Conservative minded.

Hafizullah Amin (Kharotei). Ruled for a few months in 1979. Extreme left wing Khalqi President of Afghanistan. Killed by the Russians when they invaded.

Hafizullah Khan (Barakzai). Originally an army officer, was a major Hizb commander in Bolan. Briefly Provincial Governor in the early 1990s under Khan's tutelage, but they fell out over how to rule Lashkar Gah. Allegedly now runs an NGO in Kabul.

Haiderabad. Only spring-melt vehicle crossing point of the River Helmand north of Gereshk. Located in between Gereshk and Sangin.

Haji Lal Jan (Noorzai). Elder / militia leader of Noorzo Kalay in northern Nad-e Ali and he represents one of the communities of Noorzai who settled from Now Zad and Farah during the 1990s; during the post-2001 period he controlled the Nahr-e Bughra from Chah-e Mirza to Loy Mandah. By 2008, his militia had been rolled into the Nad-e Ali police.

Haji Qudos (Barakzai). Hizb commander / militia leader who was / is Mir Wali's second in command. Controlled the Barakzai area from Gereshk westwards towards Nad-e Ali. Militia allegedly funded by USSF, however the funding stopped in 2007/8. The area previously occupied by his militia fell to the 'Taliban'. Now employed to guard a smaller area west of Gereshk under USSF sponsorship.

Harakat-e Enqelab-e Islami (Harakat). Traditionalist Afghan mujahedeen group fighting against Soviet forces. Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi was the leader of the group. Operated across southern Afghanistan. Was part of the 'Peshawar Seven' coalition of mujahedeen forces, but many of its commanders defected to the Taliban in 1995/6, although not in Helmand. In Helmand, most important commander was Nasim Akhundzada.

Hassanzai. Currently, the pre-eminent sub-tribe of the Alizai in Helmand (although not the Khankhel) and led by Sher Mohammad Akhundzada. Notorious for feuding with the Pirzai and Khalozai sub-tribes.

Hazara. Ethnic group that populates the mountainous central area of Afghanistan. Said to be descended from Genghis Khan's men. Overwhelmingly Shia (as opposed to the mainly Sunni Pushtun). Small pockets of Hazara live in Helmand, a legacy of the canal project. ~10% of the Afghan population.

Helmand Valley Authority (HVA - later called HAVA). Created in 1952 to manage the canal projects. HQ in Lashkar Gah and works yard in Chah-e Anjir. Is a very powerful organisation as it controls the water that is the basis of Helmand's agricultural society.

Herat. The major city in Western Afghanistan. Heavily influenced through its proximity with Iran. Gershk sits on the Herat- Kandahar road.

Hizb-e Islami (Hizb). 2 factions - Khaled and Gulbuddin. Gulbuddin faction prominent in Helmand. Most Helmandi Barakzai fought under Hizb affiliation during the Jihad, probably as a reaction to Alizai dominance in Harakat. Most well funded mujahidin party, but was dropped by Pakistan upon the rise of the Taliban in 1994. Exists as a political party or old boys network in central Helmand, where its members straddle the GIRoA-Taliban dichotomy.

Hotak. Major Ghilzai and Mullah Omar's tribe. Ruled Persian empire from 1722 - 29 before collapsing. Mainly live around Uruzgan and Kandahar.

Inter-services Intelligence (ISI). Pakistan's premier intelligence agency. Responsible for channeling the US and Saudi funding to the mujahidin during the jihad. Heavily financed the Taliban during 1995 - 2001; recurrent rumors and accusations that they are currently providing assistance to the Taliban shura in Quetta as well as conducting covert operations on Afghan soil.

Ishaqzai. The most marginalised of the Durrani tribes in Helmand. Important under the Taliban during 1995 - 2001, they provided senior commanders for the movement. Heavily persecuted by the Alikozai post-2001. Mainly live south of Sangin, Now Zad and Garmsir although there are some in Nad-e Ali from the canal projects.

Ismail Khan (Tajik). Originally an army officer who played a key role in the initial rebellion against the Soviets in Herat. Was a major Jamiat commander during the jihad becoming the ruler of western Afghanistan from 1992 - 1995. Became Governor of Herat under Karzai and in 2005 was made a minister in Kabul. Despite differences in mujahidin franchise, was allied to the Akhundzadas in Helmand and helped them capture Lashkar Gah from the militias in 1993 and then helped them fight the Taliban in 1995.

Jabar Khan. Probably Barakzai. Ideological militia commander who was very effective and used by the regime in other parts of the country as its mobile division. Jabar Khan was appointed a hero, or 'Qahraman' of the communist regime. Tried to defend Lashkar Gah from Rasoul Akhundzada; failed, fled to Russia and recently returned to stand in for Malem Mir Wali in the 2010 parliamentary elections.

Jamiat-e Islami (Jamiat). Islamic political party in Afghanistan similar to the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt. Oldest Islamic political party in Afghanistan. Communitarian ideology based on Islamic law but is also considered moderately progressive. Since 1968, official leader of Jamiat has been Burhanuddin Rabbani. Major commanders include Ahmad Shah Masoud and Ismail Khan.

Jereeb. Afghan unit of measure equivalent to 0.2 hectare or ½ acre. Approximately 40m x 40m.

Jihad. lit. struggle (Arabic). Like the religious terms of any religion this is open to different interpretations. Appears in the Koran as 'striving in the way of God' [as in a mental struggle], however can be interpreted to mean physical fighting. Used as a shorthand in Afghanistan to mean the period of resistance to the Russian (1979 - 1989) and, depending upon your viewpoint, the current struggle against the western backed Karzai government.

Jirga. See also Shura. Traditional Pushtun method of dispute resolution where male elders sit and discuss a problem until a solution is reached in a consensus manner as opposed to an adversarial manner. Younger children will sit and watch, but not participate. Male adults are all allowed to speak. Anyone may come. Sometime used interchangeably with Shura.

Kajaki. Northern district of Helmand populated by the Alizai tribe. Contains the centrepiece of the canal projects, the Kajaki dam.

Kakar. A tribe from which families were settled during the canal projects, particularly in Garmsir and Nad-e Ali. Key member of this tribe was Mullah Dadullah - an infamous Taliban commander who was killed by UKSF in 2007. Predated upon by the provincial government during 2001-5.

Kandahar. Second most important city in Afghanistan and the most important in the South. Along with Peshawar in- Pakistan it is the most important Pushtun city. By legend, a corruption of Iskhandar (Alexander [the Great]), but at the time the great Macedonian journeyed through the area (approx 330 BC), the city had almost certainly not been founded.

Karmal, Babrak. President 1979 - 1986. Installed by the Russians, and was never more than a client of theirs. Probably - mixed ethnicity. Seen by the Russians as not able to achieve their aims and was moved to retirement in Moscow.

Khad. Later called Ministry of State Security (WAD) or the National Directorate of Security (NDS). Unsavoury organisation under the control of the KGB until the Russians left Afghanistan in 1989. One of its major roles is to overwatch the other security services to make sure that they remain loyal to the state.

Khalozai. Khankhel of the Alizai tribe. Located mainly in Kajaki.

Khalq / Khalqi. More extreme of the two factions of the PDPA. Was in power in Kabul in 1978/9, however the army remained Khalqi dominated right through the 1980s. Ideologically defined the militias in Lashkar Gah at the end of the 1980s. Important leaders include Taraki and Amin.

Khan. A landowner, but also used as a term of respect when prefixed to peoples names. Similar in usage to Esquire (Esq.) in English.

Khankhel. The eminent lineage from a tribe. The Khankhel has aristocratic legitimacy in the eyes of the tribe to lead the other sub-tribes. As with hereditary systems elsewhere in the world, being the Khankhel is based on being the Khankhel previously and it is open to change. It takes time for the other sub-tribes to accept these changes, however, and as the Khankhels of the Durrani tribes changed during the jihad, the current leaders of the tribes are not considered as coming from the Khankhel and so are less able to coalesce the sub-tribes.

Khano (Khan Mohammad). Khalqi militia commander who controlled Lashkar Gah in the early 1990s. Real name Khan Mohammad, originally from Farah, possibly Noorzai; he became a militia commander because his brother was a well connected member of the Khalq faction. Settled back in Lashkar Gah post-2001 and became a businessman with a small militia, but was eventually disarmed.

Kharotei. Important Ghilzai tribe. Very prominent in Nad-e Ali, where they compete with the Noorzai for district leadership. Important members include Gulbuddin Hekmatyar (leader of Hizb) and Hafizullah Amin (President 1979).

Lashkar Gah. The Capital of Helmand Province since 1964. Also the site of the headquarters of the HVA. Also the name of a district. Population ~100,000.

Madrassah. lit. school (Arabic). Generally considered in the context of Afghanistan and Pakistan to mean a religious school with a focus on Quranic education. Many groups within the region also use them to train young men for battle.

Maiwand, Battle of. A serious defeat suffered by British forces at Kushk-e nakhud in what is now Kandahar province in 1880. The battle was won by Ayub Khan with support from Alizai tribesmen.

Malem Mir Wali (Barakzai). Previous Hizb commander during the jihad, then joined the government becoming the 93rd Division Commander when Hizb were defeated by Harkat in the early 1990s. This was a recognition of his de facto leadership of Gereshk - a position he still maintains. Disarmed in 2005 and became a Member of Parliament for Helmand, 2005-10, when he was disqualified for electoral fraud. Comes from Malgir.

Malgir. Barakzai area to the west of Gereshk, east of Babaji and north of the River Helmand. Part of the original land grant to the Barakzai from Nadir Shah / Ahmad Shah Durrani.

Marjah. New area created out of the desert by the canal project. Settled in 1957. Used to be part of Nad-e Ali, but now separated into its own district.

Mirab. Water manager. Sets out how much water each family can have from the canals and is the first person who arbitrates water disputes. Can either be selected by the community or appointed by the landowner, or a combination of the two. Usually paid in kind by the farmers. There are some government employed mirabs in the canal zone areas.

Moghuls. Imperial power in south Asia that ruled a large portion of the subcontinent. Began in 1526, invaded and ruled most of present day India, Pakistan and Afghanistan until the late 17th and early 18th centuries when it rapidly fell into decline.

Mohammadzai. Khankhel of the Barakzai tribe and produced the lineage that ruled Afghanistan from 1826 - 1978. Concentrations of Mohammadzai around Gereshk as it was a seat of the sub-tribe.

Morrison Knudsen (MK). US company hired in 1945 by the Afghan government to give engineering support and expertise to the canal projects. The contract was terminated in 1960 in acrimony.

Mujahed / Mujahidin. lit. holy warrior(s). In the context of Afghanistan it means those who fought in the anti-Communist resistance, but the fighters currently fighting the government also call themselves mujaheds.

Mullah Omar (Hotak). Leader of the Taliban movement. Ruled Afghanistan from 1996 - 2001. Probably currently living in Quetta.

Musa Qala. Capital of ancient Zamindawar and the key set of Alizai power. Modern district in northern Helmand.

Musahiban. Dynasty that ruled Afghanistan from 1929 - 1978. Reformist minded and owing to the vast amount of aid from the Soviets and the US, managed to develop areas of Afghanistan without incurring the resistance seen by previous monarchs. Their reigns are looked back on by many Afghans as a golden age.

Nad-e Ali. New district created by the canal project. Settled in 1954 and characterised by a series of either tribal mixed or tribally homogenous villages. 37 tribes or ethnicities present.

Nadir Shah. Became Shah of Persia in 1736 and captured Kandahar in 1737 from the Ghilzai, whom he exiled to Tehran. As the Durranis had fought with him, he rewarded their service with land grants in what is now Helmand. This act was the basis for the landowning of the tribes who had previously been semi-nomadic. Died in 1747.

Nadir Shah, Mohammad (Barakzai). Reign 1929-33. From the Musahiban dynasty.

Nahr-e Saraj. District of central Helmand dominated by the Barakzai with Gereshk as its District Centre. Named after the Saraj canal (Nahr means waterway).

Najibullah, Mohammad. President 1987-92. Previously had been head of Khad. Instituted a reconciliation and national solidarity program and expanded militias in preparation for the Russian withdrawal. Made many conciliations to the Mujahidin not consistent with Communism (for example,

using Islam and its precepts much more in governing), however the fighting continued. Against all predictions, managed to remain in power for three years after the Russian exit.

Nasim Akhundzada, Mullah (Alizai). Most (in)famous of the Helmandi jihadi commanders who led the Alizai and fought under the Harakat franchise. Was so successful that many other commanders swore allegiance to him. Credited with massively expanding the Helmandi drugs trade. He was killed by Hizb in 1990. His brothers (Rasoul and Ghafoor) succeeded him, becoming Provincial Governors of Helmand, as did his nephew, Sher Mohammad.

National Directorate of Security (see Khad).

Nawa-e Barakzai (Nawa). District in south central Helmand; predominantly Barakzai with significant Popolzai minority.

Noorzai. One of the big three Helmandi tribes (see Alizai and Barakzai). Previously, they were marginalised from Helmandi politics due to their location in Now Zad, Washir and Garmsir, however during the 1990s they occupied abandoned land in Nad-e Ali and Marjah, enabling them to control the Helmandi police in the post-2001 era. Also significant in Kandahar province.

Now Zad. One of the four ancient districts of Helmand and also a modern district. Populated mainly by Ishaqzai and Noorzai.

Parcham / Parchami. Less extreme faction of the PDPA. Ruled from 1979 until 1992. Dominated the Khad (and its successor organisations) during that time. Important leaders include Karmal and Najibullah.

Pathan. See Pushtun.

People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA). PDPA was split into two factions, Khalq and Parcham, roughly split along tribal and ethnic lines, Ghilzai and Urban Pushtun/Tajik respectively. PDPA was formed in 1965, split into its constituent factions in 1967, which were re-coalesced under Soviet pressure in 1977. The more extreme left wing Khalq faction seized power in the 1978 coup, but were replaced by the more moderate Parcham faction in 1979 upon the Soviet intervention. Due to Khalq purges during its time in power the Afghan Army was dominated by Khalq officers throughout the 1980s, yet the massive state internal security apparatus (Khad, or later, WAD) rapidly became Parcham dominated after 1979.

Peshawar Parties. An alliance of seven resistance parties based in Peshawar through which were funneled all of the US and Saudi aid by the ISI. All of the groups were Sunni Muslims, and all were majority Pashtun except Jamiat-e Islami, which was Tajik (the Hazaras / Shias were supplied from Iran). The members of the alliance fell into two groups - the political Islamists (both factions of Hizb-e Islami, Jamiat-e Islami and Ettihad-e Islami), and the traditionalists (Harakat-e Enqelab, Mahaz-e Milli and Jabha-e Milli).

Prizai. One of the three main sub-tribes of the Alizai (see Hassanzai and Khalozai).

Popolzai. Major Pushtun tribe in the Durrani confederation.

Pusht-e rud. Ancient name for the geographical area of Helmand. It means trans river [Helmand], which is how it would have appeared from Kandahar.

Pushtu. Language of the Pushtun.

Pushtun. Ethnic group in the south of Afghanistan and the west of Pakistan. Split by the countries' borders (the Durand Line). ~40% of the Afghan population.

Quami. See Rutbavi for comparison. One of the two main types of Pushtun tribe, by organisational dynamic. They are (all other things being equal) egalitarian, nomadic, non-hierarchical and leadership is less hereditary, depending more on the qualities of the individual.

Quetta. Capital of Baluchistan Province in Pakistan and a major Afghan refugee centre. Allegedly where the Taliban's leadership are located.

Rabbani, Burhanuddin. Tajik leader of Jamiat. Also President of Afghanistan from 1992-96 and briefly in 2001.

Rais Baghrani. See Abdul Wahid.

Rasoul Akhundzada (Alizai). Brother of Nasim and Ghafoor. Helmand's Governor briefly in 1993/4 when he captured it with Ismail Khan's help from the ex-Communist militias led by Khano.

Rutbavi. See Quami for comparison. One of the two main types of Pushtun tribe, by organisational dynamic. They are (all other things being equal) less egalitarian, feudal, hierarchical; landowning and leadership is hereditary, depending upon aristocratic lineages.

Saddozai. Khankhel of the Popolzai and the ruling dynasty of Afghanistan from 1747 - 1826.

Safavids. Persian dynasty that ruled Iran from 1501 - 1722. Important in the continuance of the Iranian identity of south western Afghanistan. They tried to forcibly convert Kandahar from Sunni Islam to Shia Islam which caused the Ghilzai uprising of 1722, leading to Safavid decline in the region.

Sangin. Important town in the north of Helmand. Especially important for the drugs trade as it is a trading hub linking Uruzgan, northern Helmand and central Helmand. District created by the 1964 constitution that is a tribal confluence of the Alikozai, Ishaqzai, Noorzai and Alizai tribes.

Saraj canal. First major canal built in Helmand in 1910 causing the first population movement of outsiders to Helmand.

Shah Shuja (Barakzai). Reigned 1803-09 and 1839-42, when he was reinstated on the throne by the first Anglo-Afghan war. Unable to remain in power once the British had left and was assassinated.

Shamalan canal. Major canal from the built during the canal projects providing water for Bolan, Aynak and Nawa.

Sher Ali (Barakzai). Reign 1868-79. Third son of Dost Mohammad. Turbulent reign that was terminated by the second Anglo-Afghan war. Tried to keep Afghanistan neutral between Russia and Britain, but failed. Succeeded by his brother.

Sher Mohammad Akhundzada (Alizai). Son of Rasoul Mohammad Akhundzada. Helmand's governor from 2001-5. Very close to Karzai with intermarriages between the clans. Sacked in 2005 at British insistence due to his links to the narcotics trade. Now a Senator.

Shinazai. President Karzai's sub-tribe. Part of the Popalzai tribe.

Shura. See also Jirga. Meeting, less egalitarian / consensual than a jirga. In a strict sense, people should be invited to speak at a shura.

Sistan. Area in the extreme south west of Afghanistan bordering Iran.

Spin Masjid. lit. white mosque. Barakzai area just to the west of Gereshk and to the east of Malgir.

Tajik. Ethnic group in the north east of Afghanistan. Predominantly formed the Northern Alliance, which overthrew the Taliban with US support in 2001. ~30% of the Afghan population. Significant leaders include Masoud and Rabbani.

Taliban. lit. religious students. Movement headed by Mullah Omar and founded in 1994. Heavily supported by Pakistan in its rise to power in 1995/6. Removed from power in 2001 and now an element in the post-2001 violence.

Taraki, Noor Mohammad (Taraki). Afghan President from 1978-9. A member of the more extreme Khalq faction of the PDPA, he was ousted by Amin. Responsible for the reforms (esp. land reforms) that caused so much damage and resentment in Helmandi society.

Timur Shah (Barakzai). Reign 1772-93. Son of Ahmad Shah Durrani. Moved the capital of Afghanistan from Kandahar to Kabul.

Turkmen. Ethnicity of the people living in north west Afghanistan and Turkmenistan. ~3% of the Afghan population.

Uzbek. Ethnicity of people who live in the centre north of Afghanistan. Significant leaders include Dostum.

WAD. See Khad.

Wakil. lit. advocate. Leaders in the canal projects style themselves wakils after government attempts to take power away from traditional leaderships in the 1950/60s. The same traditional leaders merely reinvented themselves as wakils.

Washir. District of north western Helmand. Mainly populated by the Noorzai.

Yahya (Noorzai). Ettihad-e Islami commander from Marjah. Fought Nasim for control of the Garmsir bridge in 1989.

Zahir Shah (Barakzai). Reign 1933 - 1973. Was very young in 1933 and so only exerted influence towards the end of his reign. Keen to advance Afghanistan, he wrote the 1964 Constitution which enshrined hitherto unseen rights, but was deposed by his cousin Mohammad Daud in 1973. Lived in exile in Italy during the Communist, Mujahidin and Taliban eras before being invited back to an honorary position, The Father of the Nation, under Karzai. Died 2007.

Zaman Shah (Popolzai). Reign 1793 - 1801. Ruled over a divided Afghanistan. Blinded and imprisoned in Kabul for over 30 years in 1801. -zai (suffix). Meaning sons of.

Zamindawar. One of the four ancient districts of Pusht-e rud. Zamindawari is used interchangeably with Alizai.

Civilian Support to Operations - HERRICK 20 Guide

MOD Civil Servants

MOD civilian volunteers have directly supported military operations for decades, most recently in close support to the military in the Balkans, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan. There are around 200 MOD civilians deployed in Afghanistan at any one time along with nearly 300 MOD civilian visitors each year. It is likely that during your tour you will have some interaction with a MOD civilian; when travelling on the airbridge, working together in theatre or in your accommodation.

MOD civilians deliver a vast array of services in support of military colleagues. They operate at Task Force, regional, and national levels throughout the ISAF chain of command, providing advice and support to military colleagues as well as mentoring Afghan partners and liaising with staff from other government departments and coalition partners. Examples of MOD civilian contributions to HERRICK 18 are:

- The DSG Regeneration Capability in Camp Bastion that provides second-line support maintaining, repairing and upgrading vehicles and equipment in the military fleet;

- Science Advisers and Operations Analysts who analyse data and inform tactical, operational and strategic decision-making;
- Finance and Commercial Officers, who negotiate, manage and review contracts with local and third party contractors to supply a wide range of services to the operation;
- Policy Advisers liaising between military commanders and UK policy makers;
- Visitors, providing a range of support from helping to field UORs and maintaining specialist equipment to conducting short term specialist tasks to tackle specific problems.

MOD civilians are supported in the UK and Afghanistan by the Support to Operations Team and are drawn from pools of experienced staff managed by Subject Matter Experts in the UK. Typically MOD civilians will deploy for six-month tours and live and work alongside military colleagues. Civilians deployed and visiting Afghanistan are classed as 'Civilians Subject to Service Discipline' and are subject to some elements of military law. MOD civilians deployed on operations complete decompression alongside military colleagues on completion of their tours.

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