

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Consistently high incident volumes
- Continued deterioration of security situation in the Western Region
- Abduction and kidnappings persist countrywide
- Local response to Force Protection shootings

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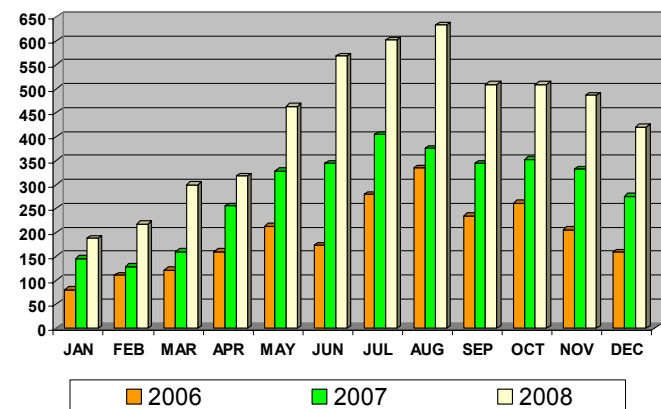
COUNTRY SUMMARY

The December AOG initiated incident volume trended well above those of previous years (including the July peak of 2007), an expected conclusion to a year that has proven to be the most volatile since the conflict began following the 2001 U.S. invasion. All indicators suggest that this trend will continue into the new year, particularly in light of the planned expansion of ISAF operations and troop levels.

Historically, the winter months record the lowest NGO incident levels, with this December marking the lowest level (5) this year. Rather than being indicative of a significant shift in the prevailing security context, this is likely the result of a seasonal decreased NGO presence and activity level.

While the full scope of the plan remains unclear at this time, the utilization of local defense initiatives (i.e. militias) in the new year looks to be set to become a reality. These militias are most likely set to be used as an adjunct "holding" force (along with ANP) following focused area clearance operations by international and national military forces.

AOG Initiated Incidents-Annual Comparison



The arrest of 50 ANP in Farah this period highlighted the ongoing issue of ANP/AOG collusion and the AOG infiltration of same. Numerous reports throughout the year, primarily focused in the south, brought this issue to light through consistent ANP "defections" (of both men and materials) as well as the involvement of ANP in the attacks on Lashkar Gah.

The deterioration of the security situation in the Western Region continues, with Herat being in the fore this period with a variety of IED and suicide attack incidents and threats reported.

Suicide attacks continued to dominate the security landscape into December. The persistent targeting of provincial and district centers

has continued to result in significant numbers of civilian casualties.

The recent developments in Gaza have resulted in a considerable amount of local response, with related demonstrations being reported countrywide. While these demonstrations have been peaceful thus far, such responses will likely continue as long as the situation persists.

Of late, Force Protection shootings (and road traffic collisions involving ISAF) have also resulted in negative local reaction, particularly in Kabul. As a result of the latest such incident, locals have threatened to close the Jalalabad road to international traffic.

KABUL

Early morning on 29 December in the southwest area of Kabul city, two men working with the driver of a hired taxi attempted to abduct an UN local staff. The victim escaped. NGO should inform national and international staff of the potential for abduction or robbery when using shared taxis, especially in isolated areas and/or during hours of darkness.

So far there have been 12 AOG incidents reported this month, compared to a monthly average of 14 during the year and 18 per month between May and November. While lower AOG activity reduces security threats, the environment remains dangerous. On

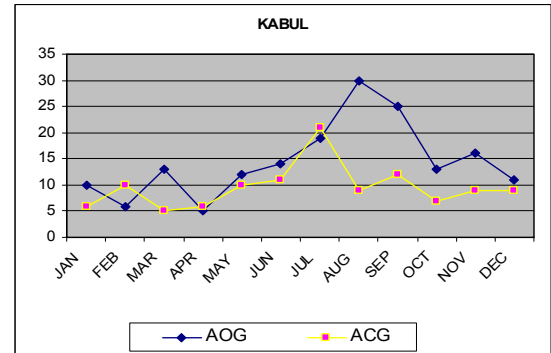
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Decreased security in Kabul City environs
- Abduction/kidnapping
- IED related attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	22
This Report Period	0

27 December a rocket attack in Kabul city that struck a private house killed three people and wounded five others. (The police academy was believed to be the target.) On 30 December (according to the prevailing report) an IMF vehicle struck a civilian vehicle killing one local person and injuring 1-4 others. The incident spurred a violent demonstration and threats to stop international vehicles from travelling on Jalalabad Road. This was very similar to an episode on 28 November and future such incidents can be expected to become increasingly dangerous for internationals. In addition to these more oblique threats, direct threats—such as that of abduction—are still active, so personal and compound security should be maintained.

Kabul city and province became more unstable this year, as illus-



trated by an increased proportion of incidents in the districts outside the city concurrent with an increase in the number of incidents within the city. Compared to 2007, AOG incidents increased about 18% within Kabul city but by about 70% in districts outside the city. In 2006, 61% of the province's AOG incidents occurred in the city, in 2007 it was 57%, and this year Kabul city AOG incidents accounted for only 40% of the province's incidents. For NGO this means there is a very real increased risk to operations outside the city (for example, the August RPG attack on an NGO clinic in Surobi and the general danger of travelling through that area) as well as an increased threat in the city (for example, the spate of AOG and ACG incidents in the western side of the city this fall).

WARDAK

This month, AOG incidents have been lower in number but consistent in nature with incidents in recent months—namely attacks on military/security vehicles/convoys and attacks on DACs. Military operations are also prevalent, posing the risk of civilian casualties, as was the case at least twice this month when IMF fired on civilian vehicles. While most incidents in the past couple week have occurred in Saydabad, all

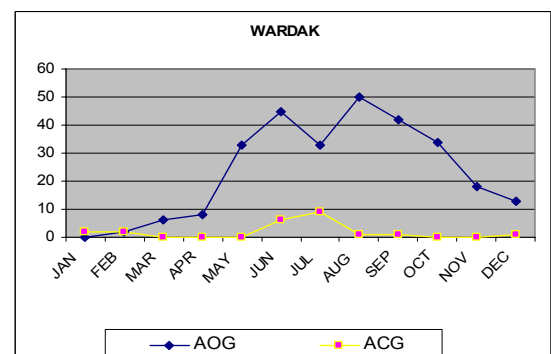
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Overall instability
- Attacks along main routes
- De-facto AOG control of province

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

provinces east of the Bihsuds are heavily infiltrated with AOG and subject to their control and to military clashes.

As of this writing, there were only 12 reported AOG incidents in December, compared to 18 in November and an average of about 40 per month from May to October. While relatively low for this year, the number is high compared to last December (two incidents). Wardak was by far the most volatile Central Region province this year, continuing a trend that started in 2007 when AOG activity and incident levels increased dramatically. While the



greatest destabilization began in 2007, AOG incident levels still increased about 40% in 2008 compared to 2007. NGO can expect a continued but short lull in incidents in the coming weeks though the province will remain highly dangerous. Even if NGO have AOG approval, the threats of collateral damage from active warfare and profit-motivated abduction will continue to make Wardak inhospitable for most NGO in the foreseeable future.

PARWAN

AOG incidents have been low in Parwan since October, dropping to 1-3 per month after experiencing 6-7 incidents per month since April. There were only two AOG incidents in December. On 25 December, AOG fired a rocket propelled grenade at the district centre and on 29 December, a vehicle borne IED exploded in Charharikar city. The attack tar-

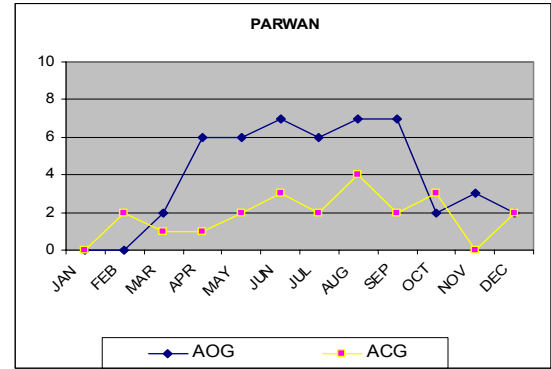
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from attacks
- IED between Charharikar and Bamyan

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	0

geted a U.S. convoy entering the Provincial Governor's office compound, reportedly killing two locals and injuring an estimated 20 others, including two US soldiers and a local interpreter. The IMF was reportedly there to attend a weekly meeting, thus indicating a planned and targeted attack.

Hekmatyer's Hizb-i-Islami Gulbuddin (HIG) has claimed responsibility for the attack—the only such attack ANSO has recorded in Chaharikar city in the last three years. Prior to this, AOG incidents in Chaharikar city



have mostly been limited to periodic rocket attacks or armed attacks on police check posts. While this is an unwelcome development, for now it can be viewed as part of general trend of VBIED attacks (Khost on 28 December and Kandahar on 27 December) rather than suggestive of a particular focus on Parwan's capital.

BAMYAN

Bamyan has been quiet during December and will likely remain so during the winter months, with weather related problems the dominant hazard. Bamyan also has the potential for criminal activity and armed robbery, though currently there is nothing indicating any specific threat.

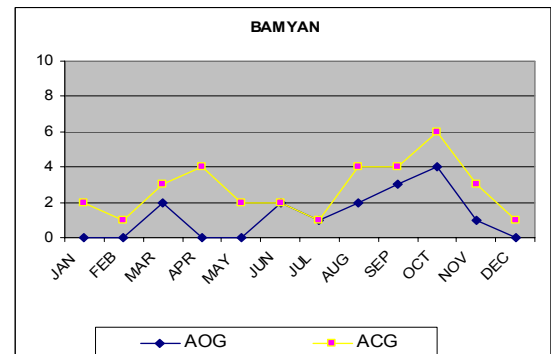
While Bamyan is one of the safest Central Region provinces, two troubling issues that arose this

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Weather related road hazards
- AOG presence in Khamard, Shibar, and Sayghan

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

year were a notable increase in AOG activity and increased danger travelling to the province from Kabul. Bamyan experienced 15 AOG incidents this year, compared to one last year and two in 2006. Though this needs to be considered in the context of an overall low incident level—for example the mean average number of AOG incidents for all eight Central Region provinces is around 100—it is also evidence of an increasing level of AOG activity that may portend future problems. Khamard, the northern section of Shibar, and Sayghan are reported to have a notable AOG



presence that could migrate toward the centre. This past summer, most NGO ceased road travel from Kabul to Bamyan after several IED incidents along the route through Parwan and one attack in Shibar, Bamyan that damaged an INGO vehicle. Given the winter slowdown, it will likely be spring before we can gauge the continued significance of these issues and the related threat for NGO.

PANJSHIR

On 13 December in Unaba District, armed assailants reportedly attacked the District Governor's house, fleeing after exchanging fire with security guards. Characteristically for Panjshir, there is little information on the incident,

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

but it is likely related to a local political dispute and not indicative of deteriorating security or a threat relevant to NGO. Panjshir has recorded only one criminal and two AOG incidents this year,

NO GRAPH AVAILABLE

and it remains the Central Region's safest province.

LOGAR

With only six AOG incidents recorded so far, December was one of only three fairly quiet months this year. This is the lowest number of AOG incidents experienced since February, when there was only one incident. AOG incidents began to pick up in March and April (with 12 and 13 incidents respectively) then averaged about 22 per month though November. While there are military and security operations occurring

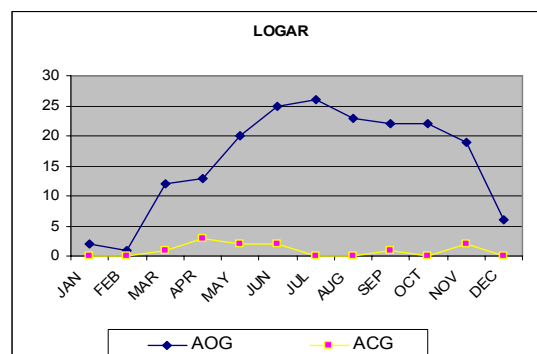
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG freedom of movement
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Armed clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

in the province, the seasonal slowdown prevents measuring the success of these operations. The AOG activity lull can be expected to be temporary and likely of shorter duration than last year (it has already started a month later than last year).

Logar's security changed drastically in 2007 with AOG incidents more than tripling the total in 2006. The change this year was less extreme, but AOG incidents still increased significantly from 2007 (over 40%). NGO security also experienced a drastic deterioration in 2007. The number of



ACG or AOG incidents directly affecting NGO rose from two in 2006 to seven in both 2007 and 2008, which included two deaths in 2007 and three deaths in 2008. While the direct NGO incident numbers are similar for 2007 and 2008, the situation in 2008 was likely much more dangerous for NGO, as NGO reduced operations in response to the increasingly hostile environment, thus likely preventing more incidents.

KAPISA

AOG incident levels this month are the lowest of the year. So far there have been only two AOG incidents, while the rest of the year they ranged from six (January) to 17 (August) per month. In 2008, Kapisa was the first province other than Kabul to see notable AOG activity, but there is currently no way to know if this will be repeated in the com-

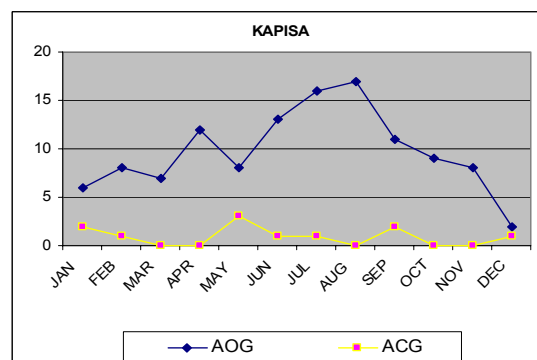
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- Significant AOG presence in some districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

ing year.

AOG incident levels in 2008 increased 77% compared to 2007, but beyond this general deterioration of stability the overall situation in Kapisa has effectively been constant throughout the year—Kapisa is considered a strategic staging area for AOG operations targeting Kabul; most of the province is believed to have a notable AOG presence and/or freedom of movement; Tagab, Alasay, and Nijrab are probably under AOG control; and security operations are most prevalent in Nijrab,



which is the highest incident district accounting for about 50% of all incidents in the province. In general, for the Central Region, Kapisa is an area of medium AOG incident levels and high instability. Other than a possible increase in AOG activity, there is currently no reason to expect any major changes in the coming months.

TRAINING NOTICE:

Please refer to Page 14 of this report for upcoming training opportunities being hosted at ANSO.

DAYKUNDI

It was reported that in Khadir District on 14 December, three armed AOG stopped mini-vans for the purpose of searching for GoA and/or INGO employees. While security reporting from Daykundi is limited, what reports do emerge (such as this) suggest a generally decreasing security situation related to increased AOG

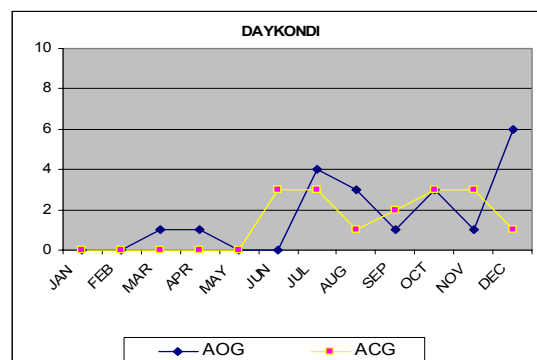
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Minimal security force presence
- AOG freedom of movement
- Banditry

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

movement. Other concerns are local power struggles to which NGO can fall victim (as occurred in July when a local warlord kidnapped two INGO international staff for political leverage), and crimes such as armed robbery—the potential for which could be increased by the province's severe economic hardships.

The southern districts of Kijran, Giti, and Gizab are likely to be largely under AOG control and/or conducive for their free



movement. While the areas north are safer than these districts, there is little in the way of an official security presence. The limited security and the conditions mentioned above make the province risky for NGO operation, and it may be becoming increasingly so.

FARYAB

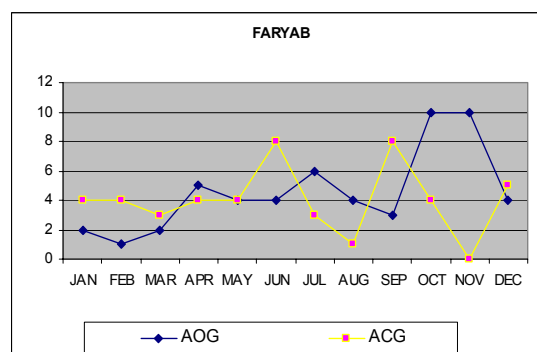
The second NGO-related incident of the year in Faryab occurred at the very end of the reporting period and as such information about it remains limited. What is known at this point is that a marked INGO vehicle was intercepted by AOG elements and its occupants detained. After a short

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Heightened AOG activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	1

period the AOG released the employees unharmed and demolished the vehicle with an RPG. In the next bi-weekly, ANSO will analyze information obtained from ongoing investigations, which is likely to be relevant the deterrence and acceptance strategies of NGOs operating in Faryab and Badghis. The incident took place in Almar district, which, like other districts in western Faryab



and eastern Badghis is very unstable and has a high AOG presence. NGO operations in these areas must be considered extremely risky if at all feasible.

BADAKHSHAN

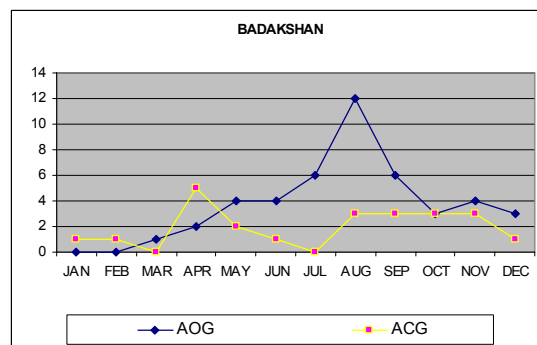
Badakhshan has remained quiet of late with the exception of criminal activity and some notable protests over food shortages. Protests at the Shahri Buzurg DAC over alleged corruption in food distribution grew significantly in size from

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Food scarcity
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

400 persons earlier in the month to over three times that many in a subsequent protest. The protests were non-violent and resulted in negotiations with the district governor. Numerous districts of Badakhshan face significant food scarcity issues during winter due to their inherent inaccessibility during the winter months. NGOs operating in such areas should be exceptionally conscientious in



pursuing their acceptance strategies given that food scarcity could lead to a breakdown in social norms that normally insulate NGOs.

SAMANGAN

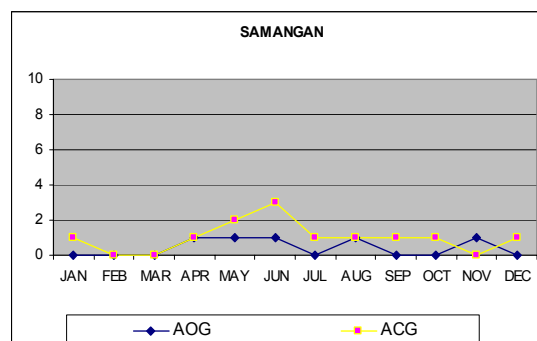
Incidents in Samangan have remained limited in number and scope, with the main concern to NGOs being a reported rise in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

robberies along the Mazar-Puli Khumri road in the vicinity of Robatak. Such incidents have occurred at night at which time NGOs are advised to suspend movement.



BALKH

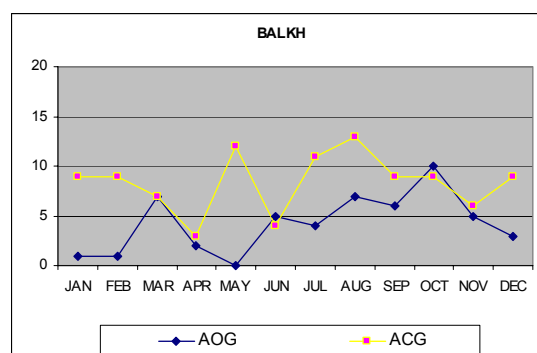
The only explicitly AOG activity during this reporting period was the rare discovery of an IED in Mazar city. The IED could have been aimed at a high-ranking official but its placement suggests

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Political infighting
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	8
This Report Period	0

other motives are possible. Furthermore, it also inconclusive whether the device was actually meant to produce casualties or serve as a “warning”. In another instance a GoA vehicle was set alight whilst parked outside. Taken together this evidence is suggestive of AOG activity, but in light of past patterns they are more likely expressions of political



strife in the build up to the upcoming elections.

TAKHAR

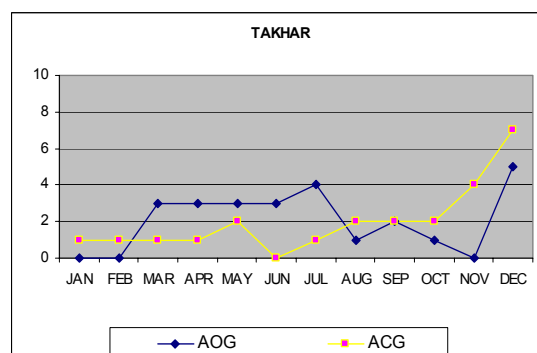
AOG activity in Takhar has been minimal recently but criminal activity has apparently increased of late. Several murders which have taken place in the province are

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Highway banditry

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

seemingly unconnected and the larger concern for NGOs is high-way robbery, particularly on the main road between Taluqan and Kalafgan. Such robberies have taken place at night, however, which should serve as a reminder to NGOs to avoid all movement at night.



JAWZJAN

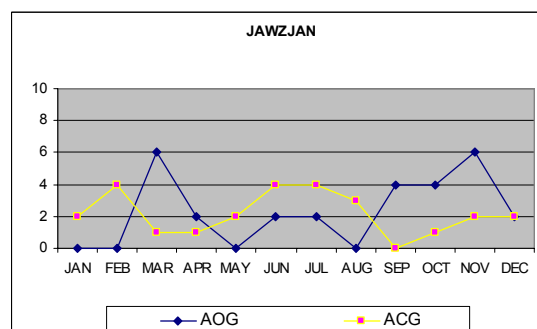
Factional strife manifested itself in a few incidents during this reporting period. In Khanaqa an individual aligned with a minority political party (in Jawzjan) was gunned down at his house by unknown armed men. Meanwhile,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks on GoA personnel
- Political infighting

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	0

district-level representatives of government ministries were attacked while travelling by car near Mingajik. Much like in Balkh, political considerations in light of upcoming elections likely play a significant role in explaining these incidents based on past trends. Rumours of AOG movement in the province have also been rife, but ANSO has as of yet not been



able to confirm their validity and as such these rumours should be evaluated in light the area's political ecology.

NANGARHAR

In common with most of the region, there were more security incidents and AOG initiated attacks in this reporting period than the corresponding period in 2007. Following an attack against the regional office of a NGO in Jalalabad outlined in the previous report, the same NGO was targeted when an IED detonated at an information point it maintained in a Jalalabad hospital. With no threats or claims of responsibility issued it is not believed the attack

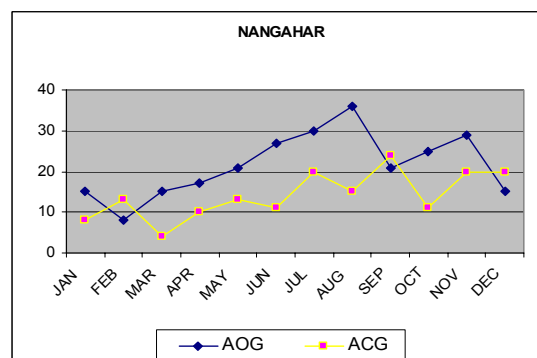
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- SVBIED
- Abduction/kidnapping
- AOG-security force clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	10
This Report Period	1

is linked to the organisation's NGO status or any perception of it being linked to GOA or international organisations..

There are also persistent reports of a SVBIED threat in Nangarhar, reinforced by a large number of AOG movements into the province during December. The use of direct fire against Afghan security forces that began in November has continued to the end of year with 3 such attacks across the province in late December. A poppy eradication team and delegation of tribal elders were attacked in Lal Pur in the east of region, as a result of which one



ANP member and a tribal elder were killed. The willingness to attack tribal elders and continuing direct fire attacks indicates an ongoing ambition of AOG to maintain their operations in Nangarhar. The absence of what until recently were routine methods of attack in the province (IED and indirect fire) and the use of 'labour intensive' direct fire attacks hints that the availability of AOG resources in Nangarhar is not what it is elsewhere in the region.

LAGHMAN

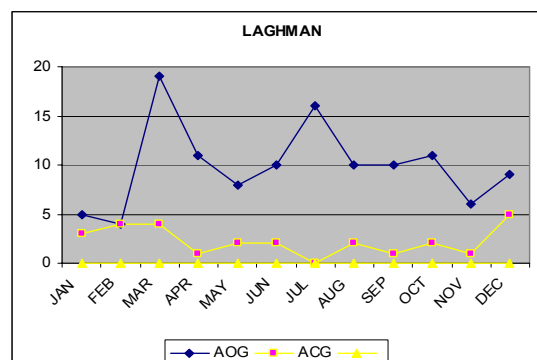
Late December has been a relatively quiet reporting period in Laghman but the incidents that have occurred are worthy of note. In the middle of the month Phase 3 of the voter registration process got underway and was followed

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

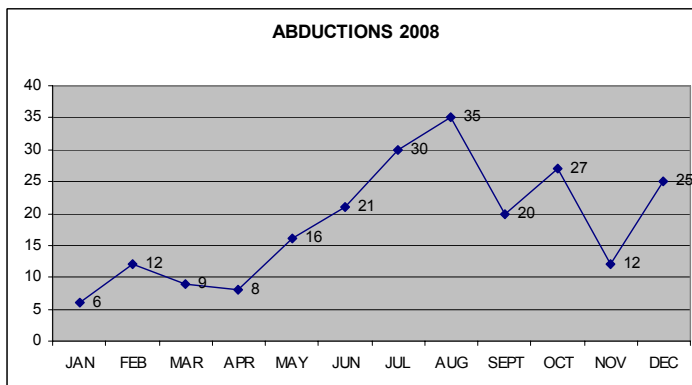
- IED in Alishing and Alingar Valleys
- Attacks on Voter Registration sites

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

by attacks on two registration sites. On 18 December rockets were fired at a site in the east of Mihtarlam district, missing their target and causing no injuries. On 25 December a school in Mihtarlam DAC that was being used in the registration process was attacked, again causing no injuries. In recent months there has been relatively little use of IED in Laghman by AOG. The finds of two devices and an explosives



package in the Alishing Valley in this reporting period may represent a change in AOG tactics in the province and pose significant challenges to those using the routes north from Mihtarlam.



KHOST

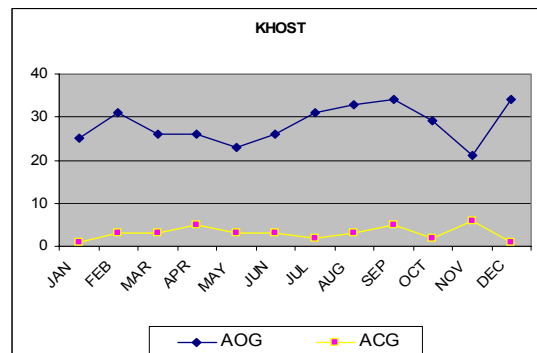
A slight increase in the total number of reported incidents in this reporting period has also seen a doubling in the number of incidents initiated by AOG compared to the same period in 2007. Centred on Khost City, incidents have broadly taken place along routes west and north out of the city. Early in the reporting period IMF searched the residence of a local doctor in Khost City. Initial reports indicated that three of the doctor's relatives were killed during or shortly after the search. It was also reported that a number of others were injured, including

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED in Khost City
- Attacks against DAC
- Clashes in Eastern Districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	6
This Report Period	0

women and a child who were all bitten by a dog used in the search operation. It is inevitable that such reports will only erode any existing support or tolerance of IMF and the following week saw four IED incidents in Khost City, including two attacks against IMF. Fifteen km west of Khost City, Mando Zayi DAC was targeted by a SVBIED on 28 December, killing at least six people including four children from a nearby school. The route north through Sabari saw a concentration of activity with a number of IED finds, premature detonations and explosions. ANBP in Tere Zayi were twice attacked with direct fire, as was a police checkpoint in Zambar, in the north of the province.



Mortars were used against Sabari DAC and Tere Zayi DACs for the first time in Khost since June and again indicate the current availability of munitions to some AOG operating in the Eastern Region. Other incidents have included assassinations of Afghan security force members, and a firefight between AOG and Afghan security forces in a bazaar in Bak, as a result of which two bystanders were killed. An ANP follow-up operation involved the questioning of local residents and workers, during which a national employee of a NGO was involved in an altercation with ANP members.

KUNAR

With more security incidents than the preceding period, and almost double the number reported in late December 2007, Kunar continues to account for a significant portion of AOG activity in the Eastern Region. The dozen incidents not attributed to AOG include the robbery of a large sum of cash from a NGO office in Ghaziabad in the west of the province, an act of arson, the murder of a 12 year old child, and the wounding of two civilians in an IMF airstrike.

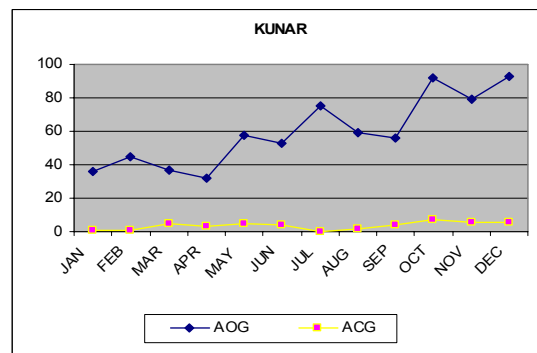
Many of the remaining 59 incidents reported in Kunar fit what is now the expected pattern of

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Criminality

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	1

AOG activity. Short duration direct fire attacks continue to be directed against security force positions in Mano Gai and Chawkay, with some locations being attacked twice or more per day on frequent basis. As outlined in previous reports, the movement of AOG into Sirkanay has produced increased activity in the district and this has continued with two IED finds, a 1-hour attack on an ANP checkpoint, and a limited and ineffective rocket attack on the DAC. This reporting period has also seen a resurgence in convoy attacks, with four taking place in the north and west of the province resulting in the death of one driver. The cycle of indirect fire attacks in Kunar has restarted with several limited uses of mortar and rocket fire across the prov-



ince. As well as the Sirkanay incident already mentioned, attacks also took place in Mano Gai and the border district of Marawara.

The use of indirect fire against targets, and recent reports of AOG movement into Wata Pur reinforce the impression that the availability of manpower and munitions to AOG in Kunar has not yet been reduced by military efforts on either side of the border. Recent weeks have seen AOG exercise a diverse range of methods to attack targets in the province and there is no reason to expect anything other than a limited reduction in activity through the winter period.

NURISTAN

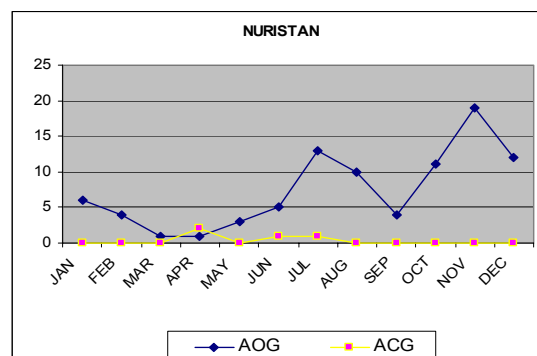
The number of incidents reported in Nuristan in late December is lower than the preceding period but nevertheless an increase on the same period in 2007. The rise may partially be a statistical one, with recent IMF deployments to the province being accompanied by an increase in clashes and concomitant reporting. Late Decem-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- Collateral damage from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

ber has seen a similar pattern of activity to that of recent months with AOG using direct fire against security forces in Kamdesh as well as the district's DAC. A recent avalanche that killed two people and injured several others is an illustration of the severity of winter in Nuristan. Unlike other parts of the region, AOG activity in the province has started to slow down and can be expected to decrease further as winter progresses. While activity slows down, NGO



operating in Nuristan should however be aware that a permanent AOG presence exists in the province and the remit of security forces is limited by a range of factors that will only be exacerbated by winter.

PAKTYA

Paktya is the only province in the Eastern Region to experience a lower number of reported incidents than the corresponding period in 2007. With an IED detonation and find, AOG activity around the areas of Shack and Gardez has continued. A direct

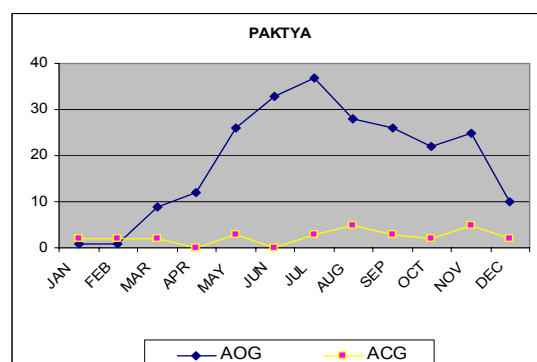
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction along Gardez-Shamal Road
- IED along main routes
- Clashes in Eastern Paktya

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

fire attack against an Afghan security forces patrol in Dand Wa Patan occurred outside the province's usual areas of AOG activity and killed one of the patrol members

With no reported activity along the Gardez-Shamal road, and no indirect fire attacks in this reporting period, Paktya is showing signs of a winter downturn in AOG activity. However, should the Dand Wa Patan attack be an



indicator of recent unreported or future AOG movement from the neighbouring Khyber Pass and Kurram districts of Pakistan, there may yet be spikes in AOG activity before spring.

GHOR

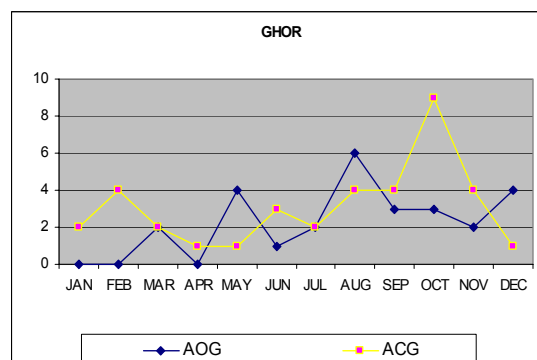
The recurring cases of looting of food convoys in Ghor points to the lack of the administrative writ over the areas beyond the provincial and district headquarters. The robbing of a private vehicle close to Chegcharan and the often

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Highway banditry

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	0

made seizures of arms from Lal Wa Sarjangan indicate the activity of both ACG and AOG in these districts. Although AOG presence in Ghor is yet to catch up with the critical levels of Farah, NGO need to undertake caution while planning their movements and operations in many areas of the prov-



ince, and also need to retain a low profile to avoid being noticed and targeted.

BADGHIS

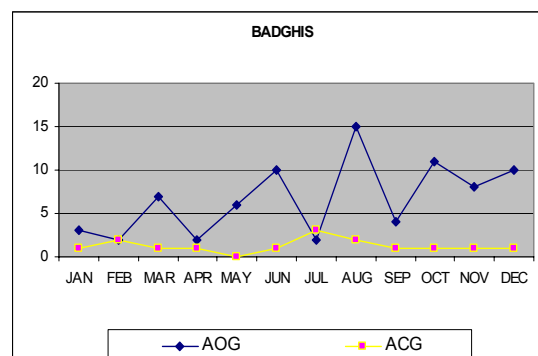
The kidnapping of three road construction workers and a civil engineer in the Muqur district, employed on a road construction project in the area is a repeat of the tactic used by AOG to target individuals employed on government construction projects - with the dual purpose of intimidating and raising funds for their activities. While the road construction workers have been released, the kidnappers have made a ransom demand against the release of the civil engineer. Being the third such incident within the month

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Tribal feuds
- Inter-AOG clashes
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

(the ANP having rescued another kidnapping victim this week) it points to a well organized method of operation. The issue of communities in these areas being divided on the basis of being 'for' or 'against' the implementation of these development projects – as a result of AOG influence or tribal rivalries (or both) - add to the existing context of tribal and ethnic divisions in these areas. The many similarities in the two consecutive kidnapping incidents and the common knowledge that the geographical locations of both these incidents fall under the influence and control of a single AOG commander, indicates the group's active opposition to the GoA development projects.



The incidents of AOG clashes and tribal conflicts in the districts of Jawand and Murghab indicate the steady build up of fighters based on tribal lines in these areas. The clash between two AOG, leading to the killing of one of the AOG commander and wounding of three others in Jawand, as well as the abduction of individuals from the Aimoq tribe (with the direct involvement of AOG) has had the effect of further increasing tribal tensions and raises the spectre of the deepening and widening of existing conflicts as AOG wrestle to gain influence in hitherto unoccupied areas.

FARAH

The desertion of an ANP cadre (17 in number) to the AOG fold, along with their weapons and equipment, is not only a sign of the growing influence of AOG in the province but also of the lack of confidence of the populace in the initiatives of the GoA in wresting back this highly restive province from the ever tightening grip of the AOG. This incident comes in close succession to the pressing of criminal charges by

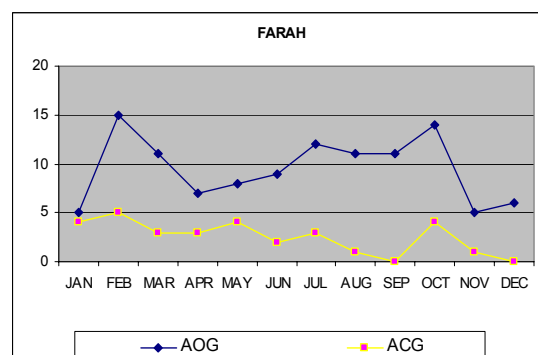
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Overall instability
- Tribal feuds
- Clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

the ANP against 50 of their own personnel, for having aided and abetted the AOG cause. The developments are a barometer of the state of affairs in the province with regard to the influence on the population of state vs. non-state actors.

The presence of fighters of foreign origin and their intimidation of the voter registrants in Bakwa, the ambush on a logistics convoy and an IED attack on IMF in Bala Buluk, and the setting off of explosives in Pusht Rod - all adds up to a challenging security situation in the province. The looming conflict between the Alizai and Noor-



zai tribes over the issue of handing over of an accused murderer adds to the highly charged environment. Cases of abduction in Farah city and the adjoining suburbs deem it to be a high risk area. NGO operating and travelling to Farah need to exercise a high degree of caution while conducting their movements and should always be on the alert for any unexpected developments.

HERAT

The shake up in the top brass of the Herat province police department in the month of Nov 2008 seems to be showing positive results. There seems to be a substantive drop in the number of cases of crime like armed robberies, kidnappings, explosions and grenade attacks. Herat City had been plagued by a constantly increasing occurrence of such incidents which were by and large criminally motivated or the fallout of political conflicts. Not only do the statistics in crime related incidents indicate a steep decline, the cases of arrests of suspects related to prior incidents of crime have also shown an encouraging increase.

On the other hand, there has been a sharp increase of AOG related security incidents in Herat city as well as surrounding areas. Following Eid, there was a sudden rush of SVBIED threats and attacks targeting Herat City and environs. Prior attacks of this nature typically occurred beyond the city limits. With the seizure of a vehicle in the proximity of the city

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

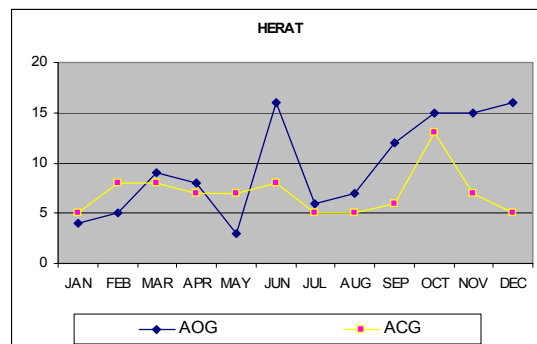
- Grenade attacks
- SVBIED threats
- IED in Herat City

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	14
This Report Period	0

limits - equipped to carry out such an attack, and the incident of another SBVIED attack close to the Police Training Centre, the threat of suicide bombing attacks in and around Herat City is very real.

The other major development was the discovery of an IED within Herat City, deployed on a stretch of a road carrying GoA vehicles and other high profile traffic. The employment of IED's as a tactic of irregular warfare needs not only technically skilled, trained and motivated individuals to assemble, deploy and command detonate these devices – the operation itself needs an active organization in the target area to extend the necessary support and accord the logistics cover. This incident - combined with the one wherein a car was intercepted while ferrying scores of IED assembled from medium mortar bombs and hand grenades into Herat City - is a cause for alarm.

There has been a pronounced change in the tactics followed by the AOG operating in the districts of Ingil and Gozara - over the month of Dec. From conducting rocket attacks onto the UN compound and the airport complex earlier, the AOG has changed its modus operandi to effecting di-



rect influence and authority over the population of these two districts through the method of intimidation; made through verbal warnings, conduct of searches and issuing of penalties. Most of the actions being directed towards the resident population rather than the GoA or the security apparatus, the larger strategy seems to be that of effecting control over the population, with spin offs from future power brokering in mind.

The incidence of Charmak in Gulran district merits mention as a subject of caution to NGO operating or residing in this area and having to depend on the local produce. Combined with the issue of contaminated local wheat flour, is the issue of insufficient relief supplies being received within the district. Official figures quote the numbers of humans presently carrying visible manifestations of the disease at 270, while thousands of livestock have also perished. This is bound to have serious adverse effects on community livelihoods. In the absence of emergency relief measures and the resulting food insecurity, we are likely to witness major movements of people from Gulran to other areas. This could further add to the number of the internally displaced while also providing possible recruiting grounds for the AOG.

PAKTIKA

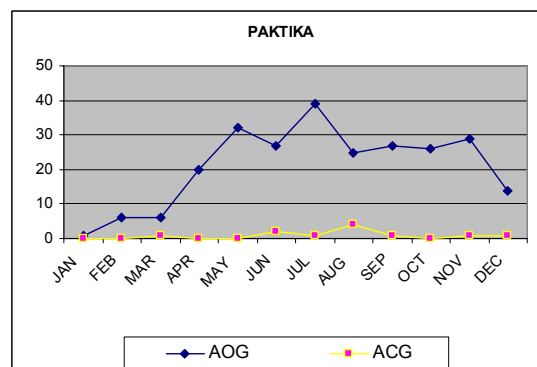
AOG offensive operations in Paktika province are in line with December 2007 levels despite last

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- AOG intimidation of Voter Registration process

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

month's almost doubling of incidents. And although it is located in the southern region, it continues to experience low incident numbers and typical conventional AOG operations—IED and close range assaults.



KANDAHAR

AOG attack levels during December 2008 were the highest recorded for this month in Kandahar province. These incidents were dominated by IED attacks, with a double IED strike in Spin Boldak targeting the District Chief's convoy as well as SVBIED attack outside of Kandahar City on the 27th of December. IMF, likewise, have not escaped

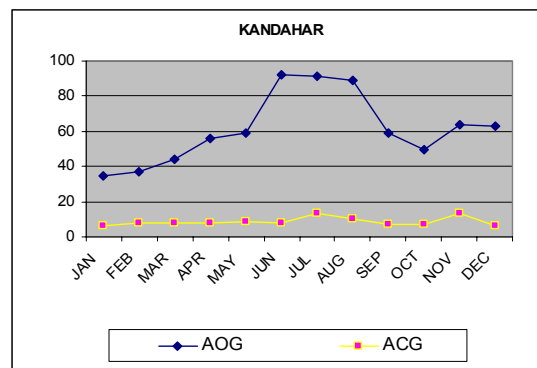
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Assassination
- Collateral damage from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	13
This Report Period	0

increasingly lethal AOG IED attacks. Strikes which have resulted in one of the highest Kandahar based IMF monthly casualty rates in recent years.

These incidents are emblematic of the threats that are confronting perceived parties to the conflict and prove a collateral risk for NGO. Conversely, NGO have received indirect threats via night letters, authored by the "Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan," stipulating that work with NGO was not permitted, implying those who do will be harmed.



Assassinations of high profile individuals within Kandahar City continues to be an issue as illustrated by the 27 December killing of the Mullah of Sra Jama (Red Mosque) as well as the deputy head of the religious shura inside the mosque.

ZABUL

Zabul province AOG and ACG incidents have declined by more than half when compared to 2007 levels, possibly indicating an AOG shift in resources to other

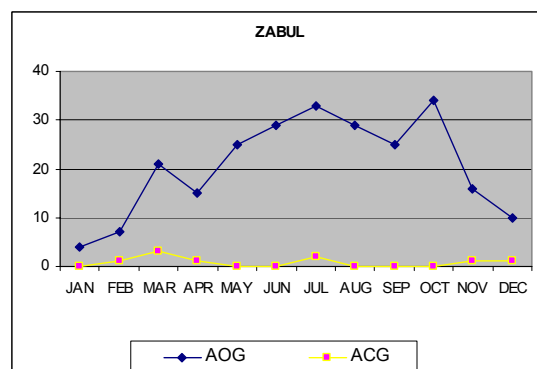
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- SVBIED
- Highway banditry

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

provinces that have experienced record increases.

Nonetheless, this does not correlate into increased security: on 24 December in Qalat City, the decapitated corpse of a driver working for a road construction company in Suri District was discovered in the Agriculture Department, with the duty guard being conspicuously absent. The perva-



sive insecurity, even in Qalat City, requires NGO to maintain exacting security procedures

NIMROZ

25 December in Sistani area of Zaranj, a suicide BBIED attacker detonated his explosive vest, targeting an ANP escort vehicle that was accompanying a convoy of

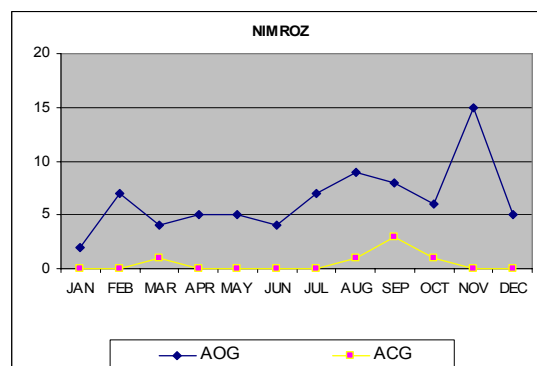
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Suicide attacks in Zaranj
- Increased AOG attacks in Chakhansor

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

local trucks transporting WFP food materials. Although the suicide bomber was the sole casualty, this event demonstrates that AOG suicide attacks in Zaranj will persist.

AOG also are employing IED throughout the province. Because of these forms of impersonal attack, NGO should always en-



sure they limit their exposure to ANP, ANSF, IMF, and GOA targets.

URUZGAN

AOG incidents in Uruzgan are relatively few when compared to more problematic provinces. Regardless, AOG continue to be heavily reliant on IED and mines in their confrontation with IMF/ANSF. NGO should be aware that Charchino's roads are heavily mined, and the IED threat is lowest in the Tirin Kot, Chora, and

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

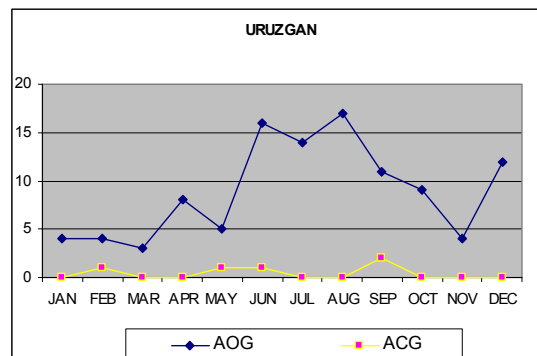
- IED
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Strong AOG presence in multiple districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Dihrawud.

NGO incidents in Uruzgan for this year have been negligible; however, especially in Charchino, Gizab and Khas Uruzgan, local AOG oppose NGO activities—opposition that is compounded due to increased AOG freedom. Residents of the Baluchi Valley are also strongly reluctant to accept NGO assistance because of a strong AOG presence and the threat of violence.

Kidnapping is an additional threat in Uruzgan; although most victims are usually ANSF, GoA, or sus-



pected GoA supporters, expatriate NGO staff would still prove an enticing target due to AOG/ACG desires to collect a ransom.

Due to the abovementioned prevailing threats, NGO should thus avoid working in and transiting through Charchino, Gizab, Khas Uruzgan, Kamisan, Khush Khadir, and eastern Mirabad/Chinarto.

GHAZNI

While AOG activities in Ghazni may seem to be slowing, incidents actually have reached an all time high for December; with an almost three fold increase in comparison to 2007's December lev-

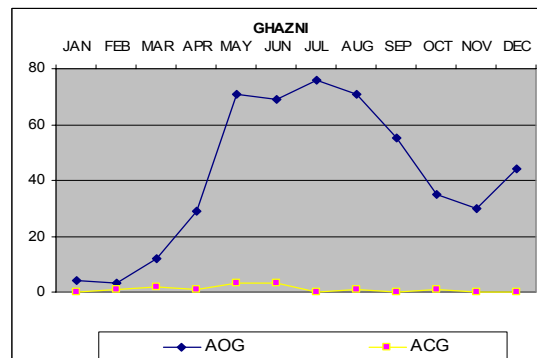
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Indirect fire attacks
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Collateral damage from clashes along main routes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

els. Moreover, according to ANSO records, incident levels have actually increased from November to December.

Despite AOG utilizing a wide spectrum of modus operandi, the majority of AOG attacks are close range in Ghazni province. Within this category, the primary method of attack is to conduct vehicular ambushes on GOA/ANSF/IMF, followed by assassination/



summary execution of known parties to the conflict or accused GOA "spies".

HELMAND

Helmand province experienced record AOG attacks for December in 2008. The most active district—Nahri Sarraj—was evenly afflicted with close range armed assaults and IED attacks. Additionally, while predominately tar-

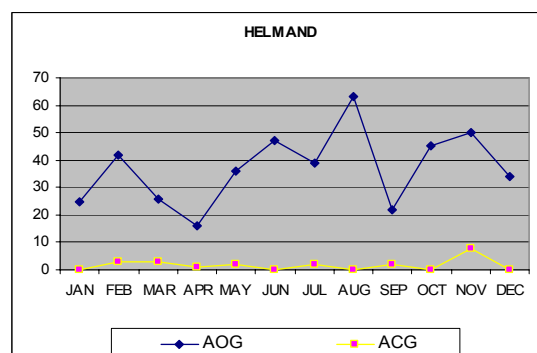
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Prevailing instability
- Collateral damage from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

getting IMF/ANSF, AOG conducted assassinations and IED targeting of civilians. In Lashkar Gah and Nad Ali, conversely, AOG adhered to strictly targeting combatants, also through IED and close range armed assaults.

Looking to the future, NGO should expect AOG activity in the province to be above the norm because of AOG desires to further a perception of an uptick in activities. Additionally, AOG ac-



tivities in the province, and writ large, indicate that they intend to employ more complex attacks to drive up IMF/ANSF casualties, especially through multi-stage IED attacks.



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ANSO ACRONYMS

IMF-International Military Forces / AOG-Armed Opposition Groups / GOA-Government of Afghanistan / ACG-Armed Criminal Groups / ANA-Afghan National Army / ANP-Afghan National Police / IED-Improvised Exploding Device / AEF-Afghan Eradication Forces / RPG-Rocket Propelled Grenade / IDF-Indirect Fire (ex: mortars) / VBIED-Vehicle Borne Improvised Exploding Device / PRP-Previous Reporting Period / ANBP-Afghan National Border Police / SAF-Small Arms Fire / NDS-National Directorate of Security (intelligence) / PSC-Private Security Company / DC-District Centre

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MISSING

This report ANSO could not provide analysis for the provinces of:

- Baghlan
- Sar-E-Pul
- Kunduz

This is because we do not know enough about the area to comment on the significance of the incidents occurring there.

If you can help us understand the province better please contact us.

Upcoming Security Training At ANSO

The following NGO security related courses will be offered in February and March 2009 by [The Armadillo Group](#):

February 22-26: Management of Safety and Security with Crisis Management Training (Kabul)

March 1-3: Personal Safety and Security (Kabul)

March 4-5: Kidnap and Abduction Avoidance and Survival (Kabul)

For more information on these courses, please contact Armadillo directly: NGO are encouraged to register early if interested as places are limited to ensure quality of learning.

[The Armadillo Group](#)

Email: steve@armadilloatlarge.com