

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Authoritative statement made regarding AOG perceptions of NGO operating in Afghanistan
- Kabul attacks demonstrate improved planning and coordination but no strategic change
- NGO community suffers first 2009 fatality in criminal case in south Nangahar
- Use of suicide attacks escalating after long lull

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

The attacks in Kabul on Feb 11th dominated the period. Elements consistent with previous trends include the targeting of Government security ministries and the combination of BBIED and small arms within the teams. New elements included the coordinated deployment of BBIED to multiple sites, the apparent inclusion of a non-security Ministry (Education, not assessed as intended target) and the size of the force which attacked the Justice Ministry (5 men).

Afghan security forces (dominantly ANP and NDS) acted effectively to prevent more than 50% of the attacks from occurring indicating a high level of readiness. It is ANSO opinion that the attacks do not fundamentally alter the vulnerability of the city. It remains as easy to breach as it has for the last two years and attacks like this will continue and escalate in complexity and impact.

Earlier in the report period the UN and NGO community were shaken by an article appearing on the 'Al-Samood' website (known for its association to the Taliban) entitled "Foreign Organizations and their Symbolic Goals". The well written article argued that NGO in Afghanistan specifically are undermining Islam, spreading Christianity, wasting money and working as spies of foreign embassies. A number of NGO and UN agencies were named or had their logo displayed. The piece stopped short of recommending attacks but is considered capable of inspiring such amongst radicals, criminals or anyone else with an invalidated grudge.

The 14 day period reported more than 150 AOG attacks including an unusually high eight (08) successful suicide attacks and more than 30 IED's.

In a particularly nasty execution on Feb 8th an AOG beheaded the Head of Refugee Affairs in Helmand while more than 50 ANA/ANP were killed in small arms skirmishes. Approximately 42 civilians died from the conflict in the same period.

NGO DATA & TRENDS

Against the backdrop of the article on the 'Al-Samood' website, noted above, incidents involving NGO continued this period with an additional seven (7) incidents bringing the annual total to 25. (13 by same period of 2008)

Sadly the period saw the first fatality of the year with an INGO driver being murdered outside his home. The case is considered personal and criminal although the general deterioration of conditions in south Nangahar is believed to be producing a more conducive environment for crime.

NGO incidents this year have already included 3 RPG/SAF attacks, 2 cases arson, 2 IED's, 4 armed robberies and 7 abductions.

AOG remain the primary cause of NGO incidents (17 vs 6 ACG) and incidents are occurring across a wide geographic area.

KABUL

Attention on the security situation in Afghanistan has again focused on Kabul, as the capital experienced co-ordinated attacks against government ministries on February 11. The close proximity of the ministries of Education, Justice and Interior obfuscated reporting of the intended targets; however it is clear that the Ministry of Justice was the primary objective of AOG forces.

At approximately 10:10am, AOG wearing suicide vests and firing small arms attacked the Department of Corrections in District Four and the Ministry of Justice in District Two. At the same time, the ANP also engaged a BBIED in front of the Ministry of Education, killing him with an RPG prior to detonation. Reports also suggest that a further attacker was killed in the street of the Ministry of Interior by ANP; although it remains uncertain as to whether this was a BBIED.

The two successful penetrations of government ministries shared a similar modus operandi: more than one attacker, the use of small arms fire to overpower static guards and the intention to cause maximum casualties following the breach. At the Department of Corrections, two BBIEDs approached the guarded entrance

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Decreased security in and around city
- IEDs, suicide bombings, rocket attacks
- Abduction

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	1

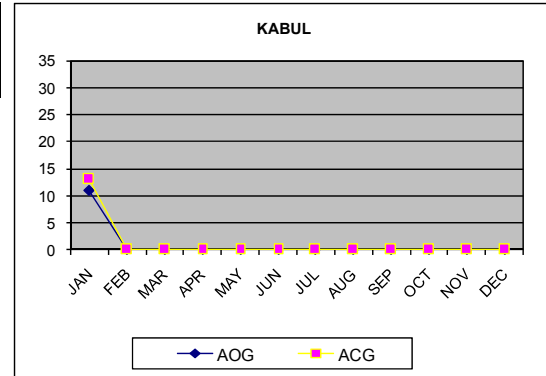
and commenced using small arms fire. Following a return of fire by ANP guards, one BBIED detonated allowing the second to enter the complex in the ensuing confusion. The second BBIED, once inside also detonated causing a reported ten fatalities.

At the Ministry of Justice, small arms fire by five AOG allowed all of the attackers to successfully enter the building and spread out randomly killing ten MOJ employees. The majority of casualties were caused by gunfire; however a BBIED detonation was also reported. The attackers were killed by government forces after a four hour standoff.

Currently, 28 fatalities have been recorded (including the attackers) and almost 60 casualties. The Taliban promptly claimed responsibility for the attacks, saying they were in response to the treatment of prisoners by the government.

It is facile to argue that the February 11 attacks are an indication of the growing presence and sophistication of AOG in the capital. It is well known that AOG activity has been intensifying in Kabul Province over the past year and furthermore that these groups have long possessed the logistical support and planning capabilities necessary to carry out co-ordinated assaults.

It is extremely fortunate that the attacks did not produce significantly more casualties. This may



be the case for several reasons.

Firstly, security forces sealed off the Ministry of Justice and the immediate vicinity and evacuated staff in a seemingly effective manner, thereby limiting the number of casualties and containing the attackers. Secondly, the actions of the ANP guards outside the Ministry of Education and Interior, served to stop one and possibly two BBIEDs. Thirdly, although parallels have been drawn with the November 2008 Mumbai attacks, once inside the Ministry of Justice, the attackers showed little understanding of the interior of the building and were intent on randomly shooting employees rather than organising a hostage situation. Furthermore, reports suggest that the attackers were ill prepared for a long siege, unlike the attackers in Mumbai.

Although the attackers penetrated the heart of the Kabul establishment, further shattering the public's confidence in the government's ability to protect its citizens, the underlying security environment remains largely unchanged. The ability of AOG to attack targets in Kabul has been evidenced repeatedly in the past year with the February 11 attacks and the subsequent security clampdown unlikely to change the fact.

During the past reporting period, a local NGO worker was the victim of a theft by an organised group who had punctured a tyre as a distraction. The tactic, popular in 2006 around Taimani St, may see a resurgence and NGO are advised to travel two or three blocks after being advised of a flat tyre to avoid the area.

PARWAN

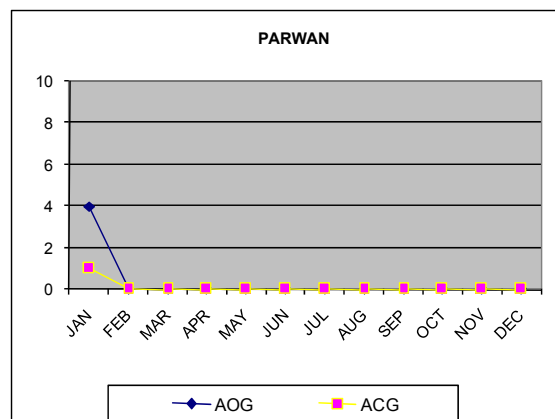
In Parwan, there have been four reported seizures of explosives or IED caches so far this year in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- History of IED incidents on road between Chaharikar and Bamyar
- Collateral damage from attacks on security forces
- Demonstrations on main road in Ghorband

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

comparison to no reported instances in the same period of 2008. It is difficult to discern at this stage whether the seizures are a result of increased ANP diligence or a general rise in the availability and deployment of IEDs. Contributing to the theory that the placement of IEDs may be on the increase in the province, there have been two reported pre-



ture IED detonations in Ghorband and Shinwari this year.

DAYKUNDI

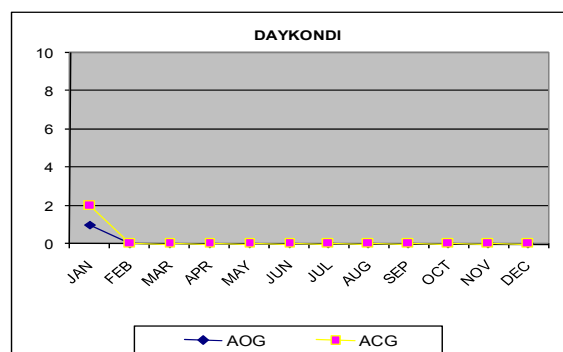
In Daykundi, NGO are relatively free to operate with no reports this year of attacks on ANA or ANP forces. Incidences of criminal activity are slightly higher than

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Free AOG movement
- Minimum security presence
- Banditry

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

the same period last year; however the majority of crimes are related to personal disputes or petty theft. The absence of AOG attacks could be explained by the scarce government security presence in the province, thereby providing few visible targets, as well as the comparatively limited strategic value, with which both the gov-



ernment and AOG hold Daykundi.

LOGAR

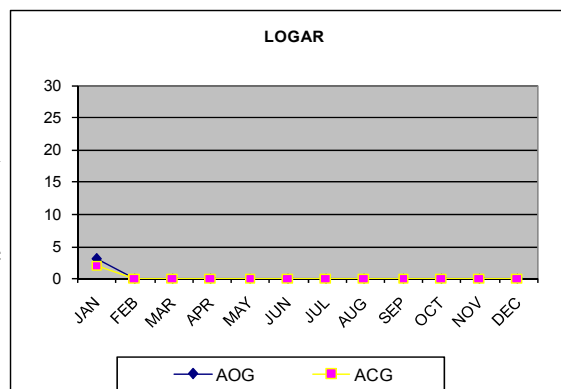
Following a VBIED attack on an IMF convoy in Kabul on February 1, France suffered further casualties when a French officer and his Afghan interpreter were killed in an IED explosion. The IED, reported in Charkh district,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG freedom of movement
- Clashes between AOG and security forces
- Abduction

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

was hidden behind a compound wall and upon detonation, followed by an ambush using SAF. A further French soldier is understood to have been seriously wounded. In 2008, the district experienced two similar ambushes on IMF convoys and patrols. In 2008 alone, AOG attacked DACs and ANP checkpoints across Charkh district more than a dozen times, underlining the status of the district as heavily infiltrated by AOG.



An IMF base in Khushi was also struck by mortar fire; however there were no reports of casualties.

KAPISA

Kapisa remains relatively calm with the number of incidents reported this year to date on a par with the same reporting period last year. In both periods, Tagab dominates the statistics representing a third of security incidents in

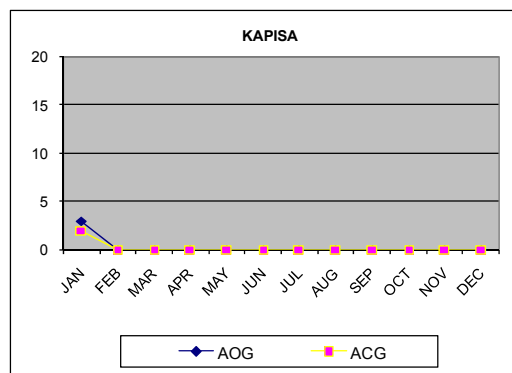
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Overall instability
- Collateral damage from security & AOG clashes
- Significant AOG presence in some districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

the province. On February 7, a joint IMF/ANA patrol in Sultan Khel village, in Tagab, seized 12 IEDs and a rifle in an operation which resulted in an ANA soldier being killed and one AOG being arrested.

In addition to the frequency of incidences in Tagab, reports have emerged of increased AOG activity, especially after dark, in the districts of Koh Band and Nijrab, bordering Panjsher.



IMF/ANA forces and AOG frequently clash in Tagab due to its strategic location and proximity to Kabul and this is likely to become more frequent in the warmer months.

WARDAK

Saydabad continues to report the largest concentration of AOG incidents within Wardak. For 2009, the district has witnessed more than fifty percent of the 19

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks on vehicles traveling the main road
- De-facto AOG control of most areas

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

security incidents recorded in the province. Although the majority of incidents are directed against IMF forces traveling the Kabul-Kandahar highway, ANP checkpoints have also come under attack by AOG using SAF.

On February 9, an IMF convoy traveling to Logar from Saydabad discovered an IED. After a con-

trolled explosion, the convoy subsequently came under RPG fire in the Tangi Villay Durani Area and called in air support to repel the attack. There were no reports of casualties.

The extent of AOG control in Wardak is reinforced by the authorities' inability to control Kabul's main artery to the south. NGO are advised to avoid traveling to Wardak due to the volatile security situation and the likelihood that the numbers of security incidences are likely to increase in the coming months.

BALKH

Balkh's relatively quiet district of Dawlatabad saw the Northern Region's first NGO incident in the form of a SAF attack on a LNGO vehicle carrying local staff on their way back from visiting a village. No one was hurt but nei-

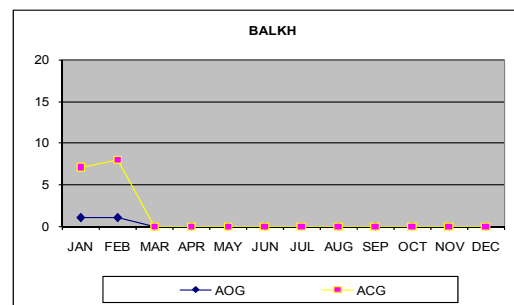
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Volatility in Dawlatabad District
- ACG activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	1

ther the perpetrators nor their motives have yet been identified. Possibilities could range from a case of mistaken identity to a targeted attack so NGOs are advised to follow ANSO for further updates.

Most direct NGO incidents in Balkh Province take place in the western districts of Chimtal and Chaharbulak and consist of threats and intimidation aside the



risks posed by collateral damage in occasional AOG attacks on ANSF. Although the remote mountain districts of Balkh are little heard from, the lack of incidents probably reflects lack of exposure. In Kishindih several ANP were ambushed by an ACG whilst trying to conduct an operation.

FARYAB

Incidents in Faryab still continue to run low in severity compared to the neighboring districts of Ghormach and Bala Murghab in Badghis. The

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG activity
- Increased AOG activity in western districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

activity in this reporting period has continued to take place in Qaysar, Almar, and Pashtun Kot districts and has consisted of attacks on ANBP and ANP checkpoints. In Pashtun Kot a local AOG broadcast its socially conservative agenda by breaking into a few houses and destroying the

occupants' TVs and warning against television viewing. Investigations in to the 31st January incident, in which an INGO vehicle was rocketed while its occupants were released unharmed, revealed that local elders have taken action against the local AOG to expel them. The AOG elements also seem to have ties to an outside state actor which is unusual in that most AOGs are based amongst the local population, but the exile deal between them and the elders involves them going to the aforementioned state.

KUNDUZ

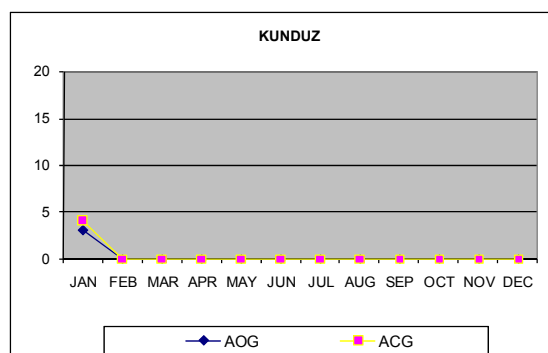
While not experiencing NGO incidents during this reporting period, Kunduz did see two significant attacks on education. In Kunduz city, usually relatively free from violence, a teacher suffered

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOGs targeting GoA, particularly education
- IEDs
- Suicide attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

an acid attack. This is the first such incident reported in Kunduz and represents a possible escalation in that it involves an attack on someone's person rather than the usual pattern of attacks which focus on targeting infrastructure (schools) with arson or explosives. Similarly, on 14 February there was a small arms attack on a school in Qal'ai Zal in the evening. SAF attacks are a particu-



larly common mode of AOG activity in Qal'ai Zal as witnessed by another such attack on an ANP checkpoint in the past few weeks.

SAR-I-PUL

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Occasional IEDs
- ACG activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

An individual in possession of one AK-47 was arrested whilst trying to place an IED along the Sangcharak – Sari Pul main road. Otherwise Sari Pul has continued its tenure as

one of the quietest provinces in Afghanistan. While incidents are certainly low, much probably also goes unreported owing to the remote nature of many of the districts. Due to the lack of reporting from many areas in Sari Pul, NGOs should know their target area and route very well before attempting missions.

SAMANGAN

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Simmering disputes in remote areas
- Strategic significance of main north-south road

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Samangan passed the preceding two weeks without incident aside from a weapons seizure. Areas most at risk in the province will remain remote districts where local disputes and smuggling have

more latitude to spread and the small possibility of a well coordinated attack along the main Mazari Sharif – Puli Khumri road (by either AOGs or ACGs). Concerning the road however the security provided by ANSF appears to have improved owing to more and better equipped ANSF emplacement and more professional behaviour at checkpoints.

NURISTAN

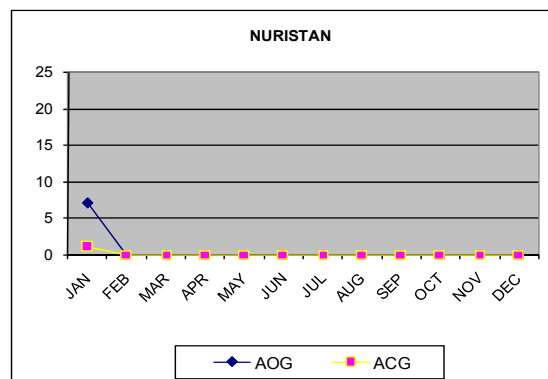
Outside Kamdesh there had only been one other reported security incident in Nuristan since mid-December. This reporting period has provided evidence that AOG activity levels are starting to increase as Spring approaches, and that AOG are already operating in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- AOG vehicle checkpoints

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

areas where there was no reported presence until the Summer in 2008. Reports of AOG operated checkpoints in Wama were followed up by ANP sending a patrol to investigate on 02 February. Close to the village of Kafer Khana the patrol was attacked and engaged in a 3 hour exchange of fire with AOG. A firefight of similar duration took place in the southern district of Nuristan when an ANP and NDS check-



point was also attacked. Reports of AOG movement into Bargi Matal add to a picture of AOG activity in areas where little, if any, is usually reported until later in the year.

NANGAHAR

The killing at his home of a national staff member living in Sherzad on 10 February again demonstrated how the conflict in the Eastern Region is facilitating criminal behaviour. With no indication of AOG involvement, the attack follows others in Nangarhar in early 2009 where easy access to munitions and limited public security have allowed extreme violence to be used against NGO. Some have linked the worsening security situation in the province to the recent departure of the Chief of Police and speculation concerning the future of the Provincial Governor, both of whom have enjoyed high levels of public support. While many of the incidents reported in Nangarhar continue to be criminal, a growing number can be linked to AOG and a number of significant incidents occurred in the province during the first part of February.

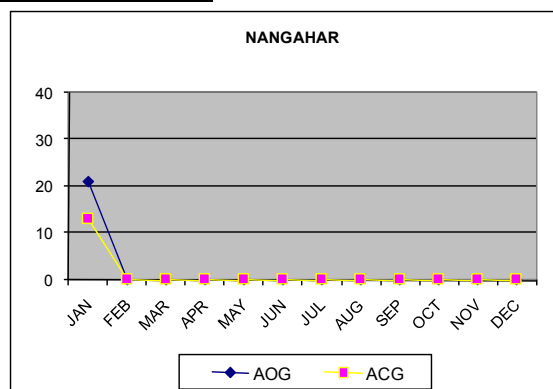
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Roadside IED
- SV/BBIED attack on GOA/IMF
- Violent Crime

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

Remotely Controlled IED were used against security force patrols on four occasions in the southern districts of Khogyani and Hisarak, as well as the central district of Behsud, on the Jalalabad ring road. Minor injuries were caused to IM members in two of the explosions, while the IED used in Khogyani on the morning of 10 February killed 3 ANP members at the scene and another who died of his injuries several days later. Another device detonated prematurely in Chaparhar, close to the location where at least three devices were used in the previous reporting period.

The morning of 07 February saw a number of attacks in the region, including two in Nangarhar. A provincial council member was killed in Dar-I-Nur by two people who attempted, and failed, to make their getaway on a motorcycle, one of whom was killed in an exchange of fire with the councillor's staff, the other being detained and killed by local residents sometime later. A few hours after this initial incident the District Governor of Goshta



was killed by a RCIED in Bati Kot.

While there is still uncertainty as to the motive for the killing of the provincial councillor, there are early signs that district governors, particularly those who enjoy public support, are being targeted by AOG in an effort to undermine the effectiveness of GOA. Direct fire is used by AOG in Nangarhar on an occasional basis, and in early February was used to attack an ANP checkpoint in Chaparhar and a ABP patrol in Lal Pur. Little more than year after it was last attacked by AOG using rockets, Jalalabad Airfield (FOB Fenty) was again attacked on 13 February when two devices were launched at it to little effect.

The use of IED by AOG in the province, and the use of weapons and explosives by criminals, continue to be the main security threats in Nangarhar, with reports of both increasing with each reporting period.

KHOST

Construction company vehicles in Khost were targeted by IED in Mando Zayi and Bak on three occasions injuring at least 6 people and killing one. In Tani an IED explosion on 08 February killed a member of the public riding a motorcycle, and two IMF soldiers were killed in Khost City on 10 February when a vehicle borne device was used against their patrol. Two ABP officers were killed in Tere Zayi on 12

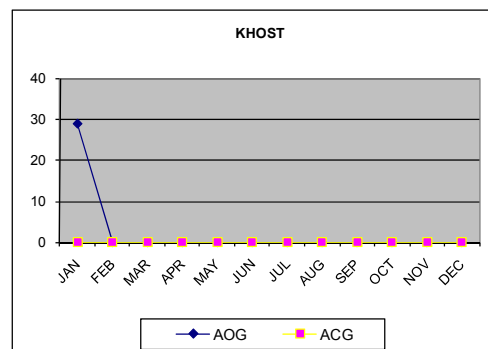
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED on approaches to DAC
- Indirect fire against DAC
- SV/BBIED against security forces/GOA

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

February in another IED attack. Other IED were found and made safe by security forces in Bak and Khost. The use of a smaller device in Khost City on 02 February was the latest in a series of attacks against music shops.

While IED have been used extensively against a range of targets by AOG in Khost, other methods of attack have also been used, including a brief exchange of fire with an ANP checkpoint in Gurbuz on 08 February and short direct fire attack on a construction company compound in Bak DAC on 10 February. Bak DAC was again attacked on the night of 12-13



February when rockets were used but failed to hit their target, while indirect fire was also used against Sabari DAC at least three times during this reporting period.

AOG in Khost continue to attack a diversity of targets in a number of different ways, maintaining a pattern of activity against construction companies and security forces, with a particular concentration in and around Khost City, Sabari, and Bak.

KUNAR

During this reporting period it was again demonstrated that Chapa Dara is an area where AOG have significant freedom to act. National staff from an INGO were distributing produce in a village in the district late in the afternoon of 09 February when they were approached by AOG who then assaulted the staff, and made off with the vehicle and its load. An ANP vehicle was taken by AOG elsewhere in the district on 01 February and unconfirmed reports have described both of these, and other vehicles taken from ANSF and NGO in recent weeks, being used to transport AOG across Chapa Dara. The

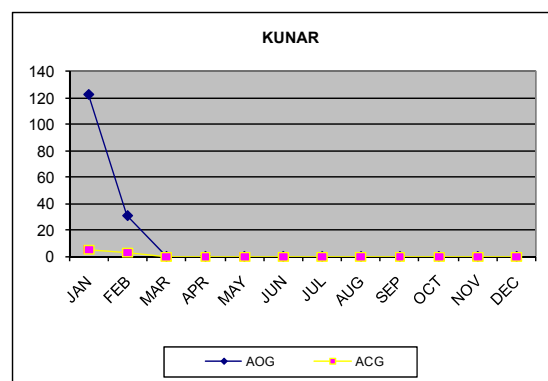
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG-IM/ANSF clashes
- Attacks on DAC
- AOG prevalence in Chapa Dara

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

destruction of an unoccupied ANP checkpoint on the eastern approach to the DAC, a previous report of ANP abandoning their DAC positions, and a brief attack by an AOG force of approximately 50 against the DAC on the night of 03 February, indicate that AOG see a sustained attack and holding of the DAC as an achievable objective.

Elsewhere in Kunar, AOG continue to target security force locations in Mano Gai, and increasingly in Ghaziabad where ANA and ANP were attacked three times during this reporting period. The closure of an IMF outpost in the Dewagal Valley, Chawkay was preceded by four attacks in the five days leading up to its closure, and followed by reports of AOG moving into the valley with the intent of targeting NGO and



other traffic on the Asadabad road.

Two separate rocket attacks on Sirkanay DAC both took place during daylight hours, as did a similar attack on an IMF position on the outskirts of Asadabad. IED use in Kunar is still at low level compared with other provinces in the region, with devices being found on the 14 February on the road linking Mano Gai to Chapa Dara DAC and another found on the route to Shegal DAC on 01 February.

LAGHMAN

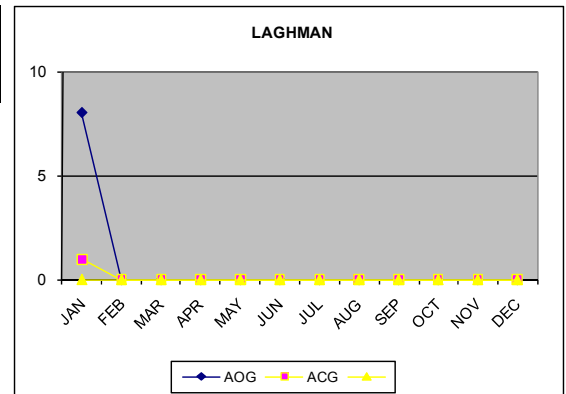
This reporting period has seen the first use of IED in Laghman since December 2008 with a roadside device being found north of Alishing DAC and a detonation close to a construction company compound in Dawlat Shah DAC in the north of the province. A short direct fire attack against Alishing DAC on the night of 02 February is further evidence of the return of AOG to the district following IM operations in the

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- IED in Alishing & Alingar Valleys
- AOG-IM/ANSF clashes in Qarghayi

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

area during January. In Alingar the posting of a night letter around the village of Chenchar on 07-08 February is an indication that AOG will soon resume activity in the Alingar Valley. A series of events in Qarghayi began in the late afternoon of 04 February when ANA engaged AOG in a firefight that lasted several hours close to Route 1 in the east of the district. The following day a similar action nearby resulted in the death of the district's Acting Chief of Police who was with a patrol called to support a checkpoint that had come under attack. In the same district on 08 February the compound of a construction company working with an Interna-



tional Organisation was attacked by AOG, who forcibly entered the compound, took its 20-30 occupants to another location where they were beaten and questioned, before releasing them all the following day. Reports of AOG movement into Qarghayi suggest that actions like these listed may soon be repeated, regardless of the deployment of additional security forces to Route 1.

KANDAHAR

According to reporting, AOG continued to take the initiative in offensive actions throughout the province. AOG thus continued to conduct abductions and assassinations of perceived and actual parties to the conflict—ANSF personnel and a religious cleric—and relied evenly on IED and close range ambushes to target IMF, with only multiple instances of premature IED detonations that led to AOG fatalities making any marked difference in incident patterns. AOG's apparent emphasis on intimidation, however, is important to note.

In the late afternoon of 5 February in Shorandam, Daman Dis-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Abduction
- Voter/Election intimidation

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	1

trict, three unarmed men flagged down a NGO ambulance, pleading to be transported to a local village so one of the three could obtain medical assistance. After the driver complied and arrived in the village, he was confronted by armed men who ordered him and the occupants out of the vehicle. The armed men then poured fuel on the ambulance and set it ablaze. Locals later came to the assistance of the driver and helped extinguish the flames, and the driver was not harmed in the ordeal. In retrospect, it appears that the original three men that flagged down the ambulance did so with the intention of delivering it to the gunmen. A positive aspect that NGO can draw from the event, though, is that incidents like these, while prevalent writ large, have yet to involve execution of staff as a norm. Because

of the importance of certain types of social programming, especially healthcare, NGO still enjoy local support that to date has typically restricted AOG to intimidation of NGO. Because of this manifest support by the community, however, NGO should expect to see attempts to tarnish NGO and development programming, so AOG may then be able to overtly target NGO and their personnel without the worry of communal backlash.

Similarly, AOG were intent upon intimidation in the early morning IED strike on a voter registration centre in the Dar ul-Malameen area of District 4 in Kandahar City on 3 February, which caused no casualties. Again, AOG appear to be utilizing violence to illustrate that the centres cannot be secured, rather than directly targeting the civilians who may take part in the voter registration process. (AOG hesitance to execute voters has been demonstrated in other regions where AOG stated they would make voter registration cardholders "eat" their cards if they are found possessing them.) While this method of voter intimidation may persist, NGO should expect that AOG may begin actual killing of registered voters in the future.

HELMAND

AOG activity again dominated reporting in Helmand Province, with typical AOG attacks on ANSF, voter intimidation in Nahri Sarraj and Nawa districts, and the assassination of ANP officers from within their own ranks, also in Nawa District, with the last incident probably indicative of prevalent AOG infiltration that will continue to plague the ANP.

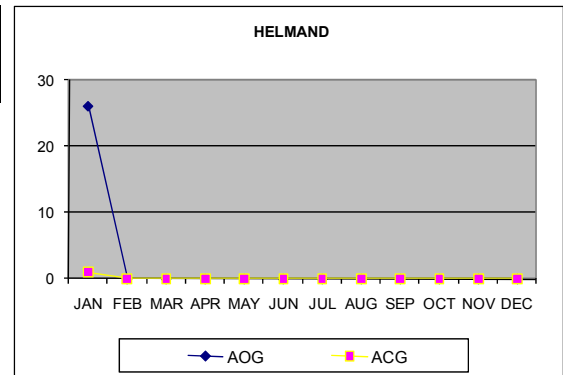
In demonstration of the ubiquitous security vacuum in the province, though, a notable incident occurred on 8 February in Safi-yano, Lashkar Gah District, when the Head of Refugee affairs in Lashkar Gah was confronted by

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Prevailing instability
- Abduction
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

five men at his residence. After the official had welcomed the men into his guestroom, the men bound him and beheaded him, then stealing his Land Cruiser and evading an ANP search. While media reports asserted and emphasized that one of the five men was the official's nephew, ANSO-collected information suggested that one of the men was an employee that had been fired from the official's place of work, and that the event fit typical AOG activity within the region. One must realize that AOG, especially when acting on the behest of recent converts to the cause, may utilize their new-found positions and perceived influence or power to settle vendettas that often appear to be criminal based. Furthermore, AOG actors, on a micro level, usually act in keeping



with past desires while in the scope of their normal AOG activities to achieve an end—political, social, or economic.

Other incidents of interest include an IED strike against the Musa Qala District Governor's vehicle that killed his 6 bodyguards on 4 February and an IMF operation that occurred on 8 February in Nawa District. During the operation, locals report that 6 civilians, including women and children, were killed when IMF air support struck a residence. Even though there did not appear to be a large public outcry from the incident, NGO should expect to observe increased public disdain for IMF.

NIMROZ

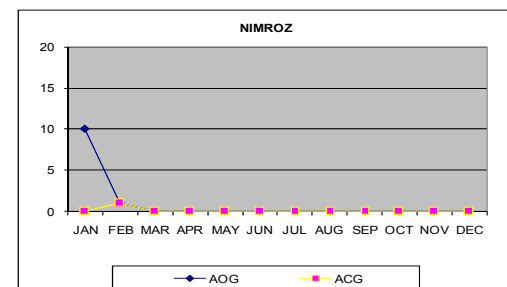
Nimroz Province continued to be afflicted with AOG driven suicide attacks. In Ghorghori City on the 8th, a BBIED struck an ANA vehicle, killing an ANA commander and three civilians and wounding an additional ANA and four civilians. The abovementioned incident appears to have been forecast—noted in the February 4th ANSO Weekly Incident

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Suicide attacks in Zaranj and Khash Rod
- Kidnap
- Prevalent security vacuum

	NGO Incidents
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List—in the assertion that a man outfitted with a BBIED device had been placed in a religious madrasa in the district on 29 January with the intent to attack ANA forces. NGO should note that all except one suicide attack since 2007 in Nimroz have occurred in Khash Rod and Zaranj districts, and 2009 will likely bear witness to record suicide attacks in the province, with 2008 having eight incidents and this already marking the second in 2009. Although suicide targets in the province have included ANSF, GoA, IMF, and road construction vehicles, the previous attack in Zaranj occurred



in the fruit market, causing four civilian fatalities and indicating that AOG are willing to strike high-value targets in spite of civilian casualties.

Prior to the BBIED attack, though, ANP identified and defused a rickshaw on 1 February that was rigged as a VBIED and parked adjacent to a main bridge in Ghorghori City. Additionally, their remains a threat warning that an AOG member has prepared three BBIED attackers and two motorcycles that are laden with explosives. The threat asserts that possible targets are known ANSF and GoA personalities.

GHAZNI

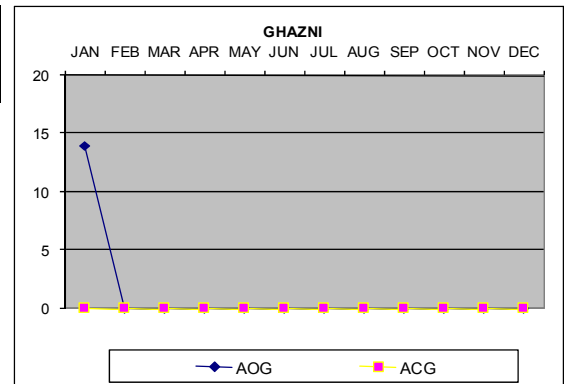
Of importance to NGO, AOG attacked an ANP unit that was escorting a forty vehicle IO convoy on 5 February as it was transiting through Sultan Bagh in Andar District, wounding one ANP. NGO should note that the southern and western districts in the province, additionally, continue to be extremely dangerous.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from IED or convoy ambushes
- Abduction
- Rocket/RPG attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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Another important incident occurred in the Lewani Bazaar area of Qara Bagh District on 1 February, when hundreds of demonstrators organized in response to an IMF operation that occurred in the evening of 31 January close to Lako Khail Village. Demonstrators later transported the corpses of the two purported civilians that were killed and the wounded to Ghazni City. Furthermore, the demonstration continued on 2 February in Ghazni City. NGO should note, despite that these



protests are typical, and casualties have been usually minimal, the prevalence of incidents throughout the Southern Region in which locals have asserted the victims of IMF operations were civilians should serve as a warning that residents in the region may soon become polarised against IMF, possibly also targeting NGO expatriate staff out of rage.

ZABUL

The situation in Zabul Province persisted as usual except for two incidents that foretold of continual hurdles that will become even more pronounced in all of Afghanistan in the coming months: civilian casualties and corruption and low morale in the ANP.

On 6 February in Torai Village, Tarnak Wa Jaldak District, we witnessed a case of the first hurdle in IMF raids that ended with six locals killed and three others detained. Because locals assert that the victims were civilians, resentment of the operation manifested itself when locals transported the victims' corpses to the District Centre on the 7th. Hostility quickly materialized at the demon-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Collateral damage from AOG and IMF clashes
- Banditry/Hijacking

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

stration when an IMF convoy transited through the affected area, leading demonstrators to pelt the convoy with stones that shattered at least one windshield. Additionally, participants may have directed small arms fire toward the convoy. The demonstration resumed again on the 8th when approximately 800 to 1000 people gathered at the Eid Gah Mosque in Qalat for three hours, and ended with the demonstrators drafting a text that called for the avoidance of any civilian casualties and the departure of IMF from the country. In addition, it looks like locals are not dropping their demands for accountability—they now blame local GoA officials and are calling for their removal, because of the officials' inability to control IMF. This dissent led to the multiple protests in Kabul that called for the removal of the Zabul Governor.

The second hurdle of poor morale and corruption in the ANP mani-

fest itself on 3 February when the Qalat-based ANP Provincial Finance Officer disappeared with his family after he stole 4 million Afghani that was intended for ANP salaries in the province. While the likely resultant frustration the ANP would have felt after not receiving their salaries as scheduled did not apparently lead them to abandon their posts, in various other regions, ANP recently did abandon their posts, even after eventually receiving their delayed salaries. NGO should then expect the ANP's low morale, compounded by evermore increased AOG targeting of ANP, to drive ANP to resign, revert to criminality, abandon their posts, or act as AOG agents.

Despite these concerns, NGO should be encouraged that their perception in the community greatly benefited from recent programmes that targeted assisting impoverished residents. Locals explicitly impress their appreciation for the aid that NGO provided to help them deal with the lack of food and harsh environment during the winter. Additionally, residents are hopeful that further reconstruction projects will result in job growth. These positive perceptions lend one to believe that local stakeholders' affinity for NGO will likely dissuade AOG from targeting NGO personnel. As is seen writ large, AOG are aware of local perceptions that development programming is necessary.

PAKTIKA

Security incidents in Paktika were markedly typical minus a few exceptions. The most prominent incident occurred in Sharan City on 12 February when a BBIED attacker detonated his vest at the ANP checkpoint outside of the local ANP Hqs, killing two ANP and severely wounding an additional eight. After the event, ANP reportedly arrested an additional BBIED attacker that was intent upon targeting an ANA facility, and threat reporting suggested

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Collateral from AOG and IMF/ANSF clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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that two additional BBIED attackers are still planning on conducting attacks in Paktika Province. Thus, NGO should expect that AOG elements in the area would like to conduct further sensational attacks, usually against GoA, ANSF, or IMF facilities.

In Sorubi District on 1 February, demonstrators congregated in condemnation of IMF's killing of a tribal elder the previous day in Urgan District. In addition, another tribal elder, this time targeted by AOG, on 8 February, was kidnapped from Yosuf Khail and later executed. And as of 6 February in Nika District, AOG were planning to place mines in IMF/ANSF frequented roadways.

AOG's interest in conducting standoff attacks and undermining the GoA were also demonstrated when an IED struck a local construction company's vehicle, killing 1 occupant and wounding another on 7 February in Ghaibi Khail of Yahya Khail District.

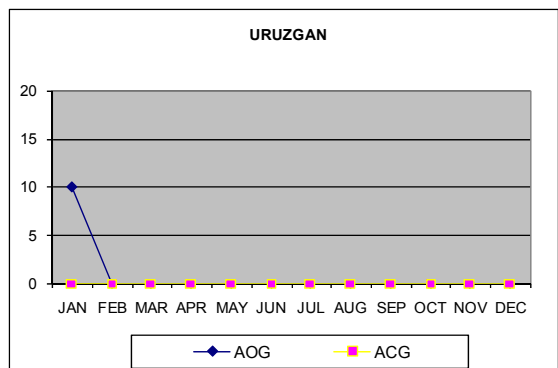
Information suggests that AOG targeting of ANP checkpoints, IMF facilities, and tribal elders who are seen as supportive of the GoA or IMF will increase with the return of AOG from their winter refuge in Pakistan. Security will continue to suffer, also, because ANSF will likely be unable to secure provincial highways. The lack of security along roads will probably lead to hindrances in development programming, especially because NGO are heavily reliant on transiting to the province through Andar district of Ghazni province—an area that is riddled with AOG. Nonetheless, NGO should benefit from favourable local perceptions of NGO that are resultant from the recent delivery of food aid.

URUZGAN

On 14 February in the Tirin Kot DAC, an IED that appears to have been triggered via a timing device detonated in front of a NGO office in the said area, causing no casualties. The said NGO is undertaking programming that could be seen as indirectly supportive of the GoA. Despite this association, NGO should not be quick to assume that it was targeted because of its association with the GoA. Rather, it is more likely that the said NGO's activities may have drawn the displeasure

of local stakeholders, because they believe that the NGO is not entirely fair in the distribution of its goods or services—a common occurrence that unfortunately has afflicted NGO working in the said NGO's sector of programming.

And in Tirin Kot City on 2 February, a BBIED attacker targeted a large number of ANP inside their base in the area while they were training killing approximately twenty-two ANP and wounding approximately twenty. Significantly, all suicide attacks that have occurred since ANSO records began in 2006 indicate that Tirin Kot and Dihrawud have been the only afflicted districts, possibly because



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG opposition to NGO operations
- Kidnap

the GoA, ANSF, or IMF do not have a formidable enough presence outside of these areas to warrant such extensively planned attacks.

HERAT

Herat Province experienced typical AOG and ACG activity with the exception of a few important incidents for NGO. The most significant incident occurred on 3 February when a three vehicle IO convoy was ambushed while transiting through Shar Khalil, Kushk District. While exact details are unknown, it appears that AOG initiated the ambush with two RPG that missed their targets and then commenced with small arms fire. All vehicles sustained hits, and it appears that the lead escort driver was wounded, initially causing the escorts to remain in the kill zone. After recovering, one escort vehicle lead the IO vehicle out of the kill zone, and the event reportedly ended with two AOG killed and the said driver wounded.

Another incident, the 11 February RPG attack on Leiliya Unas, the Herat University’s Women’s Dor-

	NGO Incidents
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mitory, located on the Herat-Airport Road in Injil District, resulted in no apparent civilian or ANSF casualties; however, ANSF furthered that AOG had planned on conducting an armed assault on the abovementioned dormitory. Although ANSF purportedly prevented this action, the AOG were able to withdraw and possibly seek refuge in Naveen Uliya, Naveen Sufla, and Sawrestan—all areas that ANSF expressed intent to conduct search operations in to locate any AOG remnants. The Leiliya was likely targeted for multiple reasons: its proximity to AOG safe havens (The organiser was probably a well known Injil-based AOG Commander that has been continually seeking to undermine the GoA and effect his will); many Herat residents, while not totally pleased with the target, may cite moral objections to upper level education for women; and the target is a symbolic structure of the government—local and national. Regardless, NGO can glean a few lessons from this attack. First, RPG attacks are sel-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Multiple suicide threats
- Criminality/Opportunism

dom effective against structures unless armour piercing grenades are utilised or one enters through a window or door. Second, AOG are unable to conduct sustained attacks in the central areas of the province because of the strong ANSF presence. Thus, NGO should merely be prepared to enact preventative security measures—blast film and security gates—and administer trauma-related first aid—stopping bleeding, ensuring victims maintain unobstructed airflow, and monitoring for shock—until advanced medical and security elements can arrive to assist.

Additionally, on 4 February in Herat City, an IO compound had a grenade tossed inside its compound slightly before midnight, causing no casualties. While the affected IO could have been targeted by AOG that intended to send a political message to the IO’s home nation, the actual actor remains unknown. Additionally, it appears that there was no explicit warning or claim for the event, making one lean towards the supposition that the attack was one done out of ignorance or opportunity, not by a regular AOG actor. Despite the inability of AOG to freely operate in Herat City, there is limited reporting that AOG are intent upon establishing a base of operations in Koh-e Sham Sheikh in Injil and Koh-e Sukhta in Guzara.

At the time that this text was being prepared, current threats in the province included seven BBIED attackers that reportedly entered Herat City to target the Indian Consulate, the PRT, and unnamed NGO.

GHOR

AOG activity in Ghor Province was minimal in comparison to other provinces in the Western Region and marked by only two incidents of special interest to NGO. On 6 February in Dahni Assar, Sharak District, AOG reportedly intercepted an IO and

	NGO Incidents
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INGO food convoy and forcefully removed a modest amount of the food aid before the convoy was able to proceed. Similarly, in Akab Khana Village, Tulak District, a government food aid convoy was delayed and robbed of aid before being able to continue on its way.

NGO should note that a prominent AOG in the area has been, and surely will continue, conduct-

ing mobile checkpoints throughout the area that are manned by large numbers of armed supporters and embarking upon criminality, such as abductions. It is likely that this AOG will continue to hamper development because of historical animosity with political adversaries and the said AOG commander’s desire to act as a proxy for other more prominent AOG in the region. Consequently, NGO should expect this AOG to further expand his operations. Reporting supports this prediction, with other closely-related AOG commanders moving into the province on the 11th to bolster his activities.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- Prevalent security vacuum

FARAH

Collected information in Farah province during this reporting period highlighted the general security vacuum that will unfortunately continue to hinder development operations in the province. NGO should consider, however, that information flow from Farah is extremely limited, which could easily skew any analyses. Regardless, it is apparent that the ANSF presence is so lacking that AOG do not feel the need to mount typical guerrilla or asymmetric style attacks, methods that AOG usually only utilize when the strength of their opposition or operating environment requires increased planning and resources.

	NGO Incidents
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Thus, AOG mounted multiple conventional assaults on ANP facilities throughout Farah District, with the only exception being AOG infiltration into Bakwa District and the reported summary execution of an ANP official whilst he was travelling through Gulistan District.

Furthermore, on February 1st, two days prior to reported AOG inflows into Bakwa District, insecurity and the adverse role that influential personalities play writ large also became manifest in the district. Eighty ANP assembled and voiced demands that the GoA

release the Bakwa ANP Commander who had been arrested earlier in relation to a kidnapping. Because the ANP demonstrators asserted that they would resign their posts and join AOG if the commander were not released, NGO should expect security in the province to further erode. Additionally, although it is less likely, dissatisfied ANP or AOG that may have ties to the commander may seek to destabilise Herat Province, because the commander was being detained in Herat Prison at the date of this publication. Even if ANP do not follow through with their threats, still, it is evident that ANP in the region are likely to neither aggressively prosecute the law nor confront violent AOG in the area when they lack the desire to remain in the ANP under the command of another official.

BADGHIS

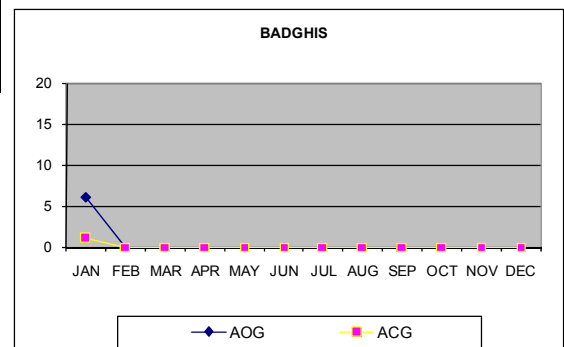
The state of the conflict in Badghis Province remains perilous, demonstrated through AOG attacks, impotence of local ANP, and the absence of IMF, all coalescing to possibly bring about the collapse of any semblance of normal life in the province.

NGO were confronted with the ubiquitous state of the conflict in Badghis on 8 February when INGO staff were delayed in Qala-i-Wali, Ghormach District. Staff had been delayed in the area due to mechanical issues with their INGO's vehicle and quickly found themselves in close proximity to ongoing AOG-ANSF clashes. As the conflict continued, AOG then approached the staff and inquired about utilising the INGO's vehicle

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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to transport wounded AOG for treatment; however, because the vehicle was disabled, the INGO was unable to oblige the AOG, and the AOG consequently moved on to find alternate means of assistance. (Please note, multiple sources reported this event incorrectly, noting it as a hijacking that occurred.)

The extent of the conflict in the province is especially disconcerting due to continual fomenting ethnic tension between Pashtun and Tajik populaces surrounding and inside Muqur District that resulted from the previously reported AOG killing of an influential Tajik personality in Zadali village. And as mentioned above, NGO should not expect ANSF to mediate the conflict, especially because of ethnic ties and fear. Fear will also likely be the dominant influence on ANP based in Murghab District due to rampant AOG kidnappings of ANP. Al-



though ANP have been gaining their release through negotiations with AOG—and probably payment of ransom—ANP will surely be dissuaded from further confrontation with AOG with the realisation that AOG possess the ability to utilize violence against ANP at any given time or location. Even more worrisome for local ANP is the comprehension that reportedly 70 AOG have relocated to Murghab with the intent to assault the ANP District Hqs. Similarly, the inability of local IMF to effect their will was reinforced on 9 February when they had to resort to an airstrike to destroy wreckage from a downed unmanned aerial vehicle in Murghab, both tools that are only utilised in regions where IMF cannot operate.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Prevalent Insecurity
- Collateral damage from AOG-ANSF/IMF clashes



ANSO is hosted by
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe

To Register with ANSO
contact:
operations2@afgnso.org

ANSO is managed by an NGO
Board. If you have any
feedback, good or bad, let
them know on:
ansoab@yahoo.com

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

CONTACT ANSO

CENTRAL REGION OFFICE (KABUL)

Phil Priestly - central@afgnso.org - 0799 323 792

Mukhtar Hussain - central2@afgnso.org - 0799 322 116

NORTH REGION OFFICE (MAZAR)

Scott Bohlinger - north@afgnso.org - 0799 404 617

Firoz Fahez - north2@afgnso.org - 0799 408 252

EAST REGION OFFICE (JALALABAD)

Chris Hansen - east@afgnso.org - 0799 248 362

Khisor Shohar - east2@afgnso.org - 0798 778 014

SOUTH REGION OFFICE (KANDAHAR)

Mohammadi - south2@afgnso.org - 0700 300 730

WEST REGION OFFICE (HERAT)

Kulvinder Brar - west@afgnso.org - 0799 322 192

Najma Fazly - west2@afgnso.org - 0799 446 820

COUNTRY MANAGEMENT (KABUL)

Nic Lee - director@afgnso.org - 0799 325 349

Nathan Ronaldson - operations@afgnso.org - 0797 165 017

Chona Bollos - administration@afgnso.org - 0797 093 073

Ali Riazi - rsamobile@afgnso.org - 0797 414 100

MISSING

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

- Paktya
- Badakshan
- Takhar
- Baghlan
- Jawzjan
- Bamyan
- Panjshir

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.

Monthly Incidents against NGO's (by perpetrator)

