

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Increasing IMF presence in the Central and South Regions
- Continued AOG efforts to influence local sentiment
- Dramatic deterioration in the western security context
- Suicide “wave” attacks

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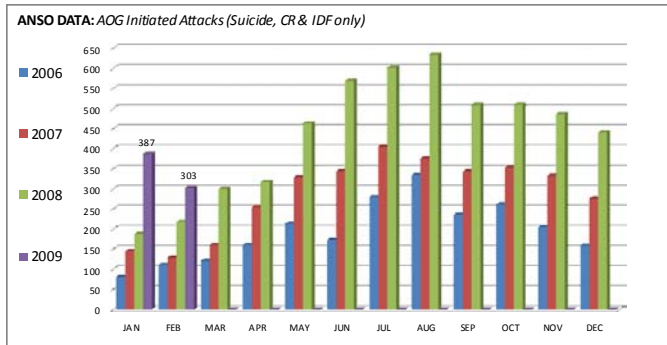


NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COUNTRY SUMMARY

The scope of the planned “surge” has been set at a total 17 000 additional US Forces. Initial deployments to Wardak and Logar are completed with further augmentation in Helmand and Kandahar planned. Recent events in Wardak are early indicators of the more aggressive tactics likely to be used this year, as well as the resultant civil displeasure to same.

There have been a total 42 civ cas during this 2 week period, 24 of which have been directly combat related. The killing of 6 nationals (2 by beheading) with perceived GoA association by AOG in Wardak this period is indicative of their prevalence and



ongoing efforts in this province.

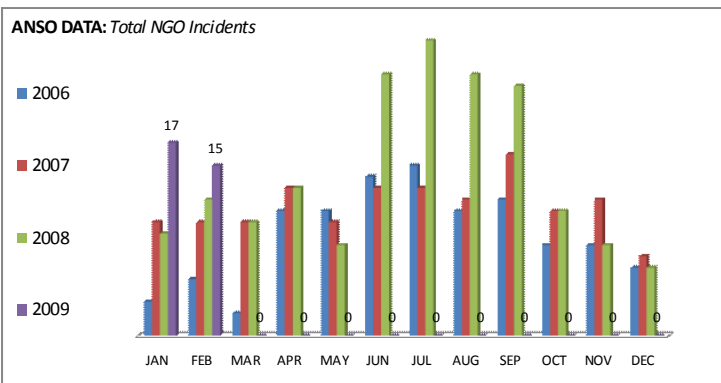
The deterioration of security in the West was illustrated this period by the swift AOG reaction to the IMF killing of a prominent AOG leader in Badghis. These incidents served to both highlight the resilience of AOG insitu (along with possible augmentation from

the south) but also the dramatic regional expansion of AOG efforts in the west overall (refer to chart on page 15).

The use of a “wave” suicide attack in Zaranj (similar to those in Kabul) indicates the increasing utilization and distribution of this tactic.

NGO DATA & TRENDS

Along with the second NGO fatality this year, this period recorded AOG intimidation efforts against NGO in the North, West, and Southern Regions, as well as a short but considerable abduction of NGO staff in Central. These occurrences, as translated into the consistently high volumes of NGO incidents during the opening months of 2009, indicate that the prevailing insecurity forecasted this year will continue to have a significant impact on NGO safety.



KABUL

On 18 February in the Shad Khana area of Mussayi, a minibus carrying 11 local NGO workers and three children was stopped by gunmen, believed at this stage to be AOG, with the occupants split into two groups and taken from the scene. The abduction took place at approximately 1500 hrs and was reported to the NGO by the local community. The ANP was subsequently informed and a mission was sent from Kabul. There is no evidence to suggest at this stage that those abducted

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

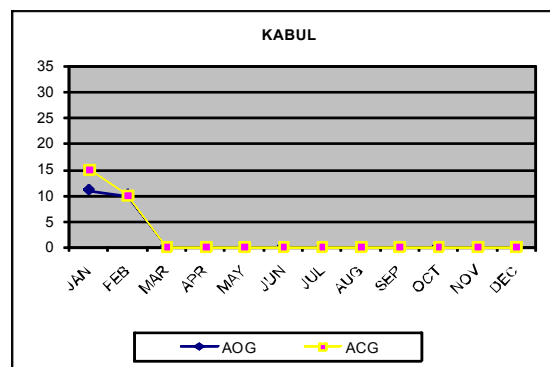
- Prevailing insecurity for Kabul City
- Suicide and IED attacks
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	1

were targeted because they worked for an NGO.

Within four hours both groups of hostages were released unharmed and seven people arrested. The extremely fortunate outcome of the incident provides an example of the importance of community engagement by NGO. In communities where NGO provide tangible benefits to the local population and a clear articulation of the organisation's mandate is explained, NGO should expect a degree of 'community ownership'. In this case, the involvement of the local community was essential to the retrieval of all the NGO workers unharmed.

In addition, the safe release of all



hostages could be partly attributed to the measured response by the ANP. A more forceful response could have led to an escalation of the confrontation and possible casualties.

In other reporting, general threat traffic in Kabul remains high following the attacks of 11 February. Unconfirmed threats have been publicised against virtually all of the major government ministries in the last reporting period, however this should be contextualised within the current security environment and the government's attempts to increase security around the ministry complexes.

WARDAK

Saydabad was again the scene of the majority of incidences across the province. Two attacks were recorded in the district against IMF convoys, although no casualties were reported and in the Tangi area of Saydabad, two locals were reportedly killed by AOG

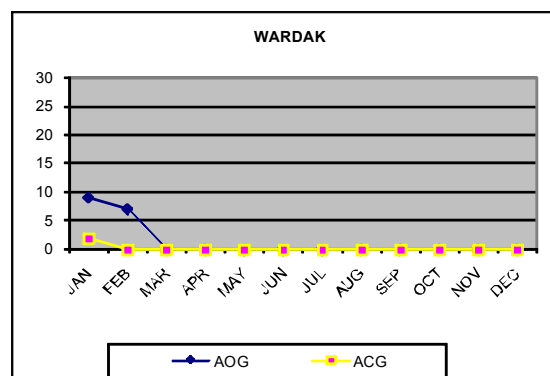
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks along main routes
- De-facto AOG control
- Prevailing instability throughout province

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

for spying.

For the year to date, Wardak has experienced a 60 percent increase in the number of security incidents from the same period in 2008. However the figure for January and February 2009 only represents one half of all security incidents in the province for August 2008. If this trend is set to continue, and there is no evidence to suggest it will not, then Wardak will experience a significantly higher number of incidents throughout 2009. This also con-



firms that the 'fighting season', as it has become commonly known, will be lengthier and more violent than in all previous reporting years.

Please Note: Monthly graphs provided in this report are inclusive as of 25 February 2009.

LOGAR

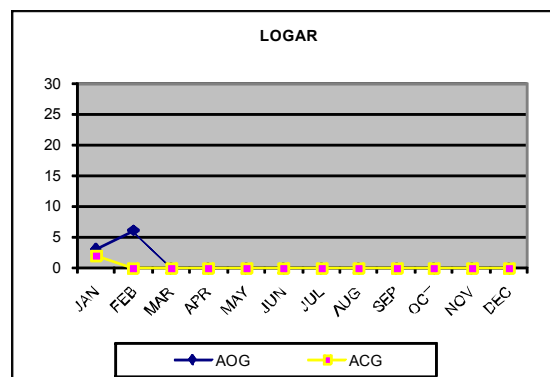
Logar, in combination with Wardak, is being viewed with intense interest due to its strategic location as a gateway to Kabul and host to elements of the new IMF build-up. If events of the last week are an indicator of future trends, then the expected increase in kinetic contact between IMF and AOG forces is all but guaranteed.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG freedom of movement
- Clashes between AOG/security forces
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

On 21 February, IMF forces raided a compound in the Deh Naw area of Muhammad Agha district, killing one local national. By the next morning, several hundred people had gathered to protest the death of the individual and the incarceration of four others. Reports suggest that there was little if any ANSF presence at the demonstration and protestors were seen with rifles and RPGs calling on the provincial authorities to release the men and to demand an end to IMF raids without prior local consultations. Two of the four locals arrested the night before were released and the



other two held for questioning.

If events of a similar nature occur again, as they almost inevitably will, then the provincial authorities will face an increasingly vocal and possibly belligerent reaction. The issue of civilian casualties and the presence of IMF forces in areas previously without an international security presence will place the local authorities

KAPISA

The eastern districts of Tagab and Alasay, as well as Mahmudi Raqi, represent 80 percent of the security incidents recorded in the Kapisa for 2009. The overwhelming majority of reports are a result of IMF/ANA operations or AOG attacks on ANP checkpoints. On

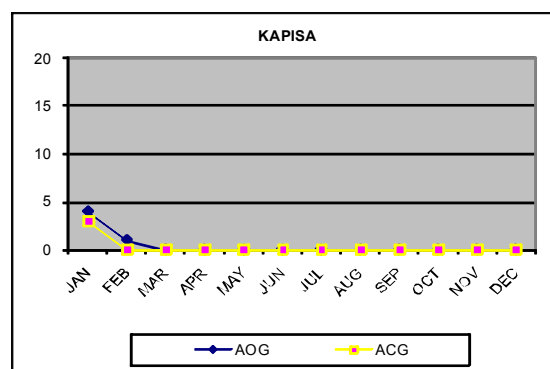
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage resulting from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

18 February, IMF forces raided a compound in Daram Daram, within Tagab, arresting a local man and seizing two weapons. A further two locals were injured in the incident and treated at a local hospital.

The western districts of Kapisa - Hesa Awal Kohistan and Hesa Duwum Kohistan - have few reported incidences beyond general low levels of criminality, largely as



a result of a higher level of development and greater socio-economic opportunity. This in turn provides a more secure operational environment for NGO.

BAMYAN

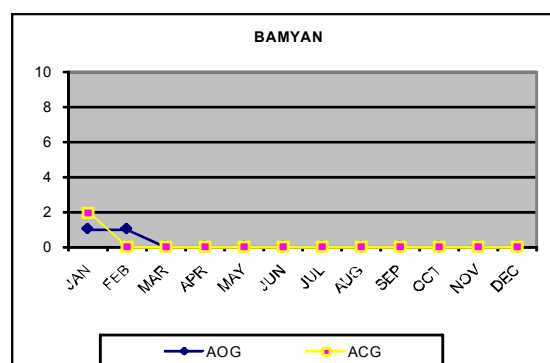
Bamyan is a safe operating environment for NGO. Any threat from AOG or ACG remains minimal in the province which maintains a relatively scarce gov-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

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

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

ernment and IMF security presence. Heavy snow falls between Yakawlang and Bamyan centre and generally cross the province have severely hampered road travel throughout the province as witnessed on 25 February when the main road between Yakawlang and Bamyan centre was closed.



PANJSHIR

Panjshir, as has historically been the case, remains a secure operational area for NGO. The Panjshir Valley serves as an important barrier to the movement of hostile

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

elements, whether ACG or AOG, into the area. Tightly controlled access through the main access point into the province near the

village of Chelena in the south and Dangana in the east, combined with the northern road closed due to heavy snow, has meant that Panjshir remains the most peaceful province in Afghanistan.

FARYAB

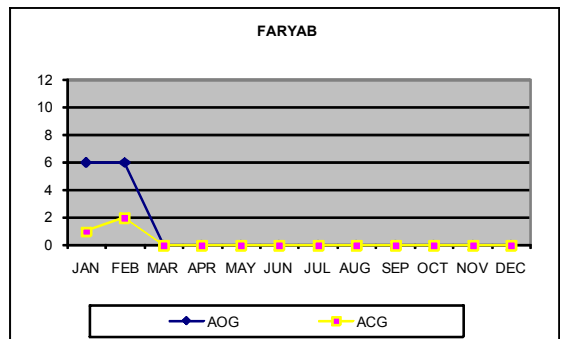
Although having experienced a few incidents in this reporting period, Faryab remains surprisingly resistant to the nearby violence in the neighboring districts

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG sentiment in western districts
- IED threat along Ring Road

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

of Ghormach and Bala Murghab in Badghis. An AOG carried out an attack on a police checkpoint in Pashtun Kot while a dispute between villagers in Khwaja Sabz Posh turned violent and erupted into a firefight. NGOs operating in the western districts, particular Qaysar, should continue to operate only with the utmost caution. Road missions should also be vigi-



lant for the presence of IEDs along the Ring Road, with the threat generally increasing the further westward one travels.

TAKHAR

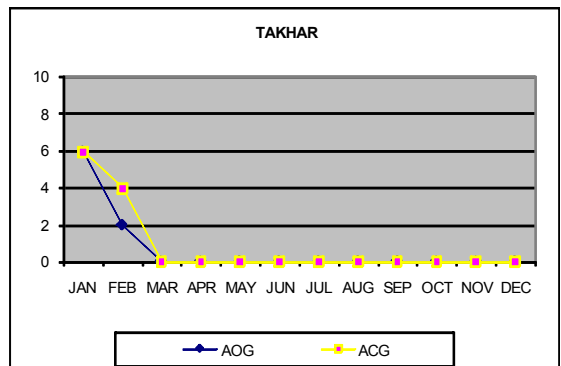
An armed robbery of an INGO compound highlighted the threat posed to Takhar by ACG activity. In an apparently well planned and executed incident, four individuals (two of whom were armed) robbed the INGO of the cash from its safe. The execution of the robbery points to a fair amount premeditation in that the ACG knew whom it wanted to steal from, presumably that the INGO had enough cash on hand to make it worthwhile, and that they went directly for the money and left other persons and property undisturbed. The robbery

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG activity
- AOG efforts to establish presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

was in Taluqan City, which is riskier from the ACG point of view because of a higher police presence and as it was also carried out at night, the robbers would have been nearly the only traffic on the streets. The fact that the ACG may have had inside information (to make such a risky robbery worthwhile) suggests that they also had a degree of inside information. Also, the lack of ANSF response could also represent some higher-level complexities surrounding this event. The INGO's staff probably saved lives by their quick and quiet acquiescence to the ACG demands. The occurrence of a potentially violent event in usually tranquil Taluqan also highlights the value of personal security training for NGO



staff in order to give them the rudiments for dealing with these sorts of frightening situations.

Other events in Taluqan underline other potential vulnerabilities. An IED discovered in Chah Ab district in the far northeast is notable because the district is so remote and relatively inaccessible to outside actors and armed groups of unknown provenance clashed in a rural area of Taluqan district. Also, two individuals were arrested in possession of 84 kg of gunpowder, which fits into a larger pattern of increasing weapons seizures across the north lately (see Balkh for more information).

SAR-E-PUL

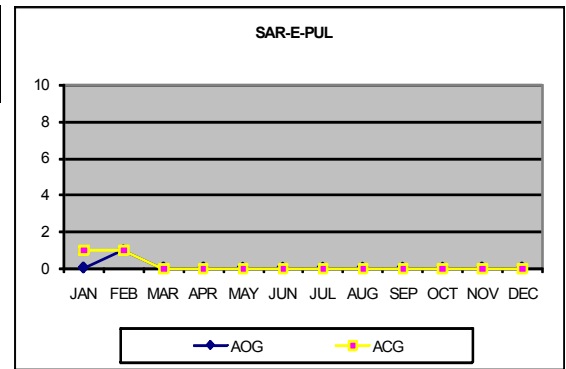
An incident involving the armed robbery of a vehicle belonging to an international humanitarian organisation highlights the risks of the province's many remote areas. The incident led to no injuries and was facilitated by the organisation's vehicle simply straying off its intended route and venturing

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Travel in remote areas
- ACG activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

into less well-known environs. The absence of NGO incidents in Sari Pul is not so much indicative of a lack of AOG and ACG activity but rather the of lack of exposure by NGOs. Additional information obtained by ANSO indicates that criminality is rife in remote districts and the rare NGO (or similarly perceived high value) vehicle would simply present too much a target of opportunity to



pass up given local privations. Accordingly, the back roads to Yakawlang and Bamyan along the Balkh Ab should be considered high risk for NGO travel given their remoteness.

BALKH

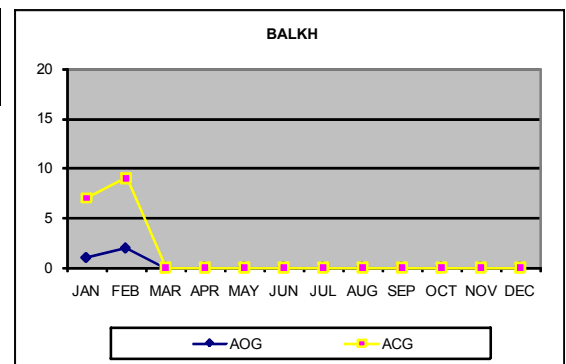
The two loci of activity in Balkh province are Mazar city for ACG activity and Chahar Bolak for AOGs. Along with robberies, much of the ACG activity in Mazar city takes the form of trafficking in various illicit items and substances. Like other provinces in the north (Baghlan, Kunduz, and Takhar), Balkh has recently seen an increase in weapons seizures. These seizures have produced more weapons and weapons of increased lethality (mortar rounds in place of BM-1 rockets). It is

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG activity
- Threats in Chahar Baluk

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

too early to make sound judgments on the implications of this trend (if indeed it is a full fledged trend) but for the moment it suggests three possibilities; reporting has improved, the ANSF's efficacy has increased, or the amount of weapons being transported through or brought into the north has increased. A night letter posted publicly in Chahar Bulak district reiterated previously voiced threats to a wide range of actors (GoA, its accomplices, anyone un-Islamic). Photocopied from a professional-looking template the letter was written in Pashto and was probably an attempt on the part of AOGs to



sway local Pashtun sentiment in favour of their goals (the document contained an illustration of a person meant to represent the Afghan state lying prostrate on the ground being manipulated by the forces in question). The result of letters such this is represent not so much an immediate threat to NGOs (though NGOs should always remain vigilant with regards to threats) as it is indicative of AOG efforts to gain acceptance and expand operational capabilities.

NOTICE: Your input is invaluable for the production of this report. While we appreciate information on incidents, we also need general information on the security situation in your area. So please remember to call or email us regularly.

Contact details of ANSO staff are provide on the last page.

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”

BAGHLAN

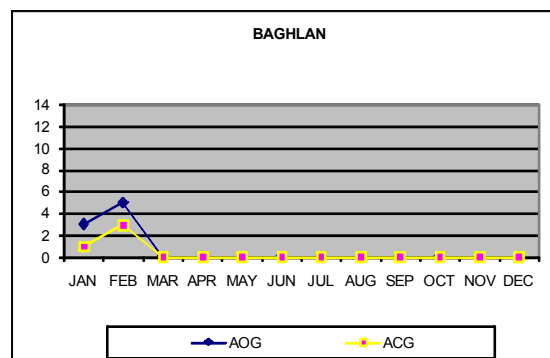
While Baghlan has been calm of late, it has been witness to a few significant weapons seizures (see Balkh). The province's strategic location along Afghanistan's ma-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in remote districts
- IED threat along Puli Khumri – Kunduz corridor

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

jor north-south artery means it is bound to be the locus of much activity, legal and otherwise. Outlying districts, which saw a fair bit of AOG activity throughout 2008, have likely been quiet in recent months due to snow and inclement conditions. As temperatures rise, NGOs should be extremely cautious about venturing into



these areas as the stasis of winter will also thaw and allow AOG activity to resume.

KUNDUZ

Kunduz this period saw the re-emergence of a pattern of threatening state agents or those seen to be sympathetic to them. An INGO employee received a night letter threatening their life and urging them to desist in their work. The placement of the letter and its wording are significant. The district has little indigenous AOG sentiment but has been known to receive night letters before and reflects Kunduz AOGs' apparent strategy of trying to expand pres-

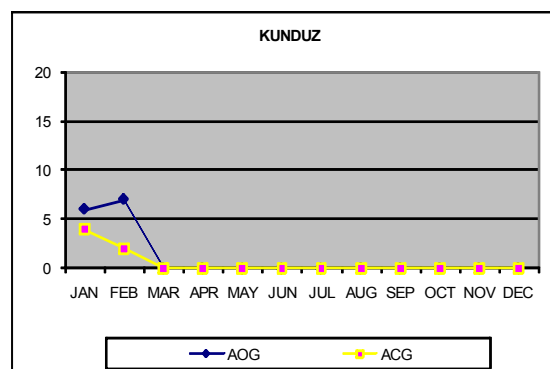
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Threats to perceived GoA association

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	1

ence (which has hereto not been very successful in that the sources of unrest in Kunduz have remained constant). The wording of the letter was broken and the speaker was both semi-literate and a native Pashto speaker, meaning that the writer likely had ties to the communities in other areas of the district where AOG sentiment has been consistently strong for some time.

Other recent trends continued unabated in the province, including a SAF attack on a school in Qal'ai Zal and a high amount of ACG activity in Kunduz city, as witnessed by a number of weapons seizure and the arrest of sev-



eral individuals suspected of involvement in criminal networks. An SAF attack on a factory in the outskirts of Kunduz could also have been the result of ACG activity. In general the threat in Kunduz city is not directed at NGO activity, being that it seems to stem primarily from ACG activity (as opposed higher AOG sentiment in outlying districts), though it still does carry the increased risk of NGOs becoming involved collaterally.

PAKTYA

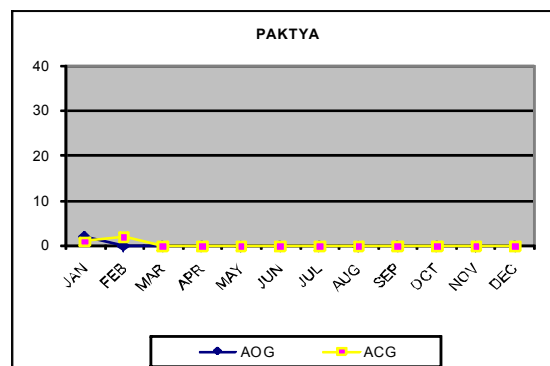
While limited AOG activity was reported in the province at the start of 2009, few incidents of note have occurred since. Security forces continue to mount operations, and in Sayid Karam during

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED on Gardez-Khost road
- Abduction

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

the early hours of 18 February IMF searched several properties and, having found a stock of night letters, arrested nine people suspected of AOG membership. As weather in the province improves it will be possible to discern whether deployments of additional IMF in neighbouring provinces have had an impact on



AOG in Paktya, or whether the current lack of reported activity is a seasonal lull.

KHOST

Approximately half of all security incidents reported in Khost during late February have been IED related. The device used in Tani on 19 February killed one ANA soldier and injured another. On the same day in Shamal one person was killed and two were injured when a device detonated against the security escort vehicle of a construction company. A construction company vehicle was

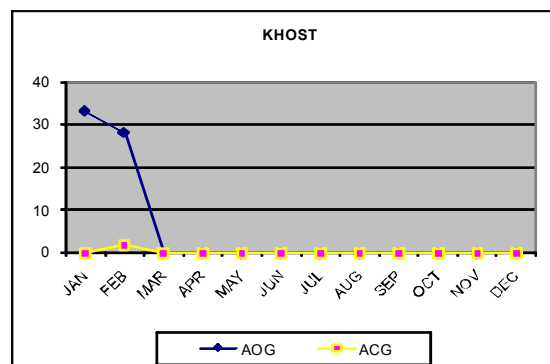
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from AOG/SF engagements
- Suicide attacks in Khost City/DAC
- IED along main routes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

also targeted in Bak when an IED exploded on 21 February, this time causing no casualties. Elsewhere, devices were found and made safe in the districts of Khost, Mando Zayi, Sabari and Nadir Shah Kot.

Sabari DAC has been subjected to repeated indirect fire attacks, being targeted three times in the last ten days of this month, each time with mortars or rockets that failed to hit the DAC. With a total of 11 indirect fire attacks in 2009, and several IED incidents in the vicinity, it is reasonable to assume that AOG will mount more complex attacks against the DAC in the near future. Bak DAC was also targeted by mortar fire, and one



person was injured in the attack that took place on 17 February. AOG in the province have made limited use of direct fire, killing three ANA soldiers in Khost City on the morning of 19 February, and attacking an IM patrol in Tere Zayi on the same day. In the Babrak Tana area of Khost a joint ANS/IMF operation on 21 February engaged AOG, killing and wounding several. Other security force operations took place in Sabari, Tere Zayi and Gurbuz, all resulting in arrests and/or munitions finds.

LAGHMAN

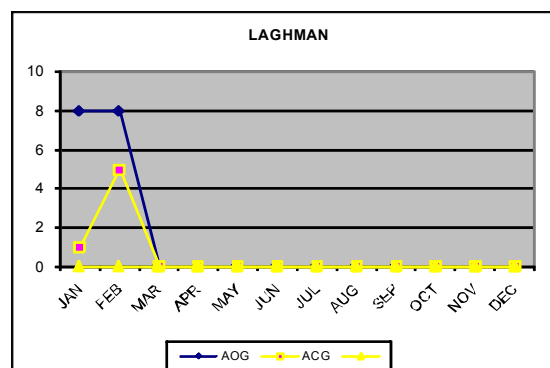
While the number of security incidents reported in Laghman remains low, it is higher than preceding weeks in this year, and those that have occurred give indications of AOG intent to pursue their objectives in the Spring of 2009 in a similar manner to that employed at the end of 2008. While not attributable to

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from direct fire attacks on IMF/ANSF
- IED on main routes through Alishing & Alinger valleys

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

AOG activity, the roadside robbery of the crew of a delivery vehicle contracted to an international organisation that took place in Alingar on 21 February is another demonstration of how the level of insecurity in the region can facilitate criminality. Also in Alingar during this period security forces found and made safe a number of IED, including 2 in the area of Sangar, one in Panjkora and another close to the village of Qasaba. The discovery of another device in Qarghayi on 24 February is evidence that despite a recent



lull in activity, AOG are still present in the southern district around Route 1. As occasionally occurs, increased AOG activity levels are accompanied by escalation of force incidents, and on 22 February an ANA patrol shot and injured a female passenger in a car that inadvertently approached the patrol on Route 1.

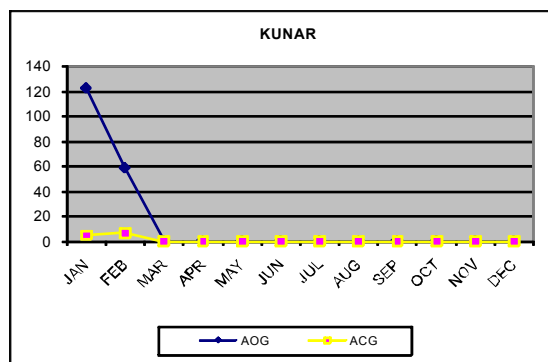
KUNAR

Weekly incident rates in Kunar have been decreasing throughout February and are now on a par with the corresponding period in 2008. Any combination of several factors may explain this decline. In early February IMF closed a base in Chawkay that came under attack on an almost daily basis. An additional IMF battalion has recently been deployed to the border areas of the province, and while not yet fully operational may have caused a pause in AOG operations while the implications of the deployment are being absorbed. Although some public sources have started to claim that at least parts of 'Operation Lionheart' conducted in Pakistan have been successful, the military benefit of the operation on the western

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

side of the border is still unclear, with latest reports indicating that several prominent members of AOG who had crossed from Afghanistan into Pakistan in late 2008 have now returned to Kunar. As reported previously, AOG activity in the province is diversifying, with direct fire attacks on security force fixed or static positions now accounting for fewer than half of all incidents initiated by AOG. As is common, many of these attacks occurred in Mano Gai, where one position in Korangal was attacked four times in six days and where ANP checkpoints came under fire on at least two occasions. Ghaziabad in the north of the province is seeing increasing levels of AOG activity and the last week of February has seen ANP in the villages of Sonak and Nishagam attacked four times.

In Mano Gai on 20 February a construction company vehicle was forced to stop and was destroyed



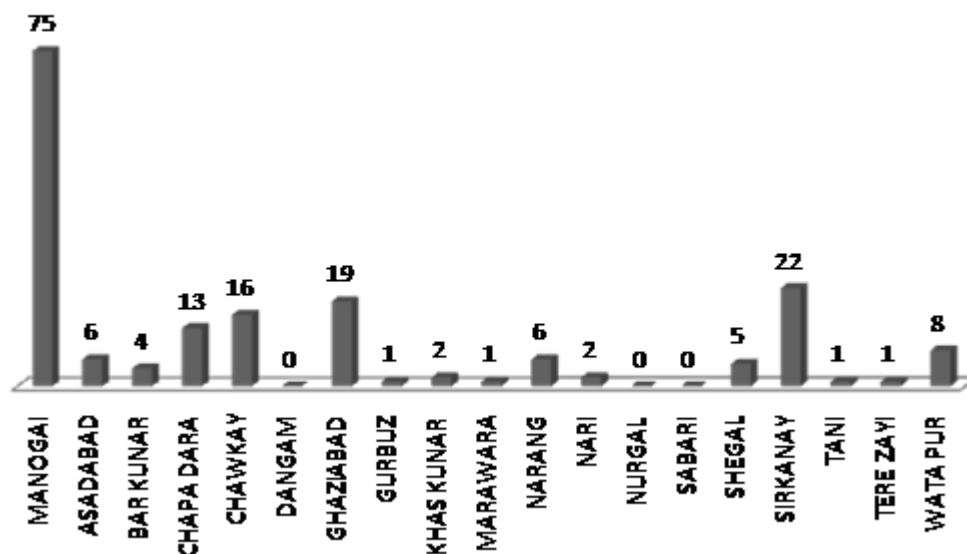
by an armed group before all those travelling with the vehicle were released unharmed. Incidents such as these are lending credibility to reports that some of the violence directed against construction companies is motivated by business and personal rivalries and not simply an AOG objection to the development of infrastructure in the province.

Continuing reports of AOG movement, lower than anticipated incident rates, and the limited use of indirect fire attacks all add to the impression that AOG in Kunar have had better access to manpower than munitions during February. As the weather in the province improves, and as the situation east of the border stabilises, incident rates can be expected to increase.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- AOG prevalence in Chapa Dara
- AOG movement in Khas Kunar

ANSO DATA: KUNAR PROVINCE - AOG Attacks, 2009 Year to Date



NURISTAN

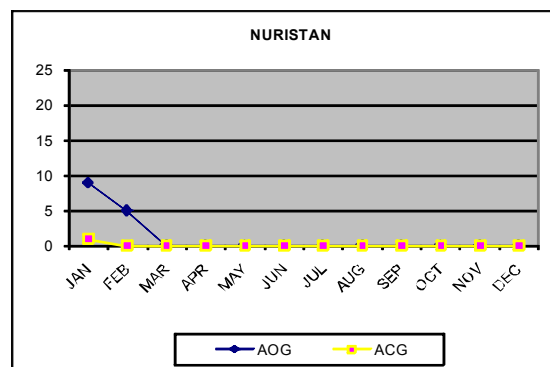
Reported AOG activity in Nuristan has increased in late February, with incidents taking place in the north and south of the province.. In Kamdesh AOG attacked a joint IMF/ANA base on both 21 and 25 February, injuring an ANA soldier in the latter incident. For a

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG prevalence in Kamdesh, Waygal, & Wama
- AOG checkpoints
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

period of about 20 minutes on the morning of 21 February Kamdesh DAC was also attacked. North-East of the DAC, the IM/ANA base at Kamo was attacked for the first time this month, when AOG targeted it with direct fire for about 30 minutes on the morning of 25 February. In the south of the province, AOG used a single rocket in an attempted attack on Nurgaram DAC on the afternoon of 18 February. Reports of AOG movement and collusion between



groups continue to circulate and prove difficult to assess, although the number and location of incidents now being reported support claims that AOG are present in greater numbers and in more parts of the province than has been the case in recent years.

NANGARHAR

As is usual, the majority of security incidents reported in Nangarhar during this period have been linked to criminality, with at least six incidents involving the exchange of gunfire between individuals or groups, three of which resulted in fatalities. Security forces in the province mounted several anti-drugs operations, searching properties and seizing substantial amounts of processed drugs, and continuing a poppy eradication programme in Chaparhar and Achin where a number of arrests were also made.

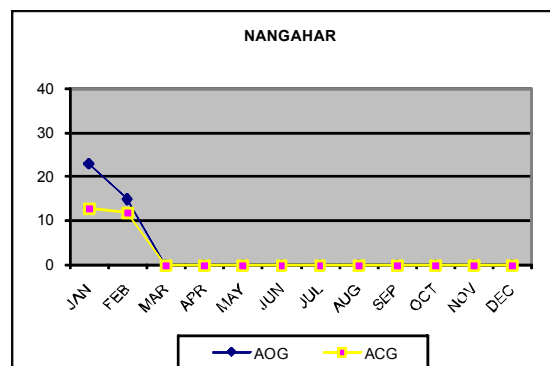
The first part of this reporting period saw less IED activity in Nangarhar than had been experienced in preceding weeks, with finds being made in several southern and eastern districts but with

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Continuing SV/BBIED threat in Jalalabad City
- Attacks on DAC
- IED on main routes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

no detonations against targets. On 25 February however a teenage boy was arrested and detained by ANSF on the Jalalabad-Asadabad road in Kuz Kunar. It is reported that the boy had been recruited as a suicide bomber, although no BBIED has been found. This incident follows a similar arrest in Jalalabad in late January. On 26 February two people travelling on a tractor were injured when their vehicle detonated an IED in the central district of Kot, and on 28 February an IMF patrol was targeted by an IED in Khogyani, causing no injuries and only minor damage. There are developing indicators that IED activity in the province is closely linked to IM/ANSF operations, with devices being placed soon after IM/ANSF activity in districts, and almost exclusively targeting security force vehicles and personnel. The extent to which this activity influences the security force remit in the south of the province is



now being questioned.

On 27 February AOG exercised what appears to be growing freedom of movement in the south by entering several mosques during afternoon prayers in a village in Sherzad. The group claimed that their operations around the village would be increasing and extended into daylight hours. The group also made appeals based on a common faith and used this to ask those present to reject GOA and abide by Sharia law. While IED have been used predominantly against security forces, and IMF or joint patrols in particular, there are signs that targeting may be diversifying. While the detonation against the tractor on 26 February may have been unintended, other recent incidents have involved large commercial vehicles that may be perceived as having links to IMF.

BADGHIS

Events in Badghis during the last fortnight have had an adverse affect on AOG influence and leadership in the province. On 15 Feb an IMF air strike killed the AOG's highest military leader in Badghis along with half a dozen of his key associates, creating a vacuum at the apex level of AOG command. This event also provides a reprieve for the government; as it was previously accused of mishandling the affair upon granting a general amnesty to the AOG commander – a commander who executed an about face after his

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

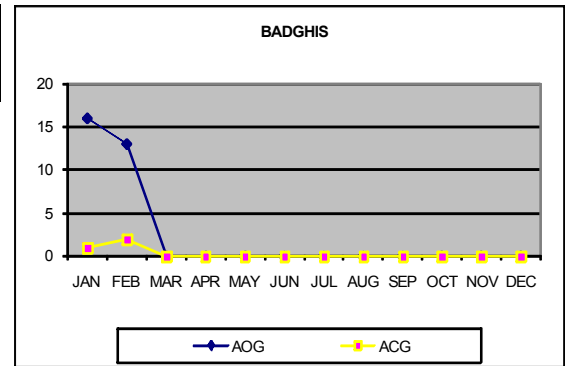
- AOG attacks on security forces
- Prevailing instability

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

release from prison and subsequently launched a very successful operation against the ANSF. This turn of events may also help assuage the passions of a rival community bent upon revenge for the assassination by AOG of their leader in late Jan.

After AOG concentrated in large numbers in Murghab, they subsequently launched numerous retaliatory efforts, including stand-off attacks on ANP check posts and the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Murghab, with up to 60 rockets fired at this facility alone.

While the present situation in Badghis suggests there may be a future lull in AOG operations until effective leadership is re-



established (with reports indicating that meetings have already occurred to achieve this goal), this lull will likely be limited as there is no shortage of replacements. The reversion to the earlier times of turbulence – with the two major AOG groups contending for dominance is also possible - given the sudden onset of a leadership vacuum and the quest for leadership amongst those who were coerced earlier to join under a unified movement.

FARAH

While the usual spate of AOG attacks on ANP police stations and check points were not witnessed during this period, Farah saw intense military operations by security forces. The major operation being in Rabat area of Qala I Koh where twelve AOG were killed in joint ANP and IMF action. The other operation - again in Qala I Koh - led to six mortalities along with eight being injured. While the incidents indicate the high levels of AOG presence and

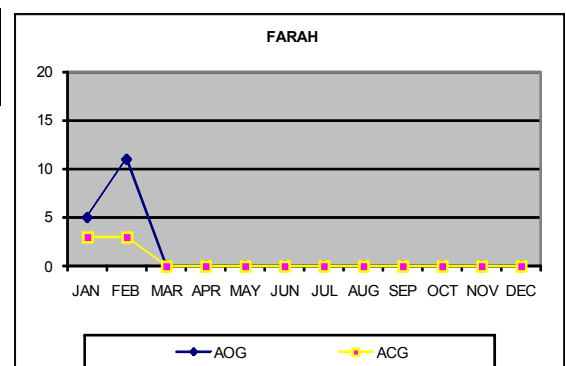
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- SVBIED
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

also the availability of actionable intelligence with the security forces, the urban counterinsurgency character of such operations places local populations at risk of being caught up in the cross fire. The hazardous combination of high intensity warfare being fought out in semi-urban locations augurs high risks to the non-combatants. NGO may like to caution their staff operating and residing in all such areas from being caught up in conflict situations.

The rescue of a kidnapping victim in Khaki Safed district and the abduction of a villager in Anar



Dara (Posht Koh) for ransom, point to the frequent recourse by ACG to such crime. The other ACG connected incident was the seizure of a large quantity of opiates and arms smuggled from across the border. The smuggling of arms is a matter of concern in an area rife with conflict. The general availability of ordinance raises the potential for such clashes in a society deeply fractured as a result of ethnic divides.

GHOR

Ghor exhibited a low level of AOG and ACG activity when compared to the rest of the region during this period. Of the occurring incidents, the most prominent was the looting and setting afire of a PRT vehicle. The vehicle was previously immobilised and abandoned due to inclement weather in the Bayan Pass area, and the act of setting the vehicle

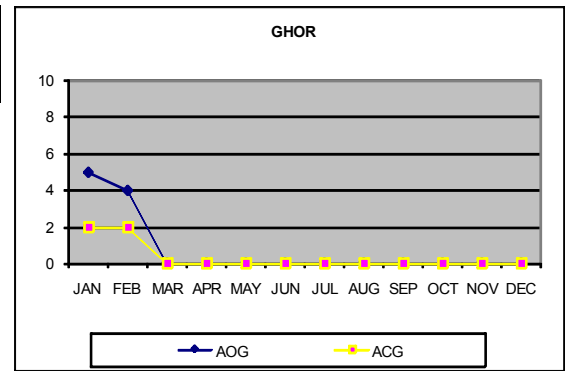
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- UXO

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

ablaze was possibly to deliver a message of hostility towards the IMF operating in the area.

The injuring of a local resident of Taywara in a mortar bomb explosion, and the subsequent discovery of another five devices from the same area, highlights the hazards to those living and operating in active conflict zones and the concomitant threat of unexploded ordinance. In line with such frequent recoveries made on earlier occasions, this indicates the level of proliferation of ordinance from



both previous and present conflicts. In addition, the seizure of two primed IED's in Shaharak is a disturbing sign in an area otherwise not frequently known for tactics employing asymmetric forms of warfare; though other forms of AOG activities are prevalent in the area.

HERAT

Four armed AOG in a car approached a team comprising of 50 NGO staff operating in the Taki Naki area of Zinda Jan District on 23 Feb. After asking the NGO staff to hand over their mobile phones, radios and GPS equipment, the AOG placed it all in the ambulance and set it afire along with six other vehicles. The timely arrival of the ANP forced the AOG to depart with all the NGO staff remaining unharmed. Within twelve hours of this incident (and three km away) two truck drivers of Iranian nationality were also abducted on Herat-Islam Qala road following a mechanical breakdown. The description and approach of the kidnappers

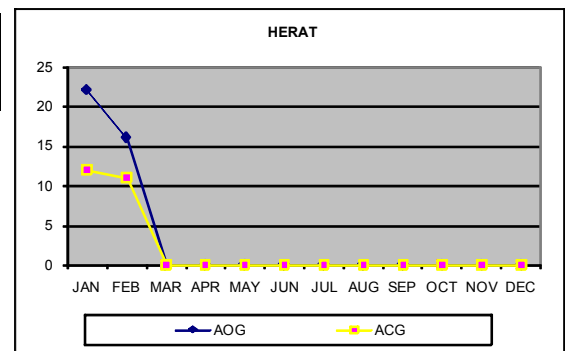
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Kidnapping/abduction
- Threat against the NGO community

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	1

closely resembled those of the Taki Naki incident. While there have been few reports of AOG activity in this area earlier, the many striking similarities between the two strongly indicate the active presence of an AOG group which may be operating off a base in Gulran District. Though not indicating a pattern, the incidents certainly suggest a heightened level of threat from AOG to NGO operating or transiting the area as well as suggesting long term ramifications for NGO operating in the area

Multiple AOG threats also emanated within Herat during this period of reporting - ranging from BBIED threats to attacks on NGO vehicles. The first consisted of a BBIED attack threat received against an unnamed NGO, the Indian Consulate and the PRT. While information on this threat



remains sketchy, a second such threat warning (attack via SVBIED or other means) was received indicating the possible targeting of NGO vehicles and establishments by AOG in Herat City and environs as well as Badghis province. While there is a possibility that these threats emanated from planned retaliation to the recent killing of a prominent AOG commander in an IMF air strike in Badghis, the only manifestation of this threat thus far has been the attack on a joint GoA/community representative's team in Badghis Province on the 25 Feb. As such, the efficacy of this threat is difficult to determine though the curtailing movement by NGO during such threat warning periods may allow for the threat to harmlessly expend itself.

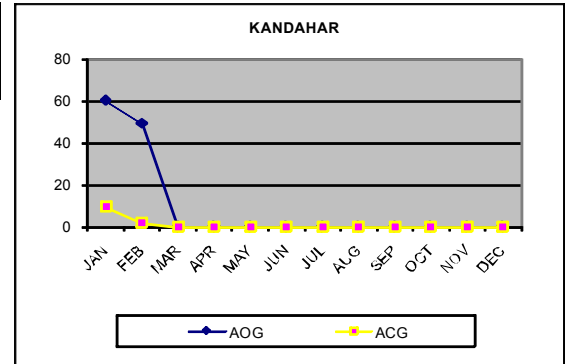
KANDAHAR

The state of the conflict in Kandahar continued to intensify, confronting NGO with a persistent AOG desire to target NGO staff in the province. On 17 February in Kandahar City, District 2, Malajat Village, an INGO national staff member was shot several times in the head and killed whilst he was on his way to work by two AOG on a motorbike. It was apparently well-known in the area that the victim worked for a foreign organization, and he probably had an established movement pattern. Previous executions of NGO staff in Kandahar occurred in July and August of 2008 in Zhari and Nesh Districts, and NGO should consider the threat to staff to be critical, with probably even more incidents going unreported. The threat to INGO workers was further emphasised in District 2 of Kandahar City on the following day when a threat

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	2

letter was placed on the house of a national staff member from a different INGO. The letter warned the employee to cease “working with the Americans,” or he would face death. Significantly, these two incidents were preceded by similar night letters being posted on the doors of local mosques in the same district two weeks earlier.

It is evident—demonstrated in the recent *Al-Samood* article—that AOG desire to erode the image of neutrality that NGO have advocated throughout the conflict in Afghanistan, and that AOG in Kandahar will continue to overtly assassinate, intimidate, and assault NGO staff, especially in Kandahar City and Panjwai District. While the bulk of intimidation and assaults on NGO staff have occurred in these two districts—since 2006, ten in the former and three in the latter—NGO should note that the trend is likely only manifest because NGO have not been able to operate outside of these areas in the past, suggesting that NGO would probably suffer



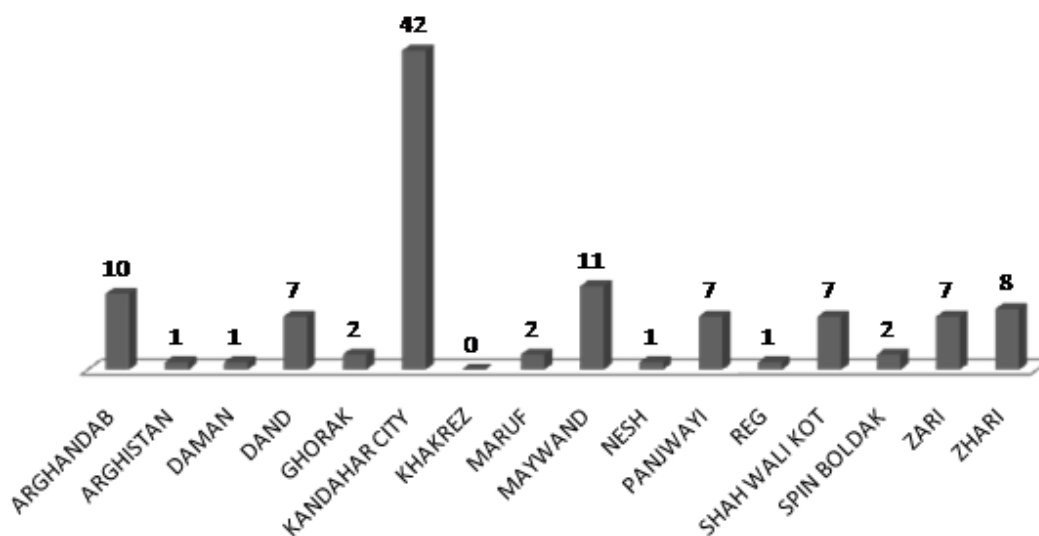
exponentially more casualties if they relocated within the province.

Because NGO are incorrectly perceived as bringing about improvements in the quality of life for recipients of aid at the behest of the GoA, AOG may be frustrated by their inability to effectively, openly associate themselves with development programming, which would bolster AOG “humanitarian” credentials. This AOG desire to be associated with development programming was illustrated on 20 February when ANA prevented an AOG road construction project in Panjwai District. The situation is further complicated, however, because some AOG commanders have disdain for NGO and their operations, while others recognize their important roles in civil society. Regardless, NGO must prepare themselves for extremely deteriorating circumstances writ large, especially in contested GoA/AOG regions, a condition that should necessitate a dramatic review of programming and methods to ensure acceptance, especially from AOG.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- Attacks against NGO staff
- IED

ANSO DATA: KANDAHAR PROVINCE - AOG Attacks, 2009 Year to Date



NIMROZ

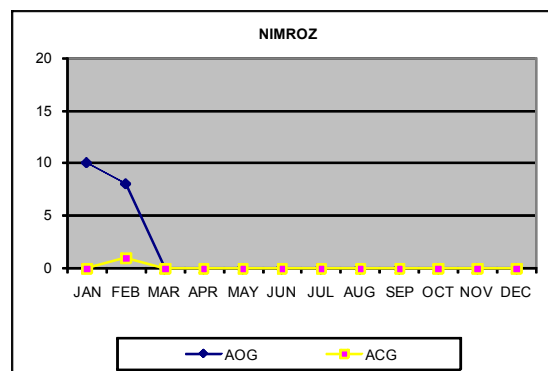
AOG continue to dominate offensive operations in the province, with ever increasing activity and a demonstrated increase in complexity. The latter factor manifested itself in the 23 February attack on ANP in Zaranj City when four BBIED attackers ap-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Prevalent security vacuum
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Suicide attacks in Zaranj & Kash Rod

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

proached the Second ANP sub-station and Anti-Narcotics Department. Initially, two of the BBIED attackers attempted to separately enter the respective facilities; however, ANP at the different sites challenged them, causing the BBIED attacker at the ANP sub-station to detonate his vest, which killed one ANP and wounded two additional ANP and two civilians. Within three minutes of the first detonation, the second BBIED attacker detonated



his vest at the second site, causing no casualties except for the obvious death of the attacker. The whereabouts of the remaining two BBIED attackers are currently unknown despite ANP attempts to locate them.

GHAZNI

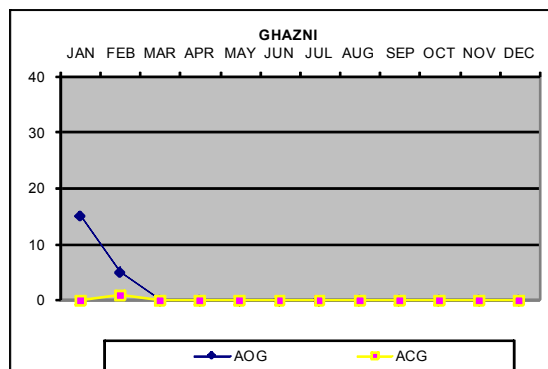
Activity in Ghazni province was minimal during this reporting period and only marked by a controversial raid that locals assert occurred in the village of Di Khodaidad on the village's mosque. While IMF continue to insist that

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Rocket/RPG attacks
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Incidents along main routes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

no such raid occurred, locals claim that IMF desecrated the mosque, driving residents to show their ire in a massive demonstration that led to ANP opening fire to disperse participants. NGO operating in the area and Ghazni City should treat the incident seriously, regardless of its veracity, and continually stay abreast of current conditions.



URUZGAN

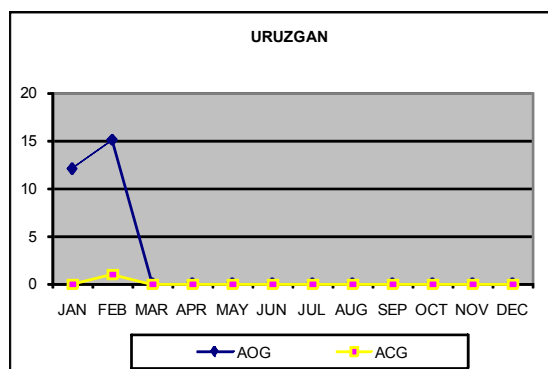
Incidents in Uruzgan were minimal and marked by only two notable incidents. In Shahidi Hassas

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG opposition to NGO activities
- Kidnapping/abduction
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

District on the 25th, AOG attacked an IMF/ANA convoy, later driving IMF to launch an airstrike that reportedly killed ten AOG. And in Khas Uruzgan on the 20th, two IMF were killed and three injured when an IED struck their patrol.



HELMAND

Historically, this province has been unstable and harshly problematic for NGO operations. Because the threats received this reporting period continued to focus on IMF and ANSF personnel or establishments, the possibility of NGO that reside or operate in close proximity to any military facilities, or find themselves in the presence of IMF/ANSF convoys, being incidentally targeted is high. In this previous week, one specific threat was received involving IMF/ANSF in Lashkar Gah City, with an AOG commander reportedly recruiting seven suicide attackers, equipped with military uniforms, to carry out attacks in Kabul, Kunduz, and Balkh provinces.

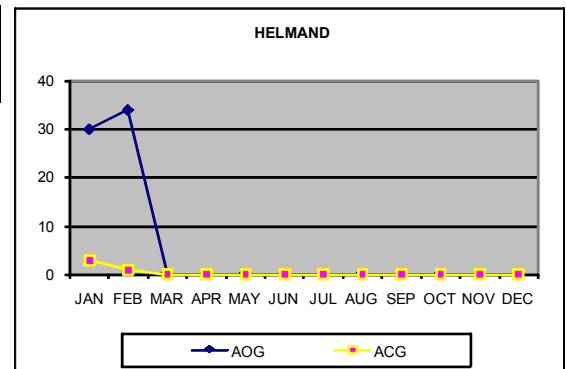
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Prevailing instability
- Abduction/kidnapping
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

incidents. Importantly, though, past experience and threat reporting suggest that AOG have historically deceived ANSF and IMF by leaking false threat information; for instance, information would detail a plan for a suicide attack in Sangin, while the actual operation would occur in Musa Qala.

IMF and ANSF were active in Nawa, Nad Ali and Nawa-i-Barak Zai districts during the reporting period, with reportedly more than fifty AOG killed and a significant number of AOG arrested. In spite of these operations, AOG are consistently targeting IMF and ANSF with IED or close-range attacks. As usual, an upsurge in AOG activity is highly expected throughout the province due to improvements in weather conditions that will allow greater freedom in AOG movements. Although AOG in the province are continuing to abstain from target-



ing NGO directly, diligence in applying mitigating measures should persist.

Additionally, NGO should be aware of the ongoing poppy eradication campaign in Lashkar Gah City and its neighbouring districts, namely Nad Ali and Nawa-i-Barak Zai, that destroyed approximately 367 hectares of poppy fields during this reporting period. Previously, no major opposition to this process had been noted until the 24 February attack on a poppy eradication team that resulted in the killing of eighteen AOG and the wounding of two ANA and two IMF soldiers. Because of the resultant animosity that surrounds these operations, NGO should consider ceasing activities in the areas where eradication is ongoing.

ZABUL

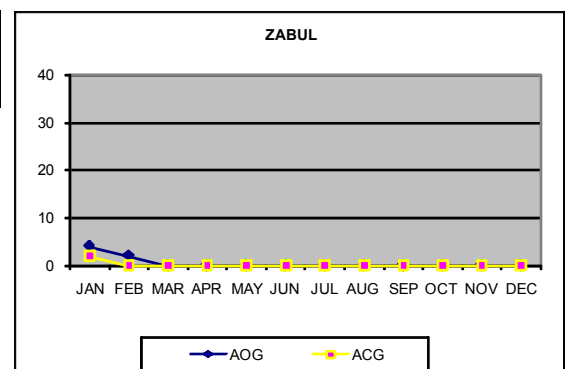
Zabul has seen a drop in the number of AOG driven incidents; however, it is widely believed that this decline is attributed to poor weather conditions. Likewise, it appears that tension between IMF and the local populace that had arisen due to civilian casualties during IMF operations in the recent past was addressed; at least four core gatherings are said to have been held between IMF,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- Banditry
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

communal elders, and Islamic scholars in three different districts of the province this reporting period, with key points of discussion including requiring ANSF participation during IMF search operations and strict avoidance of civilian casualties. Locals believe that if such discussions continue, positive results could include stabilizing the security situation and deterring negative perceptions of IMF in the region. Additionally, because a substantial number of residents are reported to be employed by IMF in the construction of a large base in the area of Sori (situated south of Qalat City) local



support for IMF and ANSF may hinder future AOG activity.

Despite the low levels of incidents reported thus far in 2009, Zabul has historically been unstable, and the threat of IED and VBIED attacks against valuable targets and IMF/ANSF vehicles; abductions; and intimidation of GoA staff and local IMF employees remains high.



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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:

- Parwan
- Daykundi
- Jawzjan
- Samangan
- Badakshan
- Paktika

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.

ANSO DATA: WESTERN PROVINCES - AOG INCIDENTS

