

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Taliban announce Operation Victory
- Spate of NGO national staff member abductions in the Eastern Region
- Increased AOG activity in Northern Region
- Suicide attacks against GOA and security forces

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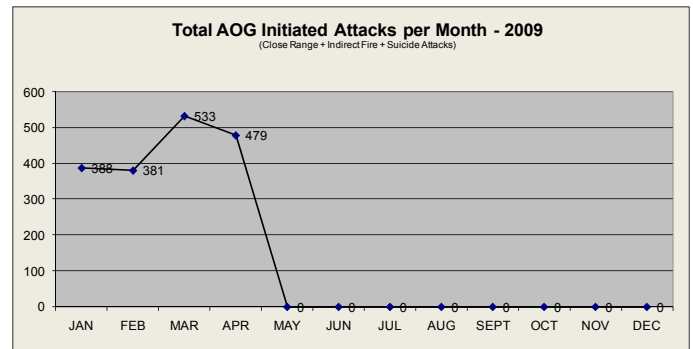
NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COUNTRY SUMMARY

Taliban announced the initiation of Operation Nasrat (Victory) as of the 30th of April. The operational focus is similar in scope and nature to operations from previous years, though it did recognize the US force 'surge' as well as continued supply route disruption.

While the Mujahedeen Day celebrations were ostensibly cancelled due to the redirection of funds to earthquake relief in the Eastern Region, Taliban claim this to be a 'victory of fear', though there were no significant events related to this event.

The attack on the Burkha DAC in Baghlan, as well as the SVBIED attack in Balkh, highlight the previously reported increased presence and sophistication of AOG elements within the Northern



Region. These events also allude to the possible shape of the 'Northern Campaign' expected this year and the intent to influence the North MSR.

There were 3 NGO national staff member abductions reported during this period, all of which occurred in the east and are presently attributed to AOG (see graph on page 6 for country stats).

The slight dip in incident

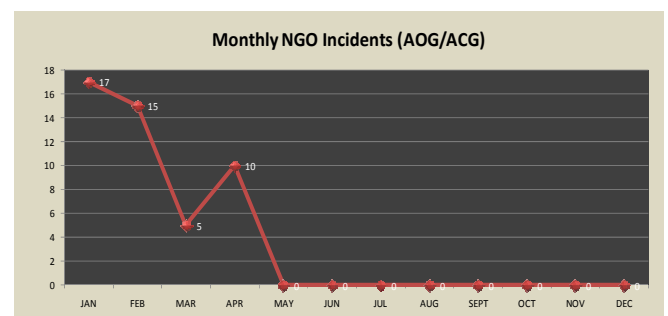
volume reported this period can be partially attributed to the allocation of resources for the poppy harvest, as seen in the lower than average volume reported from Helmand Province and other established harvest areas.

6 suicide attacks (3 BBIED, 3 SVBIED) were recorded across 5 Provinces in 3 Regions (West, North, South) this period (see graph page 6).

NGO DATA & TRENDS

It is assessed that the Taliban operational announcement detailed above does not present any significant contextual change to the NGO security sphere.

With the inclusion of the numerous NGO national staff abductions reported this period, the Eastern Region now accounts for the highest percentage volume (28%) of the country total (see graph page 4) recorded since 2005. Surpassing the traditionally higher volumes in North and Central, this points to the expanding scope of AOG presence and concomitant NGO/AOG interaction.



KABUL

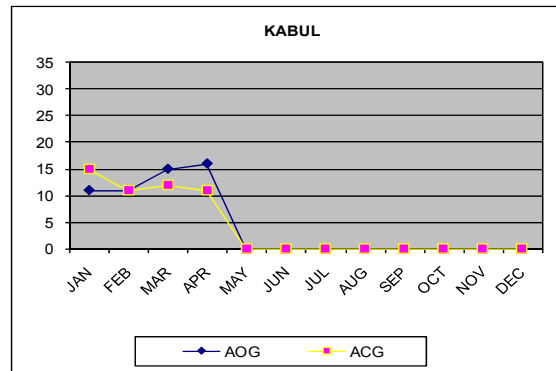
Initially, it was believed that fears over an AOG attack on Mughadeen Day may be realised following an IED attack against an ANP checkpoint in Police District Seven four days prior to the event. However with the exception of a rocket attack against the ISAF encampment at Camp Warehouse in the early hours of Mughadeen Day (injuring five), the high profile event passed without incident. Although the government's cancellation of the parade was publicly attributed to the transfer of funds set aside for the ceremony to the victims of the recent earthquake, there is no denying that the threat of AOG attack played a significant role in the decision making process.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- Decreased security surrounding Kabul City
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

Up to and including Mughadeen Day, Kabul witnessed a massive co-ordinated security operation involving all branches of the ANSF as well as ISAF in an attempt to deter any AOG attack. The cancellation of the parade, the first in its sixteen year history, should be largely attributed to the heavy threat traffic prior to the event and the desire to avoid a repeat of the attack on the parade in 2008, which left three dead and eleven wounded, showcasing the government's relative impotence. Separately, the district of Surobi has lived up to its reputation as the most unstable district in Kabul following a series of incidents in the past reporting period. The Uzbin Valley in Surobi, known as a flashpoint between ANSF/IMF and AOG, has again experienced a number of clashes. On 18 April, a newly established ANA FOB in the Uzbin Valley was rocketed by AOG, following previous report-



ing of their newly established presence. Along the Silk Gorge Area of Surobi on 23 April, an ANA logistics convoy was attacked by AOG, necessitating the intervention of an ANA quick reaction force, located nearby – a driver required medical treatment following the incident. Additionally on 29 April, the Kabul-Jalalabad Highway was closed for approximately half an hour following an AOG attack on an ANA checkpoint, located to the north of the road in Naghlu Area, which lasted until ANA reinforcement arrived.

As yet, the increase in AOG activity is yet to translate into a direct threat against NGO and civilians in general. There remains, however, the risk of collateral exposure to ANA/IMF/AOG initiated incidents along the highway to Jalalabad and where possible air travel is advised.

PARWAN

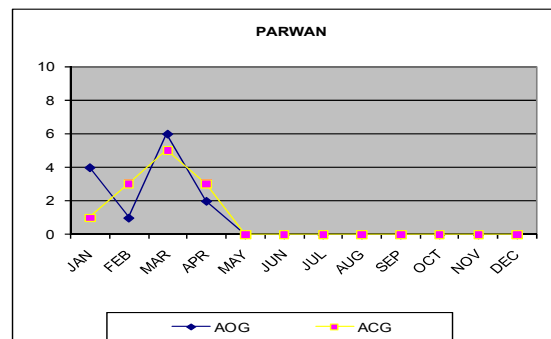
An ACG attack on a Kabul Bank convoy travelling between Jabalussaraj and Ghorband left five armed guards escorting the convoy dead and another five wounded. One ANP member was also wounded. Those responsible

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Banditry along Bamyān road
- Attacks on security forces

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

for the attack reportedly escaped with a number of weapons as well as the money being transported. ACG activities in Parwan have increased by almost 200 per cent on last year's figures, with the district of Charikar being host to three quarters of the 11 reported serious ACG incidents in 2009. Although collateral involvement in attacks on ANA/IMF convoys



heading to Bagram Airbase remains a concern for NGO, ACG incidents should be viewed as the primary threat in the province.

Please Note: Monthly graphs provided in this report are inclusive as of 29 April 2009.

LOGAR

Seven IEDs were reported in the districts of Chaki, Muhammad Agha and Puli Alam in the last two weeks; five were located and defused; one detonated while being placed by AOG, killing one, and a further device detonated while an ANP patrol was passing, injuring two ANP and one local. Despite the numerous IED finds,

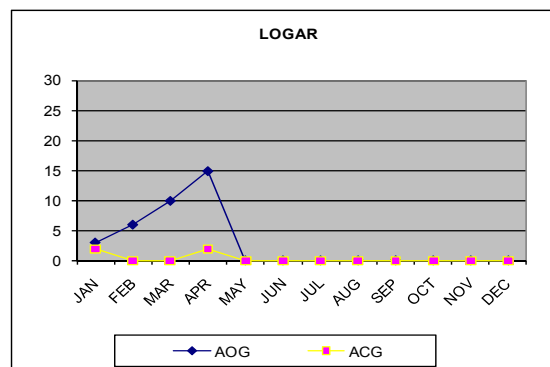
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

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

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

close range attacks, using SAF and RPGs, continue to represent the largest share of AOG initiated attacks in the province.

The Aynak Copper Mine Field Area continues to represent a higher risk than other parts of Logar largely as a result of local discontent at being excluded from the financial benefits of the project. In addition, AOG would loathe the government receiving such a large and regular revenue stream from the mine. A series of demonstrations, rocket attacks, most recently on 10 and 19 April,



as well as IEDs illustrate the present tension surrounding the location.

IMF raids and arrests continue unabated as evidenced by operations on 17, 23 and 17; however the local backlash has subsided possibly linked with improved intelligence and taking into account of local sensitivities.

KAPISA

Kapisa remained relatively calm in the last reporting period with AOG initiated attacks 150 per cent lower year to date than in the same period in 2008. As previously discussed, intensive IMF operations, including the estab-

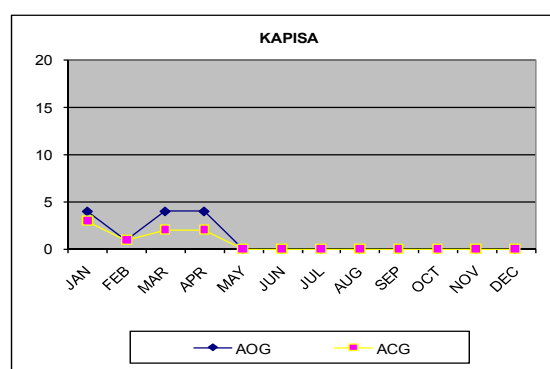
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Armed clashes
- Increased IMF presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

lishment of permanent Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) in Tagab and in neighboring Surobi, have seemingly disrupted AOG's freedom of movement.

Discoveries of weapons caches in Alasay and Nijrab and more recently in Hisa-I-Duwumi Kohistan, where on 25 April the ANP seized 96 mortar bombs and a significant amount of machine



gun ammunition, have yet to translate into realized attacks against either ANSF or IMF.

BAMYAN

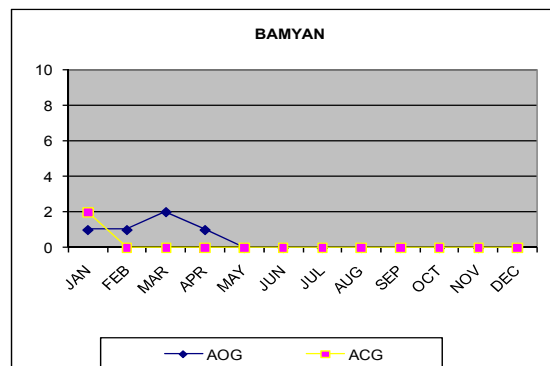
Ghandak valley in Shibar District presents a significant risk for NGO operations considering the light GoA presence and the local sympathies with AOG. The valley exists at the confluence of the

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

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

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Kharmard, Shibar and Sayghan districts and represents a natural barrier to GoA influence with local powerbrokers in nominal control of certain parts of the district. In 2008, a number of IEDs were discovered in Kharmard illustrating the potential dangers in the area. As an example, on 24 April a rocket was fired at an ANP checkpoint in Do Aob Mikh



Zarin Area of Kharmard with no resultant damage or casualties.

WARDAK

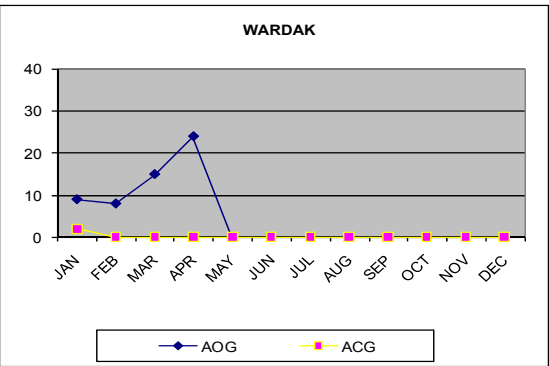
A series of offensive AOG operations in the southern districts of Wardak has confirmed the end of the comparative lull experienced in February and March. In the districts of Chaki Wardak, Nirkh, Jaghatu and Saydabad there have been a total of eight ambushes or IED attacks in the last two weeks, which included the deaths of three PSC guards and the abduction of eight others in two separate incidents on 19 April. On 27 April, the ANP launched an operation in Zamuch Tangi Area of Saydabad, which liberated the captured guards. In addition to the attacks on ANSF forces, rocket attacks have struck the DACs in Jaghatu, Maydan Shahr and Chaki resulting in no casualties or significant damage

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Overall instability
- Attacks along main routes

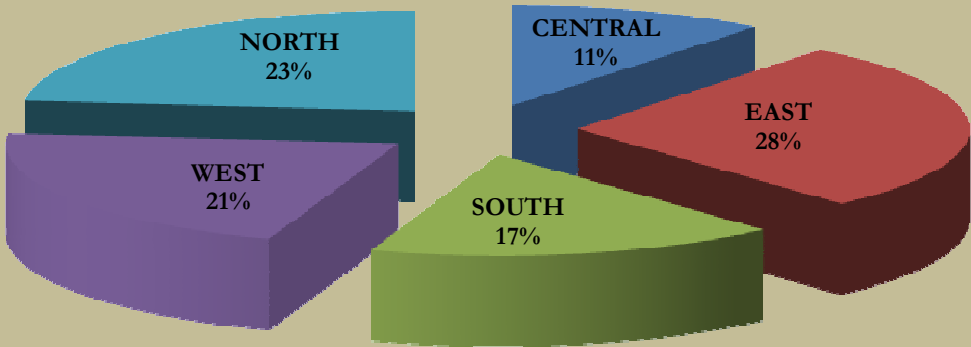
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

to date. Saydabad, representing approximately 50 percent of AOG initiated incidents in the province, was also the scene of the abduction of the father of the Minister of Education on 20 April – believed to be travelling to Kabul at the time. Although not confirmed, the possible arrest of a relative of one of the kidnappers by ANP, as is becoming almost standard practice in abduction cases, may have facilitated the release of the individual on 24 April. Where previously AOG attacks have not been marked by a significant ANA/IMF response, the latest reporting period suggests that punitive IMF strikes will rise significantly in the coming months. For example, following either IED attacks or ambushes of logistical convoys, responding air strikes reportedly killed a total of 19 AOG on the 24 and 27 April. Four civilians were also reported



to have been killed in the 24 April attack in Sewaka Village, Chaki Wardak. The first reported deaths of Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) members were also recorded in Karimdad Mir Hazara Village, Nirkh. The APPF, originally believed to be an auxiliary force for static guarding of roads and public buildings, were understood to be accompanying an IMF logistics convoy when their vehicle struck an IED, killing three and injuring three others. The frequency of AOG and ANA/IMF engagements in Wardak significantly raises the risk of travelling the already dangerous route to Ghazni. NGO are strongly advised to avoid travel along the highway route and indeed those districts in the southeast of the province.

NGO DIRECT INCIDENTS-REGIONAL DATA



DAYKUNDI

Local frustrations with the provincial government, accentuated by the arrest of an imprisonment of several protestors following a violent demonstration against an alleged corrupt provincial judge on 5 April, have manifested themselves in the form of regular street marches in Nili.

Demonstrations on 25, 27 and 28 April, involving up to 500 people, originally planned to place pressure on the authorities to release the men, have evolved into a broader protest movement against the government. Corruption and

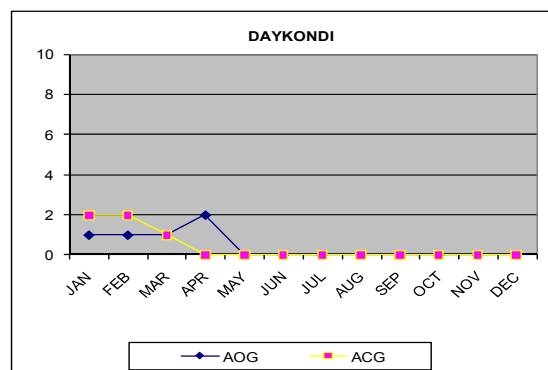
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Banditry
- Local tensions
- AOG infiltration/influence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

ineffectual management are at the heart of the issue, with the imprisoned men representing the people's demands for greater accountability and the trickling down of the tangible benefits of government. In a further setback to efforts to ameliorate the situation, it has been reported that the leader of the protests had been arrested by the ANP and flown to Kabul on 28 April.

Separately, an opportunistic local commander (with increased AOG ties) responsible for the abduction of NGO workers in 2008 has again threatened to abduct UN and GoA workers. The commander, believed to be based in Khadir, was induced to release the



NGO workers in 2008 following offers of inclusion in government. The failure of the deal to materialise is believed to have led to the current situation where any future hostages would be used either as a bargaining chip with the central government or leverage with senior AOG figures.

Although the kidnapping threat does not explicitly mention NGO, extra precautions should be taken throughout the province until the threat is further clarified or cleared by the relevant authorities.

TAKHAR

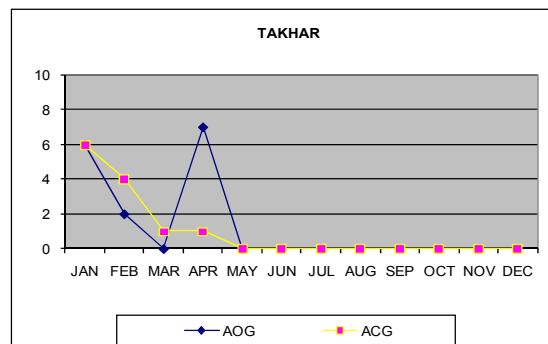
During the present reporting period, security in the north-western section of the province continues to be a matter of concern. On two separate occasions, ANP were targeted by AOG in the districts of Baharak and Darqad. In Baharak an ANP patrol was targeted with small arms fired and in Darqad a checkpoint was narrowly missed by a number of RPG rounds. Activity in Darqad, which is effectively an island in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Anti-GoA sentiment
- Local political conflicts
- External AOG influence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

the middle of the Amu River, is normally limited to smuggling activity over the Tajik border rather than outright AOG actions so the impetus and implications of this incident remain unclear. The other attack in Baharak, however, seemed to have been either perpetrated or facilitated by Kunduz-based AOGs. Additionally in Yangi Qal'a and Darqad AOG sentiment was evident in widely distributed night letters urging people not to take part in the upcoming elections. Given the rather significant shootout which took place in Yangi Qal'a during the last reporting period and some



examples that Kunduz-based AOG groups (see Kunduz) are increasingly emboldened, it is possible the AOGs will try to increase their influence in this area of Takhar by attack and otherwise discrediting the government. However, though that possibility is present, this series of recent incidents, having occurred over the last month, are not yet enough to form an established pattern and further assessment is required.

FARYAB

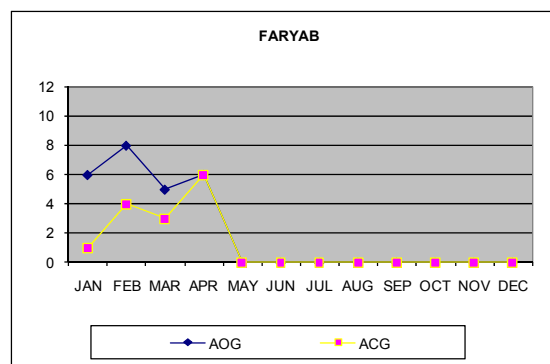
The situation in Faryab remains substantially unchanged, but an NGO was affected in one incident in which a grenade was thrown into its compound in Kohistan district, which damaged one vehicle and caused no other injuries. Kohistan is extremely remote and

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Local Conflicts
- AOG activity in western districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

rarely impacted by AOG or GoA activity. The resultant investigation of the incident indicated that the impetus for the attack was not AOG-related by rather the result of local factions competing for perceived patronage in the form of jobs for the affected organization. In another incident a major AOG attack on a police checkpoint in the Dashti Layli area of Dawlatabad district (abutting Jawzjan's Qoshtappa) was success-



fully repelled by the ANP, resulting in one ANP fatality but 10 AOG casualties (four fatalities) and the confiscation of a significant haul of weaponry and capital (8 motorbikes).

BADAKSHAN

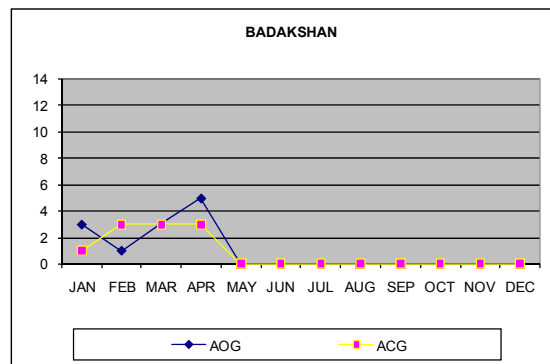
A few scattered IED incidents typify the diffuse nature of threats facing organisations working in this province. One such incident involved an IED detonating near an IO vehicle in Yaftali Sufla while the other targeted an IMF convoy in the eastern district of Warduj. No one was harmed in either incident as the IEDs were poorly constructed and detonated.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

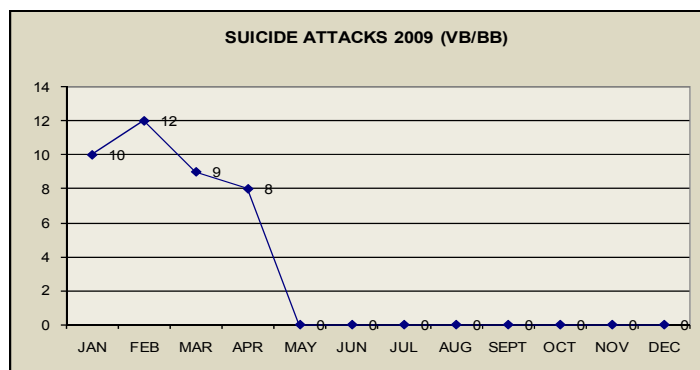
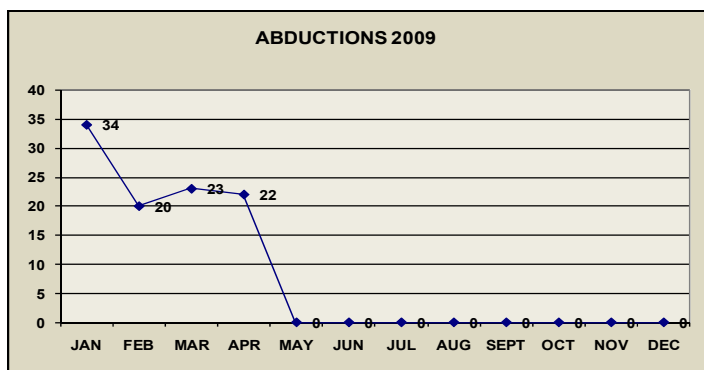
- Local political conflicts
- Infrequent IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Warduj has a history of AOG sentiment, if not activity, due to a large number of locals having been trained in Pakistani madrasas. Proactive efforts on the part of locally active NGOs appear to have substantially mitigated any threats and the organisations in question have had success with ground-level support even if the larger ideological differences remain. Due to the inherent remoteness and inaccessibility of this area, reporting from many areas of Badakhshan re-



mains limited, necessitating that organisations have a highly specific situational awareness of the areas they are working in. That said, that same remoteness and inaccessibility will likely keep the area free of organised and formidable AOG activity for the foreseeable future.



SAR-E-PUL

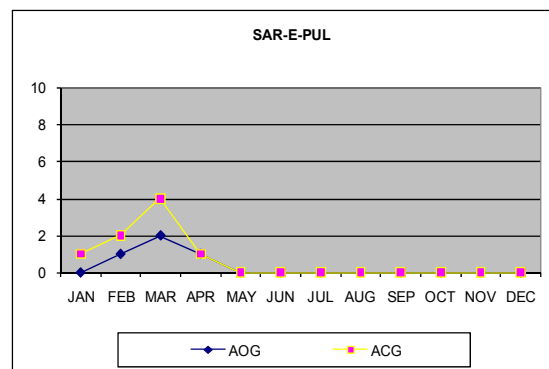
The ANA operation to curb increased AOG presence in Sayyad district appears to have produced inconclusive results, having been hampered by weather and lack of resources. Most of the suspected AOGs melted back into the sur-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence in Sayyad district
- ANA operations

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

rounding hinterland and the arrests that did result were not exceedingly fruitful. The lack of resources explains the impression of one source who thought the ANA appeared to be in a hurry to leave and a general impression that the AOG's presence is more durable than that of GoA. The repercussions of this operation remain to be seen but in the



meantime it is safe to assume that NGO work in Sayyad should proceed only with extreme caution.

BALKH

The pattern of increased AOG activity in the west of the province has continued, with AOGs more consistently targeting IMF. In a significant development, a suicide attack was deployed for the first time in Balkh (or any NR province except for Baghlan and Kunduz) in the form of an SVBIED targeting an IMF convoy in Balkh district. As in the case of Kunduz, supporting and deploying a suicide attacker indicates an increase in resources, support, and organisation on the part of an AOG group. The AOG tactic of hitting increasingly 'hard' targets more frequently with more force has resulted in a de-

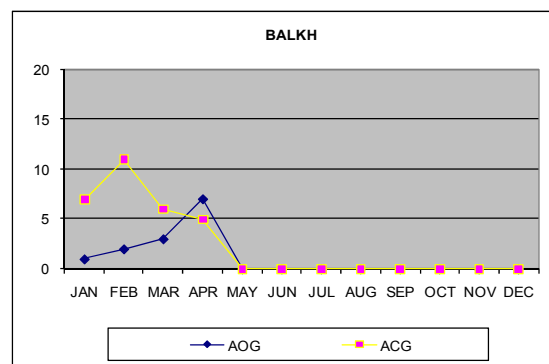
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Increased AOG activity
- Attacks against security forces
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

crease in pressure on 'softer' targets such as the ANP and NGOs. In fact, increased AOG activity has had no discernable impact on NGO activity in the region and no threats have been received during this recent uptick in violence. Though if the existing pattern in AOG activity holds, and large, resource-intensive plans fail to alter GoA and IMF posture (the attacks still produce limited casualties due to countermeasures), there remains the possibility of a shift in tactics which would impact the aid community more directly.

Elsewhere in Balkh province, local reporting indicates that covert IMF activity has contributed to mistrust and decreased acceptance of the NGO community by intended beneficiaries. Elements of this have included uncoordinated



activity, either between various IMF actors and/or between IMF and GoA, and reports of IMF conducting an officially non-existent raid, possibly dressed as ANA. The mysterious and still officially unexplained raid on Chintal in fall 2008 is the most high-profile example of this behaviour.

Other reporting indicates the extreme isolation and conservatism that prevails in southern Balkh. Often this isolation is expressed as a general fear of all outsiders or a general lack of awareness, as seen in the case of an NGO staff member encountering a village who would not believe that Zahir Shah had been deposed and insisted that he send the King their greetings.

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 provided on the last page.

ANSO: *"..by NGOs for NGOs.."*

BAGHLAN

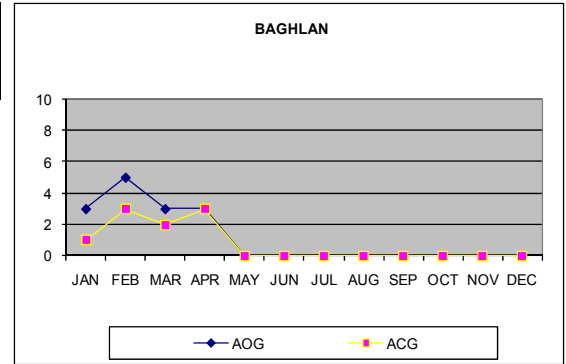
The eastern districts of Baghlan remain problematic due to the low level of GoA influence and the presence of numerous competing loci for political power. Following on significant armed clashes in Nahrin over a month ago, which resulted in the closure of the district to outsiders for a few days while local parties hashed out their differences via armed clashes, this period saw an eruption of AOG activity in the neighboring district of Burka. While classed as an attack on a district centre, it is important to

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Instability in eastern districts
- Attacks along Puli Khumri-Kunduz road

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

understand that the district centre in question is a small, isolated town with a minimal GoA presence limited to one building. An AOG launched a complex attack on this government building in the early hours of the morning, killing one of the soldiers on duty and wounding the other. At some point nine ANP were taken hostage (four of whom were later released) as the attackers fled on foot due to their transport having broken down. ANSF and IMF have subsequently responded with an increased presence and an extended search, the outcome of which remains to be seen. Because of spotty GoA control and uneven reporting, NGO activity in these eastern districts should be



the product of highly localized situational awareness and such organizations should proceed cautiously. A direct threat was discovered to the Puli Khumri – Kunduz road in Baghlani Jadid, in the form of 30 emplaced RPG launchers that were discovered and subsequently removed. Puli Khumri's importance as an entrepôt for all sorts of activity was underlined by reports of the sale of large quantity of explosives at a local market and the danger that might ensue to bystanders who witness thing they weren't meant to.

KUNDUZ

The link between armed opposition and criminal activity remains a valid factor to consider in the environment in Kunduz. In an INGO-direct incident in Chahar Darra, an NGO LN was relieved of the motorbike he was driving by three armed individuals who apparently were in need of in need of further transport beyond the single motorcycle they already possessed.

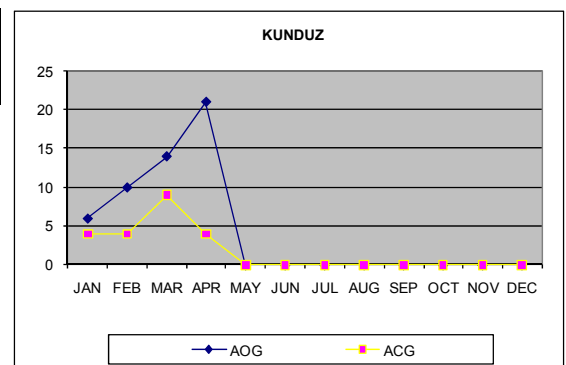
The most significant event in Kunduz during this period was a series of four apparently co-ordinated complex attacks on ANP throughout three northern districts (Archi, Imam Sahib, and Qal'ai Zal) in the early morning hours of 18 April. The complex

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks on security forces
- Increased AOG coordination

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	1

attacks all consisted of SAF and RPG fire and were launched between one and two in the morning, meaning that the same individuals were not responsible for any two attacks. While the ANP acquitted themselves rather well throughout, suffering no casualties and repelling the attackers and killing two on one occasion, this level of coordination could be significant if sustained. The capacity of Kunduz-based AOGs for relatively sophisticated and highly coordinated activity (for the NR) has already been demonstrated through their ability to conceal and deploy suicide bombers. The occasional use of suicide bombers was demonstrated by an SVBIED north of Aliabad along the main road to Kunduz. The attack did cause significant casualties (wounding eight people, four of them IMF) but otherwise did



not deviate from the established AOG pattern of targeting IMF and ANSF. The degree to which AOGs can assert their authority is not a foregone conclusion however. Near Kanam village (site of a previous rhetorical showdown between civilians and AOG members that resulted in AOG concessions) AOG elements asked a reportedly incredulous village elder to stop working with GoA. Also affecting the environment northwest of Kunduz city in Gortappa and Chahar Darra is an ongoing joint operation by ANP, ANA, and IMF described as a search operation. Because this operation has been ongoing for two weeks as of the time of writing it is likely that it will have some impact on AOG activity in the area.

KHOST

Khost also did not escape the plague of abductions that has afflicted NGO staff in the Eastern Region, manifested in the 12 April targeted abduction of an INGO national staff member as he dismounted his motorbike in the Latak bazaar in Khost City, a location he often visited at a set time. The victim was released on 19 April in Yaqubi, however, after his family furnished a ransom. Of significance, the victim was severely assaulted and questioned, including on the following specifics pertaining to his INGO: what was the nationality of his INGO; where was it headquartered; who were the donors; the identities of

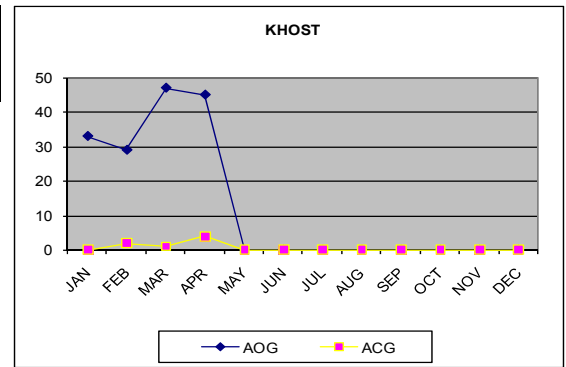
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- IED DAC approach routes
- Assassination

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

other staff members; what currency were the staff paid in; and what activities did the INGO undertake. Additionally, the victim was instructed to inform all NGO's that they were not welcome. While the identities of the captors remain unknown, because they spoke three different dialects of Pashtu—Kandahari, Khosti, and Waziristani—and lacked knowledge of the INGO—a well known organisation in the province—it is likely that they were from an AOG, one that was from outside of the province.

Besides the abovementioned incident, the protracted conflict in Khost assumed an even stronger element of brutality during the reporting period. In an example of AOG sponsored assassinations, three un-related women in Tere



Zai who were working in a field were shot and killed on the 22nd, with locals asserting that the perpetrators, masked gunmen, were AOG members who sought to punish the women for moral transgressions. Additionally, the AOG gunmen reportedly delivered children who were in the company of the women at the time to their respective families, lending credence to this claim.

Another incident demonstrating AOGs' ability to assert their will in the province occurred in Musa Khel on the 17th, when 50 AOG members attacked the District Centre and reportedly wrested control of it from ANSF.

KUNAR

20 April brought multiple unfortunate incidents for the NGO community in Kunar Province. Around midnight in Khas Kunar, an INGO national staff member was abducted along with his cousin by an AOG. Complicating the matter, after being approached to ascertain the rationale behind the event, the AOG revealed that the intended target was neither of the victims, rather, another relative that maintained a position in

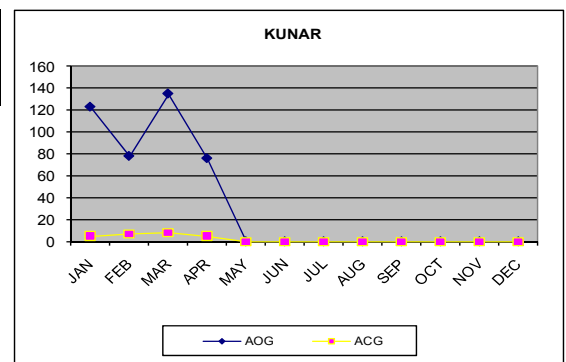
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- IDF attacks in Sirkanay
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	6
This Report Period	2

the NSP Shura council. Moreover, the AOG remain insistent that the victims will not be released unless the intended target is exchanged for the two.

In Asadabad, a night letter was posted on an INGO building, stipulating that residents should not work for the GoA, IMF, and other international entities. Additionally, the letter asserted that violators would face severe consequences. While the exact actor behind the incident remains unknown, because of surrounding factors with the INGO, and the area in which the sole night letter was posted, one is led to believe it



was resultant from a personal or professional dispute with the said INGO.

Besides the abovementioned NGO related incidents, the conflict followed the usual protracted pattern for Kunar. Lastly, as seen in Shegal District on the 17th, AOG continued to target road construction company compounds and personnel throughout the province.

PAKTYA

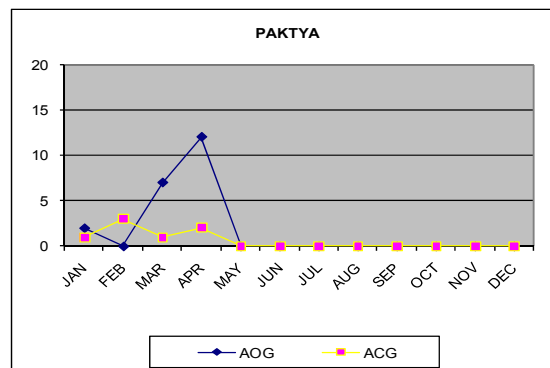
Paktya Province did not escape the ubiquitous threat of abduction for NGO national staff, staff who are exponentially more exposed than expatriates to AOG and ACG activity. Demonstrating the

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- IED along main routes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

pervasiveness of the threat, an INGO national staff member was abducted along with other civilians as he encountered an illegal vehicle checkpoint while passing through the area. NGO's should note that the victim was only abducted after items he was carrying were searched and seen to indicate that he worked with an NGO.



Unfortunately, no contact with the abductors has been made as of yet.

NURISTAN

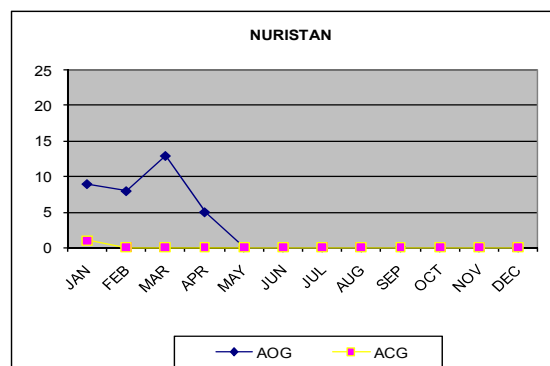
Reporting on Nuristan was minimal during this period, consisting of only a few AOG incidents; however, NGO's may be aware of comments made in the press by the Head of the Nuristan Provincial Council, in which he asserted that the province would be in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Armed clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

AOG control if the GoA did not immediately increase ANSF numbers within fifteen days. This opinion was also seconded by the Head of the Nuristan Tribal Shura, saying it was a possibility, only now. Although reporting does not indicate this likelihood, and these comments could merely be political posturing, there may be some significant credence to this claim, requiring us to treat it



seriously because of the limited amount of information that is typically released from the province.

LAGHMAN

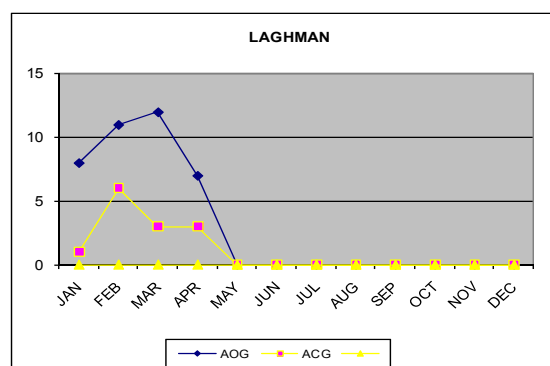
In relation to the ER, activity in Laghman continues to be minimal, with multiple IED discover-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED along main routes
- AOG checkpoints
- Criminality

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

ies in Alingar and Mihtarlam districts. Of interest, though, was the 22 April checkpoint that was orchestrated in Shakarman, Mihtarlam District, where men dressed in ANA uniforms stopped vehicles and robbed their occupants of money and valuables.



NANGARHAR

In the early hours of 17 April, Nangarhar Province found itself confronted with a burgeoning humanitarian crisis brought forth by two consecutive earthquakes that struck the south western region of the province. NGO's thus confronted the challenge of working in the two most climactic districts in the province—Khogyani and Sherzad—because of the needs of the populace. The two

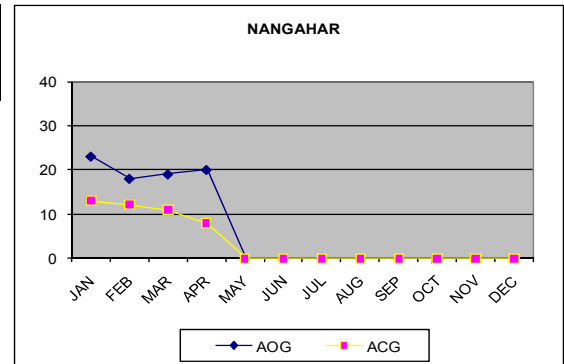
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED on DAC approach roads
- Poppy eradication efforts
- Criminality

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

districts, which are normally hostile to outsiders, reportedly welcomed assistance, possibly due in part to AOG assurances that organisations taking part in quake relief should not be harmed.

Elsewhere in the province, NGO's were faced with increasing instability, resultant from ongoing poppy eradication efforts. The marked increase in eradication led to armed clashes involving residents, AOG, and ANSF in Nazyan and Achin districts, and all indications are that pockets of armed resistance to poppy eradication will remain.



Chaparhar District is also of concern, with AOG instituting vehicle checkpoints to identify ANSF and GoA personnel in Sra Kala and Manu Du Saraka, on the 22nd and 28th, respectively. Numerous IED discoveries in Achin, Khogyani, and Sherzad indicate that AOG continue to rely on them to target IMF and ANSF in the province, and NGO's should be mindful of this threat, regardless of any purported AOG assurances.

HERAT

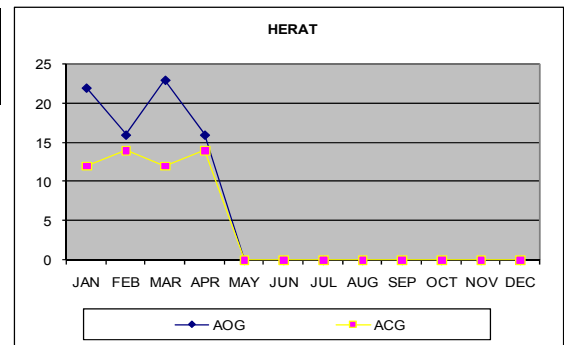
There was a significant shift in the scope of AOG activity in Herat province during this period of reporting. Not only were the incidents more significant in nature, this enlargement suggests an enhanced AOG agenda. On the 26th of April AOG carried out a mortar attack onto the premises of the IO compound located in Gozara district. Although the bombs missed their target the event was noteworthy considering the AOG shifted from its previous tactic of firing rockets, as mortars are typi-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Suicide attacks
- IDF attacks
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

cally more accurate. AOG in the Hafterband area have frequently been targeting this IO and the airport complex for the past three years. The perceived grievances of the AOG commander on the role played by pro-government establishments in his ouster in mid 2006 (from his earlier held position of influence within the establishment) - and the immediacy of these locations to his operational bases - convert them into convenient targets. This incident and the large scale attack on the ANP post in Salimi on 30 April are possible indicators of a hardening of stance of the AOG. The present deadlock is likely to continue until reconciliatory moves (which have



been underway since quite sometime) are successful.

The incident of the BBIED attack on the governor's office complex pointed to the existence of a new threat. It is worth noting that the Taliban have claimed responsibility for this attack and state the attacker was from the Ad-raksan District of Herat Province highlighting the capacity of AOG insitu. NGO visiting government offices may remain aware to the threat emanating from such attacks.

BADGHIS

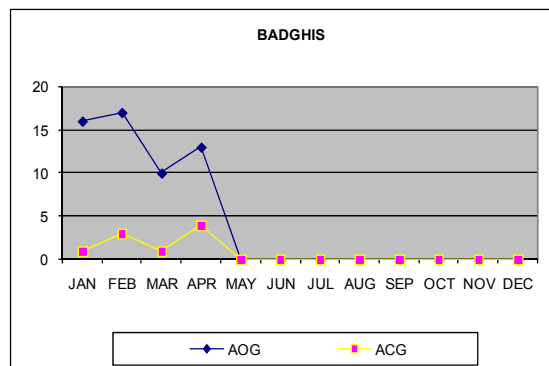
During the last fortnight, reports of AOG build up and plans for conducting military operations against security forces were reported from nearly all the districts. There is news of AOG mustering in large numbers in the districts of Ghormach, Murghab and Muqur. A number of incidents of the lay-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Convoy ambush
- IED strikes
- Increasing AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

ing of IED along the roads were reported. Other developments like the ambushing of a joint ANP and IMF convoy in Muqur, the desertion of a police post by personnel in Murghab, and reports of BBIED attackers having organized in Jawand point to a steady decline in the situation. Reports from an earlier period mentioned the enhanced presence and deployment by ANA and IMF in many fresh areas indicating that both sides are preparing for an



imminent rise in the level of the conflict. NGO operating in the areas may have to constantly monitor the signs for a sudden deterioration in the state to avoid getting inadvertently caught up in the conflict.

FARAH

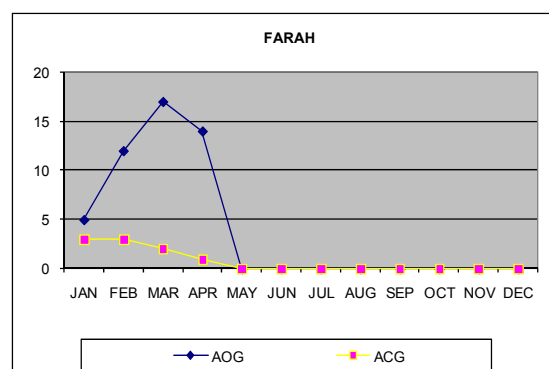
Within the Western Region, Farah retained the lead position with respect to situational insecurity and the severity of incidents. Military operations continued unabated while AOG struck with ambushes on convoys. Pusht Rod

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ambush along main routes
- Ongoing military operations
- Criminality

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

and Khaki Safed districts led in the number of AOG ambushes on both ANA and IMF convoys while the escort convoy of a private security company was ambushed in Bakwa leading to the death of three employees. Considering this to be a second incident within the span of a month it is a pointer to the deliberate targeting of private security companies. NGO travelling the affected



stretches may remain cautious to the possibility of being collaterally involved in such incidents.

GHOR

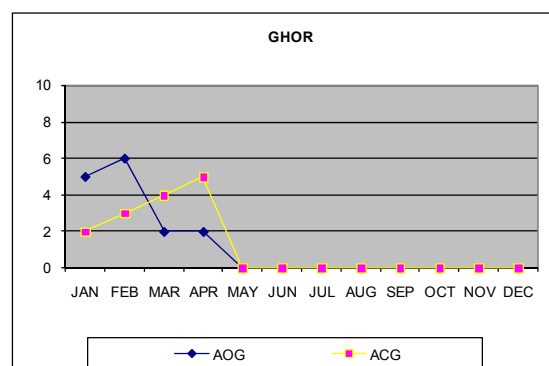
AOG set off an explosive device in a school in Taywara district. For Ghor this is a relatively new development suggestive of AOG presence and the furthering of a hard line agenda in Taywara district of same. Though such instances are more symbolic rather than actually intended to cause

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Future increase in AOG presence
- Criminality

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

casualties or structural damage, they certainly bring home the need for populations to take notice of the AOG agenda. The incidents of IED being planted in Chaghcharan and Pasaband and AOG infighting in Sharak are indicators of the spring seasonal movement and activity of AOG in these districts. The expected build up of IMF throughout southern Afghanistan in the near future indicates the likely



hood of the migration of AOG to hitherto less contested areas. This migration, from Helmand through to Badghis for example via the relatively permissive Ghor, suggest a future increase in incidents as AOG elements attempt to further secure this passage.

KANDAHAR

The state of the conflict continues unabated in Kandahar. Besides typical AOG operations, residents witnessed another AOG attempt to target local GoA authorities in the multiple BBIED attack that took place on 25 April in Kandahar City. In the strike, three BBIED attackers targeted a meeting between the Governor, IMF, and other GoA personalities, killing five ANSF personnel and wounding an additional six, as well as two civilians.

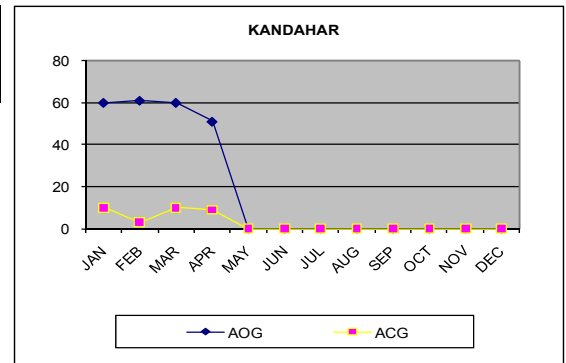
Despite general lacklustre results, AOG's are reliant upon suicide attacks to strike heavily fortified targets, while also simultaneously inculcating fear in local ANSF.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- Suicide attacks
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

Thus, reports of AOG desires to conduct further BBIED and SVBIED attacks in the province—in Arghandab District and Kandahar City—continue to circulate. These reports are bolstered by considerable munitions and VBIED finds: a large VBIED was discovered in Kandahar City on 23 April; and on the 28th, ANSF discovered a large cache of bomb making materials, including 35 remote detonation devices, 118 detonators, and 18 IED's. Additionally, ANSF assert that the four suspects detained in relation to this find are responsible for the recent attack on the Provincial Council Chamber in Kandahar City. AOG's concurrently are not neglecting rural areas that may provide fruitful opportunities for them to assert themselves, as seen in the 22 April report that an AOG destroyed a well drilling



machine and a tractor and assaulted six workers in Reg District, because the GoA had furnished the crew with the equipment. Another example was seen in Zhari District, where parties suggest that an AOG coerced locals into falsely reporting AOG casualties from a 27 April IMF operation as civilians who were merely tending poppy fields.

In sum, NGO's should expect the security situation in Kandahar Province to further deteriorate, with continual IED and suicide attacks being conducted on targets by AOG residing inside and outside of their respective target areas. Additionally, with upcoming further deployments of IMF to the region, the frequency of attacks, as well as 'collateral damage', will likely increase.

PAKTIKA

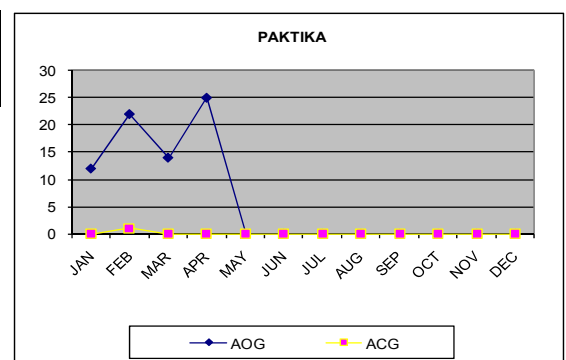
Activity in Paktika is still likely resultant from its close proximity to AOG safe havens in Pakistan. Influxes of AOG members, and possibly two suicide bombers, have been reported in the province, specifically in Barmal, Nika, and Jani Khel districts. Furthermore, it is believed that a large AOG has infiltrated into Yahya Khel with the intent to emplace multiple IED's.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Increased suicide attack threat

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Regardless of the possible AOG desire to increase IED operations, AOG continue to heavily rely upon IED's when confronting ANSF or targeting important personalities for assassination, with ever increasing lethality. On 16 April, for example, AOG unsuccessfully attempted to kill the Paktika Governor, killing three escorting ANP and an additional three PSC guards while they were travelling in Khair Kot District. Successful IED strikes also occurred in Sar Hawza, Mata Khan, Waza Khwa, and Dila districts.



NGO's should additionally heed the 25 April confrontation between AOG and two medical staff that were travelling on the outskirts of Katawaaz Village, Sharan District. The staff were confronted by AOG and accused of being spies, claims that were only addressed after AOG called unknown people in the said village to authenticate the staff's activities and associations.

NIMROZ

Nimroz experienced another suicide attack in Zaranj District. In an attempt to kill the Border Minister, two BBIED attackers approached the Minister's residence on a motorbike, with one attacker dismounting and approaching the residence while a vehicle belonging to the Minister's family was

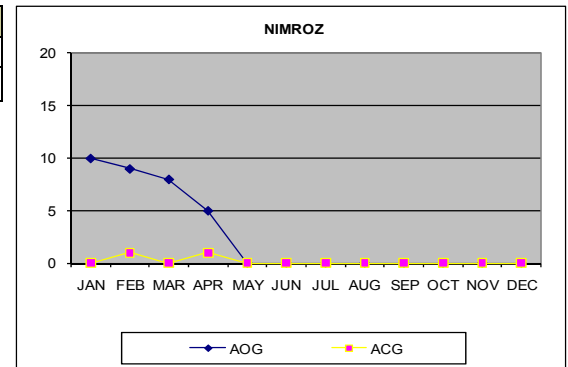
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- BBIED attacks in Zaranj and Khash Rod
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

entering the residential compound. The first attacker was consequently fired upon by the occupants of the car, ultimately causing him to detonate his vest, and the second attacker also then approached the residence and detonated his vest. In sum, the attackers killed three bystanders and wounded an additional two.

The majority of incidents in Nimroz, however, continue to be resultant from its access to cross-



border areas, mainly entailing illicit operations by criminal and opposition elements, including human trafficking and drug smuggling a situation that will likely continue due to the provinces relative isolation.

GHAZNI

AOG attacks in the province—comprised of IED's and conventional ambushes—were pervasive during this reporting period, primarily focusing on 'softer targets', such as road construction and IMF logistical convoys that are typically escorted by PSC's. Moreover, if reports of AOG inflows are correct, including a report of 400 migrating to Rashidan District, it is very likely that incident levels will exponentially in the short term.

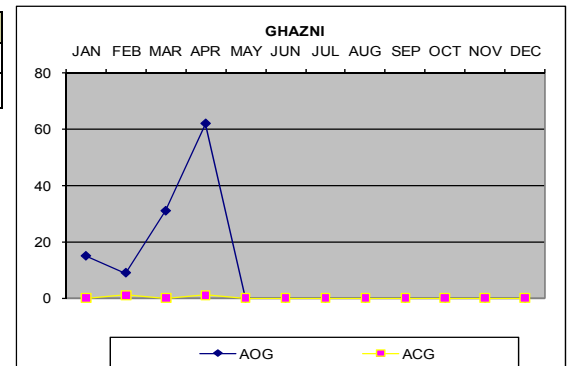
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/kidnapping
- Attacks against convoys
- Indirect fire attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

With this, NGO's should be mindful of fomenting disillusionment with the GoA, paired with the inability of ANSF to provide adequate services. This apparent security vacuum resulted in the 11 April abduction of two consultants (erroneously reported by others as NGO staff) and three shura representatives as they were traveling from Ghazni City to Waghas to conduct NSP reviews.

ANSF inadequacies were further emphasized, though, after ANP abandoned their posts in Ghazni and Ajristan districts during this reporting period, reportedly joining AOG ranks. This is likely due in part to unrelenting AOG at-



tacks on ANP—an AOG siege on the Ajristan DAC occurred on the 17th, a day before 10 ANP abandoned the same post. Additionally, reporting suggests that AOG have infiltrated the Ajristan ANP, which is likely the case throughout the province. In sum, the lack of confidence in ANSF, paired with a probable upcoming AOG offensive, creates a very precarious environment for NGO's to operate in.

HELMAND

The field of education continues to be targeted, this time on 15 April in Lashkar Gah when a group of men approached a school that was being constructed by a private firm at the behest of an INGO. The perpetrators took the two night guards hostage and appear to have detonated an IED outside of the school, causing only minor damage. After one week in captivity, though, the two guards were released unharmed. While the group responsible claimed to be Taliban, it is widely rumoured that the nature of the

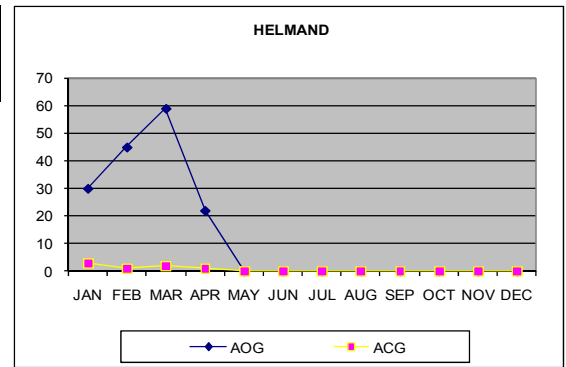
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

incident could be due to rivalries between private construction firms in the province. The past would support this possible guise to portray it as an AOG event, because similar incidents did occur in other portions of the region, and on the surface, the incidents appeared to be the work of an AOG; ultimately, though, they were entirely attributable to personal/professional rivalries.

A wider reaching concern, though, is the ongoing infiltration of AOG from southern and eastern districts of Lashkar Gah City, and intensification of their operations, which drew the attention of both IMF and ANSF. Thus, AOG inflows spurred IMF and ANSF to commence an operation, par-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- BBIED
- Armed clashes
- Pervasive AOG presence



ticularly focusing on Basharan, Nad Ali District. (Estimates of 200 AOG members migrating to Nad Ali District likely caused IMF/ANSF to take action.) The operation continues, covering the districts of Sangin and Garmser, and there are reports suggesting a substantial number of AOG members have been killed or injured. The displacement of civilians and reports of possible civilian casualties have also been reported. Moreover, the level of military activity may begin to increase in the coming days, making the situation even more precarious for NGO operations in the area.

ZABUL

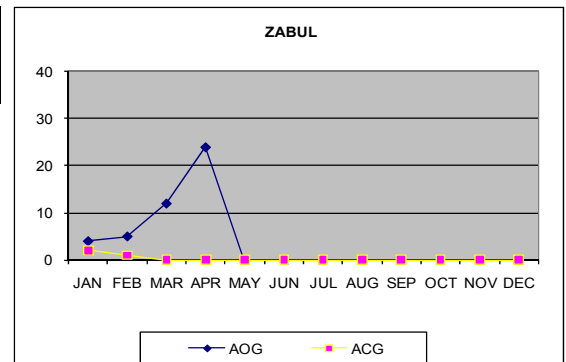
The level of AOG related activity in the province continues to cause concern for NGO's, especially in three of Qalat City's neighbouring districts: Shajoy, Shinkay and Arghandab.

The districts of Shajoy and Shinkay are highlighted, because attacks against civilians perceived as having affiliations with the GoA and Government entities continues to disrupt reconstruc-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

tion and education efforts.

The recent assault upon approximately 18 school teachers—some purport it amounted to torture—further demonstrates AOG efforts to intimidate residents in Shajoy: the victims were badly beaten and warned before being released to stop attending schools, or they would be fined 40,000 Afghani. Within the following three days, night letters were circulated that stated teachers who continued to attend schools would be seriously punished. The harassment of teachers and sudden distribution of threats to



schools and teachers probably emanates from the promise made by the newly designated Governor, stating that all closed schools would reopen.

In additionally, ongoing AOG attacks against GoA instillations and ANSF, as well as constant threats of BBIED/SVBIED attacks, continue to shape a volatile environment for NGO activities.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Suicide attacks
- Attacks along main routes



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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:

- Panjshir
- Jawzjan
- Samangan
- Uruzgan

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.

REMINDER: TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENT

Please note that there are still openings for the ANSO hosted training by [The Centre for Safety and Development \(CSD\)](#):

May 12-14, 2009, Security Management Country Level Course, Kabul, Afghanistan, ANSO Office.

Please note that NGO registered with ANSO will receive a 200 Euro discount from [CSD](#) when applying for this course.

This Security Management Course will improve participants' knowledge, insights and skills regarding security management. Participants will be able to contribute to reducing organisational security risks, by learning to develop and maintain a relevant and proportional security plan on country/project level.

NGO are encouraged to contact [CSD](#) directly at the following address if interested in attending: ebe@centreforsafety.org