

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Continued instability along primary roads countrywide
- Consistently high NGO incident volumes
- Increased targeting frequency of NGO by AOG
- Civil unrest resulting from civilian casualties inflicted during military operations

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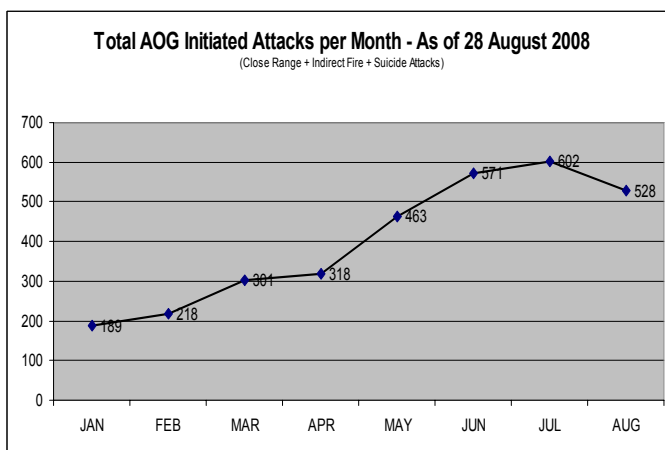
NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COUNTRY SUMMARY

Overall incident volume trends have continued through to August, indicating that the present volatility is now a permanent reality.

This increase can be attributed to a variety of factors, the most important being the increased pervasiveness of the conflict as indicated by the spread to previously unaffected areas during 2007 and 2008.

Related to this, NGO incident volume has also continued at the high levels reported during the past months (see chart below), with August accounting for at least 22 separate incidents (as of 28 Aug 08). This fact



suggests that as the AOG presence becomes more firmly entrenched over a greater area and their influence (be it direct or indirect) over the local population develops, NGO are

more likely to be the victims of AOG attributed incidents.

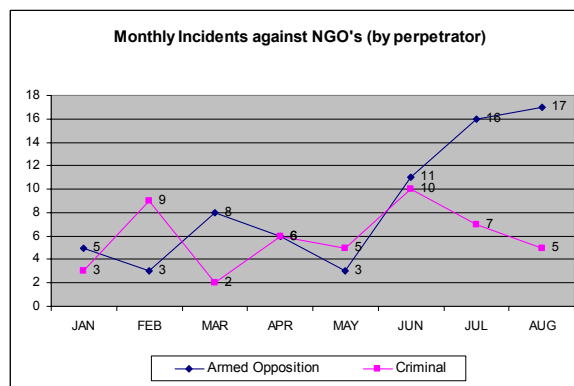
Please refer to the NGO Data & Trends section below for further analysis.

NGO DATA & TRENDS

The chart provided clearly indicates a growing desegregation between AOG and ACG attributed NGO incidents.

As detailed above, the increasing pervasiveness and strength of the AOG presence, and the concomitant impact on the local population suggests that NGO acceptance may no longer be a viable staff safety measure. While this has been an accepted reality in regions such as the South, recent incidents in the East as well as Central indicate

that this is now the case there as well. The regularity of threat activity, as well as direct actions (i.e. IED and RPG attacks) also support this conclusion. Though post-incident analysis indicates that the specific organizations were not directly "targeted", for a variety of reasons (including perceived government association), in general NGO activities and staff are now considered viable targets for AOG operations.



KABUL

During August, AOG incidents in Kabul Province reached their highest level of the year.

NGO can expect recent conditions and trends to continue in the coming months with IED, indirect fire, and suicide attacks all likely to be prominent. Of particular note, more rocket attacks directed at the airport should be expected as they have been increasing in frequency recently.

Security around Kabul City continues to deteriorate while incident severity has increased, as was

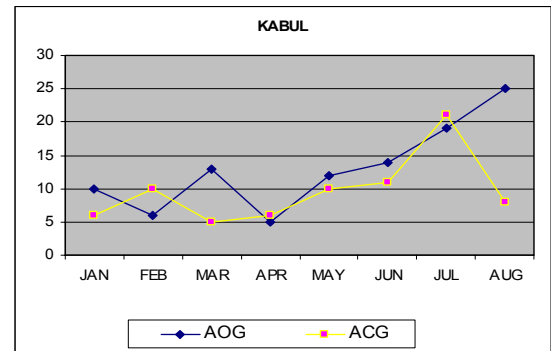
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Decreased stability in proximity to Kabul City
- Rocket attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	16
This Report Period	0

most recently evidenced by the 19 August clash in Surobi between IMF and AOG that resulted in 10 French soldiers killed and a further 20 injured. Other factors that could influence the threat environment in the upcoming month are Ramadan and the recent handover of responsibility for Kabul City security to the ANSF from ISAF—a particular factor which may prompt increased AOG attempts to further undermine confidence in the government's ability to provide a safe and secure environment.

The recent attacks on NGO (Logar, 13 August; Bamyan, 24 August; Parwan, 20 August) suggest the possibility that NGO are



now more likely to be the direct target of AOG attacks. At the same time, the overall security deterioration (outlined above) provides a more permissive environment for AOG to operate within areas that have historically been relatively secure—such as Kabul City. Given these conditions, ANSO considers the threat environment for NGO (and other international targets) to be especially high at this time.

WARDAK

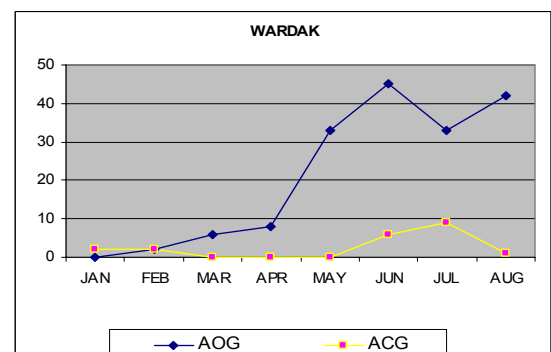
Most of Wardak should be considered high risk for NGO operations. AOG threats have remained consistent during the previous two months: military and contractor convoy ambushes; IED attacks; abduction; AOG influence on the Kabul-Kandahar road; check points and surveillance; and de facto control of areas outside district centres. District Centres are also particularly vulnerable to attack, especially at night.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- Prevailing instability
- Ongoing combat operations

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	6
This Report Period	0

The number and intensity of incidents indicate that eastern Wardak is effectively an active combat zone. During this period there were AOG incidents recorded in Saydabad, Maydan Sharh, and Nirkh, with Saydabad being especially volatile and subject to IMF air strikes. There were two IMF air strikes recorded in the past week, with one reported to have killed civilians. Aside from the immediate danger of collateral damage posed by air-strikes, such incidents may further erode what support the government (and by extension NGO) may have in the province.



Thus far there have been no reports that the actions in the east have had any impact on NGO operating in the Bihsud districts. However, security reporting from this area remains extremely limited, making security assessment difficult. In the current context, such areas of unknown security should be considered risky for NGO operations. Additionally, NGO operating in the area should be prepared for the possibility of a westward migration of the eastern instability.

PLEASE NOTE: The August AOG/ACG incident volume graphs provided in this report are short 4 days and as such do not reflect the complete monthly incident volumes. Updated end-month volumes will be provided in the next edition.

PARWAN

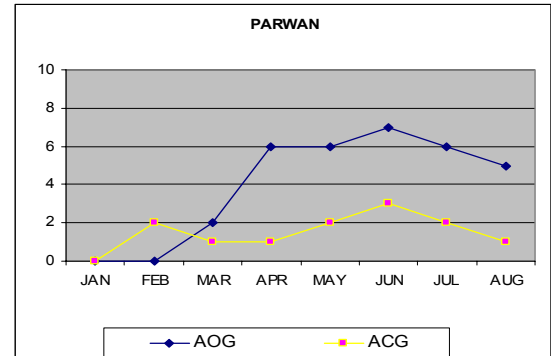
While overall AOG incidents numbers remain relatively low, anecdotal reporting suggests an increasing threat presence in the districts west of Chaharikar (Shinwari, Ghorband, Shekh Ali) along the main road to Bamyan. This was manifested by the IED attack during the last reporting period that occurred along the main road through Ghorband.

In recent months Parwan has been the preferred route from Kabul to Bamyan. This makes it an attractive target for AOG seeking to further control routes in and out of Kabul. While IED attacks typically target security

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	1

forces, a 20 August attack struck an NGO vehicle, killing one person and wounding five others. The vehicle was not marked, though it was a white Land Cruiser thus not likely mistaken for police or military. Also, reports indicate there were no security vehicles in the area that may have been the intended target. There is not enough information to confidently conclude deliberate NGO/humanitarian targeting, but at minimum the event highlights a growing threat on this road. If this was a case of poor targeting, it is the second such a mistake along the road this summer (in June an IED struck a civilian vehicle in Sheik Ali, Tangi Lali area).

There are unconfirmed reports of AOG build-up in Shinwari with



the intent to launch attacks on Bagram air base. If true, such a presence is also situated to destabilize the area west of Charharikar, and a 19 August attack on the Shiwari DAC may be evidence of this threat. As mentioned in the previous report, information indicates dissatisfaction in some communities in Shinwari regarding some NGO operations because the work is perceived as being at odds with local culture and/or religion. Such sentiments could be the product of and/or contribute to an AOG presence, and potentially pose problems for NGO operations. However, so far there have been no reports of direct threats to NGO activities.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Increased IED threat
- Increased AOG presence

KAPISA

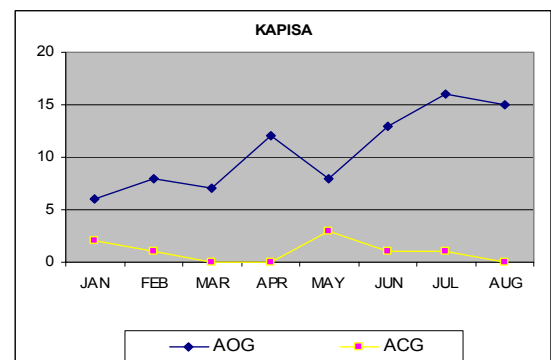
The general security situation in Kapisa Province remains uncertain and unstable and there has been no significant change in the overall threat environment in comparison to recent reports. In Tagab there is heavy fighting and frequent clashes between AOG and security forces. As with the previous period, there were reports of civilian casualties from IMF air strikes. For NGO, aside

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

from the danger of collateral damage, such events could serve to undermine support for government and/or foreign presence throughout the province.

Alasay and Njrab—given periodic military operations and reports of heavy AOG infiltration—should also be considered unstable and potentially volatile. Mahmud Raqi is vulnerable to periodic attacks, as evidenced by recent rocket attacks directed at police and the DAC.

There is anecdotal reporting from Kohistan that suggests the possi-



bility of growing anti-government sentiment and the promulgation of a message that cooperation with the GoA is anti-Islamic. While such reporting currently falls in the realm of rumour, NGO should closely monitor and assess their community support levels and local attitudes toward their work. So far there have been no reports of direct security problems for NGO operating in the district.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks against DAC
- Collateral damage from military operations

LOGAR

AOG incident levels have remained high and consistent during the last two months, with recent incidents indicating an increased AOG control of the province. This second point is most clearly evidenced by AOG's apparent ability to operate with near abandon along the Kabul-Gazni road in areas surrounding Puli Alam. AOG check points are frequent and reporting indicates that they

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

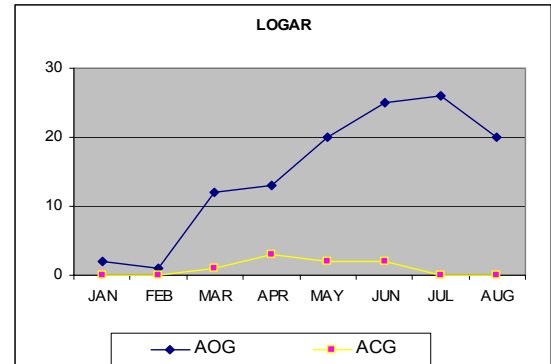
- AOG checkpoints along main routes
- AOG freedom of movement
- NGO targeted incidents

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

are most likely in the late afternoon hours.

In addition to the obvious intimidation benefit, the AOG scrutiny also appears to be facilitating attacks on security related convoys (as evidence by a 22 August burning of an IMF contracted fuel tankers and the 27 August hijacking of a water truck). Much of this activity has been centred in the Porak/Kalangar area. As this is the same area as the 13 August execution of NGO staff, a firm and active AOG presence is readily apparent.

While the bulk of recent incident reporting has originated from Puli



Alam, Baraki Barak, Kharwar, and Charkh are reported to be also effectively under Taliban control. Unless an NGO has specific guarantees of support and clear evidence of acceptance, all of Logar should currently be considered hostile to NGO operations. ANSO recommends the complete suspension of road travel by internationals or local staff that might be identified as having an NGO link.

BAMYAN

Most of Bamyan remains quiet and appears wholly amenable to NGO operations. However, travel to the province from Kabul may be increasingly risky (see Parwan analysis for further detail).

Anecdotal reporting suggests an increase in AOG activity—particularly IED threats—in the northeast districts of Kamard and Shibar. Also, the area itself is reported to have little or no security presence, nor medical facilities, in the event of the need for such services. Further to this, on 24 August, an INGO two-vehicle convoy was struck by a RCIED while travelling from Kabul to Bamyan. While no occupants were injured, a more significant out-

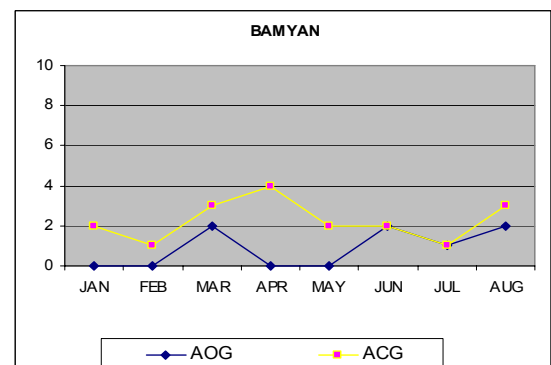
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Increased IED threat
- AOG presence in Shibar and Khamard

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	1

come was only averted due to a targeting error, as the target vehicle had accelerated just prior to detonation. In addition, ANP responding to the incident were also struck by a RCIED, resulting in one death and at least three injuries. It is likely that this follow on event was intent on targeting the first responders to the previous IED strike. While these incidents do not indicate a trend, taken in the context of recent reporting, the event has relevant implications for NGO:

1. The sophistication of the attack suggests it was AOG initiated. While Bamyan is mostly a safe district for NGO, the area of this incident has a history of Taliban links and support.
2. There appears to be a creeping AOG threat to roads between Kabul and Bamyan.



3. This attack occurred on a route that might have been deemed a safe alternative to more direct routes between Kabul and Bamyan. (This is after the route through Wardak has effectively been rendered too dangerous for travel, and the route through Ghorband and Sheik Ali appears to be becoming more risky—as highlighted by the 20 August IED attack on an NGO vehicle in Ghorband.)

Information indicates that NGO are increasingly becoming targets. High profile NGO vehicles are therefore especially vulnerable to attack.

DAYKUNDI

Security reporting from Daykundi remains characteristically limited. Reports from Kijran and Gizab suggest a recent increase in AOG movement and activity, which included the burning of a bookstore and boy's school in Gizab.

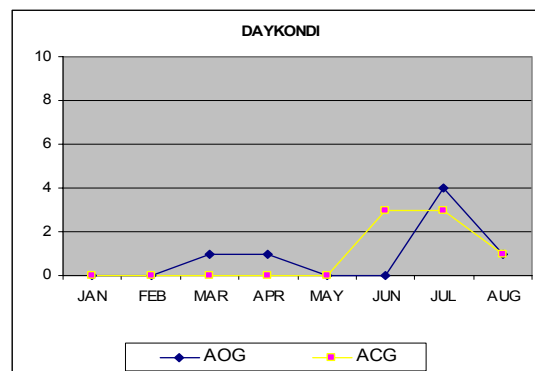
There are unconfirmed (and likely fallacious reports) of plans to attack the Nili DAC. Reports of plans to attack Nili emerge periodically and prove to be spurious.

Our own data indicates only a handful of attacks directed at police/military forces in Nili in the past three years. However, while there may be limited chance that AOG will initiate any *major* offences outside of their usual areas of operation in Kijran and Gizab, other areas should not be assumed to be secure. AOG have relative freedom of movement facilitated by the limited security presence and can move unexpectedly into other areas. Given this, ANSO assesses Daykundi to pose

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence in south
- Minimal security presence
- Limited security reporting

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0



some risk for NGO operations and international staff movements should be evaluated accordingly. While not an AOG action, the July abduction of two foreign nationals working for an NGO in Nili speaks to the potential risks to NGO operating in the province.

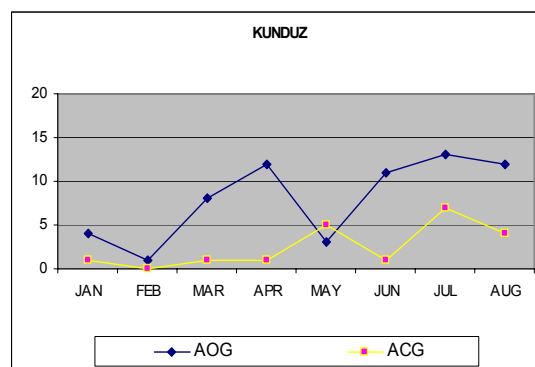
KUNDUZ

Despite the recent kidnapping and murder of an INGO staff member, the security context within Kunduz has remained consistent in regards to previous reporting periods. Having said this, the extent and scope to which NGOs are receiving threats is becoming increasingly apparent and a major IMF/ANSF military operation along the Kunduz-Baghlan Highway was recently undertaken.

The extent of AOG agitation is now known to have been much greater in the preceding months than was previously understood, at fact revealed by information that has been recently reported. At least one INGO has received multiple direct verbal and written threats along with indirect threats against the aid community appearing at regular intervals throughout the province. These include threats against those perceived to be working too closely with the government and aiding in NSP program delivery. While there was a previous understanding of this issue, the scope (as it is now known) of this is important as it points to the favourable milieu in which AOGs operate. The widespread nature of the threats also suggests that acceptance at the village or project area level cannot be counted on by NGOs to provide protection.

The military operation taking place along the Kunduz-Baghlan highway (and scheduled to have wrapped up before the month of Ramadan) is designed to bolster the ANSF by providing equipment and training that will facilitate 24-hour checkpoints along this narrow and active corridor. Whether the effects will be sustained after the IMF have left remains to be seen, but a reduced

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	1



incidence of IEDs and suicide attacks in that vicinity suggests it has at least temporarily restricted AOG activity.

Kunduz actually consists of at least two distinctive political and geographical units. The first comprises Khanabad, Aliabad, Kunduz, and Chahardara Districts and the other of the districts of Qal'ai Zal, Imam Sahib, and Dashti Archi. While both areas are spread out geographically, the majority of the population is clustered around the Kunduz and Khanabad rivers or the Amu. To date threats have been focused on Kunduz and environs to the south, where the IMF operations have been taking place, yet investigations surrounding the kidnapping and murder of an INGO employee (presently attributed to criminal activity) have revealed that the other districts abutting the Amu also harbour a level of hostility both towards the government and aid community.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Criminal activity
- IED and suicide attacks
- Threats against the NGO community

BADAKHSHAN

Badakhshan continues to distinguish itself with incidents that are seemingly random though ominous; criminality, IEDs, and the spectre of AOG activity all factor into this. This was manifested during this reporting period with an attack on both an INGO as well as an IO. The attack against an INGO office in the Yawan District, which was initially feared

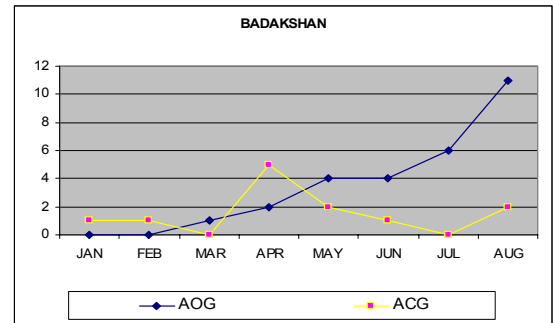
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED attacks
- Criminal incidents
- AOG activity reports

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	1

to be AOG in nature, was later revealed to be of a criminal nature, involving a groups attempt at extortion against the INGO. An IO also suffered an attack by armed elements in the form of a roadside IED, an event that is presently attributed to AOG elements.

The recent dearth of new reports concerning suspicious AOG activity (i.e. previous reports surrounding the suspicious appearance of Tajik and Pakistani citizens attending to not clearly ascertained business) does not mean that



nothing is happening below the surface. The coming six weeks will be a critical time for political jockeying as political actors seek to consolidate patronage before the winter season restricts mobility.

TAKHAR

While Takhar remained relatively incident-free during this reporting period, a few events did serve to emphasize the underlying insecurities that exist in this province. Communal tensions flared in the Yangi Qal'a District between returning IDP's and other residents over issues of land issues and water rights. A number of demonstrations, fights, and casualties were associated with the resulting row. The dispute, successfully resolved through state intervention, highlights the ongoing problem of weak institutions concerning land ownership. These events also had an ethnic undercurrent in

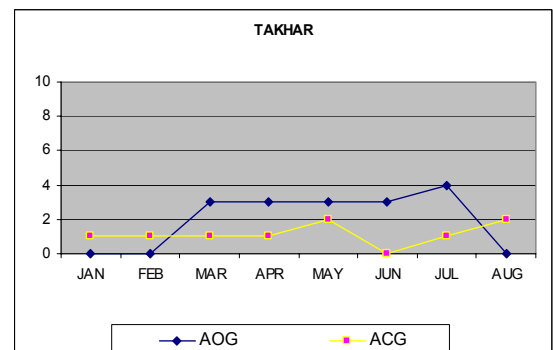
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Local conflicts
- Increased reporting of AOG activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

that many of the returning IDP's were reportedly of Pashtun descent whose ancestors arrived in the north under resettlement schemes by Afghan governments in the early part of the twentieth century.

Rumors about the threat of suicide bombers have also been in wider circulation, to the point where Takhar based sources reported on a few separate occasions that people were talking about the presence of one or two suicide bombers on the road between Khanabad and Taloqan (usually the safer stretch of the Taloqan-Kunduz Highway). While these reports could not be substantiated to the degree that warranted the issuance of a Threat Warning, the fact that they are the subject of so much anecdotal re-



porting is in itself noteworthy. The rise in rumors of this nature coincides with an important IMF operation taking place in Kunduz (see Kunduz analysis), which seems to be leading to a fear that as the IMF and ANSF constrain the AOG scope of action in their traditional habitat south of Kunduz city, they will be directing their activities elsewhere. For the time being ANSO has no evidence to substantiate or deny a greater threat on the Kunduz-Taloqan Highway, and as such advises NGOs traveling this route to continue exercising planned movement protocols, maintaining situational awareness, and utilizing low-profile transportation.

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.

BALKH

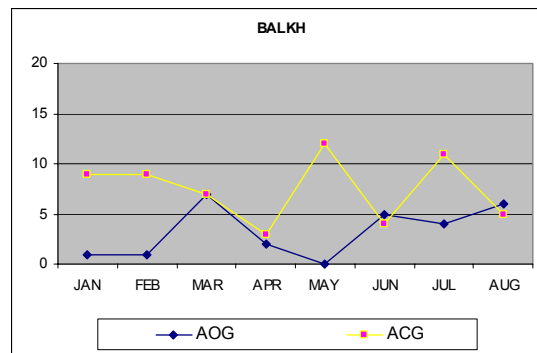
There is no new reporting from Balkh to indicate a change in the status of the province for NGO activities. The calm was only punctured by the apparently politically motivated assassination of a district governor in the west of

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Factional conflicts
- Attacks against NGO

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	10
This Report Period	0

the province. Such an event serves to highlight one of the fundamental drivers of the security situation for NGOs throughout Balkh, Jawzjan, and Sari Pul, which is factional politics. Local murders are almost entirely attributed to these rivalries, and increasing amounts of reporting and anecdotal evidence point to factional politics being the source of recent



attacks on NGOs, with the motive being to make one or another rival authority look incompetent.

KHOST

The major event in Khost this period was an attack on Camp Salerno, the IMF facility in Khost City. As many as eight suicide bombers were used in an attempt to over run the base. The attack was initiated with a VBIED attack that killed at least 10 civilians with a follow on suicide attack (targeting the first responders) being prevented by police. Over the course of the following 24 hours IMF battled with AOG

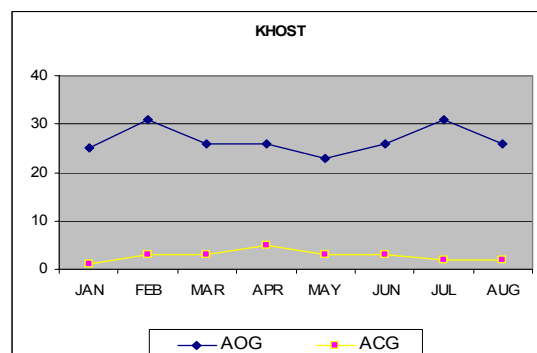
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Intimidation of NSP related activities
- Increased AOG infiltration
- Massed suicide attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	0

around the base killing a number of other suicide vest bombers. At least one air strike was utilised which resulted in a number of civilian casualties. While this attack was ultimately unsuccessful, it demonstrated the capacity of the AOG to mass a surprisingly large number of suicide bombers in one location.

Highlighting an ongoing issue in the ER, locals in Khost City staged a protest in response to the killing by IMF on 28 August of a well known cricketer on suspicion of being AOG. This event, along with the aforementioned air strikes, is increasing anti-IMF sentiment in the area which will likely result in further civil unrest.



The District of Sabari remains volatile with AOG who are (unlike any other district in eastern region) willing to put continued efforts into rocket attacks on IMF and government facilities. This was highlighted by the indirect fire attack on a police post in Zamba in which a volley of 15 rockets was utilised in this attack alone.

The situation in Khost remains volatile and NGOs are advised to limit their international staff operations to Khost City.

PAKTYA

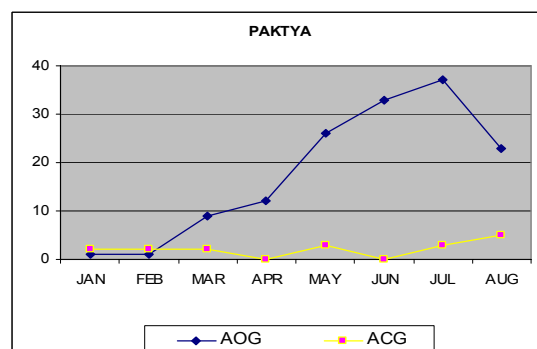
The security situation in Paktya improved this period with twelve serious incidents reported vice 21 last period. The number of direct

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Spread of AOG presence into Jaji and Sayid Karam Districts
- Attacks along Gardez-Kabul road
- Attacks against DAC

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

attacks is down significantly from eleven to four. Gardez and Zurmata were the locations of most incidents with the Gardez-Khost Road still a likely spot for IEDs. IMF bases continue to be ineffectually targeted with rocket fire. ANSO continues to advise against road travel to Kabul and for inter-



national staff to restrict their presence to within Gardez.

NURISTAN

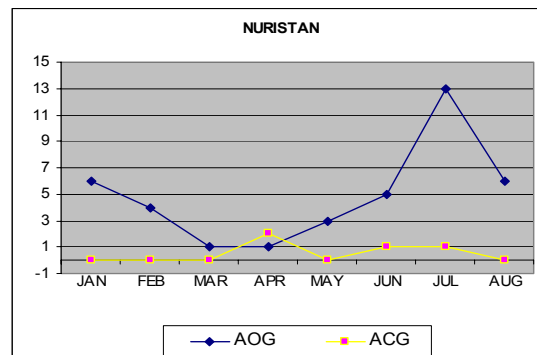
The security situation in Nuristan remains unchanged. Occasionally reports are received regarding attacks on security forces but the communications systems are so poor, the density of security forces is so low, and the presence

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- High threat to NGO non-local national staff
- Spread of AOG operations to Wama District

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

of the government of Afghanistan is so limited that AOG can go unmolested over most of the province. Three of the reported incidents this period were attacks on military bases in the Kamdesh and Bargi Matal Districts. A kidnapping of road construction workers was reported in Wama along with the burning of two truck loads of religious texts. The AOG objection to these books is



not clear.

NGO are advised to deploy only locally hired staff on the ground and to limit international operations to air travel and secure facilities.

KUNAR

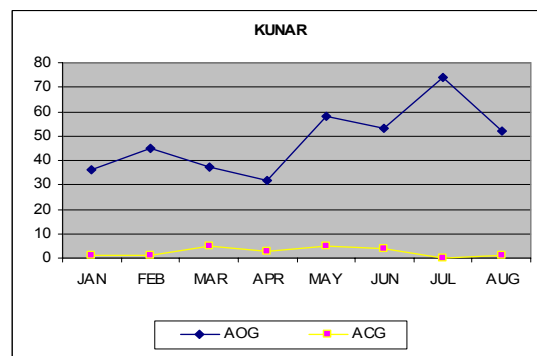
Kunar remains highly dangerous with significant numbers of AOG at large launching regular attacks on police posts and military bases. Abductions of locals, especially engineers, working on road and irrigation projects are becoming common as the following incidents illustrate. On the 16th of

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Significantly increased kidnapping threat
- Clashes between AOG and security forces

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	1

August an engineer from a sub-contracted company and three locally hired labourers were kidnapped from an INGO building site in the Shegal District. The labourers were released a short distance away and the engineer was held for cash ransom until he was released on 25 August. While the INGO did not pay for his release, the firm he was employed by did. On 24 August two engineers and several workers from a road project in Nari District were also abducted. Lastly, on 27 Au-



gust three IMF supply trucks were torched and the drivers and assistants abducted.

NGOs can expect to see kidnapping become quite common as AOG seek to disrupt reconstruction, highlight the inability of the government to provide security, and raise funds.

LAGHMAN

The number of AOG initiated incidents decreased in Laghman this period with far fewer IED incidents than has been the recent norm. The significant security event of this period was the IMF air strike that, according to Afghan government sources, killed

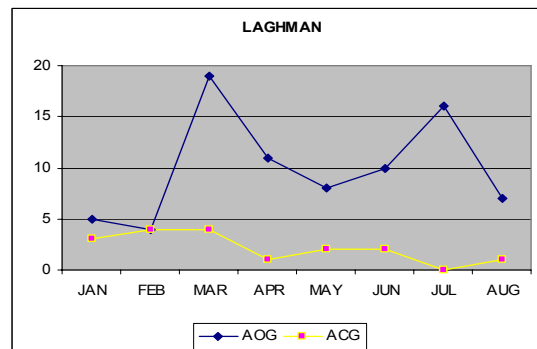
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks against DAC
- IED along DAC access routes
- Increased threat level along Hwy 1

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

approximately 20 civilians in the Galoch area. Initially IMF said that only AOG had been killed but have since admitted civilians were among the dead. The fighting and air strikes in the area led to the suspension of operations at an INGO medical clinic.

Throughout the rest of the province the number of security incidents dropped significantly. Only six serious events were reported and IEDs were down to only two



events. Attacks on Highway One decreased to one attempt on fuel tankers in Qarghayi this period and there were no more reports of illegal check points.

NANGARHAR

The most significant event of this past year was the kidnapping and murder of a Japanese staff member of an INGO in Khas Kunar District on 27 August. The victim was a long time employee with substantial experience in the area. He had been working on an irrigation project for the past three months and attended the site on most days. He and his driver left their office at 0500 and arrived at the site at 0640. Immediately on arrival five armed and masked men took them hostage and set off east down a foot path. Local villagers alerted the police and a group of seven locals followed in pursuit. Two other small groups of locals also set off from the north in the hope of cutting the kidnappers off. When the police arrived they joined the pursuit. An IMF drone also appeared overhead and had both the kidnappers and the villagers in sight at one time. No other IMF elements are known to have been involved. During the pursuit the southern

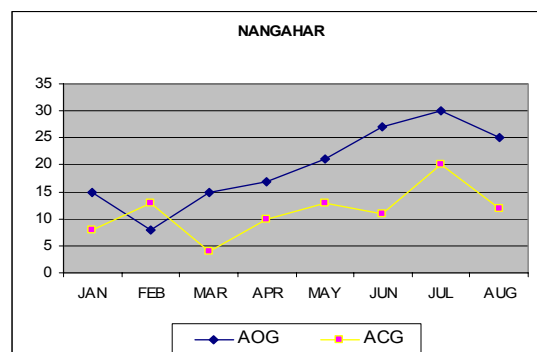
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	1

group exchanged long range gun fire several times with the kidnappers. At 1130 the driver was found unharmed hiding along the trail. A short while later a kidnapper, who confessed to being AOG, was also discovered and arrested by locals unharmed after a short fire fight. At this point the kidnappers left the trail and the villagers lost them. At approximately 1800 the chase was called off due to fading light. The villagers returned on 28 August 0800 and by 0930 had found the staff members body.

The captured AOG has told NDS that they intended to ransom the victim for cash or the release of other AOG. It does not appear that their intent was to murder the staff member but nonetheless killed him when he slowed down their escape. The AOG and the rest of the gang are originally from Dari-Noor and had been in the area for several weeks plotting this incident. The driver was also detained by NDS on suspicion of being part of the plot and remains in custody.

There are a number of points for NGOs to consider regarding this incident:

1. A thorough threat to benefit



analysis should be completed prior to travel to field sites and such moves should not be considered "routine" in the present security climate.

2. Specific threats against NGOs must be taken seriously as it has become increasingly clear that these are typically followed by action. Knowledge of the country or local good will is not a replacement for sound security procedures once a group has been targeted.

3. Travel in high profile vehicles (including those with NGO plates) as well as early and/or late in the day travel is not recommended as these increase the risk of easy identification and subsequent abduction.

3. Security force response, whether IMF or ANSF, should not be expected quickly as coordination issues hamper response times.

The major question presently confronting NGOs is have the AOG altered their rules to allow or encourage attacks on humanitarian agencies and recent trends indicate that the answer is yes. The evidence points to a change in AOG tactics for the worse and NGOs should consider the suspension of international staff travel in the rural districts.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

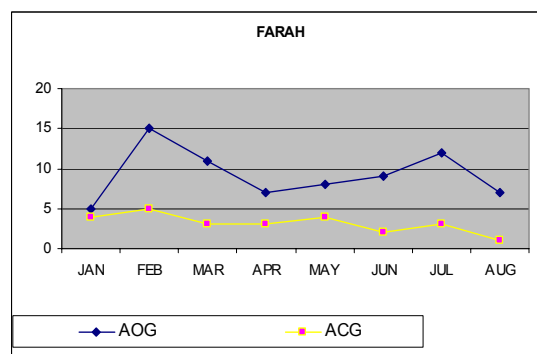
- Kidnapping/abductions
- Increased attacks along Hwy 1
- Increased AOG presence in the south/south eastern districts

FARAH

While rich in incidents, depth of detail in reporting from Farah is limited. Instability continues to make Farah unsuitable for NGO activity as IEDs, suicide attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	0

(with one case involving a potential bomber wearing a burqa), and executions all being relatively commonplace and indicative of a widespread AOG presence.



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- General instability
- Suicide attack threat

GHOR

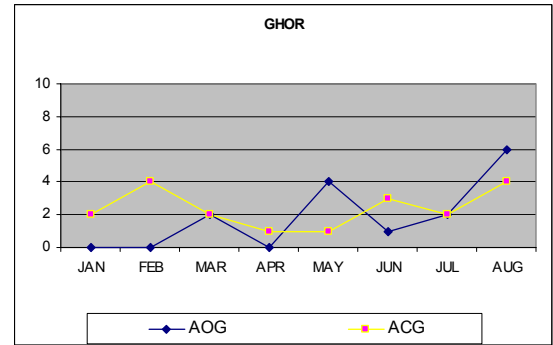
The two separate armed robberies involving NGO staff in Ghor occurring during this reporting period underscores both the risk in operating there and the use of it as a transit route between Kabul and the west. Both instances happened on the road between Chaghcharan and Sangak.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Banditry along main roads

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	2

Though the thieves did not harm the affected staff, and only stole their valuables, it nonetheless highlights the dangers of travelling on this route. Of note, there is no evidence linking these thefts to AOG activity which leaves this incident purely within the criminal realm, positive information as it indicates there is not the level of interplay between AOG and ACG activities seen in other parts of the country. While travel on the



Chaghcharan route is infinitely preferable to the ring road, any NGO making the decision to do so should ensure that thorough trip and contingency planning is accomplished prior to such road moves.

HERAT

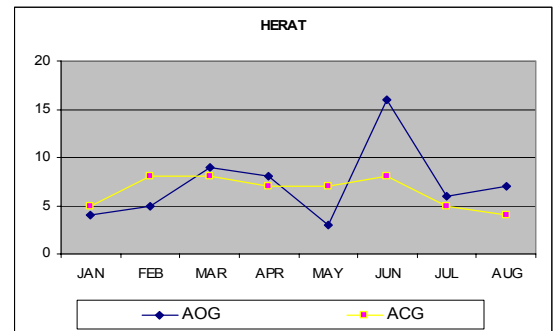
The recent incidents surrounding the (still inconclusively confirmed) loss of civilian life as a result of recent military operations has yet to elicit the strong reactions (and accordant civil unrest) that were expected. Although there were scattered protests in some of the affected villages, the larger protests in expected Herat City never materialised. There appears to be a large degree of confusion

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Civil unrest
- Criminality
- Kidnapping

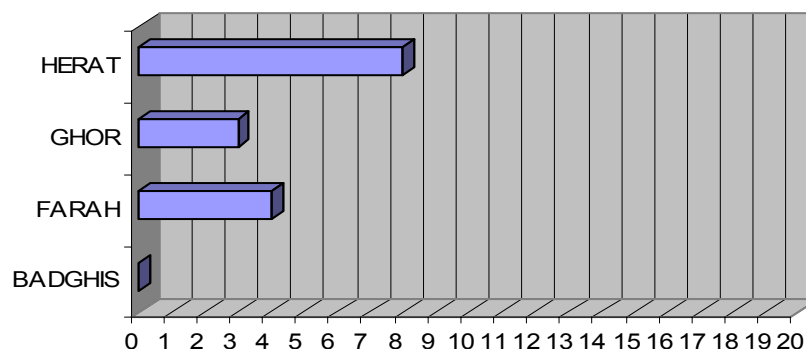
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	0

amongst important actors in Herat with regards to who is to blame and what the appropriate sanctions should be. An explanation that has gained ground in Herat emphasises not the fault of IMF/ANSF so much as internecine politics that led to the IMF receiving faulty information, information that ultimately directed the operations in question. Such confusion has served to divert and divide the citizenry. That said, all NGOs should consider heavily restricting the movement of their foreign staff until it can be assured



that situation is calm and will stay that way. The post-Shindand climate may explain the drop in the province's otherwise active criminal elements, though this may in part be due the heightened alertness (in anticipation of civil unrest) of the local security actors.

WESTERN REGION DIRECT NGO INCIDENTS 2008



KANDAHAR

While there have been no NGO related security incidents of late within Kandahar, trending indicates that it still presents highest risk area for NGO operations within the SR context. While this can be partially attributed to the concentration of NGO staff and activities in Kandahar City and surrounding environs, it also needs to be taken into the greater context of the conflict, with Kandahar presenting the most mature and pervasive AOG operating area in the country.

At present it is still unclear the affect the recent deployment of additional ISAF forces to Maywand province will be. As previ-

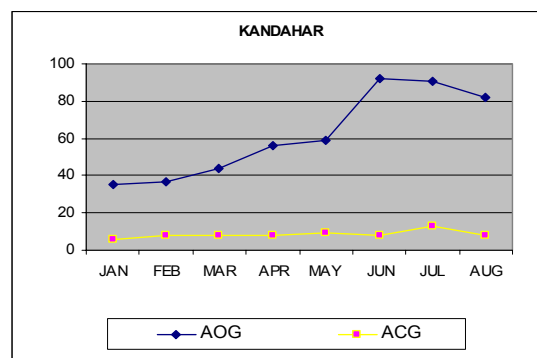
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ongoing instability along Hwy 1
- High NGO incident volumes
- IED/VBIED threat

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	10
This Report Period	0

ous such deployments have indicated (as seen in the Garmser District of Helmand), it generally results in a short to mid term deterioration in the local security climate as the two opposing forces collide. While this typical affect has not materialised as of yet, AOG elements within this district, as well as the rest of the province, have proven to be extremely tenacious and flexible so the inherent instability of the area will likely continue unabated.

The considerable instability along Hwy 1 have continued to plague security elements and logistical convoys attempting to travel along this critical route, an issue that is coming to the fore in other areas of the country as well. AOG have consistently asserted their presence in various ways, including ambushes and IED at-



tacks and present reporting indicates that this will continue to be a reality for organisations operating in this province. NGO are advised to continue limiting their movements along this route in order to limit their exposure to the considerable risks that exist.

IEDs continue to be an issue within Kandahar City, with seven separate incidents recorded during this reporting period. While the majority of these devices were identified and subsequently deactivated by security forces, it reinforces the understanding of AOG capacity to operate within the city limits.

NIMROZ

Anecdotal reporting recently identified AOG intent to engage in some form of large scale offensive within Zaranj City or it's environs. At present this information has not been confirmed nor does it fit with the low intensity nature of the conflict witnessed within Nimroz this year. Suicide attacks, IED, and ambushes have been consistently focused geographically to the north of the province (particularly Khash Rod) with targeting primarily restricted to secu-

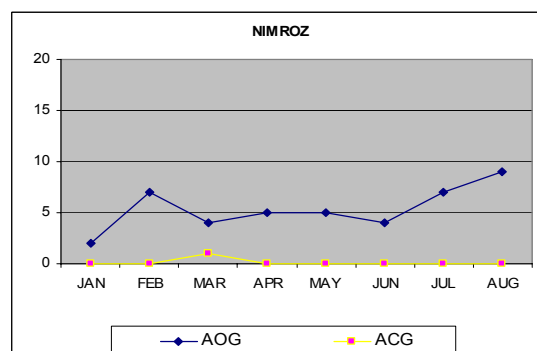
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Increased AOG activity level
- Suicide attack threat

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

rity force convoys and elements, as well as specific road construction activities. While there has been a noticed increase in overall AOG activity over the past few months, there are no indicators at present to indicate that AOG poses the operational capacity for any large scale actions.

Nonetheless, trends from throughout the SR have indicated that AOG typically shift focus to previously stable areas, though this is usually due to a lack of security force presence which increases the likelihood of AOG operational success.



In regards to Zaranj, the likeliest scenario would see an increase in the types of attacks seen elsewhere in the province, though occurring in closer proximity and greater frequency to the population centre, such as suicide attacks against GoA and security forces. As such, ANSO advises NGO to continue minimising their threat exposure though the avoidance of high profile target elements and facilities.

ZABUL

Shahjoy has consistently remained the most volatile district in Zabul despite the deployment of a reinforcement element of ANA along Hwy 1. AOG elements continue exercising a significant level of freedom of movement and action, as illustrated by the attack on an IMF logistical convoy and escorts in the Kharjoy area of Shahjoy that resulted in the death of 5 escorts as well as the wounding of a further 8. While not a particularly

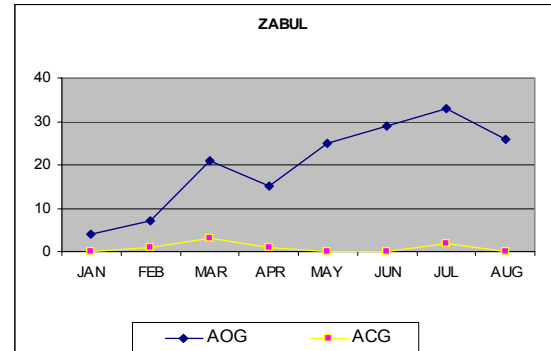
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Kidnapping/abduction threat
- Attacks against convoys along Hwy 1
- IED along Hwy 1

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

successful attack, as it resulted in the death of an estimate 32 AOG, it is compelling evidence of the force levels AOG are capable of deploying in this area, and the importance road insecurity plays as part of their tactical (as well as strategic) strategy.

The other incident of significance was the death of an estimated 30 civilians as a result of IMF air strikes during an operation in the vicinity of the Fiqirzai village in Mizan District. Similar incidents were echoed in other parts of the country (including Shindand District of Herat and Laghman province) and it is likely that continued incidents of this nature will only serve to further erode local sup-



port of IMF and the GoA.

While incident reporting remains indicative of a mid intensity asymmetric conflict, the regularity and volume of incidents have resulted in a noticeable deterioration in the overall security situation within Zabul, particularly along Hwy 1. ANSO advises the continued cessation of all NGO movement outside of Qalat City, particularly in light of the significant abduction/kidnapping threat that exists throughout the province.

HELMAND

For the second week, the districts of Nada Ali and Nawa have reported major incidents of an AOG nature. On 14 August a considerable number of AOGs (estimated a thousand in number though this remains unconfirmed) carried out a fatal assault against the Nada Ali DC. After capturing and destroying the facility (through an act of arson), IMF and ANSF forces responded and engaged the AOG force insitu, eventually forcing them to withdraw. Subsequently, the dislodged AOG are reported to have taken the control of several nearby villages and using them as a "frontline" from which to continue the fighting. Casualty fig-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

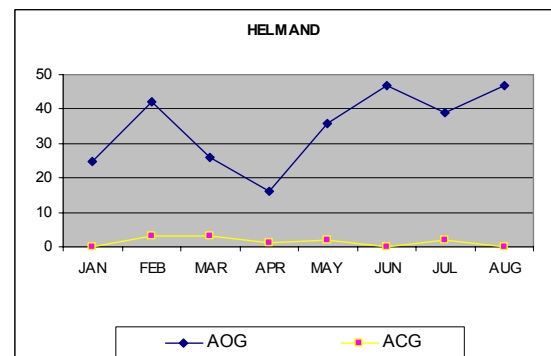
- Large scale attacks against DAC
- Ongoing AOG infiltration
- Multiple active combat zones

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

ures have indicated the death of 26 AOGs along with 11 ANSF personnel wounded. It is worth noting that a significant number of foreign fighters are reported to have been involved in this action. Local people are reported to continue their migration from the battle areas towards Lashkar Gah City.

A second DAC was also the subject of an AOG assault, this time in the Nawa District. This attack followed an AOG warning transmitted through a well-known tribal leader to the district authorities. The threat demanded the peaceful surrender of facility, though since ANSF were alerted to the imminent attack, they were able to inflict heavy casualties to the attacking AOG with the assistance of IMF.

These instances further the assessment that the overall security



situation is not likely to change significantly in the long term despite the constant military operations and the resultant AOG casualties. Further reports indicating continuing financial and manpower support from outside sources also indicates that the high level of conflict in this region will continue unabated, at least until winter weather patterns impact on infiltration routes and supply lines.

Hwy 1 between Kandahar – Lashkar Gah City continues to be heavily affected by AOG activity. While the targets of this activity continue to be primarily security forces and logistical convoys, the frequency and variety of these attacks still dictate that NGO severely limit their travels along this route as this provides the only effective threat mitigation strategy.

URUZGAN

IED continue to be the most consistently significant threat encountered within Uruzgan, with these accounting for the greatest single incident volume over the past few reporting periods. The recurrent reports of civilian vehicles being

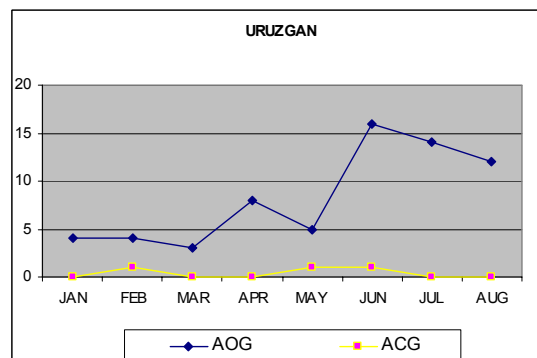
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED threat along main routes
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

the victims of roadside IED re-confirm the previous assessment that the use of “victim operated” (i.e. pressure plate initiated) devices are still relatively commonplace, particularly along the main routes in the vicinity of Tirin Kot.

NGO need to be cognizant of this threat and travel outside of Tirin Kot should be restricted as well as limited to the mid-day hours as



most of these devices are initiated in the early morning hours following placement during the overnight hours.

GHAZNI

IED, attacks against security and logistical elements along Hwy 1, as well as intimidation activities (i.e. arson attacks against schools) continue to be reported from this province in considerable volumes. Successful attacks, and subsequent occupation, of District Centres by AOG elements are also disturb-

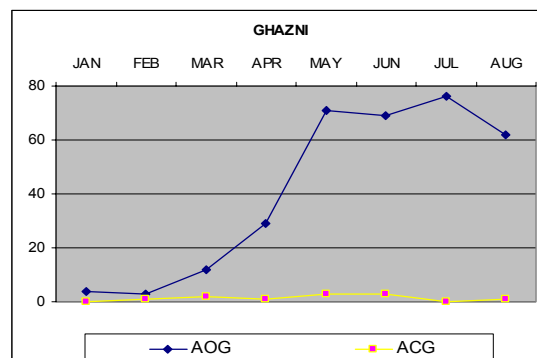
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Consistently high incident volumes
- Abduction/kidnappings
- Attacks along Hwy 1

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

ingly common. While these occupations are typically short lived, they nonetheless indicate the overall operational capacity of AOG within this province, as clearly indicated by the considerable, and sustained, incident volumes reported from Ghazni over the past few months.

This operational tempo is likely to be sustained until the winter months (which typically have a significant effect on AOG freedom of movement).



NGO are advised to continue limiting their activities to Ghazni City and cessation of movements along Hwy 1 between Ghazni and Kabul is also advised due to the considerable volatility and instability of not only Ghazni, but also the neighbouring province of Wardak.

PAKTIKA

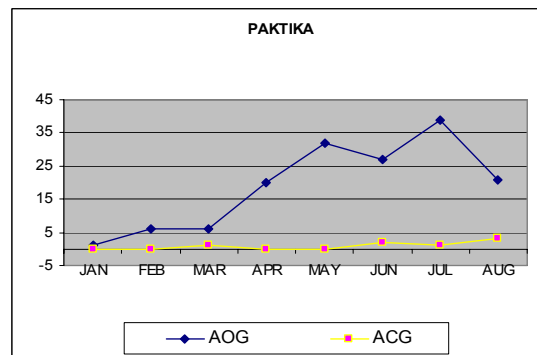
Monthly incident volumes have remained relatively stable over the past few months. Incident composition is also a consistent blend of various tactics, including IED, attacks against logistical convoys, as well as indirect fire attacks

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- RPG attacks against security forces
- Attacks against logistical convoys

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

against security force installations. Having said this, visibility regarding the security context within Paktika remains limited. As such, it is difficult to accurately assess the overall security dynamic and the impact it has on NGO activities within the province.





ANSO is hosted by
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Board. If you have any
feedback, good or bad, let
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ansoab@yahoo.com

ANSO ACRONYMS

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

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MISSING

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

- Panjshir
- Badghis
- Farayab
- Jawzjan
- Samangan
- Baghlan
- Sar-e-Pul

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

THE ANSO MANDATE

Scope of Services, P.1, 2008

The community of NGOs has established ANSO in recognition of their interdependence and shared responsibility towards security management.

They have acknowledged that ANSO is important in maintaining the impartiality, independence and political neutrality of NGOs by allowing them to be free from dependence upon security information originating from political or military sources.

They have also recognized the need to avoid association with the military in the complex Afghanistan environment and have therefore perceived a valuable role for ANSO in protecting NGO from direct contact with the military.

The community recognizes that the success of ANSO in fulfilling these functions is dependant upon the willingness of NGOs to cooperate with one another in the area of security management and to support ANSO in delivering these objectives.

In so forming ANSO then, the NGO community has accepted the inherent obligation to contribute and participate for the effective management of their own security.