

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Questionable reporting suggesting grandiose attacks abounds
- Demonstrations and rumours in the East and South raise alarm
- 2010 IMF/ANSF military and PRT efforts will likely lead to further erosion of NGO security

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

With the onset of 2010, some typical, and atypical, issues have manifest which can adversely affect the greater security situation for NGOs.

Continual threats of suicide and grandiose attacks abound, as usual, with little evidence to indicate their veracity. To date, almost all suicide threats (see Uruzgan for recent strikes) have been unknown to security forces.

Besides these, though, the effect of mass demonstrations in relation to perceived IMF offenses was evident in the Eastern and Southern regions, with at least two resorting to violence and threatening to embroil entire regions or provinces.

With this, it is possible that opposition forces or local challengers have actively sought to shape demonstrations and the context, as seen in recent rumours and clashes, including seeding demonstrations with armed individuals that confront security forces (see Helmand). Equally, while some may seek to shape the information surrounding events, the reaction of security forces to attacks and demonstrations can have an even more deleterious effect on how the public may perceive developments (see Nangarhar).

Just as current data appear to suggest, NGOs operating in areas under the dominant control of one party, either AOG or GoA, will likely continue to enjoy some level of security that is brought on through stability (expounded upon by the ANSO Director in the upcoming ANSO Quarterly).

As seen in the East and Southeast, this will likely continue to be manifest in quicker abduction releases and a decrease in serious NGO incidents (see Kunar for a recent NGO abduction).

NGOs should continue to be wary of IMF and some government/donor attempts to lure NGOs into contested areas or areas recently “secured” by IMF, as NGOs are much more vulnerable and likely to suffer a serious incident or fatality in these areas.

Despite the expanding conflict, information suggests that most NGOs are looking to expand operations in the coming year.

Keeping this in mind, one will need to closely monitor the efforts of parties to the conflict, especially the US, in their desire to expand

‘counter-insurgency’ focused “aid” operations that may further taint the humanitarian image and make it more difficult for AOG to distinguish between neutral and non-neutral aid actors in the field.

NGOs should also expect possible limited deterioration in more secure areas where parties to the conflict are seeking to expand into (e.g., in Herat City and Mazar-e Sharif, where the US appears to be intent upon establishing consulates—see Herat). These new locations may draw the ire of established AOG and foreign actors.

KABUL

With the exception of two rocket attacks and two abductions in Kabul city over the last reporting period, the security focus shifted to the surrounding districts with a number of arrests and two realized attacks. The 5 January morning rocket attack was reportedly launched from Bagrami District, rather than the traditional Chahar Asyab or Deh Sabz in the north, and was purportedly targeting the US Embassy. The three rockets fell short and impacted in District 8, one of which struck a residential house, injuring up to six civilians. Rocket attacks over the past year, generally occurring during the night, have caused few civilian casualties and are likely to continue intermittently due to their propaganda value, rather than any tactical advantage. A single rocket also struck in or near the NDS HQ on the evening of 15 January. If the HQ was the intended target, the attack illustrates that AOG do possess the ability – in terms of weapons and knowhow – to con-

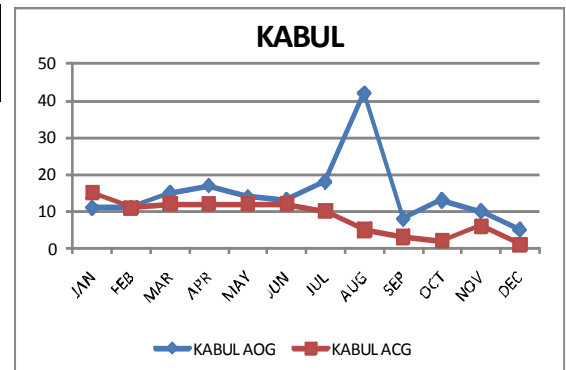
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- SVBIED attacks around high profile GoA, IMF and foreign representation targets
- ACG abductions
- Car accidents

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

duct more precise attacks than has been witnessed over the past year.

Organised crime groups far outweigh the threat from AOG in Kabul City, although often the delineation becomes rather opaque. ACG dominate the kidnapping statistics with Afghan businessmen overwhelmingly targeted for ransom. In the morning of 5 January at the busy intersection of Dani Bagh Area in PD4 where there is normally a distinct ANP presence, four armed men in a Corolla blocked the vehicle of a prominent businessman and pulled him out of the car and drove off. The man was physically assaulted and found early the next morning in Charahi Sar Sabzi Area – also in District 4. The second abduction occurred in the early evening of 9 January between Qowai Markaz and Qala Fatulla, around Kolola Pushta. It has been reported that at least two of the four abduction team wore ANSF uniforms as has occurred often in the past. In stark contrast to previous reports of abductions, ANP quickly constructed checkpoints in Shari Naw, Kolola Pushta, Taimani and Qala Fatulla and also conducted house searches in those areas, including that of an INGO residence. Together with the fate of the busi-



nessman, it remains unclear why the ANP response was relatively prompt and thorough. ANSF arrests of two separate kidnapping gangs in District 13 and Paghman on 9 and 11 January, respectively, are unlikely to affect the abduction business due to both its profitability and prevalence.

In the districts of Kabul, ANSF arrested alleged AOG members in Shakardara, Musayi and Surobi. The arrests in Surobi on 5 January were of a reported IED cell intent on conducting operations along the Kabul to Jalalabad Road, although this has not been confirmed. Also in Surobi, a further fuel tanker was attacked on 1 January, which is fitting with the pattern of an attack against a logistics convoy every few weeks. The threat has not translated into a concern for NGOs travelling along the road as virtually all attacks are targeting fuel convoys or the occasional distant SAF attack on a remote ANP or ANA base. In Paghman, following an IED strike against the local MP in November, a further IED detonated while a provincial council member from Wardak was passing. Three of his bodyguards were killed in the incident. At this stage, it is not known who is behind the incident due to a strong ACG and AOG presence in the district.

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

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

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”

PARWAN

NGOs have a light footprint in Parwan. The province is ethnically mixed with the western districts of Surkhi Parsa and Sheikh Ali hosting a majority Hazara population; the central districts of Ghorband, Shinwari and Jabalus-saraj are primarily Pashtun; and the remaining eastern districts are largely Tajik, with the exception of Kohi Safi, which borders Tagab. Although ethnicity is not a determinant of insecurity by itself, the insecurity in the province is largely a result of factional disputes between 'former' commanders from Jamiat, Hisb-e-Islami and other influential individuals of varying strength. Excepting organised crime in Chaharikar, the main concern for NGO operations in the province has been the AOG threat in the Ghorband Valley. Attacks assume the form of occasional IEDs as well as SAF attacks on checkpoints and DACs. The threat is largely confined to attacks on ANP, although

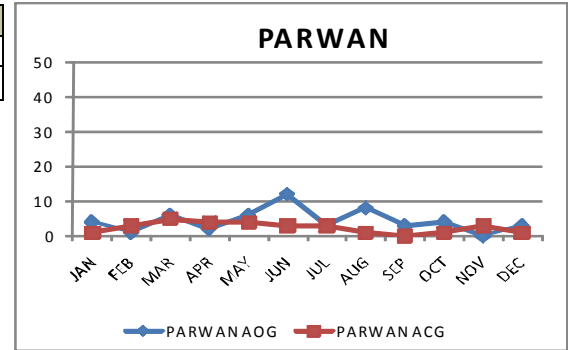
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Low intensity AOG activity in the Ghorband Valley
- ACG activity in Chaharikar
- Winter road closures through the Shibar and Salang passes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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a June RCIED attack on an IO forced many NGOs to suspend travel along the road. Local reports suggest that a degree of AOG 'sub-contracting' does occur, whereby underemployed groups are contracted to undertake an attack, whether IED or a checkpoint assault. The attacks are infrequent and do not threaten civilian traffic along the road; approximately 6 IEDs were reported along the valley for the whole of 2009. (ANSF also report that they disarmed a further four devices).

Rivalries stretching back almost twenty years have solidified pockets of support for the different groups and commanders and engendered an environment where attacks on ANP have factional overtones rather than a threat against the institution itself. Assassinations and reprisal attacks have also taken place irregularly in an area well known for having high gun ownership levels – even for Afghanistan. In addition to factional attacks, there is an established AOG presence in the Ghorband Valley, which could be described as largely dormant. For NGO operations, this means understanding the local context prior to commencing any new projects as well as maintaining strong com-



munity relations. Due to the fact that parts of the Ghorband Valley, especially Shinwari, have conservative communities, NGOs implementing gender programs should liaise with local leaders in order to gauge village acceptance levels prior to the implementation stage. Furthermore, NGOs should be aware that implementing programs in an area believed to be sympathetic to one faction may invite hostility from other factions.

The road construction project between Chaharikar and Shibar in Bamyán, due to be completed in 2012, is slowly progressing. If all goes according to plan, the PRT-funded new two lane paved road will link the two provinces and significantly improve current travel times. There are four companies working on the project which will likely mitigate the risk from any aggrieved company which failed the tender process. Attacks on the road construction companies are unlikely to take place due to their connections to the local communities and the feeling that a nice new road is probably a good idea. Occasional delays along the road may be expected over the next year, although a polite word with the friendly road worker will most likely result in the bulldozer moving out of the way sooner rather than later.

LOGAR

The security situation in Logar Province has not changed significantly since the last reporting period. Most of the incidents were recorded in Baraki Barak, Muhammad Agha, and Charkh. IED attacks and ambushes, directed at IMF and ANSF, remain the most frequently used AOG tactics.

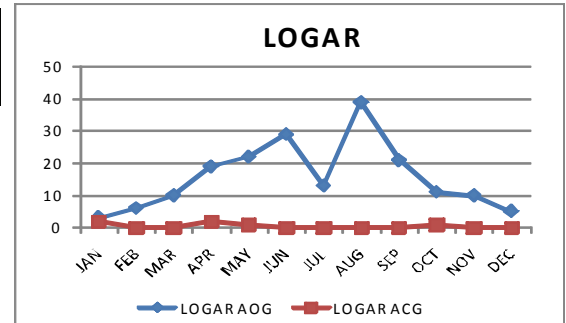
The main risk to NGO operations continues to be collateral expo-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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sure to IMF/ANSF and AOG engagements as well as from IEDs planted by AOG along district roads. For the month of January alone, there were three discoveries of IEDs along district roads in the province with an additional premature detonation. An IED also struck a DAC vehicle on 8 January, leaving no casualties. On 8 January in Puli Alam, two NDS officials were shot at a popular dogfight; while the incident was publicly reported as an AOG attack, there may have been a personal motivation, as well, according to some local reports.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abductions
- IMF operations
- AOG intimidation



The perpetrator was killed by ANP at the venue.

The bulk of recent incidents have been in Baraki Barak, Kharwar, and Charkh, which are reported to be effectively under AOG control. Unless an NGO has specific guarantees of support and evidence of acceptance, the three abovementioned districts of Logar should currently be considered high risk for NGO operations.

KAPISA

The location of two French journalists and three Afghan nationals abducted in Tagab on 30 December remains unconfirmed, although there are strong indications that they remain in Alasay. IMF and ANSF are understood to have set up a number of extra checkpoints in an effort to ensure that the group is not taken out of the area.

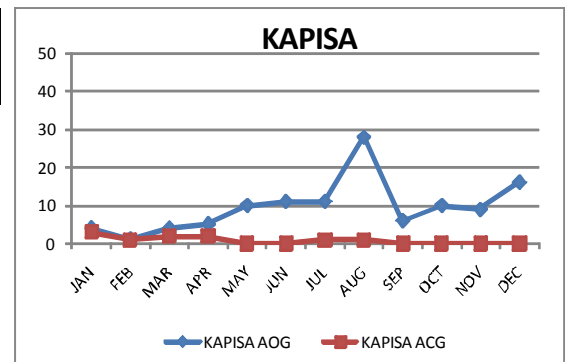
Possibly in response to the number of extra security patrols and checkpoints there has been an uptick in the number of security incidents recorded in the east of the province, namely the districts of Tagab, Alasay and Nijrab,

	NGO Incidents
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where AOG have an established presence. Two ANP checkpoints were attacked during the last reporting period in Nijrab with a further IED being found and defused in Torkhel area on 7 January. Almost all attacks in the east of the province occur along the district roads, where the interests of both AOG and IMF/ANSF collide. Similar to parts of Surobi, the roads hug the bottom of the valleys, allowing a smaller force to occupy the mountains and hills above. Often, security incidents involve ambushes on ANSF/IMF or a distant SAF attack on a checkpoint from the mountains above. AOG therefore, are able to dictate both the frequency and intensity of attacks. Three separate ambushes were recorded against ANSF/IMF since the beginning of the year in Tagab, leaving no casualties. In the Bazaar area of Alasay, however, an AOG ambush of an IMF foot convoy

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Clashes between AOG and ANSF/IMF in Tagab
- Low intensity factional disputes in Kohistan I & II
- Decentralized AOG activity in Alasay, Nijrab and Tagab



on 11 January killed one IMF, wounded two ANSF, two AOG and one civilian. A new rotation of IMF that recently arrived in the province will most likely ensure that the recent insecurity in the east may continue.

NGOs operating in the east tend to fit into two categories: either low profile, working with the agreement of the local communities, or higher profile, implementing projects from a bi-lateral donor. The more recent violence appears not to have had an impact on either type of NGO activities, though. In the west of the province, where the majority of NGOs are based, occasional factional fighting, mainly occurring during the night, is a slight cause for concern. On 1 January, a personal dispute between families escalated into a SAF exchange in the late evening.

DAYKUNDI

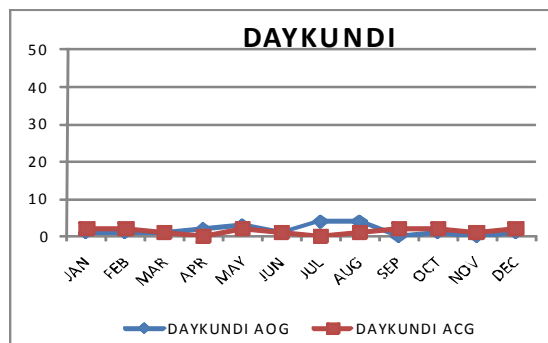
With the exception of a barber being imprisoned for failing to provide a timely haircut for a High Court Judge, Daykundi has been quiet during the last reporting

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abduction threat in Gizab
- Winter road travel
- Occasional banditry on roads leaving from Nili

	NGO Incidents
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period. Reporting from the southern districts of Gizab and Kijran remains scarce due to their nominal control by AOG; however, some reports from Tamazan Valley in Gizab suggest that the southern road route to Kandahar is coming under increasing AOG pressure. In the past several weeks there have been at least two reported abductions of commercial truck drivers due to their failure to pay the required toll or tax. Although there were strong indica-



tions that the Nili PRT may venture south to Kijran, this has not yet materialized. Most NGO operations have retreated to Nili due to the winter weather, although some base visits continue. Winter precautions should be closely followed due to the unpredictable road conditions.

WARDAK

Though incidents are decreasing from summer levels, the province continues to experience frequent clashes between AOG and IMF. The main road south from Kabul remains too dangerous for NGO travel, and AOGs reportedly operate parallel governance structures in the eastern districts. Problems also extend into the popula-

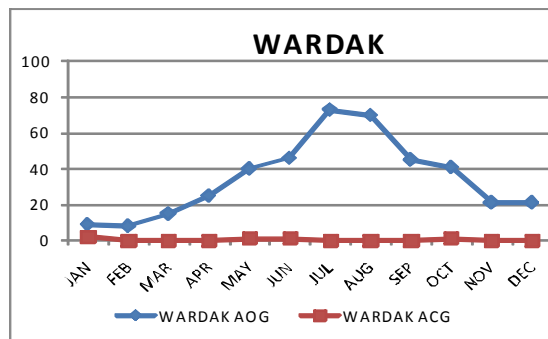
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG abductions
- AOG intimidation
- IEDs and SAF ambushes targeting IMF/ANSF and logistics convoys along Highway One

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

tion centres. Over the last couple of months there have been frequent attacks on DACs and the trend continues in January. So far this month, the DACs in Nirkh, Saydabad, Chaki and Jaghatu have all experienced attacks.

Based on the above, the situation does not look promising for NGOs this year. Although international and national military forces will probably launch operations in this province in this coming summer to stem the flow of AOG into the Central area, it will probably not result in an improved situation for NGOs. Last year, the sudden increase in fighting in Wardak was viewed with



surprise and led to a reduction in operations of some NGOs. Obviously, since few NGOs are left in Wardak, the increasing fighting will probably not affect the NGO community as much this year.

Though the road between Kabul and Maydan Shahr is still travelled regularly by NGOs, and some NGOs operate from the district centre, there is risk of collateral damage from attacks on security forces and on the district centre. The road south of Maydan Shahr is not safe for NGO travel.

FARYAB

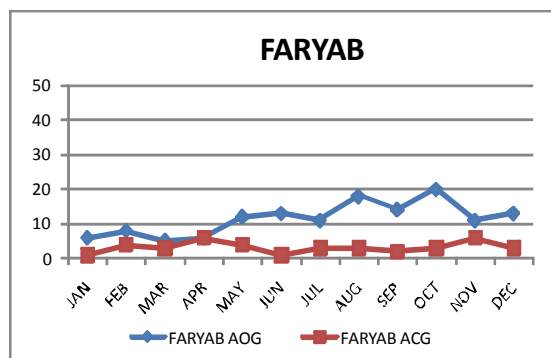
An incident of theft highlights some of the mundane issues continually facing NGOs. The incident involves the theft of some items from an NGO store room which was left open whilst the organisation was moving office

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence in eastern districts
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
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This Report Period	1

and was probably opportunistic in nature. Most notably in Faryab, otherwise, is the upsurge in AOG activity in the Eastern districts of Bilchiragh and Gurziwan, which about the volatile Jawzjan panhandle and Sayyad District of Sar-e Pul. In both areas, AOGs clashed with pro-government militias, causing a number of casualties, and succeed in a few instances of abducting militia members or



GoA employees. The Western districts remain at their previous level of instability with ongoing intermittent attacks on ANP checkpoints and IED emplacements.

TAKHAR

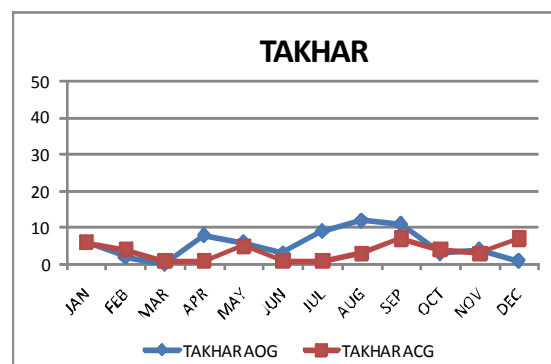
Politics continue to play a relatively large role in Takhar's affairs compared to other areas. Taluqan witnessed two protests over this reporting period: one concerning locals from Hazar Sumuch District, protesting the allegedly unjust killing of two locals in a land dispute, and the other concerning a provincial council candidate's

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Criminal activity
- Local disputes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

loss in the 2009 elections, which they claimed had been the result of fraud. In two instances, ANSF and ACGs clashed in the vicinity of Taluqan City. In Rustaq District, ACG activity continues to factor prominently into local goings-on with a few armed confrontations and standoffs reported. Part of the underlying cause of the last year's upsurge in criminal activity in the area is shifting local political dynamics, with local power structures asserting themselves more fully in lieu



of effective state power. The north-western districts of Takhar along the Amu still see intermittent AOG activity. During this reporting period, search operations led to the arrest of at least one suspected AOG member and an AOG staged an attack on an ANP checkpoint in the Sari Joi Area of Rustaq.

JAWZJAN

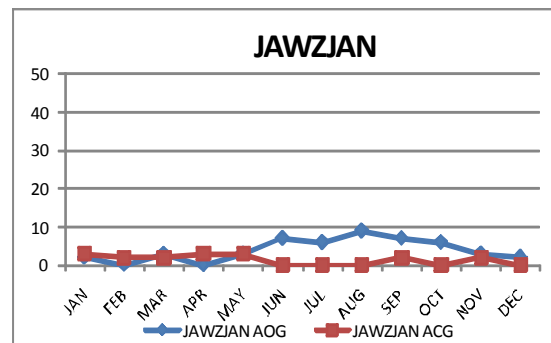
AOG activity has revived after a temporary lull in the southern panhandle of Jawzjan, namely Darzab and Qoshtappa districts. Reports surfaced of AOGs establishing checkpoints and making positive attempts to establish their

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Darzab and Qoshtappa
- Local disputes
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
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presence. In one instance, ANP intercepted AOGs who were in the process of laying explosives so that they could blow up the main road. The ANP then engaged them in what turned out to be a two-hour firefight. The firefight shows a certain tenacity on the part of AOGs not yet seen in this area, and the idea of planting explosives (one assumes to limit outside access into the area) to destroy the road represented possible strategic thinking not com-



monly exhibited by AOGs in the area. In Mingajik District, a GoA vehicle was pursued by two unidentified motorcyclists (the AOGs' most preferred mode of transportation) for some time before ANP arrived and the pursuers fled.

KUNDUZ

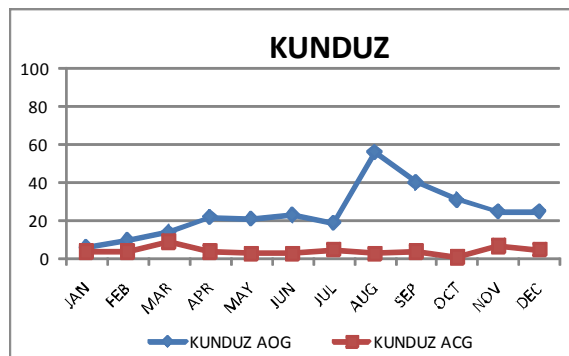
AOGs continue asserting themselves in many areas of Kunduz, particularly Chahar Darra, Kunduz, and Imam Sahib Districts. AOGs have twice killed individuals whom they detained due to alleged spying, once in Chahar Darra and once in Kunduz City. In both instances, the accused individuals were abducted, executed, and dumped elsewhere. Airstrikes have also occurred on at least two occasions: in Chahar Darra, killing a reportedly influen-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Airstrikes
- Armed clashes
- AOG vigilantism

	NGO Incidents
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tial local commander along with his bodyguards, and during a major confrontation in Imam Sahib. The killing of a local commander is likely to have a negative impact on security for organisations working in Chahar Darra as it will create a political vacuum that will last for an indefinite period of time and may open up pre-existing access guarantees to reinterpretation. The airstrikes in Imam Sahib occurred in conjunction with a very large joint operation in which IMF/ANSF killed 21 AOG members, injured 19, and arrested 30 more and hauled off a large amount of weapons. The operation is significant in that



it supports previous ANSO assessments that AOGs in Kunduz are becoming more hierarchical and centralised. These dynamics have the advantage of a more efficient use of resources, clearer command and control, and expanded operational range for AOGs, but they also serve to make AOGs easier and more worthwhile targets. Scattered clashes and ambushes continue in all the above-mentioned areas and should be treated as a constant threat.

FARAH

During this reporting period, Farah has been particularly active compared to other Western provinces, with six AOG initiated incidents and several police/military operations. The vast majority of ANSO registered incidents are confined to Bala-Buluk, Pusht Road, Bakwa and Gulistan districts. As it has already been underlined, these incidents typically assume the form of RCIEDs/IEDs or ambushes on ANSF/IMF convoys.

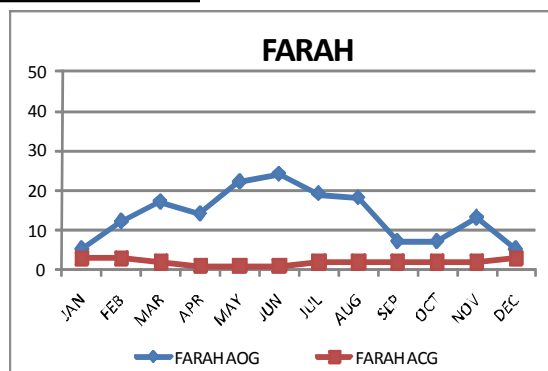
In this reporting cycle, Bakwa, Pusht Rod, and Gulistan districts have witnessed AOG ambushes

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs/RCIEDs
- Military operations
- Collateral damage

	NGO Incidents
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on IMF convoys. Regarding the latter, on 5 January an RCIED struck a joint IMF/ANP convoy and was followed by an RPG and SAF attack. Subsequently, IMF responded with an airstrike, targeting AOG positions. As mentioned in the previous report, road security remains an important concern in the province due to the use of IEDs/RCIEDs. On 1 January in Bala Buluk, an IED hit a private transport vehicle. Reportedly, five passengers, including three women, were killed and another six civilians were wounded. Of note, also in Bala Buluk, but on 11 January, ANP discovered and safely defused two IEDs. The first was planted on the road to Farah City and the second on the road to the Bala



Buluk District Centre. In the same district but on 4 January, AOG stopped a PSC vehicle and abducted the driver.

To counter this AOG activity, particularly in Bala Buluk district, ANSF/IMF led several search operations, reportedly arresting 78 AOG members.

Regarding Farah City, on 11 January armed guards of the Provincial Governor opened fire and mistakenly wounded a student. Another factor of insecurity in the province is abduction, with this time a local civilian being abducted in Khaki Safed on 3 January by a group of armed men.

GHOR

Ghor Province continues to remain relatively calm, mainly being afflicted by criminal activity. However, during this reporting period an AOG initiated incident occurred in Saghar District on 2 January, with an armed clash erupting between an AOG and local villagers. As a result, one AOG member was injured during

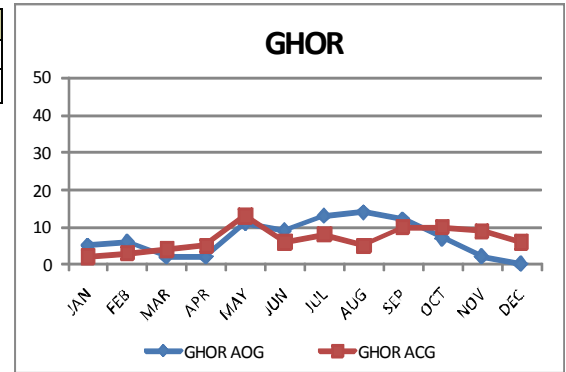
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Criminal activity
- Local disputes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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the firefight. A few days later (on 11 January) in the same area, AOG fired three rockets at night, causing no casualties. Reportedly, the reason behind these incidents was the villagers' opposition towards the AOG presence in the area.

On 3 January in Chaghcharan District, security forces conducted an operation, arresting one suspect and seizing one machinegun and munitions. A day earlier, but in Tulak District, ANP discovered



an assortment of weapons and munitions. Criminal activity continues in the province, this time in Shahrak District, where on 4 January, unknown armed men broke into a local residence. They beat the owner and subsequently left with some valuables.

HERAT

After two rocket attacks on the Herat Airport and the Injil DAC in early December, AOGs have now chosen the symbolic target of the Five Star Hotel. On 8 January, three rockets were fired towards the hotel, causing minor damage and no casualties. The Five Star Hotel has been leased as the site of a future United States Consulate (following the agreement signed in Herat on December 16th). Still, the hotel's location makes it vulnerable to such attacks and, thus, a tempting target for AOGs. Worth noting is that rocket attacks towards the city have stopped over the past few months following a military operation in Guzara District in September last year. However, these incidents, as well as a cache of rockets that was found in Herat Province recently (one find was in Guzara on 2 January), illustrate

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED/RCIED
- Rocket attacks
- Abduction

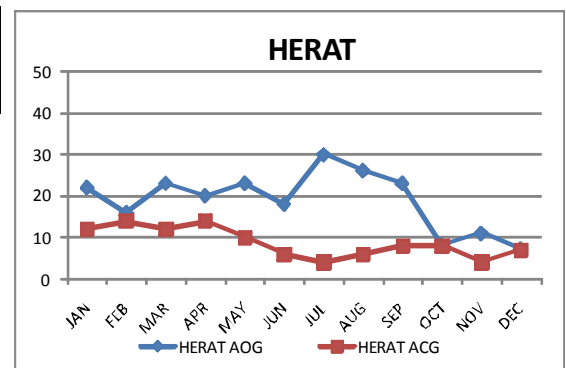
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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that one can expect further indirect attacks against the city.

Another feature of this reporting period was AOG activity in Gulran and Chishti Sharif districts.

On 4 January in Gulran District, usually known for its criminal activity, mainly related to smuggling, an AOG abducted two local drivers and subsequently released them two days later. One week later, an AOG set fire to a school in Zekanmi Village, partially damaging the building and burning some stationary. Of note, the last significant AOG-related incidents in this area occurred on 30 October, with an attack on an ANP convoy and, recently, an important weapons cache find on 1 January. Nonetheless, the district remains a concern due to the frequency of reports about AOG movements combined with sporadic attacks on security forces.

A renewal of AOG activity has also been noticed in Chishti Sherif, with an attack that occurred on the main road, against an ANP convoy, on 5 January. A



few days later (on 14 January), also on the main road, an AOG established a temporary check point, stopping private transport vehicles and robbing passengers of their cash and valuables. The area under the control of a prominent local commander had already witnessed an attack on an ANP post on 4 November. Of note, prior to these incidents, the situation there remained relatively calm, suffering mainly from criminal activity.

During this reporting period, a significant number of explosive and weapons seizures continued throughout the province. In Guzara, for instance, among three caches, two were found in Seyawshan (the area that still remains a concern for the security of Herat City). Further caches were found in Ghoryan and Gulran districts. Regarding the threat of abduction, one person was abducted in Herat City, District 4; another civilian was abducted in Koshan District.

BADGHIS

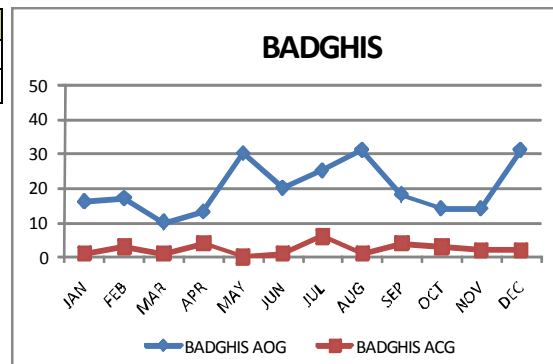
As seen in Farah, road security throughout Badghis Province, as well as the risk of collateral damage, represents an important concern due to the use of IEDs/RCIEDs. On 1 January in Murghab, an IED hit a private

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG ambushes
- RCIEDs/IEDs
- Collateral damage

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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vehicle. Reportedly, five passengers, including two women and a child, were killed. Also in Murghab, the following day an IED detonated, injuring a local civilian. During this reporting period, AOG ambushes on ANSF/IMF convoys were confined mainly to Murghab district. Of note, on 7 January an AOG fired four rockets towards an IMF/ANSF base located in the area of



the Murghab DAC. Qadis District, especially around Langar, remains an area of concern. This time, the area experienced an AOG attack on an ANP post on 4 January.

PAKTYA

The overall level of AOG-initiated incidents recorded in Paktya remains on a relatively low level with only three such incidents reported during the first half of January. Similar to previous reports, one direct attack occurred against the District Administration Centre of Jani Khel district on 7 January. In another incident,

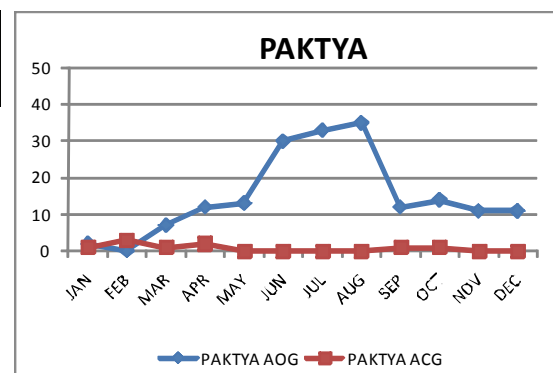
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Complex attacks in Gardez City

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
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on 4 January in Ahmadabad District, an explosive device detonated against a passing ANP patrol.

But, next to the modest amount of security incidents recorded in Paktya, the significant level of complex attacks in Gardez City seen in recent weeks continued in early January. On 7 January, a BBIED detonated against the convoy of a pro-government militia commander while it was



parked in front of a bank. At least nine people were killed and twenty-seven wounded. Such well-coordinated assaults become increasingly a pattern of AOG operating in Paktya, concentrating their efforts on high-profile targets in Gardez City.

LAGHMAN

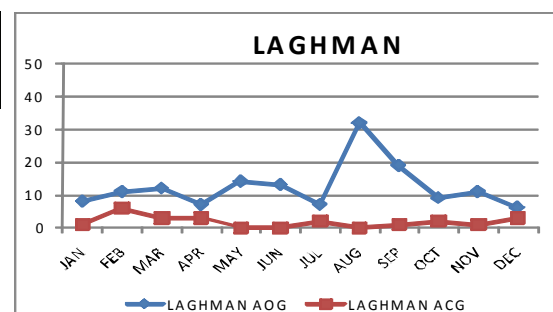
The security situation in Laghman remains unpredictable, with a relatively constant level of AOG-initiated incidents recorded during this period. Three AOG-incidents were reported across the province, which displays the same amount recorded in the second half of

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Attacks along Highway 1
- IEDs in Alingar and Alishing districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

December, namely one direct attack and two IED detonations. The direct attack occurred on 4 January in Qarghayi District, along the Kabul-Jalalabad Highway, when AOG attacked an ANP CP for about two hours. Such attacks along Highway 1 became relatively rare in recent months and the latest incident does not necessarily display a significant change to this. As seen in



previous periods, the IED detonations took place in Alishing and Alingar districts, both on 6 January. Of note, the device in Alingar detonated next to a girls' school, killing one student and injuring three, which is an unusual occurrence in Laghman.

NANGARHAR

The number of security-related incidents throughout Nangarhar Province remains high, with 53 recorded. As seen in previous cycles, the majority of them are not related to AOG but rather to the high level of criminality and security force operations across the province. Only 8 out of 53 incidents were initiated by AOG, which displays a constant ratio of below 30% related to them.

But, at the same time, the level of emplaced explosive devices remains high, with a total of 9 IEDs detonated or located in Khogyani,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

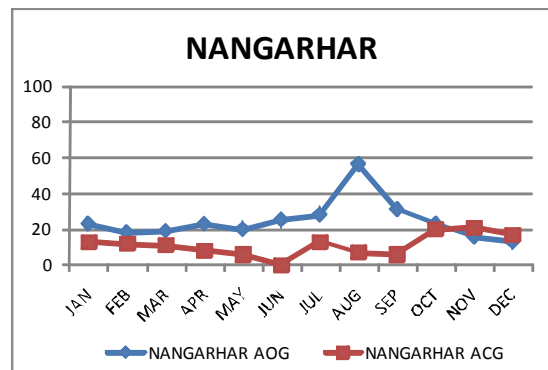
- IEDs
- Indirect fire

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Chaparhar, Rodat and Lal Pur districts. For instance, on 6 January in Rodat district, an IED detonated close to a school, killing three ANP and three children, while injuring at least 40 additional children.

Subsequent to this incident, Nangarhar witnessed several demonstrations of upset locals, protesting against the alleged misbehaviour of security forces following the detonation of an IED. During a funeral ceremony in Rodat, one day later, an angry mob assaulted a Provincial Council member during a speech.

The security situation in Jalalabad City and along Highway 1 remains



relatively calm besides a significant level of criminality in Jalalabad City. No AOG-initiated security incidents were reported along the Jalalabad-Kabul Highway, while two of them were observed in Nangarhar's capitol. Namely, on 9 January, AOG fired two mortars towards the city, with one impacting close to the NDS HQ and one detonating in a private residence in Zone 5, killing one civilian and injuring at least three others.

KOST

On 4 January in Mando Zayi district, a group consisting of 12 gunmen attacked vehicles of a Mine Clearing Planning Agency (MCPA) team with SAF whilst they were moving for mine clearance work in the area. Once the convoy was stopped, the staff members were beaten and robbed. With 15 AOG-initiated incidents recorded, Khost Province had a violent period in the first half of January. In line with historic trends, IEDs remain the weapon

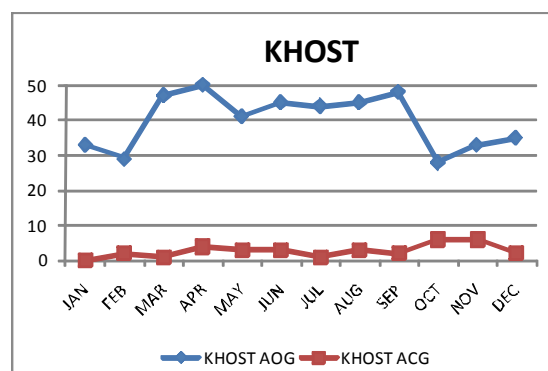
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Attacks on GOA and IMF

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

of choice of AOG with 19 devices located or detonated throughout the province. In recent weeks, Khost has seen an increasing number of IED-related strikes against high-profile targets.

For instance, on 7 January in Khost City, an IED explosion occurred inside the Governor's Office, injuring at least eight people, including the Acting Governor of Khost Province and the Governor's Head of Administration. In another incident the same day, in Gurbuz District, an SVBIED detonated next to an ANBP CP. These incidents came just after a BBIED explosion in-



side an IMF base in Khost City in late December, underlining the increased level of sophistication of AOG assaults across the province.

Khost Province, as a whole, remains a very dangerous environment for NGO operations and travel. Noting the specific threat posed by explosive devices, ANSO ER reminds NGOs to avoid any potential IED targets when undertaking essential journeys throughout the province, to the largest extent possible.

KUNAR

On 9 January in Manogai District, unknown gunmen abducted a national staff member working for an INGO while he was travelling through the area in a private car. Shortly thereafter, the local community established a committee which started a comprehensive search for the kidnapped INGO staff member. During late evening hours the same day, local elders managed to free the staff member, unharmed, from his captives.

Although kidnappings targeting NGOs are a relatively rare occurrence in Kunar, this incident underlines again the violent and

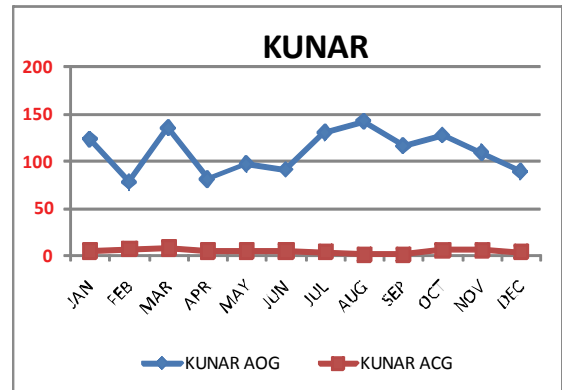
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction/Kidnap
- Armed clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

challenging environment for NGO operations and travel throughout the province. Particularly in Manogai District, the level of AOG as well as IMF/ANSF activity remains on a high level.

With 43 AOG-initiated security incidents reported, Kunar remains violent, and no seasonal decrease in combat activity is yet identifiable. As reported in previous cycles, direct attacks against IMF/ANSF remain the most common AOG tactic in Kunar. During this reporting period, about 80% of all AOG-initiated incidents were direct assaults, with the majority of them reported from Manogai District. A significant number of such assaults targeted IMF/ANSF convoys.



The resurgence of indirect fire attacks witnessed in late December continued during this reporting cycle, with eight incidents recorded in Manogai, Sirkanay, Wata Pur, and Marawara districts. No IEDs detonated in early January, although two explosive devices were discovered in Manogai and Khas Kunar.

Security along the Jalalabad-Asadabad Road is still of concern, with significant AOG activity in Nurgal and Narang districts, as was evident in the 8 January ambush of an IMF convoy in Nurgal.

HELMAND

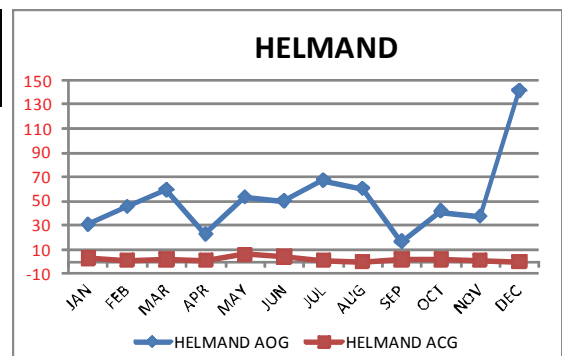
An incident in Garmsir District highlights the importance of rumour and incomplete information in shaping popular dynamics in Afghanistan. Initial reports spoke of a raid in which IMF acted in a profane manner, and a resulting protest the next day in which IMF opened fire on the protesters. To this moment, the exact sequence of events was unclear, but it seems that there was neither an IMF-caused massacre nor were there no civilian casualties. It appears that casualties inflicted by live fire were caused by ANSF when demonstrators (some of whom were armed) approached

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ambushes
- IEDs
- AOG Presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

their facility, and that this account was furthermore conflated with that of another nearby incident involving an AOG sniper targeting an IMF camp. The lesson which can be drawn from this turn of event thus far is that information flows are highly erratic and unpredictable in Afghanistan and have the ability to impact the security situation suddenly and dramatically. An insignificant incident may be embellished in such away as to give it undue importance (or to corroborate another narrative), or an insignificant incident may be taken out of context. A truly grievous violation of rights may go unnoticed or may fail to produce popular discontent, while the publication of a cartoon in an insignificant publication can spark country-wide protests.



Elsewhere in Helmand, the vast majority of the activity was AOG-initiated, consisting of the usual assortment of IEDs and ambushes. A BBIED detonated in Musa Qal'a, which itself has been relatively quiet lately, with the roads leading to it being the usual venue for AOG presence and ambushes. In Lashkargah City, an AOG may have set a new record for longest engagement by sustaining an assault on ANP for seven hours. Even though the assault did not end in tangible gains for either side, it shows the resolve of AOGs and their ability to continue to hand out psychological blows. Activity in Helmand is otherwise focused along the heavily populated areas surrounding the Helmand River.

GHAZNI

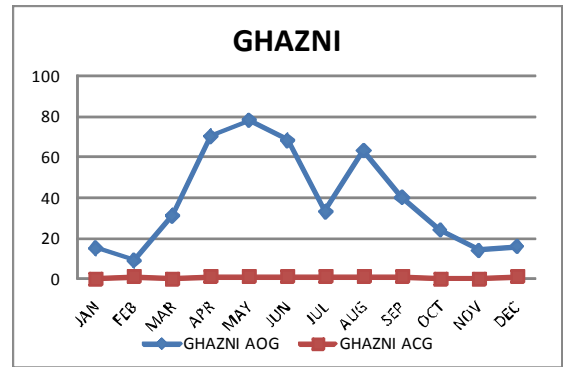
The brunt of activity in Ghazni for this reporting period was AOG-initiated and focused on Andar District. AOGs in the area typically launch a range of attacks

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Ambushes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

on IMF an ANSF targets, including IEDs, complex attacks, and ambushes utilising heavy weaponry. IMF were meanwhile active elsewhere, namely Qarabagh District where a search operation led to the arrest of some suspected AOG and the shooting of a few civilians in an escalation of force incident. IMF also arrested four



suspected AOG members during a search operation in Muqur District.

ZABUL

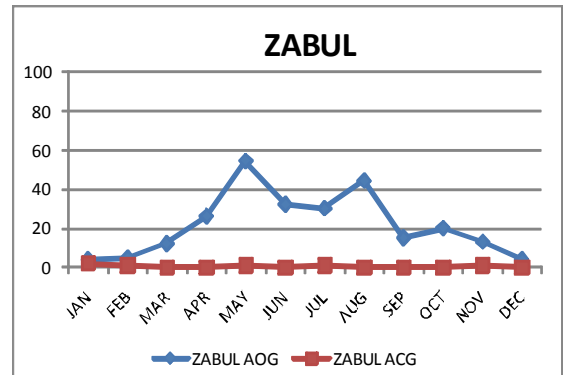
AOG influence in Qalat was made apparent in a series of night letters warning locals not to work with GoA, IMF, and construction companies. Construction companies (and NGOs engaging in construction-related work) have long been targeted by AOGs, and this latest threat underlines the threat

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- Ambushes
- AOG Intimidation

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

and their perceived closeness to GoA and IMF. While construction-related activities may not be unwelcome, per se, the companies engaging in them seem to present convenient proxies. Construction-related work also has the potential to generate or deepen hostilities in local conflicts as communities compete for resources brought in by the companies, or monetary rewards due to project needs, as seen in the purchase of natural materials (e.g., rock).



Elsewhere, ambushes in the form of complex attacks, RPGs, mortars, and IEDs remain the order of the day. Criminal activity continues to exist in this environment; when a civilian refused to give money to an ACG which stopped his car, he was killed in retaliation.

PAKTIKA

With the exception of a few AOG rocket attacks in the Margha Area of Barmal District (targeting an ANP checkpoint and the DAC), most of the activity in Paktika was the result of IMF and ANSF operations. Although details are still unclear, one such operation seems to have led to the death of an INGO national employee who was collaterally killed by IMF. Even with the limited information at hand, the incident illustrates

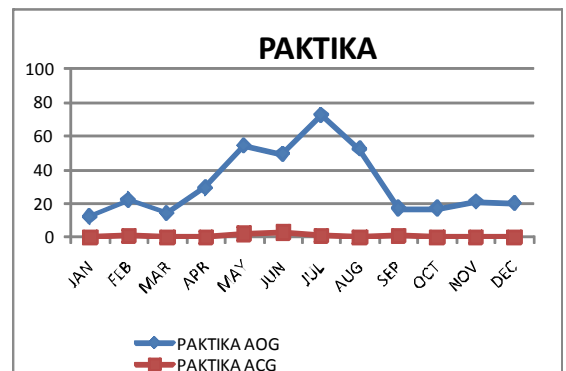
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- IEDs

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

that IMF can pose the same threat to NGOs as can AOGs. While not sacrificing neutrality or acceptance, NGOs ought not to forget to coach their staff in practical measures for dealing with IMF as they do for AOGs. Additionally, noting that acceptance refers to all community members, which includes local IMF and ANSF, as well as civilians and AOGs, is important.

Elsewhere in the province, IMF clashed with an AOG in the Char Baran District Centre, killing several AOG members, including a



local commander, who also led them to a large weapons cache that they seized. In Tobat Area of Omna District, IMF also killed a number of AOG members and a local AOG commander in another operation. AOGs have been trying to regain the initiative with the frequent emplacement of IEDs, many of which, during this reporting period, have been discovered and diffused by ANSF.

KANDAHAR

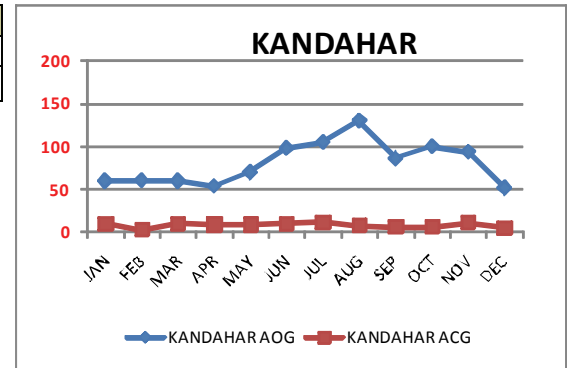
With two NGO incidents in the first two weeks of 2010, Kandahar demonstrates that low rates of NGO incidents throughout much Kandahar have been significantly affected by low NGO exposure. NGOs are clustered more densely in Kandahar than any other area and, hence, are more likely to be affected by security incidents even if they are a low priority in terms of AOG targeting. In one incident, an NGO employee was abducted in the generally quiet district of Spin Boldak, when armed men stopped the NGO's vehicle. The two other occupants of the vehicle were released, while the abductee's whereabouts currently remain unconfirmed. No motive behind the kidnapping has yet been established, but the NGO's profile may have played a role in their being targeted. In another incident, an INGO-supported clinic was searched by unknown armed men. Four individuals showed up at the compound, two of whom were armed and scaled the wall to gain entry. After rummaging through the building for about twenty minutes, the intruders left without taking anything or explaining their purpose. It is furthermore unknown whether the motives were criminal or po-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	2

litical: theft or information gathering. While guards witnessed the break-in, they exercised commendable judgement in not seeking to interfere with the trespassers. When confronted by armed adversaries, NGO staff should always stand down so as not to escalate the situation and turn theft or property damage into injury or fatalities.

An IED threat and incident was the subject of much misreporting, with both the target and location being incorrectly reported. In the event, a VBIED with an unknown target detonated prematurely in the Dand Area, killing the bomber and a few civilian bystanders. The threat of IEDs should be treated as ever-present in Kandahar. If anything, the reporting of an immediate and direct threat may only have the effect of slightly decreasing its likelihood in the sense that people are alert. In any case, GoA, IMF, ANSF, and the UN remain the predominate concern of AOG with regards to targeting, and most other casualties are simply the result of premature detonation or collateral involvement in a successfully targeted incident.

Indeed, IED data for 2009 bear out the consistency of AOG targeting. For one, virtually all IED incidents are AOG initiated (104 out of 108). Furthermore, the vast majority of attacks are simple IED attacks, and suicide attacks



are relatively rare. Kandahar suffers less spectacular attacks than Kabul, and this is probably the result of greater AOG presence and acceptance which broadens their operational capabilities and frees them to conduct smaller and more acutely targeted operations. Only five incidents in Kandahar City in 2009 involved suicide attacks. The timing for IEDs is more variable in Kandahar than in Kabul, likely for the same reasons elaborated above. The mean time for IED incidents was 1240 hrs and the median was 1200 hrs. There is additionally a big concentration at 0900s and a significant amount of activity that occurs at night, probably in well-lit areas so that attackers can identify their target. IEDs are also much more common in Kandahar City than in the surrounding countryside, which recorded fifteen IED incidents for the entire year. Such incidents outside of Kandahar occur during daylight hours and slightly later in the day, with the mean time being 1340 hrs and the median occurring at 1500. The difference is due to a spike which takes place near first light around 0700 hrs. It is also worth noting that no IED incidents in the countryside occurred along main roads, possibly as the result of heavy IMF and AOG presence and the lack of cover. During this reporting period, Zhari was by far the most active area outside of Kandahar city, with several AOG-initiated IED incidents and a few more IEDs that were identified and defused by ANSF and IMF before they could detonate.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abduction
- IEDs
- AOG-IMF/ANSF clashes

ANNOUNCEMENT:

In the coming months, ANSO will be unveiling an incident mapping service through IMMAP to aid NGO management and security procedures. Registrants will receive further information as it becomes available.

URUZGAN

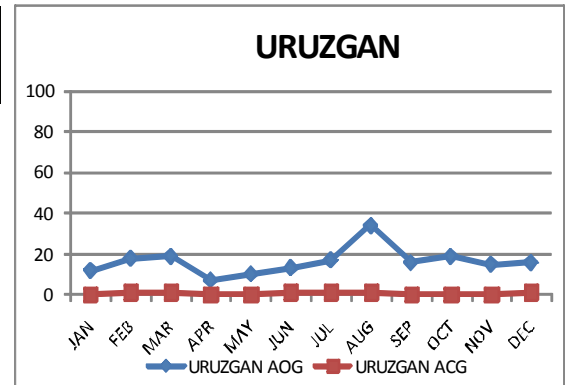
In the Sarkhum area of Tirin Kot, an international organisation suffered two dead and three wounded from pressure-activated mines which were planted in the road upon which their vehicle was traveling; however, the motive and method of the attack currently remain the subject of much speculation. Usually IEDs have timers, command lines, or are ra-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

dio-controlled so as to enable attackers to identify their target and not waste munitions needlessly. The placement of “dumb” mines on the route without additional modification suggests a randomness of targeting not witnessed heretofore. The likeliest available explanation is that the mines were intended for bigger targets such as IMF whom the attackers assumed would be the first to traverse the road. Even though the target was an IO rather than an NGO, they were travelling in NGO-like circumstances (a plain, unmarked,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

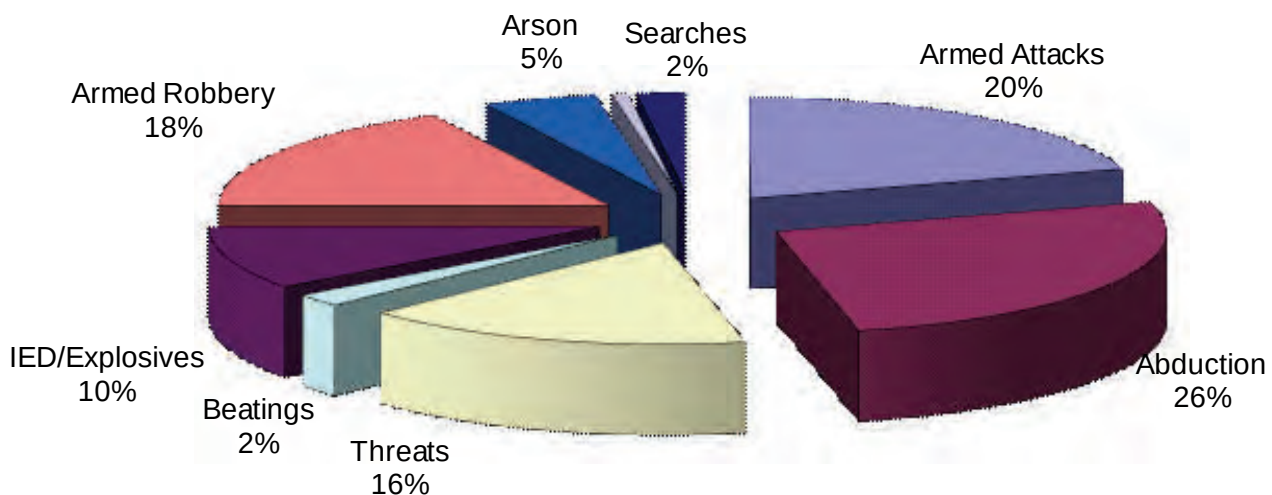
- IEDs
- AOG-IMF/ANSF clashes
- Suicide attacks in Dihrawud



private vehicle) for a project of an NGO-like nature. NGOs should remember that, while they need to leave early enough to complete the day's work, it is equally prudent not to be the first car on the road.

Dihrawud District Centre, famed as Mullah Omar's birthplace, has now suffered three sui-

COMBINED (ACG/AOG) 2009 DIRECT NGO INCIDENTS



■ Armed Attacks ■ Abduction ■ Threats ■ Beatings ■ IED/Explosives ■ Armed Robbery ■ Arson ■ Missile/Mortar ■ Searches



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ANSO ACRONYMS

ACG-Armed Criminal Group /
AEF-Afghan Eradication Forces
/ **ANA**-Afghan National Army /
ANBP-Afghan National Border
Police / **ANP**-Afghan National
Police / **AOG**-Armed Opposition
Group / **APPF**-Afghan Public
Protection Forces (local depu-
tised militias) / **DC**-District
Centre / **GOA**-Government of
Afghanistan / **IDF**-Indirect Fire
(ex: mortars) / **IED**-Improvised
Explosive Device / **IMF**-
International Military Forces /
NDS-National Directorate of
Security (Intelligence) / **PRP**-
Previous Reporting Period /
PSC-Private Security Company
/ **RPG**-Rocket Propelled Gre-
nade / **SAF**-Small Arms Fire /
VBIED-Vehicle Borne Impro-
vised Explosive Device

CONTACT ANSO

CENTRAL REGION OFFICE (KABUL)

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

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

NORTH REGION OFFICE (MAZAR)

Elizabeth Detwiler - north@afgnso.org - 0799 404 617

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

EAST REGION OFFICE (JALALABAD)

Philipp Schweers - east@afgnso.org - 0799 248 362

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

SOUTH REGION OFFICE (KANDAHAR)

Noori - south2@afgnso.org - 0700 492 550

WEST REGION OFFICE (HERAT)

Patrick Malach - west@afgnso.org - 0799 322 192

Sayed Karim - west2@afgnso.org - 0707 474 135

COUNTRY MANAGEMENT (KABUL)

Sebastien Hogan - director@afgnso.org - 0799 325 349

Ali Riazi - operations@afgnso.org - 0797 165 017

Scott Bohlinger - mobile@afgnso.org - 0797 414 100

Vacant - administration@afgnso.org - 0797 093 073

MISSING

This report ANSO
could not provide
analysis for the prov-
inces of:

Bamyan
Panjshir
Badakhshan
Baghlan
Samangan
Balkh
Sar-e Pul
Nuristan
Nimroz

This is because we
do not know enough
about the area to
comment on the sig-
nificance of the inci-
dents occurring
there.

If you can help us
understand the prov-
ince better, please
contact us.

FAREWELL

ANSO would like to thank its Mobile RSA, Scott Bohlinger, for his dedicated service to ANSO and the NGO community in the Northern Region and throughout the country. We all wish Scott the best as he begins his next venture in London.