

THE ANSO REPORT

Inside this Issue

Central Region	2-5
Northern Region	5-8
Western Region	8-10
Eastern Region	10-11
Southern Region	12-14
ANSO Info Page	15

YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Operation Mushtarak likely to be declared a success and serve as an exemplar for later COIN operations
- AOG will adhere to proven tactics in confronting IMF/ANSF: IEDs, targeted killings, and intimidation
- Increased IMF activity in the South will encourage disdain

ANSO is supported by

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Humanitarian Aid



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COUNTRY SUMMARY

Of concern for NGOs, tensions in the Southern Region are slowly approaching the boiling point, with the touted Operation Mushtarak commencing in Marjah, Helmand Province, and disconcerting statements that Kandahar will be the next site of IMF and GoA focus.

The operation is likely meant to serve as an exemplar of the 'comprehensive approach' that US counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy entails. Moreover, the action is meant to foster the belief that ANSF can take substantial roles in contentious combat operations, all while providing the entailed foreign states' constituencies with a sense that their governments have finally developed an approach that will help secure their forces' eventual, successful withdrawal.

And although COIN designs—conventional combat operations paired with a deployable ANSF/GoA force to fill the civil vacuum following combat operations—also call on NGOs to fall in line with IMF initiatives, in essence serving as the 'build' element, all indications are that NGOs intend to steer clear of the operation and avoid being seen as complicit in the action. Thus, current

NGO efforts appear only to be focused on addressing the humanitarian need in light of refugees and civilian casualties. (Current estimates suggest circa 1,100 families have sought refuge in IDP camps).

While the operation is not yet complete, one can clearly foresee media and officials portraying the action as a resounding success, at least in the short-term. With this, one can only expect IMF to succeed in confronting AOG in an environment such as Marjah, for it would make little sense for AOG to openly confront IMF/ANSF; rather, in keeping with successful guerrilla tactics, AOG will likely rally only minimal efforts, such as IEDs, sniping, and other demoralising actions, possibly even BBIED strikes.

Consequently, NGOs should not expect AOG to devote inordinate resources to Marjah because AOG recognise their strengths lie in asymmetric strikes, especially on ANSF and the GoA.

Outside of Helmand in the Southern Region, one surely gets the impression that IMF are not endearing themselves to locals due to

the overbearing nature that their movements and operations entail, and that animosity between locals and foreign forces will only grow exponentially with the latter parties' increased presence.

The conflict may only worsen, additionally, if unconfirmed reports about the capture of Mullah Baradar, the senior Taliban military commander, prove to be true. Within many circles, Baradar has been seen as an influential personality who led to unifying Taliban military efforts and a reduction in civilian casualties. Moreover, conflict research suggests that when unified parties involved in a conflict fragment, such as seen through targeted assassination of influential leaders, conflict levels actually increase because of resultant disaggregated policies, struggles, and efforts.

Other developments to monitor include GoA efforts to wholly nationalise the ECC by removing foreign monitors; with this, one could expect corruption to go further unaddressed, leading to diminished feelings of efficacy and increased protest.

KABUL

ANSF undertook eight separate arrests of alleged AOG during the past reporting period, which included seizures of weapons and two suicide vests. Arrests were reported in Bagrami, Kalakan, Paghman, Surobi and Qarabagh as well as districts 1, 8 and 17 of Kabul City. The operations in Kabul's surrounding districts are recognition of their use as a logistical hub for attacks in the capital or

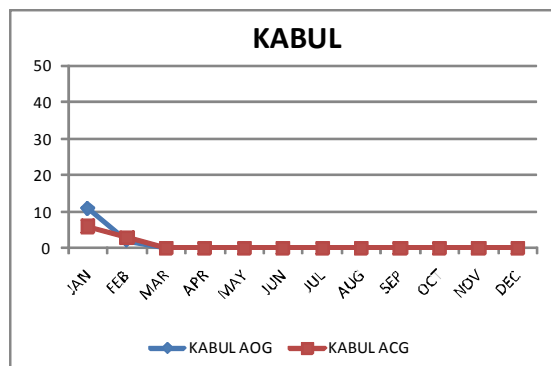
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- 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

further afield. The districts of Kabul provide greater freedom of movement for AOG, specifically from Laghman, Logar and Wardak. There were no reported casualties during any of the arrests. Often Kabul witnesses a flurry of AOG arrests following a high profile attack, such as that against GoA ministries on 18 January. The latest series of arrests, however, appear to be more comprehensive and not uniquely involved with January's attack.

While President Karzai was absent from the country, security in the capital was noticeably stepped up as the formerly named 'ring of steel' was expanded and extra po-



lice were reportedly drafted in. The checkpoints only offered mild delays with obligatory document checks being performed. NGOs with armoured cars faced extra scrutiny, with cars without proper paperwork being seized for an indefinite period of time.

Excepting the arrest operations, Kabul experienced no significant attacks beyond that of an attack on a checkpoint as well as against several fuel tankers in Surobi, which fits in with a similar pattern of attacks in the district.

WARDAK

Saydabad continues to witness the majority of incidences occurring in Wardak. The district is host to the Kabul to Kandahar Highway and is used by ANA as well as IMF convoys, becoming a favoured area for AOG attacks. On 9 February, an IMF convoy was struck by an IED in Tangi area,

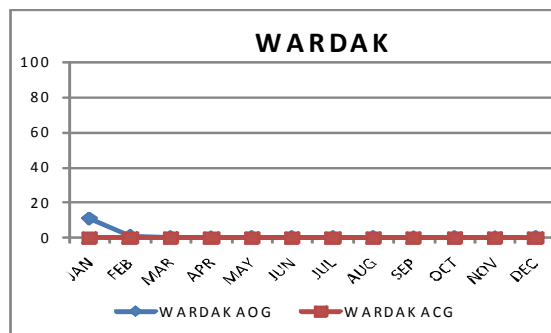
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- 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

and four IEDs, including one RCIED, were found and defused by ANSF.

Saydabad logs the most incidents largely due to the long intersection of the Kabul-Kandahar Highway (used by security forces and logistic convoys) and its proximity to the equally AOG saturated provinces of Logar and Ghazni. But Chak, Nirkh, Jalrez, and Jaghatu are all also reported to be heavily infiltrated with AOG. In Maydan Shahr, the government and security forces maintain a tenuous control of security and the district is subject to frequent attacks.



The Bihsud areas are still largely left alone by AOG and controlled by the local Hazaras, who maintain some level of security. The main concerns in those areas are local tribal clashes and the overall lack of a police/military presence. Violent clashes, which occurred in 2008 between the local population and Kuchis, may arise again in 2010 if some local reports are to be believed.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

ANSO is expanding its presence in the Southern Region and looking to NGOs for contextual information that will benefit the greater NGO community. See page 12 for further information..

PARWAN

A series of avalanches, believed to be 17, around the area of Wolang in the southern section of the Salang Pass led to the deaths of approximately 189 people, injured another 134 and resulted in the assisted evacuation of approximately 2,500. The avalanches began in the early afternoon of 8 February amidst deteriorating climatic conditions and continued into the night and early morning. The sheer scale and number of avalanches led to hundreds of vehicles being trapped either under or between avalanches and severely affected the coordination of rescue efforts. Four NGOs had staff trapped between avalanches, some of whom were in vehicles exposed to the minus 30 degrees night time conditions, rather than having the slight protection of the series of galleries along the high

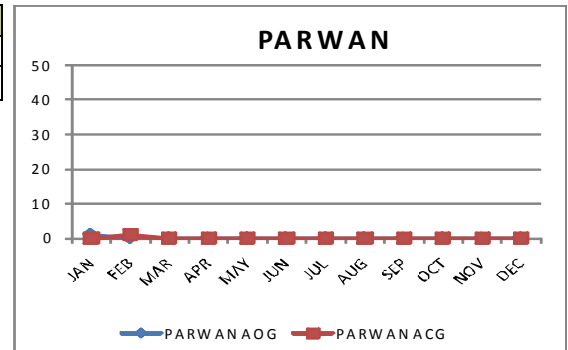
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- 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
This Report Period	0

altitude road. The rescue efforts only began in earnest the following morning as ANP, assisted by ANA and IMF, attempted to clear the road from both the northern and southern entrances to access the trapped thousands. The initial avalanches jettisoned vehicles down the narrow passes and covered others under metres of snow, causing the initial fatalities. Further deaths were recorded during the night as temperatures plummeted and the vast majority of those trapped were isolated without food, heating and proper clothing.

Snow clearing operations, typically praised for their efficiency, came under enormous pressure and it was reported that specialist equipment had to be brought in to assist further delaying the rescue. ISAF and ANA helicopters flew to the more remote locations to extract some trapped motorists. It appears, however, that most of those trapped ended up half walking, half being ferried out by ANP. By 1700 hrs on 9 February, most of those trapped over the previous 24 hours were safe, or at least on their way to safety.



The remoteness of the location, combined with the scale of the disaster, ensured that rescue coordination efforts suffered from a lack of information and unity of effort, which likely contributed to the delay in accessing the thousands stranded along the mountain pass. For NGOs, it was a stark reminder of the necessity to prepare for the worst, rather than hoping for the best. All road missions, especially during the winter months, should have reliable communications equipment for remote locations, enough food, water and warm clothing to last 48 hours, and perhaps most importantly, an understanding of the road conditions prior to setting out. The conditions could easily have led to NGO casualties in slightly less favourable conditions.

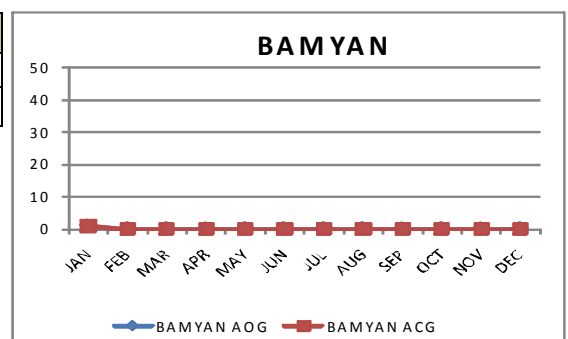
During the last reporting period the Shibar Pass was also closed due to weather conditions. During times of heavy rainfall or snow the main road, currently under construction, becomes extremely challenging between Chaharikar and Shibar, and NGOs should check ahead to ensure it is passable.

BAMYAN

Snow and lots of it was the big news from Bamyan during the last reporting period. The winter severely hampers NGO programmes, forcing their winter closure across the province. Three separate avalanches were reported

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

in Panjab and Waras, resulting in the deaths of at least 14 people. During warmer times, Bamyan is one of the safest provinces for NGOs to operate, which is illustrated by the number of NGOs operating in the area. Banditry is only a minor concern along the district roads, with ACG activity largely confined to the northeast of the province. Due to the unpredictability of the weather



KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Winter road conditions
- ACG/AOG activity in the Shikari and Ghandak Valleys

NGOs should assure that all road missions are properly equipped prior to setting out. Reliable communications have time and again shown their necessity in cases of emergency.

LOGAR

Logar hosts a significant AOG presence and logistical supply route to the capital and should be considered risky for NGO operations. While Kharwar, Charkh, and Baraki Barak are likely to be under partial AOG control, Muhammad Agha, Azra, Puli Alam and Khushi require an understanding of local dynamics prior to commencing or expanding

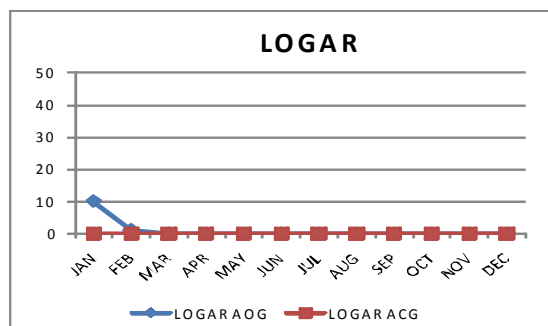
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG/AOG abductions
- IMF operations
- AOG intimidation

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

NGO programmes. As has been common during the night time hours over the past year, there have been further unconfirmed reports of AOG checkpoints being erected in the Auli Bala area of Puli Alam, which neighbours Baraki Barak. If NGOs are travelling through the province, which is not advised unless the concerned organisation has a contextual understanding of the local dynamics, then low profile travel is strongly advised.

While there have been no recent incidents involving NGOs, overall



incident levels so far this month are only slightly lower than those experienced in the last year. The winter weather, IMF arrest operations and a greater ANSF presence along the main arterial routes have contributed to the reduction in incidents and greater perceived security environment in the north of the province.

KAPISA

There has been an almost five-fold increase in the number of AOG initiated incidents to the middle of February compared to 2009. The nineteen incidents for the year have all been recorded in Alasay, Nijrab, Tagab, and the southeast corner of Mahmudi Raqi. Rather than uniquely a response to IMF patrols, it appears that the frequency of AOG attacks is an indication of their strength rather than uniquely being defensive tactics. The nature of AOG strength and the terrain in the east of the province dictate that IMF are rarely able to access Alasay in anything under an infantry company level. Am-

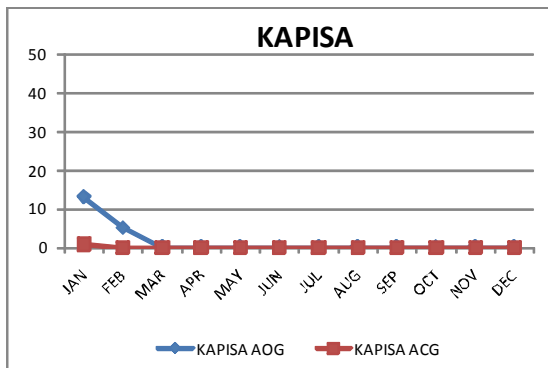
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

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

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

bushes against IMF are now occurring at least once a week, often inflicting casualties.

Of particular note in the last reporting period was the arrest of a senior ANSF figure by IMF on 5 February on allegations of links with AOGs and corruption. The arrest operation in Mahmudi Raqi reportedly involved the use of helicopters and produced muted denials of involvement from local ANSF figures. In response, a small demonstration gathered in the Puli Sayad Area; however, there were no follow up protests or isolated acts of violence. Several days later on 8 February in Shokhi Area of Mahmudi Raqi, an AOG attack on an IMF 'overwatch' position for a convoy induced a robust IMF response due to the presence of helicopters in the area supporting a vehicle recovery operation. The attack resulted in one IMF fatality and another wounded. If the current trend continues, then the warmer



months will usher in an increasingly hostile environment in the eastern half of the province.

Anecdotal reporting suggesting an increased AOG presence in the west of the province is supported, although not confirmed, by an increase in the number of incidents in the southeast of Mahmudi Raqi and a recent arrest operation on 12 February in Kamloot Area of Hisa-I-Duwumi Kohistan, which led to the arrest of two suspected AOG and the seizure of weapons. Hisa-I-Duwumi Kohistan; Hisa-I-Awali Kohistan; and Kohi Band, where the majority of NGO operations are based, have remained relatively immune from the growing levels of violence to the east. Previously reported planned IMF patrols in these districts have not materialized and the security environment is largely dominated by low level factional violence.

DAYKUNDI

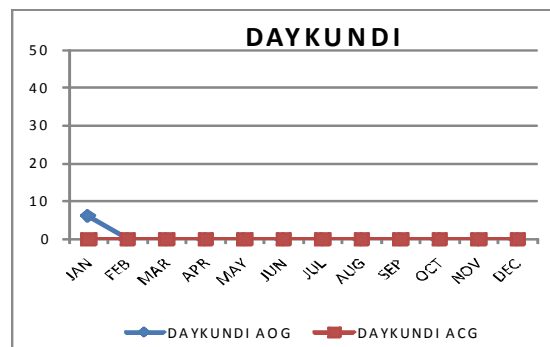
Similar to Bamyan, most NGO operations have been severely curtailed due to the winter weather and the inaccessibility of most of the province for almost five months of the year. NGOs are mainly operating in the northern and central districts of the province, with only mild banditry

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

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

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

being an expressed concern. The southern districts of Kijran and Gizab represent a different story. In recent weeks Gizab, under AOG control, has experienced an increase in the number of AOG temporary abductions for money, which is essentially a 'toll' or 'tax' for commercial vehicles. The incidents are likely to reduce the commercial traffic between the well worn Kandahar to Nili route through Gizab, possibly forcing an increase in traffic through alternative roads in neighbouring Kiti or Kijran. Compared to the neighbouring districts of Kijran and Gizab, Kiti, a tribally ho-



mogenous district, has an established ANP presence and records few security incidents. Alternative commercial routes through Kiti, and further afield through Kijran, may occur if further abductions are reported in Gizab. The PRT, established in August, has produced little activity of late. Its reported small size and alternative makeup suggest that unless it is reinforced, cosmetic, rather than substantive, projects will be its main concern.

BAGHLAN

Daytime AOG/ACG-initiated incidents involving SAF on the main road in Puli Khumri have been reported on three occasions in the past two months. These incidents have all appeared to be targeted toward specific individuals, rather than being random attacks. This reporting period, gunmen suspected to be AOGs attacked a private vehicle with SAF in Cheshmashir Area near the main road. ANP responded and the perpetrators escaped. Such attacks have been previously reported in Cheshmashir Area. No IEDs on the main road have been

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

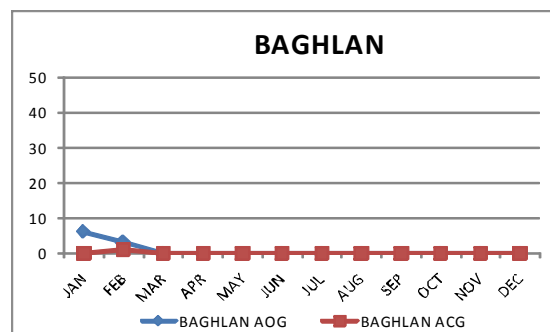
- SAF attacks in Puli Khumri
- Attacks on IMF patrols
- Clashes in Baghlani Jadid

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

reported since September of last year, following last year's pattern of a drop in IED incidents during the winter months.

While Puli Khumri City remains relatively secure, known AOGs operating in neighbouring areas are likely to continue to destabilize the district as the season turns, just as has been seen in previous years. An increase in IMF use of the Kunduz-Baghlani Highway may also raise the probability of attacks in this area.

Two abnormally-located AOG attacks on IMF patrols were reported this period in Baghlani Province, in Banu Sub-District of Andarab District, and Dand Shabudin Area of Puli Khumri District. These clashes either indicate a more active IMF presence or a



more determined AOG presence in these areas.

Fighting continues in Baghlani Jadid District, although at a decreased rate as compared to previous reporting periods. Two AOG-ANSF clashes were reported in the district, one within Baghlani Old City, Jangal Bagh Area, and one at Najo checkpoint between Baghlani Old City and Baghlani New City. (Clashes have most likely become less frequent because of the cold weather). The bodies of two dozen AOGs were reportedly found frozen to death while hiding in the mountains in the north of the district.

FARYAB

Two abductions were reported this period in Faryab Province, one which failed to be resolved through armed confrontation and one which was successfully resolved through negotiations. In Dawlatabad District, armed gunmen abducted two teachers from a school. An ANSF rescue team responded to the incident; however, the abductors escaped with

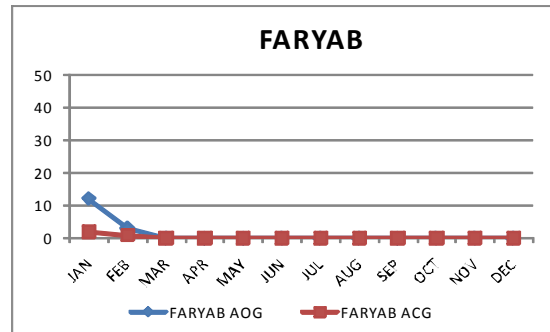
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Abductions
- Attacks against ANSF

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

their captives to a nearby village. When the ANP later attempted to recover the abductees, an armed clash ensued in which a civilian was killed in the crossfire. The abductees currently remain in AOG custody. In Almar District, a local veterinarian was abducted and released unharmed after negotiations with village elders.

AOG attacks on ANSF continue at a less frequent pace than previous reporting periods. This period, AOGs attacked an ANP checkpoint in Bilchiragh and an



ANSF/IMF patrol in Pashtun Kot. Neither incident resulted in casualties. In Maymana City, a hand grenade was thrown into the private residence of a GoA official. The incident is not known to be AOG-related. Maymana City is traditionally secure, and this appears to be an isolated incident.

KUNDUZ

Kunduz Province experienced a period of relative calm over the past two weeks. Joint IMF/ANSF search operations were conducted in Imam Sahib and Chahar Dara districts during the first few days of the month, yielding no significant seizures or arrests. Fighting continued in Chahar Dara District, where an AOG-ANSF/IMF clash resulted in the death of one AOG and a civilian bystander. AOGs also attacked the ANP

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

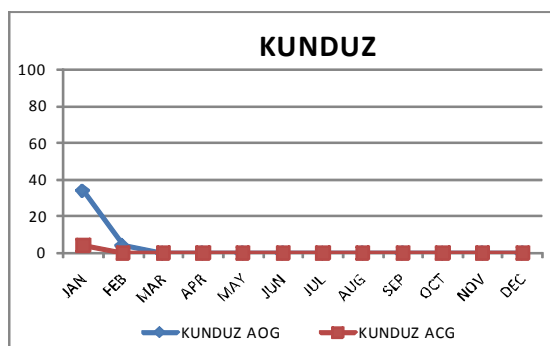
- Fighting in Chahar Dara
- IEDs in Western Imam Sahib

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

headquarters with RPGs, causing slight damage to the building.

In Imam Sahib, an IED detonated against a civilian vehicle, injuring seven in Tashguzar Area near the road from Archi District. Last month, an IED detonated in the same area, partially damaging Tashguzar Bridge. The area, in the west of the province, has been the site of past AOG-ANSF confrontation, and there is a continued threat of IEDs on the main road from Archi to Imam Sahib.

Conversely, no IEDs have been reported in the past five months on the Taloqan-Kunduz Road in



Kunduz Province, and NGOs have recently reported safe passage on this road. Chugha Area, near the border with Takhar Province, may remain at risk for occasional AOG-ANSF clashes, though none were reported this period. Chugha Area was also the site of a daytime roadside robbery reported last period; however, evidence suggests that this incident was an isolated case.

BADAKHSHAN

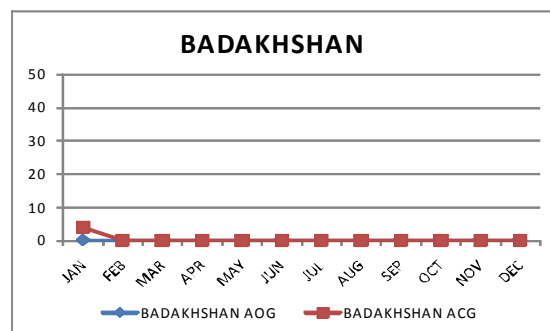
Typical ACG/AOG activity in Badakhshan has all but ground to a halt during the winter season.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Narcotics smuggling and production

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Many roads remain inaccessible due to snowfall. Some narcotics smuggling and manufacturing persists, as a large amount of heroin-producing material was seized in Kishim District.



TAKHAR

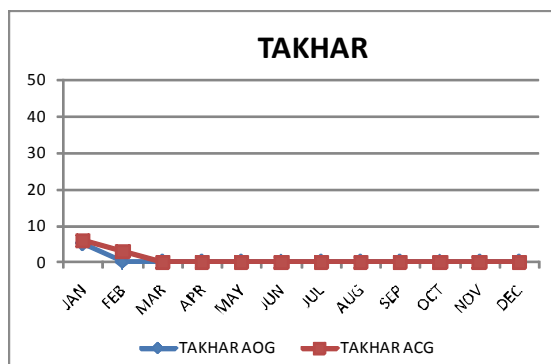
AOGs appear to be attempting to consolidate influence in northern Takhar. In Darqad and Yangi Qala districts, AOGs reportedly threatened to kill residents who were found to be cooperating with the GoA. In Darqad District, AOGs also attempted to abduct a

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence in northern Takhar

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

former jihadi commander, who successfully escaped. AOGs in this area have as of yet refrained from targeting the GoA; however, attacks may be seen in the future if ANSF increases its resistance to the growing AOG presence. In Taloqan District, two actions were taken by ANSF that may affect security on the Taloqan-Kunduz Road: a major seizure of weapons



from the home of a suspected AOG near the main road, and the arrest of a suspected ACG responsible for roadside robberies.

SAR-E PUL

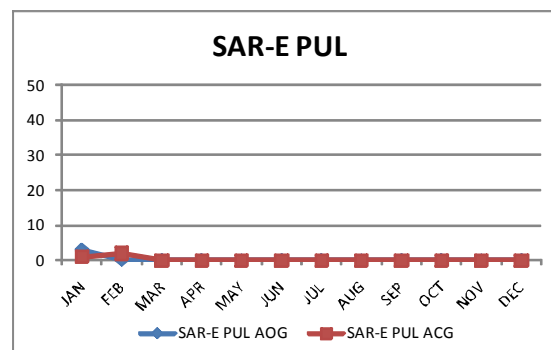
A clash between two ethnic groups erupted in Sozma Qala village of Sar-e Pul Province this reporting period, in which several dozen injuries were reported. The groups reportedly used primitive weapons, as opposed to firearms,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Clash between ethnic groups
- Roadside robbery
- Destruction of roads

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

in the clash. ANSF was deployed to secure the area, and the two groups agreed to resolve their dispute in the presence of a local GoA official. The area is reportedly calm. In Sayyad District, Sardara Area, a private mini bus was stopped by armed men who robbed the passengers of cash and valuables. Reports have surfaced that AOGs are attempting to destroy the roads leading to Almalik



Village in Sayyad District, as far west as Darzab District in Jawzjan Province, with the assumed intention of severing IMF/ANSF access to the village.

JAWZJAN

AOGs in Qush Tepa District launched a well-coordinated attack on the District Centre early this reporting period, killing two AOG and injuring three AOG and two ANP. ANP subsequently called in for ANSF/IMF reinforcements, prompting the first ANSO-recorded major operation in Jawzjan's southern panhandle since March 2009. The results of

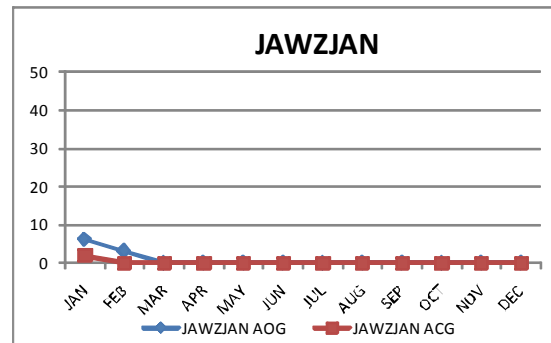
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOGs in southern panhandle

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

the operation appear to have been marginal, though.

The vast majority of incidents in Qush Tepa and Darzab districts in the past several months have been AOG-initiated. One reason that ANSF and IMF are reluctant to pursue AOGs in this area is that the single road running south from Shibirgan places convoys at high risk for IED attacks. This was exemplified this reporting period when the ANSF/IMF con-



voy returning from Qush Tepa was struck by an IED. AOG activity in Darzab and Qush Tepa districts will most likely continue, as ANSF/IMF have not been able to sustain a formidable presence in the area.

BALKH

In the first incident of its kind recorded by ANSO in the northern region, an unknown gunman dressed in ANP uniform shot dead two IMF soldiers, injured a third, and killed one national translator. The incident occurred when IMF soldiers were on a foot patrol visiting a roadside ANP station in Gorteppa Area, near the Mazar-Shibrgan main road. The soldiers were outside of their vehicles and approaching the ANP station. Reportedly, the perpetrator

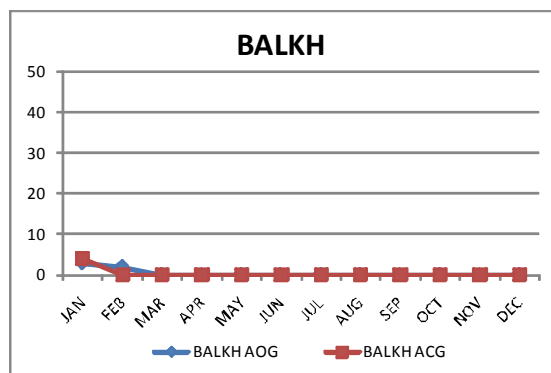
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

was standing outside of the station, while the rest of the ANP were inside. The attacker, who was subsequently shot dead by IMF, has not yet been confirmed to be ANP. Investigations into the incident are still ongoing.

This incident comes on the heels of a three-month drop in IED incidents reported in Chahar Bolak and Chimtial districts, and an inverse increase in SAF attacks on ANP checkpoints. IED and SAF incidents on the main road have slightly increased as well; however, these incidents remain relatively infrequent and continue to target

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Chahar Bolak



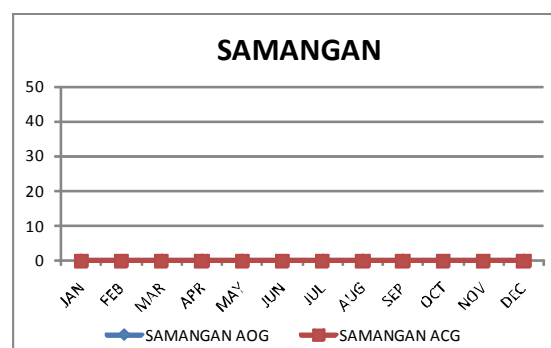
ANSF and IMF, specifically. This reporting period, an ANSF vehicle that was known to be returning from Mazar-e Sharif City to Chahar Bolak District was shot at with SAF in the early evening hours. Apart from these incidents, the main road through Chahar Bolak remains secure; however, NGOs should be especially vigilant in avoiding possible ANSF/IMF targets in this area.

SAMANGAN

No security incidents have been reported in Samangan Province in the past two months. There is no formidable AOG presence in the province, and ACG activity reported in the past has been primarily motivated by interpersonal disputes. It should be noted, how-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

ever, that incidents in some areas may go unreported. Over the years, Samangan has been particularly calm during the winter months. Limited AOG and ACG activity is likely to re-emerge in the spring.



GHOR

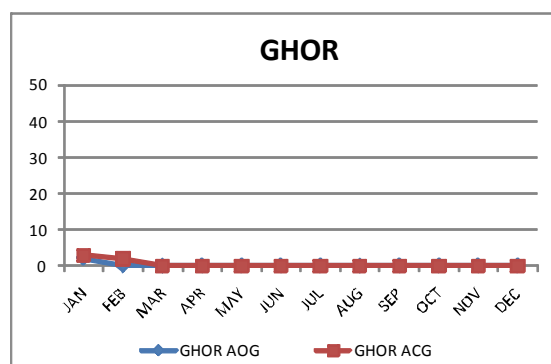
With recent heavy snowfalls in Ghor Province, difficult winter conditions have limited mobility in the area and caused, as local reporting indicates, several private residences to collapse. In Chagcharan City, for instance, a person was killed on 8 February and another one was wounded.

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

The province continues to witness a winter lull in AOG activity, registering a few typical criminal-related incidents. On 7 February in Taywara, a land dispute triggered a clash between villagers that caused the death of a local civilian. In Chagcharan City, after a robbery of a money changer's office (noted in the last report), unknown armed individuals broke into a private store and stole money and valuables on 2 February.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Criminal activity
- Armed robberies



In addition, during this reporting period ANP arrested five suspects in connection with a murder case in Taywara District. Another person who was allegedly involved in a murder was arrested in Lal Wa Sarjangan.

BADGHIS

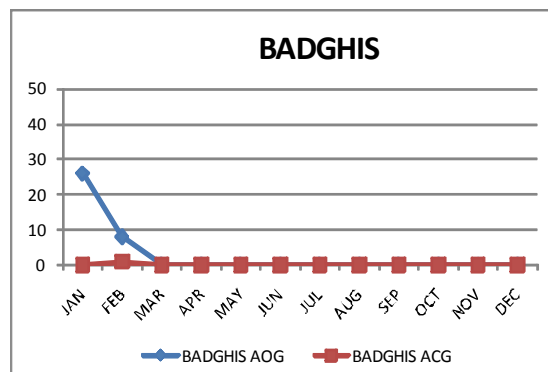
Badghis continues to witness the bulk of AOG activity in the Western Region. During this reporting period, ten security incidents were attributed to AOG (a slight decrease of 14% compared to the previous cycle). The majority of these AOG-initiated incidents were also typical for the province. Over 40% of them were direct at-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG-ANSF/IMF clashes
- AOG presence around Qala-I-Naw City
- Abduction

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

tacks on security forces, convoys, and facilities and were mainly concentrated in the usual unstable areas of Ghormach and Murghab districts. For instance, in Murghab on 1 February an IMF convoy came under a complex attack which followed a well-known pattern. An IED hit the convoy and was followed by SAF and RPGs, killing one IMF soldier and wounding another six. Air support was called in to repel the attack. Reportedly, 13 AOG members, including a prominent AOG commander, were killed as the result of the IMF airstrike. Besides close range attacks, which represent a



risk for civilians, another risk in the area is the use of IEDs/RCIEDs, as illustrated in an incident that occurred on 3 February in Murghab where an anti-personnel mine detonated, injuring a local civilian.

Finally, an AOG pattern of indirect attacks continued as, on 10 February, several BM1 rockets were fired towards the ANSF/IMF base located in the area of the Murghab DAC.

FARAH

The rate of AOG initiated incidents in Farah, which usually hosts a significant AOG presence in the Western Region (along with Badghis), has decreased during this reporting period. The traditionally unstable district of Bakwa, on 13 February, experienced an AOG ambush of a PSC convoy. As a result, six PSC guards were killed, another four were wounded, and three vehicles were damaged. Following this attack, IMF conducted an operation in this area, reportedly killing ten AOG members including four commanders. On the same day,

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

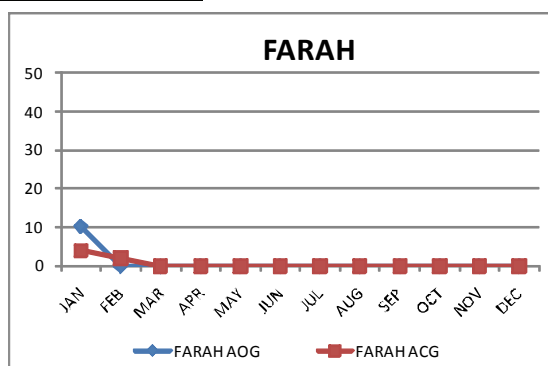
- IEDs/RCIEDs
- AOG ambushes/Armed clashes
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

an IMF patrol was also ambushed by AOG. Air support was called in to repel the attack. Reportedly 25 AOG members, including two prominent commanders, were killed in the IMF airstrike.

On 5 February in Bala-Buluk District, AOG were trying to target security forces using an RCIED, but it was discovered and later defused by ANSF. Sporadic search operations led by ANP and NDS persisted during the present cycle, this time in Farah and Khaki Safed districts, resulting in the seizure of a quantity of weapons and explosives.

Regarding Farah City, reports indicate that on 5 February IMF soldiers discovered a truck suspected to be rigged as an SVBIED and arrested the driver.



It is worth noting that probably the AOG active in Farah province are not as well organised as in Helmand; nonetheless, the province has witnessed towards the end of last year a worrying development in AOG tactics with the use of BBIED or SVBIEDs (e.g., in Farah City on 20 November 2009, and in Bala-Buluk the following day). Moreover, the ongoing military operation in Marjah, Helmand, may also have an impact on the security situation in the Western Region, particularly in some areas of Farah and Ghor provinces. As past practise illustrates, fleeing AOG elements often affect the security in neighbouring areas.

HERAT

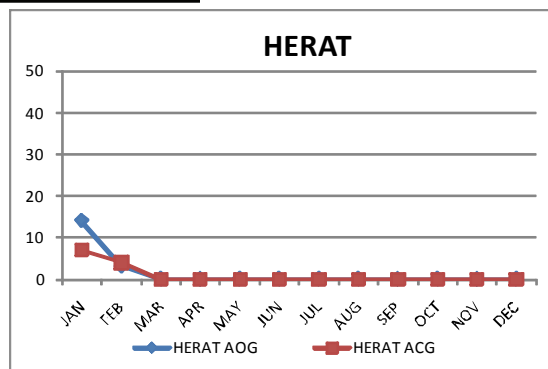
The first NGO incident of the year in Herat province consisted of an attempted robbery. On 9 February in Pashtun Zarghun, an NGO vehicle was travelling from the said district to Herat City when four armed men attempted to stop the vehicle. When the NGO driver realised that the second vehicle was going to attempt to block him, he changed direction and escaped into the neighbouring village. The security situation on this road has, so far, remained relatively calm. However, there have been reports of an increased AOG/ACG presence in the district. Of note, the main road leading from Herat to Obe, and then to Chishti Sharif, remains a concern for NGO operations (especially between Obe and Chishti Sharif). In a late reported incident that occurred on 30 January in the latter district, an

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED/RCIED
- Herat-Obe, Chishti Sharif Road
- Criminal activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

AOG established a temporary check point. The group stopped a commercial truck carrying an ANP vehicle that they later set ablaze. On 1 February in Obe District, armed individuals stopped a few public transport vehicles en route to Chishti Sharif District and robbed passengers of their cash and valuables. In the same district, two days later, ANSF recovered and safely defused a large RCIED planted on this road. The risk to NGOs of being collaterally targeted from IEDs/RCIEDs is also a concern in other areas; for instance, in Adraskan District on 3 February an RCIED was discovered on the Herat-Kandahar Road. The same day, an RCIED hit an IMF patrol passing on the road leading to the Shindand DAC. Finally, on 13 February in Kushk District ANP recovered an AT mine that AOG planted on the Herat-Turghundi Road. Taking into account ongoing and future military operations, further incidents on this road can be expected—as seen last year—



especially because the road is an important IMF supply route.

AOG were also active in Kushki-Kunha, with another attack on an ANBP post that occurred on 3 February. In addition, on 14 February in Injil District an AOG attempt to collect illegal taxes was thwarted when the ANP appeared on the scene. After the clash erupted, reinforcements were called in to support the ANP. The fire fight lasted for several hours, with casualties including the wounding of the Injil District Chief of Police.

Regarding Herat City, AOG indirect fire continued towards the area of the Herat Airport, with three rockets which targeted the IMF base, causing no casualties. Moreover, security measures have been stepped up within the city over the past two weeks following information about a potential threat of suicide bombers infiltrating the city.

KHOST

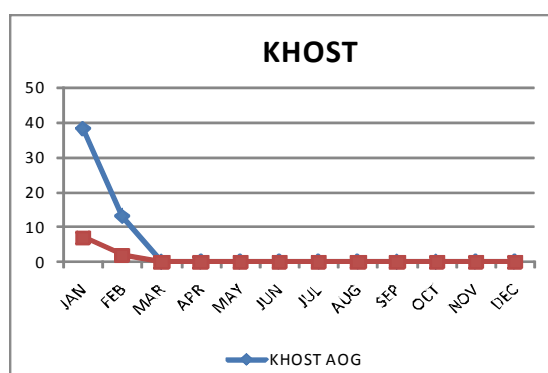
Khost Province remains volatile, witnessing a significant increase in AOG activity and, particularly, IED incidents during this reporting cycle. The overall level of IED deployment in the province (28 IEDs, of which 15 detonated and 13 were discovered prior to detonation) is dramatically high in

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs/RCIEDs, particularly in Khost City
- AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

comparison with the other province of the Eastern Region. The level of IDF and direct attacks likewise remained a concern in the province, especially in Bak and Sabari districts. Security forces continued to conduct search operations throughout the province; for example, on 4 February in Thara Khel Madrasa Area, Tani district, IMF/ANP conducted a search operation that led to the arrests of three suspects, including the head of the area's madrasa, and the purported seizure of IED materials.



AOG activity, additionally, included the intimidation of locals associated with GoA, ANSF, and IMF; for instance, on 1 February in Dar Koti Area, Khost City, AOG distributed night letters that warned people not to work with the GoA or international organisations.

LAGHMAN

The overall security situation in Laghman Province remains unpredictable, yet moderate in comparison to other ER provinces: 6 incidents were recorded, of which

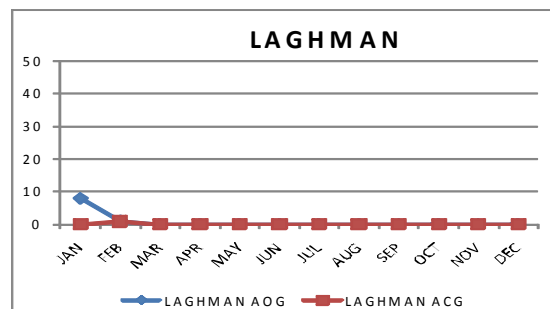
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs in Alishing and Alingar Valleys
- SAF ambushes targeting ANSF/IMF as well as supply convoys along Highway 1

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

2 of them were AOG attacks, two of them were IED discoveries in Alishing and Mihtarlam, and the remainder were two acts of crime in Mihtarlam. (During last reporting cycle, only three security incidents were reported).

The AOG incidents were two armed assaults targeting an IMF base in Najil area of Alishing District. Road security in Laghman



remained stable during this reporting period, particularly along Highway 1.

Although IED activity is a significant percentage of AOG action in the province, further direct attacks should be expected along Highway 1.

PAKTYA

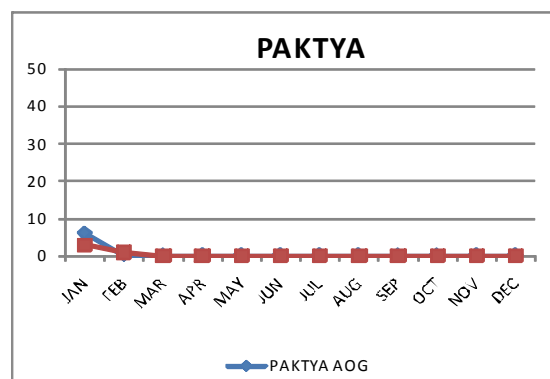
The overall level of AOG initiated incidents recorded in Paktya remains relatively low, with only one AOG BBIED attack; the rest of the incidents recorded were one IMF operation, 1 arrest, 1 demonstration, and the remainder being criminality in Gardez district.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in Gardez City
- IEDs in Zurmat district

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

On 11 February at 1700 hrs in Palan Area, Dand Wa Patan District, a BBIED attacker, purportedly dressed in an ANBP uniform, attempted to gain access to an IMF base in the abovementioned area. The attacker was challenged near the entrance, causing him to detonate his vest. Besides the death of the attacker, information suggests that 5 IMF were wounded.



Although the recorded amount of security incidents in the province is currently rather modest, the security environment in Paktya remains volatile and, at least in several areas, hazardous for NGO operations.

KUNAR

During this reporting cycle, AOG initiated activity throughout Kunar Province slightly decreased, probably due to bad weather conditions. Nonetheless, the majority of AOG initiated incidents in the Eastern Region were recorded in this province. The bulk of reported incidents were directed against IMF/ANSF, counting for

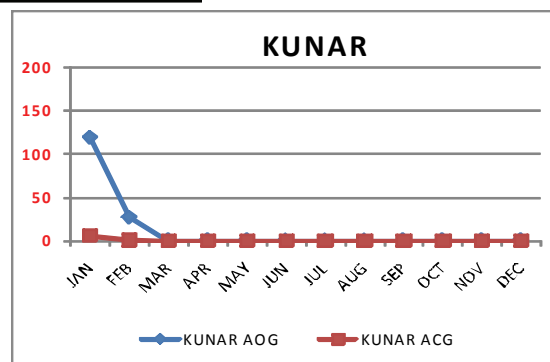
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG abductions
- Attacks along the Jalalabad-Asadabad Highway

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

over 90% of all recorded AOG incidents. Of these, direct attacks were common, but most did not amount to more than harassment. Numerous attacks—usually armed assaults or mortar attacks—were carried out against Chapra Dara District, which could signal the migration of a new AOG contingent to the area.

Looking at the persistent AOG trend of activity and ANSF/IMF operations in the province, ANSO does not expect a shift in AOG modus operandi within Kunar.



Insecurity along the Jalalabad-Asadabad Highway was at the fore during this period due to several attacks on the road and significant AOG activity in Nurgal District; for example, on the 13th and 14th AOG instigated short ambushes of IMF convoys.

HELMAND

Helmand has remained extremely dangerous, with an RCIED targeting a local civilian gathering (a dog fight) in the Mukhtar Camp area of Lashkar Gah, which resulted in 3 killed and at least 31 wounded, including 8 children.

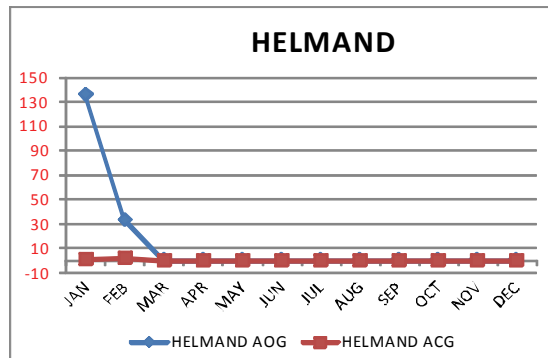
The widely publicized offensive—Operation Mushtarak—was launched during the report period, and as expected there were a large number of incidents related to this

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Ongoing military operations
- Refugees

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

effort as IMF/ANA units established checkpoints close to the area of Marjah prior to the start to control both AOG and refugee flows. In addition, raids were undertaken by AOG to determine the IMF/ANA dispositions during the build-up period (7-12 February). As a result, the areas of Babaji, Nad Ali, and Marjah experienced multiple clashes and, in the case of Marjah City itself, became a war zone. At the time of writing, the toll of this operation included two IMF killed and, in a serious case of misdirected artil-



lery, 12 civilians killed in a residential compound close to the fighting. The situation of refugees remains unclear, as only an estimated 1,000 families (out of a total of 80,000 inhabitants) have fled Marjah. Latest reports have indicated that the flow of refugees, along with civilian wounded, have been successfully treated in Lashkar Gah City.

KANDAHAR

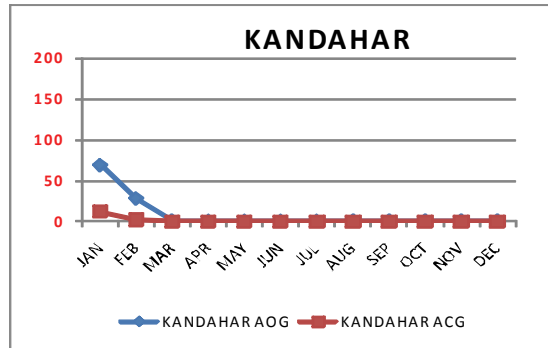
The report period witnessed a continuation of the extreme violence which has become synonymous with Kandahar. In Kandahar City alone, there were several RCIED attacks, the premature detonation of a BBIED, and a successful SVIED against IMF, all

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- AOG Attacks
- Criminal in Kandahar City

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

resulting in multiple deaths and numerous wounded. Reports of other potential SVIED and VBIED attacks were received related to the offensive in Marjah (Helmand); however, these have not yet materialized at the time of writing. The number of incidents involving criminal activity remained high in the city, as well, with family-related murder, kidnapping and the seizure of drug processing chemicals also occurring during the report period.



Outside of the city, incidents included AOG rocket attacks on KAF, AOG attacks against several IMF logistics convoys, and numerous incidents of IED discoveries on a major route used by IMF in and out of KAF.

NOTICE: The new South RSA, Peter Dimitroff, will begin holding security roundtables for the Southern Region (SR) in Kabul City during late February. Having brought Peter on board, ANSO plans to expand its services provided to NGOs operating in the SR, to include improved analysis and reporting. NGOs operating in the SR with security and contextual information are encouraged to contact Peter at south@afgnso.org to assist in improving ANSO information sources.

URUZGAN

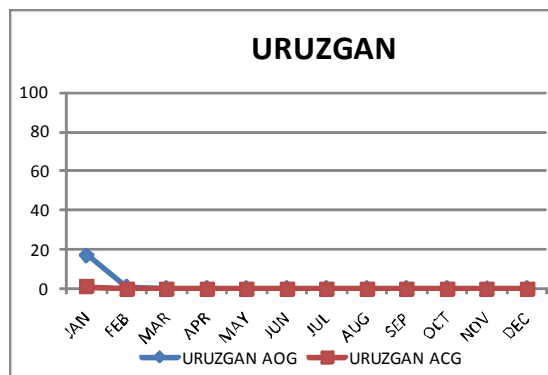
The district of Tirin Kot was the focus of the majority of the incidents during the report period, with four IED disposals occurring in the city. In the Mirabad Valley

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IEDs
- AOG pervasiveness
- Suicide attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

of Chora District, there were three separate incidents of IED attacks against IMF patrols that led to several IMF wounded. AOG appear to be avoiding serious clashes with ANA/IMF in the past six months, relying on mostly IED attacks in both urban areas such as Tirin Kot as well as on



known ANA/IMF routes in the outlying areas of the province.

NIMROZ

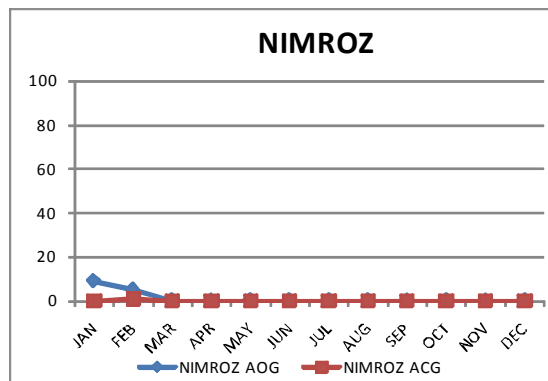
There was a series of grave security incidents during the period of 11-13 February in Nimroz Province, most particularly in Khash Rod District, where it appeared that AOG elements—leaving the

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG presence
- Illegal checkpoints
- Security vacuum

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

Marjeh area of Helmand ahead of the well-publicized IMF/ANA offensive—attacked a PSC convoy, resulting in six PSC and 10 AOG killed. Prior to this, a series of illegal checkpoints had been erected by AOG on the main Khash Rod – Zaranj Road. Significantly, ANP have reported that up to 200 AOG have moved into the province as a result of



Operation Mushtarak, which will undoubtedly lead to further incidents in the province in the next report period.

ZABUL

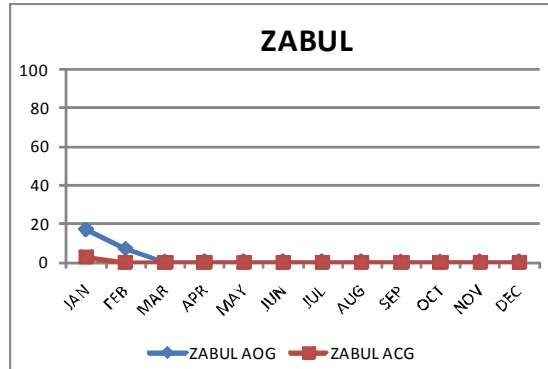
While in previous weeks incidents in Zabul primarily involved IEDs, the most recent reporting period witnessed serious violence in the form of AOG attacks on a variety of targets. Shamulzayi District was the location of an AOG attack on a joint ANA-IMF patrol, resulting in five AOG killed, while

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG ambushes against ANA, ANP, and IMF
- IED attacks

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

an RCIED attack against an IMF vehicle in the same district a little over an hour later resulted in two IMF killed. A week later, ANA/IMF operations resulted in the arrest of several AOG in both Qalat and Shahjoy districts. Prior to late 2008, AOG activity in the Shamulzayi District was virtually non-existent; since that time, the level of incidents has steadily increased, almost wholly in terms of attacks against ANA, ANP, and



IMF. Of note, Qalat and Shahjoy districts hold the dubious distinction of being some of the most violent areas in the country, with all types of AOG and criminal activity being recorded in large numbers since 2006.

PAKTIKA

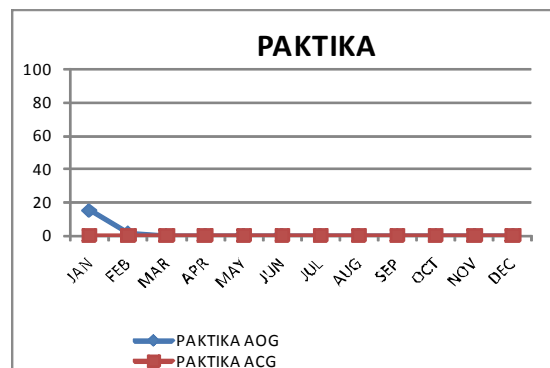
Paktika province remains relatively quiet, with only several discoveries of weapons caches (mortars and small arms) by joint

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ IEDs
- ➔ AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

operations of the ANA/NDS. In addition, two separate IEDs were discovered and disarmed by IMF EOD teams in Barmal District, which still should be regarded with caution, owing to the rash of AOG attacks on ANA/ANP within the last three months.



GHAZNI

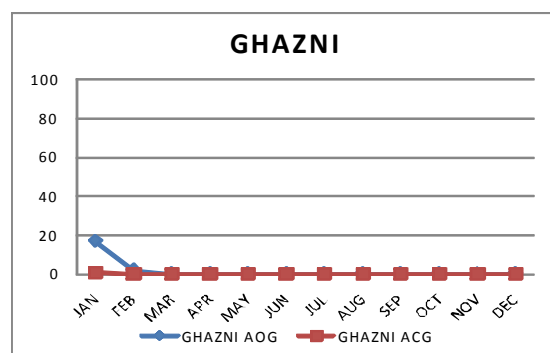
Ghazni Province witnessed a series of IMF-led raids on AOG, with arrests of low and mid-level commanders taking place in Rashidan and Wali Muhammidi Shaheed districts. These opera-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ➔ IEDs
- ➔ AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

tions appear to have gone smoothly, not attracting the violent demonstrations of the previous report period which were a result of similar raids during the last half of January. The problem of IEDs still persists in the province, however, evidenced by the safe removal of four IEDs in the Giro District Centre and an IED



attack against ANP in Jaghatu District that wounded two patrolmen.

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 and context in your area. So please remember to call or email us regularly.

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

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”



ANSO is hosted by
[Deutsche Welthungerhilfe](#)

To Register with ANSO
contact:
operations2@afgnso.org

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

ANSO ACRONYMS

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 - central2@afgnso.org - 0799 322 116

NORTH REGION OFFICE (MAZAR)

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

Firoz - north2@afgnso.org - 0799 408 252

EAST REGION OFFICE (JALALABAD)

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

Shohar - east2@afgnso.org - 0798 778 014

SOUTH REGION OFFICE (KANDAHAR)

Peter Dimitroff - south@afgnso.org - 0796 688 416

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)

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

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

Vacant - mobile@afgnso.org - 0797 414 100

MISSING

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

Panjshir

Nuristan

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.

NGO EXPATRIATE ORIENTATION

The ANSO Operations Coordinator will be hosting ANSO's NGO Interna-
tional Staff Orientation Service on 22 February. Please note, this service is de-
signed for newly arrived international staff that would like to be sensitised to
ANSO services, trends in the conflict, the conflict's historical basis and regional
-specific context, local hindrances to NGO neutrality, ethno-political issues,
and an analytical overview of NGO incidents in the past 30 days. Contact [op-
erations2@afgnso.org](mailto:operations2@afgnso.org) to register.