

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Unprecedented levels of seasonal violence in Helmand
- Ongoing political instability in Nangahar
- Nuristan is in transition - to AOG control
- Ongoing spectacular attack capability in Kunduz

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

In the **CENTRAL** region, AOGs are returning, in numbers, to both Logar and Wardak. The premature detonation of a BBIED in Chaki Wardak district, of the latter, suggesting some inexperienced new members. In Daykondi, AOG continue to struggle for freedom of movement in Kajran and Gizab. In Parwan, a female NGO worker is murdered on her way to work, while a group of seven Taliban “reconcile” in Ghorband.

In the **NORTHERN** region, BBIEDs target ANP leadership and new recruits in Kunduz, in an ongoing campaign of assassination and intimidation, especially in Chahar-Dara, while in Imam Sahib the Taliban Shadow District Governor is killed in an IMF raid. In Chimatal, Balkh an NGO compound is robbed by up to 30 armed men while AOG are returning to Chahar Bolak. In Faryab, AOG reconcile in Maimanna, while in the Dashta-Laili area of Dawlatabad a BBIED targets the convoy of the provincial police chief. In Takhar, RPGs

are fired at the Ariana Hotel in Taloqan. The IMF OP in Burka, Baghlan province continues while an NGO employee was found dead in mysterious circumstances in Dushi district. In Jawzjan, AOGs form checkpoints on the main roads between Shibergan and Andkhoy and Mazar. In Samangan, the IMF target AOG in Dari-Suf. In Badakshan, crude IEDs strike two separate NGOs in acts of intimidation while in Sar-i-Pul seven previously reconciled AOG returned to being AOG.

In the **WESTERN** region, rockets target the Herat airport while a member of the upper house of parliament was temporarily abducted in Chisti-Sharif. In Farah, NGO staff were embroiled in arrests of suspected AOG while in Ghor an unusually high profile attack targeted the District Governor of Charsada.

In the **EASTERN** region, IMF have significantly stepped up their operational tempo in Khost, particularly

in Sabari area and AOG have responded with IEDs. In Kunar, the IMF relocation from the Pech valley inspires AOG response, while mortars impact Asadabad. In Nangahar, two IEDs target a political rally in Jalalabad - aimed at unseating the provincial Governor - while others target music shops in an intimidation campaign. Suicide devices target the DAC of Sherzad and an IMF convoy in Bati Kot. In Nuristan, AOG continue to consolidate power and isolate the ANSF who are now without IMF support. In Laghman, an IED kills a Provincial Council member while in Paktya a small IED injures two in a vegetable market.

In the **SOUTHERN** region, the combination of indiscriminate and targeted killing continues to take a massive toll on both the ANSF and civilian population. In Nimroz the ANBP arrested ANP carrying 50kgs opium in an ANP vehicle.

CENTRAL REGION

KABUL

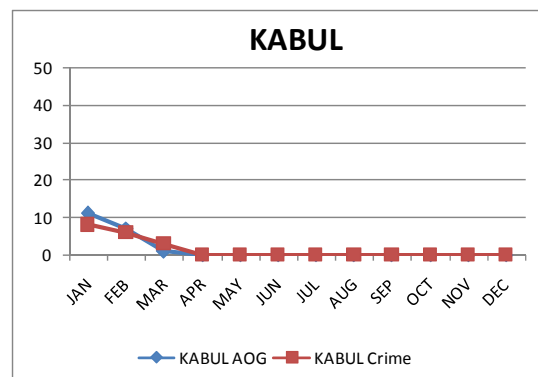
Political violence initiated by AOGs in Kabul Province remained limited to a single RPG round shot from a distance in Uzbin Valley, presumably targeting an ANP post. The events in other regional centers in the North & East of the country undoubtedly shaped the threat reporting for the capital city, which continued in the usual volumes and included mostly generic reports on AOG operations. Typical targets (security-related or high-profile, incl. public venues) and patterns (close-range IED and complex attacks, multiple indirect fire attacks) dominated the reporting. The time-line remains more of a specific factor, since mid- to late-March coincides with several high-profile events, including an expected speech on the *Transition* by the President during the Nawrooz, public events and celebrations linked to the new year, renewal of UNAMA mandate by UNSC, and the IMF leadership's report on the security process so far. Despite several 'occasions' such as the commemoration of the violent death of *Baba Mazari*

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in the hands of IEA fighters, attended by thousands including top GOA officials and other VIPs in Dashte Barchi, AOG attacks against public places & venues have not resumed.

Shakardara rose to prominence with this cycle's single IED placement & discovery (in Baghi Mangalay). The discovery marked just the third seizure of an emplaced IED for this district in ANSO data collection since its inception, in addition to a single (RC)IED detonation in November 2008, presumably intended for, but missing, an IMF convoy. In the neighbouring Paghman, gas cylinders filled with explosives were located and secured on two occasions along the district roads in Paghman (Arghandi Payeen and Karezak Arghandi).

Conflicts over resources (access to land, water but also to services provided by third parties) are not unheard of in the region, and one such report came to light during this cycle. The late February in Bagrami saw a violent clash over a long-standing land issue erupt



between two Kuchi clans, during which the leader of one of the parties was killed. The consequent shootout led to an additional three casualties inflicted by the harmed *qawm* in retaliation. Reportedly, the elders engaged in negotiations while ANSF stayed away from the conflict. The incident is reminiscent of the January clash in the informal settlement of Charaye Qambar, PD 5, also featuring a killing and an ensuing fight, following the escalation of a community dispute (in this case, peace was brokered by the intervention of an elderly who arrived for this purpose from Urozgan, and the ANP arrested the individual charged with the initial murder). NGOs with operations in the informal settlements, where resources are often scarce and tensions extremely high among the neighbours, will always benefit from maintaining a discrete awareness of similar disputes in order to avoid the eventual repercussions on the programming, and adversely, to prevent the programming from becoming a stake in such conflicts.

PANJSHIR

Following the agricultural achievements of the previous period, and once again devoid of significant security incidents, Panjshir came to the fore with the GOA & IMF's announcement of the province being slated for the first round of security transition along-

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side Bamyan and Kabul (with the exception of Surobi). This process merely reflects the fact that the province remains virtually untouched by the overall political conflict, a trait which is likely to persevere in the future.

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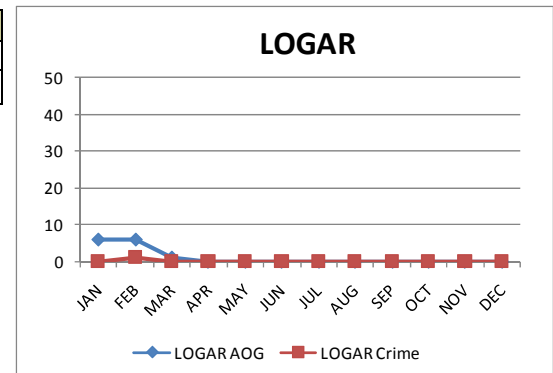
LOGAR

AOG return from the winter break, as well as accounts of AOG coordination for the spring campaign, were the constant features of security reporting from Logar this period. An assembly of AOG leaders in Baraki Barak, called after the large IMF-led push in Charkh, reportedly saw the IEA and HIG leaders exchange, in a cooperative manner, their views on the steps forward. Needless to say, such coordination stands in blunt opposition to the developments in the neighbouring Nirkh of Wardak, where the IEA pursues a hostile stance towards the local HIG network. Incident reporting has so far included 5 incidents in Muhammad Agha (two IED emplacements on the Kabul – Logar road, and three police actions in the traditional hotspots of AOG activity) and a series of IMF-led operations in Charkh in

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addition to an AOG IDF attack, all of these coming after the fatal clash in Charkh.

In the morning of 28 February, a joint IMF/ANA unit came under close-range SAF & RPG attack in Charkh DAC. After the IMF and ANP took positions inside a building, the incoming fire caused the structure to collapse, burying several operatives under rubble. 1 IMF, 4 ANA and their civilian translator were killed, and an additional 3 IMF sustained injuries during the course of action. The incident sparked a series of joint IMF – ANA operations focused on the disruption of a local AOG network, presumably responsible for the 28 February attack. At least two local IEA commanders (incl. a cousin of a reputed commander based in Baraki Barak) were killed in the targeted strikes,



and another IED facilitator detained. Several other arrests followed later on, with the AOG riposting by an inaccurate RPG attack against an ANP CP in Charkh DAC. It is also known, however, that an important Charkh commander managed to relocate to Baraki Barak & Puli Alam, and alongside the cousin of his deceased colleague, joined the coordination efforts mentioned above.

In this context, NGO access strategies combined to the local awareness, stakeholders' acceptance and the parties' willingness to recognize NGOs as neutral humanitarian actors will remain critical preconditions for NGO safety during the up-coming spring season.

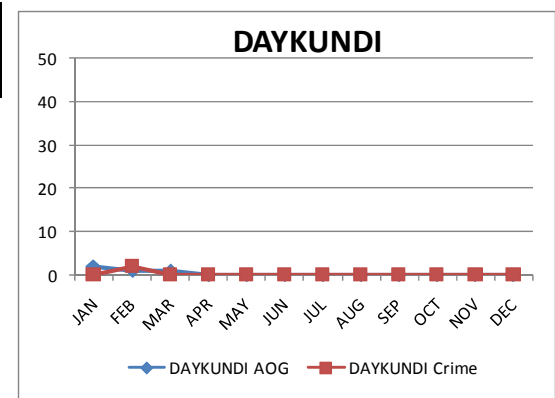
DAYKUNDI

The restive southern districts of Kajran and Gizab hosted all 6 incidents (4 AOG initiated) reported from Daykundi this cycle. A brief look at the distribution patterns clearly illustrates AOG's operational focus on controlling the access routes between Daykundi, Urozgan & Helmand, an infrastructure of convenience for migration between different operational areas and safe heavens outside these provinces.

In Kajran, the road networks cutting across areas bordering Helmand and Urozgan are a defining geographical trait of insecurity. Indeed, this cycle, AOG in Bala Dasht carried out an effective

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RCIED strike against an IMF SF detachment, for which one IMF soldier was killed while another member received injuries. Five RPGs were fired towards the ANP checkpoint in Tangi Sufla Area, Kandoha Village, which is home to the Kajran Chief of Police. In Kotale Chawdar, on the Nili – Urozgan - Kandahar Road, AOG detained several trucks proceeding from Kandahar and requested the occupants to pay passage fees. According to local reports, the occupants managed to negotiate their release without any payments. An additional two IED incidents, a pressure-plate device



removed from the Gizab-Kiti Road, and an accurate IED strike (unknown type) targeting the vehicle of an NDS officer, completed the picture in the neighboring Gizab District.

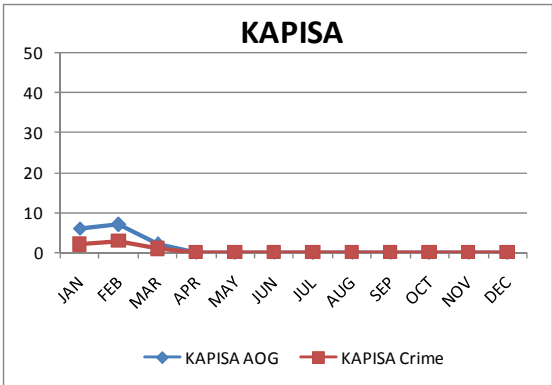
AOG efforts in Kajran & Gizab will likely persist, in minimal for the short term as AOG operatives will continue to transit via Daykundi on their way South.

KAPISA

Security dynamics in Kapisa followed the trends of the previous period, although the AOG-initiated incidents confirmed so far dropped down to just three cases. On the positive note, NGOs managed to avoid pervasive risks of collateral involvement in kinetic operations and IEDs on the main access roads in the East. Nevertheless, in light of the anticipated return of AOG effectives and the current proactive posture of IMF & ANSF, the outlooks remain gloomy for the spring season. Although far away from the volumes and lethality in the East, the Western districts are increasingly mentioned in relation to AOG attempts at expansion. Here, the shift in IED activity from community-related disputes to AOG-authored attacks has become a development of concern. Two thirds of the 17 security incidents recorded during this cycle took place in the Eastern districts. Tagab has reserved the monopoly on AOG combat initiatives with 2 very similar indirect fire attacks against the IMF base, and a failed attempt at ambushing and killing a local civilian contractor providing services for ANP in Dolan Area. IDF activity was underscored with an IMF/ANA discovery of a

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cache containing five 122mm rockets. Preference for indirect engagements and orientation on softer civilian targets for close-range attacks demonstrate the momentary disengagement of AOG due to the winter migration as well as resulting from the continued pressure by IMF and ANSF on the AOG freedom of movement along the main roads. This cycle saw Nijrab outnumber the incident volumes recorded in Tagab, with local AOG activity focused on IED emplacement. Two pressure-plate devices were found on the district roads in Miya Khel and Qanda Khel, whereas the Qazen Area witnessed a more sophisticated device, consisting of two 107mm rockets rigged with a mobile-phone operated trigger, and concealed under a culvert on the main road. In Kharesh Dara, a local civilian was killed when a hand grenade landed in a private residence. Although the context of the incident remains unclear, local sources linked the victim to an on-going dispute. Public protection force reportedly paid off when a local AOG commander was detained in Qalai Ghani and handed over to IMF.



Meanwhile, in the West, reports came in this period of increased IEA mobilization; in particular a hasty enrolment of local recruits has been recorded, accompanied by distribution of IED materiel in order to conduct autonomous IED strikes broadly aimed to challenging the movements of ANSF and IMF. If confirmed, such developments may mean increased risk for NGOs both in terms of driving into victim-operated devices, as well as being targeted by remote-controlled devices if mistakenly identified as ‘legitimate’ targets by inexperienced operatives. A similar case of mistaken identity was the likely motive behind an RCIED strike against an IO’s marked vehicle in Karezai, Mahmudi Raqi, in the late January. During this period, a pressure-plate IED was found and removed from the same road, connecting Mahmudi Raqi to Kohistan, in Bako Khan, Kohistan I. It is yet to be seen whether such developments become a more permanent trait, or remain rather an outlier, largely resulting from a temporary pressure deployed by IMF & ANSF on IEA troops in the East.

WARDAK

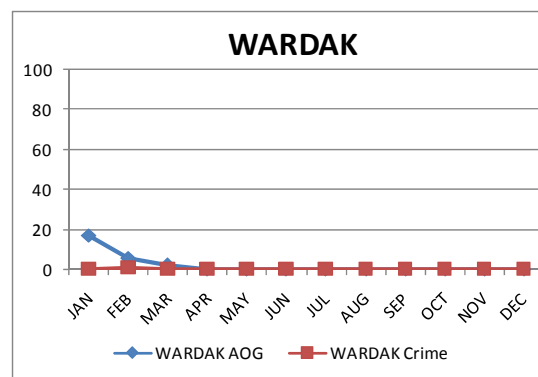
Following an extremely quiet February in Wardak, the incident volumes recorded this cycle remained very low (coming at a pace of one incident a day), although AOG kinetic activity has already become more visible across the province. More relevant than the actual statistics, anecdotal reporting from the province pointed out the return of AOG troops in large numbers after the winter break, alongside with serious coordination efforts deployed by their leadership, in particular by the IEA PSG and centred on Jaghatu, Chaki Wardak, Saydabad and Nirkh. Undoubtedly, Wardak is once again heading towards a busy spring season.

The core of AOG combat activity pertained to indirect-fire attacks. Out of 4 such incidents, 2 were respectively a multiple rocket and a multiple RPG (long range) fire against ANP checkpoints in Saydabad, with the latter injuring an ANP serviceman. The attacks basically confirmed that the AOG are only slowly getting in place in the areas where the IMF and ANSF regularly faced close-range combat in 2010. That such return is accompanied by getting visibility on new GOA security structures raised over the winter, including OMLT-supported posts & patrols, logically increases AOGs motivation to carry out harassing stand-off IDF strikes with the risks kept low for the operatives. Three consecutive RPGs were also sent towards the DAC of Daymirdad. Quite rare until 2010 - only two cases had been recorded in 2009 (both in June) - IDF attacks became a somewhat common occurrence throughout 2010 with 9 cases concentrated

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between June and December. The early occurrence of indirect fire against the DAC this year makes this tactical choice a likely pattern for 2011. Also Maidan Shahr DAC witnessed two projectiles, probably mortars, detonating in the vicinity of an ANP post on the Highway (south of DAC), while an additional two 107mm rockets were discovered in launching position in Qatar Sang, within range to the DAC. Staff's exposure to inaccurate IDF in the provincial capital is a well known risk for NGOs based in Maidan. Excluding the latest strikes, 21 IDF attacks hit the DAC or its proximity from April 2010 to January 2011 alone.

In Chaki Wardak, a district largely under control and governance of IEA, a suicide-vest BBIED prematurely detonated on its owner, riding his motorcycle via Dawran Khel en route to the DAC in the evening hours of 12 March. The timing in combination to the unusual deployment of a suicide bomber in Chak (and pretty much in the rest of the province) suggest that the BBIED was rather being transported than intended for use in the district. Indeed, only four suicide attacks have been captured for Wardak in ANSO data collection, distributed in the period between July 2007 and January 2009. With one occurrence in Maidan Shahr and three in Saydabad, all four cases were SVBIEDs intended for IMF or GOA targets. Besides the BBIED, Chaki Wardak also featured one case of a pressure-plate IED discovery (emplaced on the road connecting the district to Jaghatu); the remaining two IEDs related to



a single incident involving the music records business in Maidan Shahr.

On 7th of March in the evening, a light IED exploded underneath a vacated mobile cart used as a CD and audio cassettes shop in the bazaar area of Maidan Shahr (on the Jalrez Road). The blast occurred after when the area had already been vacated by shopkeepers and customers. During a follow-up search, a second similar device was located underneath another cart with audio & video records in the vicinity, and safely defused. Reportedly, both devices were equipped with a time-delay initiator. Following the attack, local sources noticed a widely circulated rumour in the bazaar that the concerned shop inventories included 'immoral' video records. Despite the current uncertainty regarding the authors and their motivation, the devices were not designed to cause severe casualties or damage. From a wider perspective, IED attacks against music shops are rather typical for the Eastern Region. In Jalalabad, such attacks represent a signature AOG activity which has been implemented so vigorously as to threaten the virtual collapse of local audio records market.

IEA operational focus in the short term will likely concentrate on stabilizing the 2010 security gains in Saydabad, Daymirdad, Jaghatu and Chak. IEA attacks against the HIG positions in Nirkh (currently frozen due to on-going negotiations, although reporting indicates also a running IEA deadline of 1 month for surrender submitted to the HIG commander) remain a possibility unless local elders, engaged in negotiations, convince the IEA leadership to pursue a more consensual accommodation of interests. The roll-out of ALP will likely contribute to shaping the broad lines of IMF&ANSF and AOG operational focus in the said areas.

PARWAN

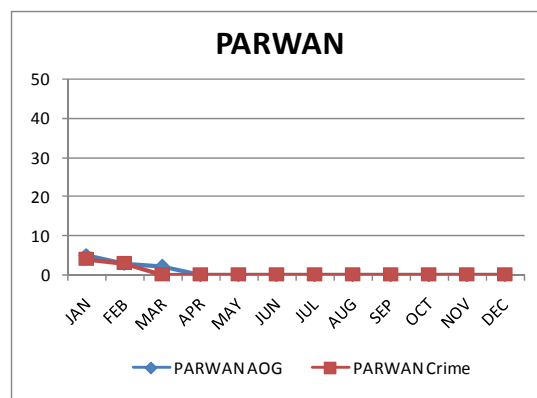
A modest 7 security incidents were recorded in Parwan during this cycle, with the AOG-initiated part concentrating on multiple indirect fire against IMF installations in Baghram and Chaharikar. Both Bagram Airfield Base (in two instances) and the PRT base in Jangal Bagh, Chaharikar (one incident) were exposed to accurate rocket attacks. NGOs generally stayed out of harms way this cycle, leaving the Deh Qazi killing of an INGO young female trainer in late January the only NGO incident recorded in Parwan this year.

In the evening of 5 March, air traffic at the Bagram Base was interrupted for an hour when the facility was hit by two rockets. Both projectiles impacted inside the perimeter, one directly on the ramp damaging two air-assets, and another one in the technical background facility, failing to cause damage as the charge did not detonate. ANP consequently arrested eight local residents in the presumed point of origin. Three days earlier, two BM-1 rockets were reported impacting inside the Korean PRT in Jangal Bagh, while a third projectile impacted in an open area outside the perimeter of the base. There were no accounts of casualties in any of these attacks. Completing the picture of AOG IDF activity, ANP

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searches resulted in the discoveries of several artillery ammunition caches, and a primed BM-1 (Jangal Bagh) in the vicinity of both bases. ANP efforts also gained publicity with the ANP operation in Jebelussaraj during which the police force seized a DShK anti-aircraft weapons system.

A brief look into 2011 data confirms a clear trend of IDF attacks against IMF installations (63% out of 11 AOG-authored incidents recorded so far). Combined to two IED detonations, the indirect attacks outweigh in occurrence close-range attacks (2 direct vs. 9 indirect incidents), translating AOG's unwillingness to engage IMF & ANSF directly. Direct escalations remain largely reserved to criminal targeting of individuals (with 5 cases including the Deh Qazi NGO incident), or intimidation cases, for which hauling hand grenades into private residences remains a favourite option (2 cases). Compared with the levels last year, AOG indirect attacks increased (7 IDF attacks against 3 recorded during the same period last year). This said, criminality & criminal violence, AOG's IDF and IED activity (mainly in proximity of IMF installations), and exposure to the established patterns of armed resolution of local



disputes & conflicts will likely continue to pose threats to the safety of NGO movement and operations in the near term.

In the wider security picture, Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Program (APRP) came to the fore with the first-ever recorded surrender of a local pro-IEA element in Parwan. The mentioned AOG consisted of seven local fighters from Siyagerd, active in the areas of Taikhan and Yakhdara in the Ghorband Valley. The group surrendered seven AK47s and three handguns. Local sources suggested that the fighters will likely join a local police force. Whether this development is a temporary outlier, or constitutes the beginning of a new redistribution of force in Ghorband, is yet to be seen.

The conciliatory echoes from Siyagerd were silenced by the 10 March suicide bombing in Kunduz. The assault targeted and killed the Kunduz Chief of Police, Gen. Sayed Kheli, a close companion of Massud during the anti-communist and civil warfare in Parwan and Kapisa. Prior to his deployment to Kunduz in August 2010, the commander served as the Provincial Chief of Police in his home province - Parwan.

NORTHERN REGION

KUNDUZ

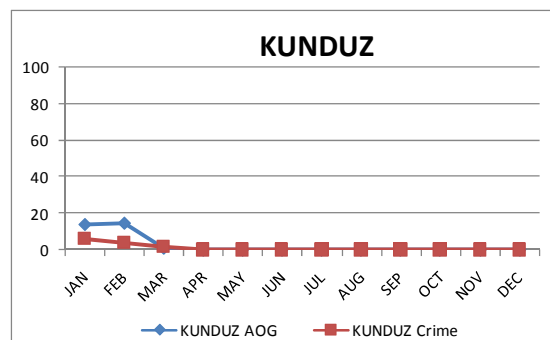
Kunduz City was the focal point of insecurity this reporting period with 2 separate BBIED attacks taking place; 1 on the 10th targeting the Provincial Chief of Police and one on the 14th targeting an ANA Recruitment Center. These occurred in a district that accounted for 5 of the province's 16 total security incidents, with Chahar Dara accounting for a further 7.

The first BBIED in Kunduz occurred on the evening of the 10th at the Kafroshi Intersection of Kunduz City, when a suicide bomber detonated himself as the Provincial Chief of Police (PCOP) and his Deputy made their way between a guest house owned by the PCOP and the Ariana Hotel. The IED resulted in the deaths of 4 ANP—including the PCOP, the Deputy Chief of Police, and 2 ANP soldiers—with injuries to an additional 8, including 1 civilian, the Provincial Head of Security, and 6 ANP.

The second BBIED occurred at

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1400 on the 14th, when a suicide bomber detonated himself in the ANA Recruitment Center, resulting in at least 36 deaths (33 of them civilian, including 3 children) and 32 injured. The attack was initiated by a lone man on a motorcycle as civilians were in the process of signing up to join the ANA academy. This attack had a similar casualty count to the BBIED that occurred at the Census Center in Imam Sahib on February 21st that killed 34 and injured 53. This makes a total of 4 high profile BBIED attacks over the first 2 ½ months of 2011 (there was also the BBIED that killed the District Governor of Chahar Dara on February 10th). To put this in context, while there were multiple IED attacks over the same 2 ½ months last year, there were no high profile BBIED attacks. Already this year, AOGs who are supposedly operating from a diminished capability after a surge of military operations in



Kunduz, have pulled off four high profile attacks, with reports continuing to surface that they have the capabilities and the plans to carry out more.

AOG governance in the province was hit when the District Shadow Governor (DSG) of Imam Sahib was killed during an IMF night raid on March 4th in Moqori Ha village of Basos Area. Reports indicate that this DSG had been instrumental in coordinating attacks against IMF and ANSF targets throughout the district.

In all, 4 IEDs were discovered (other than those that detonated) during the reporting period, 3 of them in Chahar Dara District. Also in Chahar Dara, in Dorman Village on March 9th, IMF got into a fire-fight with an AOG that resulted in the death of a local woman.

BALKH

In Chimtal, an NGO compound in the Alburz Mountains was robbed by 30 armed men on the 8th of March. Indeed, a tangible increase of AOG activities in Chimtal and an IED detonation in Mazar-e Sharif headlined a reporting period that saw 27 total security incidents take place, with one third of them (9) taking place in Mazar and practically one fourth of them (6) occurring in Chimtal. The incident volumes represent over a 50% increase when compared to the same reporting period in 2010, which saw only 17 incidents.

The Alburz Mountains sub-district of Chimtal is a known AOG stronghold that is often used as a safe haven for AOGs when they are chased from neighboring locations. Prior to this incident, on the 27th and 28th of February (but only reported after March 1st), an IO contracted truck that was carrying food and goods broke down on the 27th and was subsequently hijacked, the driver abducted. 2 IO trucks from the same group were abducted in the same location (Masjid Safed Area) during their return the following day. Thus far it is unclear whether the trucks were subsequently set on fire, but 2 of the drivers were able to escape late that evening, while the 3rd remains at large.

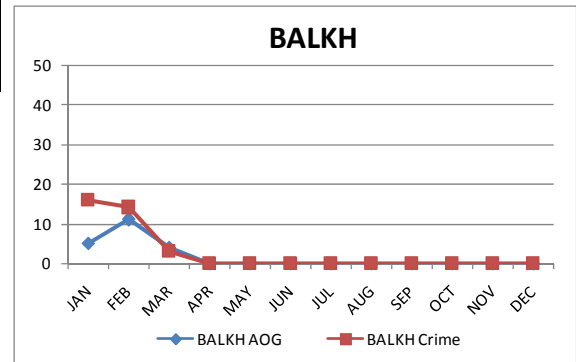
Elsewhere in Chimtal, an IED detonated on an IMF patrol in Joye Shor Village on the 5th, and on the 7th, in the same location, an AOG member was killed when the IED he was planting detonated prematurely. Also on the 7th, ANP opened fire on an AOG who was in the process of emplacing an IED on the main road between Checkpoints 7 and 8. This repre-

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sents a significant number of IED related incidents in Chimtal, where clashes made up the rest of the insecurity in the district.

An IED detonation occurred in Mazar-e Sharif around Puli Tasadi at 1250 on the 5th. Puli Tasadi is a bridge on the main Mazar – Puli Khumri Road used mostly by IMF en route to the airport. Although the IED did not destroy the bridge, 2 unexploded IEDs were later found nearby that—had they gone off—could have taken out the entire bridge. Although the IED detonated on an IMF convoy (causing no injuries), it is likely that the bridge itself was the main target. With the coming of Nowruz, and the Governor at the airport at the time of the detonation, destruction of the bridge could have constituted a symbolic gesture that the area around Mazar is not safe for the upcoming Nowruz festivals. It could have further made those arriving from the airport take a road into town that passes through smaller villages, where the ability to maintain security would have been significantly compromised. IED detonations in Mazar are extremely rare.

This cycle went under the shadow of increased threat reporting as the province prepared for the coming Nowruz celebrations. Nowruz will coincide with a significant increase in the number of security forces deployed throughout Mazar-e Sharif as VIPs and thousands of civilians make their way to the city to celebrate the New Year on March 21st. Further, the build up to Nowruz has corresponded with the coming of



Spring (sometimes referred to locally as “the fighting season”), again reflected in increased threat reporting. AOGs are increasing the volume of their attacks at the same time as VIPs and civilians are converging on Mazar for the Nowruz celebrations, putting the city, district, and province at a somewhat heightened threat level. The government has sought to mitigate these threats by increasing security in Mazar substantially by creating “security belts” around sections of the city, limiting movement, and bringing in surplus soldiers to create an estimated excess 5,000 troops in Mazar and along the main roads leading there. During the celebration, with multiple reports surfacing that AOGs have secured ANP and ANSF vehicles and uniforms, even movements for those security forces will be severely limited. While questions are sure to arise whether this will in fact keep Mazar safe, it is sure to have a detrimental effect on many of the satellite areas where these troops are drawn from. This could potentially create a window by which AOGs could operate or increase their presence in other districts. There have been no previous AOG initiated incidents this year in Mazar, and only a combined 5 over the past 2 years.

Around the rest of the province, AOGs are returning to Chahar Bolak and will likely create further insecurity (including an IED attack on March 13th that killed 3 ANP soldiers), and Sholgara and Zari saw a number of incidents as well. There is a prevailing feeling that security south of Mazar (Sholgara, Zari, and Ki-shindih) may also be slowly deteriorating, perhaps partially as a result of increased activity in Chimtal and neighboring Dar-i Suf Payin.

FARYAB

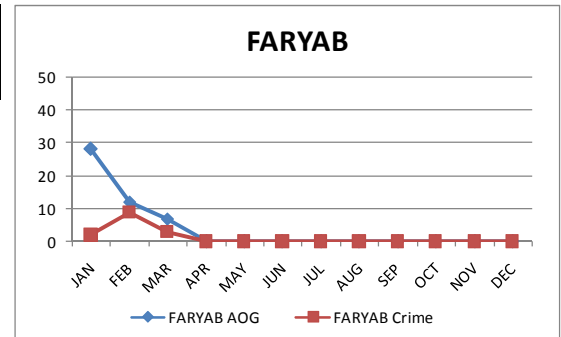
Although Southern Faryab has typically been the more insecure half of the province, with known AOG strongholds in Qaysar, Almar, Pashtun Kot and the areas bordering Darzab and Qush Tepa in Jawzjan, Northern Faryab also saw insecurity in Dawlatabad and Shirin Tagab this period, both the sites of recent significant events. There were a total of 19 security incidents this reporting period, with 3 in Pahstun Kot (2 of these from IMF/ANSF joint patrol engagements), 3 in Maymana (including the surrender of 13 AOG members on March 5), 3 in Qurghan, and 2 in Shirin Tagab.

On the 5th of March, in the Dashti Laili area of Dawlatabad—the district where the provincial chief of police had had his convoy attacked the PRP—a BBIED detonated prematurely, causing the

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individual and 7 other AOG members' deaths. Dawlatabad has seen significant AOG activity in the past, especially in the Jungal area where the previous roadside attack took place. In Jungal, 2 unconfirmed reports surfaced that individuals were stopping cars to talk with the drivers over the weekend of the 11th (the same weekend which accounted for 2 illegal checkpoints in Jawzjan), and on the 15th, in the Qaramqol District section of Jungal along the Ring Road, an ANP patrol was attacked with SAF on the 15th. While the former events remain unconfirmed, it is possible that illegal checkpoints which had formerly been set up in the area could return in the near future.

In Shirin Tagab, the district where the BBIED detonated on the Buzkashi Field on the 26th of Feb-



ruary, 2 AOG attacks on ANP units occurred on March 4th. The district had seen 22 AOG initiated incidents over the past 12 months.

Also of note, an attack took place on March 2nd near Arab Shah Village, Khan Char Bagh District along the road just North of Andkhoy. Five armed men, believed to be members of an ACG, opened fire on 4 civilians riding motorcycles, killing 2 of them. This may be significant because the area (the far north of Faryab) has not historically been insecure, but it is extremely close to the location in Jawzjan where an illegal checkpoint occurred this reporting period; a first for that particular stretch of road.

TAKHAR

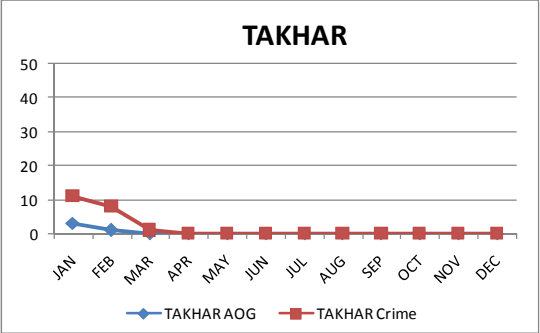
Security shifts in Takhar often appear linked to security in Kunduz. With security in Kunduz rapidly declining, as evidenced by the 2 recent BBIED attacks in Kunduz City, Takhar seems to be waiting breathlessly for the “other shoe to drop.” Thus far, Takhar has witnessed only 8 security incidents this reporting period with 4 taking place in Taluqan District and 2 in Baharak. Most notable amongst these was an RPG/SAF attack on a structure physically linked to both the Ariana hotel and an IO in Taluqan, the discovery of 5 RCIEDs in Taluqan, and an IMF/ANSF operation in a local residence in Baharak on the 3rd which brought about a public demonstration on the 8th. Demonstrations against IMF/GOA military operations are becoming more common throughout the North, and with recent highly publicized incidents involving civilian casualties, the country in

	NGO Incidents
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general.

In Taluqan, 3 RPGs were fired towards a structure shared by an IO and the Ariana Hotel in the early morning of the 10th. While 2 of the RPGs impacted harmlessly in a nearby river, the 3rd hit a wall that separated the Ariana Hotel from the IO, making it difficult to ascertain which compound was the primary target. Although IO’s are often targeted by AOGs throughout the country, the Ariana Hotel had recently received threats, and is presumed the likely target here. Nobody was injured in the attack and there were no further escalations in the area.

Takhar’s AOG network has been closely linked to that operating in Kunduz, and generally speaking, when security has deteriorated in Kunduz, it has often led to a perceived shift in Takhar as well. Sometimes this has happened be-



cause AOG groups in the two areas act in concord, and sometimes because AOGs have fled from Kunduz to Takhar. With that in mind, when reports surfaced about an increased threat of BBIED attacks following the detonation in Kunduz on the 10th, information surfaced that follow up attacks by the same group were likely to take place in either Taluqan or Kunduz City. While a 2nd BBIED attack did occur in Kunduz City on the 14th (see Kunduz section), Taluqan has thus far remained without such an incident. However, the threat remains credible, as it appears that the AOGs operating in the province remain capable and intent on carrying out attacks against GOA/IMF targets, and may be further emboldened by the results that their counterparts in Kunduz have achieved.

BAGHLAN

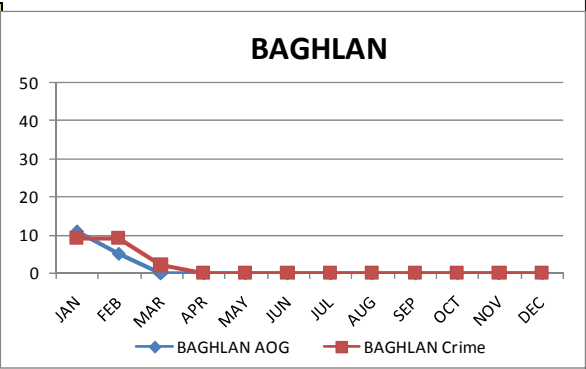
.The news that Operation Nowruz was recommencing in Burka was overshadowed by the somewhat mysterious death of an NGO staff member who worked at a basic health clinic in Larkhaba Ha area of Kelagai (Dushi). In total, Baghlan saw only 8 security incidents over the entire reporting period, with 3 of these occurring in Puli Khumri, 3 in Burka and 2 in Dushi.

At 0300 in the morning, on March 13th, an NGO staff member was found dead at his home after leaving the clinic he worked at in Dushi District. It was reported that he had gotten into a confrontation with the son of the head of the Community Development Council (CDC) the day prior. It first seemed likely that was he was killed as retribution, or from injuries suffered during the altercation, but later reports surfaced that his body was free of violent

	NGO Incidents
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marks, and that he had died in his sleep at home after taking pain medication. The district is not a known AOG or ACG hub, and it now seems that he may have died of natural causes (a heart attack or adverse reaction to the medicine), although foul play has not been ruled out. In an unrelated incident in the same area, an ACG robbed the passengers of a private vehicle along the Dushi-Puli Khumri main road.

Operation Nowruz continued with 2 operations in Burka District; one on March 8th in the Aka Khel village where IMF killed 1 AOG and captured 3 others, and another on March 9th in the Tangimorch and Gulrang areas, where 12 AOG members were killed. In this latter, it was alleged that the dead included an AOG commander of some importance. Burka is a known AOG strong-



hold, and it has been confirmed that Operation Nowruz will continue to target AOG strongholds in Baghlan, Jawzjan and Faryab. 2 incidents that came to light after the PRP, occurred in the District Administrative Center (DAC) of Dih Salah District on Feb 28th. 4 armed individuals, led by a former ANP officer, opened fire on the District Chief of Police (DCOP). An hour after the ANP forced the ACG to retreat, the ACG fired 2 RPGs towards the DAC. It is worth noting that hostilities towards the newly instated DCOPs have occurred somewhat regularly throughout the region. This was reportedly the case behind this incident, as well as many of the issues that have taken place in Badakhshan.

JAWZJAN

Out of the 9 security incidents which took place in the province this reporting period, 2 Illegal Checkpoints—both occurring along frequently travelled sections of main roads—stand out.

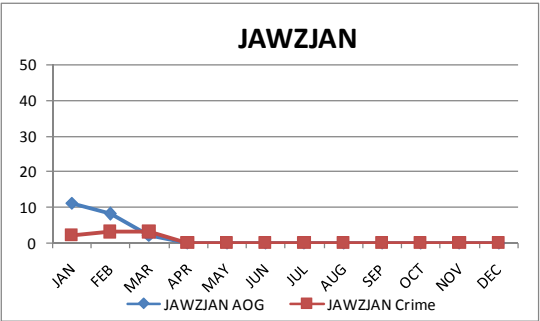
The illegal checkpoints occurred in Khwaja Du Koh District—along the main ring road between Andkhoy and Shibirghan—and in Shibirghan District—along the Sar-e Pul - Shibirghan Main Road. It was the first illegal checkpoint recorded along the stretch in Khwaja Du Koh, however the road between Sar-e Pul and Shibirghan had witnessed 17 illegal checkpoints over the last 12 months (most of them further south in Sar-e Pul District, closer to Sayyad).

Both checkpoints resulted in abductions. In Khwaja Du Koh on the 10th a civilian truck which housed an NGO vehicle in need of repairs was stopped at 1740, and commandeered by a group of armed men. The AOG started to take the truck and driver into the

	NGO Incidents
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desert, but were unable to proceed after the truck became stuck in mud. The driver was then robbed, beaten and released—his truck shot with an RPG—and the AOG proceeded back to the road where they reportedly abducted 2 other civilian vehicles, one with nationals working for an international company. The individuals in the second vehicle, all of whom claimed no ties to any international entities, were released shortly thereafter, but those from the first remain unaccounted for.

The second illegal checkpoint, which took place on the 12th during the day (1130) consisted of the abduction of a businessman along the oft used Shibirghan – Sar-e Pul main road. The event is notable as both the location (North of where these illegal checkpoints have typically occurred), and the time of day (daylight hours) are irregular to these types of incidents. While AOG checkpoints have been fairly common along



this stretch of road (an average of 1 every 3 weeks over the past year), this is the first since January 27th, and with the abducted being released on the 13th after a ransom was paid by his family, there is a good possibility this was the work of an ACG rather than an AOG.

Aside from this, Qush Tepa saw 2 incidents, and in Shah Mirza village in Khaniqa, a quiet district that has seen only 4 security incidents over the past year, a CDC Commander was shot on March 8th, dying of his injuries the following day. Finally, at the District Administrative Center in the AOG stronghold of Darzab, where recent military operations had taken place, an ANP officer joined an AOG on March 5th, and on the 8th, night letters were posted on Mosques in the district threatening those who work with ANSF, ANP or GOA to leave their jobs or suffer the consequences. The letters were allegedly signed by 3 AOG leaders including the Deputy Shadow Governor.

SAMANGAN

Samangan has been the quietest Northern Province in 2011, and it remained such this reporting period. However, 3 of the 4 security incidents that occurred this may end up significant to the security paradigm for the province.

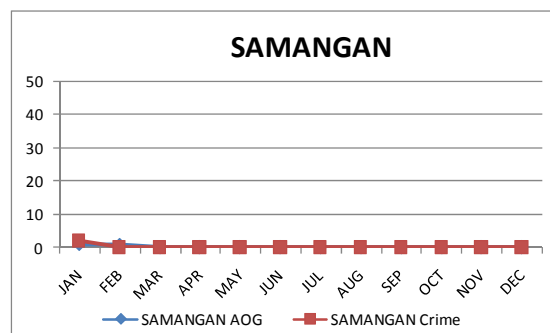
A military operation took place in Dara-i Suf Payin on Thursday, March 10th that included an air-strike to Bayanan, Sorkha, and Dara Tang villages. This strike, aimed at the most insecure district in the province, allegedly killed 6 AOG members, including a prominent commander. Later that day, a large number of AT and AP mines were seized from the area. Dar-I Suf Payin has a known AOG presence with 2-4 established groups operating regularly in and around the district. There have been reports that the groups' influence may be spreading, and that they are partially responsible for a decrease in security to neighboring districts in Balkh as well.

In Aybak, reports about a growing AOG presence in the district culminated in the arrest of an influ-

	NGO Incidents
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ential cleric for suspected ties to AOGs. If AOGs have moved into this district, or existing AOGs are making their presence felt, it may be due to a number of issues; 1) the unhappiness of a local power broker who is looking to use the security of Aybak as a bargaining chip; 2) an influx of AOGs from neighbouring Baghlani Jadid in Baghlan Province (which took the brunt of Operation Nowruz); or 3) the influence of one of the AOGs who are operating in the western district of Dara-i Suf Payin (mentioned above). Whatever the reason, the arrest of the said mawlawi created a strong reaction in the community, which claims that he had no involvement with AOGs, and a large demonstration against his arrest took place on the 13th.

The demonstration started in the City Center, but around noon the demonstrators moved to block the main Puli Khumri – Mazar-e Sharif road. They remained there well into the evening, leaving only after threatening to continue the



blockage in subsequent days until the mawlawi's release. However, on the 14th they elected to send a contingent to Kabul to argue with the government rather than demonstrate. The mawlawi is an extremely popular figure, and his arrest could drive the population to embrace the AOGs who regularly denounce the GOA and are seeking support in the area.

While it seems certain that some type of AOG presence is growing in Aybak District, it remains unclear whether this AOG means to gain community support so that they may use the district as a safe haven when they are forced to relocate from Baghlan or Kunduz, or whether they mean to increase kinetic operations in the district. Thus far, the reports of activity have not included any actual AOG incidents or attacks (although there have been more than twice the amount of security incident so far in 2011 than there were in 2010), but further assessment is required.

BADAKHSHAN

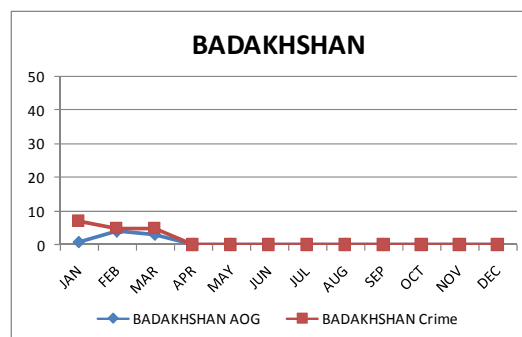
Badakhshan saw 12 security incidents this reporting period, with 2 IED attacks against NGOs, as well as a third IED detonation in front of a GOA Office in Fayzabad.

The 2 IED detonations took place in Fayzabad over a 24 hour period. These included an IED detonation in the corner of a compound rented by an INGO staff member on the 4th and an IED detonation in front of the Women's Affairs Office on March 5th. While it is unlikely that these two events were related (with the IED in the compound attributed to a personal dispute while the IED at the Women's Center likely the result of conservative groups expressing their displeasure over women's day celebrations), it remains somewhat remarkable that a district which had witnessed no IED detonations since August 2010, saw 2 within 24 hours of

	NGO Incidents
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each other. This was the first incident to target an INGO in the district since April 2008, when an NGO convoy was robbed.

On March 8th, the second direct attack on an NGO occurred when a small IED was thrown into an NGO complex in Shuhada District. This district has only suffered 7 security incidents over 5 years, yet 3 of those 7 targeted NGOs. Although this attack was accompanied by "night letters" warning female staff not to return to work, strong anecdotal evidence suggests that this also was the result of a personal dispute. While the IED detonations seem to paint a picture of deteriorating security—especially considering 2 of them took place in Fayzabad—2 of these incidents were likely personal vendettas and have little effect on the overall security paradigm for NGOs operating in the



district.

Elsewhere a skirmish occurred in Kuran Wa Munjan over the reinstatement of a District Chief of Police (DCOP). The fighting took place in the District Area Center (DAC) on March 1st as previous tensions between a former Jihadi commander and the new DCOP escalated into violence. The DCOP had recently been reinstated from Kabul, with provincial authorities believing that he would be able to help keep AOGs from infiltrating into the province.

Lastly, Baharak continued to be a focal point for general insecurity in Badakhshan, accounting for 3 of the 12 incidents this period, with 2 of them including RPG attacks on GOA structures. In total this district has accounted for 12 security incidents this year.

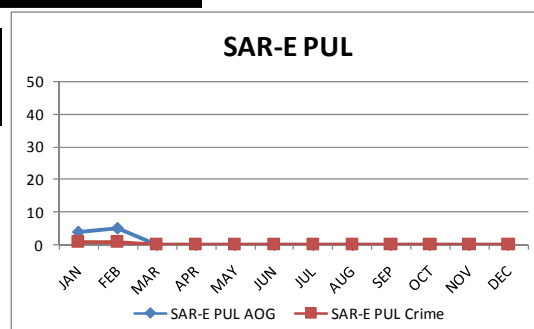
SAR-E PUL

Sar-e Pul witnessed only 6 security incidents this reporting period, with 4 taking place in Sayyad District, an AOG stronghold which was the site of a recent IMF/ANSF operation. The only other incidents took place in Sar-e Pul, and included the discovery of 2 anti-personnel mines cached in the Imam Khord area, and the surrender of 40 AOG members to the GOA on the 11th.

In Sayyad, perhaps the primary stronghold of AOGs operating in the Northwest, 4 incidents took place. Of particular note, on March 8th, 7 AOG members who had joined the peace process last January, and who had later been

	NGO Incidents
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appointed to a pro-government militia in Sayyad District, rejoined an AOG. How the peace process—specifically in the context of *arbakis*—will shift security in the region remains a bit of a question mark, and it is best looked at province to province, district to district, and area to area. With the winter fading, and the harvest and fighting season arriving, individuals who may have joined the peace process as a quick fix for the winter may start abandoning it in order to return to fighting and farming. This has the potential to create a dynamic shift in security throughout the North.



Also in Sayyad, from March 8th to 10th, Qaflatoon Village was the site of a series of skirmishes between AOGs, pro-government militia members, and the ANP. The first took place on the 8th, which led to an AOG attack on Tapai Kamal checkpoint on the 9th. The AOG gained control of this checkpoint, but abandoned it after planting an IED which detonated against an ANP/pro-government militia convoy that had been deployed to recapture the checkpoint on the 10th.

WESTERN REGION

HERAT

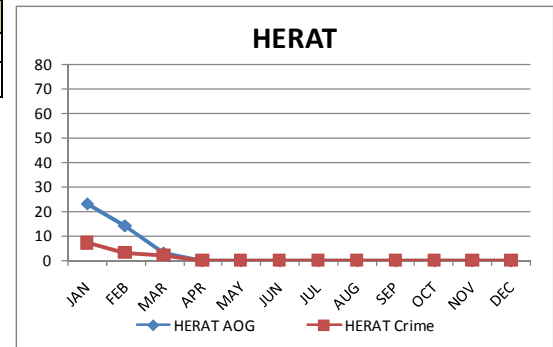
In the past two weeks, Herat Province recorded a decrease in the number of security incidents as compared to the previous cycle. This period, AOG activities were visible in Shindand, Pashtun Zarghun, Obe, Guzara and Chishti Sharif districts. The main road to Obe, which witnessed an illegal check point during the last period, experienced an AOG direct attack. On 4th of March in Robat Akhund Area, AOG assaulted an ANP check point with RPGs and SAF. A prolonged fire fight ensued, which caused the death of one ANP and two AOG members. The AOG eventually managed to overrun the check post, and set it on fire prior to their withdrawal. Another direct attack was reported in Pusht Koh Area of Pashtun Zarghun District on 7th of March, when, during evening hours, AOG attacked an ANP convoy. This attack along with several cases of intimidation of the local population by AOG and their movements in the area urged ANSF to launch a clean up operation on the 9th. The first phase focused on Taqcha, Pusht Koh and Bala Dasht villages, and

	NGO Incidents
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did not result in casualties. However, during the second phase initiated on the 12th of March in Faranjan, Mara Abad, Robat Adham and Fashkan areas of Pashtun Zarghun, four AOG members, one ANA soldier and one ANP were killed and an additional three AOG members and two ANP were wounded. Security forces also detained three AOG members. The definitive impact of the operation in the district will depend largely on the hold phase which is supposed to involve the establishment of ANP check points in the area.

IED related incidents dropped this reporting period, with two reported cases including a detonation in Shindand which targeted an ANP vehicle.

In Herat City, a female ANP recruitment officer was killed in District 7 by two unknown men on motorcycle. Although this style of killing is frequently used against ANP officials across the country and despite the fact that AOGs took the responsibility for the attack, anecdotal reports indicate that the assassination may have



been related to a personal dispute rather than being a genuine AOG attack. A series of unusual occurrences has been reported during the second half of this period. On 12 March in Guzara, three rockets impacted in the Herat Airport area, which marks the first IDF attack against the Herat Airport since February 2010. A day before, on the 11th, a member of the Meshrano Jirga was abducted in Chishti Sharif, Shirkhaj Area on the Herat–Chaghcharan Road. The victim was finally released on 14th of March through the negotiation of elders. Finally, in relatively stable Zinda Jan District, four ANP were wounded in an RCIED strike that occurred during the evening hours on the 14th. Along with the onset of the spring but also along with the announced transition of responsibilities over the security to ANSF in Herat, further increase in activities should not be ruled out, as different armed groups and actors might try to assert their presence in the area.

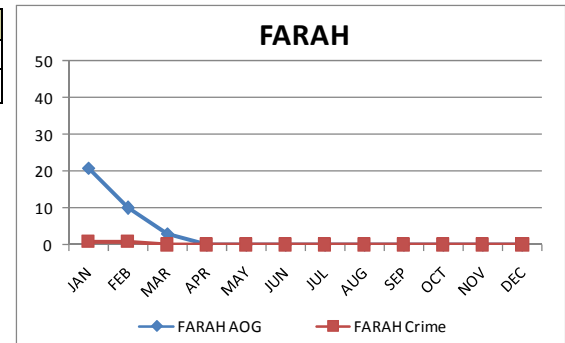
FARAH

The first NGO-direct incident recorded this year was reported in Farah City, Sangezor Area. On 1st of March, NDS conducted an operation and seized two AK 47 and five sets of ANP uniforms from a private residence. Three persons were also arrested in relation to the seizure, including a national staff member of a local NGO. Anecdotal reports suggest the NGO staff member was visiting the home of one of his relatives when the NDS raided the house. Two days later, on 3rd of March, in relation to the first incident, NDS arrested another relative of the said staff who also worked for the same NGO. At the time of writing this report both individuals remain in custody and the investigation is ongoing. In Farah City, also on 3rd of March, security forces conducted a search operation in a private residence in District 4, and arrested five suspected AOG members. In addition to the detention of mentioned suspect, it has been reported that ANSF seized weap-

	NGO Incidents
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ons and two suicide vests.

This reporting period, AOG initiated a various range of incidents in Farah, largely focusing on Pusht Rod District. IED deployment remains prevalent across the province with at least eight incidents recorded. Beside three RCIEDs which were emplaced on a secondary road leading to Farah City and another device that detonated in Dilaram Area of Bakwa District, wounding four PSC guards, five IED incidents took place in Pusht Rod itself. As assessed in the previous report, AOGs continue to focus their efforts on disruption of vehicular movement on the main road leading from Pusht Rod to Farah City. In the past two weeks, three incidents occurred along this road. Of note, Saj Village Area saw two IED strikes involving casualties. On 5th of March, an IED detonated against an IMF convoy and killed an IMF soldier. Another casualty was reported the following day, as a local civilian motor-



cyclist drove into another roadside IED. It should be noted that in Pusht Rod, another target of choice remains the Afghan Local Police (ALP) members. This period in Kharaba Village, AOG opened fire and injured an ALP member. It is worth noting that local AOGs have started to diversify their tactics, as demonstrated by the indirect attack that occurred on 11th of March. Three rockets were fired towards the DAC which, according to ANSO data, marked the first IDF assault since October 2010. Of note, Khaki Safed saw also AOG activity with an IED that detonated inside a school in Khost Villaga, partly damaging the building. Finally, Gulistan District, a well-known AOG area of operations, experienced an attack on an IMF base on the 8th. In conjunction, ANSF activities were rather limited outside Farah Province and in the past two weeks were concentrated mainly on anti-drugs operations.

GHOR

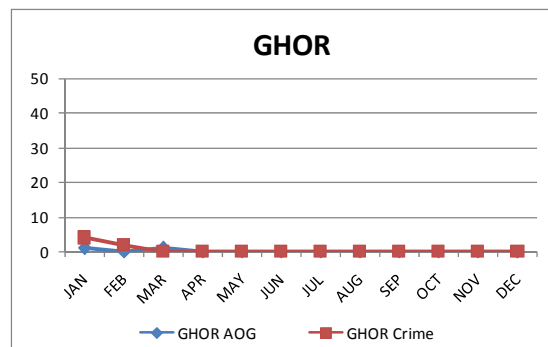
The winter lull in activities continues in Ghor Province with no NGO-direct incidents since October 2010. Nonetheless, in comparison to the last reporting period, an increase in the number of incidents has been reported over the past two weeks, reflected in four incidents. The most notable one occurred on 5th of March on the Chaghcharan-Charsada Main Road in Gurgen Area, when an AOG unit attacked the Charsada District Governor's convoy with small arms fire. Security forces escorting the convoy responded and a brief fire fight ensued. The official escaped the attack unharmed, while one AOG member was killed. This attack triggered the renewal of the long brewing conflict between two tribes in the area which may influence the security situation in the district.

Chaghcharan City experienced an incident of note in District 2, when ANP located an IED emplaced under a bridge on the road

	NGO Incidents
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leading to Kindiwal Village. In line with the seasonal trends, IED deployment during the winter period is a rare occurrence, however Chaghcharan District saw three IED strikes along with eight reported discoveries last year.

In Barakhana Area of Chaghcharan District, tensions persist between the supporters of two local commanders over the theft of a significant amount of sheep. According to reports, various attempts of mediation have been undertaken but have not settled down the divergence. On 1st of March for instance, a delegation led by the Provincial Council Chairman went to the area in order to ease the discussion but failed to broker an agreement. It seems that the perpetrators had proposed to give back a portion of the loot but their proposition was refused by the rival camp as insufficient to conclude the matter. Reportedly, the discussions



revolved around how many sheep have been stolen and therefore how many should be given back. Although no incident has so far been reported in relation to this issue, the situation remains unsolved and has a potential to deteriorate.

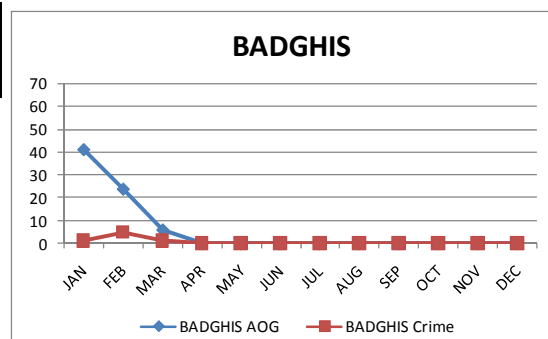
The winter lull also seemingly came to an end in the south of the province. On 14th of March, in Taywara District, an AOG established an illegal check point on the Taywara-Pasaband Main Road, and searched the vehicles for GoA employees. Although there is no indication that the AOG members were looking for NGO employees, as past practise indicates, there are pervasive risks in such circumstances of NGO staff singled out by AOG. Therefore, continuation of low-profile movement is recommended to NGOs travelling through the area.

BADGHIS

Activities in Badghis Province continued at high levels with AOG initiated incidents accounting for almost 50% of all reported incidents. Murghab District remains the focus of AOGs operating in the province, although increased incident volumes have also been observed in Ghormach. It is worth noting that during the present cycle, IED deployment was exclusively concentrated in Murghab District with nine reported incidents of which two devices resulted in detonation. In Tangi Buzbay Area, an IED detonated against an ANSF/IMF joint patrol, causing no casualties. On 12 of March, two IEDs detonated simultaneously targeting an IMF

	NGO Incidents
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convoy, in Nowbor and Passaw Area. No casualties resulted from the attack. It should be underlined that the majority of IED incidents took place in Nowbor (3), Passaw (3) and Tangi Buzbay (2) areas this period. The district saw also four direct attacks against the popular AOG targets, that is ANSF/IMF convoys and facilities. During the first half of this cycle, AOG activity resumed in Ghormach District with direct attacks as the AOG tactic of choice. These were concentrated in Du Abi Area as well as in the proximity of ANP check points located around the District Centre. One occurrence of indirect fire was also reported with a single



rocket fired towards the DAC on the 14th.

Beside AOG activity, several incidents were reported in relation to tribal tensions across the province. Pista Liq Area of Ab Kamari District saw two armed clashes related to land disputes, which resulted in a total of 12 persons wounded. As the issue has not been settled down, further tensions can be expected in the area. In addition, a deadly tribal dispute took place in Muqur, Bahaieha Village, with four locals killed and two wounded.

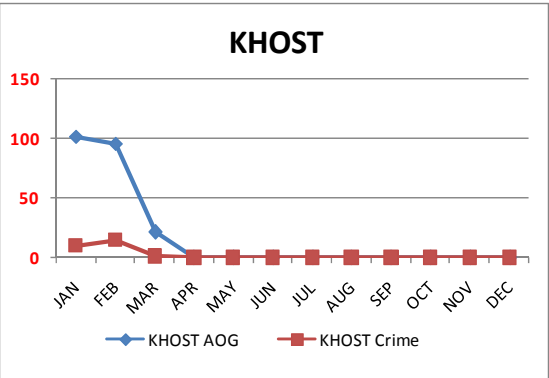
EASTERN REGION

KHOST

With a significant increase in the total number of incidents, Khost continued to be the focus of military conflict in the southeast and the wider border region – with almost twice the number of incidents as its nearest rival, Kunar. Indeed, this period saw a more than doubling of the number of significant IMF operations, from last period’s 16 to this one’s 31. A predictable correlate of this further upping of operational frequency was that the number of AOG fighters detained and killed has also nearly doubled – with 85 detained in this period as opposed to 47 last period, and 7 killed as compared to 4. These operations were overwhelmingly focused on the rural villages of Sabari district (15 of the 31), but more generally were almost entirely contained within the trio of highly volatile districts of Sabari, Bak and Tere Zayi. A handful of those arrested were HQN and HIG commanders/facilitators, although the proportion of such higher-value targets in the overall numbers is lower than in previous periods, partly a function of the short term success of the IMF operations in specifically targeting these figures over the past 4-5 months. Only three IMF operations occurred outside this belt, all in Khost City

	NGO Incidents
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or its environs, one of which appears to have been an anomaly: a March 12th night-time search of the home of the captain of the Afghan national cricket team. The sportsman was not arrested. Another of these operations detained a HQN commander who was based out of a *madrassa*. AOG themselves also demonstrated a partial upping in the frequency of their own operations, focused on IEDs, the combined number of detonations/discoveries jumping from 20 (10/10) last period to 37 (14/23) in this one. However, there was a halving of the number of IDF attacks, from 24 to 12, all but one missing their target, and direct attacks were almost identical – in the high teens – when accounting for the slightly lower number of days in last period. Moreover, no large-scale VBIEDs were witnessed during the period, while in terms of actual infliction of casualties on the IMF and ANSF side, this period saw just 1 ANBP policeman killed. There were also 1 IMF, 6 ANP, 1 ANA and 1 ANBP servicemen injured across five separate incidents – indicating the low proportion of AOG attacks that had direct tactical impacts. The only other casualties of



the period were (self-)inflicted when two PSC guards in Sabari DAC attempted to detonate an IED by shooting at it, which resulted in its detonation as planned, but which injured both of them. In terms of the geographical distribution of AOG-initiated incidents, 15 occurred in Khost City, of all types, while 14 of the 16 that occurred in Sabari did so in the DAC area, evincing a concentrated focus on preventing the highly weak GOA and ANSF presence there from having any room to augment its position. In Tere Zayi, much of the focus was also on the DAC area, particularly around the IMF and ANSF installations in the Chargotay area. While Bak was a focus for IMF, there was not a comparable number of AOG attacks in the district during this period; just two IEDs and two IDF attacks in the DAC area, the latter directed at the IMF/ANA base there. In Gurbuz, all the incidents were clustered along the main road that runs from the DAC across the border to Miranshah, but mostly took the form of IED discoveries by proactive IMF and ANSF.

KUNAR

Kunar continued to be characterised by high levels of armed confrontations between AOG and national and international military forces, with the current pattern of such attacks being shaped to a significant degree by the ongoing relocation of IMF that began to be undertaken during this reporting period. The focal point for this relocation is the Pech valley area of Manogai district, for years the scene of some of the most intense conflict across the country; IMF forces have begun their withdrawal, with at least one base being completely handed over to ANA, and there has been an immediate reaction by AOGs operating in the area and in nearby districts to step up their attacks on the exiting forces, likely in order to secure as favourable a position as possible before the replacement ANA contingents have completed their move into the area.

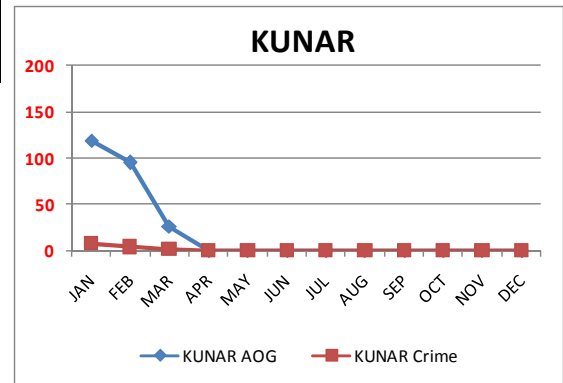
In Manogai itself, there were a number of IDF attacks on IMF bases, particularly in the Wardesh Tangay area, a continuation of last period's pattern of this form of attack in this location, as well as one direct attack on an IMF convoy. However, most significantly, there were multiple abductions in the area, of both ANSF and former employees of the IMF bases there – evincing the enhanced ability of AOG members to operate in the open. As such, the ANA are likely to face a tough immediate future as they take over there, similar perhaps to the situation in neighbouring Chapa Dara. In that district during the latter part of the period, movements into the

	NGO Incidents
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district of foreign AOGs under the command of a Nuristani commander were recorded halfway through the period, with apparent intent to attack the small ANP presence in the DAC; the actual attack came on the 13th, destroying one ANP vehicle.

However, IMF have demonstrated that while they will no longer be permanently located in the area, for now they remain observant of events there and willing to conduct tactical operations against AOGs; on the 14th, with many of their forces having left the area, IMF engaged a number of AOG fighters moving through the area and transporting heavy weapons, which resulted in an as yet unconfirmed number of AOG deaths. This Pech relocation has also meant that up the valley, across the border in Nuristan's Waygal district, the AOG presence there has moving into active planning to take that district, reportedly because they now no longer fear repercussions from the IMF – now that they are no longer nearby (see Nuristan).

Outside of the security dynamic of the northwest of the province, Asadabad City saw its first significant incidents after a pause over recent months. First, there were two kinetic engagements between AOG and IMF/ANSF in the environs of the city on the 10th, and then on the 12th, the morning that President Karzai came to the city as a result of the 9 students killed in Pech by IMF air assets on March 1st, two mortar rounds were fired at the provincial ANP HQ, likely a symbolic gesture but



in practice inaccurate.

Elsewhere, direct attacks again dominated, with 4 in each of Marawara and Sirkanay, as cross-border infiltration continued to be the primary security dynamic in these districts. In Wata Pur, 5 such direct attacks on IMF patrols and ANP CPs occurred, while Bar Kunar was noticeable for its jump in such attacks; from zero during last period, it witnessed 4 in the first two weeks of March, targeting IMF convoys and one ANP patrol. IMF and ANSF fought back to a certain extent, but the number of security force operations was down on recent levels, and there were no significant solo ANSF operations seen during the period.

In Khas Kunar, site of the oldest ALP initiative in the eastern region, a pattern of AOG attacks on ALP members and their IMF SOF supervisors became evident, with two attempts to kill ALP in their homes – one successful – and multiple IDF attacks on the district SOF base. This pattern of targeting of ALP is likely to be repeated across the region's ALP initiatives, and it remains to be seen if the IMF supervisors can adequately support their ALP allies.

For the Jalalabad-Asadabad Road, Chawkay continued to be the point of greatest vulnerability, with the only IED detonation of the period being recorded there, in the Spin Jumat area against an IMF vehicle, causing no reported damage. AOG fighters also attacked an IMF convoy on the Road in Nurgal's Panjshir Naw area.

NANGARHAR

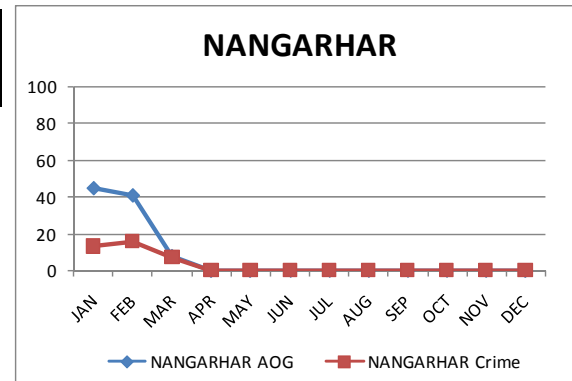
In Nangarhar, a heightened sense of threat continued to be felt within Jalalabad City towards the beginning of the period, with an ongoing credible threat of a follow up complex/suicide attack in the mould of the Kabul Bank attack in February. Reports were received of meetings involving the same networks of local and Waziristani AOGs involved in the February attack, and specific targets for potential attacks were explicitly mentioned, including the Jalalabad Prison and the Spin Ghar Hotel. As a result of these reports, IMF engaged in pre-emptive search operations on the evening of the 5th, targeting local hotels and guesthouses in the city, arresting a number of individuals thought to have been connected to the planning operation. Furthermore, ANSF were standing at heightened alert of the threat of such an operation, with additional forces deployed to key facilities and potential targets. IMF raids continued during the end of the period too, with a commander from the local AOG thought to be intimately involved in planning targeted in a night raid on a house in the Muqam Khan area of Bihsud on the 12th, which also led to the killing of two of his fighters. The immediate threat of such an attack appears to have consequently receded, yet the intent clearly remains on behalf of parts of the AOG landscape in the border region.

The stand-out security incident in the city and province was therefore the twin IED strike in Zone 4's Eidgah Mosque area, which occurred concurrently with a political gathering in the mosque organised by the main opposition politicians in the province – a part of the ongoing efforts to unseat

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the provincial governor. Less than 50m from the gathering of senior opposition figures and allied jihadi commanders inside the grounds of the mosque and attached park, the two IEDs detonated at the intersection that marks the beginning of the Jalalabad-Torkham Road. In spite of the considerable force of each blast – the second one especially so – and the fact that a number of senior ANP officers and civilians were killed or injured in the attacks, the gathering was not abandoned. The pattern of these strikes, coming at the time they did, suggest that a party unrelated to the politic conflict was responsible, out of a desire to benefit from the general disorder caused by the compounding of political and security tensions. Finally, it is worth noting that two PSC vehicles were also struck collaterally in the second blast. Political tensions seemed to quieten down towards the end of the period, but remain a standing concern. Meanwhile, a further IED was discovered in the Eidgah area on March 13th, and as such, with both its proximity to the prison and these recent incidents, this area remains a particular concern for safety within the city limits.

There were 5 further IEDs discovered and defused in the city too, and two further detonations, both in music shops – part of a well-registered pattern. Outside the city, IEDs struck an IMF vehicle on the main Sorkh Rod road to Khogyani, causing no casualties, while an RCIED struck an ANBP vehicle in Chaparhar. The head of the Hesarak ANP CID was killed and two other ANP injured when their vehicle struck an IED in that district, while the Ring Road saw another IED attack on a fuel tanker, this time a



failed one in which the IED did not attach to the target vehicle and instead detonated on the roadside. In all, there was a near identical volume of IEDs as compared with the previous period, and a similar balance between detonations and discoveries.

Furthermore, two other suicide-based attacks were also recorded in the province, one an SVBIED on an IMF convoy in Bati Kot, evidence of the growing AOG focus on security forces in that district. The other was a premature BBIED detonation just outside the Sherzad DAC, the result of a faulty vest. When the Kabul Bank attack is taken into account, this totals a higher and more sustained number of suicide attacks in recent periods, and, when taken together with regional trends, indicates a likelihood that this means of AOG attack will persist through the year. Also in Sherzad, four mortars were fired at the DAC, the only incident in a period of relative calm in this district.

In IMF operations, the focus was on Chaparhar, where 4 relatively minor search operations were conducted, recovering a small number of weapons and ammunition, and eradicating some poppy. They also arrested 4 suspected AOG members in Rodat's Kabul Camp area, non-locals who were likely using the increasingly emphasised AOG transit route from Achin into Rodat and Bati Kot. Finally, there have been intermittent rocket attacks from across the border in Goshta district during the period, which were also seen during February, striking the border town of Anar Kalay repeatedly. It emerged that these rockets were in fact being fired by the PakMil, and the Government of Pakistan subsequently apologised, although the shelling was continuing as of March 14th.

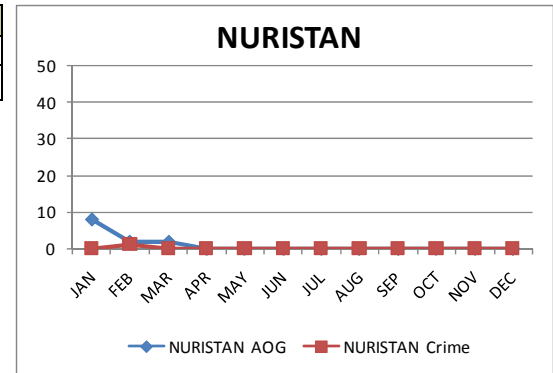
NURISTAN

Each of the incidents that occurred during this period represents an insightful window into the significant changes that continue to take place in a Nuristan now without a physical IMF presence – the PRT at Kala Gosh being recently vacated and currently occupied by just a small ANA contingent. Towards the end of last period and the beginning of this period, reports were received of large numbers of local and foreign AOGs moving into Bargi Matal district and staging themselves in the hills around the DAC, as well as further down the valley. This led to an IDF attack on the ANP facility in the DAC on February 28th, killing one of the ANP officials effectively stranded up there for the winter, as well as a direct attack on an ANBP CP near to the town, again leading to the death of a policeman. The number and composition of the AOG fighters present, as well as these two attacks and other anecdotal evidence – such as more permanent and overt AOG infrastructure – suggest that further such attacks are likely in the near future, with a potential plan to fully overrun the DAC again mentioned, as occurred twice in 2010. Similarly, in nearby Waygal, reports have been received of large numbers of local and foreign AOGs moving into the district and surrounding the DAC area, potentially also in preparation for overrunning the ANSF presence

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there in the near future; local civilians were warned to vacate the area late in the reporting period, to avoid collateral involvement in any fighting. Over the past months, AOG presence in Waygal district has quickly grown stronger, but anecdotal evidence suggests that they did not attempt to take the DAC out of concern of the response of IMF in nearby Pech Valley. However, with the withdrawal of these forces (see Kunar), this is now much less important a consideration. Yet other reporting suggests that all AOGs in Waygal are not united on the plan, indicating that the intra-AOG fighting that has recently been recorded in the district may continue.

Furthermore, in Wama reports were received that AOGs are planning to establish semi-permanent illegal CPs on the main district road in Wama, thereby cutting off the district – and by extension, also the provincial capital Parun – from access by road via Kunar. This is consistent with the increasingly evident longer term AOG priorities in Nuristan this year, and does not bode well for the authority of the GOA or ANSF. Finally, in Kamdesh the ANBP CP in the Gawardesh border area was attacked twice during the period, summing to three such attacks in 2011; this particular area is a key AOG transit route from Pakistan, and as such has been the focal point for attacks in the dis-



trict in the past year. Moreover, on the 14th AOG fighters shot and killed a targeted ANP policeman in the district, amounting to an above-average number of AOG incidents in the district during the period. As the weather improves in the district's eastern border mountains, and AOG continue to consolidate their authority in the eastern and central districts, we are likely to see further such attacks in Kamdesh, perhaps pushing into the district's central valleys.

However, it is not yet clear whether what may become a 'political transition' to AOG authority will have any negative impact on NGO access. While it is often true that foreign AOGs are much less sympathetic to local populations, and thus to the presence of humanitarian organisations, there has been a significant foreign AOG presence in Nuristan for some time now, without any denial of NGO access stemming from this up to now. Moreover, it is thought that the current AOG provincial leadership is primarily Nuristani in ethnic composition, with foreign AOGs adding fighting weight and logistical support rather than vying for authority; as such, this makes it more likely that the AOG disposition in Nuristan will continue to be broadly well-disposed to NGO operations in the remote province.

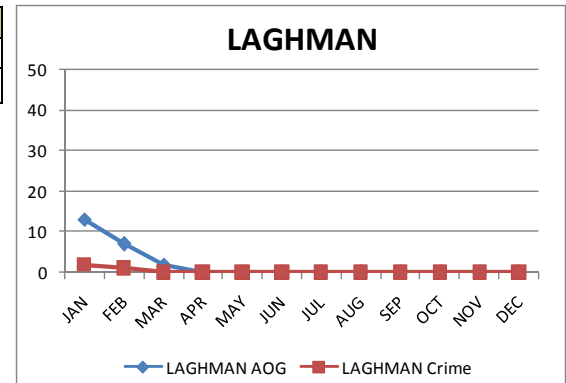
LAGHMAN

Laghman has continued its period of relative calm, with no significant security incidents on the Kabul-Jalalabad Highway, nor NGO incidents, and as such continues to represent a relatively permissive environment. However, on March 15th an IED struck and killed a Provincial Council member as he was driving with his son on the outskirts of the provincial capital, in what appears to have been the most serious assassination of a GOA official since the BBIED attack of September 2009 that killed the Deputy Director of the NDS and the Chairman of the Laghman Provincial Council, as well as 22 others. Moreover, there was a slight increase in incident numbers during the period – although still below the average over the winter – with three further IED detonations recorded, and two other IEDs discovered and defused. Two detonations and one discovery occurred in Alingar, the traditional provincial focus of IED emplacement, particularly the Sangrak valley, where

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one detonation took place, damaging an IMF vehicle; the IED discovery happened in Wati Jabarkhel. The final IED blast occurred just inside Mehtarlam district on the Mehtarlam-Alingar Road, striking an ANA vehicle but causing no significant damage. The remaining kinetic incident took the form of an IDF attack against an unknown target in the Do Shah Khal area of Mehtarlam, again causing no damage or casualties.

Alishing was quiet during the first two weeks of the month, with just one IED discovery recorded. In Mehtarlam district, the Bad Pakh/Garuch valley areas continue to be home to a significant AOG presence, and it is with this fact in mind that the GOA has decided to turn Bad Pakh into a new district – in order to increase the GOA's political and economic presence there, and bring in greater numbers of ANSF. However, it appears that AOGs will also attempt to defend their stronghold, with reports being



received of both Afghan and Pakistani AOG members moving into the area – perhaps part of the reason why Alishing has been relatively quiet. As such, we can expect some conflict there once ANSF move into the area, although the time of the move remains unknown at the present.

With regard to the Highway, towards the end of the period reports were received of AOG members preparing to conduct attacks on ANSF and fuel tankers in the Tangi Abrisham area of the Highway – the traditional focal point for such attacks – and as such the threat of proximity to such actors remains in place. Yet nothing suggests the pattern of attack will change, and as such ANSO's recommendation to only use the Highway between 0900-1500 also remains in place.

PAKTYA

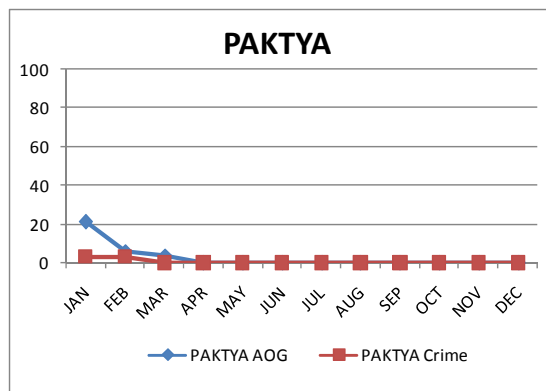
Paktya's cold and quiet winter continued, with a small, varied number of incidents, 19 in all and only 9 of which were attributable to AOG activity. Of all the incidents, the most serious was the killing of a sleeping ANBP official in the ANBP in Jaji by a colleague, who was later detained. It is not clear if this was an act of armed opposition, similar to other recent incidents, for example in Nangarhar, where AOGs have infiltrated arms of the ANSF, or if this was in fact a consequence of some personal enmity. The only other fatal incident recorded in the province was a land dispute in Dand wa Patan, which sparked an exchange of fire between the families involved in the DAC area, leading to the death of one person.

Perhaps the most significant AOG incident that occurred did so in Gardez City's vegetable market area, injuring two civilians. ANSF had been on alert of a potential complex or SVBIED attack on a GOA, ANSF or IMF facility in the provincial capital from early in the month, and so such an IED was not unexpected; three days

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prior to the detonation, on March 5th, ANSF had searched a number of shops in the city, thought to be connected to this threat. What was perhaps surprising was the underwhelming nature of the incident, but the threat of larger such complex/suicide attacks remains in the city. Another AOG incident also took place in Gardez late in the period, in the form of a short direct attack on an IMF convoy in the Banozi area.

Beyond this direct attack two further such attacks occurred, each targeting ANP CPs with SAF and RPGs, one in Jani Khel and one in Zurmat, leading to no reported casualties. In Jaji, two IEDs were discovered, one in the district centre that was defused by IMF, and one in the Rukyan area which was defused by ANP. Also in Jaji, AOG members distributed night letters warning locals not to join ANSF, at the risk of being beheaded; this may be more directly related to the ALP initiatives starting in the area. In Zurmat a suspected HQN facilitator and associates was arrested on the 14th, a day after a significant cache of



weapons, explosives and ammunition was seized in the district – demonstrating the ongoing insecurity in that particular part of the province.

Back in the provincial capital, three other incidents occurred which are worthy of note. First, a family member of a senior GOA official in the city was abducted by unknown men, and at the time of writing remains unaccounted for by the authorities. Abductions were much more common in Paktya in 2007 and 2008, with the number of such incidents dropping considerably in 2009 and 2010 – the last such incident being the kidnapping of four Turkish engineers in Dand wa Patan on December 26th 2010. However, the traditional targets of such abductions, including in Gardez City, have been ANSF and GOA employees, so this latest incident is consistent with the long term pattern of these incidents, which may also be as much related to criminality as to opposition activity.

SOUTHERN REGION

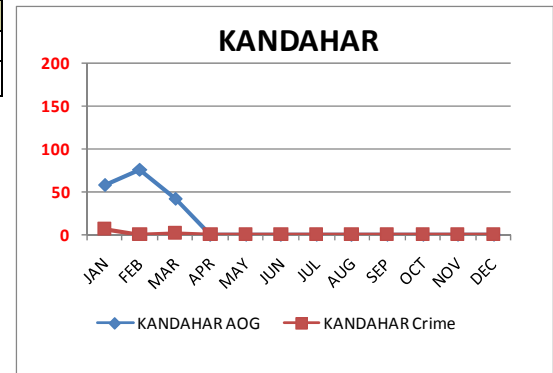
KANDAHAR

Kandahar Province continues to be very insecure particularly in Kandahar City, Panjwayi and Zhari districts, the areas that experienced the vast majority of incidents reported this period. Although the province did not see spectacular attacks, the levels of IED emplacement and AOG initiated direct attacks remain extremely high. Kandahar City sees the majority of IED employment, this reporting period accounted for almost 45% of all IED related incidents (detonations and discoveries altogether). In regards to the incident distribution, the data shows that in the past two weeks District 7 saw eight incidents (including seven IED strikes), District 8 experienced four and District 3, three incidents. Of note, a rather spectacular concentration of IED related incidents was reported in Mirwais Mina Area of District 7, which witnessed four IED strikes itself. There was also a high number of casualties associated with IED deployment in Kandahar City. According to reports, at least two civilians and one IMF soldier were killed, whereas three civilians, four ANP and one IMF soldier were wounded. Outside of the city, the

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most notable incident occurred in Shorabak District, where four civilians were killed while their vehicle hit an IED.

Another feature of this reporting period pertained to the numerous cases of targeted killing. In the past two weeks, three ANP officials were killed (including an ANP servicewomen murdered in District 9) along with one PSC commander and one civilian. Noteworthy, one of the rare failed attempts occurred in District 4, when two AOG members riding on a motorbike opened fire against an off-duty ANP but missed their target. The ANP official responded and killed both attackers. A drastic incident was reported in Zhari District, where an AOG abducted eight civilians working in a reconstruction project in the area. During the captivity, four of them were assaulted and mutilated over the accusation of cooperating with the GOA. Then, all of them were released. As mentioned previously, the province did not experience any spectacular attacks, however on 11th of March, a BBIED attacker was identified while he attempted to gain an entry to the Maydan



DAC. He was subsequently shot and wounded by ANP. In addition, ANSF/IMF have conducted a huge number of operations throughout the province, seizing a significant quantity of weapons and explosive materials. Along with numerous search operations, the eradication campaign led by the Afghan Eradication Forces (AFE) was focused on Zhari and Panjwayi districts. In Kandahar Province, a particular incident attracted media attention. In Karz Area of Dand, on 9th of March, IMF raided a local residence arresting five persons and killing one civilian, who happened to be a relative of the President Karzai. Although the exact circumstances of the incident are not known, the incident highlights the large frustration of the population with night raids and civilian casualties that result from the military operations across the country. In line with this development, the same day in Kandahar, a group of civilians protested against an operation that killed three locals believed to have been AOGs and resulted in detention of three more.

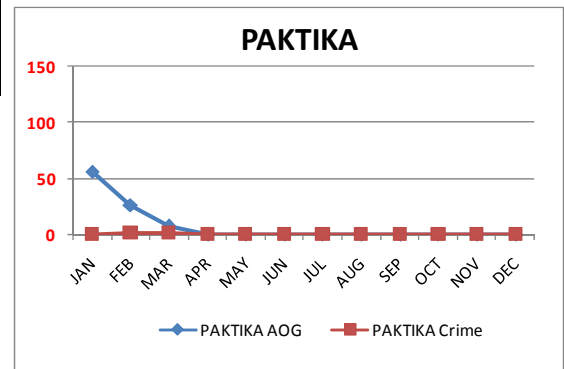
PAKTIKA

Paktika again saw a relatively low number of incidents during this period, as the weather continued to be wintry. However in one especially high-impact incident an IED struck a van full of civilians, killing 12 and wounding another 5, as it was being driven through the Yousaf Narai area of Waza Khwa. This is the second particularly bad civilian casualty incident in Paktika in recent months, after the January 18th roadside IED incident that killed 13 civilians in a Zarang rickshaw in Khushamand. In another civilian casualty incident, AOG fighters shot dead a civilian that they accused of 'spying' for the GOA, while another targeted killing, this time of an ANBP policeman while he walked home, took place in Wor Mamay DAC. The IED in Waza Khwa was one of only two IED incidents during the period; the other IED incident completes the trio incidents involving civilian fatalities, in which two civilians on a motorcycle were killed in the area of the Jani Khel DAC. There were no discoveries of planted IEDs, although an IED was recovered in the Sarobi DAC by IMF during a search operation,

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along with two firearms. As such, the lull in IED incidents recorded over the winter has continued, with numbers indeed falling even on last period's meagre volume of 3.

There were just five direct attacks from AOGs, four of which occurred in Gayan. One targeted the Tillman IMF base, and another two targeted IMF patrols in the environs of the base, one of these incidents leading to the only IMF fatality witnessed in the province during the period. In two further incidents AOG fighters fired mortars at the same base, the projectiles landing outside the perimeter. The final direct attack in Gayan targeted an ANA patrol in the Bader area; in this last incident, two AOG fighters were killed in the exchange of fire, and one ANA soldier wounded. The final direct attack took place in the Shkin area of Barmal, with no casualties reported from the firefight between AOG fighters and an ANA patrol. In the same area on the same day, a mortar was fired at the local IMF/ANA base, but as with most IDF attacks, was inaccurate and of no consequent harm.



Also in Gayan, a firefight between IMF and AOG took place during an IMF search operation in the DAC area, injuring one AOG. Elsewhere, joint IMF/ANSF operations in the Urgun DAC and in Yahya Khel's Mata Khel village led to the arrest of a combined total of 8 AOG fighters. There were also operations in Barmal, Sarobi, Yosuf Khel and Omna, resulting in the combined detention of 3 AOG fighters, the seizure of a small amount of weapons, and the destruction of some AOG communications equipment.

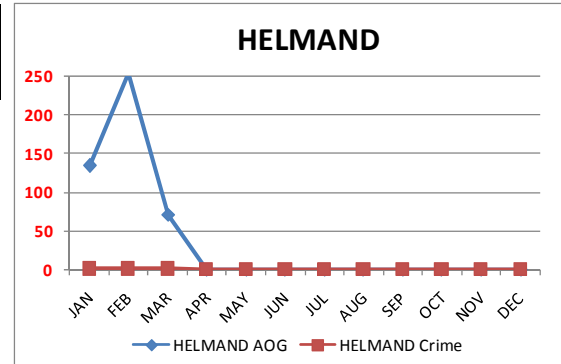
Taking the historical trends of the conflict in Paktika, we can expect that this relatively low volume of security incidents will continue for the rest of the month, before picking up significantly in April and May as AOG members flow back in after the snows have melted, with a particular focus on contesting IMF and ANSF in the eastern districts of Barmal, Gayan, Urgun and Sar Hawza, where IMF are preparing to attempt to prevent cross-border infiltration.

HELMAND

ANSF/IMF operational tempo on one hand, and AOG efforts to assert their presence and capacity on the other hand, contributed once again to an extremely high level of incidents in Helmand over the past two weeks. The vast majority of these incidents affected Nad Ali, Nahri Sarraj and Sangin districts. A glimpse into recorded data shows the prevalence of IED emplacement which represents the major concern in the area. There were at least 45 IED strikes reported across the province this reporting period along with 51 discoveries. ANSF/IMF mobile patrols were frequently the target and besides several vehicles being damaged, one IMF soldier was killed and another two were wounded as a result of these at-

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tacks. AOG initiated direct attacks contributed as well to this extremely high level of recorded incidents, with at least 77 such occurrences recorded during this reporting period. AOG direct attacks took place primarily against IMF patrols. However, an IMF logistical convoy came under an AOG attack in Nad Ali, resulting in three PSC guards wounded. The eradication campaign which started in the province in late February has continued throughout this period. The Afghan Eradication Forces (AEF) conducted several operations in Marja, Nawa-e-Barak Zayi and Nahri Sarraj destroying a large area of poppy fields, in the hope to cut funding for numerous armed groups oper-



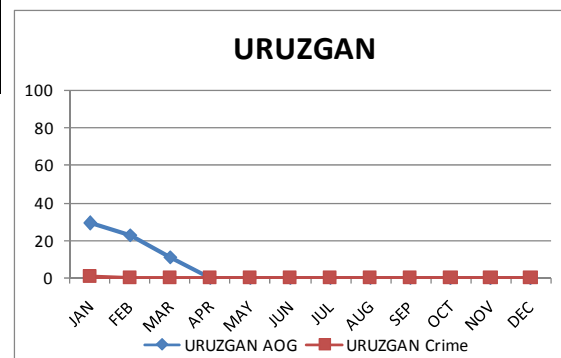
ating in the area. Such campaigns in the past were often confronted with the strong opposition from the local civilians as well as armed elements. It was also a case during this reporting period. On 5th of March in Nahri Sarraj, the AEF repelled an AOG attack, killing one AOG member and arresting another three. In addition to the eradication campaign, ANSF/IMF conducted numerous operations in Sangin, Musa Qala and Lashkar Gah districts. In total, these operations resulted in the reported deaths of 34 AOG members and the detentions of another 17.

URUZGAN

Whereas the incident volumes remained quite similar to the previous period, the number of AOG initiated incidents has continued to increase in Uruzgan. During this reporting period AOG activities affected at the first place Tirin Kot, then Dihrawud and Khas Uruzgan districts. The main concern for NGOs operations remains IED emplacement in the province. In the past two weeks, there were at least 31 IED related incidents, of which 10 devices resulted in detonation. Of note, almost 70% of all reported IED related incidents took place in Tirin Kot District (21 out of 31 incidents). These devices were deployed against various targets: ANP/IMF vehicles but also against a PSC convoy and an

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ANP check post. The most notable incident occurred on 13th of March in Nai Chin Area of Tirin Kot, with an IED strike targeting an ANP vehicle and killing two ANP, and wounding another two. Beside a PSC guard who was wounded in an IED strike in Khanqa Area, this reporting period saw also one civilian casualty. This incident occurred on the 2nd in Surkh Murghab Area and resulted in one local reported to have been wounded. A rather rare diversification in IED deployment was demonstrated with another incident that took place in Khurma Area of Tirin Kot, where a donkey-borne RCIED exploded in the vicinity of an ANP post. In addition, an RCIED strike in Khas Uruzgan resulted in two



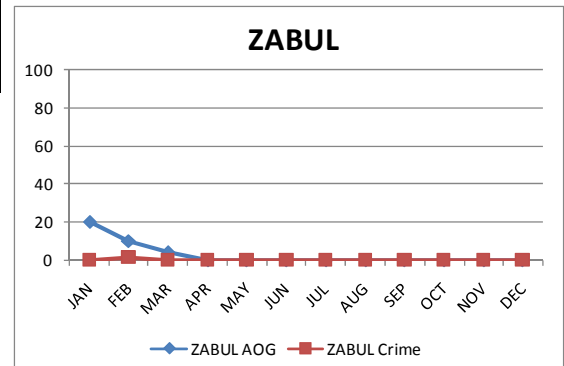
NDS officials wounded. Along with IED emplacement, AOG initiated nine direct attacks during the present cycle. These were focused on Tirin Kot, with seven such events, in addition to two reported in Dihrawud. The majority of these attacks were not associated with casualties.

ZABUL

During this reporting period, the level of security incidents recorded across the province remained in line with the previous cycle. The hotspots of AOG activities in the past two weeks were Shinkay, Tarnak Wa Jaldak and Daychopan districts. Also the low level of AOG direct attacks continued during the present period, with just three such occurrences reported, i.e. one in Tarnak Wa Jaldak, and two in Shinkay. An armed clash was also reported in Shamuzayi District, where during an operation, IMF engaged an AOG, killing two militants. IED emplacement represented the AOG favourite tactics throughout the province with six reported incidents during this reporting period. With the improvement in weather conditions and consequent improvements of road accessibility, the AOGs' efforts to disturb vehicular movement in the province will certainly increase.

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IED deployment this period was geographically diversified. Whereas the first half of the present cycle saw IED discoveries in Mizan, Shahjoy, Qalat, in the second half IED incidents were concentrated in Tarnak Wa Jaldak and Daychopan, with 3 incidents that resulted in detonations. There were two IED strikes against IMF patrols, but the most notable incident occurred on 12 of March in Daychopan District, when one civilian was killed and another four were wounded, while their vehicle struck a roadside IED in Chalar Area. The pattern of targeted killing continued as well this period. On 13 of March, AOG shot and killed an ANP officer in the DAC area of Shahjoy District. This period, ANSF/IMF operations focused on Qalat, Mizan and Shamulzayi districts. Noteworthy, the activities of the security forces in Zabul resulted in several inci-



dents that sparked public protests. In Qalat District, an incident of 'escalation of force' was reported on 7th of March, wounding one civilian. In Shahjoy, two civilians riding on a motorbike failed to heed IMF warnings to stop. Subsequently, the IMF opened fire, killing one of them and wounding another. In addition, a road incident involving PSC guards degenerated into violence and reportedly caused the death of one civilian in Sori District. The locals staged a demonstration but ANSF deployment avoided further confrontation. On a different note, a demonstration erupted over alleged desecration of the Holy Quran in Qalat City on 3rd of March but ended with no reports of violence.

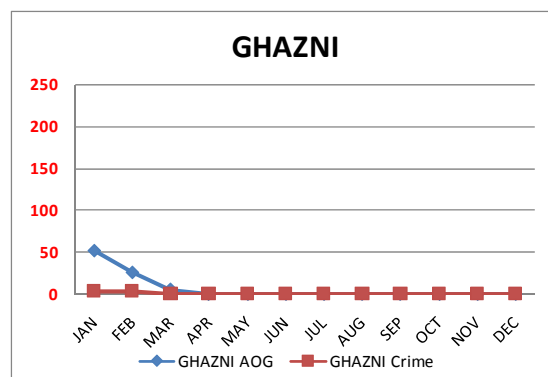
GHAZNI

The seasonal downturn in activity was reflected in 31 incidents reported during this reporting period. The most active districts were Andar, Qarabagh and Ghazni. IED deployment remained limited with two IEDs discovered in Andar and Qarabagh districts. Unlike the PRP, which did not experience any indirect fire attack (IDF), two such events were reported during the present cycle. A rocket detonated in the vicinity of an IMF base in Gelan District Centre. Another IDF incident occurred on 14th of March in Ghazni City, Plan-e-Say Area. Early in the morning, three rockets were fired from Khashak Area (the western part of the city). One rocket impacted in the vicinity of the IEC compound, another detonated close to the ANP HQ in a local shop, and the third one landed in an open area. There were no reports of casualties asso-

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ciated with this attack. It is worth noting that IDF attacks have played a minor role in Ghazni Province since the beginning of 2011, with the bulk of AOG activity consisting of direct attacks. According to ANSO data, there have been five reported incidents related to the IDF throughout the province so far this year, with two attacks in Ghazni, two in Muqur and one in Giro District. The most recent incident was reported on 5th of February 2011 in the latter district, when AOG fired two mortar rounds towards an IMF convoy.

This reporting period also experienced nine AOG direct attacks; the figure represents an increase as compared to the previous report. Also this cycle, the targeting patterns of these attacks were more varied. Four of them targeted ANP check posts located in



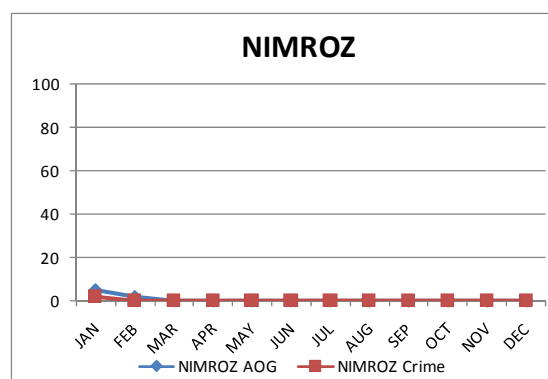
Khawaja Umari, Andar and Qarabagh. In addition, the last two districts witnessed attacks on IMF and PSC vehicles. Finally, the Ajristan and Zana Kah DACs came under AOG attack respectively on 9th and 14th of March, which serve as reminder that before the winter lull DACs in Ghazni were one of the AOG favourite targets. Another issue that should be closely monitored by NGOs operating in the province will be the impact of the transition of security to ANSF in Lashkar Gah City on the security environment in the area. Rather surprisingly Lashkar Gah has been announced along with Herat and Mazar-e-Sharif as the first areas to experience the transfer of security responsibilities to ANSF.

NIMROZ

Similar to the trend that had been observed during the same period last year, the overall incident levels remained low in Nimruz, with six cases reported during this cycle. Khash Rod District remained the main area of concern, experiencing 80% of all reported incidents. Whereas late February saw five IED related incidents (four discoveries that occurred in Khash Rod and one device that resulted in detonation, killing one civilian

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

in Haji Habib Village of Kand District), this rate has dropped sharply with only one IED related incident reported in the Khash District during the present period. A worrying development was reported on 11th of March in Razea Afghani Village, where AOG beheaded two civilians for motives which have not been revealed. The victims worked in a bakery in the Khash Rod Bazaar. Ulti-



mately, ANBP reported the arrest of three ANP officials who were carrying 50 kg of opium in an ANP vehicle.



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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 / **PDO**-
Private Development Organisa-
tion / **ALP**-Afghan Local Police
/ **LDI**-Local Defence Initiative /
IEA-Islamic Emirate of Afghani-
stan (Taliban) / **PSG**-Provincial
Shadow Governor (IEA) / **DSG**-
District Shadow Governor (IEA)

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MISSING

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

➔ BAMIYAN

This is because we
do not know enough
about current activity
in the area to com-
ment.

If you can help us
understand the prov-
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