

TAC NEWS

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OBJECTIVE: KANDAHAR!

An Overview of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan - April 2010

"... we will pursue the following objectives within Afghanistan. We must deny al Qaeda a safe haven. We must reverse the Taliban's momentum and deny it the ability to overthrow the government. And we must strengthen the capacity of Afghanistan's security forces and government so that they can take lead responsibility for Afghanistan's future..."

*President Barack Obama
West Point: 1 December 2009*

With the announcement of an increase of 30,000 American combat troops to reinforce the International Security Assistance Force, delivered before the Corps of Cadets at the United States Military Academy, the near decade-long struggle in Afghanistan entered a new phase. In this issue of *Tacnews* we will review the international land forces, and provide an introductory overview of the evolving tactical situation.

An excellent primer on the political and military background of the theatre of operations is available though GHQ's modern 'Country Studies:' <http://www.ghqmodels.com/pdf/01Afghanistan.pdf>. That piece, however, was written by John Fernandes in 2002: since then the situation on the ground has changed in several significant ways. Both Coalition Forces and the Taliban have learned from experiences in Operation Iraqi Freedom. On the insurgent side, there has been an expanded use of suicide bombers, frequently car bombers, and a much wider campaign of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). In 2009, an average of 22 a day were planted! One American General commented, "An enemy that can generate 8,000 IEDs and bring 8,000 IEDs to bear and have a major effect, we ought to hire the J-4, the logistician."

To counter these threats, ISAF had deployed 1,600 mine-protective vehicles (MRAPs). The deployment of unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) has assisted ISAF leaders and intelligence officers to better monitor and occasionally target Taliban targets.



A more significant change in Taliban strategy has been the increase in troop concentrations in southern Afghanistan, particularly in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. By 2006 Taliban leaders were training young enthusiastic *Madrasahs* students in Pakistan in the basics of guerilla warfare, and slowly infiltrating them over the porous borders in ever increasing numbers. In the summer of that year, Canadian troops of Task Force Orion, acting on tips from Afghan National Police intelligence, encountered noticeably larger enemy concentrations in the Panjwayi Valley west of Kandahar. The police had liberally passed out free cell phones to locals, and those friendly with government/coalition troops would report suspicious activities. In the subsequent battles, the 1st Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry took more casualties, and earned more decorations than any Canadian unit since the

continued on page 4

INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE SECURITY FORCE

LAND COMBAT FORCES

APRIL 2010

<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Where</u>
International Security Assistance Force / United States Forces - Afghanistan	(Gen. Stanley McChrystal, USA)	ISAF Headquarters, Kabul
Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command - Afghanistan	(Brig. Gen. Austin Miller, USA)	Kabul
Combined Operations Task Force Afghanistan (USA) Special Operations Task Force (USA) Special Operations Task Force (USA) Special Operations Task Force (USA)		Bagram Airfield operating in RC-East and RC-North operating in RC-South operating RC-West
NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan / Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan 2 - 22 Infantry	(Lt. Gen. William Caldwell, USA) (Lt. Col. Mike Loos, USA)	Camp Phoenix, Kabul Kabul Military Training Center responsible for Afghan army and police training centers
ISAF Joint Command / V Corps Regional Command Capital Turkish Battle Group	(Lt. Gen. David Rodriguez USA) (Brig. Gen. Levent Colak, Turkey)	Kabul International Airport Camp Warehouse, Kabul operating in southern Kabul
Regional Command - North/ Airmobile Brigade I Quick Reaction Force (Germany)	(Brig. Gen. Jurgen Setter, Germany)	FSB Marmal, Mazar e Sharif FSB Marmal, Mazar e Sharif; operating in Kunduz area
Regional Command West/ Sassari Mechanized Brigade 1st Bersaglieri Regiment 151st Mechanized Infantry Regiment 152nd Mechanized Infantry Regiment	(Brig. Gen. Alessandro Velti, Italy) (Col. Francesco Mario Ceravolo, Italy) (Lt. Col. Sossio Andreottola, Italy) (Col. Roberto de Masi, Italy)	FSB Herat operating in Herat province operating in Herat province Camp El-Alamein; operating in Farah province
ANSF Development Assistance Bureau Task Force Fury / 4th BCT. 82nd Airborne Division 4-73rd Airborne Cavalry 1-508 Parachute Infantry 48th BCT 1-121 Infantry 2-121 Infantry	(Brig. Gen. Larry Dudley, USA) (Col. Brian Drinkwine, USA) (Lt. Col. Mike Wawrzyniak, USA) (Lt. Col. David Oclander, USA) (Col. Lee Durham, USA) (Lt. Col. Matt Smith, USA) (Lt. Col. Kenny Payne, USA)	Camp Phoenix, Kabul Kandahar Airfield advising Afghan forces in RC-South; and RC- West Farah; advisors in RC-West Zabul; advisors in RC-South Camp Phoenix, Kabul advising Afghan forces in RC-East and RC-North Camp Clark, Khost; advisors in southern RC-East U/I location; advisors in RC-North
Regional Command - East / 82nd Airborne Division (Maj. Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, USA) Task Force Bayonet / 173rd Airborne BCT 1-91 Airborne Cavalry 1-503 Airborne Infantry Task Force La Fayette / 27th Mountain Infantry Brigade 2nd Foreign Parachute Regiment (France) 13th Alpine Chasseurs Battalion (France) Task Force Mountain Warrior / 4th BCT, 4th Infantry Division 2-12 Infantry 3-61 Cavalry 1-108 Cavalry 1-221 Cavalry 2-503 Airborne Infantry	(Maj. Gen. Curtis Scaparrotti, USA) (Col. James Johnson, USA) (Lt. Col. Paul Fellingner, USA) (Lt. Col. Matt McFarlane, USA) (Brig. Gen. Marcel Druart, France) (Col. Randy George, USA) (Lt. Col. Brian Pearl, USA) (Lt. Col. Robert Brown, USA) (Lt. Col. Randall Sirmnrons, USA) (Lt. Col. Scott Cunningham, USA) (Lt. Col. Bill Butler, USA)	Bagram Airfield FOB Shank, Logar; responsible for Logar and Wardak provinces FOB Shank; operating in Logar FOB Airborne; operating in Wardak FOB Nijrab, Kapisa; responsible for Kapisa province and Surobi district operating in Surobi district operating in Kapisa province Jalalabad Airfield; responsible for Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, and Nuristan provinces ("N2KL") FOB Blessing, Pech; operating in central Kunar FOB Bostick, Naray; operating in Nuristan FOB Hughie, Jalalabad; operating in Nangarhar FOB Mehtar La; operating in Laghman FOB Joyce; operating in southern Kunar

AFGHANISTAN ORDER OF BATTLE

LAND COMBAT FORCES APRIL 2010

<u>What</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Where</u>
Task Force Rakkasan / 3rd BCT, 101st Airborne Division	(Col. Viet Luong, USA)	FOB Salerno, Khowst responsible for Khowst, Paktya and Paktika provinces
1-33 Cavalry	(Lt. Col. Stephen Lutsky, USA)	FOB Gardez; operating in Paktya
1-187 Infantry	(Lt. Col. Rob Harman, USA)	FOB Orgun; operating in eastern Paktika
3-187 Infantry	(Lt. Col. Dave Fivecoat, USA)	FOB Sharana; operating in western Paktika
Task Force White Eagle / 21st Mountain Brigade	(Col. Janusz Bronowicz, Poland)	FOB Ghazni responsible for Ghazni province
Battle Group Alpha	(Lt. Col. Zenon Brzuszkzu, Poland)	FOB Ghazni; operating in Ghazni province
Regional Command - South / 6th Division	(Maj. Gen. Nick Carter, UK)	Kandahar Airfield
Task Force Helmand / II Light Brigade	(Brig. James Cowan, UK)	Camp Lashkar Gah responsible for northeastern Helmand province
Household Cavalry	(Lt. Col. Harry Fullarton, UK)	Camp Musa Qala: operating in Musa Qala
I Coldstream Guards	(Lt. Col. Toby Gray, UK)	operating in Babaji area
I Grenadier Guards	(Lt. Col. Roly Walker, UK)	FOB Shawqat; operating in Nad-e-Ali
I Royal Anglian Regiment	(Lt. Col. James Woodham)	Camp Lashkar Gah; - police advisors
I Royal Welsh	(Lt. Col. Nick Lock, UK)	operating between Babaji and Nad-e-Ali
2 Yorkshire Regiment	(Lt. Col. David Colthrup, UK)	Camp Tombstone; army advisors
3 Rifles	(Lt. Col. Nick Kitson, UK)	FOB Jackson; operating in upper Sangin valley
I Royal Life Guards	(Col. Fleming Mathiasen, Denmark)	FOB Price; operating in Gereshk area
Task Force Kandahar	(Brig. Gen. Daniel Menard, Canada)	Kandahar Airfield responsible for Kandahar city and environs
I Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry	(Lt. Col. Jerome Walsh, Canada)	operating in Panjwayi
1-12 Infantry	(Lt. Col. Reik Anderson, USA)	FOB Wilson; operating in Zhari
2-508 Parachute Infantry	(Lt. Col. Guy Jones, USA)	operating in Arghandab
Task Force Leatherneck / 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade	(Brig. Gen. Larry Nicholson, USMC)	Camp Leatherneck (Bastion) responsible for Farah and southern and western Helmand
Task Force Raider	(U/I Lt. Col., USMC)	strike force operating throughout Helmand
4th LAR Battalion	(Lt. Col. Michael Martin, USMC)	operating in Khan Neshin area
Regimental Combat Team 2	(Col. Paul Kennedy, USMC)	Camp Delaram II, Farah responsible for eastern Farah and northwestern Helmand
3/4 Marines	(Lt. Col. Martin Wetterauer, USMC)	operating in Farah and Now Zad
Regimental Combat Team 7	(Col. Randy Newman, USMC)	Camp Dwyer, Garmshir responsible for southern Helmand
2/2 Marines	(Lt. Col. James McDonough, USMC)	FOB Uelhi; operating in Garmshir
1/3 Marines	(Lt. Col. Matt Baker, USMC)	Camp Geronimo; operating in Nawa
1/6 Marines	(Lt. Col. Cal Worth, USMC)	operating in southern Marja
3/6 Marines	(Lt. Col. Brian Christmas, USMC)	operating in northern Marja
Task Force Uruzgan, 11th Airmobile Brigade	(Brig. Gen. Marc van Uhm, Netherlands)	Camp Holland, Tarin Kowt responsible for Uruzgan province
6th Royal Australian Regiment	(Lt. Col. Jason Blain, Australia)	Camp Holland. Tarin Kowt
13th Airmobile Infantry Battalion	(Lt. Col. Wagemakers, Netherlands)	Camp Holland; operating around Tarin Kowt
Special Operations Task Group (Australia)		Camp Holland; operating around Tarin Kowt
Task Force Stryker / 5th Stryker BCT, 2nd Infantry Division	(Col. Harry Tunnell IV, USA)	Kandahar Airfield operating along Highway One in Helmand, Kandahar, and Zabul
2-1 Stryker Infantry	(Lt. Col. Jeff French USA)	FOB Ramrod, Maywand; operating west of Kandahar
8-1 Stryker Cavalry	(Lt. Col. William Clark, USA)	FOB Spin Boldak; operating near Pakistani border
1-17 Stryker Infantry	(Lt. Col. Jon Neumann, USA)	FOB Frontenac, Shah Wali Kot; operating east of Kandahar
4-23 Stryker Infantry	(Lt. Col. Burton Shields, USA)	FOB Price, Gereshk; operating in Helmand
Task Force Zabul / 33rd Mountain Battalion	(Lt. Col. Karl Slaughenaupt, USA; U/I Romanian colonel)	FOB Lagman. Qalat operating in Zabul

Korean War. They also managed to break up a concentration that apparently had hoped to make a lightning attack on Kandahar to seize important government facilities at least long enough for major TV coverage - an obvious attempt to reprise the media storm following the Vietnam War's Tet Offensive in 1968. A similar Taliban operation took and held the market in Lashikar Gah, Helmand, late in January 2009.

An analysis of the Canadian operations shows other changes in Taliban planning. When insurgent forces find a locale that they intend to defend, their preparations are becoming quite extensive. Knowing that ISAF rules proscribe bombing built-up areas, lest civilian casualties occur, these areas are preferred. In 2007, when elements of I Royal Canadian Regiment returned to a battlefield from the previous year near Bayanzi, the defenses had been augmented by trenches, fortified buildings, fences and treelines, and larger-than-normal stockpiles of ammunition. They had also augmented their usual light weapons with 81mm recoilless rifles.

Similar insurgent concentrations have been occurring in both Kandahar and Helmand provinces in recent years. This spring's operations around Marjah, Helmand province, was designed to both recover that town from insurgent control, and to neutralize the cash-cow for the Taliban, Helmand's opium poppy crop. 2,500 US Marines and 1,500 Afghan soldiers participated in the operation. While insurgents still fight as they did in the past, cadre units are better equipped, dressed and armed. Some, nicknamed "Taliban Cavalry," are riding on motorbikes purchased in Pakistan, augmenting the ubiquitous Toyota 4x4 pick-up.

Neutralizing the build up areas in Zobal, Dand, Panjawai, Khakrez, and Arghandab will hold the key to seizing the summer 2010 prize: Kandahar. Marjah (pop. +/- 85,000) was a trail run. "Kandahar means Afghanistan. If we have a peaceful Kandahar, we will have a peaceful Afghanistan," Tooryalai Wesa, governor of Kandahar province, said in an interview. "The history and politics of Afghanistan is always determined from Kandahar." 12 times as many people live there.

Note: Army sources tell GHQ that the exact vehicular

makeup of any given team is dictated by the mission and available equipment, rather than the 'standard' TO&E. MRAPs frequently replace Bradleys, and M-ATVs are replacing Hummers as quickly as they arrive in theatre.



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|-----|------------|-----|-----------|
| 1. | Badakhshan | 20. | Laghman |
| 2. | Badghis | 21. | Logar |
| 3. | Baghlan | 22. | Nangarhar |
| 4. | Balkh | 23. | Nimruz |
| 5. | Bamyan | 24. | Nurestan |
| 6. | Daykundi | 25. | Oruzgan |
| 7. | Farah | 26. | Paktia |
| 8. | Faryab | 27. | Paktika |
| 9. | Ghazni | 28. | Panjshir |
| 10. | Ghor | 29. | Parvan |
| 11. | Helmand | 30. | Samangan |
| 12. | Herat | 31. | Sare Pol |
| 13. | Jowzjan | 32. | Takhar |
| 14. | Kabul | 33. | Wardak |
| 15. | Kandahar | 34. | Zabol |
| 16. | Kapisa | | |
| 17. | Khost | | |
| 18. | Konar | | |
| 19. | Kunduz | | |

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