

Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF): Training and Development

ANSF meets targets

The current strength of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) is over 306,000 (over 170,500 Afghan National Army and over 135,500 Afghan National Police). In June 2011, the Security Standing Committee of the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board agreed on an increase of the Afghan National Army (ANA) growth target to 195,000 by November 2012 and for the Afghan National Police (ANP) to 157,000 by November 2012. Since November 2009, 112,000 soldiers and policemen have been added to the force.

At the Kabul Conference in July 2010, President Karzai publicly expressed his ambition to see the ANSF in the lead in conducting security operations across Afghanistan by the end of 2014, which will be the end of his second term. This is an Afghan ambition which NATO applauds and fully supports. On 22 March 2011, President Karzai announced the first Afghan provinces and districts to start the transition of security responsibility, in 7 areas where the ANSF has been assessed as capable of shouldering additional security tasks with less assistance from the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). The second set of provinces to enter the transition process is due to be announced in October 2011. As the ANSF takes on more responsibility in these areas, ISAF will shift to a more supporting and training role.

Afghan National Army and Air Force

The Afghan National Army is comprised of six Corps Headquarters and a Capital Division. Over 90% of Afghan Kandaks (Battalions) are partnered with ISAF units.

The ANA was, by necessity, originally built as an infantry-centric force. However, over the past year, the NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan (NTM-A) has focused on helping the Afghans develop enabling capabilities - such as military police, intelligence, route clearance, combat support, medical, aviation, and logistics - needed to provide the ANA fighting elements with the necessary support functions. Training schools and Afghan National Security University Branch Schools - all 12 of which are now functioning - are also cornerstones of ANA development.

Created in 2007, the Afghan Air Force (AAF) currently numbers nearly 4700 personnel and 59 aircraft, including 33 Mi-17, 11 Mi-35 helicopters, 12 C-27 and 3 CT-182T. It is on its way to becoming a professional, operationally capable and sustainable force of 145 aircraft and more than 8,000 personnel by 2016. Airlift and air power are essential elements of the Afghan counter-insurgency, while combined helicopter gunship and, eventually, light (close) air support, fixed wing capability will allow Afghan security forces to conduct largely independent operations. The Afghan Air Force has also established an airborne medical evacuation capability, providing specialised emergency medical care in remote areas. In addition, search and rescue operations allow life-saving help to reach victims of natural disasters, such as following the Salang Pass avalanche and during the floods in Kandahar. Meanwhile, the airlift of government leaders into remote provinces provides a valuable link to rural communities while giving the population a chance to have their voices heard. Work is ongoing to recruit, train and employ Afghan personnel to allow the transition of aviation functions from ISAF and ISAF nations to the Afghan authorities.

Afghan National Police

The primary branches of the Afghan National Police include:

- The Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) is the police force designed to provide basic law and order services to the people in villages and districts. They are assigned to Police Districts and Provincial and Regional Commands. The AUP also includes Traffic Police, Fire and Rescue and a United Nations Protective Force. The current AUP end strength is approximately 96,400 personnel.
- The Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) is the premiere counter-insurgency (COIN) force. It is a nationally deployable police force that works closely with the Army as part of its COIN mission and maintains the rule of law and order utilising proportionate armed capabilities. There are approximately 12,400 ANCOP.
- The Afghan Border Police (ABP) provides the Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) with a general law enforcement capability at international borders, entry points and in the Border Security Zone, which extends 50 km into Afghan territory. In addition, the ABP controls pedestrian and vehicular traffic at border crossing points, deters and detects illegal entry and other criminal activity along the border, and is responsible for airport security at five international airports. ABP currently numbers 20,400 of the total police forces in Afghanistan.
- The Government of Afghanistan established an Afghan Local Police (ALP) force in August 2010 under the control of the Ministry of Interior. The ALP is an Afghan-led programme, which provides community based security in areas with little or no ANSF presence. ALP is established in selected areas with the full approval of the local populace and following validation by the Afghan Government. ALP recruits are vetted and approved by local shuras (committees) and district police chiefs.



Afghan National Army soldiers parade during the Transition ceremony in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province



Afghan National Police

ALP sites are partnered with international forces and monitored by the local shura, the District Chief of Police, District and Provincial Governors and the Ministry of Interior. Essentially ALP provides for small, community-based self-defence units under the MoI's chain of command, represented by the District Chief of Police. The units are representative of, and accountable to, the community, and have no arrest or investigative authorities.

The NTM-A mission supports the development of self-sustaining institutions. The MoI opened the Afghan Border Police School and is working to open a National Police Staff College, for which EUPOL provides vital oversight and trainers. Additionally a National Police Training Centre will open in Wardak and the ANP Academy will reopen in Kabul for a 3-year programme, in March 2012.

“Quantity is important, but quality is imperative.”

Over the course of the past year, NTM-A has placed a greater emphasis on quality. Five areas of particular qualitative improvement have been ANSF leader development, training the Afghan trainers, inculcating an ethos of stewardship, building literacy and vocational skills, and developing enduring institutions, systems, and enablers.

Leader Training: NTM-A and the Afghan security ministries have made leader development their number one priority and have made significant progress in developing leaders through a combination of officer and non-commissioned officer (NCO) training programs. Since November 2009, the ANSF has trained nearly 50,000 officers and NCOs through a variety of leadership courses. Additionally, leadership institutions, such as the Afghan National Military Academy and the Afghan National Police Academy have been established in Afghanistan to provide the ANSF with a longer term self-generation capability.

Training the Trainers: Developing the quality of Afghan trainers is critical to moving the training mission toward transition. The aim is to have Afghans in the lead by training trainers as well as recruits. Building a train-the-trainer system is part of an effort to create a self-generating and self-sustaining system that can be maintained by the Afghan Ministries of Interior and Defence.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) and Ministry of Interior (MoI) have made significant progress over the past year in being able to train, and thereby generate their own forces. The MoD, in partnership with NTM-A, trained and certified 1396 ANA instructors to lead army training. Similarly, the MoI trained and certified 453 ANP instructors to lead police training.

Inculcating an Ethos of Stewardship: The ANA and ANP have been conducting 100% inventories of vehicles, weapons, and night-vision devices over the past several months and establishing national property books to track and maintain equipment. They have also been conducting a 100% inventory of all personnel for the past six months. This personnel inventory reflects a growing awareness that people are a scarce and valuable commodity, whom leaders must care for properly in order to retain. Personnel within the ANSF are also being trained in vocational skills such as maintenance, facility engineering and driver training that will enable them to maintain equipment and infrastructure so that it endures well beyond the process of transition.

Building Literacy and Vocational Skills: Literacy is the critical enabler. In 2009, there was no mandatory literacy training programme and 86% of new recruits were illiterate. Since then, over 134,000 ANSF have received some form of literacy training and nearly 116,000 soldiers and police have passed 1st, 2nd, or 3rd grade literacy exams. It is projected that over half of the ANA and ANP enlisted members and NCOs will be literate to at least first grade level by November 2011. Additionally, all 12 ANA specialty schools have opened and each of these schools is now capable of developing the vocational skills that are needed to manage and sustain institutions, infrastructure, and systems.

Developing Enduring Institutions, Systems and Enablers: NTM-A and the security ministries are working to build their capacity to generate and sustain their own forces. This requires institutions that the ANSF are

capable of operating and maintaining with minimum coalition oversight. Currently, there are a total of 256 training, logistics, personnel, intelligence, communications, and medical institutions in various stages of development, which are being linked together to form systems from the tactical level to the strategic (ministerial) level. The independent functionality of these institutions and systems – with leaders and trained personnel to manage, steward, and sustain them – will be a priority to ensure that the ANSF endures beyond the process of transition of security lead to the ANSF.

Recruitment and Vetting

“The goal of the vetting process is to deny the insurgents the anonymity they need”
– Lt Gen Caldwell, Commander NTM-A

Recruitment follows an 8-step vetting process. Upon signing an enlistment contract agreement, the recruit must get two individuals (village elder, Mullah, or other local government representative) to sign and vouch for the recruit. These individuals are held responsible if any discrepancy in the contract is found. The recruit's paperwork and government ID is reviewed and basic biometric and medical information (Iris scan, fingerprints, height, age, and weight) is collected, added to the recruit's personnel file and accompanies the recruit to training. The biometric data is then checked to see if the individual has any known criminal or insurgent links. Recruits are also tested for drugs - approximately 6% of applicants are screened out for either drug use or medical conditions. Also currently ongoing is a nation-wide programme to screen and re-validate every ANSF member already in service. It is envisaged that this screening will be completed by spring 2012.

NTM-A has also been conducting an Afghan-initiated counter-intelligence (CI) training programme with the ANSF for the past 16 months. The ANA nearly doubled its counter-intelligence manning over the past year. The increase was driven by an ANSF-led initiative in response to a perceived threat from insurgents who attempt to infiltrate. Of note, five additional CI positions were added in support of the National Military Hospital. Through support from the US Army Intelligence Center of Excellence, 73 percent of the total ANA CI authorized personnel will be trained by December 2011. One hundred percent of ANA CI will be trained by April 2012.

While there are known incidents of ANSF soldiers or policeman opening fire on ISAF troops due to combat stress or personal animosity, it is worth noting that to date, there are no known cases in which a recruit has joined the ANSF – or was directed by Taliban to join – with the express intent to harm coalition forces. However, there may have been incidents where ANSF members were co-opted by the Taliban after joining. More common is insurgent impersonation of ANSF soldiers and policemen, since ANSF uniforms are readily available on the black market. However, the Afghan government has launched an initiative to counter this, confiscating uniform items from shops and threatening to arrest those who sell them. Further, training has increased allowing Afghan leaders to better recognise signs of combat stress, and the introduction of more predictable leave and deployments for ANSF soldiers and police has helped in this regard.

Retention and Attrition

Reducing attrition is essential for the long-term viability of the ANSF, especially with respect to retaining quality personnel. If total strength objectives are increased in the future, attrition must be reduced even further. Average monthly attrition rates are 2.6% in the ANA and 1.29% in the ANP. The ANSF's goal is to reach an attrition rate of less than 1.4%. On average, the ANSF consistently gets 6,000-9,000 recruits every month.

A Representative Force

There are approximately 1,500 women in uniformed positions across the Afghan National Security Forces, which comprises less than 1% of Afghan army and police personnel strength. However, this remains a historic milestone for the Afghan women who up until just 10 years ago had been deprived of their basic rights. Considerable efforts have also been invested

in building an inclusive army that provides a cadre of women soldiers and reflects the overall ethnic make-up of the country. The ANP has just over 1,200 women in the ranks. Currently there are 320 women in the ANA, of which 215 are officers, and five female pilots in the Afghan Air Force. The Ministry of Defence has developed a special recruitment drive to increase the level of southern Pashtun participation. This has been on a constant rise, representing approximately 3% of new ANA recruits since April 2010.



Afghan National Police being trained by Czech Military Police

Training Continues in the Field

While the NTM-A Commander focuses on training the initial recruits and building ANSF institutional training capability, the development of Afghan soldiers and policemen continues in the field after they graduate. The ISAF Joint Command (IJC) Commander is responsible for developing fielded ANSF through Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) and Police OMLTs (POMLTs). Placing these teams under the operational command reduces overall risk as ISAF forces can more effectively respond to emergency situations involving mentoring teams who are attached to ANSF units.

NATO's Mentoring Teams

OMLTs and POMLTs are an important part of NATO-ISAF's contribution towards the development of the ANSF. Each POMLT and OMLT is normally deployed with an Afghan unit for a minimum of six months.

OMLTs provide a bridge from the collective training received at the Kabul Military Training Centre to follow-on training in the field. OMLTs consist of 11-28 personnel (depending on the type and function of the ANA unit with which it is partnered) from one or several countries. Nations contributing OMLTs, as of 28 September 2011, are:

- Albania: 1
- Australia: 6
- Belgium: 1
- Bulgaria: 4
- Croatia: 3
- Czech Republic: 1
- Denmark: 1
- France: 7
- Germany: 6
- Greece: 1
- Hungary: 1
- Italy: 9
- Latvia: 1
- Norway: 1
- Poland: 5
- Portugal: 2
- Romania: 3
- Slovakia: 1
- Slovenia: 1
- Spain: 5
- Sweden: 1

- Turkey: 6
- United Kingdom: 7
- United States (ETTs¹): 76
- Multinational: 5

POMLTs coach, teach, mentor, and when necessary, support the operational planning and employment of the ANP unit to which they are partnered. POMLTs are composed of 15-20 personnel from one or several countries. Nations contributing POMLTs, as of 28 September 2011, are:

- Croatia: 2
- Denmark: 1
- France: 5
- Germany (PMTs): 12²
- Italy: 4
- Lithuania: 1
- Netherlands: 6
- Norway: 1
- Poland: 8
- Spain: 2
- Turkey: 1
- United Kingdom: 6
- United States (PMTs): 279³

Embedded Partnering

Under Embedded Partnering, International Forces and Afghans live together; train together; and plan and execute missions together, sharing the risks and responsibilities. Combining ANSF and international force capabilities creates a synergy that develops ANSF capability and combats the insurgency.

Embedded Partnering occurs at every echelon from the ministry to unit. At the Regional Command level this means all operations that are jointly planned and commanded by combined staff incorporates Regional Police, Border Zone and ANCOB brigade headquarters. For manoeuvre elements, ISAF and ANSF brigades and battalions integrate staffs. In addition to conducting joint missions, mentor teams co-locate with their assigned battalions. Police mentor teams embed with their assigned ANP units 24/7.

NATO-ANA Trust Fund

Created in 2007 and its scope gradually expanded over time, the NATO-ANA Trust Fund provides a mechanism for ISAF nations to support the following activities:

- The long-term sustainment of the ANA,
- ANSF long-term literacy, English language training and professional military education,
- Transportation and installation costs for equipment donations by ISAF nations to the ANA, purchase of ANA equipment and services for engineering infrastructure projects, in-and out-of-country training.

The sustainment cost requirement for the ANA in 2011 is assessed to be just over 2.8 billion USD. The Fund helps pay for salaries and other costs, complementing separate support from the United States, which concentrates on initial build-up of the Afghan National Security Forces (ammunition, uniforms, training, as well as the construction and maintenance of security infrastructures). The US-led efforts in 2011 are expected to total over 11 billion USD.

1 US Embedded Training Teams perform the same functions as OMLTs: providing ANA units with comprehensive mentoring.

2 Germany currently provides Police Mentoring Teams (PMTs), which cooperate with ISAF, but for legal reasons, are not under ISAF's command.

3 US provides Police Mentoring either through PMTs or via partnering units

Contributions and pledges as of June 2011 (€)

• Bulgaria	160,000
• Czech Republic	389,024
• Denmark	4,250,000
• Estonia	210,000
• Germany	109,700,000
• Italy	7,400,000
• Lithuania	40,000
• Luxembourg	12,126,000
• Netherlands	37,600,000
• Norway	23,720,674
• Slovenia	230,000
• Spain	4,000,000
• Turkey	1,500,000
• United Kingdom	4,540,006
• Australia	150,000,000
• Finland	1,700,000
• Japan	25,829,177
• South Korea	21,294,719
• Sweden	3,226,783
• Switzerland	131,118
• UAE	7,078,143
• Other	672,507
• TOTAL:	415,798,151 Euro

NATO Equipment Donation Support Programme

The NATO Equipment Donation Programme in support of the Afghan National Security Forces was created in 2006. NATO's Allied Command Operations (ACO) coordinates equipment donations on behalf of ISAF contributing nations.

Completed equipment donations since 2006:

• Bulgaria	50 mortars, ~21 million rounds of small arms ammunition (of different types) and 500 binoculars
• Canada	2,500 small arms, ~6 million rounds of ammunition and equipment
• Czech Republic	12 helicopters (attack and utility)
• Estonia	~ 4,300 small arms and ~5 million rounds of ammunition
• Finland	~1,400 field telephones and ~60 generators
• France	personal equipment

• Germany	clothing and equipment
• Hungary	~21,000 small arms and 150,000 rounds of ammunition
• Lithuania	~ 4 million rounds of small arms ammunition
• Luxembourg	~2,000 body armour kits, ~2,000 helmets
• Montenegro	~ 1,600 small arms and 250,000 rounds of ammunition
• NATO heaters, cargo nets	
• Norway	100 field weapons, 100 mortars and ~400,000 rounds of ammunition (of different types)
• Poland	uniforms; 4 million rounds of ammunition, weapon spare parts
• Slovenia	60 mortars, ~10,000 small arms and ~2.2 million rounds of ammunition Compact 200 Bridge, tools, equipment & training including TPT
• Switzerland	3 fire trucks, spares, medical equipment
• Turkey	24 howitzers, ammunition, clothing equipment and academy supplies 950 mortars, 144 machine guns, boots

Transportation for the above equipment donations was facilitated by the following countries: Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Luxembourg, Norway, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Additional support was provided by NATO, members of the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution (SALIS)⁴ and through the ANA Trust Fund.

History

At the April 2009 Strasbourg-Kehl Summit, NATO Heads of State and Government decided to expand the ISAF mission to oversee higher-level training for the ANA, and training and mentoring for the ANP. To meet this goal, NATO established the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) on 21 November 2009.

NTM-A draws together enhanced NATO and national efforts to train ANA and ANP to increase coherence and effectiveness. It works in close partnership with the Afghan Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Interior, as well as in collaboration with the European Police Mission in Afghanistan (EUPOL) and the European Gendarmerie Force.

⁴ The following SALIS members contributed with their SALIS flying hours: Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovakia, and Slovenia

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