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**AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES  
AND SECURITY LEAD TRANSITION:  
THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS, METRICS,  
AND EFFORTS TO BUILD CAPABILITY**

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HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
AND INVESTIGATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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HEARING HELD  
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### TUESDAY, JULY 24, 2012

#### AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES AND SECURITY LEAD TRANSITION: THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS, METRICS, AND EFFORTS TO BUILD CAPABILITY

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###### DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

[There were no Documents submitted.]

###### WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

###### QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted post hearing.]



**AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES AND SECURITY  
LEAD TRANSITION: THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS,  
METRICS, AND EFFORTS TO BUILD CAPABILITY**

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS,  
*Washington, DC, Tuesday, July 24, 2012.*

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:05 p.m. in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Rob Wittman (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROB WITTMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM VIRGINIA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS**

Mr. WITTMAN. Ladies and gentlemen, in the interest of time, since we have some votes coming up, we will get under way. I will call to order in an open session the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for a hearing on “Afghan National Security Forces and Security Lead Transition: The Assessment Process, Metrics, and Efforts To Build Capability.”

And I want to welcome our panelists today. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules.

And today our subcommittee convenes the fourth in our series of hearings related to the Afghan National Security Forces. Members have just received a closed classified briefing from the senior Department of Defense officials on the metrics used to assess the readiness of Afghan forces and current capability ratings. Now the subcommittee holds an open hearing on this topic.

And we have assembled a panel of specialists to provide testimony about the sufficiency and reliability of the metrics used by the U.S. to track the progress of the development of the Afghan National Security Forces. We will also receive testimony on the effectiveness of the U.S. training effort and the challenges our troops face in readying the Afghan Army and police to assume the lead for security by 2014.

The development of self-sufficient Afghan forces capable of providing internal and external security is a key goal for the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. And in the public settings before this subcommittee and elsewhere, Department of Defense officials have said that the capability of the Afghan forces will inform decisions about the pace of the continued drawdown of U.S. troops and the size of an enduring U.S. presence.

Our panel today includes Dr. Anthony Cordesman, the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies; Dr. Joseph Felter, a retired U.S. Army colonel

and senior research scholar at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University; Ambassador Kenneth Moorefield, the Deputy Inspector General for Special Plans and Operations at the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General; Mr. Charles M. Johnson, Jr., Director of International Affairs and Trade at the United States Government Accountability Office. Mr. Johnson will be assisted in answering questions by his colleague, Ms. Sharon Pickup, also a director at GAO.

Panelists, thank you for your participation today, and we look forward to your testimony.

I note that all Members have received your full written testimony. This will also be entered into the record as submitted. Therefore, this afternoon I ask that you summarize your comments and highlight the significant points. This will allow our Members greater time to pose questions and ask for additional information.

As an administrative note, I recognize that members of other subcommittees may join us. Pursuant to the committee rules, I will recognize these Members after all Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee members have had an opportunity to question the witnesses.

I want to remind the panelists that we are on a strict 5-minute limit, so I would ask that you watch your timers. The gavel will sound at 5 minutes in the interest of time, since we have a large number of panelists and an upcoming vote. So I will ask that you strictly follow our time guidelines.

And, with that, Mr. Cooper, I will go to you for an opening statement.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wittman can be found in the Appendix on page 29.]

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the interest of time, I have no opening statement.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

With that, we will begin with our witnesses.

Dr. Cordesman.

**STATEMENT OF DR. ANTHONY H. CORDESMAN, ARLEIGH A. BURKE CHAIR IN STRATEGY, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

Dr. CORDESMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me begin by saying no one should approach the challenges of creating effective Afghan security forces and creating the right assessment process and metrics without remembering our failures in Vietnam and in Iraq. These were very different wars from Afghanistan, but they did have some things in common: We consistently exaggerated the progress being made in developing the forces in each country, and we made constant changes to our goals for force size, structure, and funding. Every year was the first year in Vietnam and Iraq, and, in many ways, every year is the first year in Afghanistan.

We have also repeated our tendency to rush force development and focus on progress in numbers rather than problems. Our current assessment tools, like the CUAT [Commander's Unit Assessment Tool] system, have taken years to involve, and they still focus on force generation rather than the broader and far more impor-

tant issue of determining whether we can create an affordable and sustainable force that can actually take over security and finding the right ways to measure progress toward that goal.

At present, we lack any credible plan for the future development of Afghan forces. We use broad numbers like 352,000, 228,500, and 4.1 billion. We rate units individually in ways that ignore key issues like corruption, political alignments, and the actual ability to deal with insurgent threats in the field. We have no public plan that explains the progress we expect in credible terms, the challenges we face, the real-world costs of sustaining progress, and what transition really means in terms of time—all of which are critical aspects of metrics and assessment.

In my detailed testimony, I have laid out the challenges we need to meet in changing our assessment systems in considerable detail. And I have not done this casually. I fully recognize that we have made real progress in developing the ANSF [Afghan National Security Forces], particularly since we first started to fund the effort on a credible basis in 2010. But the fact is, it remains a very high-risk effort. Our metrics and assessments are weak, and they focus on creating the force rather than transition. And I am deeply disturbed that NTM-A [NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan] has not issued a useful public report on ANSF development since 2010.

With the exception of the Department of Defense semiannual report to Congress, there is no command transparency, no basis for public trust. And experience should tell us that if we are to have any chance of success, we need to look beyond today's assessment and metrics.

The main purpose of ANSF metrics should be to determine whether the ANSF has the will and ability to fight and act as a coherent force to develop the central government. Manning, equipment levels, and training are all secondary. We should never lump together the elements of the ANSF. They should all be assessed separately and in different ways, reflecting their function.

Assessment should be tied to credible funding plans and estimates of what is being spent, the number of trainers, the number of mentors, and the number of partners actually there. No one should ever be allowed to report people as pledged as if they were present. We need to honestly assess the massive impact of corruption, ties to power brokers and warlords that affects every element of the ANSF.

When we do these assessments and metrics, they should be by district, by region, and by critical area of engagement, not broad, national, or provincial figures that really do not reflect progress. We do need to have assessments of how the police and security forces are actually tied to the justice system and governance. A police-only assessment system is inherently meaningless.

And, finally, we should tie all of our assessments to whether we can afford the overall activities of the government, whether the overall funding of transition is adequate, and not separate the funding of the ANSF from the overall fiscal problems of transition.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Cordesman can be found in the Appendix on page 31.]

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Dr. Cordesman. I appreciate your testimony.

Dr. Felter.

**STATEMENT OF COL JOSEPH H. FELTER, USA (RET.), PH.D.,  
SENIOR RESEARCH SCHOLAR, CENTER FOR INTER-  
NATIONAL SECURITY AND COOPERATION, STANFORD UNI-  
VERSITY**

Dr. FELTER. Thank you, Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and members of the subcommittee. It is an honor and privilege to join this distinguished panel and to discuss the challenges of building and assessing the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces.

My testimony draws on perspective gained in my career as a U.S. Army Special Forces officer with multiple operational deployments, most recently as commander of the International Security Assistance Force Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team from 2010 to 2011.

The ANSF can't win the war in Afghanistan on its own, but it can lose it. Accomplishing its core mission of establishing security and protecting the population is critical to setting conditions and creating space for the Afghan Government to implement the development, governance, and other activities key to making progress and ultimately prevailing in this comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign. With security, sustainable gains are possible. Without it, progress along any other line of effort will be impeded and failure all but certain.

One effort to bring this critically important security to areas beyond the current reach of the ANA [Afghan National Army] and ANP [Afghan National Police] is the MOI's [Ministry of the Interior] Afghan Local Police program. To date, there has been steady and deliberate progress in fielding the ALP [Afghan Local Police]. And U.S. Special Operations Forces, working by, with, and through their Afghan counterparts and other coalition force members, have done and continue to do a remarkable job under extraordinarily challenging conditions.

But there are serious potential risks associated with deploying the ALP or other similar security forces. A number of ANA forces I spoke with when ALP was fielded admitted concerns that they may have to fight these forces someday after ISAF [International Security Assistance Force] departs.

Afghan Government leaders may determine that the ALP program should not be continued, and this is certainly their sovereign prerogative. However, I believe they would be abandoning the ALP at their own peril if they cannot adequately resource and field an alternative initiative to protect Afghanistan's rural population in strategically important areas, deny these areas to the Taliban, and create space for state institutions to mature.

Given the emphasis of this hearing on metrics and assessments, I will highlight a challenge on this topic. Gauging ANSF capacity has by and large relied on assessments presented in quantitative terms, just as Mr. Cordesman has emphasized, such as how many ANSF in various categories are trained and deployed. A less delib-

erate effort has been invested in accounting for variation in the quality of these forces.

Quality assessments are often based on the reports of U.S. trainers' and mentors' reports, and these are often not transparent. These can be quite accurate when they spend a considerable amount of time with the unit, but much less so in cases where they have limited real exposure to the units being assessed. Given this, at least in the case of the police and other units with frequent exposure to locals, I would advocate including some form of a community-based performance assessment, in which both public and anonymous feedback is regularly solicited through surveys, complaint hotlines, and other mechanisms, as an independent measure of performance. Such assessments might help increase public accountability.

I will conclude with reasons for optimism and concern that should inform efforts to build ANSF capability and to develop standards to assess them by.

Assessing ANSF capabilities relative to the standards of developed Western militaries can be disheartening. But, encouragingly, ISAF and GIROA's [Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan] challenge is building and sustaining security forces that are more capable than the Taliban and other likely threats that Afghanistan will face. This standard is arguable achievable, even with the well-documented ANSF weaknesses and shortcomings.

Also, historical precedent provides some basis for optimism that the ANSF, with continued aid and support from the international community, may be able to secure the country and prevent a return of Taliban rule after U.S. forces leave. Following the redeployment of Soviet combat troops from Afghanistan in early 1989, for example, the security situation did not collapse, despite the many dire predictions at the time.

But we have many reasons for concern as we build and assess ANSF capacity. Ultimately, counterinsurgency campaigns can only be as good as the governments they support, and even the best, most effective militaries cannot compensate long for failures in governance.

It is likely that huge investments made in the ANSF have led to the purchasing of a certain amount of cooperation among various authority figures. As our investments are inevitably reduced and these incentives diminished, this cooperation will be harder to sustain. Given this, perhaps the biggest threat to the ANSF's ability to secure the country after the departure of U.S. forces hinge less on its capabilities and more on its internal cohesion and the potential for ethnic divisions to fracture it.

A capable ANSF is a necessary but not sufficient condition for success in the Afghanistan campaign. Improving the capabilities of this institution must not be addressed or assessed in a vacuum.

Thank you for the honor of testifying here today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Felter can be found in the Appendix on page 70.]

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Dr. Felter.  
Ambassador Moorefield.

**STATEMENT OF AMB. (RET.) KENNETH P. MOOREFIELD, DEPUTY INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR SPECIAL PLANS AND OPERATIONS, OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

Ambassador MOOREFIELD. Good afternoon, Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Thank you for this opportunity today to discuss Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense oversight of the Department's efforts to develop the Afghan National Security Forces.

Between now and the end of 2014, ISAF and U.S. military strategy is focused on developing the operational capability of Afghan forces to assume the security lead. Although planning is still ongoing, ISAF and U.S. commands have indicated that certain ANSF development efforts will likely continue past 2014.

Oversight performance assessments undertaken by DOD IG [Department of Defense Inspector General] over the past year have addressed a number of these force development challenges. One recent assessment concerned efforts to build an Afghan Air Force by 2016. Development of the Afghan Air Force became a command priority only in 2010. It is therefore in the early stages of building base infrastructure, procuring aircraft, and recruiting and training Afghan pilots and crews.

Our team noted a potential systemic challenge in this regard, with reference to the need for a clear consensus between NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] and the Afghan Government concerning the roles and capabilities of the Afghan Air Force. Another issue identified concerned the ineffective maintenance, parts supply, and performance of the C-27A medium cargo aircraft, a key part of the Afghan Air Force fleet. And recruiting sufficient Afghan personnel with the educational background required to build and maintain a relatively modern air force presents a challenge.

DOD IG also has completed an assessment of the progress made by U.S. Special Operations Forces and Marines in building the Afghan Local Police. ALP growth has not been without difficulties, but it has had success in denying insurgent forces access to ALP districts and villages.

Recently, ALP's strength reached 13,000, with a goal to expand to 30,000 by the end of 2014. However, there is a shortage of Special Operation Force personnel. The addition of several U.S. infantry battalions has helped, but they are not as well-prepared by training and experience to carry out this mission.

Additionally, the ALP program was originally planned to last 2 to 5 years. Given its relative success, the program's longer-term duration, which ISAF recommends, needs to be confirmed.

In April of this year, DOD IG conducted an assessment to determine whether the development of an effective command and control system to plan, communicate, and execute ANA operations was on track. Our team found that the ANA can, in fact, conduct basic C2 [Command and Control] with other ANSF elements, but it is very dependent upon enabler support provided by the U.S. and coalition assets, especially in certain key areas as communications and intelligence. Building these key enabler capabilities in logistics, health care, and other areas, in addition, is a top command priority.

Another C2 challenge is adapting ANSF personnel to operate and manage the relatively complex information technology and automation systems that C2 requires. Qualified applicants for IT [information technology] positions remain limited. A number of ANA personnel who did get trained soon found better-paying jobs in the private sector.

In June 2012, the DOD IG conducted an assessment of U.S. and coalition efforts to develop ANA leadership. Leadership, it is worth underscoring, is key to ANSF's success. Progress continues to be made building the leadership corps through basic and advanced training programs, as well as by partnering with NATO and coalition units and mentors.

Worth noting is that the National Military Academy, modeled along the lines of West Point, just graduated its largest class ever of 640 junior officers, compared to only 84, 5 years ago. On the battlefield, as the ANA lead operational role has increased, our forces report that so has ANA officer confidence increased.

However, there is still much progress to be made. The advancement of officer personnel through assignments and promotions is insufficiently skill- or merit-based. This presents a disincentive to military personnel seeking increased responsibility and accomplishment. And Afghan military officers reflect the experience and views of multiple generations who trained and fought under the Soviet Army and the mujahideen and more recently with NATO-U.S. forces. Not surprisingly, they are evolving toward but are not yet a fully cohesive officer corps.

In closing today, I would like to underscore the remarkable professionalism and determination we have witnessed consistently displayed by ISAF and U.S. trainers and advisers. They conduct their mission under arduous and increasingly dangerous conditions. We in DOD IG will continue our oversight efforts with respect to this mission through 2014 and beyond.

I would welcome any questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Moorefield can be found in the Appendix on page 87.]

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Ambassador Moorefield.

Mr. Johnson.

**STATEMENT OF CHARLES M. JOHNSON, JR., DIRECTOR,  
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRADE, U.S. GOVERNMENT  
ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, members of this subcommittee, I am pleased to be here to discuss the efforts to build, train, and sustain a capable Afghan National Security Force.

I am accompanied by my colleague, Ms. Sharon Pickup, from our Defense Capabilities and Management team. I would like to thank her and her staff, as well as the staff for our International Affairs and Trade team, for assistance in preparing for this testimony.

Let me first start by noting that, since 2002, the U.S. has allocated about \$43 billion toward this effort, with an additional \$11.2 billion appropriated in fiscal year 2012 and \$5.7 billion requested for fiscal year 2013.

In 2010, the U.S. Government, the Afghan Government, and international community agreed to transition lead responsibility for the Afghan security to the Afghan National Security Force by the end of 2014. The transition is in process, and the U.S. and NATO partners and coalition forces have begun evolving more toward an advise-and-assist effort.

A successful transition requires that ANSF be fully capable of addressing security challenges on a sustainable basis. Today we will address three points: progress reported and tools used to assess ANSF capability; challenges affecting the development of ANSF; and the use of security forces teams to advise and assist the ANSF.

With respect to progress, in April 2012 DOD reported that only about 7 percent of the Afghan National Army and about 9 percent of the Afghan National Police units were capable of operating independently with assistance from advisers.

While we have previously found the tools being used to assess ANSF reliable for us to report on capability, it is worth noting that the definitions have changed several times. For example, when we reported on the Afghan National Army in 2011, the highest capability rating was referred to as “independent,” which meant that a unit was capable of performing its mission without assistance from coalition forces. At that time, no Afghan National Army unit was rated at that level. Now the highest level is “independent with advisers.” DOD has noted that this change has contributed, in part, to increases in the number of ANSF units assessed at the highest level.

It is also worth noting that not until recently did DOD and the NATO forces begin assessing the Afghan National Police for civil policing capabilities, which is key to rule of law.

Our second point is that several longstanding challenges may affect the progress and sustainment of the Afghan National Security Forces. There are three to highlight: the costs, skill gaps, and limited ministerial capacity.

As for the costs, we have previously reported that the Afghan Government is dependent on donor contributions to support security forces and that the U.S. has contributed at least 90 percent of the Afghan security-related expenditures. Two months ago, the international community pledged to sustain the Afghan National Security Forces post-2014 at an estimated annual cost of about \$4.1 billion through 2017. Given the limited Afghan revenues, it is anticipated that the U.S. and international community would need to fund a significant portion of the projected \$4.1 billion. IMF estimates that the Afghan Government will not be able to sustain its expenses or afford its expenses at least for another decade.

Key skill gaps in the ANSF also persist, including shortfalls in leadership and logistics capability, which has been noted earlier. For example, DOD reported significant shortages in the number of noncommissioned Afghan officers needed to provide leadership to the ANSF. Some of the causes we have identified include shortages in trainers and low literacy rates, which remain an ongoing barrier to addressing skill gaps.

We have recommended in 2011 that DOD, in conjunction with the international partners, takes steps to eliminate the shortage of

trainers. However, according to DOD's latest 1230 report, about 16 percent of the required instructor positions remain unfilled and lack pledges to fill them.

Another challenge we have previously highlighted is limited capacity of the Afghan Ministry of Defense as well as the Ministry of Interior. As of April 2012, the MOD [Ministry of Defense] was assessed as requiring some coalition assistance to accomplish its mission, while the Ministry of Interior was assessed as needing significant coalition assistance. MOD and MOI are important to a successful transition over to the Afghan Government.

Finally, with respect to the use of Security Forces Assistance Teams, the U.S. Army and the Marine Corps began deploying these teams earlier this year in support of the transition of lead security responsibility. These teams will advise the ANSF leaders in areas such as command and control, and logistics.

We have previously identified areas we believe will be important considerations for DOD as it moves forward. Among these is the importance of assigning personnel to the adviser teams in a timely manner so that they can train and prepare in advance of being deployed; and, secondly, the need to set clear priorities between the advising mission and the other operational requirements that they will be expected to fulfill in-country.

This concludes my opening statement. I would be happy to take any questions at this time.

[The joint prepared statement of Mr. Johnson and Ms. Pickup can be found in the Appendix on page 97.]

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

Panelists, thank you so much for your questions.

As you have just heard, the tones have gone off for votes. What we will do is to try to get through at least several Members' questions, and then we will recess to go vote, and then we will return.

Dr. Cordesman, I would like to begin with you. I think it is very interesting that you bring up the metrics by which success is being measured with transition with ANSF units, and you talk about the Commander's Unit Assessment Tool as probably not being the proper overall metric.

Give us your thoughts. And you mentioned some other metrics there—the willingness to fight, allegiance, corruption, those sorts of things. Give us your thought about the current CUAT as an assessment tool versus other metrics that in your estimation or what you are saying should be out there.

And how do we best do that evaluation as to those units' capability, not just in the short term but also in the long term as a sustainable force as U.S. forces leave under any situation, regardless of how much support they have? And, you know, the metrics right now are based on some level of support all the way up to operating independently. And I wanted to get your thoughts about what else you think ought to be included in that assessment tool.

Dr. CORDESMAN. Mr. Chairman, it has taken us about a decade to get to the CUAT system. Before then, we had the CM [Capability Milestone] system, which was essentially a series of force-generation measures, which historically have always grossly exaggerated the capability of the force, regardless of whether it was our

force or some other. This is not the way you assess capability, period.

The CUAT system hopefully has a broader set of elements. It does look more realistically at the history of combat performance. And I am at least told that it looks at political alignments, corruption, and the actual nature of the unit structure relative to the government and the point of whether you have an effective link to policing and other activities. But it is broken out still as a force-generation measure.

We have basically about 18 months in which we are supposed to transfer virtually every part of Afghanistan to actual operation largely by Afghan forces. Now, when I went through this list of issues in my summary testimony—I have gone through a much longer list in the written testimony—I focused on the fact, this is a force-on-force issue. It is a net assessment issue. You measure not whether you are generating forces but whether their overall performance in the field is actually performing this role of moving toward transition. And that is completely different from counting things and saying how many people are trained, as important as they are.

It is also a grim reality that money is a critical issue here. We have to know whether they have, not simply the number of trainers, but whether any of them are qualified. If you could randomly pick out anyone in uniform and turn them into a trainer and a mentor, you are not meeting the kinds of capabilities that Dr. Felter or, I believe, anybody else would measure.

If you are saying that basically we simply run as many people through the system as possible, that is not a metric of success. You need to know basically whether you are generating an affordable force, and you need to know whether you are providing the proper trainer component. And any assessment system that only focuses on Afghan forces is, by definition, a failure.

The bulk of the forces will be army forces, as long as you only count ANSF. If you throw in the ALP and the APPF [Afghan Public Protection Force], the bulk of the forces numerically are not army, they are police and security forces, each of which has a different function, each of which is considerably more corrupt and more subject to political interference, on an average, than the army forces. You need to assess them accordingly. And you need to look at whether your spending and your training processes are solving this.

In large parts of Afghanistan, there is no matching court system, there is no real government to support the police, there is no adequate detention system. If you look at the most recent 1230 report, buried away in the text is the statement that to get government presence in Kandahar and Helmand they had to waive all requirements for qualification for the personnel deployed. And there are many areas where we know that basically the Taliban or insurgents effectively run the justice system.

Looking at this is a fundamentally different perspective from simply focusing on force numbers.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Dr. Cordesman.

Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank the witnesses.

Dr. Cordesman, your critique is devastating. And I believe it is an accurate summary to say that you point out that the U.S. does not have a credible policy in dealing with the transition right now. Is that a short way of summarizing it?

Dr. CORDESMAN. Well, I think, Congressman, I would say that what we don't have is any credible public plan.

I know that people have worked in great detail on providing at a more classified level the kind of planning activity on a civil and military level that would help. I also know that, quite frankly, the numbers keep changing, the goals keep changing. It is, frankly, ridiculous to talk about a \$4.1 billion figure as if we had the faintest idea what conditions would be in 2014 and 2015 or if that somehow this figure was a constant relative to time. It was basically all of about 12 months ago when we said we needed twice the money. And all of a sudden, we are at a completely different funding level, with no justification or public expenditure.

We never had any credible way to get 352,000. That is no reflection on the people over there. There is no methodology that you can say requires a specific number. But to say that we are going down to 228,500 is not something anybody can really explain or sustain.

And this, to me, is the problem. We have the right concepts. We have made real progress. I think in many areas we have the right priorities. What we don't have is a credible plan, a credible management system, a credible way to look at advisers and money, and a way to tie the progress we are making to the overall progress in the war.

Mr. COOPER. Again, a devastating critique.

We are here in the public setting, so I wonder if a credible plan is even possible, given the 18-month time horizon, the \$4.1 billion budget figure, and the other constraints that you have mentioned.

Dr. CORDESMAN. Well, it is again an excellent question, Congressman, but the alternative is to let everything grow by topsy.

Yes, the plan has to be regularly revised and updated. Yes, it is conditions-based. Yes, you have to put a lot of things together where you can't properly quantify it and you have very uncertain data. That is pretty much a definition of public policy. And to say that you can't do it because it is difficult and it can't be perfect is simply not a credible excuse.

Mr. COOPER. So here, on the one hand, we don't have a credible policy, and then we don't have a credible excuse for not having a good policy. So we are kind of caught in between here.

In your opinion, have conditions in Pakistan made our task more difficult recently, now that supply lines are allegedly back open again? Is the political situation in Pakistan continuing to make it even more difficult than it would be otherwise?

Dr. CORDESMAN. I think it is probably a very broad conclusion that none of our problems in Pakistan are over. And if you looked at today's news and the fact that the tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan have risen again in spite of meetings designed to ease them—we do have the ability, hopefully, to bribe them into opening the lines of communication long enough for transition.

I don't think I know of anyone who describes them seriously as allies or believes that we have solved the problems that we are

dealing with. When we have public opinion polls that show that Pakistanis think that Americans are more of an enemy than Indians, we know just how deeply in trouble we are. And I don't think anyone is saying that somehow our problems with the ISI [Inter-Services Intelligence] sanctuaries and their links to various insurgent groups have in any way gotten better in the last year.

Mr. COOPER. I see that my time is about expired, Mr. Chairman. In the interest of time, I will yield to my colleagues.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

We have about 5 minutes, I think, remaining in the vote. What we will do, in the interest of time, is to go ahead and leave for the vote, and we will come back after a recess. And I will recess the committee, ask the panelists to hang around. We have two votes, and then we will return, and we will pick up questions with Mr. Coffman.

[Recess.]

Mr. WITTMAN. I call back to order the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Armed Services Committee.

And we will now continue our questioning, and we will go to Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Cordesman, as we finish tranches 4 and 5 over the next 2 years, some of the toughest areas to be handed off to, or handed back to, the Afghans are yet to be done. And as our overall level of troops decrease and the number of resources we have in-country decrease, can you talk to us about, how do you measure that metrics of, should things begin to happen that looks like the ANSF is not being successful, what should we be watching for to say, all right, that trend is going the wrong way?

And how do we address the resource issue that might be presented since we will, over time, have fewer folks there to respond with?

Dr. CORDESMAN. Well, it is a very good question, Congressman.

I think that one of the critical aspects is that you appraise what is happening in terms of, not things like enemy-initiated attacks, but insurgent presence and influence; that you watch whether the pattern is one of expanding control in the—what I think you have been briefed on—the critical districts and the districts of interest, which are the most sensitive parts of Afghanistan. That is where the ANSF and the whole process of transition will probably succeed or fail, although there are insurgent elements in other parts of the country.

And I think this is critical, because right now we tend to assess risk almost exclusively on whether there are times when the insurgents basically conduct organized attacks against us or we have, as part of the campaign plan, reasons to attack them. I don't think that in any way portrays the risk of the problems we face.

I think that you have to tie the success of the ANSF to what is happening in terms of governance and whether the Afghan Government is effective and capable of operating in that area. If we simply look at the Afghan security forces, we may see a lot of cases where the army can win, but it does not have any lasting impact.

Half a century ago, I remember a very senior U.S. officer pointing out that if you couldn't go there at night and without an ar-

mored vehicle, you didn't have security; and that the ratings in Vietnam in no way reflected what the actual level of security was.

I think these are the key measures. I think we also have to look at what happens to Afghan units in combat and over time. What levels of attrition exist? What happens to their equipment? Are they actually being supplied? Do they become linked to power brokers and warlords?

Now, that is the ANA. I would find it, frankly, amazing if we did not see in many elements of the police, as we go through this process, a very different problem: growing levels of corruption, growing levels of ties to narcotraffickers and power brokers, a tendency to try to get what they can at the command level while they can.

I would also look very hard—

Mr. CONAWAY. Give us a couple of sentences on why the distinction between the two. Why can the police not go the same route—I mean, obviously they started later, but why can't they—

Dr. CORDESMAN. They are far more local by the very nature of things. They are far more tied to local power brokers, particularly where government is weak. They can easily, basically as they do—I mean, there are cases in Afghanistan where you can have a Taliban checkpoint and 10 kilometers away you have the Afghan police extorting money from truckers or whoever is moving. They are simply there.

And, basically, the level of discipline, the level of rotation and training is different. The level of support and equipment is different. They are far more vulnerable to outside pressure. And if you can't perform the mission and somebody offers you money, you might as well take the money as well as be vulnerable. If you are in the border police, it is a remarkably attractive business proposition. And raising salary doesn't alter the pattern of corruption.

Now, I don't mean to say that this happens throughout the force. There are some very competent, very honorable Afghans in it. But this is a key process.

Mr. CONAWAY. We tend to focus on the negatives, the corruption and those kinds of issues. And then you counter that with your statement that you don't mean it is all. How do we get a handle—those of us policymakers decide which side to take on that limited statement? Is there a way to measure—and I am about to run out of time, but—

Dr. CORDESMAN. What I have seen in the field, Congressman, is you map out the areas where you know that you have corruption and you map out the areas where you know you have effective forces. And, basically, this a critical aspect of assessing those forces. We, after all, do it with provincial governors and district governors. We have a very good idea which are corrupt and which are honest, and we focus on the honest ones and we see the corrupt ones as a problem.

But any assessment of the police, the Afghan Local Police, the APPF, that does not do this is, not necessarily a waste of time, but it is an invitation to get into extremely serious trouble.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Conaway.

Mr. Coffman.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In terms of the—I understand that the development of the police is behind the development of the Afghan Army. And I served in Iraq with the U.S. Marine Corps, and one thing that I remembered, when there wasn't adequate security, it was very difficult to stand up a local police force. Because what would happen is we could rely on the Iraqi Army because they weren't necessarily from the—they weren't usually from that area. In the instance where I was, they were not from the area. So they would go—when they weren't out on patrol, they would be in secure base camps. When the local police, if they were actually doing their job, the insurgents would follow them home at night and potentially kill them and their family. And so it was very difficult to stand up a police force.

And so, to what extent is this the case in Afghanistan? Anyone?

Dr. FELTER. Congressman Coffman, I can take a response at that one.

I would say, you are absolutely right; without security, nothing is possible, as far as making progress with counterinsurgents. Certainly when you are standing up a local police force, an indicator that they are being successful and harming the insurgents' interests is that they are attacked. And we see this in Afghanistan and certainly with the Afghan Local Police.

And I think that is why, again, it is so important that you have to bring security. Nothing is possible without security. And right now, with three-quarters of the Afghan population residing in these rural areas where the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police is not, some of our only options are to try to find some deliberate way to carefully vet individuals at the local level and provide local security.

And then build on the security, providing a security window while the institutions of the Afghan Government, to include the national police and the army, can develop and take over that mission and then eventually transition those local security forces to the actual police and military at some point when the conditions are right.

Dr. CORDESMAN. Congressman, if I may supplement, I think we need to realize that we also will be reducing our presence.

We also need to understand that this is not in any sense a homogenous country. Tribal areas in the east, tribal areas in the south operate under very different rules. A lot of those still, even if we are there, have justice systems which have strong Taliban elements actually running them.

Security is a key issue, but, frankly, in civil policing, wherever you do not have an effective government presence, wherever the courts and the legal system doesn't work, wherever you don't have legal detention facilities, you can't have a police function regardless of how well-trained and organized they are.

And I think that what you may have seen in Iraq—and it is typical—is, the army has a chain of supply and command that operates more or less continuously. The police very quickly can become isolated locally by district, according to a provincial governor, get tied to power brokers, because that broad chain of command doesn't function; it is the local authorities. And there is no clear solution to that problem.

Quite frankly, that is why so many of these police training efforts since World War II have been interesting exercises in a triumph of basically good intentions over experience.

Mr. JOHNSON. Congressman, if I can add, Dr. Cordesman is correct; local governance is really critical to success in the transmission. And that is one of the four key elements that is being used to make the determination as to when we transition lead over to an Afghan security force in certain locations.

The others, in addition to ANSF capability and the security environment, is also the ISAF posture at the time, the presence of ISAF as well. So there are four key elements that are being used to make those decisions.

Mr. COFFMAN. We are talking about reducing the size of the Afghan security forces. And so, what is the methodology in doing that? Is it, to your knowledge, to anybody's knowledge on the panel, is it taking units that are certainly lower in terms of readiness, capability than other units and making decisions along those lines? Could anybody tell me how those decisions are being made?

Mr. JOHNSON. Much of the information we have is in an FOUO [For Official Use Only] report, which we would be happy to come and brief you on.

But what we do know is that there is an effort to, obviously, reduce the costs, in terms of the coalition costs. Part of that may be driving some of the reduction. And, also, what the Afghan Government can sustain, that is part of the initiative there. I think Dr. Cordesman earlier raised a point about, how do you come up with these numbers? And, obviously, that is something that needs to be looked into.

Mr. COFFMAN. Very well.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Coffman.

And we will begin a second round of questions.

Mr. Johnson, I want to go to you. You talked about financial stability, financial capability being critical in the long term there for the ANSF. We know that the NATO forces have committed about \$4.1 billion in that effort. But we also know there is a big difference between pledges and money on the ground or money actually being put into an account for that to happen. Can you tell us, what pledges have actually been made by which NATO nations?

And then we all know, too, in the strategic partnership agreement that the U.S. has entered into that our commitment goes through 2024. NATO's commitment in the agreement goes to 2017. So is there an assumption that after 2017 that the U.S. will be the sole partner in that effort there in Afghanistan? I wanted to get your perspective on that. It looks to me like there are some elements there that potentially for us cause some concern.

Mr. JOHNSON. Yeah, I mean, I hate to repeat again. Much of the information we do have is considered "for official use only" by the Department, so I can't discuss it in an open setting.

What I would reiterate, though, is that the Afghan Government will remain dependent on donor contributions. The \$4.1 billion figure that has been thrown out, I can tell you that the projected amount is that the Afghan Government will contribute about \$500

million of that, with the hope that the donor community will step up to cover the rest of that.

I would also say, as I noted earlier, the U.S. Government has paid about 90 percent of the security-related expenditures. All of the information in open sources allude to the fact that the U.S. will continue to pay probably a larger share of that, although my understanding is that the amount is coming down.

Mr. WITTMAN. Do you have any specifics on pledges or commitments by NATO nations in this? I know we have heard what the commitment is by the Afghan Government, but it would be interesting to understand the remaining portion of that commitment. If it truly is a partnership, how much are the partners going to give?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yeah, again, most of that information is FOUO, and—

Mr. WITTMAN. Okay.

Mr. JOHNSON [continuing]. We would be happy to brief you on it.

Mr. WITTMAN. That will be great. I think it would be good information for the committee, so, with your indulgence, we will try to schedule a time—

Mr. JOHNSON. Okay.

Mr. WITTMAN [continuing]. To get together with your office and members of the committee so that we can get at that information.

Ambassador Moorefield, I wanted to ask you this. In talking about capability or capacity within the ANSF, do you believe that, with the plan currently in place with transition and with capability-building in the ANSF force, do you believe that there will be enough capability within that force within the proposed scheduled drawdown of U.S. forces so that capability will sufficiently transition from U.S. forces to ANSF forces, with, obviously, the accompanying support?

And what do you believe is the critical element of support as these tranches are turned over in this transition?

Ambassador MOOREFIELD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think there is a good plan in terms of the build-out of the force to the current size of 352,000. That is army and police. That will be accomplished during this calendar year.

It is not, of course, just to produce the forces, but it is the ongoing, I think, training and even, I would add, literacy, which is a critical element in terms of enabling them to take on more technical branch-type training or NCO [Non-Commissioned Officer] or officer development.

So it is an ongoing process. I think that evaluating it just at the point they reached 352 is, frankly, not a very insightful way of understanding, you know, what their real capability is going to look like over next the 2 years.

Now, I am just going to refer to what General Allen has already said in his testimony, but, I mean, it is evident that his concept, his strategy is to front-load the risk. So if they are going to move up—which apparently is the intention—the responsibilities, the lead security responsibilities for Afghan forces between now and—well, by this summer, but with the idea in 2013 to be able to measure whether or not they are stumbling or not, as it were, and be able to fortify them where they are weak, you are going to see evidence fairly quickly, I would project, as to where the weaknesses

are out there. And that includes Afghan Army and Afghan police forces.

So it is a high-risk initiative, but it enables us, while we still have forces there, to respond to problems that do arise.

Mr. WITTMAN. Very good. Thank you, Ambassador Moorefield.

Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Dr. Felter, you have an unusually good background to understand Afghanistan, both the military side and the political side. You state in your testimony that a capable ANSF is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for success there.

What would you suggest on the political side that we should be trying to do to have a government in Kabul and the provinces that could create a more loyal Afghan Army?

Dr. FELTER. Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

I would even take it down to the local level. And I will use the example of, you know, the Village Stability Operations currently being managed by the U.S. Special Operations Forces, which the Afghan Local Police is a part of.

The intent of that program is to connect, you know, the village to the district center, to the government. And the district center is the only government that these people in the village even know, so quality of governance really starts at the district level. And that is where we need to start building capabilities on the governance level. You know, the very best Special Operations Forces, whether they are U.S., coalition, or Afghan, they can't convince locals to support their government if it is—they can't sell a product that doesn't sell, I guess is the bottom line.

So quality governance at the district level is key. And once we start connecting Afghans to the district level to quality governance, then we can expand it from there. And, in a sense, the governance from the top down, from the central government, to the province, to the district, can be brought to the local Afghans. So I would say that is key.

Buying time and space is key here. As the institutions of the central government develop and mature, we need to have security to buy time and space. So, again, that is a necessary but not sufficient condition, I think, for progress in the campaign. But maintaining that security at the local level, which in this case means village to district, is all-important as those other institutions develop at the national level.

Mr. COOPER. So the VSO [Village Stability Operations] program is working?

Dr. FELTER. I think it has made great progress, absolutely. It is not the silver bullet, it is not the panacea, it is not going to solve all the problems. But I think it is a great example of an effort to provide this local-level security that is all-important to make any progress along the other lines of effort in the counterinsurgency campaign—development, governance. All of them key on having some modicum of security at these levels. And this is an effort to do it.

You know, today, three-quarters of the Afghan population are out in these rural areas where, at least at this point, the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police can't be. So we can't cede

these areas to the Taliban. We can't defend everywhere, but we have to find the strategically important areas and develop the capacity to have the security so these institutions can develop, both at the central level in Kabul, all the way down to the provinces and to the district.

Mr. COOPER. As you are well aware, we have already been involved in this conflict for over 10 years, and people's patience is running thin. So we should plan on another 10 years or 20 years to get this working?

Dr. FELTER. I think we should plan on using our remaining time, which has been determined by our political leadership here, to make as much progress as possible, to develop this capacity of the ANSF and allow the governance to develop as much as possible.

But I would offer some encouraging news. You know, if you look at historical precedent, you know, when the Soviets left Afghanistan in 1989, you know, things held together. It wasn't pretty, but they were able to prevent the complete collapse of the Najibullah government.

I think we are leaving Afghanistan already in much better shape than the Soviets left it. And we are going to make progress between now and when we leave. So absolutely, I think we need to take advantage of all our remaining time, while we have forces there. We need to partner more effectively, while we have the capacity and competence-building and professionalizing opportunities of a large coalition force presence. But eventually, they are going to have to stand up and take it on their own. If we stay—there is a certain moral hazard, I think, if you have an open-ended commitment, where if there is no requirement to stand up and provide for your own security, then there is less of an incentive to do so. And again back to the—I use the Soviet experience as an example, where once the Soviets left, there were some encouraging signs that the Afghan military forces were able to stand up on their own. There was actually a certain sense of self-reliance now. And certainly much of the support for then the mujahideen and now I would say the Taliban might diminish when this large occupying force, if you will, leaves, and they realize they are going to have to defend themselves and can't turn to the occupying power to fill that role.

Mr. COOPER. My memory is faulty, but post the Soviet departure, wasn't it just a series of warlords and not a central government?

Dr. FELTER. It wasn't pretty at all. The Najibullah government that was installed prior to the Soviets left, it was able to hold together. So I am not painting a rosy picture here, but I use it as an example that it wasn't a complete collapse. Importantly, the Soviets maintained aid and assistance to the Najibullah government, and that kept it going. But it wasn't until the actual collapse of the Soviet Union and the aid got cut off that the Najibullah government fell and that we saw the civil war that ensued that resulted in the Taliban taking over.

So maybe apples to oranges here, but I think history doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme, a Mark Twain quote. I think this here is a case where we will be leaving Afghanistan I think in better shape than the Soviets left it. And I think we can expect certainly as good, if not better, results and that the government, you

know, may not collapse. There may be some challenges, we may be ceding some territory, but I think we can avoid a collapse of the government we leave behind. And I think the biggest threat is internal cohesion. I think the Afghan National Security Forces now have demonstrated they can prevail against the Taliban in the field head-to-head. I would say they are at least marginally better performers than the Taliban. They are not nearly to the level we would like, and Dr. Cordesman has pointed that out very eloquently, but they can prevail against the Taliban. They are marginally better.

And given that, I think that we can expect some capability for them to keep the government in position. But should the government, should internal divisions fracture the Afghan National Security Forces, should they start to support warlords or other power brokers, I think that is where we are going to see our problem. So I really think the key variable here is political, not military. I think the ANSF has enough capacity to defend the country at some basic level, but it is all going to depend on political factors, and if they can avoid the division and factional strife and ethnic divisions that could tear the country apart.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I see my time has expired.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

Mr. Coffman.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Assuming that the aid continues I think at the \$4 billion level, if I understand it, that is the kind of post-2014 commitment, and we look back at the Soviets' experience that the Najibullah government was able to remain in power at some level but then collapsed after that aid stopped when the Soviet Union dissolved. What does that tell us about—doesn't it in a way—I mean, obviously from the standpoint of U.S. taxpayers, it is not a great thing, but doesn't that give us some hope that if that aid, if that commitment were to continue, that the government would stay together and they would not be divided along ethnic tensions, and that the central government would obviously hold, the military would hold at some level, and although there might be areas dominated by the Taliban, for the most part the country would remain free of the Taliban? Is that a realistic scenario?

Dr. CORDESMAN. Congressman, I would have to say maybe, but probably not. There are a couple of things to bear in mind here. First, until somebody can explain where they got that 4.1 [billion dollar] figure, I can only point out that as of May 2011, the figure was \$7.2 billion to \$9 billion for the same size force. So even if you fully fund the mystery number, you have no reason to basically trust it. If you do support the Afghan National Security Forces, and we can't solve the problem of sustaining an effective civil government—and they face far more serious problems in terms of funding as we pull money out and troops out, according to World Bank and IMF studies than the ANSF—then we end up with what I think we would all warn about, which is a force without a government and without the sustaining money.

I think, too, that I would remember here that a lot of our plans are tacitly linked to something people tend to forget about. The Af-

ghan Government formally promised yet again to make the critical reforms to allow district, provincial, and other governments to work, and reduce corruption in specific detail at both the Bonn conference and Tokyo conference. But as yet, there are no plans as to how that will happen, to hold them accountable. And we have 10 years of experience in which not one of those promises has ever been kept. And just in the last week, we have seen them fail to come to grips with something critical like investment in mining and petroleum. So you have asked a critical question, but you have got to address it in a much broader way. And you have to ask yourself, unless we can make that 4.1 credible, both as a cost estimate and in terms of funding, it is one of those horrible numbers like 352,000 for which there is no known purpose or real source.

Mr. COFFMAN. Dr. Felter.

Dr. FELTER. Congressman, just to follow up, I think you are right, I think there is—with this continued aid, there will be some incentives to hold it together, to have this all-important cohesion within both the ANSF and the government itself. So, encouragingly, if the international community and the United States can provide some level of aid and assistance, we might expect there to be strong incentives to cooperate amongst these power brokers within the Afghan Government. But also, as we withdraw, in a sense, ISAF is there like a referee enforcing the rules. And as we draw down in numbers, it is like—you could liken it to a football game with the referees leaving the field. Will the teams continue to play by the rules? Not sure. But this aid and assistance will be a continued incentive for them to cooperate going forward if it is still provided at some level.

Mr. COFFMAN. In terms of this culture of corruption and the dysfunction that we so often hear of in Afghan civil governance and Afghan security forces, but maybe perhaps right now they see the United States and our coalition allies as really the guarantor of their security, once we are gone, will that in effect, that absence inherently strengthen those institutions of Afghan governance and security and improve the situation, knowing that we are not there?

Dr. CORDESMAN. We don't know of any historical cases, not one, where that has been what has happened. We have seen other governments and successor groups over time survive in structure. But the fact is if the government can't function as we leave and if it doesn't make the reforms it has promised and if we don't get a decent election and a new leader, confronting them basically may not make the Taliban and Haqqani Network win, but the end result is very likely to be fragmentation of the country on ethnic, sectarian, and regional lines. That may not be an unacceptable consequence. I think we need to be careful about Afghan good enough. But the idea that somehow pulling the plug makes people behave better is not one for which I know of much historical precedent.

Dr. FELTER. May I add just a quick comment on that? So, in the case of the Afghan local police, there was a survey taken in the eastern part of Afghanistan where when the ALP had been effective at defending its villages, which is its main goal, the people thought that—they didn't want to give the ALP credit, because they were still giving credit to ISAF. So, even in cases where we see success and positive performance, in some cases, and I don't

disagree with Dr. Cordesman's historical assessment, but there is cases in Afghanistan where we can see survey evidence that the people there still give credit to ISAF, or they are reluctant to give credit to the ANSF, in this case the ALP, because they think it is all attributed to ISAF's presence. So if we can see them succeed when we leave, they might start getting the credit and maybe getting the support of the population, which is so critical.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Coffman.

Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you.

This is for the whole panel. Obviously, the figure \$4.1 billion is being bandied around how to pay for the security forces. But do we have any, at this point, estimate as to the economic impact on our leaving, and all of the caring and feeding that goes on in which much of that is based on—you know, sourced out at the local economy. What impact will that have on the economy? And does that—how does Afghanistan replace that near-term positive impact of stuff we buy locally? Do we know what that impact is? Anybody?

Dr. CORDESMAN. There are World Bank and IMF estimates, Congressman. They would both be the first to tell you that they are little more than wags. We simply don't know, out of the money we appropriate and disburse for Afghanistan, how much of it actually gets into the country and where it goes. The organization that is supposed to be assessing the overall aid process, which is called UNAMA [United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan], has never issued a report on aid or an estimate of the total spending. We do have work done by the GAO [Government Accountability Office], SIGAR [Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction], CBO [Congressional Budget Office], which looks at how the U.S. appropriates and audits individual programs.

Mr. CONAWAY. I am not talking about aid. I am talking about, well, we have got bases all over the place where we hire locals to—

Dr. CORDESMAN. I am talking about military spending, which we call aid often. I am talking about direct spending in country. I am talking about State Department and other spending, which is not aid, which is a very substantial amount of the money, but does go in country, and aid together. And the estimates done from World Bank, IMF basically came up first within January an estimate that it would take about \$20 billion to \$24 billion a year in outside financing to keep the country from basically having problems with economic growth, and \$10 billion in aid more recently in Tokyo, roughly, to sustain the effort, civil and military. But all of those estimates were made by people who explicitly said they could not assess the impact of reducing the military side of spending as distinguished from the civil aid side.

Mr. JOHNSON. If I can chime in on that, we issued a report back in September 2011 on Afghan donor dependency. I guess a key point there, to follow up on what Dr. Cordesman said, is that a lot of the money has been off the books. So the Afghan Government itself has no visibility in the amount of money that is pouring into its country, that they don't have any oversight and accountability over themselves. I know we have shifted more toward providing

some of our assistance—I think the goal was up to 50 percent—directly through the Afghan Government, whether it is through trust funds or other means and all.

But until there is more visibility in terms of all the books, I think we kind of took an effort to pull it all together for one of the first times back in September of 2011. But that is something that has not been routinely done, and that is something that is probably needed.

Mr. CONAWAY. Who should do that?

Mr. JOHNSON. We would be happy to undertake a follow-up effort.

Mr. CONAWAY. And not to be argumentative, but Dr. Felter, you used the phrase occupying force a while ago to describe the U.S. presence there. Do you consider us an occupying force as that term is typically used?

Dr. FELTER. I would say some of the Afghans view us as an occupying force in the same way they viewed the Russians as an occupying force. And there are certainly very important differences between the two, and I would take offense if we were compared too closely to the Russian or to the Soviet occupation. But it is really important not how we perceive ourselves—

Mr. CONAWAY. I got that part. But you used it as your descriptor, and I was focusing on that.

Dr. FELTER. I think that in the eyes of many Afghans, we are occupiers.

Mr. CONAWAY. I get that. But I don't think we view ourselves that way.

Dr. FELTER. No, absolutely not.

Mr. CONAWAY. And shouldn't.

Dr. FELTER. But it is very critical to understand how we are viewed. In some of these remote areas, you get the question occasionally that locals ask you if you are Russian. And it has happened on more than one occasion. That is just how disconnected some of these areas are.

Mr. CONAWAY. Yeah. It speaks to the level of overall development. I mean, some of those back valleys are in a different century than the rest of the country. You know, that is okay. They like it, and that is not our job to drag them kicking and screaming into the 21st century. We sometimes get lost in that issue. I appreciate you not calling us an occupying force.

Dr. FELTER. Thank you, sir.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Conaway.

Are there any other questions from the panel members?

Mr. Coffman. Yes.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just have one question. And that is that it appears that there has not been a credible election yet in Afghanistan by international standards. And what in your mind is going to be the transition of power when Mr. Karzai leaves? I wonder if you all could speak to that. Because that is obviously key to the success of Afghanistan, would be a peaceful and credible transition of power.

Dr. CORDESMAN. I think that, first, the U.S., its allies, are making every possible effort to get an effective election in 2014. I think it is—the idea we could do it in 2013 has been abandoned. But it

isn't just a matter of creating an honest election. It is the fact we don't know who would really be the replacement to Karzai. We are not sure that there won't be a Karzai attempt to create something as we saw in Russia, have a relative run or something similar, in spite of what he says.

And the most serious problem we face is that even if there is an effective election, it will occur in 2014 in the middle of this economic problem and aid problem that Congressman Conaway pointed out. And basically speaking, unless we get the reforms that the Afghan Government has promised, the new leader basically will still have a system where there is no way the parliament can actually function and allocate money. And one man essentially is in charge of virtually all the funding that goes through the Afghan central government, the president, and there is no ability at the provincial or local level to raise money. So you have got to solve not only the election problem, but the leadership problem. And basically, those problems in governance reform, which the government has formally pledged to do in two international conferences, but for which as yet there is no deadline or implementation plan.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I yield back.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Coffman.

Mr. Conaway, anything else?

Mr. CONAWAY. No.

Mr. WITTMAN. Panel members, thank you so much for joining us today. We really appreciate your perspective.

Mr. Johnson, we look forward to getting a little more information to you about some of the finances. Members, if you have any additional questions for our panelists today, if you will make sure that you get them to us, we will get them to our panelists. We would ask your indulgence, if there are additional questions, if we could submit those to you in writing. And if you could get some answers back to us, that would be great.

Again, thank you so much for your time and efforts today.

And with that, the committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:52 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]



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**A P P E N D I X**

JULY 24, 2012

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**PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD**

JULY 24, 2012

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**Statement of Hon. Rob Wittman**  
**Chairman, House Subcommittee on Oversight and**  
**Investigations**  
**Hearing on**  
**Afghan National Security Forces and Security**  
**Lead Transition: The Assessment Process,**  
**Metrics, and Efforts To Build Capability**  
**July 24, 2012**

Today the Oversight and Investigations subcommittee convenes the fourth in our series of hearings related to the Afghan National Security Forces.

Members have just received a closed, classified briefing from senior Department of Defense officials on the metrics used to assess the readiness of Afghan forces and current capability ratings.

Now, the subcommittee holds an open hearing on this topic.

We have assembled a panel of specialists to provide testimony about the sufficiency and reliability of the metrics used by the U.S. to track the progress of the development of the Afghan National Security Forces. We will also receive testimony about the effectiveness of the U.S. training effort, and the challenges our troops face in readying the Afghan army and police to assume the lead for security by 2014.

The development of self-sufficient Afghan forces capable of providing internal and external security is a key goal of the U.S. strategy for Afghanistan.

In public settings before this subcommittee and elsewhere, Department of Defense officials have said that the capability of the Afghan forces will inform decisions about the pace of the continued drawdown of U.S. troops and the size of an enduring U.S. presence.

Our panel today includes:

- Dr. Anthony Cordesman, the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at the Center for Strategic and International Studies;
- Dr. Joseph Felter, a retired U.S. Army colonel and Senior Research Scholar at the Center for International Security and Cooperation at Stanford University;
- Ambassador (ret.) Kenneth Moorefield, the Deputy Inspector General for Special Plans and Operations at the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General; and

- Mr. Charles M. Johnson, Jr., a Director of International Affairs and Trade at the United States Government Accountability Office. Mr. Johnson will be assisted in answering questions by his colleague Ms. Sharon Pickup, also a Director at GAO.

Thank you for your participation. We look forward to your testimony.

**Statement before the House Armed Services  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations**

***“AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES AND  
SECURITY LEAD TRANSITION:  
THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS, METRICS, AND EFFORTS  
TO BUILD CAPACITY”***

A Statement by

**Anthony H. Cordesman**

Burke Chair in Strategy,  
Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

**July 24, 2012  
2212 Rayburn House Office Building**

**Afghan National Security Forces and Security Lead  
Transition: The Assessment Process, Metrics, and Efforts  
to Build Capacity**

Testimony before the House Armed Services  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

**Anthony H. Cordesman**  
Center for Strategic and International Studies

**July 24, 2012**

It is important to note from the outset that it is as critical to assess the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in terms of the broad strategic direction of the conflict as it is to assess them in conventional military terms. The ANSF cannot be assessed effectively simply in terms of training, equipment or even combat performance. In fact, the effectiveness of Afghan forces during and after Transition may well have little to do with the metrics that focus on their strength or abstract estimates of their combat capability and ability to operate without outside support.

**Assessing the Conditions for Meaningful Military Success**

No assessment system that measures performance against training, manning, or equipment benchmarks can be adequate, and the same is true even of assessments of actual performance against the enemy. Most insurgencies are won or lost not by tactical military success but by the behavior of the host country government; by its ability to maintain cohesion, by its ability to win support at the local level, by the quality of its governance, by its perceived integrity, and by its ability to compete on the level of ideology and strategic communications.

Measuring the ANSF's *ability* to fight is not nearly as important as measuring its *will* to fight – and its will to fight for the central government and not some powerbroker or warlord. In most historical cases where a government was defeated, its security forces started with major advantages in terms of their size, equipment, and training. In many cases, they win most direct battles initially, and sometimes seem to defeat the insurgents decisively. At the same time, the failures in politics, governance, equity and economics that led to the insurgency in the first place continued.

The security forces mirror image the corruption and weaknesses of the government they served, often committed abuses equal to or greater than those of the insurgents, and had no ability to “win and hold” on a lasting basis. The Maoists won for these reasons, so did the insurgents in Nepal, and so did the Taliban. The Taliban recovery between 2002 and 2010 occurred for the same reasons.

Every aspect of transition in Afghanistan, and every aspect of a realistic assessment of the Afghan security forces, must be shaped by honestly assessing how serious these problems really are at each stage of transition and in the years beyond. “Spinning” positive reports to the neglect of real problems at the strategic level is a recipe for defeat regardless of how well the ANSF perform militarily.

These problems will not go away even if there is some form of apparent peace settlement. Outcomes in both Cambodia and Nepal are recent warnings that peace can be just as cosmetic and unreal – albeit in very different ways – as it was in Vietnam and that a peace settlement in no way ends the problem of creating an effective mix of governance and a security forces. Afghanistan was the subject of several international and national peace agreements from 1988 to 1993 even as the state collapsed into a brutal and chaotic civil war.

Moreover, all of our assessment, aid, and governance systems must now adapt to rapidly diminishing ISAF troop levels over the next two years. Freedom of movement will become much more difficult throughout the country. This will cause a ripple of negative effects: implementing – and verifying – aid projects outside of the Kabul area will become much more difficult; improving – and monitoring – governance outside of Kabul will be equally difficult; with far fewer route-clearance capabilities, even military travel will become problematic.

Lower ISAF troop levels will also make data collection more difficult at all levels – from ANSF development, Afghan governance, and Rule of Law -- to basic security metrics such as enemy attacks and IEDs. ISAF troops are our eyes and ears on the ground. If the ANSF and other Afghan actors do not learn to collect and report on a whole host of metrics, we will be increasingly blind and deaf.

### **Assessing the Assessment System**

The US has long had problems in honestly and realistically assessing the Afghan, Iraqi, and even South Vietnamese forces that it has trained. US assessment systems have been consistently inaccurate in measuring loyalty, unit cohesion, corruption, COIN capabilities (as opposed to conventional capabilities), and the military’s ability to sustain itself without US help.

Past US failures in this area have not been ignored, however, and the Commander’s Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT) for assessing the ANSF represents our best effort yet at accurate evaluation. In particular, the classified parts of the CUAT system seem to offer a more realistic approach than the old Capabilities Milestone (CM) system.

The CM system was a “plant gate” system that largely worried about manning levels, equipment and supply levels, and punching training tickets, but not about what happened in terms of real world unit performance and loyalty. It had real value in creating a force that was largely sustained and supported by the US and its allies, but little value in measuring real world potential for Transition. The CUAT system is at least supposed to measure actual combat performance and examine issues like political alignments, corruption, and ties to warlords and power brokers. Yet the CUAT system does not place enough emphasis on these factors, and does nothing to eliminate the pervasive positive bias that has hindered previous assessment systems.

### **Focusing on Political and Ethnic Loyalties, Corruption, and Factional Divisions**

Manning, equipment, and training alone have never been fully sufficient measures of quality in the Afghan security forces. This is particularly true of police and local paramilitary units in developing and corrupt states with weak governance, as is the case in Afghanistan. Even the regular Afghan military forces, higher command systems, and the Ministry of Defense present major problems in terms of unity, leadership, corruption, loyalty, and abuses that alienate the population.

These are problems that US and other outside military trainers now tend to minimize in public, and trainers – as distinguished from mentors/embeds/partners -- are not charged with addressing. They are, however, “win or lose” realities in the field. As our recent experiences in both Iraq and Afghanistan have shown – and the broader history of counterinsurgency makes clear – the most effective combat units can become part of the problem rather than the solution if they become tied to rival power brokers or factions, or become caught up in ethnic and sectarian struggles.

Different forms of this mix of corruption and factional alignments have already had a critical impact twice in modern Afghanistan. Divided loyalties helped lead first to the Soviet intervention, and then, after their departure, to the years of self-destructive civil war that were crucial to the Taliban’s creation and eventual success. The Soviet-backed government fell apart in 1992 partly because of the re-emergence of ethnic, regional, and tribal divisions within the Afghan security forces. Even high level military officers and government officials left to join the same Pashtun, Tajik, or Hazara Islamist militias that they had only recently been fighting against. The threat that similar divisions could split the current Afghan central government must be taken seriously, given the rise of a new Northern Alliance and factional divisions among Pashtuns

### **Treating Assessment of the Military Differently from Other Elements of the ANSF**

Each element of the ANSF will need to be assessed separately in order to effectively identify challenges and needs during Transition. There is no value in discussion about the total ANSF and its total cost, or in focusing on largely arbitrary goals for future total manning before and after Transition. .

Consider how the ANSF is actually structured. With forces near their current goal of 352,000, their total authorized strength was 344,108 on April 30<sup>th</sup>. However, only a total of 194,466 (57%) were military – including 7,809 ANA Commandos, 646 ANA Special Forces, and 5,541 Air Force. The rest – a total of 149,642 (43%) were police with very different functions, plus large numbers of Afghan Local Police (ALP). Additionally, there was no clear plan to create enough men in the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) to replace virtually all private security contractors.

The police have only one comparatively small element that is really intended to fight as a paramilitary force: The Afghan Civil Order Protection Force (ANCOP). It is the capacity of the various elements of the Afghan military to replace US and allied forces during 2014-2020 (the first real world date full transition might take place for the ANSF is 2016-

2017) that will determine the Afghan government's ability to defeat the Taliban and other insurgents.

The force elements that will be in combat must be supported by an effective MoD, effective C4I capabilities, effective IS&R, effective trainers, and effective O&M and logistical sustainment. Much will depend on the level of future fighting, but assessments must focus on their ability to actually secure every area where transition occurs and to defeat the insurgents militarily. It must also shift from a Kandak or small combat unit-focused system to a force-wide assessment system that reports on every aspect necessary to measure the ability of the regular military to perform their function.

At the same time, the assessment system must still look beyond combat performance, particularly by early 2014 onwards. The military can divide along regional-ethnic-sectarian lines, and by power broker/warlord. Military corruption can occur at every level from the Ministry to the Kandak and small unit.

The hoarding of ammunition and supplies, the effective "selling" of combat services, political favoritism, bypassing the chain of command at the political level, the selling of positions and promotions, and creating substructures to obtain money and privileges that bypass the formal command structure are problems affecting most military forces in the developing world.

This corruption and politicization within the regular military can be self-defeating. History shows that it is all too easy for such problems to spiral out of control if money and outside support become a critical problem. This happened with the Kuomintang against the Maoists, it happened to a lesser degree in Vietnam, and it occurred with remarkable speed in Iraq as the US forces withdrew – with the selling of promotions and positions in previously relatively clean units beginning in a matter of months.

The old warlord structure of Afghanistan had many elements of these problems, compounded by competition over lucrative sources of revenue such as transport routes, drug production, and access to external sponsors. Conflict over resources can reoccur all too easily if the US and its allies cut spending, training, and mentoring too quickly.

Moreover, a combination of poor leadership, economic crisis, and ethnic and sectarian divisions may contribute to the weakening of the Afghan state. Accordingly, a meaningful assessment of the performance of Afghan forces – even the regular military – must focus on tribal, ethnic, and factional loyalties along with the prevalence of various forms of corruption.

### **Making Separate Assessments of Paramilitary, Police, Local Police and Security force Forces**

The present system for reporting on progress in the police is almost solely oriented towards force generation and support of counterinsurgency. The system that ISAF uses to assess the ANP (which is nearly identical to the ANA assessment system) overstates the capabilities of the police, because it focuses on manning, equipping, and training – instead of focusing on more important factors such as corruption, loyalty, and the functioning of the justice system. The ANP is essentially being trained to become a light paramilitary COIN force, with little in the way of traditional police training. In most areas, the police are not linked to a functioning justice system at all.

Assessments of the Afghan police must reflect the fact that they face distinct challenges and fulfill different functions from the military. With the possible exception of the ANCOPs, the pressures for corruption and politicization are far greater at every level from the Ministry of the Interior down to the local police. There are many honest and effective Afghan officials and police, but the system rewards political loyalty and corruption with little meaningful control or punishment.

Compared to the military, the various elements of the police are tied far closer to factional politics and local government, and have far more opportunity to take bribes, pursue personal vendettas, and abuse the population. This is far more likely where governance is not present, is weak, or is corrupt – particularly if police forces are not local, are not properly protected and supplied, become independent local forces, and/or become tied to power brokers, insurgent factions and narco-traffickers.

The police had 149,642 personnel as of April 30, 2012. These were divided into very different elements, each of which has to be assessed separately. The police as a whole had some 17,442 ANCOP. The Afghan Border Police or ABP had some 27,972 personnel, and are the most corrupt element of the police. The regular Afghan police – or Afghan Uniform Police -- had 85,434 personnel, including 25,195 officers, 39,943 NCOs, 77,653 patrolmen, and 6,851 initial entry trainees.

In addition – and outside the force goal of 352,000 for the ANSF -- were 12,660 personnel in a growing Afghan Local Police (ALP) whose future levels and resources are increasingly uncertain. The training and creation of another police-like force, the APPF, had undergone many major problems, but there were 6,558 trainees as of the end of 2011.

No reputable or meaningful assessment of these forces can lump them together or separate them from the overall context of the political structure of the country during transition, the quality of governance, and the functioning of the justice system.

Each element of the police and the other civilian security forces perform a far wider range of functions than the military, and must be fully integrated with the civil government and justice system.

This is a major challenge, and one that will create massive problems for a successful transition because the broad failures in virtually every aspect of the rule of law program, the limited span of effective control of the central government, and the Taliban's de-facto enforcement of its own justice system in many troubled areas.

The regular police, and the local police, also need local governance and services, an effective on-the-scene mix of formal and traditional justice, and detention facilities – if transition is to succeed without reverting to a violent contest for power between tribes, factions, and ethnic groups, resulting in gains for insurgents and local warlords alike. In far too many areas there is no effective governance backing up the Afghan police, with little chance of meaningful progress before 2014, or at any predictable time thereafter.

These are areas where the few unclassified metrics that actually measure the quality of governance, police, courts, and aid at the provincial and district levels now have little or no transparency and very uncertain credibility. They are also areas where the unclassified assessment in each stovepipe are "spun" to report exaggerated levels of success. In

practice, however, assessing Transition for the Afghan police forces without making an assessment of the progress in combining governance, justice, and policing is an exercise in futility.

### **Mapping Transition in Credible Ways Instead of Claiming Province-wide or District Wide Success**

Furthermore, a meaningful assessment cannot claim blanket success for an entire province or district when there are substantial areas with no effective governance, justice system or policing. It is necessary to map areas of influence and operations, and do so without coloring large areas where only a few “ink spots” of success really exist.

There is a critical need to monitor progress by at least estimating the interaction between the credible presence of governance, police, and a justice system at the local level, and particularly in the key provinces and districts where there either is an active insurgent threat or a significant insurgent presence.

This will be particularly important in assessing real world capability to transfer responsibility. It is one thing to “transfer” provinces that are so secure that the transfer has no real meaning. It is quite another to transfer areas where the different elements of the ANSF face real threats. Moreover, even in “secure” areas, “secure” is defined largely in terms of the overall level of military activity and not insurgent presence, influence, control ratlines or tactical sanctuaries.

The only way to know whether the ANSF is effective is to focus on the areas where it needs to be effective and rate its performance over time as Transition actually occurs. The US and ISAF should not repeat the politically cosmetic transfers that occurred during the Iraq War – where the most serious fighting in Basra during the entire war occurred after the transfer of the province – only to be followed by the “Charge of the Knights” and a sudden need for massive US intervention. The Afghan military is not as capable as its Iraqi counterpart was in 2008, and if they are forced into a premature Basra-type battle on their own, they may not win.

### **Follow the Money, the Trainers, and the Mentors, and Integrate Assessments of Allied, and ANSF Efforts**

For similar reasons, assessments of the various ANSF branches need to consider how well they are financed and supported by trainers and mentors. There needs to be a much more integrated effort to directly link Afghan progress and effectiveness with outside support, and to show the trends in reducing the need for outside support over time. Current reporting systems do not seem to make this linkage in any credible way.

It makes no sense to talk about \$4.1 billion funding for the entire ANSF, to talk about pledged trainers as if they were actually on the scene or certain to come, and to talk about cuts from a total of 352,000 ANSF in 2014 to 228,500 in 2017. These gross oversimplifications are simply not credible. No one can predict the conditions that should shape the future size and funding of each element of Afghan forces, and discussing total manning and funding for the ANSF is little more than statistical nonsense.

The current lack of any credible open source data on the plans for developing the ANSF through 2014 and beyond undermines the credibility of ISAF, NTM-A, and US plans – and raise serious questions as to whether credible, fundable, and staffable plans actually exist. It should be stressed that the transparency and credibility of such plans is an absolutely essential part of an effective assessment as well as an essential part of any credible effort to win sustained Congressional and public support for the ANSF over time. As yet, no element of such plans is public and no credible public reporting of any kind has emerged on such efforts from NTM-A or any other body.

### **Assessing How ANSF Development Impacts on the Broader Economics of Transition**

The problems involved in shaping and funding the complex mix of Afghan army, regular police, local police forces, militias, and contract or APPF security forces would be less important if they did not coincide so directly with efforts to create a broad transition to ANSF security operations far more quickly than previously planned. The fact is, however, that the transition to reliance on Afghan forces now has to be much quicker than US, ISAF, and NTM-A planners counted on even a year ago, and will have far less outside funding.

Moreover, the success of every element of the Afghan security forces is essential to creating a secure enough climate for the Afghan economy to function and develop, and to create significant outside investment. It is also an essential part of any successful transition plan to sustain aid and economic advisory activity in the field as US and ISAF forces are withdrawn and aid workers and PRTs are removed.

This means that plans to deal with the civil aspects of transition in the Afghan economy must be integrated with plans to develop the ANSF, and the same is true of assessments of these plans and progress in actually implementing them.

At the same time, assessments of governance and economics must take explicit account of the probable level of security in given areas as outside military and aid workers depart, as well as who can provide security for domestic and internal ventures.

These are not casual issues. Local security may be lacking in key parts of Afghanistan until long after 2014 – barring some “peace” arrangement that gives insurgents de facto control over high threat areas. An aid or economic plan that ignores the fact that the nation is at war and that key areas are likely to remain so long after 2014 has neither practical value nor credibility.

### **Measuring Transition in Net Assessment Terms**

Finally, it is time to stop making separate assessments of the ANSF and the insurgent threat, and to start explicitly assessing areas loyal to or controlled by given power brokers and warlords.

As long as a real war exists, the ANSF should be assessed in terms of its impact on a war and not as an NTM-A force generation exercise. This means putting an end to largely meaningless statistics on enemy initiated attacks coupled to ANSF ratings of entire force elements or major units, replaced by an emphasis on understanding the trends in government vs. insurgent control at the provincial and district levels, and particularly in

key combat areas, major population centers and key areas that impact on the economy or key lines of communication.

Such assessments are key to assessing the prospects for any form of negotiated peace agreement, including identifying potential spoilers. The assessment of ANSF actions and capabilities needs to be directly compared to the success or failures of the insurgents, their ability to control or influence given areas in Afghanistan, and the extent to which they have sanctuaries and supply lines in Pakistan.

## Appendix A

### ANSF Excerpt from the “Failing Economics of Transition”

<http://esis.org/publication/afghanistan-failing-economics-transition>

ISAF and its training mission, National Training Mission Afghanistan (NTM-A), did make major progress in developing the Afghan forces after 2009, and some aspects of this progress have accelerated over time. As **Figure Twenty-Nine** shows, it may be possible to expand the different elements of the ANSF to over 352,000 men during the period of transition. This is uncertain, however, given the current problems with attrition and AWOLs shown in **Figure Twenty-Nine**, the lack of suitable numbers of expert outside trainers, and the uncertainty as to whether the funding will be available to field so large a mix of military and police forces for any length of time.

In any case, successful transition will also depend more on creating a force that is affordable and effective than one that is large. Current plans talk about a future force level of 230,000 and a budget reduced to around \$4.1 billion a year, but it is not clear such plans will be put into practice, how the current force goals will be adjusted, what budget will actually be available, and how much the Afghan government can spend of its own revenues. The security situation remains unpredictable, as do the challenges posed by peace negotiations, and the police effort presents special problems both because of corruption and because it is being developed without a matching real-world justice system and Afghan government presence in the field.

It is unclear whether the US and its allies are willing to fully fund the necessary development and support effort through 2014 and for as long as it takes after this time to achieve lasting security and stability – a truly massive funding effort that so far has dominated total aid expenditures in Afghanistan.

#### *Transition and the Regular Armed Forces*

Unless far more progress is made towards a real peace than now seems likely, a successful transition will be equally dependent on major training and partnering efforts that last well beyond 2014 and possibly to 2020. This will be critical to give Afghan forces quality as well as quantity, limit the impact of corruption and power brokers, create an Afghan Air Force that is not scheduled to have even basic force size and equipment before 2016, and give the Afghan Army the time necessary to build up its overall structure, command and control capability, infrastructure and sustainment capability, maintenance and other services.

The *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* for October 30, 2011 makes it clear that there are still many limitations to the force development effort for the Afghan National Army and Air Force:<sup>1</sup>

- Even with this progress, the growth and development of the ANSF continues to face challenges, including attrition above target levels in the ANA and some elements of the ANP, leadership deficits, and capability limitations in the areas of staff planning, management, logistics, and

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/October\\_2011\\_Section\\_1230\\_Report.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/October_2011_Section_1230_Report.pdf)

procurement. The ANSF continues to require enabling support, including air (both transport and close air support), logistics, ISR, and medical, from coalition resources to perform at the level necessary to produce the security effects required for Transition. The influence of criminal patronage networks on the ANSF also continues to pose a threat to stability and the Transition process. Further, the drawdown of U.S. and international forces increases the risk of a shortfall of operational partnering resources, which could reduce the ANSF-ISAF operational partnership and may impede ANSF development (p. 4).

- Successful Transition of the lead for security responsibilities to the ANSF is heavily dependent on a healthy, sustained partnering and advising relationship. These security assistance relationships create the conditions by which ANA and ANP forces can develop and become effective in defeating the insurgency, providing security for the local population, and fostering legitimacy for the Afghan Government. These relationships provide the ANSF with the ability to operate in a complex, counterinsurgency environment while also providing operational space and timing to man, equip, and absorb critical training. As the ANSF continues to grow and the U.S. and coalition forces begin to draw down, the gap between the requirements for partnering and available resources will grow. This gap threatens to undermine force development and may pose a risk to the Transition process. As a result, IJC is currently reviewing all partnering relationships to align with projected force levels and ensure resources are used to the greatest effect in the areas where they are most needed. As of September 30, 2011, there are seven critical shortfalls for the ANA and 88 shortfalls in the ANP in focus districts (31 AUP [Afghan Uniformed Police], 22 ANCOF [Afghan National Civil Order Police], and 35 ABP [Afghan Border Police]). These shortfalls do not account for U.S. forces departing theater without backfills due to the ongoing surge recovery, and shortfalls are expected to increase as U.S. and coalition forces continue to draw down (p. 40).
- As of September 2011, the MoD is assessed as requiring some coalition assistance to accomplish its mission (a rating of CM-2B, a status it achieved in October 2010). Overall, NTM-A [NATO Training Mission Afghanistan]/CSTC-A [Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan] anticipates the MoD moving to CM-1B by early 2013, with full Transition of most offices and functions to CM-1A by mid-2014 (p. 16).
- Although progress is being observed and assessed in a number of areas across the MoI, challenges remain that must be addressed. Civil service reform, both in personnel management and pay, is a recurring deficiency, both in the MoI and the MoD. The September 3, 2011 Ministerial Development Board recommended that Public Affairs be held in the CM-1B testing phase until civilian pay reform is achieved. The MoI Civil Service Department remains behind schedule largely because it lacks a permanent director and empowerment to effect change, as well as adequate office space, logistical support, office equipment and Internet connectivity needed to accomplish its basic functions. The Civil Service Department also requires support from the MoI senior leadership to implement the Afghan Government Public Administration Reform Law and to include conversion to the reformed pay scale. A strong partnership with provincial governors is required to improve hiring at the provincial level. The challenges surrounding civil service reform have already impeded Public Affairs' advancement and could obstruct overall MoI capacity, progress, and sustainment (p. 18).
- Shortfalls in the institutional trainer requirements set forth in the CJSOR [Combined Joint Statement of Requirements] still exist and continue to impede the growth and development of the ANSF. CJSOR v11.0 is the current document supporting trainer requirements. As of the end of the reporting period, the shortfall in institutional trainers is 485, a decrease of 255 from the March 2011 shortfall of 740, with 1,816 deployed trainers currently in-place against the total requirement of 2,778. The United States currently sources 1,331 non-CJSOR trainer positions. In order to temporarily address the NATO CJSOR shortfall and fill the U.S.-sourced non-CJSOR requirements as quickly as possible, the United States has implemented a series of requests for information from other coalition partners, including unit-based sourcing solutions to address short-term training needs. (p. 19-20).

- In order to maintain the accuracy of personnel figures, NTM-A/CSTC-A continues to review and revise the end-strength reporting process. During the reporting period, this constant review process highlighted a failure to report training attrition, which has resulted in a large discrepancy between actual and reported ANA end-strength numbers. After agreeing upon an accurate end strength for September, NTM-A and ANA leadership implemented new policies and procedures to ensure training base attrition is accurately reported in the future. Strong leadership within the ANA Recruiting Command (ANAREC) and effective and mature processing within National Army Volunteer Centers, which induct recruits into the ANA, has enabled adjustments to current recruiting plans in order to prevent delays in achieving the objective end-strength levels. NTMA/CSTC-A continues to work closely with and support the ANA in rectifying manning issues to ensure growth to the JCMB-endorsed ANA end-strength goal of 195,000 personnel by the end of October 2012 (p. 22).
- Although recruiting and retention are continuing at a strong pace, if the high levels of attrition seen during this reporting period continue, there is a risk that the ANA will not be able to sustain the recruitment and training costs currently incurred to achieve the October 2012 growth goal. Historic trends show that attrition is seasonal, rising in the fall and winter and declining in the spring. The main causes of attrition in the ANA are poor leadership and accountability, separation from family, denial of leave or poor leave management, high operational tempo, and ineffective deterrence against soldiers going absent without leave (AWOL) (p. 22). Nevertheless, President Karzai issued a decree in April 2011 renewing the policy of amnesty for AWOL officers, NCOs, and soldiers who return to their units voluntarily until March 2012. This extension has the potential to impede the ANA's ability to decrease attrition.
- The ANA is projected to still have only 57,600 NCOs to meet a requirement of 71,900 in November 2012.
- The AAF's [Afghan Air Force] long-term development strategy includes the creation of an air force that can support the needs of the ANSF and the Afghan Government by 2016. This force will be capable of Presidential airlift, air mobility, rotary and fixed-wing close air support, casualty evacuation, and aerial reconnaissance. The AAF also plans to be able to sustain its capacity through indigenous training institutions, including a complete education and training infrastructure. The air fleet will consist of a mix of Russian and Western airframes. Afghan airmen will operate in accordance with NATO procedures, and will be able to support the Afghan Government effectively by employing all of the instruments of COIN airpower. This plan, however, is ambitious, and is indicative of the tension between Afghan Government aspirations, necessity, and affordability (pp. 31-32).
- In August 2011, the total number of reporting ANA units in the field increased to 204, and the number of units achieving an operational effectiveness rating of "Effective with Assistance" or higher was sustained at 147; alternatively, 37 units (18 percent) of fielded ANA units are in the lowest assessment categories, "Developing" or "Established," due to an inability to perform their mission or the immaturity of a newly-fielded unit. Even the ANA's highest-rated *kandak*, 2<sup>nd</sup> *kandak*, 2nd Brigade, 205th Corps, which achieved the rating of "Independent," remains dependent on ISAF for combat support and combat enablers. In locations without a large ISAF footprint, the ANA has exhibited little improvement and there is little reporting on their operational strengths and weaknesses. These units are typically located in the west and far northeast regions (p. 43).

The *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan for April 2012* reflected significant progress, but again showed the level of the challenges that will exist through 2014 and beyond:

- The CM rating for the MoD has not changed since it achieved CM-2B in October 2010, primarily because of the addition of new departments within the overall ministry. As of the last evaluation period, of the 47 total offices and cross-functional areas, 5 of the departments had a CM-4 rating, 10 had achieved a CM-3 rating, 15 had achieved a CM-2B rating, 9 had achieved a CM-2A rating, and 4 achieved a CM-1B rating (ANA Recruiting Command, Office of the Minister of Defense,

General Staff G6 Communications Support Unit, and 15 the Parliamentary, Social, and Public Affairs Department). (p. 14)

- Despite progress, the MoD faces a number of significant challenges. Although the MoD is less vulnerable to criminal penetration than the MoI, criminal patronage networks (CPNs) continue to operate within the MoD, particularly within the Afghan Air Force. Further, the MoD is challenged by a lack of human capital in many specialized areas requiring technical expertise, and the development and growth of talent and expertise will remain critical to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the MoD. (p. 15)
- Synchronizing the development of the MoD with the Transition to Afghan security lead throughout Afghanistan remains essential, and the MoD will need to take initiatives necessary to ensure that it is, at once, developing autonomous ministerial operations and effectively supporting the Transition process. (p. 15)
- ANSF-ISAF operations include: 1) ANA Partnered (ANA conducted the operation jointly with ISAF); 2) ANP Partnered (AUP, ABP, or ANCOP conducted the operation jointly with ISAF); 3) Joint ANSF Partnered (ANA and ANP conducted the operation jointly with ISAF); 4) ANSF Led (ANSF conducted the mission with support from ISAF). (p. 40)
- In the past six months, the number of partnered operations as well as ANSF-led operations increased. A decrease in total number of operations in January and February 2012 is attributable to the extreme winter weather across the country. The total percentage of ANSF-led operations also increased, rising from 14 percent (16 of 112) in September 2011 to almost 33 percent (31 of 95) in February 2012. (p. 40)
- The majority of reported Level 1 and Level 2 partnered operations, as defined in figure 16, occurred in Regional Commands South (RC-S), Southwest (RC-SW), and East (RC-E) between August 2011 and January 2012; ANSF-led operations typically occurred in RC-S, RC-E, and Regional Command North (RC-N). Partnered operations are generally expected to yield an increase in ANSF-led operations as ANSF unit capabilities increase. This trend is evident in RC-S and RC-E but not in RC-SW. A more thorough analysis of Cycle 13 CUAT data for units in RC-SW shows an improvement in ANSF ability to plan and lead Level 0 operations, which are not reported through formal channels. CUAT data indicates that ANSF-led operations are most frequently lower-risk operations. This conclusion is substantiated by data in Figure 15: ANSF-led Operations, which compares Level 1 and 2 operations. There was, however, one ANSF-led Level 2 operation in Khost (RC-E) in February 2012. The success of this operation illustrates the developing Afghan capacity to successfully lead operations in this sensitive border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan.
- The ANSF continues to face a shortage of NATO/ISAF trainers. The total number of required trainers is currently 2,774 – reflecting a slight adjustment since September 2011 when the requirement was 2778. This change is due to the elimination of 457 positions and the addition of 453 different positions. These changes are indicative of the evolution of the NTM-A mission as Afghans take responsibility for some additional tasks. The percentage of trainers in-place or pledged currently stands at 84 percent with a shortfall of 448 positions. The shortfall of absent trainers previously stood at 26 percent, but a Force Generation Conference hosted by NTM-A and SHAPE in January 2012 substantially lowered the shortfall to 16 percent. Figure 6 illustrates the current status of the CJSOR. (p. 18)
- While progress was not uniform across all sections of the ANA, some units, such as the Afghan National Army Special Forces, have made impressive strides, and are now very capable. Progress has been slower in other areas, such as in developing the ANA logistics capabilities, or the development of the Afghan Air Force. (p. 19)
- Using the MoD and NTM-A-agreed definition for Southern Pashtuns, this ethnic segment made up 6.6 percent of enlisted recruits during the reporting period. Despite persistent efforts, the impact of the initiatives on the security situation in the south and elsewhere remains marginal. Southern Pashtuns are defined as belonging to the following tribes: Ghilzai, Durrani, Zirak, Mohammadzai,

Barakzai, Alikozai, Achakzai, Popalzai, Panjpao, Alizai, Ishaqzai, Tokhi, Hotaki, Khogiani. (p. 20)

- Monthly attrition rates also did not meet the targeted level of 1.4 percent for the first five months of the reporting period: 2.4 percent in October, 2.6 percent in November, 2.3 percent in December, 1.9 percent in January, 1.8 percent in February, and 1.2 percent in March, for a six-month average of 2.0 percent. However, there was consistent improvement due to improvements in leadership, providing more leave to soldiers, enhanced living conditions, and pay system improvements. (p. 21)
- The pool of potential NCOs increased with continued growth of the literacy program and recruitment focus on literate candidates. A total of 8,083 NCOs were generated between October 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, including 5,908 from the Team Leader Courses and 2,175 from initial entry 1 Uniform courses (1UC). Nevertheless, the ANA is challenged by a significant current shortfall of nearly 10,600 NCOs as well as needed growth of 6,800 additional NCOs this year. The shortage of NCOs will gradually be reduced through 2014 as experienced, qualified soldiers are identified, trained, and promoted. (p. 22)
- ANA equipment fielding continued over the course of the reporting period. However, beginning with ANA units fielded during March 2012, there will be increasing shortages of equipment, particularly vehicles, of which nearly 4,194 are currently stranded in Pakistan due to the closure of the Pakistani ground lines of communication (GLOCs). The closure of the GLOCs has had a more limited effect on communications equipment and weapons, the delivery of which continues via air lines of communication (ALOCs). Fielding priorities for the next 180 days are expected to be met if Pakistani GLOCs are restored. Fielding new equipment to units training at the Consolidated Fielding Center will remain the focus throughout 2012. As additional equipment becomes available, NTM-A will continue to backfill corps units to 100 percent of *tashkil* authorizations.
- At the national level, ANA logistics nodes are complete, and development efforts are expected to increasingly focus on improving logistics effectiveness in the coming year. On a regional level, the future structure of ANA logistics began to take shape in early 2012 as a merging of Forward Supply Depots and Corps Logistics Battalions into Regional Logistics Support Commands (RLSCs) started, with four mergers having been completed. Six RLSCs will report to the Army Support Command (ASC) of the GS, building the hub for logistical support. As a sign of Afghan development, the Commander of the ASC published the implementation plan for this effort in November 2011. Notably, the nascent logistics system successfully distributed packages of cold weather clothing and equipment to ANA units during this reporting period.
- During the coming period, logistics development efforts will focus on facilitating distribution and using completed infrastructure in order to develop an ANA logistics system better able to respond to specific requests from the ANA units. However, despite progress, the ANA is expected to lack combat enablers and logistics support for the foreseeable future. (p. 26).
- AAF plans, however, are ambitious and indicative of a need to balance Afghan Government aspirations, necessity, and affordability. As of the current reporting period, AAF capacity and capability remained extremely limited and future progress is challenged by significant obstacles, including inadequate national education and literacy levels as well as a nascent pilot training program. (p. 26)
- Corruption also remains a significant problem in the AAF, where a criminal patronage network is involved in numerous illegal activities. ISAF and the Afghan Government continue to work together to combat corruption, and as of the end of the reporting period, numerous investigations were ongoing. Nevertheless, the Afghan Government has yet to demonstrate the political will to address corruption and remove and prosecute corrupt officials on a consistent basis. (p. 26)
- All lines of operation made limited progress during the reporting period, but remain immature. The AAF build timeline lags the rest of the ANSF, as it started its training mission two years later, and more time is needed for technical training to produce pilots, mechanics, and several other technical skill sets.

- The AAF airmen build remains underdeveloped. The overall strength of the AAF was 5,541 at the end of the reporting period, with 1,577 currently in training. The pilot training program currently has 55 candidates progressing through the self-paced (normally 18 months) English language training course and 64 progressing through 12-month pilot training courses. New accession pilot candidates are required to possess an 80 English Competency Level score before beginning a formal pilot training course. Future training can now be conducted entirely within Afghanistan with the opening of the training center in Shindand, but the March course was cancelled due to a lack of progression by pilot candidates in the English language course. Shindand is capable of producing 70 pilots per year. There are also Afghan pilots attending courses in the United States, United Arab Emirates, and the Czech Republic.
- In November 2011, NTM-A and the AAF conducted a data call to assess the training level of AAF airmen, evaluating 2,800 personnel, or more than half of the force. The assessment revealed that 1,918 of those surveyed were undertrained but remained assigned to units. Combining the data call and subsequent investigations, only 973 personnel were found to be fully trained for their position. NTM-A and the AAF responded with additional training programs, resulting in 557 additional personnel that have now completed training. The existing shortfall in trained airmen is significant; the lack of a sufficient aircrew impedes the growth of the capability and infrastructure for the AAF and undermines the ability to grow the force. (p. 27)
- As of March 2012, the AAF was rated as CM-4 (exists but cannot accomplish its mission) because not all manpower billets are sourced, and those that are filled often lack appropriate training. Kabul Air Wing is still awaiting its programmed allocation of aircraft. Currently, Kabul aircraft include 15 C-27s, 18 Mi-17s (with expected arrival of six additional aircraft in Spring 2012), and 11 Mi-35s, of which four have expired. As part of this fleet, Kabul also hosts the Presidential airlift, with three Mi-17s and two C-27A aircraft dedicated to this important mission. (p. 27)
- Kandahar Air Wing is assessed as CM-4, due to the absence of all programmed mission aircraft (C-27, LAS, C-208). Additionally, the wing lacks manpower and training, which will follow once it begins to receive additional mission aircraft. Kandahar currently has seven of the planned 11 Mi-17s. Activities are underway now to permanently base four C-27As as the final five C-27As are delivered later this spring. Kandahar will also be receiving the C-208 light lift aircraft as deliveries continue through summer 2013.
- Although Shindand Air Wing is assessed as CM-4, it has continued to mature as the AAF's training wing. During the reporting period, Shindand has begun initial pilot training with the newly delivered C-182 trainer aircraft. The AAF's English Language Training immersion program, "Thunder Lab," will move to Shindand during the spring of 2012. (p. 28)
- Cycle 13 CUAT data showed the number of partnered units within the ANA increased from 175 in August 2011 to 201 in February 2012. The number of units reported as uncovered/unassessed or not reported was 37. The total number of ANA *kandaks* was also increased to show the number of units lacking any assessment data. (p. 38)

The key problems in generating the forces that will be required for Transition are funding and providing the proper mix of outside trainers, mentors, and partners. Given the current state of the ANA, it is far from clear that the US, other donors, and the Afghan government can create the kind of army called for in current plans for withdrawing most US and other ISAF by the end of 2014 with the resources that will be available, that the current force goals can be met with the necessary quality, that enough outside trainers and partners will be available, and that the Afghan government can deal with the economic impact of funding such a force and its civil and police needs.

This is critical to every aspect of the economics of transition because there are direct links between the capability of the ANA and the ability to secure traffic across the Pakistani border, and along critical roads like the Afghan ring road that circulates the

country. Most transition planning tacitly assumes that Afghanistan will be broadly secure at the end of 2014, and that there will be enough security to allow development and the relatively secure flow of trade. There is little evidence to date that such an assumption will be valid, and it seems even less likely if the US, other donors, and the Afghan government cannot create an effective Army.

### ***Transition and the Police Forces***

The 2011 *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan* made it clear there were even more serious limitations to the development effort for the various Afghan police forces:

- Despite indicating positive developments in ANP force generation, NTM-A recently determined that 3,940 officers and 6,733 patrolmen were filling NCO billets; large numbers of officers and patrolmen placed against vacant NCO positions overstates the development of the NCO ranks. Removing officers and patrolmen from NCO-designated positions would result in an actual officer strength at 102 percent, patrolmen strength at 113 percent, and NCO-assigned strength at 66.7 percent against authorized positions. NTM-A and IJC, along with ANP leadership, will focus on growing the NCO corps by 12,700 in order to close this gap (p. 34).
- Untrained patrolmen remain the biggest challenge for the AUP and NTM-A/CSTC-A, and the MoI continues to push the recruiting base in order to ensure all available training seats are used. As of September 2011, the AUP had a total of 11,919 untrained patrolmen and NCOs. AUP attrition remains the lowest of all police pillars at 1.3 percent, and has consistently remained below the monthly attrition objective of 1.4 percent for the last 11 months (November 2010 - September 2011) (p. 36).
- As of September 2011, the Afghan Border Police (ABP) end strength was 20,852 personnel. The ABP remains on schedule to meet all growth objectives for officers and patrolmen, but remains short of NCOs, with only 3,800 of an assigned total of 5,600. This shortfall, as well as the shortfall of untrained patrolmen, remains the primary focus for training efforts.
- Although overall attrition in the ANP has remained near target levels for the past year, high attrition continues to challenge the ANCOP in particular, which has experienced an annual attrition rate of 33.8 percent; although this has decreased significantly from 120 percent annual rate in November of 2009, it remains above the accepted rate for long-term sustainment of the force. As a national police force rotating from outside areas, it has avoided the corruption that was once seen in other police pillars. Although ANCOP units' effectiveness initially suffered from runaway attrition that stemmed largely from extended deployments and high operations tempo, the adoption of a 12-week recovery and retraining period between deployments has improved this situation.
- Building a capable and sustainable ANP depends on acquiring the equipment necessary to support the three basic police functions: shoot, move, and communicate. Accordingly, significant equipment uplift for the ANP began during the reporting period, which is expected to increase the ANP's on-hand equipment to approximately 80 percent by the spring of 2012. Despite progress, however, the ANP remains under-equipped as a result of fielding challenges. Due to these shortages, the MoI has developed fielding priorities based on operational requirements. To address the delay in processing supply/equipment requests, the MoI Material Management Center established a Customer Care Center in April 2011. This single point-of-entry clearinghouse for supply/equipment requests has been a success, significantly reducing response times (pp. 37-38).
- The ANP's logistics system remains particularly limited, both in facility development and in assigned and trained logistics personnel. The biggest challenge in developing logistics support to the ANP is the hiring and training of civilian personnel, as civilians make up 50 percent of the logistics workforce. Civilian hiring will continue to be a challenge until the MoI institutes civil service reforms (p. 38).

- The ANP has demonstrated improvement in its ability to conduct limited, independent policing operations and to coordinate operations with other ANSF elements. These improvements are largely attributable to a number of exogenous factors, including low insurgent threat levels in the given operating environment and ISAF enablers. ISAF mentor reporting shows that the majority of ANP units still rely heavily on coalition assistance, especially in contested areas. As with the ANA, the operational performance of ANP units is also suffering from U.S. and coalition force reductions. Each of the three ANP pillars saw an increase in the number of units that were not assessed due to recently-fielded units that are not reporting or not partnered due to lack of available coalition forces. Within the ABP, 11 of the 12 units were not assessed due to long standing partnering shortages. Additionally, four ANCOP *kandaks* located throughout theater were not assessed. Finally, within the AUP in key terrain districts, 17 of the 22 units not assessed were in RC-C (p. 45).
- Currently, the MoI Force Readiness Report is the Afghan system for reporting ANP data. Unfortunately, at this time, the report only focuses on the statistics for personnel and equipment: shoot, move and communicate. There are no ratings associated with the data and no commander's assessment or narrative comments to describe issues and challenges. The positive aspect of the report is that the MoI collects, aggregates, and builds its own reporting products with minimal coalition oversight (p. 46).

The updated April 2012 report did reflect real progress, but it also showed the level of challenges that still remained:

- As of the end of the reporting period, the MoI was assessed as needing significant coalition assistance, a CM rating of CM-3; the MoI is expected to achieve CM-2B next quarter. As of the last evaluation period, of the 30 total offices and cross-functional areas, 3 departments had a rating of CM-4, 11 achieved a CM-3 rating, 9 achieved a CM-2B rating, 4 achieved a CM-2A rating, and 2 achieved a CM-1B rating. Notably, Public Affairs recently transitioned to CM-1B, joining Policy Development. Additionally, several departments were established during the reporting period, including Gender Affairs, Democratic Policing, Counter-IED, and Recruiting Command. Recruiting Command will have its first assessment next rating period. The corruption cross-functional area was dropped as each department now has corruption metrics as part of its evaluation. (p. 16)
- The ANP continues to show improvement, with 50 percent (219 of 435) of ANP units currently rated as "Effective with Advisors" or higher compared to 37 percent (80 of 218) in August of 2011. The number of ANP units covered by the CUAT system has increased dramatically – from 218 in August 2011 to 435 as of January 2012. The number of units rated "Independent with Advisors" increased from 0 in August 2011 to 39 in January 2012. (p. 43)
- Although the MoI demonstrated measured progress during the reporting period, it faces multiple challenges which risk impeding further development. The MoI faces persistent difficulties in creating and maintaining a sustainable force, including civil service reform and a logistics capacity within the ANP pillars. Further, the MoI remains significantly susceptible to penetration by CPNs in the fielded force. Due to the nature of its mission, the dispersed deployment of its forces, and the span of control, the Afghan Border Police is particularly vulnerable to potential influence by CPNs. The Afghan Government, in partnership with ISAF, has made only limited progress toward eliminating corrupt officials. ISAF and the Afghan Government are accelerating efforts to develop internal accountability systems and sustainable processes through ministerial development and reform initiatives that will enable prevention and detection of internal criminal activity, thereby reducing the influence of CPNs. (p. 17)
- ...spot inspections of the fielded force have shown that only 50 percent attend class, emphasis is being placed on having more students attend literacy training centers. (p. 18)
- While progress was not uniform across all sections of the ANP, some units, such as the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), are now highly effective, frequently partnering with ISAF forces in successful operations. Progress has been less rapid in other areas, such as the

development of ANP logistics capabilities or the development of the Afghan Border Police. (p. 28)

- Tajiks are significantly overrepresented in the force, Pashtuns are represented proportionately to the Afghan population, but Hazara, Uzbeks, and others are underrepresented to varying degrees. (p. 29)
- ...efforts are needed to address the current NCO shortage of 8,316 and the 16,700 untrained patrolmen. During March, MoI successfully took their first steps to self govern the imbalances in the ANP. In addition to temporarily freezing recruitment, the Minister of the Interior also created a commission to address the imbalances in rank and location. Initial indications are that this self initiated Afghan commission will emphatically state that over-strength police officers (p. 29)
- Although ANCOP units' effectiveness initially suffered from high attrition that stemmed largely from extended deployments and high operations tempo, the adoption of a 12-week recovery and retraining period between deployments has improved this situation. (p. 30)
- In addition, the commander of the ANCOP continues to use new processes to reduce attrition rates and ensure that leaders are held accountable for poor performance. As a result of these efforts, ANCOP attrition in March 2012 was only 0.5 percent, one of the lowest rates since tracking began. Though the ANCOP still suffers from significant attrition levels, averaging 1.9 percent over the past six months, the ANCOP continues to meet growth objectives. (p. 30)
- The ABP is the pillar of the ANP responsible for securing and safeguarding the Afghan border as well as providing security up to 50 km away from the border. As of March 2012, the total strength for the ABP, including police in training, was 24,927 an increase of 2,968 personnel from the previous reporting period. However, the ABP continued to face a shortfall of NCOs, with only 4,041 of a total 5,622 authorized billets filled and an additional 942 officers and patrolmen assigned to NCO billets. The NCO shortfall remains the primary focus of ABP training efforts. (p. 31)
- At present, the ABP's most significant challenge remains the development and training of its Blue Border mission (defined as rule of law enforcement at Border Crossing Points and Air and Rail Ports of Entry), as opposed to the Green Border mission (defined as patrolling borders between the points of entry). ABP also face challenges in the development of its other core institutions such as Border Coordination Centers, Operational Coordination Centers, training facilities, and headquarters. In the absence of these capabilities, the ABP is not effectively securing and controlling Afghanistan's borders. In the near future, NTM-A will work with the MoI and ABP to better define the Blue Border force structure requirements, identify and procure essential Blue Border mission-specific equipment, and develop a Program of Instruction to satisfy Blue Border development requirements. Green Border planning teams will continue to work with IJC to find the right balance and cooperation between ABP and ANA for border security outside the Blue Border mission. (p. 31)
- Similar to the AAF, the ABP is also challenged by corruption and the penetration of CPNs. Although many police units are performing well, some police units still undermine the rule of law, fail to take action against criminal or insurgent threats, extort the population, and engage in a range of other criminal activities. ISAF and the Afghan Government continue to work together to address ANSF corruption and have successfully removed numerous members of the ABP involved in criminal activity. (p. 32)
- Untrained patrolmen and the lack of a sustainable logistics system remain the biggest challenges for the AUP. NTM-A and the MoI continue to emphasize recruiting in order to ensure all available training seats are used. As of March 2012, the AUP had a total of 12,500 (20 percent) untrained patrolmen and NCOs. AUP attrition remains the lowest of all police pillars, averaging 1.0 percent per month during the reporting period. (p. 32)
- As of October 2011, the ANP needed approximately 20,000 more NCOs within the following year. An increased emphasis on NCO training during the reporting period added 9,003 NCOs to the ANP, reducing the shortfall to 10,997. In addition to a shortage of NCOs, the ANP also faces a

significant amount of assigned but untrained patrolmen.

- Between October 1, 2011 and March 31, 2012, ANP training capacity increased from nearly 14,500 to 14,584. The ANP was expected to reach approximately 16,000 personnel by the end of December 2011; however, severe delays at National Police Training Center (NPTC) – Wardak impeded achievement of this goal. NTM-A continues to seek efficiencies while developing the necessary capacity to grow the size of the ANP, develop the force, and create a mature, sustainable ANP Training Management System infrastructure to support force training. Training is currently conducted at 30 formal training sites, but this total will eventually decrease to approximately 11 permanent sites in 2014. Across all police pillars and all courses, 21,907 students have graduated since the beginning of October 2011. (p. 33)
- The ANP remains under-equipped as a result of fielding challenges, including battle loss replacement needs and the closure of Pakistani GLOCs. Due to equipment shortages, the MoI has developed fielding priorities based on operational requirements. To address the delay in processing supply/equipment requests, the MoI Material Management Center established a Customer Care Center in April 2011. This single point-of entry clearinghouse for supply/equipment requests has been a success, significantly reducing response times. (p. 35).
- As a result of a deliberate decision to place initial focus of force generation on ANP policing units, the development of enablers – in particular logistics capabilities – was delayed and is not expected to be fully self-sufficient until late 2014. NTM-A began to shift its efforts to logistics development in mid-2011, and it will continue to be a key focus in 2012. (p. 35)
- The ANP logistics system requires significant coalition assistance at the regional level and below in order to effectively sustain the ANP. The biggest challenges to improvement in the logistics system are the recruitment of qualified police and civilian logisticians and the training of personnel to use the approved MoI logistical system. (p. 35)
- Further, the ANP's logistics system remains particularly limited in personnel system accountability, primarily in managing the assignment and training of logistics personnel. A major challenge in developing long-term logistics support to the ANP is the hiring and training of civilian personnel, as civilian authorizations make up 50 percent of the logistics workforce. Due to pay disparity between the MoI civilians, other opportunities for literate candidates with technical skills, and shortfalls in hiring processes and civilian personnel management, civilian hiring will continue to be a challenge until the MoI institutes civil service pay reforms. Additionally, the MoI completed the manpower build-out of the sustainment system by adding approximately 2,100 logistics positions (1,400 uniformed, 700 civilian) into the SY1391 *tashkil*. (p. 36)
- The United States provides the ANSF with the majority of required mentor teams. The drawdown in U.S. forces will result in a decreased number of partnered units, creating additional requirements for other coalition partners.
- Cycle 13 CUAT data showed the number of reports for partnered units within the ANP increased from 231 in August 2011 to 347 in February 2012. This total number may also include ANP units that did not previously submit a CUAT report (e.g., in the case of newly fielded or recently partnered units). The number of units reported as uncovered or unassessed increased from 31 to 88, due to an overall increase in units reporting.
- While surge recovery will decrease the number of personnel available to partner with the ANP, the projected impact of the surge recovery on the performance of the ANP is unclear. ANP partnering levels have consistently lagged behind those of ANA units. An important aspect of the Security Force Assistance concept is the deployment of partner and mentor units trained specifically for police missions. This focused effort is anticipated to result in a more productive partnering/advising relationship and increased ANP capabilities, especially in the civil policing missions and functions.
- Overall, the number of units that were not assessed decreased from 17 percent in August 2011 to 14 percent in January 2012. As of February 2012, data from the Provincial Response Company and all Operational Coordination Centers (OCCs), both provincial and regional, were added to the

overall ANP effectiveness ratings, accounting for the slight increase in the overall number of submitted reports versus October 2011 data. Overall, 74 percent of units are rated as “Effective with Partners” or higher, compared to 69 percent in August 2011. (p. 43)

It is clear that generating effective police forces present even more problems that generating an effective ANA, and that adequate outside funding and trainers/mentors/partners will be critical. Moreover, success will be far more dependent on the level of outside aid and funding in civil programs.

Even if these problems did not exist, the entire police development effort would be limited by the lack of progress in governance, creating the other elements of rule of law, and the permeating climate of corruption, interference by power brokers, and the impact of criminal networks. Moreover, political pressure is already growing that can divide the ANSF by ethnicity and may be a prelude to post withdrawal power struggles.

Moreover, corruption is endemic within the police, as is the abuse of power and extortion. The current unclassified readiness and capability assessment systems being used to show progress within the ANP are virtually meaningless since they do not assess the integrity of police units. Worse, unclassified reporting does not indicate the scale of police coverage in any given district, or show whether the other elements of governance and the justice system are present, and whether there are detention facilities. No unclassified effort is made to assess areas where the police (and sometimes Army) do not interfere with insurgent operations or have de facto arrangements that allow both to operate in ways that affect commerce and transportation.

The present system for reporting on progress in the police is almost solely oriented towards force generation and support of counterinsurgency. The system that ISAF uses to assess the ANP (which is nearly identical to the ANA assessment system) overstates the capabilities of the police, because it focuses on manning, equipping, and training – instead of focusing on more important factors such as corruption, loyalty, and the functioning of the justice system. The ANP is essentially being trained to become a light paramilitary COIN force, with little in the way of traditional police training. In most areas, the police are not linked to a functioning justice system at all.

These are not casual issues since they too affect every aspect of the Afghan economy. Moreover, the present separation of the police development effort from matching efforts to improve governance and the rule of law creates another set of problems. Police forces cannot operate in a vacuum. They need a successful government presence and popular governance to win the support of the people and support for their justice efforts. There must be prompt justice of a kind the people accept and find fair enough to support or tolerate. Incarceration must set acceptable standards and jails must not become training and indoctrination facilities for insurgents and criminal networks.

### *Is Successful transition still possible for the ANSF?*

It should be stressed that the problems in the ANSF might well be solvable with time, advisors, and funds. **Figure Thirty** shows, however, that past funding levels which were planned to be available to support the force goals shown in **Figure Twenty-Nine** have already proved to be unsustainable in today’s political and budget climate, while the race to withdraw US and allied forces is already underway.

NTM-A and ISAF have already taken steps to adapt to the new timescale and funding levels they face, but they have not yet openly changed force goals that are highly ambitious, may be unfundable after 2014, and stress the entire system.

This leaves three options:

- Fund and support the ANSF plan in something approaching its current character for as long as it takes to defeat the insurgents, if – as now seems almost totally unlikely – this proves possible.
- Act immediately to reshape the ANSF plan to create more realistic goals and costs without false optimism, and seek Congressional and Allied support for a smaller, cheaper, and still effective force.
- Go on to force NTM-A and ISAF to downsize resources while keeping the current force goals, and create a hollow force that will be unsustainable after transition – repeating the mistake made in Vietnam on a very different level.

So far, the official choice seems to be option one. It is an effort to go to the total force strength called for in current plans with less focus on force quality and future affordability. As noted earlier, however, the US and other governments are discussing ISAF plans that call for a force of only 230,000. They are also examining major cuts in pre-transition spending and cuts in post-transition spending to \$4.1 billion a year – versus the \$7-9 billion called for in early 2011. It is not clear exactly what this force would look like, and the US is simultaneously seeking to cut the US share of the spending from around 80% to 25%.

The economics of transition depend on a successful transition to an Afghan lead in security. The worst possible option is to create an Afghan force that can last through 2014, but becomes a dysfunctional façade once most US and allied troops are gone. Keeping US and ISAF force levels high to 2014, preparing the ANSF as if it would have continuing support in funds and advisors, and then leaving it unsupported would repeat the mistakes of Vietnam in turning potential success into abandonment and Afghan defeat.

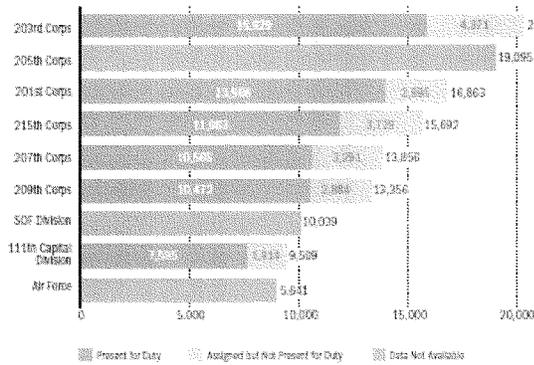
Accordingly, one of the acid tests of any economic plan for transition is that it addresses the future of the ANSF in explicit terms and ways that are practical and properly funded. As is the case with every element of Transition, there is no point in succeeding in one part of transition if a plan cannot be funded and executed that deals with all of the problems in transition.

Figure Twenty-Nine: ANSF Forces and Force Goals – Part One

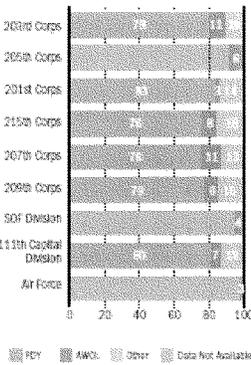
**ANSF FORCE STRENGTH AGAINST TARGET GOALS**

Priority	Targets	Status	Change Since Last Quarter
Afghan National Army	195,000 troops by 10/2012	187,874 personnel (as of 3/2012)	+11,520
Afghan National Police	157,000 personnel by 10/2012	149,642 personnel (as of 3/2012)	+5,645

ANA PERSONNEL STRENGTH, SELECTED COMPONENTS, ON MARCH 12, 2012



ANA PERSONNEL PRESENCE, SELECTED COMPONENTS, ON MARCH 12, 2012 (PERCENT)



**ANP FORCE STRENGTH, MARCH 2012**

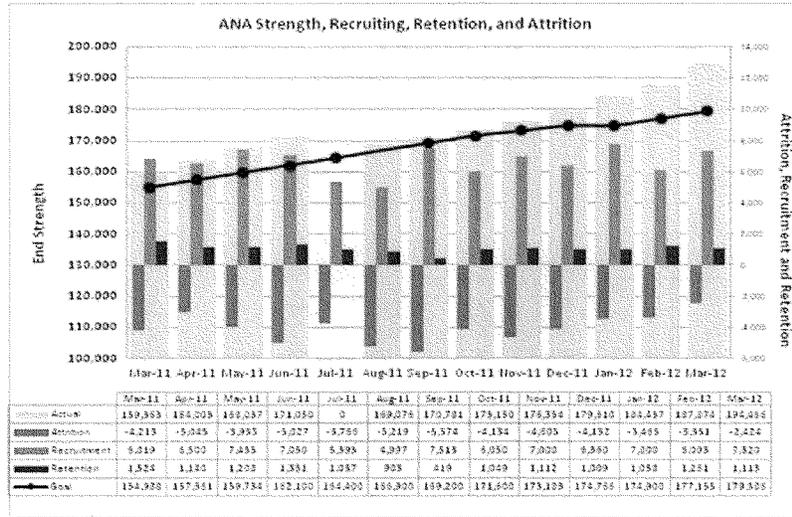
	Authorized (Tashkil)	Assigned to Tashkil Positions	Not Assigned to Tashkil Positions
<b>ANP (Total Strength: 149,642*)</b>	<b>140,579<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>140,947<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>8,695<sup>a</sup></b>
<b>Breakdown by ANP Component</b>			
ANP	80,275	84,006	—
ANP	23,086	22,222	—
ANCP	13,878	16,490	—
Other Units	22,540 <sup>b</sup>	22,837 <sup>c</sup>	—

Notes: ANP – Afghan National Police; ANCP – Afghan National Civil Control Police; — = not available.  
 a. Does not include trainee and free units.  
 b. Includes authorized ANP/ANCP personnel in addition to authorized personnel for Mal headquarters, airborne, training, counterterrorism, health, medical, intelligence, and the units.  
 c. Includes personnel authorized for or assigned to Mal headquarters, airborne, training, counterterrorism, health, medical, intelligence, and the units.  
 d. Students enrolled in initial entry training programs and officer graduates.

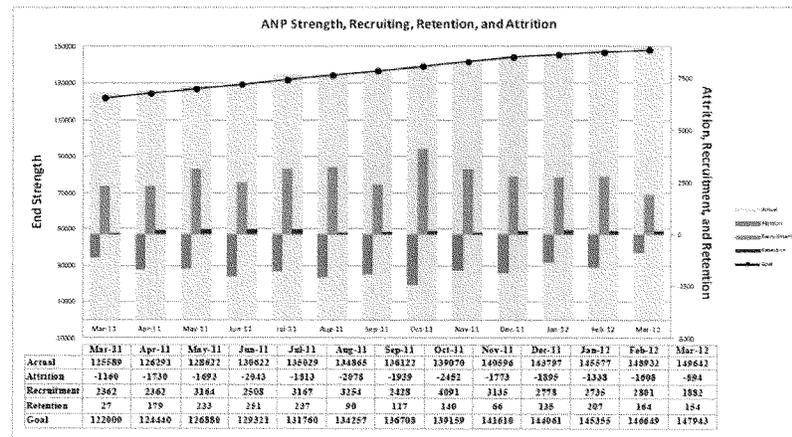
Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report, April 30, 2012, pp 69, 71, 75.

Figure Twenty-Nine: ANSF Forces and Force Goals – Part Two

ANA End-Strength (March 2011 – March 2012)



ANP End-Strength (March 2011 – March 2012)

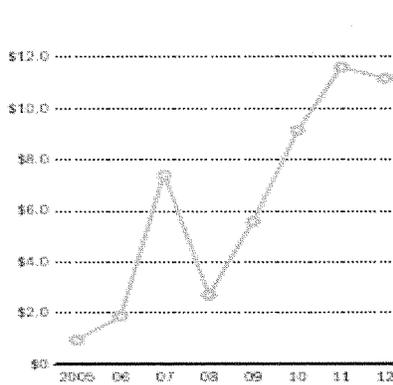


Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 2011, pp. 23, 35; Source: Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, April 2012, p. 30.

Figure Thirty: ANSF Funding Levels: Past and Projected

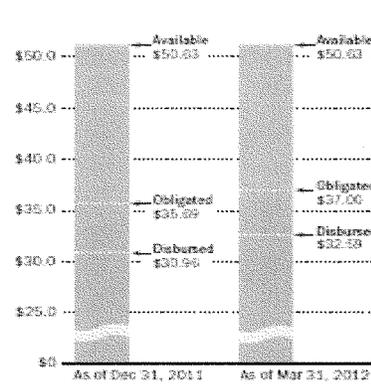
Past and Current Spending on ANSF

ASFF AVAILABLE FUNDS BY FISCAL YEAR  
(\$ BILLIONS)



Note: Numbers affected by rounding.  
Sources: DoD, responses to SIGAR data call, 4/11/2012;  
P.L. 112-74, 12/23/2011; P.L. 112-10, 4/15/2011.

ASFF FUNDS, CUMULATIVE COMPARISON  
(\$ BILLIONS)



Note: Numbers affected by rounding.  
Sources: DoD, responses to SIGAR data call, 4/11/2012  
and 1/13/2012; P.L. 112-74, 12/23/2011; P.L. 112-10,  
4/15/2011.

Pre-Transition Plans for ANSF Aid Spending During 2013-2024

PROJECTED ANSF EXPENDITURES, 2008/09-2023/24				
	2008/09*	2013/14	2018/19	2023/24
<b>Expenditures by Security Force (\$ BILLIONS):</b>				
AFN <sup>b</sup>	\$3.2	\$3.8	\$5.0	\$6.5
ANP	\$1.5	\$1.7	\$2.1	\$2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4.7</b>	<b>\$5.5</b>	<b>\$7.1</b>	<b>\$9.2</b>
<b>Expenditures Relative to Revenues (PERCENT):</b>				
ANSF Expenditures as a Share of Projected				
QRAA Domestic Revenues	44%	27%	19%	15%

\* Numbers affected by rounding. Excludes operating and investment expenditures at a reduced scale.  
<sup>b</sup> World Bank Midpower Level Assumptions: ANA strength increases to 260,000 by 2012/13; ANP strength increases to 102,000 by 2013-14. These derive from the total staffs reported at the January 2010 Global Operations, which were 171,000 for the ANA and 138,000 for the ANP as of October 2011.  
<sup>c</sup> Macroeconomic assumptions: Afghanistan's long-term GDP growth rate averages 6% annually; inflation decreases of 1% in 2012/13 and beyond; bank domestic revenue rises to 1.3% of GDP by 2008-09.  
 Sources: World Bank (2005), Afghanistan Rule of Law Diagnostic Review 2010; Security Sector, pp. 23-24; DoD, "Report of Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan," 4/2010, pp. 104, 110.

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report, July 2010, pp. 92-93, and Quarterly Report, May 2011, p. 50.

***The Problem of the Afghan “Local Police”***

The ANA and ANP, however, are only part of the story. There are other Afghan forces that present funding and security challenges which affect the post-transition Afghan economy. ISAF has made real progress in selected areas in combining efforts to create local police that respond to the regular police and government, and where the creation of such security forces is part of a broader effort to create civil governance and economic aid efforts.

The Afghan Local Police are one of these forces. SIGAR reports that the ALP had 12,660 members as of March 25, 2012. ALP members are mentored by the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force (CJSOTF-A) and ISAF Regional Commands East and Southwest. The goal was to provide a total of 30,000 members in 99 districts, and in the ALP headquarters in Kabul, by 2014. CSTC-A and CFSOCC-A had obligated \$36.4 million of Afghan Security Forces Fund (ASFF) funds to support the ALP and cover its salaries as of March 25, 2012.<sup>2</sup>

As US official reporting indicates, this effort goes far beyond simply creating a militia, and potentially offers a key way to address the critical transition problems in providing effective security and reasons to be loyal to the central government at the local and district levels.<sup>3</sup>

The Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) began conducting Village Stability Operations (VSO) in February 2010. VSO is a bottom-up COIN initiative that establishes security areas around rural villages to promote local governance and development. VSO uses Afghan and ISAF Special Operations Forces embedded in the community full-time to help improve security, governance, and development in more remote areas of Afghanistan where the ANSF and ISAF have a limited presence.

Each VSO consists of a 12-man team that embeds in a village and regularly engages local Afghans, enabling a level of situational awareness and trust otherwise unattainable. VSO teams are supported by a Village Stability Platform (VSP), which includes a range of enablers and supporting elements. Along with medical, air, civil affairs, and military information teams, VSPs also include units focused on linking the district and provincial levels of governance and development to the national government. Further, Provincial

...Augmentation Teams, in partnership with Provincial Reconstruction Teams, help VSPs to build local governance and improve development. In districts with VSO, Afghan satisfaction with access to essential services has uniformly increased over the last three months. Further, analysis of attack levels before and after a VSP is established indicates, after a brief increase in insurgent attacks, a steady improvement in security conditions throughout the community. The VSO initiative has resulted in such noticeable improvements in security, governance, and development that Taliban senior leaders have identified the VSO initiative as a significant threat to their objectives.

Significant success has prompted the program to expand. The VSO initiative began with five VSPs covering 1,000 square kilometers; as of this report, CJSOTF-A has 6,000 personnel in 103 locations throughout Afghanistan, covering approximately 23,500 square kilometers. To support this growth, the VSO initiative now supplements Special Forces with conventional forces.

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<sup>2</sup> SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, April 30, 2012, p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 30, 2011, pp. 66-67

Currently, the 1-16th Infantry and the 1st/505th Parachute Infantry Regiment are augmenting Combined Forces Special Operations Component Command – Afghanistan (CFSOCC-A) presence to enable the expansion of VSO sites across the country.

There were more than 48 operational Afghan Local Police sites, and more than 50 additional sites pending, at the end of 2011:<sup>4</sup>

Established in August 2010 by President Karzai, the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program is part of the VSO initiative. ALP is a village-focused MoI initiative that complements ISAF's COIN strategy by training local Afghans in rural areas to defend their communities against threats from insurgents and other illegally-armed groups. The ALP program is a complementary component to the VSO program; although not all VSO sites have ALP units, all ALP units are a part of an existing VSO site. In the latter phases of a VSO, village elders may, through a *shura*, elect to establish an ALP unit.

These prospective ALP sites are validated by the MoI, which conducts an evaluation and officially approves the district for ALP development. A district is considered officially validated when the Afghan Government officials meet with the local officials to formally agree that the given district demonstrates both a need and a desire for an ALP unit. The MoI has approved 100 districts for ALP units as of September 2011; of those, 48 districts have been validated by their district *shura* and collectively represent a force of about 8,100 ALP. In conjunction with counsel from U.S. Special Operation Forces and IJC, the Afghan Government has authorized an ALP end-strength of 30,000 patrolmen.

The MoI requires ALP candidates to be 18-45 years of age. They must be nominated by local community *shuras*, vetted by the MoI, and biometrically-enrolled in the ALP program. Weapons must be registered in order for the ALP unit to receive the MoI funding provided for authorized program positions. ALP members sign one-year service contracts, work part-time, and are paid approximately 60 percent of the basic salary for an ANP patrolman.

...U.S. Special Operations Forces currently conduct a three-week ALP training program that introduces basic security and policing skills...As a purely defensive force, ALP units are not equipped for offensive operations nor are they permitted to grow beyond the size in their *tashkil*, which amounts to approximately 30 patrolmen per village and 300 per district. ALP patrolmen have detention but not arrest authority, and conduct investigations under the direct supervision of the Deputy District Chief of Police.

Despite these limitations, ALP units have proven effective in disrupting insurgent activities by denying them safe havens and limiting their freedom of movement; the improved security enables development and governance projects for the community...Each ALP unit coordinates its operations extensively with the ANSF, coalition forces, local *shuras*, and Afghan Government officials, which helps build and strengthen the link between local governance and the central government. The units are also overseen by the village *shura* that originally sponsored them, as well as U.S. Special Operation Forces. This extensive oversight by both Afghan and coalition members helps to ensure ALP operations are effective and conducted in accordance with Afghan law.

The ALP program continues to increase in strength and effectiveness, and the ALP have proven to be a significant threat to the insurgency in key areas throughout Afghanistan. In response to this, insurgents have engaged in intimidation campaigns and targeted assassinations against ALP members and their families. These attacks have largely failed to intimidate ALP forces and local communities, which continue to defend their villages effectively against insurgent attacks.

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<sup>4</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 30, 2011, pp. 66-67

The ALP add to the cost of Afghan forces, and they cannot be set up and maintained without a major presence from highly-skilled Special Operations Forces (SOF), military, and aid workers in the field. The history of similar forces is also one of relatively rapid collapse when that presence (and money) leaves and all of the problems in governance, local corruption, and local custom return. They also have already led to extensive unofficial “copycat” units that are abusive, corrupt, and tied to local power brokers.

As the Department of Defense Reported at the end to 2011,<sup>5</sup>

Despite its significant success, the ALP program faces a number of challenges. The program is heavily dependent on Special Operations Forces for training, mentorship, and oversight. The approved expansion to 30,000 ALP patrolmen will likely strain the capacity of the coalition Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan, and may require additional conventional forces in order to adequately support projected ALP growth.

Further, the proliferation of independent, non-sanctioned militias outside the VSO framework threatens to undermine the legitimacy and progress of the ALP program. Although limited in number, these unauthorized groups exacerbate the concern that the ALP program risks empowering local strongmen who will either use the ALP program to incorporate their own militias into the government structure, or will brand their militias under the ALP title to further their own illegal interests. Illegally-armed militias in Kunduz Province, for example, posing as ALP patrolmen, have been collecting illegal taxes and have engaged in a number of armed conflicts with other local groups, degrading local security conditions and fostering negative perceptions of the ALP program. Also during the reporting period, a Human Rights Watch report accused some ALP units of abusive practices. ISAF has undertaken to investigate these allegations. The ALP is also challenged by ethnic tensions; although *shuras* are largely effective in ensuring fair tribal and ethnic representation in ALP units, some units actively resist recruiting certain ethnicities, which can create significant ethnic tension in rural villages

The *Department of Defense Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan for April 2012* noted that,<sup>6</sup>

The MoI has approved 99 districts for ALP units; of these, 58 have been validated by their local *shura* and the MoI, a 21 percent increase from the previous reporting period. The total force of 12,660 ALP represents a 56 percent increase from the previous reporting period. The Afghan Government has authorized an end-strength of 30,000 ALP. However, ALP growth in the south and east – the main focus areas of the program – continues to be challenged by insurgent intimidation efforts and tribal infighting.

The ALP program continues to expand and gain popular support. Tactical and technical proficiency of units gained during the 2011 fighting season has improved ALP capacity and performance. The sustainability of these gains, however, depends on coalition enabler support, MoI engagement, and continued USSOF mentoring.

Despite significant success, the ALP face multiple challenges. The program is heavily dependent on U.S. Government funding and USSOF training, mentorship, and oversight. Achieving the

<sup>5</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 30, 2011, pp. 66-67. For further reporting, see David Alexander, *Afghan security contractor oversight poor: Senate report*, Reuters, Washington, Fri Oct 8, 2010 6:58am EDT; Ray Rivera, *Obstacles Hinder Formation of Afghan Security Force, Report Says*, New York Times, November 1, 2011; and Congressional Research Service, *Wartime Contracting in Afghanistan: Analysis and Issues for Congress* <http://www.scribd.com/doc/73041739/Wartime-Contracting-in-Afghanistan-11142011>.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, April 30, 2012, pp. 65-66.

approved total force of 30,000 ALP guardians will challenge the capacity of CFSOCC-A forces, and may require additional support from USSOF and conventional force enablers. In part mitigating this concern, current plans call for transitioning some USSOF teams from directly training ALP to an "ISAF overwatch" role for mature ALP units, which would increase CFSOCC-A's ability to train, mentor, and oversee ALP with decreased force requirements.

ALP face many challenges, including ethnic and tribal tensions. For example, in Baghlan Province, ethnic tensions have resulted in clashes between Pashtun-dominated ALP and Tajik-dominated ANP. Although local *shuras* are largely effective in ensuring fair tribal and ethnic representation in ALP units, some *shuras* and ALP commanders actively resist recruiting certain ethnicities, which can create significant ethnic tension in multi-ethnic villages. To mitigate these risks, USSOF works closely with the *shuras* and District Chiefs of Police to promote a multi-ethnic approach, which is a key to stability.

The proliferation of independent, non-Afghan Government sanctioned militias, which operate outside the VSO/ALP framework, threatens to undermine the legitimacy and progress of the programs. Although limited in number, these unauthorized organizations threaten to damage the ALP "brand," especially those that misuse the ALP name to further their own interests.

Finally, during the reporting period, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) released its annual report on the protection of civilians, which discussed the ALP at length. UNAMA noted that ALP had improved security in and kept insurgents out of ALP areas, but maintained some criticisms from its 2010 report, which included references to isolated issues in recruitment, vetting, training, and discipline. To address these occurrences, CFSOCC-A created ALP Assessment Teams charged with investigating misconduct allegations and related issues affecting the ALP at the district level.

Sustaining the ALP presents major challenges in both funding and in providing trainers and partners that can keep such forces effective and limit the risk they become corrupt or serve local power brokers and warlords, or even the insurgents.

President Karzai reinforced these transition problems -- as well as the broader problems created by the ethnic divisions within Afghanistan by disbanding another force called the Critical Infrastructure Police that was set up by ISAF in Afghanistan's four northern (and largely non-Pashtun) Balkh, Kunduz, Jowzjan and Faryab provinces. Elements of these forces were certainly corrupt and supported northern leaders like the governor of Balkh Province that had little loyalty to Karzai. They had some 1,200-1,700 members per province and were paid as much to not extort the population as to give it security. Nevertheless, the net effect was to compound ethnic tensions -- particularly as Karzai did little to deal with the corruption and abuses of regular and local police that were Pashtun or more directly under his control.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Matthew Rosenberg and Alissa J. Rubin, *Afghanistan to Disband Irregular Police Force Set Up Under NATO*, New York Times, December 26, 2011.

***Private Security Contractors and the Afghan Public Protection Force***

President Karzai has created another, potentially greater problem for the economics of transition by trying to rush the disbandment of private security forces in ways that seem more oriented toward enhancing his power over security contracting and key aspects of government, military, and aid spending than security.

**Figure Thirty-One** shows that just the portion working for the Department of Defense totaled 20,375 in the fall of 2011. They have been responsible for securing ISAF sites and convoys, diplomatic and non-governmental organization personnel, and development projects. ISAF and diplomatic missions, along with their development partners, employed some 34,000 contract security guards from Private Security Companies (PSCs), of which some 93 percent were Afghans.<sup>8</sup>

*Figure Thirty-One: Private Security Personnel Working for the Department of Defense in Afghanistan*

	As of 7/7/2011 PSC Contractors	As of 12/9/2011 PSC Contractors	5-Month Difference PSC Contractors
U.S. citizens	693	570	-123
Third-country nationals	1,282	897	-385
Afghan nationals	13,330	18,908	+5,578
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,305</b>	<b>20,375</b>	<b>+5,070</b>

Source: SIGAR, Quarterly Report, January 2012, p. 84.

No one doubts that private forces have been a problem, but so is setting impossible standards for replacing them and putting security functions into the hands of new, corrupt, and incapable central government forces. The Department of Defense reported October 2011 that,<sup>9</sup>

By 2010...many PSCs were operating outside of Afghan law and customs as well as U.S. Government requirements, and PSC performance was often marked by poor discipline and safety. As a result, President Karzai issued Presidential Decree 62 in August 2010 directing many PSCs to be disbanded by December 2010 and replaced by the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF). ...Although the decree included exceptions for Embassies and diplomatic personnel, it soon became clear that the APPF could not adequately replace PSCs in such a short time period. In order to allow time for the APPF to develop, the Afghan Government, together with the international community and ISAF, developed a 12-month bridging strategy for the further implementation of Decree 62.

The strategy is divided into categories to address the three distinct types of PSC operations: diplomatic, development, and ISAF. Diplomatic entities are exempt from Presidential Decrees and

<sup>8</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 30, 2011, pp. 66-67

<sup>9</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, October 30, 2011, pp. 66-67

associated regulations applicable to PSCs. In contrast, at the conclusion of the bridging period, development entities and ISAF are expected to contract for their security services through the APPF. The 12-month bridging period began on March 22, 2011, and terminates on March 20, 2012. At the end of this period, as determined by its capacity and capability, the APPF will increasingly assume responsibilities, in priority order, for the security of ISAF and ANSF construction sites and for ISAF bases. In the event the APPF does not possess the capacity or capability to assume this responsibility, there is a conditions-based extension in the bridging strategy to allow PSCs to continue to provide services for an additional 12 months. The bridging strategy also called for disbanding seven PSCs due to close ties with Afghan officials. During June and July 2011, ISAF replaced all contracts held by these seven PSCs, which included 34 contracts and nearly 4,000 guards.

Of the 46 remaining PSCs, 43 PSCs have renewed licenses and have been certified as compliant, while the remaining three continue to work with the MoI to become relicensed. All remaining PSCs, however, barring the extension of the current bridging strategy, will be disbanded by March 2012, with the exception of those PSCs providing security services to diplomatic activities, which will continue to operate indefinitely.

...ISAF and the U.S. Embassy are assisting the MoI to develop the management and command and control necessary for the APPF to meet the needs of the coalition and the international community. The APPF currently has a guard force of approximately 6,400, and is expected to integrate approximately 14,000 guards who are expected to transition from existing PSCs to the APPF, while also generating additional forces of no fewer than 11,000 guards. In total, approximately 25,000 guards will be required by 2012 in order to support ISAF and implementing partner security requirements.

Key observations from the initial assessment indicated that the APPF was unable: 1) to execute and maintain the business operations necessary to remain a viable and solvent business; 2) to man (recruit, vet, train), pay, equip, deploy, and sustain guard forces to meet contract requirements; 3) to negotiate and establish legal and enforceable contracts with customers for security services; 4) to command and control security operations across Afghanistan; 5) to meet the requirements of the bridging strategy. Additionally, the APPF has not created an operational State-Owned Entity to support business operations essential to manage and execute contracted security services.

In sum, the APPF is not on track to assume the responsibilities for security services performed by PSCs, which, barring the extension of the current bridging strategy, are projected to be disbanded on March 20, 2012. Combined planning efforts are ongoing to resolve the identified issues in a timeframe that is consistent with President Karzai's original directive.

A study by ISAF and the Afghan Interior Ministry, reported in November 2011, found a whole new range of problems, and that "of 166 'essential' criteria to determine if the government was able to recruit, train and sustain the guard force, less than a third could be fully met" and "sixty-three of the measurements could not be met at all."<sup>10</sup>

A report in the *New York Times*, based on reading the study, found that the MoI program "has no money available to procure necessary supplies and equipment." It also found that the training center was not teaching leadership skills and could not generate enough guards to meet the forecasted demand. It also found that the MoI failed to provide the seed money — about \$10 million — to prop up a state-owned business to run the program. The program had already failed to supply personnel and equipment for some of

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<sup>10</sup> Ray Rivera, *Obstacles Hinder Formation of Afghan Security Force, Report Says*, *New York Times*, November 1, 2011

its contracts, the report said. Its authors concluded that the police protection force “is not on track” to assume the responsibilities of the private security companies by March.

An official working for Gen. John R. Allen, the commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, stated on background that, “It’s become a top priority because if it doesn’t work, everything grinds to a halt...If it isn’t sorted out, everyone will pull out because they don’t want some fly-by-night security protecting them.”

A SIGAR report in January 2012 found similar problems with the entire APPF effort:

As noted in previous SIGAR quarterly reports, in August 2010, President Karzai had decreed that all national and international PSCs would be disbanded by the end of the year. Instead, the MoI announced in December 2010 that PSCs could continue to operate with new restrictions that would prevent them from conducting actions that fall within the authority of Afghan law enforcement agencies.

In March 2011, the Afghan government released its bridging strategy for transitioning the lead on security from PSCs to the APPF. This strategy allowed PSCs that were licensed by the MoI and had agreed to certain staffing limitations to operate and perform security for diplomatic and ISAF projects; however, PSCs that perform security services for development and humanitarian projects were to be replaced by the APPF by March 2012.

In September 2011, the MoI, ISAF, and representatives of the U.S. Embassy Kabul completed a six-month assessment of the effectiveness of the bridging strategy and the capacity of the APPF, according to DoD. Specifically, the assessment reviewed whether the APPF will be able to effectively manage and provide security to ISAF and ANSF construction sites and ISAF bases at the end of the

bridging period. According to the assessment, the APPF was unable to carry out a number of tasks:

- Execute and maintain the business operations necessary to remain a viable and solvent business.
- Recruit, vet, train, pay, equip, deploy, and sustain guard forces to meet contract requirements.
- Negotiate and establish legal and enforceable contracts with customers for security services.
- Command and control security operations across Afghanistan.
- Meet the requirements of the bridging strategy. In addition, the APPF had not created a functioning state-owned entity to support the business operations that are essential to manage and execute contracted security services.

As of December 31, 2011, the APPF had 6,558 personnel, according to CSTC-A. Of those, 5,624 were assigned and present for duty—221 on the LOTFA [Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan] tashkil (funded through the LOTFA) and 5,403 on the MoI tashkil. According to CSTC-A, all LOTFA-funded assigned APPF personnel are trained; however, training data for personnel on the MoI tashkil was not available, specifically for those assigned to security contracts. CSTC-A assumes that all APPF personnel on the MoI tashkil are trained either through ANP courses, the APPF training center, or through on-the-job training.

According to CSTC-A, the MoI is in the process of expanding the LOTFA tashkil to meet the requirements associated with the implementation of Presidential Decree 62. That decree, which President Karzai issued in August 2010, placed the responsibility for the provision of security services under the direct authority and oversight of the Afghan government through the APPF. PSCs previously provided these services.

Pending approval, the expanded tashkil is expected to authorize billets for 516 uniformed APPF members—including staff for the APPF Training Center and operational staff—to provide the expertise needed to provide security services to the international development community and ISAF. The MoI is also expected to add billets for 130 civilians to support business operations within the APPF.

SIGAR's next quarterly report noted:<sup>11</sup>

This quarter, the APPF, a state-owned enterprise established by the Afghan government to replace PSCs, began assuming responsibility for providing security for reconstruction programs. Under a two-year "bridging strategy," the Afghan government planned for the APPF to take over security for all international development projects and convoys on March 20, 2012, and for all military construction sites and bases a year later. On March 18, the Afghan government announced that it had granted 30- to 90-day provisional licenses to some implementing partners to give them time to finalize contracts with the APPF.

Similarly, the Department of Defense report to Congress for April 30, 2012, noted that,<sup>12</sup>

The Bridging Strategy for Presidential Decree 62 (August 16, 2010) stated that commercial, development fixed site, and convoy security services, including ISAF convoys, must transition to the Afghan Public Protection Force (APPF) by March 20, 2012, with security services for ISAF bases and construction sites transitioning to APPF by March 20, 2013.

Six- and nine-month assessments were completed by MoI, ISAF, and U.S. Embassy personnel during September 2011 and January 2012. Results indicated the APPF was not on track to meet the requirements of the Bridging Strategy. The assessments concluded the State Owned Enterprise (SOE) was not developed and lacked sufficient leadership, training capacity, resources, and planning necessary for increased roles and responsibilities. The Afghan Government acknowledged the assessment and requested assistance from ISAF and the U.S. Embassy. As a result the APPF Advisory Group was established to partner with the Afghan Government and build adequate APPF capacity and capability.

Since that time, the APPF Advisory Group has worked closely with the MoI to advance APPF development, and, as a result, the APPF has made substantial positive progress on critical tasks necessary to begin the transition of security responsibilities and President Karzai approved the APPF transition plan. APPF has issued 15 permanent Risk Management Consultant licenses and an additional 31 interim RMCs. These interim RMCs will allow security providers to operate under the APPF even as they pursue permanent RMC licenses. In addition, 40 contracts with commercial and developmental partners are now complete, with six more in the advanced stages of negotiation. The advisory group continues to work closely with the MoI to ensure the APPF matures and continues to support commercial and development efforts.

Replacing one existing problematic force with far inferior forces that are even more subject to corruption, presents critical problems for outside and domestic investors and companies, and makes basic security functions uncertain in what is still a war zone at government expense. It also will raise the cost of government security forces, and of virtually every civil operation that requires more than minimal security.

### ***Making Security Force Planning a Key Part of the Economics of Transition***

<sup>11</sup> SIGAR, *Quarterly Report*, April 30, 2012, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Department of Defense, *Report on Progress Towards Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, April 30, 2012, pp. 66-67

The problems involved in sharpening and funding the complex mix of Afghan army, regular police, local police forces, militias, and contract or APPF security forces would be less important if they did not coincide so directly with efforts to create a broad transition to ANSF security operations far more quickly than previously planned. The fact is, however, that the transition to reliance on Afghan forces now has to be much quicker than US, ISAF, and NTM-A planners counted on even a year ago, and will have far less outside funding.

Moreover, the success of every element of the Afghan security forces is essential to creating a secure enough climate for the Afghan economy to function and develop, and to create significant outside investment. It is also an essential part of any successful transition plan to sustain aid and economic advisory activity in the field as US and ISAF forces are withdrawn and aid workers and PRTs are removed.

This means that plans to deal with the civil aspects of transition in the Afghan economy must be integrated with plans to develop the ANSF. They must also take explicit account of the probable level of security in given areas as outside military and aid workers depart, as well as who can provide security for domestic and internal ventures. There are few prospects of anything approaching local security in much of Afghanistan until long after 2014 – barring some “peace” arrangement that gives insurgents de facto control over high threat areas. No aid or economic plan that ignores the facts that the nation is at war and that key areas are likely to remain so long after 2014, has either practical value or credibility.

**Dr. Anthony H. Cordesman**

Anthony H. Cordesman holds the Arleigh A. Burke Chair in Strategy at CSIS. He is a recipient of the Department of Defense Distinguished Service Medal. During his time at CSIS, he has completed a wide variety of studies on energy, U.S. strategy and defense plans, the lessons of modern war, defense programming and budgeting, NATO modernization, Chinese military power, the lessons of modern warfare, proliferation, counterterrorism, armed nation building, the security of the Middle East, and the Afghan and Iraq conflicts. (Many of these studies can be downloaded from the Burke Chair section of the CSIS Web site at <http://www.csis.org/program/burke-chair-strategy>.) Cordesman has directed numerous CSIS study efforts on terrorism, energy, defense planning, modern conflicts, and the Middle East. He has traveled frequently to Afghanistan and Iraq to consult for MNF-I, ISAF, U.S. commands, and U.S. embassies on the wars in those countries, and he was a member of the Strategic Assessment Group that assisted General Stanley McChrystal in developing a new strategy for Afghanistan in 2009. He frequently acts as a consultant to the U.S. State Department, Defense Department, and intelligence community and has worked with U.S. officials on counterterrorism and security areas in a number of Middle East countries.

Before joining CSIS, Cordesman served as director of intelligence assessment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense and as civilian assistant to the deputy secretary of defense. He directed the analysis of the lessons of the October War for the secretary of defense in 1974, coordinating the U.S. military, intelligence, and civilian analysis of the conflict. He also served in numerous other government positions, including in the State Department and on NATO International Staff. In addition, he served as director of policy and planning for resource applications in the Energy Department and as national security assistant to Senator John McCain. He had numerous foreign assignments, including posts in the United Kingdom, Lebanon, Egypt, and Iran, as well as with NATO in Brussels and Paris. He has worked extensively in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. He is the author of a wide range of studies on energy policy, national security, and the Middle East, and his most recent publications include (CSIS, 2010), *Iraq and the United States: Creating a Strategic Partnership* (CSIS, 2010), *Saudi Arabia: National Security in a Troubled Region* (Praeger, 2009), *Iranian Weapons of Mass Destruction: The Birth of a Regional Nuclear Arms Race?* (Praeger, 2009), *Withdrawal from Iraq: Assessing the Readiness of Iraqi Security Forces* (CSIS, 2009), and *Winning in Afghanistan: Creating Effective Afghan Security Forces* (CSIS, 2009).

DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES  
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION

**INSTRUCTION TO WITNESSES:** Rule 11, clause 2(g)(5), of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress requires nongovernmental witnesses appearing before House committees to include in their written statements a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source of any federal contracts or grants (including subcontracts and subgrants) received during the current and two previous fiscal years either by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness. This form is intended to assist witnesses appearing before the House Armed Services Committee in complying with the House rule. Please note that a copy of these statements, with appropriate redactions to protect the witness's personal privacy (including home address and phone number) will be made publicly available in electronic form not later than one day after the witness's appearance before the committee.

Witness name: Anthony Cardasman

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

Individual

Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2011

federal grant(s) /	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
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contracts			
N/A			

FISCAL YEAR 2010

federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
N/A			

FISCAL YEAR 2009

Federal grant(s) / contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

N/A			

**Federal Contract Information:** If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Federal Grant Information:** If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

STATEMENT BY  
COLONEL JOSEPH H. FELTER, PH.D., USA (Ret.)  
CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND COOPERATION (CISAC)  
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS  
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES AND SECURITY LEAD TRANSITION:  
THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS, METRICS, AND EFFORTS TO BUILD  
CAPABILITY  
24 JULY 2012

Thank you Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and members of the subcommittee. It's an honor and privilege to join this distinguished panel and to discuss the challenges of building and assessing Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) capability to transition to security lead.

My testimony draws on experience and perspective gained during my career as a US Army Special Forces officer with deployments to Afghanistan most recently in 2010-2011 as commander of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team (CAAT) deploying experienced counterinsurgency advisors across all five ISAF regional commands and reporting directly to COMISAF. It is also informed by participation in efforts to build host nation security force capabilities in the Philippines and elsewhere as well as by scholarly research on the effective employment of state security forces to combat insurgency.

I will recommend several areas the US and Coalition Forces might focus on to help ensure the ANSF is effective at and capable of securing the country with minimal outside assistance. I will discuss some challenges in assessing ANSF effectiveness and conclude with reasons for both optimism and concern regarding the current status and anticipated future capabilities and effectiveness of the ANSF and how these concerns challenge the assessment process today.

State security forces, to include the ANSF, cannot and should not be expected to "win hearts and minds" in a counterinsurgency campaign. While often loosely defined, "winning hearts and minds" refers to efforts aimed at addressing popular grievances and concerns and at executing an array of activities intended to gain and maintain popular support and to improve the perception of government legitimacy over the long term. Such ambitious objectives, however, exceed the scope and capacity of state security forces such as the ANSF. For example, even the most proficient and capable ANSF cannot remedy the adverse effects of a corrupt or ineffective District Governor; neither can ISAF. Security forces play a crucial but nonetheless a supporting role in a state's efforts to achieve these ends.

A more appropriately bounded mission for security forces in counterinsurgency is better described as "leasing hearts and minds"- gaining control and sufficient popular support in the near to medium term to create time and space for the requisite follow-on whole of government efforts needed to consolidate this control and to achieve broader government campaign objectives in the longer term.

Establishing security and protecting the population are key prerequisites to accomplishing the mission of "leasing hearts and minds" (as defined here) and setting the conditions for successful follow on governance, development activities and other efforts that are key to making progress in a comprehensive counterinsurgency campaign. This is particularly challenging in Afghanistan where the majority of the population lives in rural areas that the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) are currently unable to secure.

A well trained, equipped professional ANSF that cannot project its influence to protect Afghanistan's subpopulation most at risk of falling under Taliban influence and control cannot ultimately be considered effective at performing its most basic mission-protecting and providing for the security of its citizens. Given this, and based on guidance provided to me by the sub-committee staff, I'll describe my experience with and assessment of one such effort to bring security to rural areas in Afghanistan-the Afghan Local Police (ALP) program- and why the type of capacity this initiative is intended to provide is important to overall success in the campaign.

The Afghan Local Police program, a component of US SOF led Village Stability Operations (VSO), is a community driven effort to provide all-important security and protection to the population in Afghanistan's rural areas. Beyond the appreciable benefits this program provides in extending security, it also serves as a mechanism that can harness the potential of local forces to build community rapport with and provide important local information to regular ANA and ANP units operating in the same vicinity. Additionally, it can serve as a potential resource to facilitate reintegration efforts key to making progress in the campaign.

There has been steady and deliberate progress in establishing the ALP since it was codified by Presidential decree and placed under the Ministry of the Interior on August 16, 2010. As of mid-July 2012, US SOF personnel responsible for executing this program report 68 districts are currently validated for VSO/ALP and 15,400 ALP members have been raised and employed to assist in security provision in the vicinity of their home villages. The ALP are established in key rural areas deemed important to GIROA in terms of security, governance, and development and potential to deny insurgent safe havens and freedom of maneuver.

During my previous tour of duty in Afghanistan, our advisory teams visited multiple US Special Forces units conducting Village Stability Operations and standing up Afghan Local Police where conditions were suitable and strict requirements for the program were met. Based on this experience and updated feedback from SOF personnel currently involved in this mission, I can attest that US SOF members implementing VSO/ALP have done and continue to do a remarkable job under very challenging conditions.

Recent assessments of the performance of the ALP in combating the Taliban have generally been positive. A report provided to me by NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan reported that in April-May of this year, ALP "successfully held their positions in 85% of insurgent engagements." Performance can vary across sites due to stark differences in local conditions but, encouragingly, the majority of the assessment feedback from recent surveys conducted in the field indicates that Afghans support the ALP in the areas where they are deployed.

But there are serious potential risks associated with deploying ALP or any armed group within their communities and largely outside the de facto control of GIROA. A number of ANA officers I spoke with when the ALP was first fielded admitted that they fully expected to have to fight these forces some day after ISAF forces depart.

Afghanistan's past history of warlords employing armed groups against the interests of the state provides an ominous backdrop that understandably heightens these concerns.

Major factors that mitigate the anticipated risks of the ALP and undergird the current success of this program include careful and deliberate selection of districts where strict screening criteria and conditions are met for the program and, perhaps most importantly, by providing extremely high quality oversight of the program with exceptionally professional and well trained US Special Forces. The significance of this capable US SOF oversight cannot be overstated and ideally is a role that ANA SOF can assume to a greater degree should the program endure post transition.

The vision of ALP is ambitious. It is intended to bring security to rural areas absent ANSF presence and deny Taliban access and freedom of movement all the while buying time for nascent institutions to develop. Whether the program continues post transition to realize this vision will hinge on GIRoA's commitment to provide resources, enforce strict site selection criteria, and field high quality personnel to provide oversight of the program.

GIRoA leaders may determine that Afghan Local Police program should not be continued and this is certainly their sovereign prerogative. If security conditions improve in these rural areas or the ANA and ANP can establish a presence to secure those select districts deemed of strategic importance then the absence of ALP or similar locally recruited and employed security units will not be problematic. Sun Tzu warns, "If he prepares to defend everywhere, everywhere he will be weak." It is not feasible to expect the ALP program or other community defense initiatives to be deployed ubiquitously. Nevertheless, I believe GIRoA would be abandoning ALP at its own peril if it cannot develop an alternative way to protect Afghanistan's rural population in strategically important areas and create space for state institutions to mature.

Given the emphasis of this hearing on metrics and assessments I will make a few general points on this topic. First, as will be emphasized in detail in other testimony we will hear today, we must be careful how we interpret many of the key outcome measures we use to help assess effectiveness and progress. Take for example the use of significant activities (SIGACTS) data or other reported indicators of violence. Low reported violence might be associated with success or it may be a symptom of uncontested Taliban control of an area or lack of Coalition Force units present to report activities. Violence may indicate a deteriorating security situation or may just as well predict improvement as ISAF and ANSF units are contesting an area and conducting operations aimed at wresting control back from the Taliban while insurgents are fighting to prevent them from doing so. Better indicators are needed, such as the willingness of noncombatants to share information and cooperate with coalition forces.

Second, for some time, gauging ANSF capacity has relied on assessments presented in quantitative terms such as how many ANSF in various categories were trained and deployed. Less deliberate effort has been invested in accounting for variation in the *quality* of these forces. Existing metrics of quality assessment are frequently based on US

trainers' or mentors' reports. Such assessments can be quite accurate when these trainers and mentors spend a considerable amount of time with a unit. In cases where assessments of ANSF capabilities and progress are made by personnel with limited real exposure to the units in question, however, we may see much less accurate assessments being made.

Given this, at least in the case of the ANP and other units with frequent exposure to locals, I would advocate including some feasible form of a community-based performance assessment, in which both public and anonymous feedback on the police is regularly solicited through surveys, complaint hotlines and other mechanisms as an independent measure of police and potentially other units' performance. Tying rewards such as commanders' promotions, resource allocation from higher headquarters and other incentives to community or "customer" assessments may help bring much needed increased public accountability and enforce standards of performance among certain types of ANSF units most especially the ANP.

Finally, there is an opportunity to enlist greater expertise and bring it to bear on the assessment process. More and higher quality data on conflict in Afghanistan could be made available for independent analysis by some of our best minds residing in academia and the policy community.

#### **Reasons for optimism**

Assessing ANSF capabilities relative to the standards of developed western militaries can be disheartening and cause pessimism about their anticipated capabilities post-US troop withdrawal. Rampant corruption, readiness issues, high desertion rates, limited organic enabling assets, poor accountability mechanisms, illiteracy and other problematic factors can make it challenging to maintain a positive outlook for the ANSF post-transition.

However, ISAF and GIRoA's challenge is building and sustaining an ANSF that is more capable and proficient than the Taliban and other likely security threats Afghanistan might face. This standard is arguably achievable even with the well-documented ANSF weaknesses and shortcomings. Encouragingly, the ANSF is increasingly reported as holding their ground in head to head confrontations with the Taliban and overall is prevailing against a variety of insurgent threats around the country albeit often with the benefit of a variety of Coalition Force enablers.

Historical precedents provide some basis for optimism that the ANSF, with continued aid and support from the international community, may carry out its mission to secure the country and prevent a return of Taliban rule after US forces leave. Following the redeployment of Soviet combat troops from Afghanistan in early 1989, for example, the security situation did not collapse despite the many dire predictions at the time. In fact, with continued military assistance and enablers such as combat aviation assets, the Afghan security forces were able to prevent the collapse of Najibullah's government for nearly three years – up until the critical aid and assistance was cutoff with the fall of the Soviet Union.

**Reasons for concern**

Ultimately, counterinsurgency campaigns can only be as good as the government they support and even the best, most effective militaries conducting operations in support of such a campaign cannot compensate long for failures in governance. As an example, take US SOF led efforts to conduct Village Stability Operations which include raising and employing Afghan Local Police. The primary goals of this program are to connect villages to their district government using a bottom up approach. The quality of the governance capacity from the district level on up must ultimately provide the popular incentives needed for such a program to succeed. Even the best SOF team (whether ISAF or ANSF) cannot “sell” a product that Afghans do not want to “buy”.

It is likely that the huge investments made in the ANSF have led to the “purchasing” of a certain amount of cooperation among various leaders and stake holders. As our investments are inevitably reduced and these incentives diminish, this cooperation will be harder to sustain. Given this, perhaps the biggest threat to the ANSF’s ability to secure the country after the departure of US forces hinges less on its capabilities and more on its internal cohesion and the potential for ethnic divisions to fracture it.

A capable ANSF can be part of the solution in securing Afghanistan post -US withdrawal, or potentially part of the problem- should it disintegrate and its members support anti-government elements. This will be determined by political conditions and by the subsequent ability of the state to maintain civilian control of the ANSF as much as by the capabilities of Afghan security forces that we are building and improving.

A capable ANSF is a necessary but not sufficient condition for success in the Afghanistan campaign; improving the capabilities of this institution must not be addressed or assessed in a vacuum.

Thank you for the honor of testifying here today and I look forward to your questions.

**Colonel (ret.) JOSEPH H. FELTER III**  
**CURRICULUM VITAE –July 2012**

Stanford University  
 jfelter@stanford.edu

**PROFILE:**

Joseph Felter is a Senior Research Scholar at the Center for International Security and Cooperation (CISAC) at Stanford University and Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution. Felter Co-Directs Stanford's Empirical Studies of Conflict Project (ESOC). Prior to arriving at Stanford, Felter served as a career Army Special Forces and Foreign Area Officer with distinguished service in a variety of special operations, diplomatic and other military assignments. He has conducted foreign internal defense and security assistance missions across East and Southeast Asia and has participated in operational deployments to Panama, Iraq, and Afghanistan. As a military attaché to the Philippines he helped develop the country's counterterrorist capabilities and advance the peace process between a major Islamic separatist group. Felter has extensive organizational leadership and program management experience notably helping to build West Point's Combating Terrorism Center into an internationally recognized center of excellence for terrorism education and research. He recently led the International Security and Assistance Force, Counterinsurgency Advisory and Assistance Team deployed throughout Afghanistan reporting directly to General Stanley McChrystal and Gen David Petraeus advising them on counterinsurgency tactics, operations and strategy.

**EDUCATION:**

Ph.D., Stanford University, Political Science, 2005.

Dissertation: "Taking Guns to a Knife Fight: A Case for Empirical Study of Counterinsurgency."

Dissertation draws on an original 10,000-incident, micro-conflict data set.

Committee: David Laitin, James Fearon, and Simon Jackman.

Graduate Certificate in Management, University of West Australia, 2002.

M.P.A., Harvard Kennedy School, 1998. Methodological Area of Concentration in Negotiations and Conflict Resolution.

B.S., United States Military Academy, 1987.

**PROFESSIONAL HISTORY: US Army Officer 1987-2011**

2010-2011 Commander, Counterinsurgency Advisory & Assistance Team (CAAT), International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), Afghanistan.

Led international team of 110 senior counterinsurgency advisors deployed across Afghanistan advising and assisting leaders at all levels engaged in counterinsurgency operations. Reported directly to ISAF Commanding General (General Stanley McChrystal and General David Petraeus) providing expertise and advisory support on all counterinsurgency related matters.

2005-2008. Director, Combating Terrorism Center (CTC), West Point, NY.

Recruited, mentored and supervised a select team of scholars researching and publishing on terrorism related issues. Led team in greatly expanding the budget, pace and scope of the center's research and international reach. Initiated an aggressive research program focusing on terrorist

ideology and organization. Initiated and managed the “Harmony Project” – a multi-year collaboration between CTC and US Special Operations Command that harnessed the capacity of leading US and international scholars to analyze captured al-Qa’ida documents from the Defense Department’s Harmony Data Base, producing reports informed by these documents, and making them available to the broader academic and policy community.

Spring-Summer 2008. Balad, Iraq

Deployed to Iraq to serve with a Joint Special Operations Task Force.

Spring-Summer 2006 Defense Attaché Office Kabul, Afghanistan

Deployed to Afghanistan to assess the readiness and training of the Afghan National Police and to provide operational support to the US Defense Attaché’ Office, Kabul. Provided comprehensive report and findings to US Ambassador.

1999-2002. Military Attaché Manila, Philippines

Worked with the Armed Forces of the Philippines Special Operations Command, US DoS Counterterrorism Coordinator and US Special Operations Command Pacific to develop the capacity of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Counterterrorism Forces. Planned and initiated a program that provided negotiation training to the Philippine Government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace process panel members. Served as US Embassy Liaison to the Philippine military during two international hostage crises involving American citizens.

1992-1996. Special Forces A-Team Leader and Company Commander – Southeast Asia

Conducted foreign internal defense and security assistance missions with host nation military and internal security forces throughout East and Southeast Asia while leading specialized operational teams and a company in the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) based in Okinawa, Japan.

1989-1991. Ranger Platoon Leader with the US Army 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger Regiment

Led elite platoon of US Army Rangers, the US military’s premier strike force capable of projecting power worldwide within 36 hours. Led rangers in combat airborne assault and follow-on missions in support of the invasion of Panama and capture of Manuel Noriega during Operation Just Cause.

**TEACHING HISTORY:**

Stanford University, Sophomore College Fall 2011. Course taught: “The Face of Battle”

Assistant Professor, Department of Social Sciences, United States Military Academy, 2005 – 2008. Courses taught: International Relations; Advanced International Relations Theory; Terrorism Studies; Advanced Terrorism Studies

Adjunct Associate Professor, School of International & Public Affairs, Columbia University, 2007-2008. Courses Taught: Limited War and Low Intensity Conflict

**LANGUAGES:**

Defense Language Proficiency Test Ratings in: Dari, Thai, Tagalog, Korean, and German

**FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS, AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

Co-Director, Empirical Studies of Conflict (ESOC) Project. 2008-Present

Research Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 2009-Present

US Army War College Fellow and National Security Affairs Fellow, Hoover Institution, Stanford University, 2008-2009

Member, Army Science Board for Terrorism's Root Causes, 2006 – 2007

Senior Service College Fellow, Singapore Command and General Staff College, 2002. Received Singapore Senior Service College annual award for earning the highest academic average in the college's academic curriculum

Harvard-Stanford Preventive Defense Project, Research Associate, 1997 – 1999. Authored "Understanding and Managing the Taiwan Question: Opportunities for Courtship versus Coercion across the Taiwan Strait." under the supervision of Ashton B. Carter which served as a base document for cross-Strait issues for participants in a Track II trip to China and Taiwan in March 1999.

**PUBLICATIONS:**

"Can Hearts and Minds be Bought?" *The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq*, With Eli Berman and Jacob N. Shapiro. *Journal of Political Economy* (2011) 119, 766-819.

"Do Working Men Rebel?" *Insurgency and Unemployment in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Philippines*. With Eli Berman, Michael Callen, and Jacob N. Shapiro. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2011) 55, 496-528.

"The Enemy of my Enemy: Al Qaeda and the Libyan Insurgency", With Brian Fishman. *Foreign Policy Magazine*, April 2011.

"Constructive COIN: How Development Can Fight Radicals." With Eli Berman and Jacob Shapiro. *ForeignAffairs.com*, June 2010.

"Iranian Influence in Iraq: Politics and Other Means." With Brian Fishman. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, NY, October 2008.

"Al-Qa'ida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A Second Look at the Sinjar Records." In Brian Fishman ed. *Bombers, Bank Accounts, and Bleedout: Al-Qa'ida's Road in and Out of Iraq*. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, NY, 2008.

"The Power of Truth: Questions for Ayman al-Zawabiri." With Jarret Brachman and Brian Fishman. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, NY, 2008.

"CTC Report: An Assessment of 516 Combatant Status Review Tribunal (CSRT) Unclassified Summaries." With Jarret Brachman. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, NY, 2007.

"Al-Qa'ida's Foreign Fighters in Iraq: A First Look at the Sinjar Records." With Brian Fishman. *Combating Terrorism Center at West Point*, NY, 2007.

*Harmony and Disharmony: Exploiting al-Qa'ida's Organizational Vulnerabilities.* Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, NY, 2006. With Jacob N. Shapiro, et. al.

"Recruitment for Rebellion and Terrorism in the Philippines." In James Forest ed. *The Making of a Terrorist: Recruitment, Training and Root Causes* (Praeger International, 2006).

"*Aligning Incentives to Combat Terrorism.*" In Rohan Gunaratna ed. *Combating Terrorism* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2005).

#### **WORKING PAPERS:**

"Aid Under Fire: Development Projects and Civil Conflict" (Currently under review)  
Working paper presented to the NBER annual Economics and National Security Conference July 2011- With Benjamin Crost and Patrick Johnston. We develop a model that predicts how development projects can cause an increase in violent conflict if governments cannot (1) ensure the project's success in the face of insurgent opposition and (2) credibly commit to honoring agreements reached before the start of the project. To test the model, we estimate the causal effect of a large development program on conflict casualties in the Philippines. Identification is based on a regression discontinuity design that exploits an arbitrary poverty threshold used to assign eligibility for the program. Consistent with the model's predictions, we find that eligible municipalities suffered a substantial increase in casualties, which lasts only for the duration of the project and is split evenly between government troops and insurgents.

"Assessing Relevant Lessons from the Soviet Experience in Afghanistan." Working paper submitted for the 2011 APSA Annual Meeting - With Katya Drozdova. This paper draws on former highly classified documents chronicling the communications and discourse of the Soviet Politburo to reveal important insights into how senior leaders in the Soviet Union assessed the situation in Afghanistan from events leading up to the 1979 invasion and its protracted occupation, through the withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989 and for nearly three additional years of support to the Soviet installed Afghan government.

"The Effect of Civilian Casualties in Afghanistan and Iraq." NBER Working Paper 16152 – With Luke N. Condra, Radha K. Iyengar, and Jacob N. Shapiro. This paper focuses on the reaction to civilian casualties in Afghanistan, using a series of analytic comparisons to distinguish between four prominent theories on how civilian casualties may affect violence: revenge, recruitment, population-provided information, and the mechanical correlation between civilian casualties and insurgent group capacity. We find strong evidence of a localized revenge effect and show that this effect was not present in Iraq, suggesting insurgents' mobilizing tools may be quite conflict-specific.

#### **SELECTED PROFESSIONAL TALKS, PRESENTATIONS & AFFILIATIONS:**

"Theories of Counterinsurgency." For the *Terrorism, Governance, and Political Violence Conference*, Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC), University of California San Diego, June 2011.

“Mining Afghan Lessons from the Soviet Experience” presentation of research findings at the Human Social Cultural Behavior Modeling Conference: “Integrating Social Science Theory and Analytic Methods for Operational Use”, February 9-11, 2011

“ISAF Counterinsurgency” formal one hour monthly presentations on the state of counterinsurgency across the force to the Commander, International Security and Assistance Force (COMISAF) and senior ISAF Staff at ISAF Headquarters, Kabul Afghanistan Jan – Dec 2010.

“Counterinsurgency and Counterterrorism.” For *The Political Economy of Terrorism and Insurgency Conference*, Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation (IGCC), University of California San Diego, June 2009.

“The Philippines: A Template for Effective Counterinsurgency.” For the World Affairs Council of Northern California, June 2009.

“Deploying Effective Counterinsurgency Forces.” Keynote Address for Philippine Army Senior Leaders and Commanders Conference, Fort Bonifacio, Manila Philippines, March 2009.

“Identifying and Responding to Terrorism and Insurgency.” Invited presentation, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University, November 2008.

“Iranian Influence in Iraq.” Invited presentation, The Hoover Institution, Stanford University, November 2008.

“Rethinking the Global War on Terror” panel member with Martha Crenshaw and Thomas Fingar at FSI International Conference: Transitions Nov 13, 2008.

“The Enemy of my Enemy is Iran: Iranian Influence in Iraq.” For *Social Science Seminar*, Center for International Security and Cooperation and The Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies, Stanford University, October 2008.

“Effective Military Support to Counterinsurgency.” Invited speaker at Yale University Program on Order Conflict and Violence Speaker series, February 2007.

“The Internet: A Portal to Violent Islamist Extremism.” Testimony before the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, May 2007.

“Assessing Counter Terrorism Policies.” For *International Security Forum Conference*, Zurich, Switzerland, September 2006.

“The Future of the Jihadi Movement.” Panelist with Peter Bergen, Jessica Stern, Barbara Bodine, and David Cook at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 2006

“Taking Guns to a Knife Fight: A Case for Empirical Study of Counterinsurgency.” Presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, August 2006

Panel Chair and Discussant Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Sept 2005

Frequent appearances and contributions in national and international media outlets, including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, U.S. New & World Report, Time Magazine, Newsweek, NBC Nightly News, PBS, ABC News and Fox News.

**GRANTS:**

Department of Defense Minerva Research Initiative, "Terrorism, Governance, and Development," 2008. Co-Principal Investigator, \$9.6M, five years.

**SECURITY CLEARANCE:**

Top Secret-SCI, 2010

**DISCLOSURE FORM FOR WITNESSES  
CONCERNING FEDERAL CONTRACT AND GRANT INFORMATION**

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Witness name: Joseph H. Felter

Capacity in which appearing: (check one)

Individual

Representative

If appearing in a representative capacity, name of the company, association or other entity being represented:

FISCAL YEAR 2011

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant
Award # FA9550-09-1- 0314	Air Force Office of Scientific Research (Minum)	\$15,081.42	insurgency/counter- insurgency

FISCAL YEAR 2010

*none*

federal grant(s)/ contracts	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

FISCAL YEAR 2009

*none*

Federal grant(s)/	federal agency	dollar value	subject(s) of contract or grant

contracts			

**Federal Contract Information:** If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of contracts (including subcontracts) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

Federal agencies with which federal contracts are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

List of subjects of federal contract(s) (for example, ship construction, aircraft parts manufacturing, software design, force structure consultant, architecture & engineering services, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

Aggregate dollar value of federal contracts held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2010: \_\_\_\_\_;

Fiscal year 2009: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Federal Grant Information:** If you or the entity you represent before the Committee on Armed Services has grants (including subgrants) with the federal government, please provide the following information:

Number of grants (including subgrants) with the federal government:

Current fiscal year (2011): 1;  
Fiscal year 2010: 0;  
Fiscal year 2009: 0.

Federal agencies with which federal grants are held:

Current fiscal year (2011): 1- Air Force Office of Scientific Research  
Fiscal year 2010: n/a;  
Fiscal year 2009: n/a.

List of subjects of federal grants(s) (for example, materials research, sociological study, software design, etc.):

Current fiscal year (2011): insurgency/counterinsurgency  
Fiscal year 2010: n/a;  
Fiscal year 2009: n/a.

Aggregate dollar value of federal grants held:

Current fiscal year (2011): \$15,081.42;  
Fiscal year 2010: 0;  
Fiscal year 2009: 0.



July 24, 2012

Statement of  
Ambassador (Ret.) Kenneth P. Moorefield  
Deputy Inspector General for Special Plans and Operations  
Department of Defense Office of Inspector General

before the

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations,  
House Armed Services Committee

on

Afghan National Security Forces and Security Lead Transition:  
The Assessment Process, Metrics and Efforts to Build Capability

Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you to discuss Department of Defense (DoD) Office of Inspector General (DoD IG) oversight regarding the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and the Assessment Process, Metrics and Efforts to Build Capability.

Between now and the end of 2014, NATO and U.S. military strategy to develop the ANSF is focused on setting the conditions for transfer of full security responsibility to the army and police, and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA). The implementation of this strategy is occurring simultaneously with a phased drawdown of U.S. and NATO combat forces amidst continued engagement with elements of the Taliban and other insurgent forces.

The strategy includes:

- Providing continued army and police unit training, equipping, partnering and mentoring to enable the ANSF to progressively assume the leading security operations role;
- Shifting primary focus from growth to improving ANSF quality and professionalization, sustainability, and preparedness to transition;
- Assisting provinces, districts, and municipalities through the progressive stages of transitioning to GIROA security lead over the territory of Afghanistan.

In addition, institutional capacity building of the security ministries—Defense and Interior—are vital to effectiveness and sustainability of ANSF and are a significant focus of the advisory effort. So is development of ANSF “enablers” in priority capability areas such as air support, logistics and the health care system, among others.

Without effective ANSF command and control processes and procedures, its forces cannot operationally achieve their potential. This, too, necessitates Command advisory attention. Finally, the Command has made leadership development of army and police officers and NCO’s, conceivably the most critical ANSF personnel resource capability, one of its highest priorities.

Many of these NATO and U.S. forces’ security objectives with respect to ANSF development have been addressed in previous DoD IG assessments. A summary of the conclusions, observations and recommendations from selected reports initiated over the past year are addressed in this testimony. They are not intended to provide a fully comprehensive picture of the current status and capability of the ANSF.

### **U.S. and Coalition Plans to Train, Equip, and Field the Afghan Air Force**

In August 2011, the DoD IG conducted the site visit for an assessment<sup>1</sup> of U.S. and Coalition efforts to train, equip, and field a viable and sustainable Afghan Air Force (AAF).

AAF long-term strategy is to build a force by 2016 capable of supporting ANSF operations with air mobility, rotary and fixed-wing close air support, casualty evacuation, and aerial reconnaissance and to provide Presidential airlift.

The AAF was and still is in a nascent stage of development. Although an air advisor effort had existed since 2005, the NATO Air Training Command-Afghanistan (NATC-A) development of the AAF began in earnest in 2010. As of February 2012, the AAF had grown to over 5,300 personnel and 88 aircraft assigned to three Air Wings, including the continuing development of the AAF training wing.

DoD IG noted several systemic issues during its assessment including the need for a common vision for the roles, missions and capabilities of the AAF and enhanced command and control of air assets. These issues were considered NATC-A command priorities.

Additional challenges included: ineffective maintenance, supply, and performance of the G-222/C-27A medium cargo aircraft; shortages of ground and air support equipment; and difficulty recruiting sufficient personnel to meet the technical requirements of a modern air force. In addition, the fleet still does not have the aircraft to provide a more robust close air support capability.

AAF development lagged ANSF ground forces and will require continued U.S. and Coalition resource and advisor support in order to transition the AAF to an operational, independent, and self-sustaining force by the Command's target date of 2016.

### **U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Develop the Afghan Local Police**

In October 2011, the DoD IG conducted an assessment<sup>2</sup> to determine the effectiveness of U.S. and Coalition planning and operational implementation efforts to train, advise and assist in the development of the Afghan Local Police (ALP).

The ALP consists of Afghan personnel recruited, trained and assigned to provide protection and stability in local villages/areas where the ANSF is insufficiently strong

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<sup>1</sup> "Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Plans to Train, Equip, and Field the Afghan Air Force," Project No. D2011-D00SPO-0234. The final report is scheduled to be released final in August 2012.

<sup>2</sup> "Assessment of U.S. Government and Coalition Efforts to Develop the Afghan Local Police," released July 9, 2012 (Report No. DODIG-2012-109).

to prevent armed insurgent infiltration and activities. The ALP supports the Village Stability Operations program which is designed to enhance governance and development, enabling communities to stand up for themselves, and links the local villages/areas to the GIRoA. It employs local Afghans, who are hired with the advice and consent of village elders, and is intended to be primarily defensive in nature.

The strategy implemented by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has achieved progress in developing the ALP. The goal is to expand to a force of 30,000 by the end of 2014. As of April 2012, ISAF reported ALP strength as approximately 12,900. According to this assessment and ISAF reporting, ALP forces have had success in denying rural intervention and movement by insurgent forces and are considered important by ISAF to the long-term effectiveness of Afghan security and governance.

The DoD IG assessment identified several critical issues that must be addressed to enable the ALP program to reach its full potential.

There is a lack of sufficient and trained Coalition personnel, in particular U.S. Special Operations Forces, which puts the expansion of the program to 30,000 ALP at risk. ISAF has added some conventional battalions to the ALP development effort to mitigate this risk.

To reduce the current uncertainty regarding the long-term viability of the ALP program, ISAF, in coordination with the Afghan Ministry of Interior, needs to determine whether the ALP program should endure beyond the currently planned timeframe of two to five years. Indecision on this point could diminish the current effectiveness of the program and result in inefficiency and wasted resources.

Further, the Afghan Ministry of Interior's logistics and administrative systems have not provided timely and necessary support to the ALP program. ALP personnel were graduating from training and being assigned to units without all of their required equipment. In addition, administrative support requirements were incomplete. Consequently, the Afghan Ministry of Interior did not provide some ALP members with pay and benefits.

Former Afghan Public Protection Program (AP3)<sup>3</sup> personnel in at least one province were being "re-branded" at the provincial level as ALP and assigned against district ALP authorizations, but without the knowledge/approval of district Afghan Uniformed Police leaders, village elders, or U.S. Special Operations Forces personnel. This resulted in police personnel from one district or village within a province claiming

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<sup>3</sup> AP3 was an Afghan Ministry of Interior security program that preceded the ALP program, supported and equipped by ISAF. However, AP3 personnel were not approved/vetted by village elders/shuras and did not provide security at the village level. They often worked outside of their home districts, performing missions such as route and site security.

to be ALP and performing security-related duties in another district or village, in violation of the intent and procedures of the ALP program. ISAF reports that this unit of former AP3 guards rebranded as ALP has been disbanded, with those personnel being incorporated into their home district ALP programs, as appropriate.

#### **U.S. Efforts to Develop the ANA Command and Control System**

In April 2012, the DoD IG conducted an assessment<sup>4</sup> to determine whether DoD will complete the development of an effective Command and Control (C2) system for the Afghan National Army (ANA) by the end of 2014.

While the ANA has demonstrated an improving capability to independently conduct counterinsurgency missions, and its units can orchestrate basic C2 with other elements of the ANSF, we determined that their C2 capability is still marginal because it is acutely dependent upon enabler support provided by the U.S. and Coalition.

There are a number of resource-intensive, high risk areas that could become critical if not properly addressed, and therefore could degrade ANA C2 effectiveness. These include the difficult challenge of adapting to evolving organizational structures, excessive complexity of some technology and automation being introduced, limited command authority related to removal of ineffective senior officers and other continuing personnel challenges, logistics impediments, and the significant reliance on U.S. and Coalition enablers.

Evolving and emerging ANSF organizational constructs pose significant challenges to the development of the ANA C2 system. For example there are four key C2 nodes currently being established or undergoing significant change in their organizational mission and structure: the ANA Ground Forces Command, the National Military Command Center, the ANA Special Operations Command, and the Air Command and Control Center.

In addition, 40 regional and provincial operational coordination centers are at different stages of maturity in terms of manning, leadership and equipment with varying levels of ability to interact with their regional, provincial, and national level command centers.

The ANSF continues to struggle with improving the capacity and effectiveness of its logistical system. Efforts to enable ANSF development and implementation of what represents a complex and confusing logistics organizational structure and related processes have resulted in a requisition system that requires an average of 22 signatures from multiple management levels for the supply of routine items. Major challenges in obtaining parts resupply for equipment continues. The ANA currently lacks sufficient

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<sup>4</sup> "Assessment of U.S. Efforts to Develop the Afghan National Security Forces Command and Control System," Project No. D2012-DOOSPO-0085.000. This report is projected to be final in October 2012.

logistics leadership and the specific education/training in how to plan and execute operational force sustainment for more than a few days. These limitations present significant impediments to developing and sustaining an effective C2 system.

Members of the ANA expressed concern about their inability to cope with the complexity of computer automation and technology provided by the Coalition intended to enhance ANSF command, control, and communication capabilities. Currently, the ANSF does not have sufficient capacity to operate, and effectively maintain the level of information technology and automated systems provided.

Illiteracy and low education levels reduce the number of qualified applicants for IT positions, and those who do succeed in being trained and gaining experience in complex systems ultimately can find great demand for their skills in the private sector at higher salaries. This places continuous recruiting and training requirements upon the ANSF to replenish required technical skills from a limited human resource pool.

The ANSF is also highly dependent upon specialized enablers provided by the U.S. and Coalition to inform and enhance C2 capability, these include: Military Intelligence Companies, Signal Intelligence, and Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Assets.

#### **U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Develop Leaders in the Afghan National Army**

In June 2012, the DoD IG conducted an assessment<sup>5</sup> of U.S. and Coalition efforts to develop leaders – officers and non-commissioned officers (NCO) – within the ANA. Building leader capacity within the ANSF is a top priority of the ISAF and U.S. commands.

The ANA lacks leaders in sufficient numbers with the requisite skills to manage complex organizational and technology-based systems, reflecting the Afghanistan-wide human capital shortage. However, significant progress has been made in the development of officer and NCO training programs and, with additional infrastructure under construction, the ANA will have the capability to provide career-long professional education and training. Commanders and trainers were predominantly ANA personnel, and the programs were well on the way to transition to Afghan lead.

Worth noting, the National Military Academy, modeled along the lines of West Point, just graduated its largest student class yet of 640, versus its first class of 84 that matriculated in 2007. In addition, the National Army Officers Academy is introducing a year-long training course based on the U.K. Sandhurst Military Academy to improve the professionalism of junior officers.

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<sup>5</sup> “Assessment of U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Develop Leaders in the Afghan National Army,” Project No. D2012-D00SPO-0090. This project was announced on February 28, 2012.

The ANA has several personnel issues impacting the viability of a sustainable system for producing and advancing a new generation of leaders. These issues detract from the goal of establishing a true merit based personnel system and the infrastructure to support one.

Personnel assignment and promotion is often conducted using considerations other than skill or merit. The lack of a viable retirement system for senior ANA officials also impedes upward mobility and long-term retention.

In addition, the ANA officer corps consists of personnel with different leadership models based on their training and/or experience with either the Soviet Army, Mujahideen or with the Coalition. As a consequence, there is not a common set of officer leadership views and values, especially as they relate to the role of an NCO.

The ongoing success of the ANA literacy program remains essential to improving nearly all aspects of ANA capability and is specifically critical to leader development. Literacy is an enabler for soldier, NCO and officer functions and has societal value in that it creates a more discerning citizen.

#### **U.S. and Coalition Efforts to Improve Health Care Conditions at the Dawood National Military Hospital**

During the last week of June 2012, a DoD IG team inspected<sup>6</sup> the Dawood National Military Hospital (NMH) to review the status of U.S., Coalition and ANA efforts to improve the management and health care services provided at the facility, including the medical logistics processes and accountability and control of medical supplies.

For the ANSF to become fully independent and sustainably effective in conducting combat operations, the ANSF health care delivery system will need to provide essential field-level combat casualty care, evacuation of casualties, restorative surgery and rehabilitation, and long-term care for disabled personnel.

In its preliminary observations the team noted that progress had been made at NMH since the February 2011 inspection by DoD IG in a number of key areas, including:

- Significant progress in the joint effort between ISAF and the Afghan Ministries to develop and implement an overarching ANSF health care system plan.
- Medical standards clearly defined as goals for the ANSF medical care system, including NMH, giving focus and direction to joint development efforts.
- No complaints or evidence of patient maltreatment.

<sup>6</sup> "Oversight of U.S. Military and Coalition Efforts to Improve Health care Conditions and to Develop Sustainable ANSF Medical Logistics at the Dawood National Military Hospital," Project No. D2012-D00SPO-0163.000. This project was announced on April 25, 2012.

- Nutritionist oversight capability established.
- Improved cleanliness, sanitary conditions and general appearance.
- New processes and procedures to improve personnel accountability and patient care.
- Improved medical logistics system performance, including accountability for medical supplies; fully operational NMH medical warehouse.
- Focused medical advisor training added to pre-deployment Program of Instruction for medical mentors.
- New management of the ANA Medical Command and NMH providing effective leadership.

However, there are still challenges that need to be addressed.

Although there have been improvements in overall staffing levels at the NMH, the pharmacy and nursing departments continue to experience personnel shortages. These shortages may hinder the ability of the NMH pharmacy to perform quality control measures and the hospital to continue to improve delivery of safe and effective patient care.

The NMH also lacked administrative procedures to transfer equipment from clinical areas that had more than a sufficient supply to areas in need of the same medical equipment. In addition, there was limited medical equipment repair capability at the NMH.

Furthermore, the security of controlled pharmaceutical substances in the bulk storage area and the accountability of medication in the pharmacy dispensary were insufficient.

Finally, we found that the plan for the medical mentoring mission beyond NMH's scheduled date in 2013 was unclear and needed to be refined and communicated to medical mentors and ANSF medical system staff.

### **Metrics Reports**

The DoD IG has issued two reports presenting metrics that measure the development of the ANSF. These metric reports<sup>7</sup> issued successively on the Afghan army and police were undertaken to fill a perceived information gap among senior leaders in OSD and relevant Congressional Committees. The DoD IG selects,

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<sup>7</sup> "Assessment of Afghan National Security Forces Metrics—Quarterly, Afghan National Army (Sept 2011 – Feb 2012," released May 15, 2012 (DODIG-2012-034.2) and "Assessment of Afghan National Security Forces Metrics—Quarterly," released January 20, 2012 (DODIG-2012-034.1). The data is generated by NATO as UNCLASSIFIED with Restricted Release; the caveat requires DOD IG to classify the products CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with U.S. policy.

summarizes, and concisely presents six months of quantitative and qualitative metrics deemed indicative of progress toward the goal of developing a sustainable Afghan National Security Force for transition to Afghan lead responsibility by 2014.

The reports have two primary sections: a narrative section describing trends, explaining anomalies, and providing overall context, a four-page graphic section consisting of a summary chart in “stop-light” format (green-amber-red), plus three pages of graphs illustrating significant metrics. The broad areas of focus are progress with respect to ANA and ANP improvements in force quality and professionalization, sustainment, and transition. The next report, to be issued shortly, concerns the ANP.

### **Future**

NATO/U.S. strategy beyond 2014 is still being formulated in terms of ANSF personnel strength and force structure, and the precise focus and force strength of NATO and U.S. trainers and advisors. DoD IG oversight efforts will continue through 2014 and beyond, as appropriate, with respect to the continued development of the ANSF and its sustainment.

I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

## Biographies



### Ambassador Kenneth P. Moorefield Deputy Inspector General for Special Plans & Operations



Before joining the Office of the Inspector General, Ambassador Moorefield served as senior State Department representative on the Iraq/Afghanistan Transition Planning Group, from December 2005 to June 2007.

Kenneth P. Moorefield was sworn in as Ambassador to the Republic of Gabon and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe on April 2, 2002.

Prior to this appointment, Ambassador Moorefield had over 30 years of experience in the U.S. foreign, military, and civil services. During his overseas career with the Departments of State and Commerce, he has held political, economic, consular, and commercial officer positions at our Embassies in Vietnam, Peru, Venezuela, the United Kingdom, the U.S. Mission to the European Union, and France.

Ambassador Moorefield graduated from the Senior Seminar (1995) and the United States Military Academy at West Point (1965) and took graduate studies at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service (1972). He has received various military and Foreign Service decorations including the Silver Star, Purple Heart, State Department Superior Honor Award, and two Presidential Meritorious Honor Awards.

He was born in Temple, Texas.

United States Government Accountability Office

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**GAO**

Testimony  
Before the Subcommittee on Oversight  
and Investigations, Armed Services  
Committee, House of Representatives

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For Release on Delivery  
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Tuesday, July 24, 2012

## AFGHANISTAN SECURITY

### Long-standing Challenges May Affect Progress and Sustainment of Afghan National Security Forces

Statement of Charles Michael Johnson, Jr.  
Director, International Affairs and Trade

Sharon L. Pickup  
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management





Highlights of GAO-12-951T, a testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Armed Services Committee, House of Representatives

July 24, 2012

## AFGHANISTAN SECURITY

### Long-standing Challenges May Affect Progress and Sustainment of Afghan National Security Forces

#### Why GAO Did This Study

Since 2002, the United States and other nations have worked to develop ANSF. In 2010, the United States, NATO, and other coalition partners agreed to transition responsibility for the security of Afghanistan from the international community to the Afghan government by the end of 2014. According to NATO, a successful security transition requires ANSF capable of addressing security challenges in Afghanistan. To support its development, the United States has allocated \$43 billion to train, equip, and sustain ANSF from fiscal years 2002 to 2011, appropriated \$11.2 billion in fiscal year 2012, and requested about \$5.8 billion for fiscal year 2013.

To assist Congress in its oversight, GAO has issued over 20 reports and testimonies on ANSF since 2005. This testimony discusses findings from GAO reports and ongoing work that cover (1) progress reported and tools used to assess ANSF capability, (2) challenges affecting the development of capable ANSF, and (3) use of U.S. Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams to advise and assist ANSF. To perform this work, GAO reviewed DOD and NATO documents, and met with officials in Washington, D.C., Tampa, FL, Brussels, Belgium, and Kabul, Afghanistan.

#### What GAO Recommends

GAO is not making new recommendations but has made numerous recommendations in prior reports aimed at improving efforts to develop ANSF capabilities. DOD has generally concurred with most of these recommendations and has taken or has planned steps to address them.

View GAO-12-951T. For more information, contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr. at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov, or Sharon L. Pickup at (202) 512-9619 or pickups@gao.gov.

#### What GAO Found

The Department of Defense (DOD) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) report progress developing capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), but tools used to assess the performance of ANSF units have changed several times. In April 2012, DOD reported progress increasing the number and capability of ANSF, with 7 percent of army units and 9 percent of police units rated at the highest level of capability. GAO has previously found the tools used by DOD and NATO to assess ANSF reliable enough to support broad statements regarding capability. However, issues related to these tools exist. When GAO reported on ANA capability in January 2011, the highest capability rating level was "independent"—meaning that a unit was capable of executing the full spectrum of its missions without assistance from coalition forces. As of August 2011, the highest level had changed to "independent with advisors"—meaning that a unit was capable of executing its mission and can call for coalition forces when necessary. DOD reports, these changes, as well as the elimination of certain requirements for validating units, were partly responsible for the increase in ANSF units rated at the highest level.

Several long-standing challenges may affect the sustainment of capable ANSF, including cost, key skill gaps in Afghan forces, and limited ministerial capacity. First, while the Afghan government and coalition partners agreed in May 2012 to a sustainment model for ANSF, with an annual budget of \$4.1 billion, GAO has previously reported the Afghan government has limited ability to financially support its security forces and is dependent on donor contributions. Second, shortfalls in leadership and logistics capabilities in ANSF persist. Addressing such gaps is necessary to reduce ANSF reliance on coalition support. Finally, the Ministries of Defense and Interior—which oversee the Afghan army and police—continue to require coalition support to accomplish their missions. DOD has also reported these ministries face challenges, such as lack of expertise in human capital and problems with corruption. GAO has made recommendations to address these challenges, including addressing shortages of trainers. Since GAO made its recommendations, additional trainers have deployed to Afghanistan.

As part of the overall transition of lead security responsibility to ANSF, starting in early 2012, the Army and Marine Corps began training and deploying small teams of advisors with specialized capabilities, referred to as Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams (SFAATs). These teams will be located throughout Afghanistan and will work with ANSF personnel from the headquarters to the battalion level and advise and assist in areas such as command and control and intelligence. GAO's past work examining the use of training and advisor teams in Iraq and Afghanistan highlighted certain areas relevant to DOD's plans to provide SFAATs in support of the current mission in Afghanistan. For example, GAO found it is important that DOD assign officers and non-commissioned officers to advisor teams in a timely manner so they can train and exercise as a team prior to deployment. In addition, commanders need to set clear priorities between the advising mission and other operational requirements such as counterinsurgency operations. Given the key role of advising teams in supporting the transition process, these areas will be important considerations for DOD as it continues to refine its plans for forming, deploying, and using advisor personnel to mentor and develop the ANSF.

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Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and Members of the Subcommittee:

We are pleased to be here to discuss U.S. and international efforts to develop capable Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). Since 2002, the United States and other nations have worked to develop the capabilities of ANSF. In 2010, the United States, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Afghan government, and members of the international community agreed to transition responsibility for the security of Afghanistan from the international community to the Afghan government by the end of 2014. In the past few months, NATO has begun to shift the focus of its mission from combat to a support role more focused on advising and assisting ANSF. According to NATO, a successful transition requires that ANSF be fully capable of addressing security challenges in Afghanistan on a sustainable basis. To support this effort, the United States allocated \$43 billion to build, train, equip, and sustain ANSF from fiscal year 2002 to 2011, with an additional \$11.2 billion appropriated in fiscal year 2012 and approximately \$5.8 billion requested by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) for fiscal year 2013.

To assist Congress in its oversight, since 2005 we have issued over 20 reports and testimonies focusing on ANSF. Our remarks are based on our prior and ongoing work on this issue.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, we address (1) progress reported and tools used to assess ANSF capability, (2) challenges affecting the development of capable ANSF, and (3) use of U.S. Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams to advise and assist ANSF. Detailed information on the scope and methodology for our prior work can be found in the reports we have cited throughout this statement. For the purposes of this testimony, we updated data on ANSF size and capability using DOD and NATO progress reports. We obtained the views of DOD on this information and incorporated the Department's comments where appropriate. We conducted the underlying performance audits in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our

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<sup>1</sup>For example, GAO, *Afghanistan Security: Department of Defense Effort to Train Afghan Police Relies on Contractor Personnel to Fill Skill and Resource Gaps*, GAO-12-293R (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 23, 2012); and *Afghanistan Security: Afghan Army Growing, but Additional Trainers Needed; Long-term Costs Not Determined*, GAO-11-66 (Washington, D.C.: Jan. 27, 2011).

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findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

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**DOD and NATO  
Report Progress  
Developing Capable  
ANSF, but Assessment  
Tool Has Changed  
Over Time**

DOD and NATO report progress in developing capable ANSF.<sup>2</sup> In April 2012, DOD reported that the number of ANSF grew steadily and exceeded growth targets. Similarly, as of May 2012, NATO reported that the Afghan National Army (ANA) reached its October 2012 recruitment growth goal of 195,000, while the Afghan National Police (ANP) reached 149,208 of its October 2012 goal of 157,000. We previously reported that DOD reported similar progress in 2010, achieving its interim growth goals for the ANA several months ahead of schedule. Further, DOD noted that increased numbers of ANSF were accompanied by increased capability of these forces, reporting that 7 percent (15 out of 219) of ANA and 9 percent (39 out of 435) of ANP units rated as operating independently with the assistance of advisors.<sup>3</sup> Table 1 provides additional information on DOD assessments of the ANA and ANP.

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<sup>2</sup>DOD reported this assessment in its April 2012 *Report on Progress Toward Security and Stability in Afghanistan*, which covers progress in Afghanistan from October 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012.

<sup>3</sup>Assessments classify ANSF units into one of six levels of performance: independent with advisors, effective with advisors, effective with partners, developing with partners, established, and not assessed.

**Table 1: DOD Assessments of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) Operational Effectiveness reported in April 2012**

Rating Definition Level	ANA Units and Headquarters	Percent of Units	ANP Units	Percent of Units
Independent with Advisors	15	7%	39	9%
Effective with Advisors	101	46	180	41
Effective with Partners	80	37	102	23
Developing with Partners	18	8	36	8
Established	3	1	16	4
Not Assessed	2	1	62	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: DOD.

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

ANSF ratings are based on the Commander's Unit Assessment Tool (CUAT), an assessment system used to evaluate the capability of ANSF. The assessment tool provides quantitative data for security force units, including the level of personnel, equipment, and training, and qualitative assessments for functions such as leadership and education. In addition, the assessment tool reports on the operational performance of the ANA and ANP units. DOD uses these assessments as part of its report of progress in the development of capable ANSF. We have previously found these assessment tools reliable enough to support broad statements regarding ANSF capability.<sup>4</sup>

However, issues related to these assessment tools exist. Specifically, key definitions used in ANSF assessments have changed several times and assessments did not fully measure ANP capability until recently.

- *Changing definitions.* Key definitions used in capability assessments of ANSF have changed several times. For instance, when we reported on ANA capability in January 2011, the highest capability rating level

<sup>4</sup>For the purpose of this statement, we determined that we did not need to independently validate these assessments, as we are presenting DOD and NATO data to describe and comment on their reports of progress.

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was "independent"—meaning that a unit was capable of planning, executing, and sustaining the full spectrum of its missions without assistance from coalition forces. As of August 2011, the highest level changed to "independent with advisors"—meaning that a unit was capable of planning, executing, and sustaining its mission, and can call for coalition forces when necessary.<sup>5</sup> The change to "independent with advisors" also lowered the standard for unit personnel and equipment levels from "not less than 85" to "not less than 75" percent of authorized levels. As DOD reports, these changes, as well as the elimination of certain requirements for validating units, were responsible, in part, for its reported increase in April 2012 of the number of ANSF units rated at the highest level. We have previously reported that clarity regarding the criteria by which security forces are assessed is critical to congressional oversight of efforts to develop foreign security forces.<sup>6</sup>

- *Problems assessing ANP capability.* DOD has reported problems using the CUAT to assess the capability of the ANP. Until recently, the same report template was used to assess the ANA and ANP, despite the differing missions of these institutions. While the assessment tool did rate the ability of ANA and ANP units to meet their counterinsurgency mission, according to DOD it did not address civil policing and other responsibilities of the ANP.<sup>7</sup> DOD reported that the February 2012 CUAT report began collecting data on community policing and rule of law capabilities of the ANP. According to DOD, prior to February 2012, the ANP were more focused on counterinsurgency than civil policing. However, the assessment tool cannot be used to report on the development of ANP capability to perform civil policing functions prior to February 2012.

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<sup>5</sup>We first reported on changes to capability ratings for the ANA in 2008, noting that definitions for the highest level of ANA capability changed from "independent operating capability" to "full operational capability." See GAO, *Afghanistan Security: Further Congressional Action May Be Needed to Ensure Completion of a Detailed Plan to Develop and Sustain Capable Afghan National Security Forces*, GAO-08-661 (Washington, D.C.: June 18, 2008).

<sup>6</sup>GAO, *Operation Iraqi Freedom: DOD Assessment of Iraqi Security Forces' Units as Independent Not Clear Because ISF Support Capabilities Are Not Fully Developed*, GAO-08-143R (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 30, 2007).

<sup>7</sup>GAO, *Foreign Police Assistance: Defined Roles and Improved Information Sharing Could Enhance Interagency Collaboration*, GAO-12-534 (Washington, D.C.: May 9, 2012).

### Long-standing Challenges May Affect Progress and Sustainment of Capable ANSF

The security transition in Afghanistan is contingent on ANSF capable of providing security throughout the country as coalition forces shift the focus of their mission to a support role. Several long-standing challenges, including cost, key skill gaps in Afghan forces, and limited capacity of ministries supporting the ANSF, may affect the capability of ANSF to sustain lead responsibility for security throughout Afghanistan.<sup>8</sup>

- *Cost to sustain ANSF.* We have previously reported that an analysis of the amount of future funding needed to support ANSF is critical for decision making and oversight. At the May 2012 NATO conference, the United States and other donor nations contributing to the NATO-led ANSF training mission agreed to a preliminary model for the future sustainment of ANSF. This model envisions a post-2014 force size of 228,500 with an estimated annual budget of \$4.1 billion.<sup>9</sup> We have previously reported that the Afghan government has limited ability to financially support its security forces and is dependent on donor contributions.<sup>10</sup> A January 2010 International Monetary Fund analysis projected that it will take at least until 2023 for the Afghan government to raise sufficient revenues to cover its operating expenses, including those related to the army and police. Ensuring continued donor contributions until that time may present challenges.
- *Key skill gaps in ANSF.* In 2009 and 2011, we reported that key skill gaps exist within the ANA and ANP, including shortfalls in leadership and logistics capability.<sup>11</sup> We have previously recommended that DOD, in conjunction with international partners, take steps to eliminate the shortage of training personnel for the ANA needed to address these skill gaps. However, in April 2012, DOD reported that shortages in the number of non-commissioned officers needed to provide leadership to ANSF remained a challenge, noting that the ANA required an additional 10,600 non-commissioned officers and the

<sup>8</sup>According to DOD, lead security responsibility means ANSF are planning and controlling operations with the advice and support of NATO. In May 2012, GAO issued a classified report on the security transition in Afghanistan.

<sup>9</sup>In April 2012, GAO issued a restricted report on the cost to build and sustain ANSF.

<sup>10</sup>GAO, *Afghanistan's Donor Dependence*, GAO-11-948R (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 20, 2011).

<sup>11</sup>See GAO-11-86 and *Afghanistan: Key Issues for Congressional Oversight*, GAO-09-473SP (Washington, D.C.: Apr. 21, 2009).

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ANP required approximately 8,300. DOD has previously noted that the development of leaders for ANSF is essential to improving its capability. Additionally, despite reported progress in providing ANSF with literacy training—a key prerequisite for learning specialized skills, such as logistics, needed to reduce reliance on coalition forces—DOD states that illiteracy remains a challenge. Further, despite the surge of U.S. troops to Afghanistan, the training mission continues to experience a shortfall in personnel needed to help address these key skill gaps. According to DOD, as of March 2012, about 16 percent of instructor positions to train ANSF were unfilled and NATO lacked pledges to fill them.

- *Limited capacity of ministries supporting ANSF.* We have previously reported that limited capacity in the Afghan Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI)—which oversee the ANA and ANP, respectively—present challenges to the development and sustainment of capable ANSF. For instance, MOI faced challenges, such as a lack of consolidated personnel databases and formal training in properly executing budget and salary functions. In April 2012, DOD reported that the MOD was assessed as requiring some coalition assistance to accomplish its mission—an assessment unchanged since October 2010, while the MOI was assessed as needing significant coalition assistance—an assessment unchanged since 2009.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, DOD reported that the ministries face a variety of challenges, including, among others, MOD's lack of human capital in areas requiring technical expertise and MOI's continuing problems with corruption.

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<sup>12</sup>GAO, *Afghanistan Governance: Performance-Data Gaps Hinder Overall Assessment of U.S. Efforts to Build Financial Management Capacity*, GAO-11-907 (Washington, D.C.: Sept. 20, 2011).

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### Factors to Consider in Deployment and Use of Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams to Develop the ANSF

As part of the overall transition of lead security responsibility to the ANSF by 2014, NATO's mission in Afghanistan is shifting from a combat role to more of an advising and assist mission. To that end, earlier this year, the United States and coalition nations have begun providing specialized teams, referred to as security force assistance advisory teams (SFAATs), to provide leadership and expertise to ANSF personnel and units. At the same time, overall U.S. troop levels are planned to draw down from about 87,000 as of the end of March 2012, to approximately 68,000 by the end of September 2012.

Mentoring, advising, and partnering with ANSF units has been a key part of NATO's mission in Afghanistan. For the U.S. contribution, DOD has used a variety of approaches to provide U.S. forces to carry out the advise and assist mission, including forming individual training teams as well as augmenting existing brigade combat teams with additional personnel to serve as advisors. Starting in early 2012, the Army and Marine Corps began training and deploying small teams of advisors with specialized capabilities, or SFAATs. These teams will be located throughout Afghanistan and are comprised of officers and senior-grade non-commissioned officers. They will work with ANSF personnel from the headquarters to the battalion level and advise and assist in areas such as command and control, intelligence, and logistics. In addition, the SFAATs will work with the ground commander to arrange for these units to provide any necessary support to ANSF units such as fire support or medical assistance. To initially provide these teams, the Army and Marine Corps in some cases created these teams by drawing personnel from units that had already deployed to Afghanistan. In other cases, they created teams by drawing personnel from U.S. based units. As the Army and Marine Corps plan to provide additional teams of advisors for future deployments, they are exploring whether to use the same approaches or other options for organizing and deploying these personnel. In addition, coalition nations are expected to provide a number of similar advisor teams.

Our past work examining the use of training teams and advisor teams in Iraq and Afghanistan highlighted certain areas that we believe are relevant to DOD's plans to provide the SFAATs in support of the current mission in Afghanistan.<sup>13</sup> For example, our recent work focused on the

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<sup>13</sup>See *Iraq and Afghanistan: Actions Needed to Enhance the Ability of Army Brigades to Support the Advising Mission*, GAO-11-760 (Washington, D.C.: Aug. 2, 2011).

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Army, which in 2009 shifted its approach and began replacing individual training teams with brigade combat teams augmented with advisor personnel. Specifically, we identified challenges related to the sourcing and training of personnel, balancing missions, defining command and control relationships, and providing support to advisor personnel once deployed.

- *Sourcing and training of advisor personnel.* Neither the training teams nor the augments provided to the Army's brigade combat teams existed in any of the services' doctrinal structures. Instead, they were typically sourced with personnel who were identified individually, and generally consisted of company and field-grade officers and senior non-commissioned officers who were taken from other units. We found that DOD faced some difficulty in providing the required field grade officers or specialized capabilities to these teams, because of widespread demand for these personnel, whose numbers were already in short supply. In addition, DOD faced challenges getting personnel assigned to advisor teams in a timely manner, limiting their ability to train and exercise as a team prior to deployment.
- *Balancing advising activities with other missions.* We found that units in Afghanistan faced some challenges because commanders did not always set clear priorities between the advising mission and other operational requirements, such as counterinsurgency operations or performing missions such as conducting checkpoints. As a result, in kinetic combat environments, commanders prioritized the combat mission and directed their resources accordingly.
- *Defining command-and-control relationships.* Theater commanders did not always provide clear guidance on command and control structures for the advisors. In some cases, the lack of clarity on command relationships between brigades and advisor teams led to the reassignment of advisors to the control of a division or a brigade that they had not trained and deployed with.
- *Provision of support to advisor teams.* We found that brigades in Afghanistan sometimes faced challenges providing the necessary support to advisor teams such as transportation assets, force protection resources, and equipment because support requirements had not always been clearly identified, these items and capabilities were in limited supply and were, at times, also needed to support combat operations.

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We made several recommendations to DOD to enhance the Department's ability to support the advising mission, including clearly defining the requirements for the number, ranks, and capabilities of advisors, the relative priority of the advising mission, and the support that advisor teams require. DOD concurred with our recommendations and has taken some actions to implement them. Given the key role of advising teams in supporting the transition process, these areas will be important considerations for DOD as it continues to refine its plans for forming, deploying, and using advisor personnel to mentor and develop the ANSF.

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Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes our prepared statement. We would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

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## Contacts and Acknowledgments

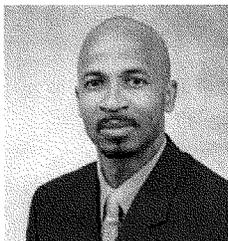
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**Charles Michael Johnson Jr.**, is a Senior Executive with the U.S. Government Accountability Office. He is the primary Director responsible for GAO's portfolio addressing U.S. International Counterterrorism and Security Assistance-related issues particularly focusing on evaluating the effectiveness and coordination of (1) U.S. efforts to combat terrorism and transnational criminal organizations abroad, including efforts to assist foreign partners in countering such threats and (2) efforts to protect U.S. personnel working and visiting abroad. Much of his efforts over the past years have addressed U.S. efforts in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other terrorist safe havens.

Prior to joining GAO's International Affairs and Trade team, Mr. Johnson was an Assistant Director in GAO's Homeland Security and Justice team, where he was responsible for leading work on justice and law enforcement issues, including the FBI's post-9/11 realignment to focus on counterterrorism/counterintelligence. He also spent a year detailed to the U.S. House of Representatives' Homeland Security Committee between 2005 and 2006, where he served as a key staff member for border security and immigration issues. Mr. Johnson graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in business administration from the University of Maryland and completed Harvard University's JFK School of Government Senior Executive Education Program.

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Sharon L. Pickup is a director in the Defense Capabilities and Management team of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in Washington, D.C. She is responsible for managing GAO evaluations related to the defense budget, military operations and readiness, and business transformation. Key projects under her leadership include evaluations of the readiness of U.S. forces to support ongoing operations and other commitments, use of advisor teams in Iraq and Afghanistan, language and cultural awareness training for U.S. forces, training of Army combat brigades and Navy ship crews, cost and funding of ongoing operations, and the Department of Defense's management approach to achieving business transformation.

Since joining GAO in 1982, Ms. Pickup has served in various assignments in the agency's headquarters, overseas and field offices. From 1982 to 1984, she was an evaluator in the Los Angeles field office where she reviewed defense and civilian programs including the Navy's surface combatant readiness reporting system and federal employee health benefits. While in GAO's European Office from 1984 to 1988, Ms. Pickup evaluated various defense and international programs, including Air Force plans to modernize close air support capability, NATO munitions requirements, basing of Navy P-3 aircraft, U.S. chemical defensive capability, Army supply and financial management, and U.S. bilateral narcotics assistance. After returning to headquarters in 1988, she continued to specialize in international and defense issues as a senior evaluator and Assistant Director in GAO's National Security and International Affairs Division (NSIAD). Among other things, she managed reviews of the Department of Defense's 1993 Bottom-Up Review, overseas presence, U.S. assistance programs for the Nicaraguan contras, the International Atomic Energy Agency's nuclear inspections, and allied contributions to Operation Desert Storm.

In 1997, Ms. Pickup was named to manage NSIAD's report review unit responsible for ensuring the quality of the division's reports. She held this position until selected to attend the National War College, National Defense University, in August 1999. After graduating in June 2000, Ms. Pickup assumed the position of Assistant Director for defense planning and force structure in GAO's Defense Capabilities and Management team, focusing on strategy, force structure, and joint warfighting issues. In June 2002, she was appointed to GAO's senior executive service.

Prior to GAO, Ms. Pickup began her public service as a program analyst for the Office of the Federal Inspector and a researcher for the Department of Interior, responsible for analyzing plans to develop a natural gas pipeline in Alaska. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Westminster College, a Master of Public Administration from the University of Southern California, a diploma from the U.S. Naval War College (with distinction) and a Master of Science in National Security from the National War College (distinguished graduate). She also attended the Harvard University Program for Senior Executive Fellows and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Seminar XXI program.