

THE ANSO REPORT

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YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Kidnappings and abductions persist
- Inclusion of NGO in AOG threat activity
- Prevalent use of IED country wide

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COUNTRY SUMMARY

Abductions and kidnappings remain a persistent security issue throughout the country. The recent releases of INGO staff members in Kabul and Helmand in early December, as well as a recent threat to an NGO staff member in Bamyan, attest to this. The “catch and release” of electoral staff in Farah and Paktika during this period also highlights the broad geographic range of this tactic. Be it for criminal or political reasons, kidnapping is a threat that is likely to persist well into 2009.

The use of threats (be they verbal or written) are also a pervasive issue for NGO. Threat letters specifically identifying NGO within the text were reported from

Herat and Kunduz this period, though these are assessed as being part of a broader AOG effort to shape the environment rather than a precursor to more direct action.

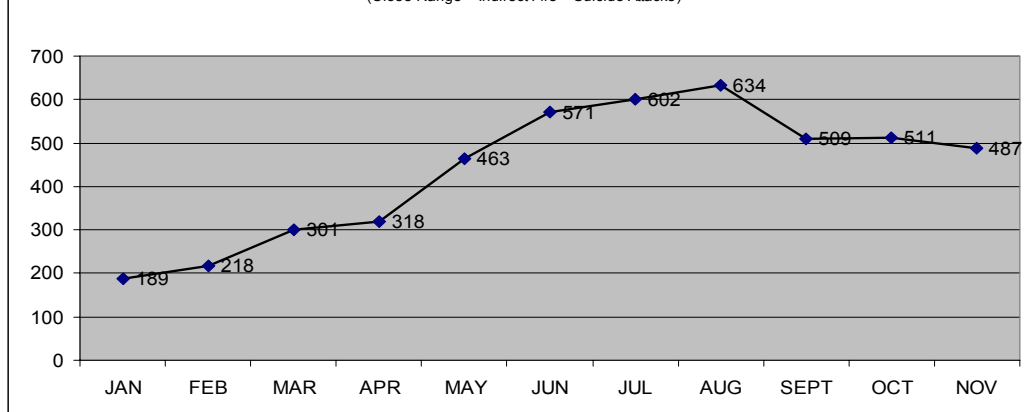
The planned “surge” of international military forces in 2009 is starting to gather momentum, with reports indicating that Wardak and Helmand will be some of the first areas targeted. It is likely that further troop deployments will follow suit, with the actively volatile areas receiving the bulk of reinforcements. It should be noted that any increase in troop deployments to such areas will initially serve as a destabilizing influence as greater

combat power is brought to the conflict. This will also likely result in displacement of AOG elements, possibly into previously more stable areas.

Overall incident volumes have remained relatively consistent in the closing months of 2008. This volume is being primarily driven by the South and the East and the previously suggested “short and shallow” winter lull is still expected. Both sides have also indicated an intent to actively prosecute the conflict throughout the winter months which will continue to drive these volumes.

Total AOG Initiated Attacks per Month - 2008

(Close Range + Indirect Fire + Suicide Attacks)



KABUL

On 3 December the French INGO worker abducted in Karte Parwan was released. (Specific details are extremely limited and only available through international media). Kidnapping in general though is extremely lucrative in Afghanistan and prevalent in the environs of Kabul City and as such can be expected to remain a threat to NGO.

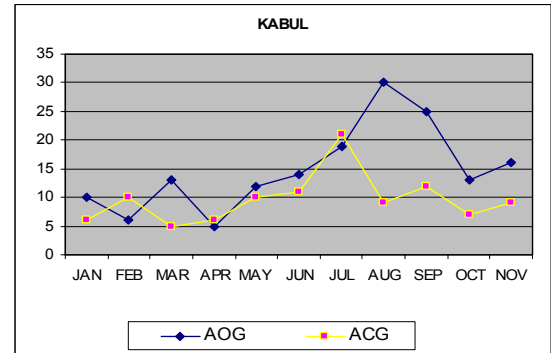
On 30 November a national staff member of an INGO was killed in a suicide IED attack apparently

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Decreased security around Kabul City
- Suicide attacks
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	22
This Report Period	0

targeting German Embassy vehicles travelling on Darulaman Road. This was a somewhat anomalous attack as it occurred in the afternoon. Of the seven suicide attacks in the city so far this year, only two have occurred in the afternoon. The choice of a non-security target is only slightly atypical as this year four such attacks have targeted ANA or IMF, and three targeted non-security entities (Germany Embassy vehicles, Ministry of Information and Culture, Indian Embassy). The target of the 27 November suicide bombing near Massoud Square is not known. While Kabul city has been relatively quiet this reporting period



(likely attributable to a highly active and visible police presence and the Eid holidays), NGO can expect the threat of suicide as well as non-suicide IED attacks to remain high in the coming weeks. (Unlike suicide attacks, non-suicide IED attacks are just as likely to occur in the afternoon as they are the morning.) In addition NGO can anticipate periodic rocket attacks, which almost always occur during hours of darkness. Typical impact sites are around the airport, the Jalalabad Road area, and the western side of the city.

WARDAK

So far in December Wardak has seen few AOG incidents and if last year is any indication, December should be remain relatively quiet month. Last year in December, AOG incidents dropped drastically to only two after averaging 30 per month from June through November. Though the monthly average is up 20% over last year and NGO can expect at least par-

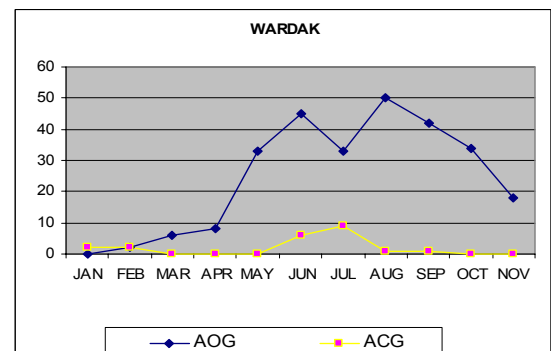
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Prevailing insecurity
- Suicide/IED attacks
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

allel increase in incidents in December over last year, this month will nonetheless remain relatively quiet.

However, much more so than even last year, AOG have firmly established themselves as the de facto authority in most areas east of the Bihsuds. This has made Wardak (along with Logar) the planned target for increased IMF operations and troops come January. Until then Wardak will probably remain relatively quiet, but firmly in control of AOG, and



highly risky for NGO operations. Once the military surge commences the province will likely return to the volatile state of the last half year.

NOTICE: Your input is invaluable for the production of this report. While we appreciate information on incidents, we also need general information on the security situation in your area. So please remember to call or email us regularly.

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

ANSO: “..by NGOs for NGOs..”

LOGAR

Notable this period was the military activity in Puli Alam District. On 8 December military forces killed Mohammad Bobi; a Taliban commander reportedly notorious for suicide bombings, torture, kidnapping, and other criminal activities in the area. While this has gotten some degree of international news coverage, the killing of one commander is unlikely to

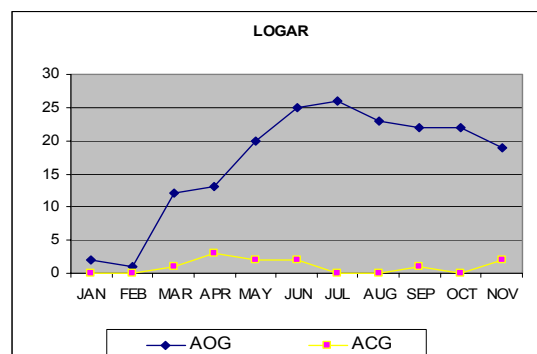
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG freedom of movement
- Attacks on security forces

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	7
This Report Period	0

have much impact on the overall security situation in Logar. AOG incident levels have been low so far this month, it is difficult to know if the incident decrease is from military operations or part of the typical seasonal downturn is occurring throughout the region.

Last year, AOG incidents in Logar dropped off drastically in November. This year they remained high in November, so the recent decline may very well be attributable to a later than normal winter slowdown. In addition, while mili-



tary operations appear to be focused on Puli Alam, throughout November AOG were highly active throughout most of Logar. For now, while quieter, Logar should still be considered an AOG stronghold that presents a highly dangerous environment for NGO lacking explicit local/AOG approval.

BAMYAN

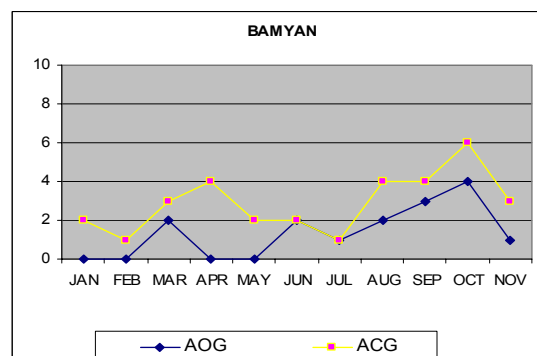
In late November, local authorities notified an international staff member of an INGO of a criminal/profit motivated kidnapping threat against him. While the threat is reported to have been specifically targeting this individual, it raises awareness of the po-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Weather related road hazards
- Abduction/kidnapping
- AOG presence in some districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

tential for NGO targeting in this largely safe province. Criminal groups have been recently active in the area an example being the mid-November abduction the son of a local businessman by ACG (Later, suspects were arrested and he was returned.). While the overall threat to NGO is low, internationals will have a high profile given the area's relative isolation and low population. Given internationals' potential value as hos-



tages, limited income opportunities in the area, and the threat of winter hardship, NGO could become desirable targets, and they should be vigilant in their anti-abduction and counter-surveillance practices and compound security.

KAPISA

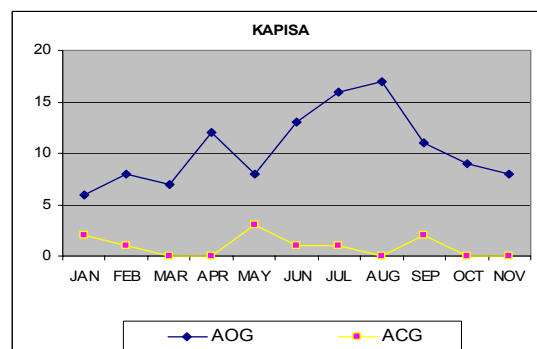
The Mahmudi Raqi district centre was the target of an AOG RPG attack on 3 December. Rather than suggestive of a new threat, this incident is indicative of a

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- Significant AOG presence in some districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

known low but continual level of AOG operations throughout the province. NGO should avoid Tagab, Nijrab, and Alasay districts, as they remain the most heavily AOG-infiltrated districts. Tagab is the most volatile district due to continual military operations aimed at rooting out AOG.



DAYKUNDI

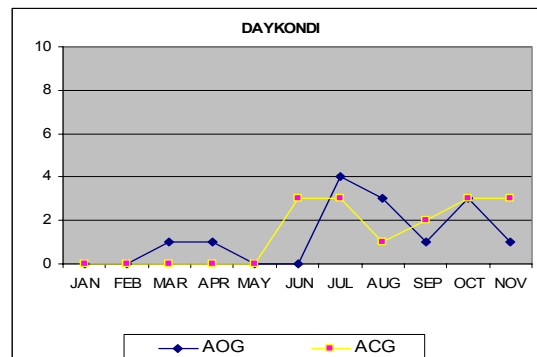
Districts south of Nili—Gizrab, Kajran, Giti—are heavily infiltrated with AOG and should be avoided by NGO. While other areas are subject to AOG movement, the most salient current

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG freedom of movement
- Minimal security force presence
- Criminality

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

threat in the northern districts seems to be from criminal activity. There were several criminal incidents in November and some level of criminal activity appears to be continuing this month. For example, in the Ishtarlay bazaar area police opened fire on reported thieves. Typically, the security presence is extremely limited



in Daykundi, thus increasing the potential for criminality.

FARYAB

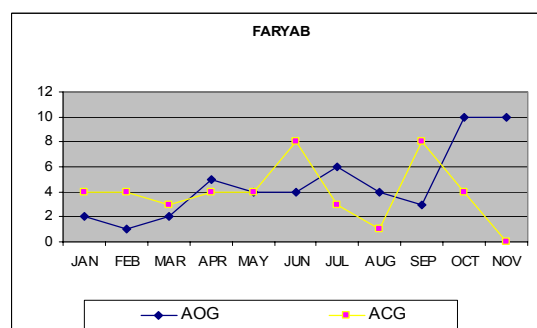
Events in the volatile western districts of Faryab have not kept pace with the adjacent districts of Badghis, but still remain a source of concern. The level of AOG sentiment in such districts (Almar, Qaysar, and Pashtunkot) is currently in a state of flux and local reporting reveals major conten-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- AOG activity in western districts

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

tion between AOGs and locals supportive of NGO activity. Activity in Faryab for this reporting period has been focused on the under-construction Maymana-Qal'ai Naw road, with ANSF being attacked in the general area of this route and a road-construction company compound also coming under attack. Another threat to movement in the province stems from occasional IEDs placed on the road between Maymana and Dawlatabad which are often



found and removed before they have a chance to detonate. Such IEDs are probably not the result of local AOG sentiment in their immediate vicinity, but rather attempts by AOG to expand their presence and reach.

JAWZJAN

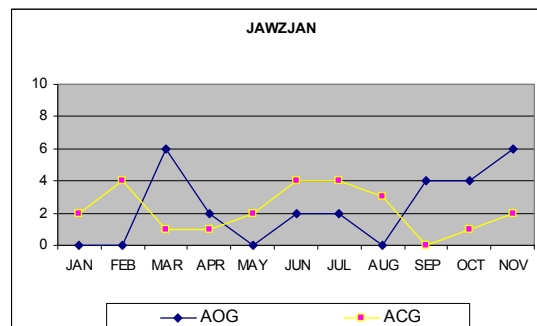
Jawzjan has settled down considerably in the last few weeks, with the only incident being an SAF attack on ANP in the vicinity of Fayzabad. Local reporting indicates that the recent wave of incidents centered around Aqcha

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- ACG activity
- Threats against NGO in Aqcha, Mardiyani, and Mingajik

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	0

might be attributed to a single individual opposed to some of the more dominant political forces in the province. This theory, while still unconfirmed, fits the pattern of evidence for activity both in recent events and over the past few years, where many incidents in Jawzjan are a reflection of the organizational efforts of high-profile individuals rather than an



expression of more widespread AOG sentiment.

BAGHLAN

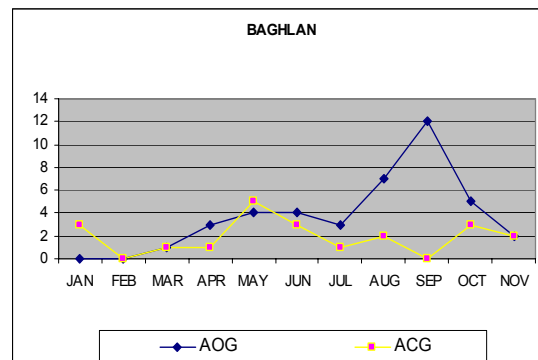
In the recent reporting period Baghlan saw a number of incidents, most of which took the form of increased ACG activity. An attack on a police checkpoint

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- AOG activity in remote districts
- Upsurge in ACG activity

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

in the town of Khinjan, most likely perpetrated by an ACG, highlights the province's vulnerability to organized crime stemming from its importance as an economic corridor. Scattered incidents in remote districts also reflect this summer's rise in AOG



activity, though this will mostly remain latent during the winter months.

KUNDUZ

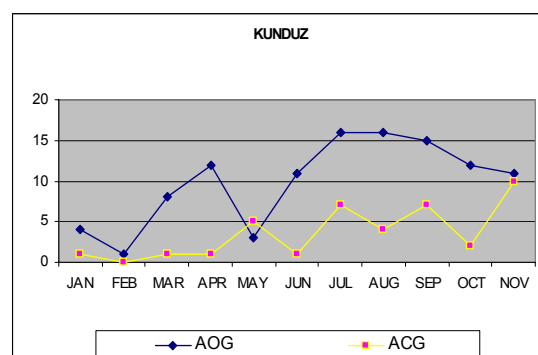
NGOs in Kunduz experienced an indirect threat this month in the form of a night letter distributed in a Kunduz suburb. Similar night letters distributed in Imam Sahib district carried the same threats but did not mention NGOs specifically and were left at local mosques. Night letters in Kunduz province are a frequent occurrence and have so far occurred in two types; hand written and ad-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Non-specific threats to NGO
- Targeting of security forces and GoA

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	14
This Report Period	1

ressed to specific organisations, and photocopied versions distributed over a wider area. The recent instance is an example of the latter and reflects a larger amount of coordination and planning. While they should always be taken seriously, the night letters are probably best understood as a method of AOGs' establishing presence, creating the appearance thereof, or gauging local reaction. Other threats around Kunduz have persisted from previous reporting periods, though in reduced levels. These include SAF



attacks on police checkpoints, and IED attacks targeting ANA or IMF. Voter registration centres must also be considered relatively high-risk given that they have been repeatedly targeted in recent months. Taking these threats into account, the best strategy for NGOs is to keep distance, both physically and politically, from persistent AOG targets.

LAGHMAN

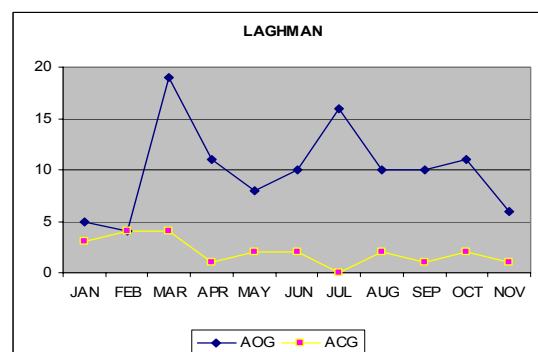
Laghman still tends to be relatively sedate compared to most provinces in the ER. It appears that AOG influence in the province is still being stifled by the previous local outcry resulting from the October AOG killings

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

of Laghman residents aboard a bus in Kandahar. Because of such adamant opposition, as witnessed in a high-ranking NDS official's cries that AOG members who do not leave the opposition will find their families' homes burnt, it is likely that AOG operations may be severely curtailed for some time, if not indefinitely. AOG may resort to less manpower intensive



and lower profile activities such as more emplaced IED and mines in order to maintain a sense of their presence.

KHOST

Khost province continues to be demonstrative of both IMF/ANSF and AOG desires to establish themselves as the dominate force.

The 4 December assault on the Khost NDS headquarters also serves as a further example of the complex suicide attack tactics now in common usage by AOG. A vehicle with ANP markings, driven by three suicide bombers

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

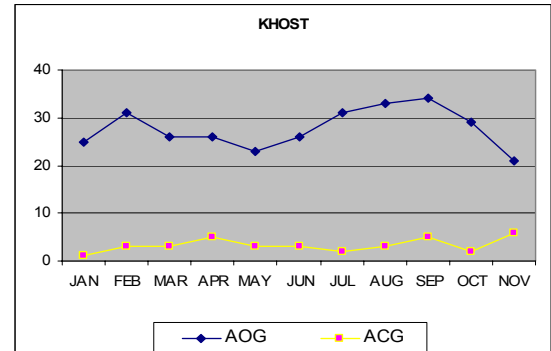
- IED
- Suicide attacks
- Collateral damage from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	6
This Report Period	0

who were wearing NDS uniforms, gained entry into the compound, and utilizing a mix of grenades and suicide vests, caused both ANSF and civilian casualties.

Likewise, on the evening of 11 December in Yaqoubai district, Noori village, IMF/ANSF forces conducted a search operation which resulted in the arrest of five AOG and the confiscation of five Kalashnikovs and three motor-bikes.

As a result of this ongoing struggle, Khost residents are especially worried about the deteriorating security situation. Despite the fact



that Jalaluddin Talabani recruits forces from the area, locals assert that they are not enamored with AOG due to poor past Taliban governance. Furthermore, any support they give to local AOG is done out of fear. Regardless, when queried about their attitudes toward NGOs, the majority of the local population voice their support for NGO development projects and express their desires for more.

KUNAR

Activities in Kunar during this reporting period are rather typical for the province, with AOG attacks on IMF/ANA bases, ANA or IMF convoys, and ANP check points in the area. Additionally, further AOG purportedly infiltrated into the areas of Chapa Dara, Ghaziabad, and Sirkanay, with the former two being the most currently active AOG offensive areas.

The 14 December assault on the collective home of a local politician, one INGO employee, and an IO worker is an example of recent activity in Sirkanay. 10-15 AOG, outfitted in ANA and ANBP uniforms assaulted the residence, secured the guests, and confiscated their mobile phones. The homes occupants however called for assistance (as well as firing a

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

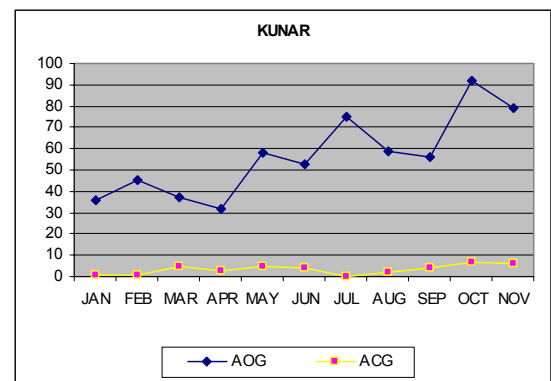
- Collateral damage from clashes
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

warning shot) and a sporadic fire-fight inside the compound ensued; forcing the AOG to depart. A pursuit by ANP and local residents of the AOG, as well as a follow on IMF search of the area, resulted in no apprehensions and no casualties were reported.

While Kunar residents believe that the snows will close the mountain passes therefore restricting AOG flows, they fear that similar clashes will occur because AOG have already established themselves in urban areas. A latent fear is cast over Kunar province for this very reason, with residents facing intimidation, assassination, and summary execution by AOG if they are accused of supporting or even being associated with GoA or IMF.

Although approximately only 5-10% of Kunar residents are reported to support AOG, residents are nonetheless still displeased with the GoA as a result of per-



ceived corruption in GoA construction and development projects and the GoA's inability to deliver worthwhile projects.

When asked about their disposition to NGOs operating in the province, residents point to their past demonstrated support: for example, when they insisted that kidnapped NGO workers should be set free. The residents highlight to the AOG that NGOs bring development, as in the building of clinics, at great risk to themselves, while neither the AOG nor GoA bring any assistance. Ultimately, while it appears that the people of Kunar are standing strong for their beliefs, they find themselves caught between two parties, punished on one side with violence and the other with a seemingly ineffective government.

NANGARHAR

On 7 December, in Jalalabad District 4, an INGO discovered an IED located inside its compound. The device apparently had failed to detonate because of a faulty fuse and had been tossed over the INGO's compound wall from a quiet residential street. The INGO reportedly was not given any warning—night letter, oral, etc.—that there could be repercussions to its activities, nor is it undertaking any activities that

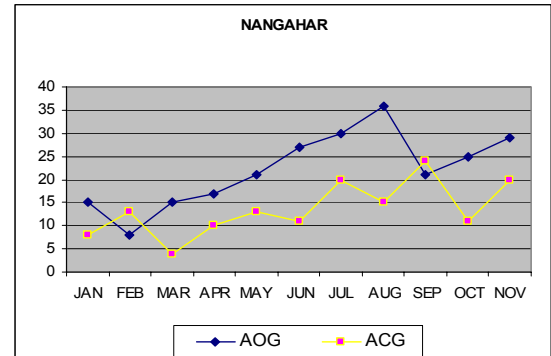
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Armed attack
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	8
This Report Period	1

could be misconstrued as supportive of the GoA. While the source of this attack remains unclear (either AOG or local dissatisfaction), the fact that the INGO was targeted in probably the most secure area of Jalalabad suggests that the attack could have been orchestrated to send a message, be it of a local or more global in nature.

Possible defensive measures to mitigate the impact of such attacks include the following: 1) restricting visitor access throughout the compound; 2) ensuring proper standoff from uncon-



trolled areas (neighbours, alleys, etc.) for staff and buildings; 3) improved appropriate lighting; and 4) installation of blast film for windows. However, the NGO tenants of transparency, ownership, and communal acceptance remain the best forms of prevention though some NGOs may choose to maintain a low profile if they suspect their presence may be the source of dissatisfaction.

NURISTAN

Nuristan province, similar to Kunar, is predominately afflicted with a sustained conflict between AOG and IMF/ANSF, which only pose a threat to NGOs incidentally. Furthermore, the vast majority of AOG offensive opera-

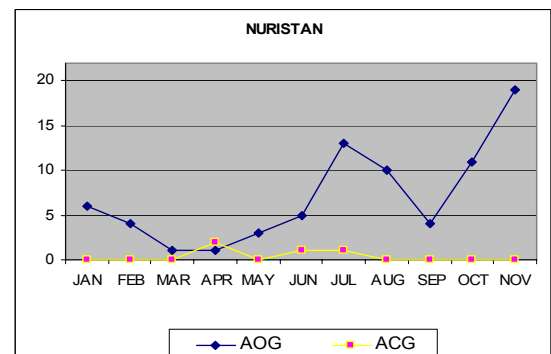
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Collateral damage from clashes
- Abduction/kidnapping

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

tions during this reporting period occurred in Kamdesh district, a fact that is in line with this years trends which indicate that 66% of all AOG offensive operations have occurred in the said district.

Nuristan residents, nonetheless, remain optimistic that the winter will bring a lull in the fighting. They do not share similar fears with their southern neighbours in Kunar province, for they believe



the snow will block passes and roads, and they do not think that local AOG—a mix of Hezbe Islami Gulbuddin and Taliban—have established a formal presence in urban centres.

PAKTYA

Paktya residents presently hold favourable attitudes towards NGO development projects in their province, opining that the GoA has forsaken the province in favour of other regions. For example, residents point to still unfinished highway projects in their

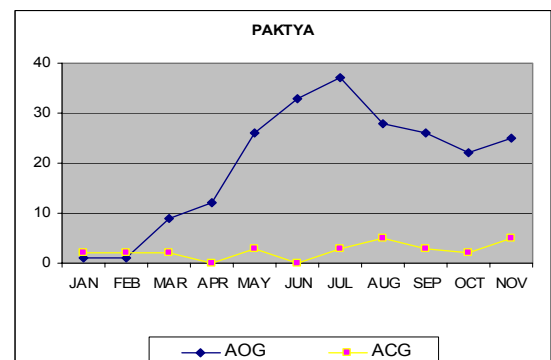
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Abduction/kidnapping
- Collateral damage from clashes

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

province in contrast to burgeoning development in the North. And although the GoA cites insecurity in the region as a hindering factor in development, the people are clearly displeased.

The prospects for further stability look grim, however. Locals suggest that Dand Wa Patan and Jaji districts, because of their porous borders with Pakistan, will allow the security situation to further



deteriorate. Furthermore, despite residents' desires for conflict levels to abate, AOG propaganda continues to make great inroads in the province, sustaining the conflict.

FARAH

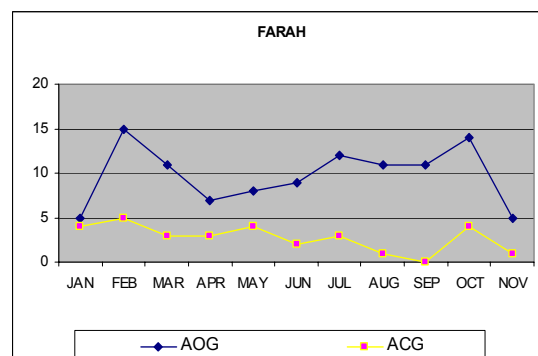
With reports of extensive AOG offensive actions against security forces, especially in the districts of Pusht Rod, Khakhi Safed and Bala Buluk; Farah remains a difficult province for NGO operations at present. The kidnapping and sub-

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Kidnapping/abduction
- Ambush against security forces

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	0

sequent release of two electoral officials on 11 Dec in Bakwa - presumably with the help of the active mediatory role played by the tribal elders - points to the existence of very potent traditional social structures and the conflict resolution role played by tribal elders in these areas. NGO may like to take note of the support available through such struc-



tures existing in the ranks of their beneficiaries and invest in the same - as a possible insurance to future crisis.

GHOR

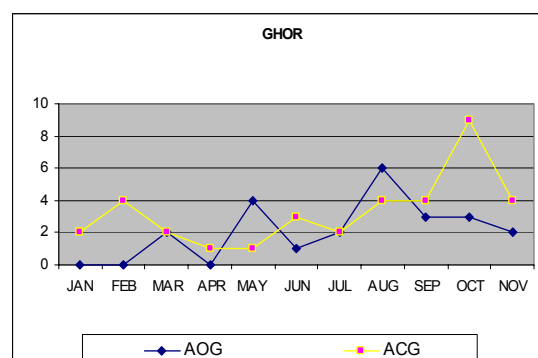
The drop in the number of incidents in Ghor province may be partially attributed to the onset of winter which has a restraining effect due to the topographical

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Kidnapping/abduction
- Banditry along main roads

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	5
This Report Period	0

layout making movement of groups comparatively more difficult. There has also been a drop in the number of incidents attributed to the ACG. However, very real threats resulting from the actions of AOG remains in place in the form of attack on convoys and government establishments.



BADGHIS

The execution of one of the three Afghan civil engineers abducted earlier from the road construction project in Ghormach was a stark reminder to the seriousness of the dangers facing the victims of such abductions. The positive side to this otherwise grim incident was the freeing of the two other engineers by their captors as a result of the mediation efforts of the tribal elders. Another such incident involved the release of the 7 ANSF soldiers (following the me-

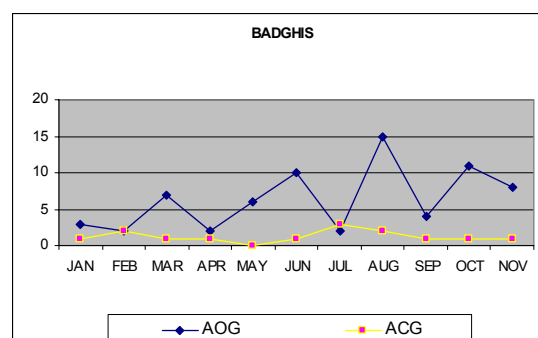
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Kidnapping/abduction
- Increasing volatility

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

diation of security forces and local elders) captured earlier by the AOG during an ambush on an ANP and ANSF convoy. Both the incidents mark a very encouraging note in an otherwise volatile environment.

While on one hand the increasing boldness of the AOG attacks on IMF and government security forces in Murghab district bespeaks of the growing influence of AOG in these areas, the violent clashes between different AOG and between the AOG and the ethnic communities expresses as a clash on interests and the respective areas of influence. This is possibly attributable to the influx



of elements foreign to these areas and their coming into conflict with the host societies. The likelihood of the induction of more IMF fighting troops in Afghanistan in the coming few months is likely to increase the intensity of combat operations in Badghis province too, as more AOG may temporarily relocate their areas of operations from the southern provinces or shift bases in a very fluid conflict, as they seek logistic support to their operations through existing ethnic and tribal ties.

HERAT

The intimidation of the residents of Engil and Gozara districts by AOG through a diktat comes as the latest in the series of such threats made every few weeks in these areas. The AOG have demanded the following; that men and women stop working for NGO; ANP and ANSF personnel stop working for the government; women and girls stop attending educational institutions; people extend active cooperation to Mujahids; people found working for or spying for foreign forces will be punished by death; people to abstain from participation in the electoral process while electoral officials working for the electoral process to be punished by death; and community leaders and village elders found supporting the gov-

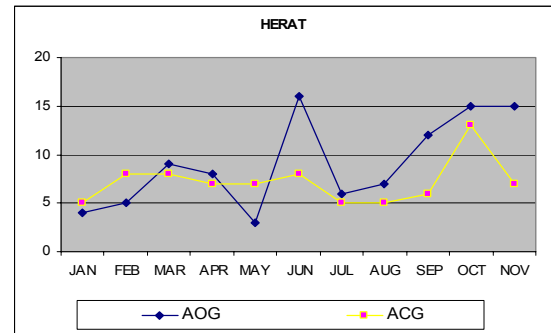
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Intimidation
- SVBIED threats
- Force protection shootings

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	14
This Report Period	1

ernment to be punished by death. The threats of the AOG in these areas have increased in scope and intensity over the time. The threat to people working for NGO is not new. A warning was issued to the residents of these two districts in June of this year asking them to stop their work with NGO. Another warning was issued to the Afghan women NGO workers eight weeks earlier to stop working with NGO. However no retaliatory action has followed these threats.

Overall, the tactics of the AOG point to a larger strategy aiming at population influence and control, keeping in view the need to cultivate and build a support bases for future anti-establishment operations and undermining of the existing governing structures. This may also be with a view to gaining political influence and mileage prior to the general elections scheduled in the forthcoming year.



The SVBIED threats to the development community in and around Herat City during the period of Eid (and earlier) come as a latest change from an earlier period where threats to the NGO community in Herat City were limited to abductions or the risk of being inadvertent victims of armed robberies or grenade attacks - as part of the larger community of Herat city. Though no such actions occurred, the issuance of such threats twice over may serve as an early indicator that the development community in Herat city are now considered a viable target.

The two recent force protection shooting incidents merit a mention, as they add to the existing threats faced by the NGO. While there were a myriad of factors that played in these incident (early hour low light conditions being one) they nonetheless highlight the diversity of the threat environment within Herat.

GHAZNI

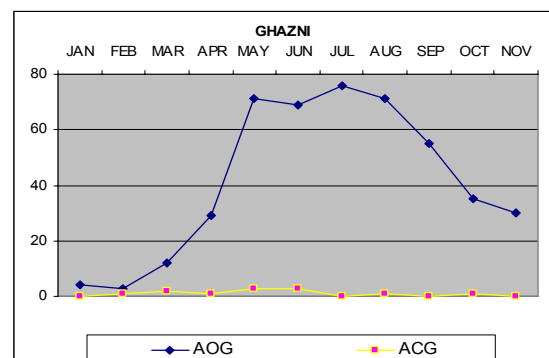
AOG are pervasive in Ghazni province and appear to be equally splitting their operations between IED and close range armed confrontation in this reporting period.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Kidnapping/abduction
- Pervasive AOG presence

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

Travel on highways and roads is deemed especially hazardous due to AOG control. And despite what appears to be continual defeats by IMF/ANSF in AOG initiated attacks, AOG are persistent. The burgeoning conflict in Ghazni may only headed for further heights, moreover, for it appears that AOG will concomi-



tantly attempt to establish a monopoly on violence, contrary to GoA desires.

PAKTIKA

From 1 November to present, AOG in Paktika have relied heavily on IED as a method of attack—61%. Hence, AOG in the province, just as writ large, appear to be dependent on IED as a “force multiplier” of sorts, allowing them to heavily target ISAF and PSC escorted convoys with actual fighters. Another manner in which AOG have attempted to ply their will is the continual use of summary execution and abduction, again enabling them to instill fear through intimidation, exploiting their natural benefits of concealment within the populace and an overwhelming willingness to resort to violence.

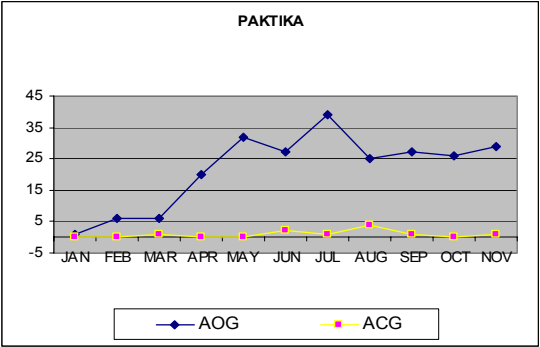
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Ongoing AOG infiltration
- Targeting of logistical convoys

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

An example of this policy of compliance through intimidation is evident in the 12 December evening abduction of the Yusof Khel District Field Coordinator for the Election Commission from his residence. (AOG, in typical fashion, wore ANA uniforms during the incident). Sharan district has become emblematic of this systemic issue, with two separate abductions—a group of six civilians and a tribal elder—being kidnapped during the reporting period.

Relating this to an NGO security manager’s perspective, it means that in an environment where expatriate and national staff are targeted merely because they can be exploited—like any other human—dictates that movement must be rigidly monitored and



restricted. Moreover, staff (especially national staff) must plan for scenarios they could be confronted with. While sanitation—ensuring that no links to NGO or other contentious parties are on your person—is essential to reduce the likelihood that one will be taken as a target of opportunity during an event, managers must plan for the worst case scenario, one in which AOG or ACG specifically target a member of their staff. In these cases, awareness of one’s surroundings, emergency preparedness, enacting obstacles—security gates—within a residence, and the ability to communicate for assistance are essential factors that will gain potential victims time to receive assistance.

ZABUL

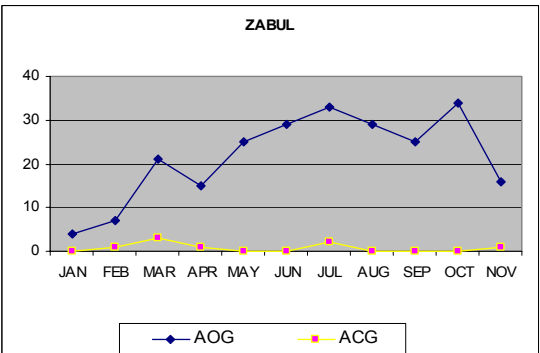
Consistent threat reporting indicates that AOG intend to continue their campaign of destroying critical transportation infrastructure (bridges and culverts) through the use of IED. The latest such incident occurred on the 3rd of December though this marks only the latest in a series of

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Destruction of road infrastructure

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

such events that have been ongoing since early summer. While part of this campaign appears to be designed to disrupt logistical supply convoys along Hwy 1, there also appears to be a secondary objective of restricting security force capacity to access known AOG strongholds. The recent reports of an AOG element intent on disrupting the access routes to Arghandab district is just one example of this.



The main impact this will have on NGO is the ability to safely access program areas, though considering the prevailing instability of this province, it is most advisable to restrict activities to within Qalat City.

HELMAND

The NGO national staff member (guard) abducted in late November was released unharmed on the 4th of December following the intervention of local community leaders. This event was the result of an interpersonal feud and was not related to the individuals employment in an NGO. This factor indicates that this incident does not present a threat to the wider NGO community. This abduction

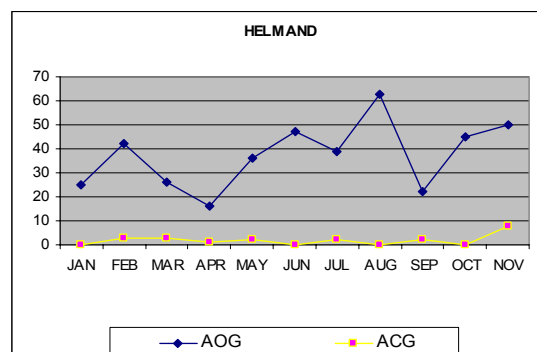
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- Prevailing instability
- Suicide attacks
- IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

tion also marked the first NGO incident for Helmand in 2008, though this low figure is likely attributed to the limited NGO presence within the province overall as well as their operational protocols in light of the prevailing instability.

Helmand is also reported to be one of the areas to be reinforced in the new year as part of the upcoming “surge”. Despite this, and considering that this province was witness to one of the largest AOG actions of the conflict thus far (the ‘siege’ of Lashkar Gah in early October), there is unlikely to



be any considerable improvement in the provinces overall stability for the mid to long term. The influx of further ISAF forces will in fact be a destabilising influence over the short to mid term as the combat capability is increased. NGO will need to factor this into their long term planning and as such project continued restrictions to Lashkar Gah well into 2009.

URUZGAN

Reports indicate that while there have been no NGO direct incidents reported in this province for 2008, this is not a clear indicator of NGO acceptance. The districts of Charchino, Gizab, and Khas Uruzgan host a limited security force presence, have a considerable AOG presence, and is gen-

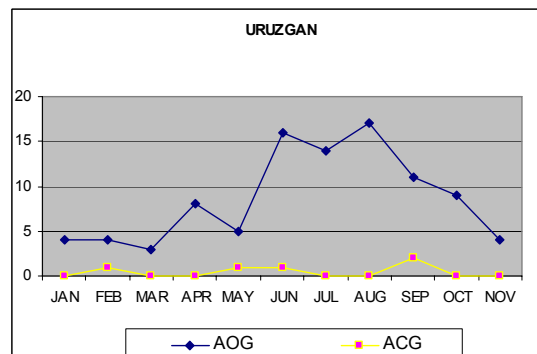
KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

- IED
- Kidnapping/abduction
- Prevailing instability

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

erally assessed as an inhospitable environment for NGO activities. There is a prevailing threat of abduction within Uruzgan, though this has primarily targeted GoA associated personnel as part of an ongoing intimidation and kidnap for ransom campaign by both AOG and ACG. NGO should consider international staff as a high value target for such actions and limit their movements and exposure accordingly.

IED remain a threat, a threat which increases exponentially the



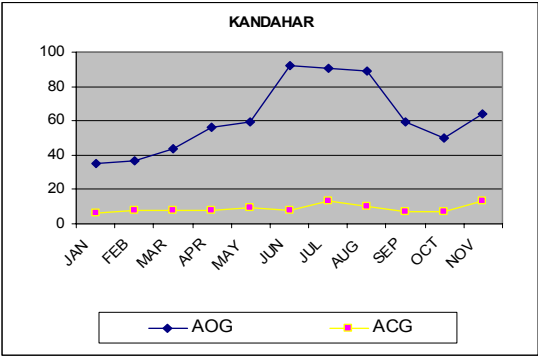
further afield from Tīrin Kot (the main population centre and concentration point of security forces and governance) one gets. The Tīrin Kot-Kandahar main route should still be considered high risk and as such NGO are advised to restrict their movements along same to essential only.

KANDAHAR

Despite IMF and ANSF efforts, AOG activities are omnipresent during this reporting period, even in the provincial capital. It appears that while ANSF may have hindered AOG activity—it discovered a rickshaw full of explosives before it was able to enter Kandahar City on 14 December—IED strikes are numerous. Additionally, similar to the 12 December complex AOG attack against IMF in Helmand province, AOG may be looking to design more multi-stage IED attacks that will enable

them to drive up casualties, while still avoiding armed combat. On 14 December in Daman District, for example, IMF were targeted with an IED, later discovering additional explosives placed under a culvert near the same location.

AOG, although apparently reliant on IED attacks, also continue to harass less formidable targets—ANP—with close range attacks. In an example similar to past assassination attempts, motorcyclists shot and killed an ANP official whilst he was on his way to work in Kandahar City on 13 December. AOG also engaged in a conventional firefight with an ANP post for four hours on 11 December in Arghistan District. In both examples, we see that



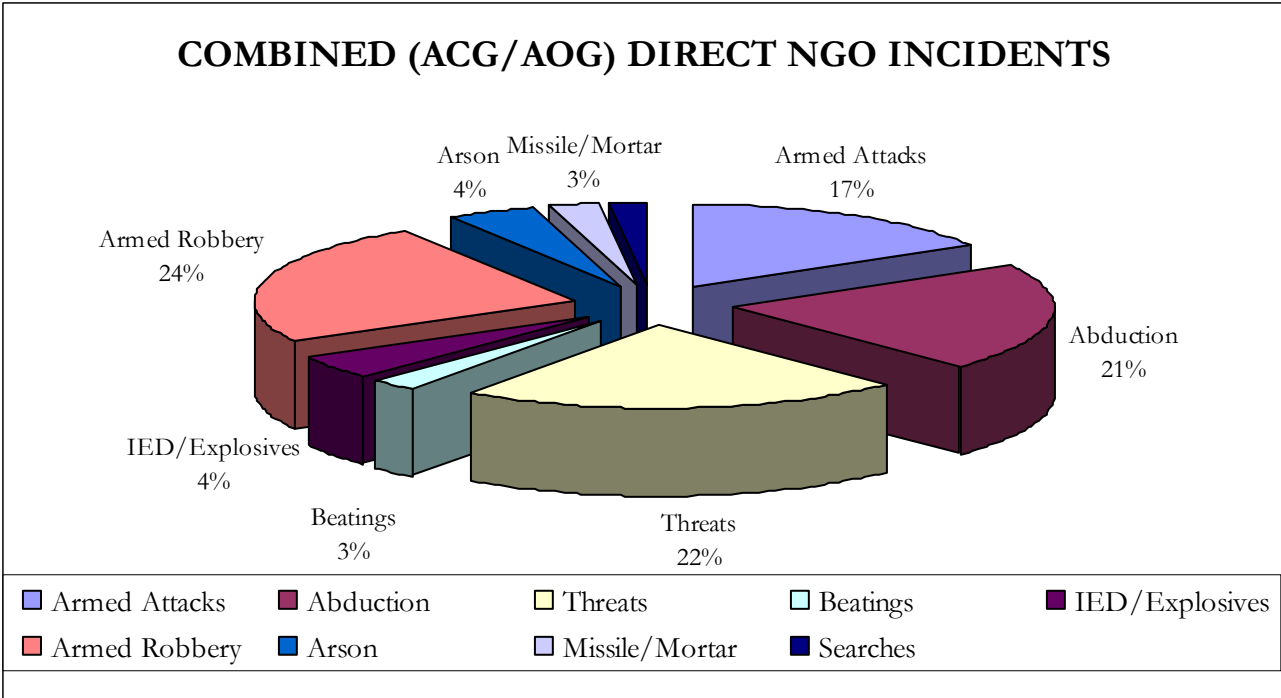
AOG are only employing actual combatants when they believe odds will be in their favour. NGO can typically keep this pattern of modus operandi in mind when they are trying to avoid becoming entangled in the strife. Accordingly, when approaching IMF or ANA, NGO should be mindful that the threat these forces are usually confronted with is impersonal, or allowing more standoff, such as IED or RPG. And in the case of ANP, NGO should expect armed confrontation.

KEY THREATS & CONCERNS

➤ IED

➤ Collateral damage from clashes

➤ Assassination within Kandahar City





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

IMF-International Military Forces / **AOG**-Armed Opposition Groups / **GOA**-Government of Afghanistan / **ACG**-Armed Criminal Groups / **ANA**-Afghan National Army / **ANP**-Afghan National Police / **IED**-Improvised Exploding Device / **AEF**-Afghan Eradication Forces / **RPG**-Rocket Propelled Grenade / **IDF**-Indirect Fire (ex: mortars) / **VBIED**-Vehicle Borne Improvised Exploding Device / **PRP**-Previous Reporting Period / **ANBP**-Afghan National Border Police / **SAF**-Small Arms Fire / **NDS**-National Directorate of Security (intelligence) / **PSC**-Private Security Company / **DC**-District Centre

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MISSING

This report ANSO could not provide analysis for the provinces of:

- Parwan
- Panjshir
- Badakhshan
- Takhar
- Samangan
- Balkh
- Sar-e-Pul
- Nimroz

This is because we do not know enough about the area to comment on the significance of the incidents occurring there.

If you can help us understand the province better please contact us.

THE ANSO MANDATE

Scope of Services, P.1, 2008

The community of NGOs has established ANSO in recognition of their interdependence and shared responsibility towards security management.

They have acknowledged that ANSO is important in maintaining the impartiality, independence and political neutrality of NGOs by allowing them to be free from dependence upon security information originating from political or military sources.

They have also recognized the need to avoid association with the military in the complex Afghanistan environment and have therefore perceived a valuable role for ANSO in protecting NGO from direct contact with the military.

The community recognizes that the success of ANSO in fulfilling these functions is dependant upon the willingness of NGOs to cooperate with one another in the area of security management and to support ANSO in delivering these objectives.

In so forming ANSO then, the NGO community has accepted the inherent obligation to contribute and participate for the effective management of their own security.