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## HIGHLIGHTS

- **High profile attacks against GOA officials in Samangan and Laghman**
- **Tranche 3 of the transition moves into increasingly contested provinces and districts**
- **High numbers of civilian casualties in multiple IED incidents in the South**

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## COUNTRY SUMMARY

The NORTH witnessed two BBIED attacks in provinces that rarely see such activity. Samangan's first ever BBIED targeted a parliament member (PM) and regional power broker, Ahmad Khan "Samangani," and in the process caused the most fatalities of any singular security incident in the region this year. Shibirghan city in Jawzjan also recorded a BBIED blast, although with much more limited results. In the NORTHEAST, Kunduz - which last year was the northern province most often on the receiving end of such attacks - conducted its transition ceremony, denoting the most conflict prone province yet to transition in the North, although one that is expected to soon be followed by Faryab. One of only two NGO incidents in the country this period occurred when in Badakhshan, a message was sent to an NGO in the form of a grenade thrown into their compound, injuring three staff members.

The CENTRAL region notched the only other NGO incident this period in Daykundi, when an NGO staff member was pulled out of his car and beaten due to an interpersonal dispute. However, more notable to the region was the initiation of stage three of the transition process, which moved into more contested areas country-wide, including Kapisa province as well as Puli Alam and Khushi districts of Logar. In Kapisa this initiated French IMF preparations to withdraw in full and the planning of an ANSF clearing operation, while in Logar, the transition ceremony suffered a low level "statement attack," when rockets detonated against the ANP HQ as the delegation from Kabul was preparing to depart.

The SOUTH suffered significant civilian casualties in a number of separate incidents, albeit primarily IED attacks. Most notable in terms of overall casualties (civilian and non-civilian) was a prolonged complex attack against an ANP HQ in Kandahar, but in the same province, an SVBIED detonated against a bus full of daily workers from an IMF base, and further civilian casualties occurred in an IED detonation against a civilian bus in Ghazni, as well as in a variety of other IED detonations throughout these provinces, Helmand and Uruzgan.

Although devoid of BBIEDs this period, the EAST region saw a high profile attack in Laghman, when an IED detonated against the vehicle of the head of the Women's Affairs Department, demonstrating the degree to which GOA officials of any capacity are branded "legitimate" targets by AOG. In Nangarhar, an IO staff member received a threatening letter cautioning him against his involvement with foreigners.

In the WEST, Farah city was the recipient of a complex attack against the provincial governor's compound, while in Ghor, complicated conflict dynamics between a local IEA-affiliated AOG, a large armed group from Murghab, and the tribesmen of a recently slain provincial judge resulted in clashes and a worsening of the overall security situation in the northern districts. IOs were also directly or indirectly involved in three separate incidents in the region, although in each the individuals involved were left unharmed.

# CENTRAL REGION

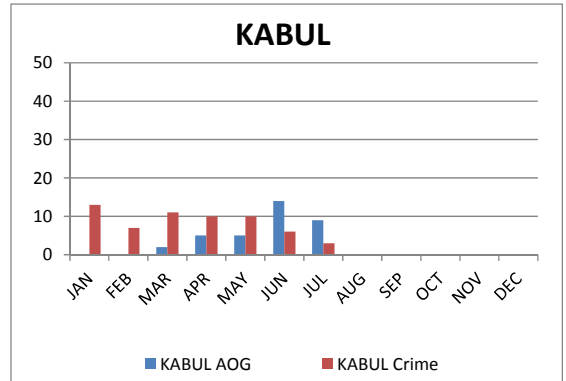
## KABUL

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	9
This Report Period	0

Kabul did not see any repeat of the previous period’s complex attack, but did see multiple NDS arrests of AOG members across the city. This included a coordinated set of raids related to a complex attack network in PD 9, in and around Chehel Metra/40 Meter Road; a total of eight AOG operatives were arrested, including two positively identified as BBIED operatives. While the intended target of the operation remains unclear, the raids demonstrate both continued AOG intentionality vis-à-vis high profile complex attacks in the city, and the ability of security forces to disrupt many of them.

Further NDS arrests of AOG members or AOG-affiliated individuals were also recorded in the past fortnight. In Taimani, a religious leader belonging to the Haqqani faction was arrested on

Street 9 by an NDS QRF unit, having recently rented a house on the street; it remains unclear what his role was to be, but the importance of the incident lies again in its demonstration of both ongoing AOG presence in the city, and of often-effective NDS disruption. In Shahr-e Naw, two ANA soldiers were detained in the Bakhtar Hotel for suspected links to the armed opposition, while in Macroyan, a civilian employee of the Supreme Court was arrested by NDS. These two incidents each suggest active AOG efforts to penetrate the capital’s state institutions in an ever-changing manner, although the inherent opacity involved in NDS operations also means it is difficult to get the full picture behind the motives of the detained individuals.



Aside from these operations, Kabul city remained characterized by minor ANP actions, and petty as well as more serious criminality. Most significant was the fatal shooting of a local man who attempted to resist during an armed robbery in Kart-e Naw, when three gunmen in a vehicle targeted another vehicle that was transporting a large amount of cash for a local businessman; the incident reinforces ANSO’s standing assessment that resistance is the primary risk for the targets of such ordinarily non-violent armed robberies. In a similar but non-violent instance, an IO staff member was accosted and robbed of his valuable while walking home in Macroyan.

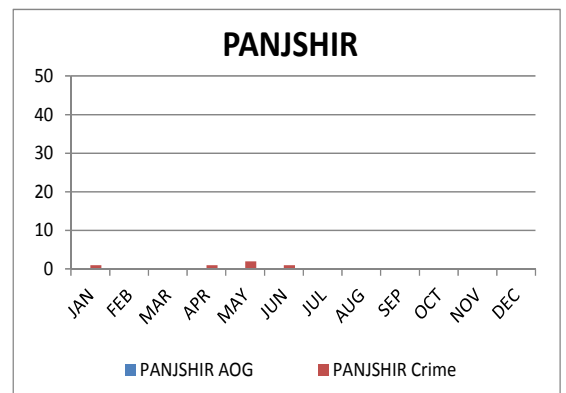
## PANJSHIR

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

During the past fortnight, there were no security-related developments in Panjshir, in a close approximation to the long-run average for the province. During the previous period, a single IED detonated in the area of the Paryan DAC, which, as with other such kinetic incidents so far this year (which amount to a total of three) is a function of local political and economic rent-seeking behavior by provincial elites, not of any activity by the armed opposition, which continues to be functionally

absent from the province – with last year’s October combined VBIED/BBIED attack a singular, spectacular exception.

Relative to the same period in 2011, this year maintained steady overall incident volumes, increasing only from seven to eight (a mix of armed criminality stemming from personal disputes and the aforementioned elite-driven rent-seeking). As such, it continues to be the case that Panjshir as a whole has some of the lowest



incident volumes in the country, although NGO actors and foreign tourists in the valley often do not enjoy a freedom of movement that would reflect this, given the tight control that local security personnel exercise over the province’s terrain.

## KAPISA

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

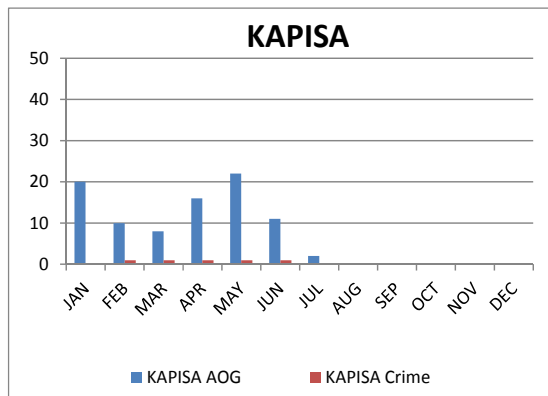
Along with Logar, Kapisa was one of two provinces in the central region with areas formally announced to be soon undergoing transition during the first half of the month, with a formal ceremony taking place in Mahmud Raqi on July 4<sup>th</sup>. However, unlike Logar, Kapisa’s transition is to be total, with the French IMF contingent soon departing the entire province, as well as neighbouring Surobi, after an extended period of operational presence.

The ceremony took place in advance of the actual physical withdrawal of the IMF detachment from the province, which is slated to begin around the 21<sup>st</sup> of July and is expected to last until mid-August. The concurrency of this withdrawal operation with Ramadan is not a coincidence; the IMF are expecting their road-bound logistics convoys to receive considerable kinetic attention by the armed opposition, as a parting shot to their time in the province, and are therefore likely to be keen to attempt to exploit an anticipated weakened physical state of AOG cadres due to their daytime fasting. In spite of this however, we can expect a spike in insecurity along the main provincial road in Kapisa and on the section of the Kabul-Jalalabad highway between Surobi and Pul-e Charki during their withdrawal, particularly as opposition fighters have increased their presence along these roadways already.

At the time of the transition ceremony, the GOA also announced

its intention for a large ANSF clearing operation to take place after IMF withdrawal (and as such likely to start shortly after Ramadan), focused on the AOG-dominated districts of Tagab, Alasay and Nijrab. This operation is, though, likely to face little AOG resistance; a public announcement of such an operation will almost inevitably be followed by a concerted AOG cadre outflow beforehand, mostly into those western Laghman districts recently vacated by the IMF, where the armed opposition has already made strong gains.

Beyond that operation and into next year’s fighting season, we can expect the province’s armed opposition to exploit withdrawal by substantially escalating its targeting campaign of ANSF and GOA officials. In this regard, neighbouring Laghman – whose AOG networks remain closely connected to those of Kapisa – offers an instructive insight into the province’s medium term prospects. Around the transition of Mehtarlam during summer 2011, NDS and ANSF engaged in a concerted campaign to round up AOG members in the capital district, and for a number of months the security situation in the capital improved substantially. However, since the beginning of this year’s summer fighting season, there has been a substantial deterioration of security in Mehtarlam, with AOG openly patrolling in villages near to the city during the night; their



increasing penetration of Mehtarlam has been significantly eased by the recent IMF withdrawal from the province’s western districts, which remained much more contested.

A similar dynamic is likely to play out in Kapisa. Indeed, the French IMF detachment is not just departing from the relatively uncontested northern districts – of Mahmud Raqi and the Kohistans – but from the entire province. As such, the timeline described above for Laghman may be accelerated for Kapisa, with AOG cadres capable of exploiting the more complete absence of any IMF presence more quickly than they were able to in Laghman. Yet it remains likely that a concerted push in the province will wait for next year, as the post-Ramadan ANSF operation will likely encourage AOG cadres to absent themselves in early autumn and remain out until the following spring.

Indeed, continuing the trend from the previous fortnight, actual kinetic activity remained low in Kapisa, with many of the province’s AOG cadres ‘abroad’ in Laghman, escalating their campaign of targeting GOA and ANSF in both the western districts and in Mehtarlam city after IMF withdrawal from those areas in early June (see Laghman). In Shukhi, an IED struck an ANP vehicle on the 8<sup>th</sup>, injuring two policemen, while in the Joybar area of Tagab, just north of the DAC on the main district road, AOG staged a daytime ambush on an ANP convoy, killing one policeman and injuring three more.

### NOTICE:

The graphs provided in the report are accurate as of 11 July 2012.

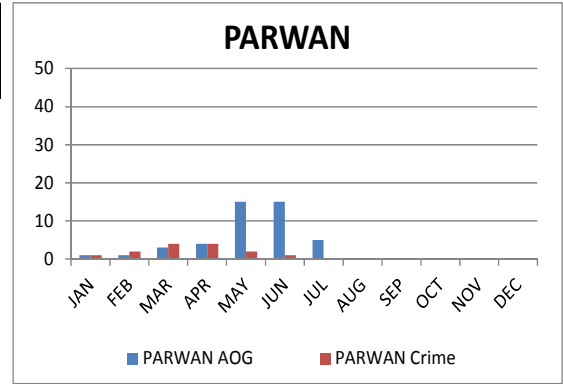
## PARWAN

AOG activity in Parwan continued to concentrate on the stretch of the Kabul-Bamyan highway that runs through the province, which moreover saw no further ANSF operations designed to push back on the opposition's increasing presence along the strategically important roadway. In all, five AOG attacks took place on the roadway, spread across Sheikh Ali, Siyagerd and Shinwari, and targeting ANP in all but one incident. In Shinwari, where the district shadow governor had killed his leading military commander for an extramarital affair during the previous fortnight, AOG fighters staged a night-time attack on the ANP HQ which injured one policeman – likely a statement attack intended to demonstrate that the killing of this commander has not negatively impacted AOG operational capac-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

ity in the district. There was, furthermore, an RCIED strike against an ANP vehicle just outside Shinwari district in the Belandi area of Jabal Sarraj on the 14th, which killed a policeman and a local, again demonstrating undiminished operational reach.

In Siyagerd, an ANP CP came under SAF attack in the Abakan area, a key focus for opposition assaults, while just across the district border in Sheikh Ali, an ANP convoy came under attack in the Tangi Lalay area; in neither of these attacks were there any ANP or AOG casualties. The final incident on the road occurred in western Sheikh Ali; gunmen stopped a local vehicle bringing livestock to Bamyan late in the evening, and proceeded to severely beat the two occupants, leaving one in a critical condition in



Bamyan hospital. Similar to the attack on an IO convoy a month ago in the same area, this attack can be seen as a form of social pressure on local society, intended to communicate the insecurities now associated with the normal flows of people and commerce through the area – and the government's inability to stop it. As such, with increasing numbers of opposition fighters now present in the valleys that intersect the highway, and an ANSF reluctance to deploy a large number of forces to push back on this AOG presence, the roadway is likely to continue to remain a significant risk for NGO road movements until the autumn.

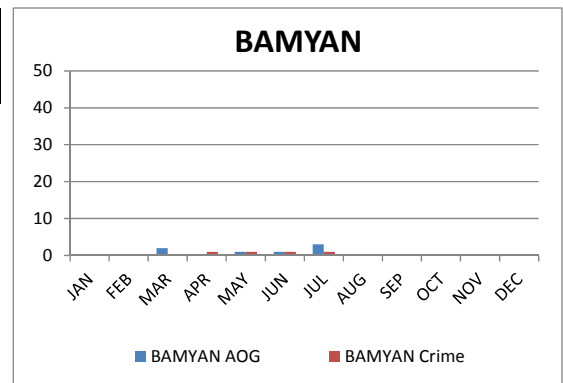
## BAMYAN

The northeast of Bamyan was home to an uncharacteristic volume of violence during the past fortnight, seeing two armed opposition operations within a week of each other as part of an AOG campaign to move onto the offensive in the area. After the previous fortnight's detention of the Saighan district shadow governor (DSG), it could have been expected that the AOG networks in Saighan and Kahmard would retreat in expectation of an ANSF and NDS follow-up effort. However, the opposite has occurred; first, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July an AOG unit attacked an ANP CP in Kahmard's Eshpushta area, on the border with Baghlan – the origin of northeastern Bamyan's AOG networks. ANP vehicle units

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

were quickly dispatched to support the CP, and fell victim to a pre-planned RCIED ambush in Karimak, a little west of Eshpushta; one ANP vehicle was hit by the detonation, killing four policemen and injuring a further two. The attack on the CP can be understood to have been bait for the RCIED, a tactical sophistication that has been absent from AOGs in the area up to now.

Five days later, a pressure plate IED struck another ANP vehicle while on routine patrol, this time in the northern part of the Shikari valley relatively near to the Kahmard border; the IED killed five policemen. Together, these incidents outnumber the total previous casualties suffered by the



ANP in the province since 2001 (i.e. nine vs. a total of six, three of which were sustained in an ambush in Kahmard in Sept. 2011). Moreover, this was the first incidence of kinetic activity by the armed opposition in Shikari since 2009. As such, the AOG networks operating in this valley, as well as in eastern Kahmard, have clearly demonstrated that they are willing and able to maintain an offensive disposition vis-à-vis ANSF and IMF units; for their part, security forces have not yet conducted any significant clearing operations in response.



## WARDAK

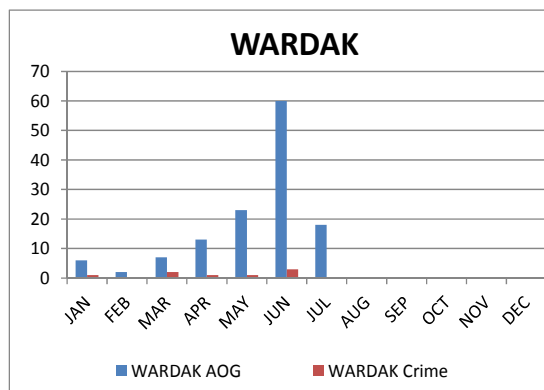
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

Overall AOG-driven insecurity continued to creep up in Wardak, which took the accolade for the home of the highest number of security incidents in the central region during the first half of July. However, it is worth noting right off that while the conventional conflict continues to intensify in line with seasonal trends, the Kuchi-Hazara conflict remained contained by a widely deployed ANSF presence in the Hazara-majority districts to the west, with local reports indicating that the multi-ethnic composition of the security forces assisted in preventing further outbreaks of violence during the past fortnight. However, while the government has had tactical success in this regard in the past weeks, a higher-order political solution remains unachieved, and as such the potential for further violence is extent.

Returning to the conflict, persistent insecurity along the Kabul-Ghazni highway and signs of growing AOG strength in the southern districts of Jaghatu and Chak were the most noteworthy security developments in the province. Firstly, fully half of all AOG operations were concentrated along the highway in the past fortnight, with a particular increase on the stretch of the road running through Nirkh. In both Nirkh and Saydabad, a number of the attacks on security forces, PSC convoys and fuel tankers led to casualties – demonstrating that while overall opposition operations on the highway remain low-

er than in 2011, they continue to be able to contest security forces with a high degree of effectiveness where they try. Most notably, in Nirkh’s Surpul area, AOG fighters ambushed an ANP convoy, killing one policeman, while nearby in Awal Khel, another ambush on the same day killed a PSC guard. In Saydabad’s Salar area, another PSC convoy was attacked, killing two PSC guards and one armed opposition fighter, while a total of five logistics trucks were destroyed in four separate incidents in different places along the road-way.

Two IMF operations also took place along the highway during the past fortnight, with each leading to the deaths of five AOG fighters; in Salar, an airstrike killed five and injured three as they were planting IEDs on the highway, while in Onkhey, a joint ground operation similarly killed five after contact with an AOG unit led to a protracted firefight. Furthermore, also in the Salar area, ANA shot and killed three AOG fighters as they were planting IEDs on the highway – further evidence of the strength of AOG presence in this particular part of the district. The final incident of relevance along the highway was an instance of ‘green-on-blue’ activity, when an ANA soldier shot and injured five IMF soldiers before escaping the base. Although the specific motive remains unclear, such incidents have become a growing trend across the country in the past two years.



Elsewhere, Jaghatu saw noteworthy developments, taking the form of social pressure by foreign elements within the armed opposition during the past fortnight. Those local shopkeepers in the main Jaghatu bazaar that sell food items were approached by Waziristani fighters and told to shut their shops, because they were alleged to be providing some of their produce to the security forces. Local elders subsequently raised the issue with local AOG command, who later assured the shopkeepers that they could continue to work as normal. This development indicates a subtle change in the balance of power between local and foreign AOG cadres in Jaghatu, a dynamic which has also been detected in other AOG-dominated areas that maintain a significant Waziristani presence.

Jaghatu also saw one attack on the DAC during the reporting period, taking place in the early afternoon, as well as an attack on an ANP CP in the Bungi area. Similarly, in Day Mirdad armed opposition fighters attacked the district center in the middle of the night, while in Chak, a policeman was killed in an ambush of a patrol in the Ali Khani area. In that district moreover, three separate significant IMF operations were staged in the past fortnight, which led to the killing of a total of eight AOG fighters, including a commander, and the arrest of three more. The other IMF operations of note took place in Maydan Shahr, and saw the arrest of three suspected AOG members in one operation, and the killing of a number of others during a search operation to capture an AOG commander late in the period.

### ACRONYMS:

Please see the final page for a list of ANSO-utilized acronyms.

## LOGAR

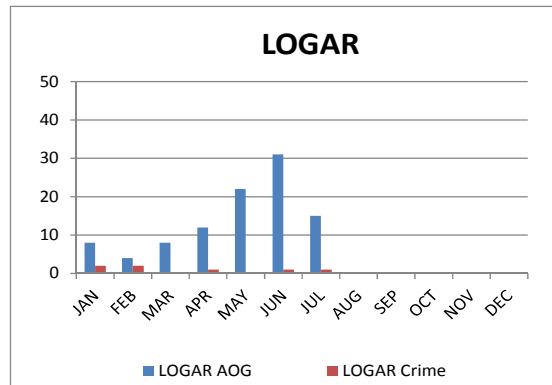
Logar was the second of the central region’s provinces to see transition ceremonies during the past fortnight, with Puli Alam and Khoshi districts marked for an impending security handover during a ceremony in the provincial capital on the 12<sup>th</sup>. While Khoshi is relatively uncontroversial as a choice, given its low incident volumes, the provincial capital is different. With the southern districts of Baraki Barak and Charkh under the authority of the armed opposition, Puli Alam town as well as the district’s stretch of the Kabul-Gardez road continue to face significant insecurity.

Indeed, just as the VIP delegation was leaving the transition ceremony for Kabul, a number of rockets impacted in the vicinity of the nearby ANP HQ; although no one was injured, this was the first case in the central or eastern regions of effective AOG statement operations at the time and place of a transition ceremony, and indi-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

cates the progressively bigger gamble that each new tranche of transition represents for both the IMF and the government. GOA leadership in Puli Alam is aware of this, at least in regards to their own area, with local officials including the governor stating publicly their worries over their insufficient preparedness for independence from IMF support; particular concerns are insufficient numbers of ANP and the non-fulfillment of Kabul’s promises to start ALP programs in the province.

In further manifestations of the difficulties facing the government in taking command of security in the capital district, two policemen were shot and killed by unknown gunmen while walking in the town’s main bazaar on the evening of the 2<sup>nd</sup>, while a timed IED also detonated in the bazaar two days before, injuring three civilians in what appears to have been a mistimed operation. Finally, on



the 15<sup>th</sup> a twin RCIED strike took place in the main bazaar area, the second device striking the ANSF responders in a tactic seen in the capital for the first time.

Elsewhere, the district centers of Charkh and Baraki Barak each saw AOG-authored insecurity, with Charkh coming under particular pressure; in one of the two attacks on its DAC, IMF air support killed five of the AOG attackers, injuring four others. Overall, AOG-authored kinetic incidents continued to rise across Logar, and indeed increased significantly over the average fortnightly level of June. Should AOG attack rates maintain at their current level of over one per day, July will record more than 25% growth on the previous month.

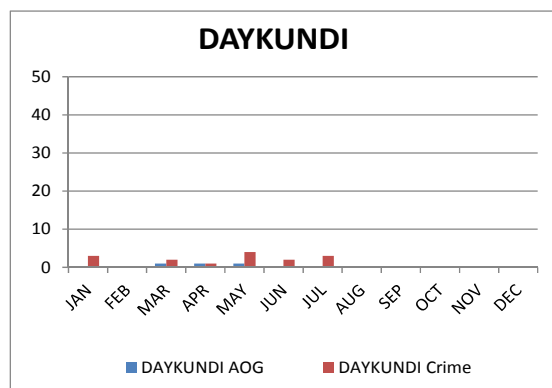
## DAYKUNDI

The only NGO incident in the central region over the past fortnight took place in Daykundi’s Khadir district, when two local medical staff arrived to the Dara Khudi area in the late afternoon of the 4<sup>th</sup> to conduct vaccination work; shortly afterwards, they were approached by two armed men who proceeded to severely beat one of the staff members, leaving him with serious albeit non-life threatening injuries. It is believed that the motive behind the beating was a personal dis-

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	1

pute, and as such, does not represent any change in wider local acceptance of NGOs in the area.

Another incident also took place in Khadir, and likewise took the form of armed criminality; in the Karas area on the main Khadir-Ishtarlay road, a group of eight armed men opened fire on two trucks carrying civilians in their rears, in order to stop the vehicles and rob their occupants. This they did, in the process injuring the drivers, before withdrawing



from the area. The only other incident in the province was a robbery very similar in form, taking place in Kiti on the main road to Nili; four armed men stopped and robbed a local mini-bus carrying travellers to the provincial capital, before letting them go on their way.

# NORTHERN REGION

## SAMANGAN

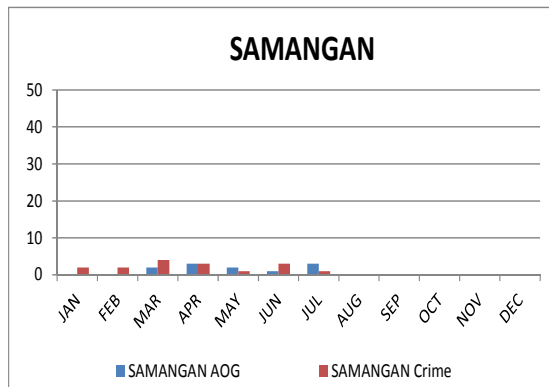
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

In the quietest province in the region, Aybak was home to Samangan's first BBIED attack ever against the wedding of a relative of Ahmad Khan "Samangani" - the parliament member and most prominent powerbroker in the province - which caused the highest total number of casualties for any one security incident in the North this year (22 killed - including Ahmad Khan, the provincial head of NDS, and the ANP regional commander for the West - with over an additional 50 wounded).

While the event is likely to attract attention due to the high profile of those killed and the severity of the casualty count, it remains unlikely that the attack projects any change to the low level of AOG

activities in Aybak. Rather it marks a significant outlier and a target of opportunity in a relatively soft security environment, for which no actor has yet claimed responsibility. As for the power vacuum left in the province after Ahmad Khan's death, Samangan does not have a recent history of significant power struggles, and the potential for heightened violence in the wake of the attack is therefore low.

Out of the 11 incidents the province experienced, seven took place in Dara-i Sufi Payin, with five of those directly involving a week-long GOA/IMF operation that engaged AOGs in the area. After the initial three days of fighting, the operation developed into a



stand-off between ANSF forces and the AOGs trapped inside the Dara-e Jamalak valley, approximately 35 km from the Dara-i Sufi Payin DAC.

Reports indicate that a number of AOG members were captured during the operation, which may result in a temporary lull in AOG activity. However, this is unlikely to have a long-term impact and the district can be expected to return to its previous rates of insecurity, which - while low - accounted for 23% of reported incidents in Samangan during the first six months of 2012.

## BADAKHSHAN

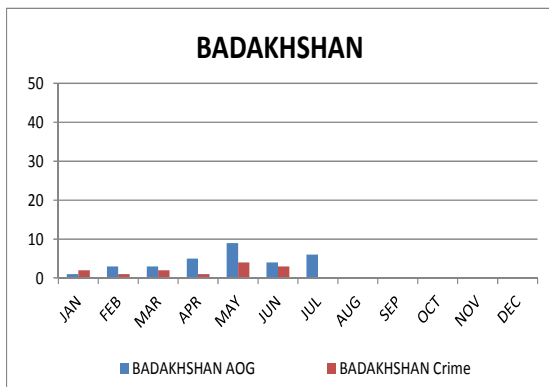
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	4
This Report Period	1

The tossing of a grenade into an INGO guesthouse in Darwazi Bala District injured three NGO staff and became the first security incident of any type to be recorded in this district since 2009. While the incident marked a strong outlier and was not accompanied by reports of AOG movement or ACG activity, it is understood that such low level attacks are generally used as a means to intimidate throughout the province. The exact motives of the attacker remain unclear and the ANP investigation is ongoing.

Overall, Badakhshan recorded 10 security incidents, putting it on course to sustain the rate of inci-

dents experienced in May and June. The proportion of AOG-initiated incidents rose to 70%, compared to 21% the previous month. While it is too early to identify this increase as a trend; it is nevertheless notable in a province where AOG-initiated incidents have averaged only 33% over the first half of 2012.

Warduj, by far the most insecure district in the province this year, accounted for three incidents, all involving the killing or abduction by AOGs of local elders and a civilian accused of cooperating with the GOA. Together with three similar incidents that took



place in late June, these incidents indicate a potential shift in the relationship between the AOG and the local community: in total, only seven out of 31 recorded incidents in Warduj this year have consisted of AOG-driven intimidation of local civilians. Community intimidation tactics such as the above appear to be on the rise region wide, as evidenced by similar incidents in Balkh and Jawzjan this period.

## JAWZJAN

Although Jawzjan continues to experience a low overall volume of security incidents, like the previous cycle, the current period witnessed some notable outliers, including a BBIED detonation that occurred near to the provincial governor’s office and ANP HQ and an IED discovery in the vicinity of the municipality compound, both occurring inside of Shibirghan city itself.

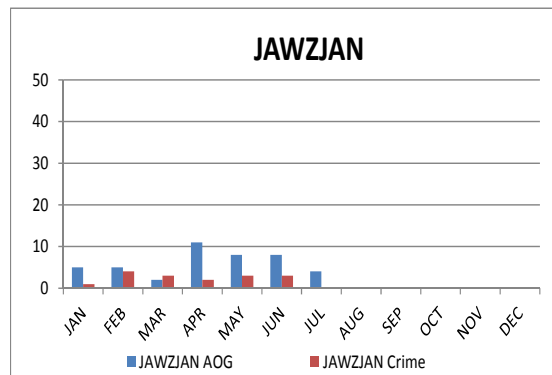
After Darzab and Qush Tepa witnessed a spike in AOG activity in April, a slow regression of activity has followed, with security reporting shifting away from these two districts over the last month, which - although usually the center of insecurity - have recorded only one incident since 12 June. However, over the same period, security reporting has increased somewhat in the northern districts of the province.

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

While the intimidation of community leaders has made up a significant portion of that - and continued to do so this period - the most notable incidents have been three IED related incidents in Shibirghan city, including the two mentioned above and an IED detonation on 14 June.

Such IED emplacement has thus far been stand alone activity in the city, whereas AOG activity has picked up in other districts - primarily around Mingajik - Shibirghan has seen no other AOG activity or movements directly inside the city.

This follows a trend seen throughout the northern districts of low volumes of AOG activity, but occasional significant acts that draw attention, such as the killing of two village representatives in Mingajik this period following



similar incidents that had occurred in June. However, it remains unclear whether the groups responsible are the same who have been reported in these districts in the past, either the small local mixed AOG/ACGs or AOGs pushed into the area from the Western districts of Balkh province (which have seen less AOG activity over the last month).

The end of June and the beginning of July also saw a number of cases of female students falling ill, but similar to Sar-e Pul and Takhar, thus far no independent organization has been able to confirm that an actual poisoning took place.

## FARYAB

Faryab experienced two AOG incidents involving IOs this reporting period, thus recording the first such incidents in 2012.

In the first, two IO vehicles were ambushed in Qaramqol district when returning from the project site. The ambush involved SAF from both sides of the road and, although both vehicles managed to escape, an IO security staff was injured in the engagement. Both vehicles were clearly marked with the logo of the IO involved and had been in the general area for a while, suggesting that this was a planned attack.

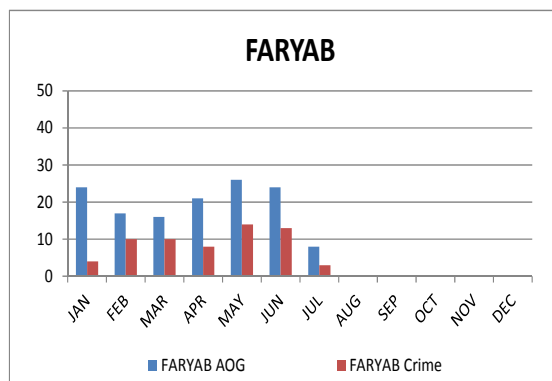
While the incident marked an outlier in terms of the target’s profile (IO), attacks against other high profile targets (such as GOA and ANSF) have taken place in the

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	3
This Report Period	0

area with some regularity. In fact, both IO-related incidents this period took place in districts with a strong and consistent pattern of AOG-authored activity.

In the second, two unmarked IO contracted trucks were stopped in Qaysar district, two of the drivers abducted, and the trucks set on fire. Such incidents - while absent in Faryab this year - fall within the existing trends in AOG strong areas throughout the country.

Overall, Faryab recorded 18 incidents during the reporting period, with insecurity primarily surfacing in the usual districts, particularly Qaysar. Outside of the attack on the IO contracted trucks, a member of the provincial council from Qaysar was targeted in an apparent assassination attempt by one



of his own staff members, and the district recorded its first abduction of the year three days before the IO incident, when a local man was abducted while digging a well (making two for the period after none prior in 2012).

While the exact reasons that AOG activity has declined in the province are unclear - with ANSF/IMF operations playing some role, and the possibility of internal strife amongst AOG leadership in Pashtun Kot another - it appears that insecurity in the province may broaden some in targeting and tactics, even if lessening in volume.



## SAR-E PUL

Sar-e Pul appears poised to experience a drop in AOG activity in July after three months of moderate escalation, with only five security incidents recorded in the initial weeks of July, three of those authored by AOG. This marks a slight departure from trending in 2011, when incident reporting remained relatively steady from May through July before dropping sharply in August.

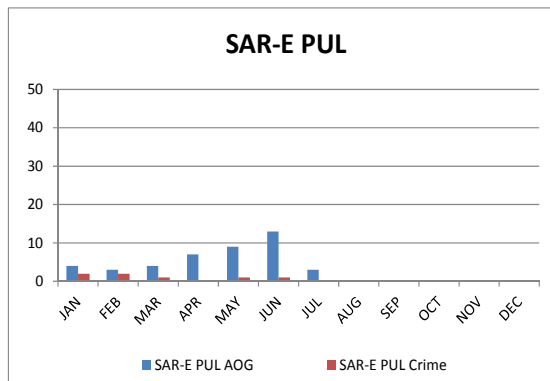
AOG activity declined most notably in Sar-e Pul district. Whereas 10 of the 11 incidents recorded in June were AOG authored, this cycle the district recorded only two security incidents, both initiated by security forces, including a joint operation that resulted in eight AOGs killed and an IED

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

discovery inside of Sar-e Pul city. AOG activity was centered around Sozma Qala district, and included a brief daytime illegal checkpoint. Sozma Qala may witness more activity in the near future with ANSF pressure on Sar-e Pul and the ongoing ALP project in Kohistanat.

The decrease in security reporting in Sar-e Pul appears primarily due to a heightened ANSF presence on and around the Sar-e Pul-Shibirghan road and the noted joint operation, which some local sources have suggested is leading to a temporary change in local security dynamics.

While the province took a respite from kinetic reporting, along with



Jawzjan, it suffered from a number of female students falling ill at two schools in Sar-e Pul and one in Gosfandi district. The incidents strongly resemble those which occurred at two Jawzjan schools during this same period, as well as those in Takhar that took place earlier in the year. Although no source has yet been determined, like in Takhar, it has put pressure on the GOA to make arrests, but the extent of the involvement of those arrested remains unclear.

## BALKH

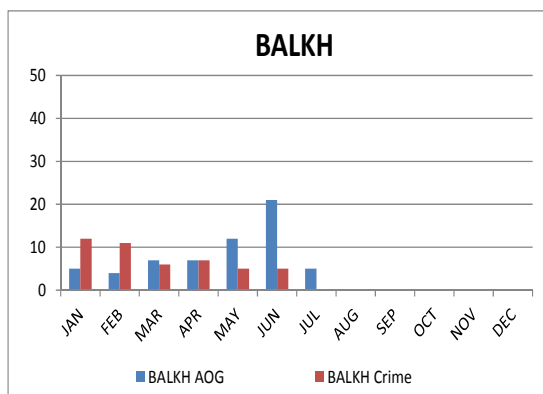
Reporting declined notably over the first two weeks of July in comparison to June, with only nine security incidents reported. Although five of these were initiated by AOG, Chimtal and Chahar Bolak - usually the focal point for AOG activity - together combined for only four security incidents. To put that number in context, these two had combined for 36 security incidents over the past two months.

In fact, the monthly volume of security incidents in the province has receded since a spike in May which witnessed 41 security incidents (total, not AOG authored). This gave way to 34 in June - with a higher percentage of those

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

authored by AOG - and this general downward trend in combination with the approaching Ramadan make it seem unlikely that a new spike of activity will occur in late July.

However, AOG activity, which made up 33 of the 75 incidents over the prior two months, was not absent, with the most notable incident being the abduction and killing of the head of a local shura outside of a mosque in Arab Mazari of Chimtal district. Although the targeting of civilians has not been common in Chimtal, this marks the second attack on this community this year, with the first being an IED strike against



the same mosque on 5 June. The targeting of community leaders - allegedly for their relationship with the GOA or lack of support for AOG leadership - fits with recent regional patterns targeting community leaders in an effort to tax and intimidate local communities. Similar incidents were reported this period amongst the Northern districts of neighboring Jawzjan, an area that AOG have likely moved to as they have become more scarce in Chimtal and Chahar Bolak.

## BAGHLAN

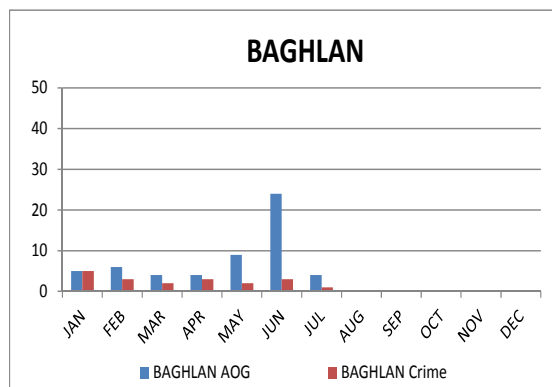
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

Baghlan experienced a significant decrease in kinetic activity this reporting period with only 13 security incidents recorded, of which only four were AOG-initiated. This comes after an exceptional spike in June that saw 24 AOG authored attacks out of the total 46 incidents recorded.

The most significant drop took place in Baghlani Jadid district, which thus far experienced only one AOG initiated attack in July, when the vehicle of a high-ranking GOA official was targeted

with an IED. The lull in the AOG-driven activity in Baghlani Jadid occurs in conjunction with an IMF/ANSF operation in the district along with two others; Dushi and Tala wa Barfak.

While this appears to have provided temporary respite from the spike in June, a sudden decrease in AOG activity is not unusual for the province, nor does it necessitate a sustained shift. For instance, in May 2011 the number of incidents dipped by 42% before increasing again the following



month. AOG groups tend to leave areas under pressure before returning after the operation is over. With the high volume of AOG activities recently noted, it is likely the same pattern will emerge, albeit potentially offset by Ramadan and predicted seasonal declines.

## KUNDUZ

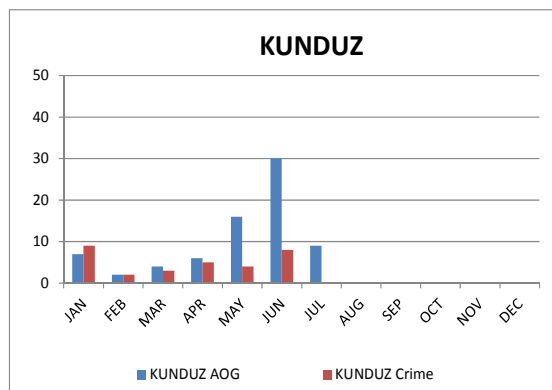
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

Like much of the Northern region, Kunduz experienced a period of relative quiet in comparison to the levels of activity recorded in June. Only 14 incidents were recorded in the first half of July, unusually close to the number of incidents recorded in Takhar for the same period.

However, similarities between the two ended there, with 79% of the incidents in Kunduz AOG-initiated attacks against hard military and government targets in the

districts that are traditional sources of insecurity, denoting no change in geographical distribution (ie: Kunduz, Chahar Dara), tactics (primarily IEDs) or targeting patterns (ANSF/IMF/GOA), although the source of the short term decrease remains unclear.

Two issues of note to the NGO community were an IED detonation against an ANP vehicle at 0840 hrs on the Kunduz-Takhar road - just outside of NGO travel times - and (in a less kinetic devel-



opment), the transition ceremony for the province on 11 July, marking the first transition in the North of a province that has traditionally seen high levels of AOG activity, even if significantly below those of 2011.

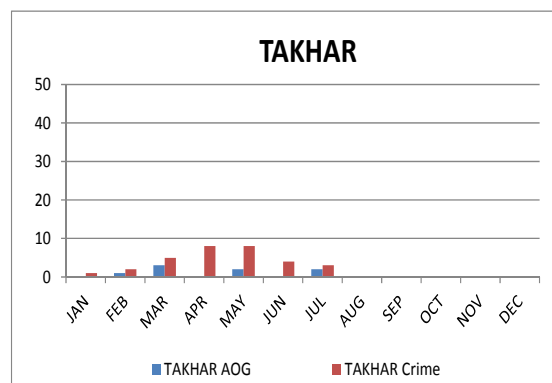
## TAKHAR

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

11 security incidents were recorded in Takhar this reporting period, of which three were AOG-initiated. Most significant was the detonation of an IED against the district governor of Khwaja Ghar's vehicle, one of three incidents to occur in that district. Although the DG escaped uninjured, it marked the second IED detonation there this year. AOGs are often known to move through Takhar, and Khwaja Ghar -

although quiet this year - is known to host AOGs strongly connected to those in Archi (Kunduz).

The use of Takhar as a transit route and/or logistics base was also visible in Taloqan this period, where two AOG members were arrested in possession of suicide vests. This comes after a similar two incidents were reported in June (in Ishkamish and Taloqan city). Although AOG activity is



not expected to pick up significantly, it appears likely that AOGs from Baghlan and Kunduz will continue to transit through the province.

# WESTERN REGION

## HERAT

	NGO Incidents
<b>Year to Date</b>	5
<b>This Report Period</b>	0

Herat experienced two incidents involving IO contracted elements this reporting cycle, bringing the total for the year to nine, as compared to only six over the same time period (January to mid July) in 2012. These manifested in Shindand, where an ACG abducted two employees of an IO contracted private road construction company, and in Gulran, where AOG intercepted and detained two commercial trucks carrying IO food items to the Gulran DAC.

In Shindand, the abductees were released unharmed three days later after negotiations by local elders, while in Gulran the trucks were temporarily relocated until the ANP conducted a rescue operation and engaged the group. The operation resulted in the retrieval of one truck and a driver, but the other was kept in captivity for a few more hours before being released (after the AOG first looted and set fire to the truck).

Of the nine IO related incidents recorded this year, five of them have been authored by AOG, as opposed to only one of those six from 2011. This stands in contrast to the fact that AOG incident volumes have decreased in the province by 17% this year. Although the sample size remains small, it raises the possibility that AOGs are more actively targeting supply trucks and/or IO contracted elements than they previously had.

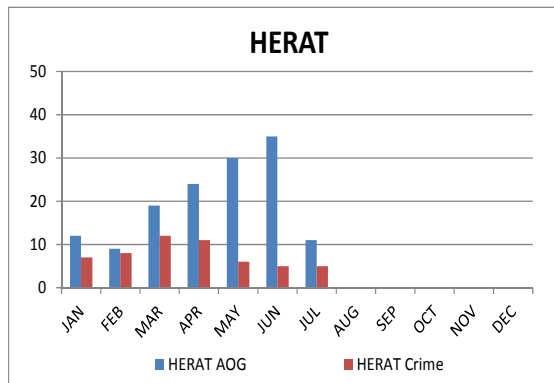
Although the overall volume of AOG authored incidents dropped

from 24 the previous cycle to 17 this cycle, the province remains on pace to reach June's overall total (35), which was the highest yet this year.

AOGs appear to be actively embracing campaigns of intimidation while dealing with internal leadership issues. In Herat City, two targeted killings were recorded; one against an NDS officer, and the other targeting an ANP policeman en route to his home. Further to this, ANP located a VBIED and subsequently arrested its driver in PD8. Despite these, security in the city remained strongly dictated by ANSF operations or activities, which accounted for 70% of all recorded security incidents this cycle.

In the southern districts AOG increased their efforts to conduct a campaign of intimidation. This included the targeting of public GOA figures, such as in Adraskan, where AOG abducted the head of Saghar district agriculture department while he was en route to Ghor in a public transport vehicle (his whereabouts remain unknown at the time of writing), as well as in Shindand, where AOG gunned down the district mayor/ex-district governor en route home. AOG also shot and killed an ALP member and an ANP policeman - both in transit - in two separate occasions.

Other AOG related activities with the potential to shift local dynamics came to the fore in the eastern districts, where a prominent local



AOG commander with a strong presence throughout Pashtun Zarghun joined the APRP along with 21 of his followers. Furthermore, a clash occurred between an emerging local AOG in Obe and an entrenched AOG operating directly under the District Shadow Governor (DSG) which resulted in the death of six AOG members. With this latter conflict ongoing, and the weakening AOG presence in the eastern part of Pashtun Zarghun, the local dynamic across these two districts could potentially shift one of these AOGs towards Pashtun Zarghun to fill this new power void. Adding yet more layers, the Gulran District Shadow Chief of Police joined the APRP with 15 of his followers and the DSG of Injil was arrested by NDS. While the long term implications of these conflicts, defections, and arrests remain to be seen, the absence or weakening of AOG leadership in the areas is likely to create short term disruptions to AOG activity in Pashtun Zarghun, Obe, Gulran, and Injil.

Lastly, IMF/ANA operations caused damages to the leadership of an exogenous AOG from Badghis which has been using the northeastern part of Karukh to transit between Obe and Kushki Kuna by killing a brother of the commander. The event took place just days after the AOG attacked an IMF/ANA convoy with SAF and RPGs. The group does not appear to be considerably diminished though, and remained active, as evidenced by a roadside IED detonation against an IMF military supply convoy that killed three PSC guards towards the end of the cycle.

## GHOR

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	8
This Report Period	0

Despite the fact that Ghor recorded the exact same volume of AOG authored security incidents (six) this period as that of the previous cycle, power struggles between three separate groups in the northern districts came to the fore over the last two weeks, resulting in tensions and conflict that caused a notable shift to local dynamics and the short term security paradigm in the effected districts.

The first group is a local AOG with growing ties to IEA leadership that has recently attempted to raise its profile via attacks on high profile targets. These have included the killing of an INGO staff member in May and more recently, the abduction and killing of a judge of the provincial court.

The second group is the tribesman of the slain provincial judge, who are now at odds with the above AOG over the killing.

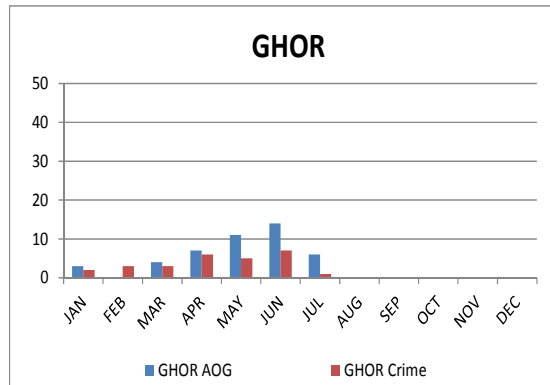
The third group is that under the leadership of a prominent local commander from Murghab Valley, located in the northeastern edge of Chaghcharan. The commander is an important but relatively neutral actor who is considered a key figure in stabilizing the northern districts, as he controls the largest armed group in the area and maintains relations with the GOA, high level IEA leadership, local AOGs, and the NGO community.

Conflict between these three groups surfaced when an armed clash occurred between the AOG and the Murghab Valley commander. The AOG's efforts to raise their profile and free a recently imprisoned group member had drawn negative attention from a number of actors, and all three groups had met - hosted by the commander from Murghab - to try to settle the dispute between the AOG and the tribesmen of the killed judge, who were seeking retaliation. However, the meeting went wrong and instead further antagonized the situation, eventually resulting in an armed clash initiated by the AOG.

This conflict has now spilled over and affected the security situation in Charsada, and has the potential to do so in Chaghcharan City, where NGOs maintain a strong presence.

Adding to the volatile mix, five days after the first clash occurred, a sizable allotment of ANSF deployed into Charsada for clearing operations which resulted in the death of one AOG member and injuries to two ANP policemen. Fighting alongside the ANSF soldiers were dozens of the judge's tribesmen acting as militia members.

Thus far the commander from Murghab valley has not made any visible moves after the clash, and



it is likely that the engagement temporarily relocated the local AOG out of Murghab Valley into Charsada, where they may be taking refuge with the high level IEA leadership entrenched there. However, as ANSF operations thrust further north into Charsada, the potential for armed clashes between the AOG and other actors (ANSF, the judge's tribesmen, and/or the armed forces of the prominent commander) will be considerably increased.

Targeting another AOG that had recently become more active, further large scale ANSF operations took place in Dawlat Yar, where the security situation had rapidly deteriorated throughout the last month. This operation targeted a particular local AOG that had recently become more aggressive, conducting three IED strikes over the last four weeks, one of which directly targeted an INGO vehicle. While the operation resulted in the death of two AOG members and injuries to three others (as well as two ANP policemen), the majority of AOG members - including their commander - appear to have relocated into the mountainous areas in the north of the district where they can hide and the rough terrain hinders the ability of ANSF to operate. This is likely to create a short term lull in activities, but without any known "hold" phase forthcoming, not necessarily a sustained change.

**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 and context in your area. So please remember to call or email us regularly.

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

**ANSO:** *"..by NGOs for NGOs.."*



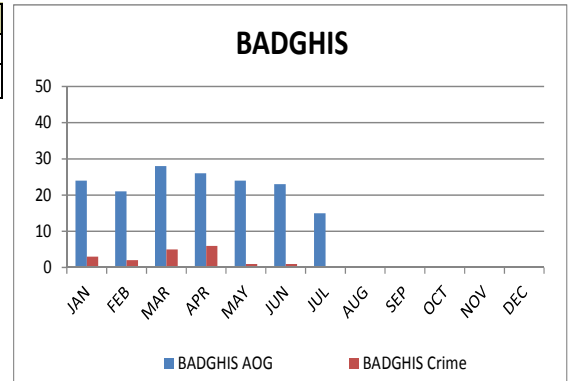
## BADGHIS

Following negotiations by local elders, the ex-IO employee – who had been abducted by AOG along with a GOA employee at Sabzak on 24 June – was released, while the GOA abductee was killed. The shared background of the freed individual – from the same tribe as that of the AOG commander – strongly facilitated the negotiations, despite the fact that exogenous elements directly involved took a firm stance against the release, which created issues between the local AOG commander and the exogenous AOG. The entire incident shed light on the rising influence of exogenous elements in the area, and the inherent potential to affect local dynamics – including AOG policies and targeting – particularly in areas where political struggles between the ANSF/IMF and AOGs

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

over the APRP/ALP/PGM has intensified.

Indeed, Badghis experienced 24 AOG authored incidents targeting ALP this year, a significant jump from the mere three recorded over the first half of 2011. This is even more notable when one takes into account the fact that overall AOG incident volumes have dropped by 25%, suggesting that AOG operational focus has shifted significantly towards the targeting of ALP. Amongst all of these 24, 14 occurred in Murghab, five in Qadis, and three in Ghormach. The groups targeting the ALP may continue unhindered since IMF/ANSF have primarily focused on targeting moderate local AOGs along the Ring Road in these three districts, rather than AOGs more heavily influenced by exogenous elements and their ide-



ology, located in areas bordering Murgab, Ghormach, and Qadis (particularly Nakhcherystan) that are the ones taking the firmest stance against the ALP program. This targeting may be largely due to antagonism against those AOG members who left them to join the ALP. The targeting appears effective, as indicated by the fact that 87 ALP members deserted in Murghab this reporting cycle alone. Moreover, the ALP/PGM/CIP presence is expected to expand as groups are established to hold ground during the construction of the Herat - Maymana section of the Ring Road, further complicating the political dynamics and increasing the potential for conflict.

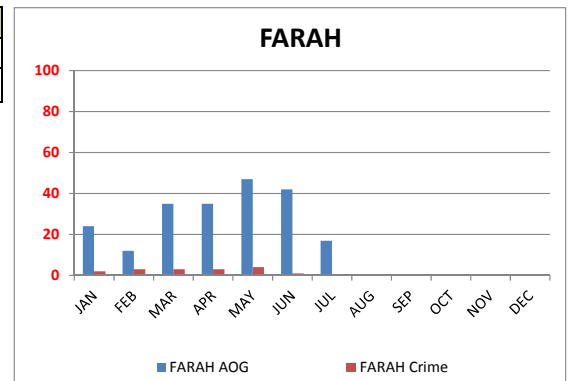
## FARAH

A one-month lull came to an end in Farah city when AOG launched a complex attack on the provincial governor’s compound. The attack was initiated with an RCIED, and followed by the launching of three rockets, two of which impacted inside the compound, while the third landed in the vicinity of the bazaar, resulting in the death of one local civilian and injuries to 26 others (as well as two ANP policemen). While no suicide operatives were involved, complex attacks of any type have been extremely rare in the province, with only two other cases recorded over the past six years (one in Farah city just two months earlier and the other in Gulistan in 2010). While these are likely to remain rare, it appears that AOG in the

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

province are gaining in both capability and willingness to launch such attacks, as following this latest, 18 AOG suspects were arrested, and just a week later, ANP located a VBIED in the city.

The use of IEDs has become more prevalent of late, with 12 effective detonations recorded this reporting cycle as compared to nine the previous one, despite the fact that the overall volume of AOG authored incidents declined slightly from 23 to 19. While in Bakwa AOG targeted IMF military logistic supplies along the Herat-Kandahar highway with three IED detonations, the increase was primarily attributed to IED attacks in Pusht Rod - where five detonations occurred against



ANSF - as well as in Gulistan, which recorded four against recently launched ANSF operations in/around the district center area to establish ALPs. AOGs appear to have established multiple positions with separate units surrounding the ANSF/IMF, there after disrupting their movements with roadside IEDs rather than engaging them in close range conventional attacks. The conflict is expected to intensify should ANSF/IMF expand their operations beyond the district center area, or when ANSF/IMF withdraws, at which point AOG are likely to assault infant ALPs.

# EASTERN REGION

## NANGARHAR

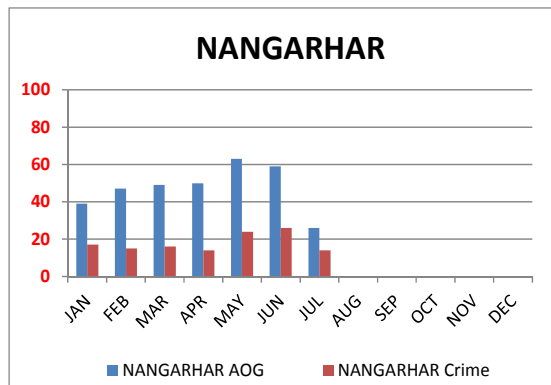
NGO Incidents	
Year to Date	15
This Report Period	0

Whilst there were no NGO incidents this reporting period, a national staff member of an IO agency involved in the demining sector received a night letter at his home in Jalalabad's Zone 4, instructing him to resign or face severe consequences. Aside from this, Jalalabad remained broadly quiet apart from the usual accounts of petty criminality as well as a number of private disputes which led to violence. As a consequence of the several cases recorded this reporting period, eight civilians were injured by gunfire.

Outside of the provincial capital, Bati Kot, Khogyani and Shinwar districts remained epicentres for AOG activity in the province. In Bati Kot, AOG members conducted three operations targeting ANP patrols and checkpoints with heavy weapons and SAF, all along the district's stretch of the Torkham-Jalalabad highway. A similar attack was launched against the DAC, which has attracted a growing number of AOG attacks this year, consistent with a general pattern of rising AOG power in the district. Opposition cadres are likely to continue to press ANSF targets along the highway, and as such the risks to NGOs engaged in road move-

ments through the district will continue to be primarily manifested in proximity to attacks against ANSF targets. IMF activity in the district amounted to two search operations in the increasingly AOG-dominated village of Chardeh, in which two suspected AOG members were detained; but such a level of operations is unlikely to have a major impact on AOG strength in the area.

Similarly in Khogyani, the armed opposition maintained significant pressure on ANSF units across the district, although exhibiting a strong preference for direct attacks. In all, the total number of attacks was eight, which represented the highest number for any district during the period. These incidents were primarily focused upon the Memla area, with attacks against several ANP checkpoints, and in Kaga (the DAC area), where the armed opposition targeted the DAC and the district's main ANBP base. The attacks in Kaga are a clear demonstration of AOG confidence in the district, although the fact that they occurred at night also points to a relative balance of power with the ANSF in the district center area at the moment. In Khawaran, AOG



shot and killed two off-duty ANA soldiers, while in neighbouring Sherzad district, the growing provincial trend of AOG targeting of GOA officials saw its latest casualty in the fatal shooting of the director of the youth department and his driver in the Hashemkhel area.

In the south eastern Shinwari districts, IEDs were the primary tactic utilized during the period, although in Dur Baba AOG members conducted two direct attacks against the ANA HQ and one against an ANA CP. Of these IED attacks however, only four detonated, whereas nine were discovered by IMF EOD teams. The geographical distribution of these IEDs points to AOG focus on generating insecurity along main district roads leading to DACs, where the highest concentration of ANSF patrols can be found. In addition to discovering a number of IEDs during the period, the security forces also carried out two search operations in which five suspected AOG members were detained and a quantity of arms was seized. Overall AOG attacks decreased when compared to the previous reporting period and can be expected to decrease further in the coming months with the onset of Ramadan.

## KUNAR

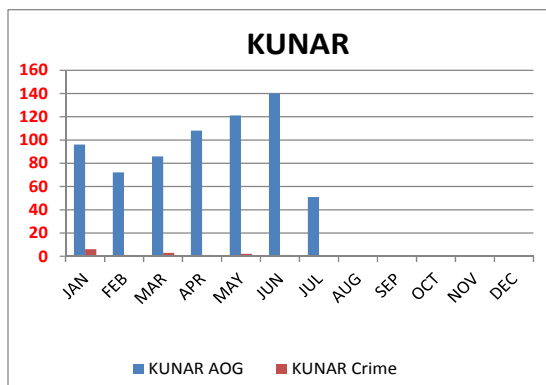
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

Although overall AOG incident levels remained broadly consistent with the previous period, the past fortnight saw noteworthy developments in Asadabad, Wata Pur and Nari. In Asadabad, the total number of AOG incidents more than doubled, with all nine consisting of direct attacks against ANP targets, including two occasions when AOG fighters attacked the ANP QRF base in the Nawabad area on the outskirts of the city with heavy weapons and SAF. This can be understood as growing acceptance on the part of the recently changed AOG leadership to select targets in and around Asadabad city, which had previously been something of a demilitarized economic zone. Indeed, targeting of GOA and ANSF targets in and around the provincial capital in the year so far

has doubled in comparison to the same period in 2011.

Asadabad was also home to a demonstration consisting of several hundred people outside of the Hajj Affairs department over perceived irregularities in the allocation of Hajj quotas, which, whilst peaceful, blocked the main access route in and out of Asadabad City. The incident was the latest in a series of demonstrations over the issue and demonstrates the impact that even non-violent protests can have upon NGO movements.

In Wata Pur, six AOG fighters were killed by an IMF airstrike. The district harbours the highest concentration of local and foreign AOG commanders in Kunar, and this most recent strike came mere days after one in which a senior foreign AOG commander was



killed. Despite this, the armed opposition remains firmly in political control of the district, in a clear demonstration of the limited utility of IMF airstrikes as a means of altering the balance of forces on the ground.

Finally, in two significant incidents, the armed opposition forcibly evicted several government employees from the districts of Nari and Ghaziabad. Such efforts can be interpreted as part of a strategy to reduce government presence, likely intended to take full territorial control of these districts, which have assumed particular importance as infiltration routes from across the Pakistan border.

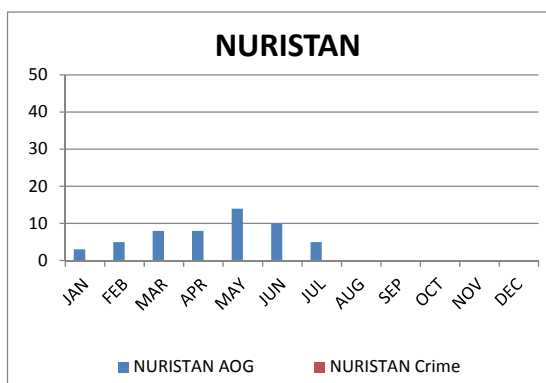
## NURISTAN

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

In Kamdesh, the armed opposition attacked the district's ANP HQ for the second time in less than a week – coming just six days after at least 100 AOG fighters launched a massed assault against ALP and ANA forces in the area - which led to a number of deaths on both sides. The incident followed the resumption of IMF operations in the district in early June, after an absence of almost three years since October 2009, when AOG pressure forced them to withdraw as they had done from Waygal and Bargi Matal before that. Whilst this second attack was clearly not on a comparable scale to the first, it is significant in so far that it likely demonstrates AOG intent to communicate to GOA and ANSF both that

the opposition is willing and able to maintain such pressure shortly after a major massed assault, and that the district's government forces can expect that there will be further attacks of this kind, especially when IMF re-withdraws in October.

In Bargi Matal meanwhile, AOG attacked a number of ANBP checkpoints in the DAC area. Nuristan experiences especially harsh winters and thus, although being only the second attack of its kind this year, the onset of insecurity has been relatively late in the summer. Indeed, by the end of 2011 there had been 15 AOG incidents in Bargi Matal, six of which targeted security forces in the DAC area. Further attacks



against ANSF in the district are therefore likely during the remainder of the summer, as the armed opposition attempts to place them under increasing pressure. That AOG fighters are able to maintain a considerable presence in the vicinity of the DAC is also significant, since it demonstrates their de facto control over the wider district, despite the token presence of the government in the DAC. In 2011, AOG strength was such that, had it not been for the intervention of IMF in September of that year, they would likely have overrun ANSF in the DAC and seized control.

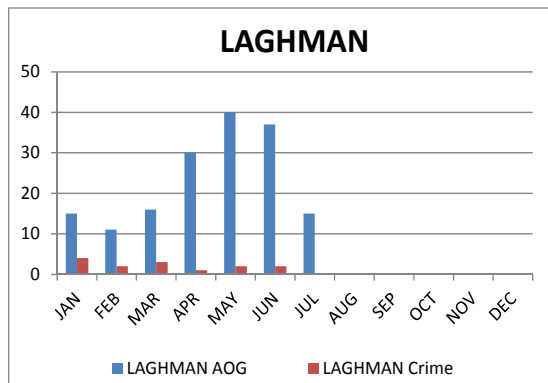
## LAGHMAN

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	2
This Report Period	0

The most notable incident this reporting period was the targeted killing of the head of Mehtarlam’s Department of Women’s Affairs in Mehtarlam city by an IED that had been planted beneath her car, and which was detonated as she returned to it from a nearby bazaar. The incident marked the latest in a series of attacks against government and ANSF targets, which began in earnest in May when AOG fighters conducted attacks against the PRT base in Mehtarlam and ANSF bases across the province to mark the onset of the summer fighting season. It was also indicative of the ability of the armed opposition to penetrate deeper into Mehtarlam, following IMF withdrawal from the western districts of Dawlat Shah, Alishing and Bad Pakh in early June. Whereas previously

ANSF and NDS had been able to maintain relatively good security within the city, AOG momentum in the wake of IMF withdrawal has clearly been difficult for them to contain.

This growing operational intensity across the province was also demonstrated in other districts by several significant incidents during this period. In Bad Pakh, AOG fighters attacked a number of community security guard posts that were protecting pylons transporting electricity from Surobi to Jalalabad. Whilst all five attackers were killed in this instance, it demonstrates a renewed drive to target critical infrastructure in the border district, which had previously been a major issue, and also indicates the challenge likely to be faced by the national security



forces in containing such attacks.

Meanwhile in Dawlat Shah, AOG fighters attacked the DAC with heavy weapons, killing two civilians when a rocket impacted upon a private residence. Finally, in Alishing a former ANA soldier was shot dead by members of the armed opposition.

However, despite the growing strength of the armed opposition in Laghman, the security forces were not solely preoccupied with containing the threat, and conducted a number of proactive operations. The most significant of these occurred when ANSF conducted a clearing operation in the Qalay-e Sheikhan area of Mehtarlam, killing one AOG commander.

## PAKTYA

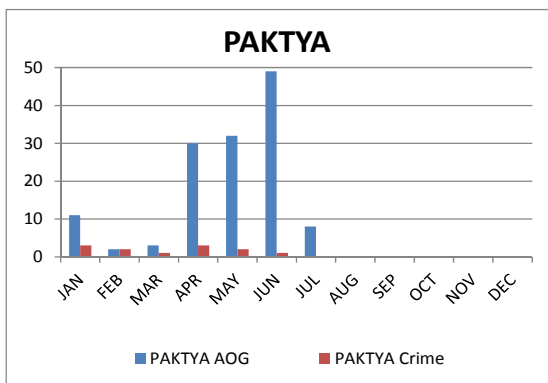
	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

Whilst AOG incident levels in Paktya fell un-expectedly this period, those that did occur were consistent with the established strategic priorities of opposition cadres in the province. This was most evident in Gardez, where the armed opposition remains intent upon harrying the security forces in and around the provincial capital ahead of its upcoming transition. In Tanden area, AOG attacked an ANA patrol with heavy weapons and SAF, killing one ANA soldier. Similarly, an IED was detonated against an ANP-ANA team whilst they were manning a temporary checkpoint in the area of the Ariana gas station, killing one ANP officer and one ANA soldier.

used to contest neighbouring Sayid Karam, with two attacks against the DAC within the space of five days; the second of which ended with the killing of two ANP officers and four AOG fighters.

IMF activity during the period was heavily concentrated in Jaji, most notably in the form an airstrike in the Safari area which killed five AOG fighters. Jaji is a key infiltration route for armed opposition groups from across the Pakistan border and IMF has previously detained several AOG commanders in the district.

Insecurity as a result of cross-border AOG infiltration also manifested in an armed clash between AOG fighters and local villagers in Dand wa Patan, in the



Muqbel Valley. In the incident, an opposition cadre attacked six off-duty ALP policemen who were returning to their homes from their checkpoint in the Nari Kotal area, killing one and injuring another. After local villagers and ANBP responded to the attack, the AOG unit fled the area toward the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, abducting a local elder and his brother whilst en route. The ANBP and the villagers gave pursuit across the border, killing one AOG fighter and injuring another, but were eventually turned back by Pakistani military forces.



## KHOST

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

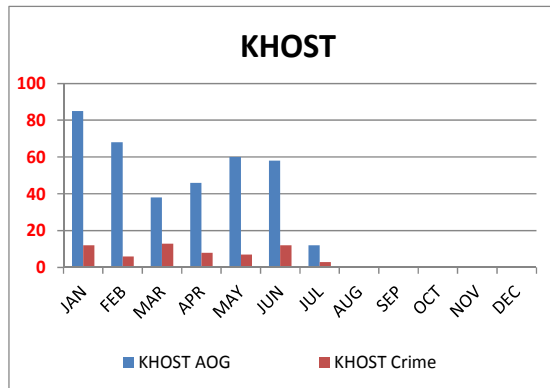
Khost was unusually quiet this period, with a 38 per cent decrease in AOG incidents compared to the previous period. This trend was not evident in 2011, when the incident levels in the first half of July were greater than the latter half of June. This development - should it sustain - would be understood as AOG engagement in an economy of force effort, with resources focused towards achieving high impact attacks – such as the complex attack against the Salerno IMF base in the first half of June – rather than a high volume. Despite this, there were some incidents worthy of note.

In AOG dominated Musa Khel, the armed opposition maintained significant pressure against the DAC, with three indirect fire attacks. Also in the district center

area, a tribal elder was killed for his suspected support of the government.

Consistent with its status as the most kinetic district in Khost, Sabari was home to the highest number of AOG incidents, six in total. This included two incidents of indirect fire against the DAC, and two direct attacks. In the first, AOG attacked an IMF-ANP patrol with heavy weapons and SAF, withdrawing after a brief firefight, while in the second, AOG fighters shot and killed an ANA soldier at his home. Atypically, there were no IMF operations conducted in Sabari this period, whereas there were three in the previous month and a total of 39 in the year thus far.

IMF efforts were instead focused upon Tere Zayi district, with four



joint search operations being undertaken with the ANSF, as a result of which 14 AOG members were arrested.

As in the wider province, the provincial capital experienced a lull, with no AOG incidents being reported, compared to five in the previous period, including a BBIED attack outside of the Speen Jumat mosque which killed three IMF soldiers, five from the ANP and 17 civilians. Criminality remained existent however: one man was shot and killed by unknown gunmen, and another was injured when armed robbers dressed in ANP uniforms forced their way into his home.

### ANSO STAFF AND VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT:

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new **ANSO RSA North**, Ms. Tereza Beniakova. Contact details are provided on the last page of this report.

\*

We are presently recruiting for **ANSO RSA South** position based in Kandahar and **ANSO RSA Mobile**. If you have a solid working experience from a conflict environment, a NGO mindset combined with an analytical background, and a desire to be challenged, all the while being a member of a close knit team, you are encouraged to forward a cover letter, CV, and 2 substantive writing samples to [jobs@ngosafety.org](mailto:jobs@ngosafety.org).

Please refer to the appropriate vacancy in the subject line of your email.

# SOUTHERN REGION

## KANDAHAR

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

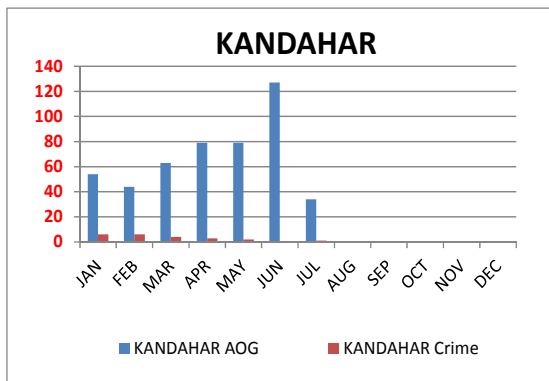
Kandahar witnessed another eventful reporting period, recording the highest rate of AOG activity in the region. In addition to a significant level of IED incidents and AOG direct attacks, the security environment in the province was shaped by a series of high-profile attacks deployed against various targets but focused on Kandahar city. On 2 July, an SVBIED (Toyota Corolla) detonated in District 9 against a bus full of daily workers which was travelling between an IMF SOF base and the city, killing 11 occupants and injuring an additional 23 civilians.

The use of a suicide vector against ‘soft targets’ represent an outlier thus far this year, nonetheless attacks aimed at exploring vulnerabilities of IMF/ANSF/GOA or associated during road missions do not denote a new trend. A week later, AOG conducted a coordinated complex attack targeting the ANP HQ in District 1 of Kandahar city. The assault was initiated with a BBIED detonation against an ANP post outside of the headquarters. Following a well established tactic, the remaining AOG operatives occupied a building adjacent to their intended target (in this case a high school) using it as a vantage point, and from this position opened fire with RPGs, and heavy and small arms on the ANP HQ. The ensuing firefight with security forces lasted into the late afternoon and resulted in a heavy casualty toll as 11 AOG fighters (including an-

other two BBIEDs that detonated during the clash), eight ANP and two civilians (school guards) were killed, while 30 ANSF, two IMF soldiers and eight civilians sustained injuries.

The trend in the South of AOG using multiple suicide vectors was further highlighted this period, as shortly prior to the aforementioned complex attack another AOG unit, including at least one BBIED attacker and two operatives, was driving a Zaranj tricycle when their explosive charge detonated in District 4. The detonation, assessed as premature as it occurred with no apparent target in the vicinity, claimed the lives of two children and caused injuries to an additional six civilians.

AOG reliance on the deployment of suicide vectors follows the pattern of ‘economy of effort’ in urban centers country-wide (although in the South it occurs at a much higher frequency than in other regions), and will most likely continue throughout the ‘fighting season’. Besides Kandahar city, AOG activity this period particularly affected Zhari, Panjwayi, Maywand, Khakrez and Arghistan. IED deployment remained the main threat on the provincial level, with at least 38 recorded incidents (both detonations and discoveries) which were focused on Zhari, Arghandab, Khakrez and Arghistan. Noteworthy of these was an incident recorded in the latter district highlighting the threat of collateral



involvement for the local population from the use of a secondary device destined to target the first responders. In Shin Nari area, a roadside IED detonated on a local Mazda truck. Subsequently another device hit a tractor that came to assist with evacuating victims of the initial detonation. Both detonations caused 16 civilian fatalities and injured nine others, (of note another ‘daisy chain’ IED occurred in Ghorak and targeted an ANP detail). The civilian casualty toll increased further when an additional seven victims were killed during two separate IED incidents in Wam Dara area of Arghistan and Cenar village of Ghorak. In Kandahar city, early July saw a re-emergence of the pattern of targeted killings that had decreased in frequency over the past two months. In the last fortnight Districts 2, 4 and 5 witnessed targeted killings on ANP officers, while a tribal elder was killed while praying in a local mosque of District 9.

Lastly, ANSF/IMF operations were focused this reporting cycle on Kandahar city, Zhari, Maywand and Panjwayi. In addition to seizure of several weapons and ammunition caches, these operations resulted in a reported 11 AOG members detained and an additional 10 killed, including the Panjwayi district shadow governor. In contrast to this, two separate shootings that involved rouge ANA and ALP elements (in Zhari and Miya Nishin) are indicative of the challenges that face ANSF during this pre-transition period.

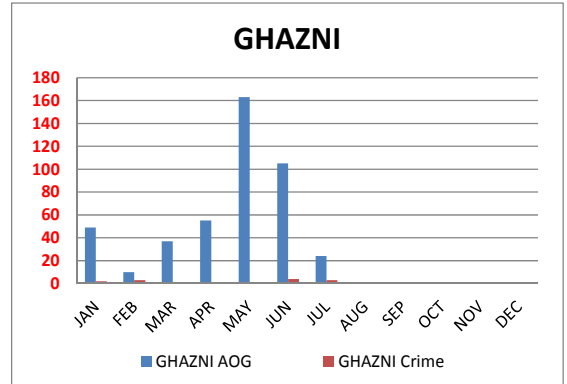
## GHAZNI

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	1
This Report Period	0

Ghazni experienced a large variety of incidents this reporting period, with at least 63 security events, which - prior to late reporting - nevertheless denoted a significant decrease as compared to the previous cycle. On the provincial level IED emplacement appears to be on the rise, with 18 incidents reported across the province. In the last fortnight effective IED strikes took place in Ghazni, Ghelan, Andar and Zana Khan. Despite the fact that ANSF/IMF vehicles remain the priority targets of AOG IED cells, civilians once again bore the brunt of casualties. This was mainly due to two separate IED incidents recorded in Ghazni and Andar. While three civilians were killed in Andar, an IED detonation targeting a 303 bus in Noghi area of Ghazni, killed five civilians and injured 18 others. It should be noted that

although transiting on Highway 1, the bus was hit when it took a detour to circumvent heavy traffic. Given the significant presence of common AOG targets transiting on the highway, the potential for collateral involvement remains a tangible threat that can be somewhat - although not entirely - mitigated by the avoidance of proximity to such targets. Further to this, insecurity along regularly traveled routes remains primarily manifested in the early morning or evening hours, as IEDs are emplaced over night, and this is when ANSF presence/patrols are somewhat lessened.

Direct attacks continued to feature prominently in the Ghazni security landscape, and affected mainly Ghazni, Giro, Ajrastan, Qarabagh and Muqur districts.



Yet a significant trend that has continued into the current period consisted of a series of clashes between local village militias and AOG members (IEA) in Andar. In the last fortnight three armed clashes occurred in the villages of Shahin, Kansaf and Ibrahim Khel area. The most significant incident took place in Shahin village, where the firefight caused the deaths of seven local militiamen and two AOG members. Resistance against the presence of AOG elements (particularly those exogenous to the area) appears to be increased in scale (and to affect a number of villages in Andar). The AOG attempts to retake control of the area have thus far been unfruitful but are indicative of further escalations to come.

## URUZGAN

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

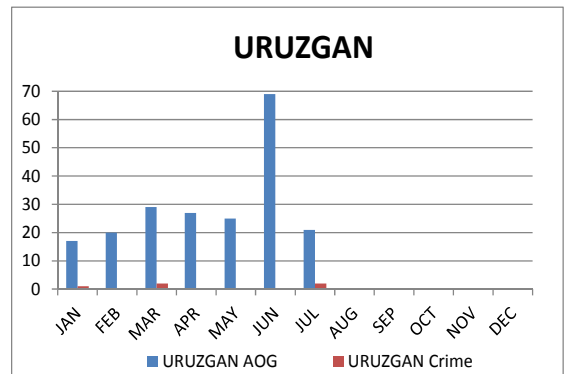
In the last fortnight Uruzgan recorded 53 security incidents, a significant volume, albeit one slightly below that of the previous period. Of these 53, AOG directly authored 34 of them (64%), particularly affecting Tirin Kot, Dihrawud, Gizab, Char Chino and Chora districts.

As has often been the case, IED related incidents dominated the security profile this reporting cycle, accounting for 75 % of all recorded security events. In the last two weeks, amongst the 40 recorded IED related incidents, 25 of them consisted of detonations, primarily occurring in Tirin Kot, Chora, Gizab and Char Chino districts.

AOG IED cells continued to target ANP and ALP vehicles in an

efficient manner, with the attacks resulting in at least two security force members being killed and an additional 19 injured. Much like in the other southern provinces, the use of victim-operated devices affected the civilian population, with the most noteworthy incidents of such taking place in Chora, where in two separate IED strikes - one recorded along the main Chora-Tirin Kot road - 13 civilians were killed and another two were wounded. Also in Chora, an IED detonated against the vehicle of the former ANP chief of Chora district, slightly damaging the vehicle but causing no injuries.

AOG close-range attacks remained limited to only six occur-



rences this period (the month of June saw 24) from Dihrawud (three), Char Chino, Khas Uruzgan and Tirin Kot (each one). Although slight in number, noteworthy amongst these was an intense clash that occurred in Durafshan Village, following an ambush on an IMF foot patrol that claimed the lives of nine AOG members and one IMF soldier.

On the ANSF/IMF side documented operations were focused on Tirin Kot and Dihrawud but mainly limited to IED location and disposals.

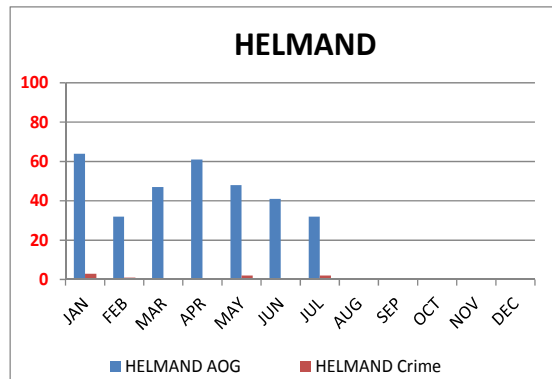
## HELMAND

Incident levels from Helmand demonstrated an upwards trend when compared to the PRP, with 69 security incidents recorded during early July prior to late reporting, putting it on pace to surpass June. AOGs, which authored 50 % of all incidents, were most active in Nahri Sarraj, Musa Qala, Marja, Nad Ali and Lashkar Gah districts. It is worth noting that after experiencing a spike in incidents during the March-April period (due to the poppy eradication campaign), the aggregate security reporting from Helmand recorded thus far this year still remains far below the levels of 2011. Yet, in line with long-term patterns, IED continues to feature prominently in the security landscape, with 18 detonations and an additional 14 disposals. The period also demonstrated the significant risk of collateral involvement

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

in such incidents, as 66% of the cycle’s IED strikes involved civilian casualties. The most significant occurred in Nahri Sarraj when a motorcycle mounted RCIED detonated near to an ALP post, killing three civilians (in addition to two ALP), and wounding another 11. In addition, five separate IEDs claimed the lives of 11 civilians, including six children (in Washer, Musa Qala, Marja and Nahri Sarraj).

Helmand also recorded at least 17 clashes between ANSF/IMF and AOG this cycle, concentrated in Musa Qala, Nahri Sarraj, Sangin and Garmser. In Musa Qala, a simultaneous AOG attack on two ANP posts resulted in a protracted clash that caused the deaths of 22 AOG fighters and five ANSF members. Nahri Sarraj district came to the fore, experiencing a



“green-on-blue” incident (ANSF on IMF shooting) involving an ANCOF member who opened fire and killed three IMF soldiers, wounding a fourth, while on duty at a joint check post. While such incidents have become more common this year (in particular in the South, which witnessed 12 occurrences out of a total 16 country-wide), this represents the first thus far involving a member of the “elite” ANCOF force. Trust and cooperation between ANSF and their IMF mentors could be further impacted by an additional incident this period, during which in Musa Qala, an IMF patrol mistakenly fired at two ANP whom they perceived to be AOG members, killing one and injuring another.

## PAKTIKA

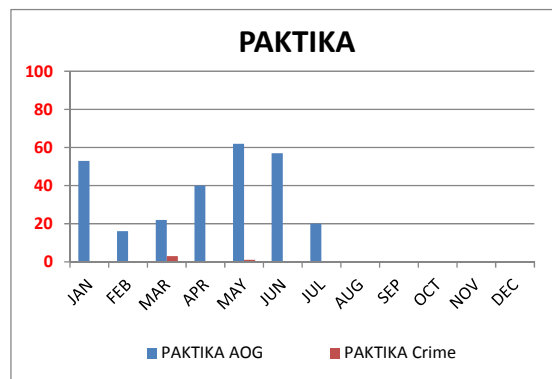
In Paktika the overall volume of incidents remained consistent with the previous cycle, with the tactical portfolio indicating that close-range assaults were the main vessel of AOG operations this period. In addition, the province witnessed an attempted suicide attack. Although unsuccessful, it marks the fifth incident involving a suicide vector thus far this year.

On 5 July, in Urgun, a single BBIED operative wearing an ANP uniform was spotted by an ANP detail while attempting to penetrate the Bazaar area and shot dead before being able to detonate his device. The use of suicide vectors in the province does not denote a new trend, yet this marked the first such incident to occur in this particular district

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

since May 2010, when an SVBIED detonated during an attack on an ANBP compound in the DAC area. The most recent incident is indicative of the AOG focus on populated areas when conducting attacks involving suicide vectors (as all this year attacks occurred in the main centers).

As mentioned, AOG direct attacks dominated this period and affected mainly Omna, Sar Hawza, Gayan and Barmal. Although the majority of these attacks consisted of brief engagements targeting ANP/ALP posts and DAC areas (Omna and Gayan), showing once more AOG reluctance to sustain major casualties, four ALP members and one civilian were



killed in Sar Hawza and a firefight between AOG and ANSF/IMF claimed the lives of nine AOG fighters in Barmal.

Barmal, Yani Khel, Sar Hawza, Mata Khan and Urgun saw ANSF/IMF activity in the form of 10 operations, with two airstrikes that caused considerable casualties highlighting the importance of air assets to IMF goals. In the latter district, an air strike conducted on 3 July resulted in 45 AOG fighters dead and an additional 12 injured, while nine AOG members were killed during another air strike in the Mangrati area of Barmal on the 1<sup>st</sup> July.



## ZABUL

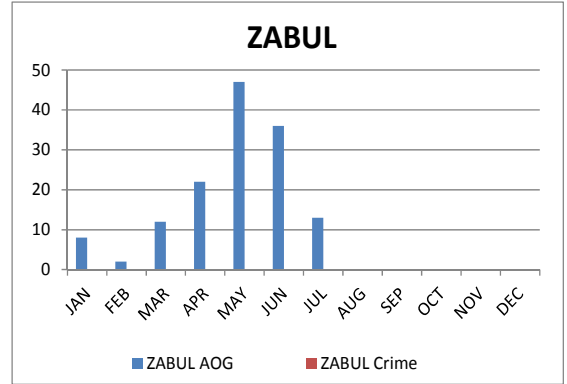
During the first two weeks of July documented AOG authored activity in Zabul (16 recorded incidents) dropped in comparison to the PRP (with - further to this - June levels having dropped significantly from the spike recorded in May, see attached graph). ANSF/IMF operations were also limited in number and focused on Tarna Wa Jaldak, Naw Bahar and Qalat districts.

In the last two weeks, IED emplacement and close range attacks on ANP/ALP static and mobile targets made up the primary tactics used by AOG across the province. An exception to these targeting patterns was the ambush on an IMF logistical convoy, escorted by a PSC, that occurred in Shahjoy. The attack, which destroyed one tanker and caused injuries to two PSC guards,

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

prompted an ANA follow-up operation during which two AOG members were killed. Further clashes have been recorded in Qalat, Arghandab, Daychopan, Mizan and Shahjoy districts and claimed lives of five AOG fighters while on the ANSF side two ANA soldiers were killed in the area of the Daychopan DAC.

IED emplacement, the most commonly deployed tactic in the province, was concentrated on Qalat and Shahjoy, as well as on the bordering district of Shamulzayi and caused a number of casualties. The most noteworthy amongst these was an IED strike against an ANA vehicle that took place in the Bagh area of Arghandab, resulting in five ANA soldiers killed. IED-related incidents also continue to cause harm to AOG them-



selves. A premature detonation in Shamulzayi killed two AOG fighters and wounded two others while in Tarna Wa Jaldak a pre-emptive IMF air strike targeted an AOG as they were emplacing a roadside IED, killing an additional two. Apart from IED disposals, ANSF/IMF search operations were conducted in Qalat, Shahjoy and Tarnak Wajaldak, and an operation in Naw Bahar resulted in the discovery of a large cache of explosive materials. Lastly, tensions rose between a Parliament member and local authorities over land issues. A demonstration in Qalat city on the 14<sup>th</sup> ended peacefully but the issues had not been settled at the time of writing.

## NIMROZ

Security reporting from Nimroz remained very low in relation to other southern provinces, with only two security events recorded, one of which took place on the last day of the PRP (30 June), when an anti-personnel mine detonated on an ANA foot patrol, wounding one soldier in Khash Rod district.

As previously noted, Khash Rod generally hosts the majority of security incidents, given its importance for different actors involved in the conflict due to the district's geographical location and the presence of the main roads in the area. The second incident however was noteworthy for the number of casualties involved as well as the unusual location.

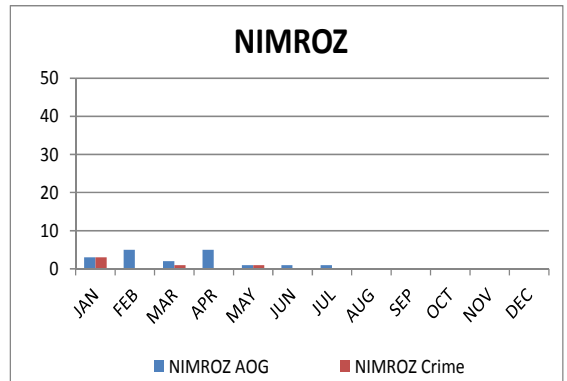
During the second week of the

	NGO Incidents
Year to Date	0
This Report Period	0

current cycle (10 July), a roadside IED detonated against an ANP vehicle patrolling in the area of Ghar Ghari (Chakhansur district). The detonation caused three ANP fatalities and injured another two.

This marked only the second incident recorded thus far this year in the district, with the first occurring in March, when during an operation ANP arrested four AOG members and seized a quantity of drugs. Although very rare in the district, (although incidents in remote areas may go unreported), the use of IED nonetheless fits with the overall security profile of the province.

While still displaying a level of incidents far below historical patterns, the current data from Nim-



roz indicates that IED emplacement remains the favored AOG tactics throughout the province, followed by close-range attacks and IDF assaults (although prior to the most recent incident, IEDs were exclusively focused on Khash Rod district). Despite IEDs making up the majority of what little security incidents occur, the high-profile attack that took place in Zaranj city in April, when a BBIED attacker detonated his device close to an IMF detail, has remained an exceptional outlier and manifested insecurity continues to be the exception in the district rather than the rule.

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### MISSING THIS PERIOD:

ANSO did not provide analysis for the following areas:



These areas will be included in subsequent reports. If you have any information that would help us better understand the dynamics, please contact your local ANSO office.

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### COMMON ACRONYMS

**ACG**-Armed Criminal Group / **AEF**-Afghan Eradication Forces / **ANA**-Afghan National Army / **ANBP**-Afghan National Border Police / **ANP**-Afghan National Police / **AOG**-Armed Opposition Group / **APPF**-Afghan Public Protection Forces (local deputised militias) / **DC**-District Centre / **GOA**-Government of Afghanistan / **IDF**-Indirect Fire (ex: mortars) / **IED**-Improvised Explosive Device / **IMF**-International Military Forces / **NDS**-National Directorate of Security (Intelligence) / **PRP**-Previous Reporting Period / **PSC**-Private Security Company / **RPG**-Rocket Propelled Grenade / **SAF**-Small Arms Fire / **VBIED**-Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device / **PDO**-Private Development Organisation / **ALP**-Afghan Local Police / **LDI**-Local Defence Initiative / **IEA**-Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (Taliban) / **PSG**-Provincial Shadow Governor (IEA) / **DSG**-District Shadow Governor (IEA) / **PGM** - Pro-Government Militia / **APRP** - Afghan Peace and Reconciliation Program