



COALITION COMBAT AND ADVISORY FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

AFGHANISTAN ORDER OF BATTLE

BY WESLEY MORGAN APRIL 2014

This document describes the composition and placement of U.S. and other Western combat and advisory forces in Afghanistan down to battalion level. It includes the following categories of units: maneuver (i.e. infantry, armor, and cavalry) units, which in most cases are responsible for advising or partnering with Afghan troops in particular provinces or regions; artillery units; aviation units, both rotary and fixed-wing; military police units; most types of engineer and explosive ordnance disposal units; and “white” special operations forces. It does not include “black” special operations units or other units such as logistical, transportation, medical, and intelligence units or Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

International Security Assistance Force / United States Forces—Afghanistan (Gen. Joseph Dunford, USMC)—ISAF Headquarters, Kabul

Kabul Support Unit / 1 Coldstream Guards (Lt. Col. Toby Till, UK)—Kabul; security force supporting ISAF Headquarters and British facilities¹

TF 1-Fury / 1-508 Parachute Infantry (USA)—U/I location

Special Operations Joint Task Force—Afghanistan / NATO Special Operations Component Command—Afghanistan (Maj. Gen. Scott Miller, USA)—Camp Integrity, Kabul²

Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force—Afghanistan (USA)—Bagram Airfield; village stability operations, advisors to Afghan Defense Ministry special operations forces, and other missions³

Special Operations Task Force—East (USA)—Bagram Airfield; operating in eastern Afghanistan

Special Operations Task Force—South (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; operating in Kandahar Province

Special Operations Task Force—South-East (USN)—U/I location; operating in Uruzgan and Zabul Provinces

Special Operations Task Force—West (USMC)—Camp Lawton, Herat; operating in western Afghanistan and Helmand Province

ISAF Special Operations Forces (UK/Australia)—Kabul; advisors to Afghan Interior Ministry special operations forces⁴

Regional Special Operations Task Groups—located around Afghanistan⁵

Combined Joint Special Operations Aviation Component—Afghanistan (USAF/USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support to SOJTF-A special operations forces⁶

9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force—Afghanistan (Maj. Gen. Kenneth Wilsbach, USAF)—Kabul International Airport; oversees U.S. Air Force units in Afghanistan⁷

455th Air Expeditionary Wing (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; air support in eastern and northern Afghanistan

451st Air Expeditionary Group (USAF)—Kandahar Airfield; surveillance support in southern and western Afghanistan⁸

II (Army Cooperation) Squadron Royal Air Force (UK)—Kandahar Airfield; close air support⁹

39 Squadron Royal Air Force (UK)—Kandahar Airfield; surveillance support¹⁰

455th Expeditionary Operations Group (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; air support in eastern and northern Afghanistan

4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; surveillance support¹¹

62nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (USAF)—Bagram, Kandahar, and Jalalabad Airfields; surveillance support¹²

75th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; close air support¹³

83rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; medical evacuation support¹⁴

457th Fighter Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; close air support¹⁵

774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; transport support¹⁶

Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 (Brig. Gen. Balan Ayyar, USAF)—Camp Phoenix, Kabul; responsible for rule-of-law and detention operations

U/I Military Police Brigade (USA)—Camp Sabalu-Harrison; detention operations¹⁷

U/I Military Police Battalion (USA)—Parwan Detention Facility¹⁸

NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan / Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan (Lt. Gen. Ken Tovo, USA)—Camp Eggers, Kabul; responsible for training Afghan security forces¹⁹

TF 2-Fury / 2-508 Parachute Infantry (USA)—Camp Eggers, Kabul; NTM-A security force countrywide²⁰

ISAF Joint Command / XVIII Airborne Corps (Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, USA)—Kabul International Airport; countrywide operational headquarters²¹

TF Paladin / 242nd EOD Battalion (USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-IED operations in eastern and southern Afghanistan²²

TF 2-44 Air Defense Artillery (USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-rocket and -mortar mission at bases countrywide²³

Joint Task Force Sapper / 130th Engineer Brigade (Col. Diana Holland, USA)—Kabul; overseeing construction and deconstruction operations countrywide²⁴

TF Bayonet / 65th Engineer Battalion (Lt. Col. David Acker, USA)—Camp Leatherneck; engineer operations in southern and western Afghanistan²⁵

TF Rugged / 365th Engineer Battalion (Lt. Col. David Wong, USA)—Bagram Airfield; engineer operations in eastern and northern Afghanistan²⁶

Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 28 (USN)—Kandahar Airfield; construction support in southern Afghanistan²⁷

TF Black Diamond / 489th Engineer Battalion (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograde operations in southern Afghanistan²⁸

133rd Engineer Battalion (Lt. Col. Dean Preston, USA)—Bagram Airfield; withdrawal and deconstruction operations²⁹

TF ODIN (Enhanced) (Col. Neil Hersey, USA)—Bagram Airfield; surveillance support in eastern and southern Afghanistan³⁰

TF ODIN-A (USA)—Bagram Airfield and Kandahar Airfield; surveillance support³¹

TF Condor (USA)—Bagram Airfield and Kandahar Airfield; surveillance support³²

Regional Command Capital (Brig. Gen. Ali Riza Kugu, Turkey)—Camp Warehouse, Kabul; operating in Kabul Province³³

Battalion Motorized Task Force (Turkey)—Camp Dogan, Kabul

Regional Command East / 10th Mountain Division (Maj. Gen. Steve Townsend, USA)—Bagram Airfield; supporting ANA 201st and 203rd Corps in fourteen eastern provinces³⁴

TF Red Devils / 1-504 Parachute Infantry (USA)—Bagram Airfield; theater reserve force for eastern and northern Afghanistan

TF Spartan / 3rd Security Force Assistance Brigade, 10th Mountain Division (Col. Sam Whitehurst, USA)—FOB Lightning, Gardez; supporting ANA 203rd Corps in southern RC-East³⁵

TF Wolfpack / 4-25 Field Artillery (USA)—Camp Clark, Khost; operating in Khost Province

TF Chosin / 1-32 Infantry (Lt. Col. Theo Moore, USA)—FOB Airborne, Maydan Shahr; operating in Wardak Province

TF Titan / 3-71 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Angel Mesa, USA)—FOB Rushmore, Sharana; operating in Paktika Province

TF Catamount / 2-87 Infantry (Lt. Col. Brian Beckno, USA)—FOB Shank; operating in Logar Province

TF Strike / 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Col. Peter Benchoff, USA)—FOB Gamberi; supporting ANA 201st Corps in northern RC-East³⁶

TF Widowmaker / 1-75 Cavalry (Lt. Col. John Kilbride, USA)—FOB Wright, Asadabad; operating in Kunar Province

TF Top Guns / 1-320 Field Artillery (Lt. Col. Mark Sherkey, USA)—Bagram Airfield; operating in Kapisa and Parwan Provinces

TF 2-502 Infantry (Lt. Col. John Lubas, USA)—FOB Mehtar Lam; operating in Laghman Province

TF First Strike / 1-502 Infantry (Lt. Col. Arie Richards, USA)—Jalalabad Airfield; operating in Nangarhar Province

TF Thunder / 159th Combat Aviation Brigade (Col. Jimmy Blackmon, USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support in eastern and northern Afghanistan³⁷

TF Attack / 3-101 Attack Aviation (USA)—Jalalabad Airfield; aviation support in northern RC-East

TF Wings / 4-101 Assault Aviation (USA)—FOB Shank; aviation support in southern RC-East

TF Lift / 7-101 General Support Aviation (USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support throughout RC-East

TF Attack / 1-227 Attack Aviation (Lt. Col. Cain Baker, USA)—Camp Marmal, Mazar-e-Sharif; aviation support in RC-North³⁸

TF White Eagle / 10th Armored Cavalry Brigade (Poland)—FOB Ghazni; operating in northern Ghazni Province³⁹

Battle Group Alpha (Poland)—FOB Ghazni; operating in northern Ghazni Province

Regional Command North (Maj. Gen. Jorg Vollmer, Germany)—Camp Marmal, Mazar-e-Sharif; supporting ANA 209th Corps in nine northern provinces⁴⁰

Nordic-Baltic Transition Support Unit—Camp Northern Lights, Mazar-e-Sharif; operating in RC-North⁴¹

Partnering and Advisory Task Force Mazar-e-Sharif (Germany)—Camp Marmal; operating in Balkh Province

Northern Reaction Unit (Germany)—Camp Marmal; division reserve

Expeditionary Air Wing Mazar-e-Sharif (Germany)—Camp Marmal; fixed- and rotary-wing aviation support for northern Afghanistan⁴²

TF Stalwart / 1-41 Infantry (Lt. Col. Kendall Clarke, USA)—Camp Marmal; operating in RC-North⁴³

TF 2-121 Infantry (USA)—Camp Marmal; retrograde operations in RC-North⁴⁴

Regional Command South / 4th Infantry Division (Maj. Gen. Paul LaCamera, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; supporting ANA 205th Corps in Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Zabul Provinces⁴⁵

TF White Devils / 2-504 Parachute Infantry (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; theater reserve force for southern and western Afghanistan

TF Dragoon / 2nd Cavalry Regiment (Col. Douglas Sims, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; operating in Kandahar Province⁴⁶

TF Cougar / 2-2 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Charles Svelan, USA)—FOB Frontenac; operating in Shah Wali Kot District

TF Red Warrior / 1-12 Infantry (Lt. Col. Dave Voorhies, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; outer security force

TF Lethal / 2-12 Infantry (Lt. Col. Rich Garey, USA)—FOB Apache, Qalat; operating in Zabul Province⁴⁷

TF 3-61 Cavalry (USA)—FOB Pasab; operating in Maywand and Zhari Districts

TF Steel / 2-77 Field Artillery (USA)—FOB Walton; operating in Kandahar City

TF 151 / 151st Infantry Battalion (Romania)—FOB Apache, Qalat; operating along Highway 1 in Zabul Province⁴⁸

TF Demon / 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (Col. Matthew Lewis, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; aviation support in southern and western Afghanistan⁴⁹

TF Gunfighters / 1-1 Attack Aviation (USA)—FOB Tarin Kowt; aviation support in Uruzgan and Zabul Provinces

TF Fighting Eagle / 2-1 General Support Aviation (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; aviation support in Kandahar Province

TF Nightmares / 3-1 Assault Aviation (USA)—Shindand Airfield; aviation support in RC-West

TF Saber / 1-6 Air Cavalry (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; aviation support in Kandahar Province

Regional Command Southwest / Marine Expeditionary Brigade—Afghanistan (Brig. Gen. Daniel Yoo, USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; supporting ANA 215th Corps in Helmand and Nimruz Provinces⁵⁰

1/7 Marines (USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; operating in northern Helmand Province⁵¹

Brigade Advisory Team / 3 Mercian Regiment (UK)—Camp Bastion; Afghan army advisors⁵²

Joint Engineer Group / 32 Engineer Regiment (UK)—Camp Bastion; engineer support⁵³

Joint Fires Group / 3 Regiment Royal Horse Artillery (UK)—Camp Bastion; artillery support⁵⁴

Joint ISTAR Group / 9th/12th Royal Lancers (UK)—Camp Bastion; surveillance and reconnaissance

TF Belleau Wood / 1st Marine Regiment (Col. Peter Baumgarten, USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; base security⁵⁵

1/9 Marines (USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; operating in west-central Helmand Province⁵⁶

4 Royal Regiment of Scotland (UK)—Camp Bastion; base security

23rd Light Infantry Battalion (Georgia)—Camp Leatherneck; base security

Special Mountain Battalion (Georgia)—U/I location

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward) (Col. Patrick Gramuglia, USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; aviation support in Helmand and Nimruz Provinces⁵⁷

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 (USMC)—Camp Bastion; heavy transport aviation⁵⁸

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 (USMC)—Camp Bastion; attack aviation⁵⁹

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261 (USMC)—Camp Bastion; medium transport aviation⁶⁰

Regional Command West / “Sassari” Mechanized Brigade (Brig. Gen. Manlio Scopigno, Italy)—Camp Arena, Herat; supporting ANA 207th Corps in Badghis, Farah, Ghor, and Herat Provinces⁶¹

Transition Support Unit Badghis (Spain)—Qala-e-Naw; operating in Badghis Province

Transition Support Unit Center / 152nd Infantry Regiment (Italy)—Camp Arena; operating in Herat Province

TF Fenice / 7th Aviation Regiment (Italy)—Camp Arena; aviation support in western Afghanistan

TF Genio / 5th Engineer Regiment (Italy)—Camp Arena; engineer support for western Afghanistan

TF Bobcat / 2-5 Infantry (USA)—Shindand Airfield; operating in western Afghanistan⁶²

Major changes since March 1, 2014:

—Departure of Canadian contingent

—Dissolution of TF Helmand in RC-Southwest

—Relief of 2nd Cavalry Regiment by 4th BCT, 4th ID in RC-South

—Departure of Marine EA-6 Prowler squadron from Bagram Airfield

NOTES

- ¹ The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards deployed as the first Kabul Support Unit in August 2013 (see regimental newsletter). Their exact chain of command is unclear.
- ² Established in the summer of 2012, SOJTF-A/NSOCC-A is a two-star headquarters that oversees all three allied SOF commands in Afghanistan: CJSOTF-A, ISAF SOF, and the “black” special operations forces of the U.S. Joint Special Operations Command task force. See USSOCOM Fact Book 2013.
- ³ CJSOTF-A is headquartered by troops from the 3rd Special Forces Group. Its core tasks are to advise the Afghan National Army’s special operations forces (the Afghan commando kandaks and Special Forces) and to train and advise the local police forces associated with the Village Stability Operations program. CJSOTF-A controls six battalion-level task forces: two built around Army Special Forces battalions, two around Army infantry battalions, one around a Marine special operations battalion, and one around a Navy SEAL team. Navy Combat Camera Command Detachment 1210, “CJSOTF-A Presentation,” June 2012.
- ⁴ Established in 2007, ISAF SOF is a one-star, brigade-level headquarters that oversees most non-U.S. special operations forces in Afghanistan as well as one U.S. special operations unit, TF 10. Command of ISAF SOF appears to rotate between British and Australian officers; Brig. Mark Smethurst was in command as of March 2012.
- ⁵ The ISAF SOTGs, some battalion-level and some company-level, support the various regional commands, often by advising elite Afghan Interior Ministry units like the Provincial Response Companies, the Kabul-based Crisis Response Unit, and TF 333 and TF 444, and are designated as numbered task forces. For example, press reports mention TF 10 (a company from the U.S. 10th Special Forces Group) in RC-Capital; TF 45 (Italian SOF) in RC-West; TF 47 (German SOF) in RC-North; TF 49 and TF 50 (Polish SOF) in Ghazni and other areas in RC-East; TF 42, TF 196, and TF 528 (British SOF) in Helmand; and TF 66 (Australian SOF) in Uruzgan and Kandahar. (Units that have since withdrawn included France’s TF 32 and the Netherlands’ TF 637.)
- ⁶ CJSOAC-A is composed of helicopter, fixed-wing, and unmanned aviation units from the U.S. Air Force Special Operations Command, the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, and conventional U.S. Army aviation units.
- ⁷ 9th AETF-A does not fall under ISAF command, but its commander is dual-hatted as Deputy Commander (Air) of USFOR-A. It exercises only partial control of the wings and squadrons below it; day-to-day tactical control of those units is exercised by U.S. Air Force Central’s Combined Air and Space Operations Center in the Persian Gulf.
- ⁸ 451st AEG (formerly 451st AEW) operates MQ-1 and MQ-9 drones as well as E-11A and MC-12W piloted aircraft. See 451st AEG web site.
- ⁹ II (AC) Squadron, a Tornado GR4 squadron, relieved 617 Squadron in February 2014.
- ¹⁰ 39 Squadron is a Reaper UAV squadron.
- ¹¹ 4th ERS is an MC-12 squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.
- ¹² 62nd ERS is an MQ-1 and MQ-9 drone squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.
- ¹³ 75th EFS is an A-10C squadron that deployed in October 2013. See warthognews.blogspot.com.
- ¹⁴ 83rd ERQS is an HH-60G rescue helicopter squadron.
- ¹⁵ This F-16 squadron deployed in November 2013 and moved from Kandahar to Bagram in December 2013.
- ¹⁶ 774th EAS is a C-130J squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.
- ¹⁷ 18th MP Brigade relieved 333rd MP Brigade in July 2013. See brigade Facebook page.
- ¹⁸ This battalion deployed in early 2012.
- ¹⁹ Lt. Gen. Ken Tovo took command of NTM-A/CSTC-A in April 2013.
- ²⁰ 2-508 PIR relieved 1-294 Infantry in early January 2014.
- ²¹ XVIII Airborne Corps relieved III Corps as the headquarters of the IJC in February 2014.
- ²² 242nd EOD Battalion relieved 3rd EOD Battalion in Kandahar in July 2013 and 184th EOD Battalion at Bagram in December 2013.
- ²³ 2-44 ADA deployed in February 2014.
- ²⁴ JTF Sapper relieved JTF Triple Nickel in October 2013.
- ²⁵ 65th Engineer Battalion relieved 307th Engineer Battalion in October 2013.
- ²⁶ 365th Engineer Battalion relieved 8th Engineer Battalion and 122nd Engineer Battalion in December 2013.
- ²⁷ NMCB-28 relieved NMCB-15 in September 2013.
- ²⁸ 489th Engineer Battalion relieved 92nd Engineer Battalion in October 2013. The battalion falls under the CENTCOM Materiel Recovery Element, not ISAF, but is listed here for clarity’s sake.
- ²⁹ 133rd Engineer Battalion relieved 864th Engineer Battalion in October 2013. The battalion falls under the CENTCOM Materiel Recovery Element, not ISAF, but is listed here for clarity’s sake.
- ³⁰ ODIN stands for Observe-Detect-Identify-Neutralize. The current leadership of TF ODIN-E arrived in July 2013.

- ³¹ TF ODIN-A operates the MQ-1C and RQ-5 UAVs and various versions of the C-12 and C-35 airplanes. The current TF ODIN-A rotation deployed in May 2013.
- ³² TF Condor operates the RQ-5 UAV and a version of the C-12 airplane.
- ³³ The current headquarters of RC-Capital arrived in November 2012. ISAF.NATO.int, “Subordinate Commands | RC-Capital.”
- ³⁴ 10th Mountain Division relieved 101st Airborne Division as RC-East in February 2014.
- ³⁵ 3rd SFAB, 10th Mountain relieved 4th SFAB, 3rd ID and 4th SFAB, 101st Airborne in November 2013. See brigade and battalion Facebook pages.
- ³⁶ 2nd BCT, 101st Airborne relieved 4th SFAB, 10th Mountain in late February 2014. See brigade Facebook page and battalion Facebook pages.
- ³⁷ 159th CAB relieved 10th CAB in January 2014. Each of its battalion task forces combines UH-60, CH-47, AH-64, and OH-58 companies and provides direct support to a BCT. See brigade Facebook page and battalion Facebook pages.
- ³⁸ 1-227 Aviation relieved 1-135 Aviation in January 2014.
- ³⁹ 10th Armored Cavalry Brigade relieved 25th Air Cavalry Brigade as TF White Eagle in December 2013.
- ⁴⁰ The current headquarters of RC-North arrived in February 2013. ISAF.NATO.int, “Subordinate Commands | RC-North.”
- ⁴¹ The Nordic-Baltic Transition Support Unit was established in March 2013 and comprises 450 Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, and Latvian troops.
- ⁴² See RC-North Facebook page.
- ⁴³ 1-41 Infantry relieved 6-4 Cavalry in January 2014. See battalion Facebook page.
- ⁴⁴ 2-121 Infantry deployed in January 2014.
- ⁴⁵ 4th ID relieved 3rd ID as RC-South in early July 2013. See division Facebook page.
- ⁴⁶ 2nd Cavalry Regiment relieved 4th SBCT, 2nd ID in July 2013. See regimental Facebook page.
- ⁴⁷ 2-12 Infantry relieved 3rd BCT, 1st ID at the end of February 2014. See 3/1 BCT Facebook page.
- ⁴⁸ 151st Infantry Battalion relieved 34th Infantry Battalion in July or August 2013.
- ⁴⁹ 1st CAB, 1st ID relieved 3rd CAB in August 2013.
- ⁵⁰ I MEF (Forward), also known as Marine Expeditionary Brigade—Afghanistan, relieved II MEF (Forward) as RC-Southwest in early February 2014.
- ⁵¹ 1/7 Marines relieved 3/7 Marines in March 2014.
- ⁵² 3 Mercians relieved 4 Rifles in early October 2013.
- ⁵³ 32 Engineer Regiment relieved 22 Engineer Regiment in October 2013.
- ⁵⁴ 3 Regiment RHA relieved 1 Regiment RA in October 2013.
- ⁵⁵ 1st Marine Regiment replaced 2nd Marine Regiment as TF Belleau Wood in late February 2014.
- ⁵⁶ 1/9 Marines, or elements of the battalion, deployed in late 2013, seemingly relieving 2/8 Marines.
- ⁵⁷ 3rd MAW (Forward) relieved 2nd MAW (Forward) in early February 2014.
- ⁵⁸ HMMH-466 is a CH-53E squadron that relieved HMMH-462 in March 2014.
- ⁵⁹ HMLA-369 is an AH-1W and UH-1Y squadron that relieved HMLA-167 in November 2013.
- ⁶⁰ VMM-261 is an MV-22B squadron that deployed in January 2014.
- ⁶¹ The “Sassari” Brigade relieved the “Aosta” Brigade as RC-West in February 2014.
- ⁶² 2-5 Infantry relieved 1-214 Field Artillery in December 2013. See battalion Facebook page.