



## COALITION COMBAT AND ADVISORY FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

# AFGHANISTAN ORDER OF BATTLE

BY WESLEY MORGAN AUGUST 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 and advisory (i.e. infantry, armor, and cavalry) units; 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)—Camp Souter, Kabul; security force supporting British personnel and facilities and ISAF headquarters<sup>1</sup>

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. Ed Reeder, USA)—Camp Integrity, Kabul<sup>2</sup>**

Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force—Afghanistan (USA)—Bagram Airfield; village stability operations, advisors to Afghan Defense Ministry special operations forces, and other missions<sup>3</sup>

Special Operations Task Force—North-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 forces<sup>4</sup>

Regional Special Operations Task Groups—located around Afghanistan<sup>5</sup>

Combined Joint Special Operations Aviation Component—Afghanistan (USAF/USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support to SOJTF-A special operations forces<sup>6</sup>

### **9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force—Afghanistan (Maj. Gen. John McMullen, USAF)—Kabul International Airport; oversees U.S. Air Force units in Afghanistan<sup>7</sup>**

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 Afghanistan<sup>8</sup>

IX (Bomber) Squadron Royal Air Force (UK)—Kandahar Airfield; close air support<sup>9</sup>

39 Squadron Royal Air Force (UK)—Kandahar Airfield; surveillance support<sup>10</sup>

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

4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; surveillance support<sup>11</sup>

62nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (USAF)—Bagram, Kandahar, and Jalalabad Airfields; surveillance support<sup>12</sup>

75th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; close air support<sup>13</sup>

83rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; medical evacuation support<sup>14</sup>

457th Fighter Squadron (USAF) Bagram Airfield; close air support<sup>15</sup>

774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; transport support<sup>16</sup>

**Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 (Brig. Gen. Mark Inch, USA)—Camp Phoenix, Kabul; responsible for rule-of-law and detention operations**

U/I Military Police Brigade (USA)—Camp Sabalu-Harrison; detention operations<sup>17</sup>

U/I Military Police Battalion (USA)—Parwan Detention Facility<sup>18</sup>

**NATO Training Mission—Afghanistan (Brig. Gen. Simon Hetherington, Canada)—Camp Eggers, Kabul; responsible for training Afghan security forces<sup>19</sup>**

TF 2-Fury / 2-508 Parachute Infantry (USA)—Camp Eggers, Kabul; NTM-A security force countrywide<sup>20</sup>

**ISAF Joint Command / XVIII Airborne Corps (Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, USA)—Kabul International Airport; countrywide operational headquarters<sup>21</sup>**

TF EOD / 63rd EOD Battalion (Lt. Col. Bobby Sadler, USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-IED operations in eastern and southern Afghanistan<sup>22</sup>

TF 2-44 Air Defense Artillery (USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-rocket and -mortar mission at bases countrywide<sup>23</sup>

Joint Task Force Trailblazer / 2nd Engineer Brigade (Col. Peter Andrysiak, USA)—Bagram Airfield; overseeing construction and deconstruction operations countrywide<sup>24</sup>

TF Rugged / 365th Engineer Battalion (Lt. Col. David Wong, USA)—Bagram Airfield; engineer operations in eastern and northern Afghanistan<sup>25</sup>

TF Ultimus / Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 25 (USN)—Camp Phoenix, Kabul; advising ANA engineer units<sup>26</sup>

TF Black Diamond / 489th Engineer Battalion (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograde operations in southern Afghanistan<sup>27</sup>

877th Engineer Battalion (USA)—Bagram Airfield; withdrawal and deconstruction operations in eastern and northern Afghanistan<sup>28</sup>

TF ODIN (Enhanced) (Col. Neil Hersey, USA)—Bagram Airfield; surveillance support in eastern and southern Afghanistan<sup>29</sup>

TF Volunteer / 48th Brigade Combat Team (Col. Randall Simmons, USA)—Camp Phoenix, Kabul; responsible for maintaining Kabul Base Cluster installations<sup>30</sup>

**Train, Advise, Assist Command Capital (Brig. Gen. Erhan Uzun, Turkey)—Camp Warehouse, Kabul; operating in Kabul Province<sup>31</sup>**

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**

## provinces<sup>32</sup>

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

TF 222 / 1st (Prince Hussein) Mechanized Infantry Battalion (Jordan)—Bagram Airfield; operating in areas around the airfield<sup>33</sup>

Train, Advise, Assist Command Southeast / 3rd Cavalry Regiment (Col. Cameron Cantlon, USA)—FOB Lightning, Gardez; supporting ANA 203rd Corps in southern RC-East<sup>34</sup>

TF Tiger / 1-3 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Eric Strong, USA)—FOB Rushmore, Sharana; operating in Paktika Province

TF Sabre / 2-3 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Mike James, USA)—FOB Shank; operating in Logar Province

TF Thunder / 3-3 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Brian Harthorn, USA)—FOB Airborne, Maydan Shahr; operating in Wardak Province

TF Steel / Fires Squadron, 3rd Cavalry (USA)—Camp Clark, Khost; operating in Khost Province

Train, Advise, Assist Command Northeast / 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Col. Peter Benchhoff, USA)—FOB Gamberi; supporting ANA 201st Corps in northern RC-East<sup>35</sup>

TF Widomaker / 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 Afghanistan<sup>36</sup>

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-North<sup>37</sup>

## **Regional Command North (Maj. Gen. Bernd Schutt, Germany)—Camp Marmal, Mazar-e-Sharif; supporting ANA 209th Corps in nine northern provinces**

Nordic-Baltic Transition Support Unit—Camp Northern Lights, Mazar-e-Sharif; operating in RC-North<sup>38</sup>

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 Afghanistan<sup>39</sup>

TF Stalwart / 1-41 Infantry (Lt. Col. Kendall Clarke, USA)—Camp Marmal; operating in RC-North<sup>40</sup>

TF 2-121 Infantry (USA)—Camp Marmal; retrograde operations in RC-North<sup>41</sup>

## **Regional Command South / 1st Cavalry Division (Maj. Gen. Michael Bills, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; supporting ANA 205th Corps in Kandahar, Uruzgan, and Zabul Provinces<sup>42</sup>**

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

Special Mountain Battalion (Georgia)—Kandahar Airfield; force protection at various ISAF bases

TF Mountain Warrior / 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division (Col. Brian Pearl, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; operating in Kandahar Province<sup>43</sup>

TF Red Warrior / 1-12 Infantry (Lt. Col. Dave Voorhies, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; operating in eastern Kandahar Province

TF Lethal / 2-12 Infantry (Lt. Col. Rich Garey, USA)—FOB Apache, Qalat; operating in Zabul Province<sup>44</sup>

TF Destroyer / 3-61 Cavalry (USA)—FOB Pasab, Zhari; operating in western Kandahar Province

TF Steel / 2-77 Field Artillery (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding

TF Raptor / 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (Col. Paul Mele, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; aviation support in southern and western Afghanistan<sup>45</sup>

TF Flying Dragons / 1-52 General Support Aviation (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; transport aviation

TF Warhawk / 2-158 Assault Aviation (USA)—Shindand Airfield; aviation support in RC-West

TF Tigershark / 1-229 Attack Aviation (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; attack aviation support

1-230 Air Cavalry (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; attack aviation support

**Regional Command Southwest / Marine Expeditionary Brigade—Afghanistan (Brig. Gen. Daniel Yoo, USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; supporting ANA 215th Corps in Helmand and Nimruz Provinces<sup>46</sup>**

1/7 Marines (USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; operating in northern Helmand Province<sup>47</sup>

2nd Combat Engineer Battalion (USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; route clearance operations<sup>48</sup>

Joint Fires Group / 26 Regiment Royal Artillery (UK)—Camp Bastion; artillery support<sup>49</sup>

Manoeuvre Battlegroup / 5 Rifles (UK)—Camp Bastion; reserve force<sup>50</sup>

1 Queen's Dragoon Guards (Lt. Col. Will Davies, UK)Camp Bastion; reconnaissance and Afghan army advising missions<sup>51</sup>

TF Belleau Wood / 1st Marine Regiment (Col. Peter Baumgarten, USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; base security<sup>52</sup>

1/2 Marines (USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; operating in west-central Helmand Province<sup>53</sup>

23rd Light Infantry Battalion (Georgia)—U/I location

Marine Aircraft Group 26 (Col. Patrick Gramuglia, USMC)—Camp Leatherneck; aviation support in Helmand and Nimruz Provinces<sup>54</sup>

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 (USMC)—Camp Bastion; heavy transport aviation<sup>55</sup>

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 467 (USMC)—Camp Bastion; attack aviation<sup>56</sup>

Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 261 (USMC)—Camp Bastion; long-range medevac<sup>57</sup>

**Train, Advise, Assist Command West / “Sassari” Mechanized Brigade (Brig. Gen. Manlio Scopigno, Italy)—Camp Arena, Herat; supporting ANA 207th Corps in Badghis, Farah, Ghor, and Herat Provinces<sup>58</sup>**

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 Afghanistan<sup>59</sup>

*Major changes since July 1, 2014:*

—Relief of 4th ID by 1st Cavalry Division as RC South

—Transformation of RC Capital and RC West into TAAC Capital and TAAC West

—Downsizing of NTM-A from three-star to one-star command

—Relief of 3-10 Mountain by 3rd Cavalry Regiment in RC East

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> 1 Coldstream Guards relieved The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards as the Kabul Support Unit in February 2014 (see regimental newsletter). Their exact chain of command is unclear.

<sup>2</sup> 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 (not included on this order of battle). See USSOCOM Fact Book 2013. Maj. Gen. Reeder took command of SOJTF-A in June 2014.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.)

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> IX (B) Squadron, a Tornado GR4 squadron, relieved II (AC) Squadron in May 2014.

<sup>10</sup> 39 Squadron is a Reaper UAV squadron.

<sup>11</sup> 4th ERS is an MC-12 squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.

<sup>12</sup> 62nd ERS is an MQ-1 and MQ-9 drone squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.

<sup>13</sup> 75th EFS is an A-10C squadron that deployed in October 2013. See warthognews.blogspot.com.

<sup>14</sup> 83rd ERQS is an HH-60G rescue helicopter squadron.

<sup>15</sup> This F-16 squadron deployed in November 2013 and moved from Kandahar to Bagram in December 2013.

<sup>16</sup> 774th EAS is a C-130J squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.

<sup>17</sup> 18th MP Brigade relieved 333rd MP Brigade in July 2013. See brigade Facebook page.

<sup>18</sup> This battalion deployed in early 2012.

<sup>19</sup> Brig. Gen. Hetherington took command of NTM-A in July 2014.

<sup>20</sup> 2-508 PIR relieved 1-294 Infantry in early January 2014.

<sup>21</sup> XVIII Airborne Corps relieved III Corps as the headquarters of the IJC in February 2014.

<sup>22</sup> 63rd EOD Battalion relieved 242nd EOD Battalion in June 2014.

<sup>23</sup> 2-44 ADA deployed in February 2014.

<sup>24</sup> JTF Trailblazer relieved JTF Sapper at the end of May 2014.

<sup>25</sup> 365th Engineer Battalion relieved 8th Engineer Battalion and 122nd Engineer Battalion in December 2013.

<sup>26</sup> NMCB-25 relieved NMCB-28 in April 2014.

<sup>27</sup> 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.

<sup>28</sup> 877th Engineer Battalion relieved 133rd Engineer Battalion in June 2014. The battalion falls under the CENTCOM Materiel Recovery Element, not ISAF, but is listed here for clarity’s sake.

- <sup>29</sup> ODIN stands for Observe-Detect-Identify-Neutralize. The current leadership of TF ODIN-E arrived in July 2013.
- <sup>30</sup> 48th BCT relieved the 226th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in February 2014.
- <sup>31</sup> The current headquarters of RC-Capital arrived in November 2012. ISAF.NATO.int, “Subordinate Commands | RC-Capital.”
- <sup>32</sup> 10th Mountain Division relieved 101st Airborne Division as RC-East in February 2014.
- <sup>33</sup> TF 222/K, built around the 1st Mechanized Infantry Battalion, relieved TF 222/J, built around the 3rd (Princess Basma) Mechanized Infantry Battalion, in late June 2014.
- <sup>34</sup> 3rd CR relieved 3rd BCT, 10th Mountain in July 2014. See brigade and battalion Facebook pages.
- <sup>35</sup> 2nd BCT, 101st Airborne relieved 4th SFAB, 10th Mountain in late February 2014. See brigade Facebook page and battalion Facebook pages.
- <sup>36</sup> 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.
- <sup>37</sup> 1-227 Aviation relieved 1-135 Aviation in January 2014.
- <sup>38</sup> The Nordic-Baltic Transition Support Unit was established in March 2013 and comprises 450 Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, and Latvian troops.
- <sup>39</sup> See RC-North Facebook page.
- <sup>40</sup> 1-41 Infantry relieved 6-4 Cavalry in January 2014. See battalion Facebook page.
- <sup>41</sup> 2-121 Infantry deployed in January 2014.
- <sup>42</sup> 1st Cav relieved 4th ID as RC-South in early July 2014. See division Facebook page.
- <sup>43</sup> 4/4 ID relieved 2nd Cavalry Regiment in early April 2014. See brigade Facebook page.
- <sup>44</sup> 2-12 Infantry relieved 3rd BCT, 1st ID at the end of February 2014. See 3/1 BCT Facebook page.
- <sup>45</sup> 16th CAB relieved 1st CAB, 1st ID in April 2014.
- <sup>46</sup> I MEF (Forward), also known as Marine Expeditionary Brigade—Afghanistan, relieved II MEF (Forward) as RC-Southwest in early February 2014; also in the spring of 2014, the British brigade-level headquarters TF Helmand merged into RC-Southwest.
- <sup>47</sup> 1/7 Marines relieved 3/7 Marines in March 2014.
- <sup>48</sup> 2nd CEB relieved 1st CEB in late April 2014.
- <sup>49</sup> 26 Regiment RA relieved 3 Regiment RHA in May 2014.
- <sup>50</sup> 5 Rifles relieved 4 Scots at the end of May 2014.
- <sup>51</sup> 1 QDR relieved 3 Mercians and 9th/12th Royal Lancers at the end of May 2014.
- <sup>52</sup> 1st Marine Regiment replaced 2nd Marine Regiment as TF Belleau Wood in late February 2014.
- <sup>53</sup> 1/2 Marines relieved 1/9 Marines in May 2014.
- <sup>54</sup> 3rd MAW (Forward) relieved 2nd MAW (Forward) in early February 2014.
- <sup>55</sup> HMH-466 is a CH-53E squadron that relieved HMH-462 in March 2014.
- <sup>56</sup> HMLA-467 is an AH-1W and UH-1Y squadron that relieved HMLA-369 in May 2014.
- <sup>57</sup> VMM-261 is an MV-22B squadron that deployed in January 2014.
- <sup>58</sup> The “Sassari” Brigade relieved the “Aosta” Brigade as RC-West in February 2014.
- <sup>59</sup> 2-5 Infantry relieved 1-214 Field Artillery in December 2013. See battalion Facebook page.