



COALITION COMBAT AND ADVISORY FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

AFGHANISTAN ORDER OF BATTLE

BY WESLEY MORGAN NOVEMBER 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; 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.

International Security Assistance Force / United States Forces—Afghanistan (Gen. John Campbell, USA)—ISAF Headquarters, Kabul

Kabul Support Unit / 2 Rifles (UK)—Camp Souter, Kabul; security force supporting British personnel and facilities and ISAF headquarters¹

TF Volunteer / 2-162 Infantry (USA)—New Kabul Compound; security force supporting U.S. personnel and facilities and ISAF headquarters²

1-186 Infantry (USA)—U/I location

Special Operations Joint Task Force—Afghanistan / NATO Special Operations Component Command—Afghanistan (Maj. Gen. Ed Reeder, USA)—Camp Integrity, Kabul³

Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force—Afghanistan (USA)—Bagram Airfield; supporting Afghan Defense Ministry special operations forces⁴

ISAF Special Operations Forces (UK/Australia)—Kabul; supporting Afghan Interior Ministry special operations forces⁵

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. John McMullen, 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 (Col. Rhude Cherry, USAF)—Kandahar Airfield; surveillance support in southern and western Afghanistan⁸

31 Squadron Royal Air Force (UK)—Kandahar Airfield; close air support⁹

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

41st Airlift Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; transport support¹⁰

62nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (USAF)—Bagram, Kandahar, and Jalalabad Airfields; surveillance support¹¹

83rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; medical evacuation support¹²

4th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; close air support¹³

163rd Fighter Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; close air support¹⁴

ISAF Joint Command / XVIII Airborne Corps (Lt. Gen. Joseph Anderson, USA)—Kabul International Airport; countrywide operational headquarters¹⁵

TF EOD / 63rd EOD Battalion (Lt. Col. Bobby Sadler, USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-IED operations in eastern and southern Afghanistan¹⁶

TF 5-5 Air Defense Artillery (USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-rocket and -mortar mission at bases countrywide¹⁷

Joint Task Force Trailblazer / 2nd Engineer Brigade (Col. Peter Andrysiak, USA)—Bagram Airfield; overseeing construction and deconstruction operations countrywide¹⁸

528th Engineer Battalion (USA)—split between Bagram Airfield and Kuwait¹⁹

Joint Task Force ODIN (Col. Mark Levine, USA)—Bagram Airfield; countrywide surveillance support²⁰

Joint Task Force Thor (USA)—Bagram Airfield; fixed-wing surveillance support²¹

Train, Advise, Assist Command Capital (Brig. Gen. Safak Gok, Turkey)—Camp Warehouse, Kabul; supporting Afghan security forces in Kabul²²

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 Corps²³

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 airfield²⁴

TF Rifles / 3rd Cavalry Regiment (Col. Cameron Cantlon, USA)—FOB Gamberi, Laghman; advisor group for ANA 201st and 203rd Corps²⁵

TF Tiger / 1/3 Cavalry (USA)—Jalalabad Airfield; operating in Nangarhar Province

TF Sabre / 2/3 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Mike James, USA)—Bagram Airfield; operating in Parwan Province

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

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

51st Light Infantry Battalion (Georgia)—Bagram Airfield; base security²⁶

82nd Combat Aviation Brigade (Col. Michael Musiol, USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support in eastern and northern Afghanistan²⁷

TF Wolfpack / 1-82 Attack Aviation (USA)—Jalalabad Airfield; aviation support in northern RC-East

2-82 Assault Aviation (USA)—U/I location

TF Talon / 3-82 General Support Aviation (USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support throughout RC-East

Train, Advise, Assist Command North (Brig. Gen. Harald Gante, Germany)—Camp Marmal, Mazar-e-Sharif; supporting ANA 209th Corps²⁸

Support Force Mazar-e-Sharif (Germany)—Camp Marmal; base security and support²⁹

Expeditionary Air Wing Mazar-e-Sharif (Germany)—Camp Marmal; fixed- and rotary-wing aviation support for northern Afghanistan³⁰

Train, Advise, Assist Command South / 1st Cavalry Division (Forward) (Brig. Gen. Douglas Gabram, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; supporting ANA 205th and 215th Corps³¹

TF Thunder / 3/3 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Brian Harthorn, USA)—Camp Dwyer, Garmsir; operating in Helmand Province³²

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

Manoeuvre Battlegroup / 5 Rifles (UK)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding³³

1 Queen's Dragoon Guards (Lt. Col. Will Davies, UK)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding³⁴

TF Mountain Warrior / 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division (Col. Brian Pearl, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; advisor group for ANA 205th and 215th Corps³⁵

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)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding

TF Steel / 2-77 Field Artillery (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; force protection and artillery support

TF Raptor / 16th Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (Col. Paul Mele, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; aviation support in southern and western Afghanistan³⁶

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

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

Marine Expeditionary Brigade—Afghanistan (Brig. Gen. Daniel Yoo, USMC)Kandahar Airfield; retrograding³⁷

1/2 Marines (USMC)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding

Marine Aircraft Group 26 (Col. Patrick Gramuglia, USMC)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding

Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 366 (USMC)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 467 (USMC)—Kandahar Airfield; retrograding

Train, Advise, Assist Command West / "Garibaldi" Bersaglieri Brigade (Brig. Gen. Maurizio Scardino, Italy)—Camp Arena, Herat; supporting ANA 207th Corps³⁸

Transition Support Unit Center / 1st Bersaglieri Regiment (Italy)—Camp Arena; operating in Herat Province

TF Fenice / 5th Aviation Regiment (Italy)—Camp Arena; aviation support in western Afghanistan

1-82 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Dan Miner, USA)—Shindand Airfield; operating in western Afghanistan³⁹

Major changes since October 1, 2014:

—Transformation of RC-South into TAAC-South

—Inactivation of RC-Southwest

—Relief of 2nd BCT, 101st Airborne by 3rd CR in RC-East

—Inactivation of CJATF-435

NOTES

1. 2 Rifles relieved 1 Coldstream Guards as the Kabul Support Unit in August 2014. Their exact chain of command is unclear.
2. 2-162 relieved 48th BCT in early September 2014.
3. Established in the summer of 2012, SOJTF-A/NSOCC-A is a two-star headquarters that oversees all three allied SOF commands in Afghanistan. Maj. Gen. Reeder took command of SOJTF-A in June 2014.
4. CJSOTF-A is headquartered by troops from the 3rd Special Forces Group. At its peak, CJSOTF-A controlled six battalion-level regional special operations task forces manned by Army Special Forces and infantry unit, Marine special operations forces, and Navy SEALs. It is unclear how many of these task forces remain.
5. Established in 2007, ISAF SOF is a one-star headquarters that oversees most non-U.S. special operations forces in Afghanistan as well as some U.S. special operations forces. Command of ISAF SOF appears to rotate between British and Australian officers. At its peak, ISAF SOF controlled regional special operations task groups led by Britain, Australia, Germany, Italy, Poland, France, the Netherlands, and the U.S. 10th Special Forces Group, among others, and advised elite Interior Ministry forces including the provincial response companies, the Kabul-based Crisis Response Unit, and Task Forces 333 and 444. It is unclear how many of these task groups remain.
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 quintuple-hatted as commander, NATO Air Command—Afghanistan; deputy chief of staff (air), ISAF Joint Command; deputy commander (air), USFOR-A; and director of the Air Component Coordination Element, ISAF's link to CENTCOM's Combined Air and Space Operations Center in the Persian Gulf, which directs U.S. air missions.
8. 451st AEG (formerly 451st AEW) operates MQ-1 and MQ-9 drones as well as E-11A piloted aircraft. See 451st AEG web site.
9. 31 Squadron, a Tornado GR4 squadron, relieved IX(B) Squadron in September 2014.
10. 41st AS is a C-130J squadron that deployed in September 2014.
11. 62nd ERS is an MQ-1 and MQ-9 drone squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.
12. 83rd ERQS is an HH-60G rescue helicopter squadron.
13. This F-16 squadron deployed in May 2014.
14. 163rd FS is an A-10C squadron that relieved 303rd EFS in October 2014.
75th EFS is an A-10C squadron that deployed in October 2013. See warthognews.blogspot.com.
15. XVIII Airborne Corps relieved III Corps as the headquarters of the IJC in February 2014.
16. 63rd EOD Battalion relieved 242nd EOD Battalion in June 2014.
17. 5-5 ADA relieved 2-44 ADA in October 2014.

18. JTF Trailblazer relieved JTF Sapper at the end of May 2014.
19. 528th Engineer Battalion deployed in August 2014.
20. ODIN stands for Observe-Detect-Identify-Neutralize. The current leadership of JTF ODIN arrived in July 2014.
21. JTF Thor replaced the Air Force's 4th ERS as Afghanistan's MC-12 Liberty surveillance unit in October 2014.
22. RC-Capital transformed into TAAC-Capital in August 2014.
23. 10th Mountain Division relieved 101st Airborne Division as RC-East in February 2014.
24. 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.
25. 3rd CR relieved 3rd BCT, 10th Mountain in July 2014. See brigade and battalion Facebook pages.
26. The 51st Battalion deployed in October 2014.
27. 82nd CAB relieved 159th CAB in September 2014. See brigade Facebook page and battalion Facebook pages.
28. RC-North transformed into TAAC-North in July 2014.
29. Unterstützungsverbandes MES replaced Partnering and Advisory Task Force MES and the Quick Reaction Unit in July 2014.
30. See RC-North Facebook page.
31. 1st Cav relieved 4th ID as RC-South in early July 2014, and transformed into the one-star TAAC-South at the beginning of October 2014.
32. 3/3 Cavalry relieved 1/7 Marines in late September 2014.
33. 5 Rifles relieved 4 Scots at the end of May 2014.
34. 1 QDR relieved 3 Mercians and 9th/12th Royal Lancers at the end of May 2014.
35. 4/4 ID relieved 2nd Cavalry Regiment in early April 2014. See brigade Facebook page.
36. 16th CAB relieved 1st CAB, 1st ID in April 2014.
37. I MEF (Forward), also known as Marine Expeditionary Brigade—Afghanistan, departed the Bastion-Leatherneck base complex in Helmand at the end of October 2014.
38. The "Sassari" Brigade relieved the "Aosta" Brigade as RC-West in February 2014.
39. 2-5 Infantry relieved 1-214 Field Artillery in December 2013. See battalion Facebook page.