DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

DEPLOYMENT HANDBOOK
AFGHANISTAN

4 SEPTEMBER 2009

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LOCATION & CLIMATE

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located on a cross roads between central and south Asia. The nearest coastline is in Pakistan, approximately 283 miles to the south. Afghanistan is bordered by Pakistan to the east and south, China and Tajikistan to the northeast, Uzbekistan to the north, Turkmenistan to the northwest and Iran to the west.



Afghanistan has a very dry climate, with the majority of rainfall usually occurring in the north of the country in March and April, however monsoonal rainfall can occur in the southern plateau during summer.

The country experiences great variation in temperature during winter and summer, with highs in the south reaching as high as 122°F (50°C), while winters are harsh with freezing nights and temperatures in higher elevations significantly below freezing.

During the summer, Kandahar Province can experience the Simoom wind - a hot, dry and dust laden wind, making the area prone to sandstorms.

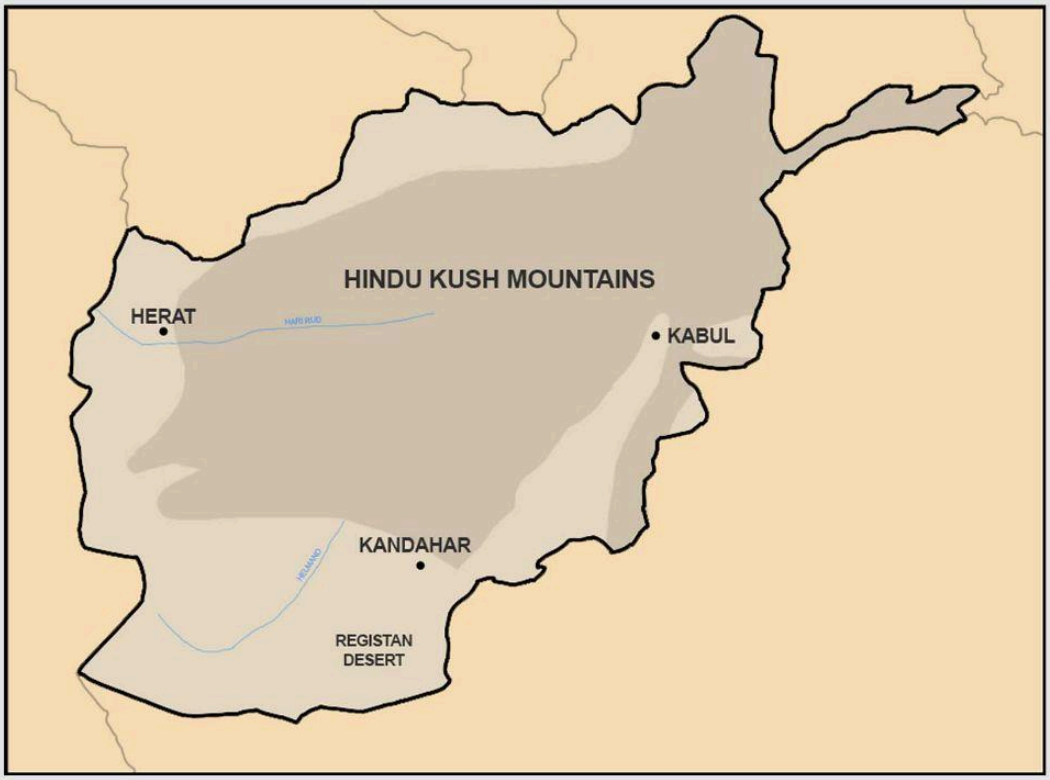
LOCATION & CLIMATE

Afghanistan is 252,072 square miles in size. It is predominantly a mountainous country, but with open plains in both the south and the north. The Hindu Kush Mountains make up the central highlands, running southwest from the northeast of the country. These mountains have formed many valleys and gorges and offer a multitude of strategic locations and choke points.

Located at the western boundary of the Himalayas, numerous peaks in the Hindu Kush rise up to well over 20,000 feet above sea level, with the highest peak being Noshaq (on the Afghan/Pakistani border) at 24,580 feet.

The north of the country has fertile rolling hills and plains known as the Northern Plains, and are a major part of Afghanistan's agricultural production.

In the south, the Southern Plateau primarily consists of deserts and arid salt flats, with the Registan Desert being a major feature south of Kandahar. The Helmand and Hari Rud rivers provide irrigation to form two green zones, the exception to an otherwise largely infertile area.



GEOGRAPHY

POPULATION

Afghanistan has an estimated population of 33 million, although precise numbers become less reliable in the remote, rural locations. Over 70% of the population live in rural areas, with 25% residing in urban centers. The remaining population are nomadic.



Major Cities:

Kabul

With a population of over 3 million, Kabul is Afghanistan's largest city, and it's capital. Kabul is a multicultural city, with a varied population drawn from the different ethnicities that make up the Afghan state. The city was heavily damaged during the Afghan civil war and suffered greatly under Taliban rule. Since the US led invasion, Kabul has seen a resurgence, with a rapid growth in population and a number of major buillding projects. Kabul is located in a valley high in the Hindu Kush, and at 5873 feet above sea level is one of the highest capital cities in the world.

Kandahar

Afghanistan's second city, Kandahar lies 3310 feet above sea level, situated on the Southern Plateau between the Hindu Kush and the Registan Desert. Kandahar is the former capital of the Taliban regime and is of significant spiritual value to the Taliban. The city contains one of the holiest sites in Afghanistan, Kirka Sharif - the Shrine of the Cloak, which is believed to contain the cloak of Mohammed. Kandahar is also a major city for the Pashtun people, who make up the majority of the cities 600,000 inhabitants.

Herat

Sitting in a valley to the west of the country, Herat is Afghanistan's third largest city. The city is close to the Iranian border and an important centre for Persian Culture, and as such receives considerable investment from Iran. Herat is inhabited predominantly by Persian and Farsi speaking Tajiks.

Mazar-e-Sharif

Afghanistan's fourth largest city, Mazar-e-Sharif lies on the northern plains at the feet of the Hindu Kush. Mazar is a multicultural city, the economic center of northern Afghanistan, and contains a number of important shrines and archaeological sites. Standing at 1171 feet above sea level it is the lowest lying major city in Afghanistan.

Kunduz

Lying close to Mazar-e-Sharif on the northern plains, Kunduz is a predominantly Pashtun city, despite it's location in traditionally Uzbek and Tajik lands. Kunduz lies within a highly productive agricultural area.

Jalalabad

Jalalabad is a Pashtun dominated city, situated in a valley close to the Pakistani border in the east of Afghanistan. It sits at the western end of the famed Khyber Pass and as such has major transport routes to Pakistan.

Taloqan

Taloqan is a major Tajik city in north Afghanistan. It was the last major city to fall to the Taliban, holding out all the way until September 2000. It was liberated from the Taliban a little over a year later during the US led invasion.

Ghazni

Strategically located on the highway between Kabul and Kandahar, Ghazni is a multicultural city, home to Tajiks, Hazara and Pashtuns along with a number of other ethnic groups.

POPULATION

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Khost

East of Ghazni lies Khost, in close proximity to the border with Pakistan. The city is majority Pashtun, and due to it's location has seen a large amount of insurgent activity over the last year.

Lashkar Gah

The capital of Helmand Province, Lashkar Gah is a major city in southern Afghanistan. The city lies on the banks of the River Helmand and due to US irrigation projects in the mid 20th century now sits within a highly fertile green zone. However this fertile ground has helped establish Helmand Province as a major producer of poppies and narcotics. UK forces moved into Lashkar Gah and Helmand province in 2006 to stem the flow of insurgents from the Pakistani border to the south and the area has since become one of the most active insurgent hot spots in Afghanistan. The presence of local 'narco warlords' has complicated the situation for ISAF forces in this area.

POPULATION

ETHNICITY & RELIGION

Afghanistan is a multicultural and multilingual society, a result of historic trade routes and centuries of warfare and invasions. The major ethnic groups within Afghanistan are; Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara and Uzbek, with the remainder of the country being Turkmen, Nuristani, Baluch and the nomadic Aimaq.

Pashtuns are the single largest group, forming around 40% of the population and predominantly reside in the south and east of Afghanistan. Pashtuns will speak either Pashto or Dari (or both), with Dari being reserved more for the urban educated. The majority of the Pashtun community are Pashto speaking and reside in rural areas.

The second largest ethnic group are the Tajiks, contributing to around 25% of the population. Tajiks are descended from Persians and reside in two main locations - Herat in the west and the northeast of Kabul. Tajiks are more likely to be found living in urban areas, and as a community have a great deal of political influence.

Descended from the Mongols, the Hazara make up around 10% of the population and inhabit the central highlands west of Kabul. The Hazara speak Hazaragi, a form of Dari. They practice Shi'a Islam, as opposed to Sunni Islam like the majority of the population.

The last major ethnic group in Afghanistan are the Uzbeks, constituting just under 10% of the population. Uzbeks typically speak both Dari and Uzbek and are usually located in the northwest of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan is a highly religious country, and religion is an essential part of life for most Afghans. The vast majority of the population are from the Sunni branch of Islam, but there is also a significant Shi'a community in Afghanistan in the form of the Hazara ethnic group.

Within Islam the role of the Mullah is an important and influential one. The Mullahs are the local religious leaders in their communities, and will usually be the mosque leader in a particular area. As such they carry great influence and weight in their communities.

ETHNICITY & RELIGION

TRIBAL LIFE & CONFLICT

Afghanistan is often referred to as a nation of tribes, however in modern times it is only the Pashtuns who remain organized into tribal groups. The rural Pashtuns maintain traditions and practices that often date back centuries, while urban Pashtuns have mostly moved away from tribal traditions.

Within a Pashtun tribal family, the eldest male, or Patriarch, will usually be the head of the family. Each family will likely contain several generations of family members, and will occupy a single building or single compound of buildings. The family will live a 'traditional' and conservative life, with marriage often being to paternal cousins and family roles based on gender.

A Pashtun tribal village has a distinct structure. The head of the village is known as the Malik, with the Mullah being the local religious leader. Major landowners in the area are referred to as Khan, who may fulfill the other roles in smaller villages. Villagers meet at a Jirga (outside of Pashtun society this is referred to as a Shura), this meeting of influential villagers is the key decision making forum in Pashtun tribal society, and is a highly important part of Pashtun life.

Within the Pashtun tribes there are several sources of tribal conflicts, although it should be noted the majority of conflict occurs within a singular tribe, not between tribes. The first of these conflicts is between the Durrani and Ghilzai, a conflict that dates back hundreds of years between the two main tribal organizations.

Under the Durrani tribe are two large sub-tribe groups - the Zirak and Panjpai. Within the Zirak are the major groups; Barakzai, Achakzai and Popalzai, whose members control the land south of the Hindu Kush. The Panjpai consists of smaller and weaker tribes, existing on less fertile and productive land, whom the Taliban relied on for support in exchange for elevated positions in the Taliban administration. Since the fall of the Taliban, the Zirak have sought to reestablish themselves as the dominant force in local government, land ownership and the opium trade, driving an increase in inter-tribal violence.

Pashtun culture involves conflict between family members in what is known as 'first cousin hostility' or Taborwali. This usually arises through disputes over the inheritance of land when a senior family member passes, a process driven by the scarcity of fertile land in Afghanistan. Complex, large family structures and the lack of any formal administration to control the boundaries of land leads to frequent border disputes between family members. This mistrust and at times open hostility leads to regular violent clashes between family members.

TRIBAL LIFE & CONFLICT

Afghanistan is one of the least developed countries in the world, with a significant percentage of it's population below the poverty line. However since the US intervention and fall of the Taliban the country has seen a large influx of investment as the west looks to rebuild Afghanistan, resulting in renewed economic growth.

The official currency of Afghanistan is the Afghani (AFN), worth around 50 AFN to $1.

There is a stark difference in living standards between the urban and rural areas, with many rural areas having either an unreliable electrical supply or no supply at all. Within cities such as Kabul major building works are evident, with modern apartment blocks now sitting alongside traditional Afghan buildings and Soviet built concrete residential blocks. In the rural areas, the mud and stone built house and compound is still the primary residence.

Agriculture is the primary source of employment in Afghanistan. The main crops grown in the country include; wheat, grapes, potatoes, pomegranates and watermelons and Afghanistan is regarded to produce high quality fruit. The country also sits on a wealth of natural resources, with significant deposits of metals, rare earth elements, gas and oil beneath the country.

There is a darker side to Afghanistan's economy - the narcotics trade. The country is estimated to supply 80% of the world's opium supply, with areas such as the Helmand river valley being a major part of this economy. In many areas the poppy has supplanted other agricultural crops as the primary crop, due to the significantly higher profits available within the heroin trade. As such, poppy production can be regarded as the primary source of income for many Afghan farmers. Likewise, the levels of opium addiction in Afghanistan is also very high.

The opium trade therefore fuels both resistance and mistrust of the ISAF mission, with locals being fearful that the presence of ISAF will lead to poppy eradication programmes and the destruction of their livelihoods. The presence of local narcotics barons and their own militias further complicates matters, and drives more resistance to the ISAF mission. The Taliban, who are anti-narcotic in their ideology, appear to have put this misgiving aside for the time being, allowing the opium trade to contribute to funding their insurgency.

ECONOMY

Afghanistan is located along the historic silk road, and as a result was an essential crossroads between the west, the east and south asia. The country has seen numerous conflicts throughout history, with the Persians, Alexander the Great, the Mongols, the British Empire and the Soviet Union amongst those to experience the inhospitable terrain, unforgiving climate and determined fighters of what would become Afghanistan.

The nation of Afghanistan first emerged under the rule of Ahmad Shah Durrani and the Durrani Empire in the 18th century, but would later collapse following Durrani's death. Decades of civil war followed, before the country was eventually reunited in the 19th century under Dost Mohammad Khan. This reunification would not last, and following Khan's death in 1863 civil war broke out once again. This period was also marked by the 'great game' - competition on the geo-political stage between the British and Russian Empires, with Afghanistan heavily influenced by the rival powers during this period due to it's proximity to the jewel in the British Empire - India. In 1839 the British invaded Afghanistan and began the first Anglo-Afghan war, where an initially successful invasion turned into disaster following an Afghan uprising and the subsequent massacre of the occupying British force. The second Anglo-Afghan war was fought between 1878 and 1880 as the British successfully installed a regime in Afghanistan that would provide a buffer between Russia and British controlled India. A third Anglo-Afghan war was fought in 1919, through which Afghanistan secured it's independence.

Afghanistan enjoyed several decades of relative stability following it's independence, but this would end in 1973 following a coup by former Prime Minister Mohammad Daoud Khan. Daoud abolished the monarchy and declared himself president of the Republic of Afghanistan. The reforms Daoud attempted were not successful and in 1978 the communist and pro-Soviet People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) assassinated Daoud and carried out a violent coup known as the Saur Revolution. The Republic of Afghanistan then became the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, and the new government initiated a Marxist-Leninst agenda with the state restricting religious practices and replacing traditional laws with secular, Marxist-Leninist laws. During this period significant aid was received from the Soviet Union, with infrastructure projects undertaken and military training provided.

As this was happening the PDPA was engaged in a violent campaign of repression against the Afghan elite and the religious establishment, with tens of thousands either killed, tortured or imprisoned. The actions of the government, it's enforcement of secular practices and it's close links to the Soviet Union made it deeply unpopular with much of Afghanistan, and by spring 1979 the majority of the country was experiencing significant unrest, with over half the Afghan army deserting or joining the growing uprising.

HISTORY

SOVIET WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

With the uprising in Afghanistan continuing to grow, the PDPA requested support from Soviet forces in spring 1979 to assist in the fight against the Mujahideen. Soviet deployments would begin by the summer, troop numbers were limited initially but would soon increase as the year progressed and the PDPA government started to show signs that it may not survive the rebellion. Of particular concern to the Soviets was the ascent to the head of government by deputy prime minister Hafizullah Amin in September 1979, following Amin's arrest and killing of General Secretary Taraki. The Amin government seemed doomed to fail, and with the Soviet Union concerned about the rise of a hard line Islamic regime in Afghanistan and destabilization of Soviet influences in Central Asia, the decision was made to intervene militarily in Afghanistan.

The invasion began on the 25th December 1979, led by the Soviet 40th Army. By the 27th December Soviet troops had occupied major government buildings in Kabul, and Amin had been assassinated. The Soviet Union claimed this operation was in accordance with an existing treaty between the two countries and their actions were liberating Afghanistan from Amin's rule. The west viewed it as an illegal Soviet invasion.

Following the fall of Amin, the Soviets installed deputy prime minister Babrak Kamal as the new head of government, and within two weeks Soviet troop numbers would surpass 100,000. Soviet forces quickly established control over the country's urban centers and strategic locations and at the request of the Kamal government would be drawn into fighting against the rebels, resulting in a large loss of life amongst both rebel forces and civilian protesters. The Soviet presence was viewed poorly by the majority of the Afghan population and had the effect of galvanizing resistance to the Soviets and PDPA even further.

Despite the large Soviet deployment, the majority of the country remained outside their control, allowing the Mujahideen to wage a fierce guerilla war. The Soviet response was to intensify military operations in rebel controlled areas, displacing or killing large numbers of civilians as they did so. As Soviet operations increased, so did the resistance to their occupation and flow of recruits to the rebels. By 1985 the war was still being fiercely fought, with the Mujahideen - by now being supported by the CIA through financing and arms - engaging in sabotage operations, assassinations and widespread attacks on Soviet forces.

HISTORY

HISTORY

SOVIET WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Like other great military powers before them, the Soviet Union found themselves bogged down in heavy fighting in Afghanistan. The style of combat the Soviets were equipped and trained to fight - large combined arms operations where armor and artillery could be massed - were unsuitable for the counter insurgency operation they now found themselves in. Small, mobile Mujahideen units were using hit and run tactics in the inhospitable terrain of Afghanistan to great effect, with US support resulting in the supply of the Stinger MANPAD system to the rebel forces, which were claimed to have shot down large numbers of Soviet aircraft. As Mikhail Gorbachev ascended to the position of General Secretary of the Soviet Union in 1985, the Soviet desire to withdraw from Afghanistan began to grow.

In support of the desired withdrawal, the Soviet Union were developing and training the Afghan armed forces to take over the fight against the Mujahideen, but despite a build up to over 300,000 military personnel the Afghan military remained largely ineffective and suffered high numbers of desertions. The Soviets were also having issues with the leadership of the Afghan government, and in May 1986 Mohammad Najibullah was elected general secretary, replacing Kamal, who by now had fallen out of favour with Moscow. Najibullah began to attempt to unite the country, initiating political and social reforms, and offering a more religious, Islamic slant to the government.

In July 1987, the Soviet Union formally announced it's intention to withdraw from Afghanistan and attempts at peace negotiations were by now underway. A number of Mujahideen groups formed an alliance under an Interim Afghan Government, led by Sibghatullah Mojaddedi, who had the diplomatic coup of meeting with US vice president George Bush. Despite the negotiations, the interim government felt a military victory against the PDPA government was the only viable solution and proved unwilling to reach a political settlement.

The first half of the Soviet withdrawal began on the 15th May 1988, with the remaining forces withdrawn between 15th November and the 15th February 1989. With the Soviet Union now out of Afghanistan the Mujahideen went on the offensive, quickly taking a number of provincial capitals. However, against expectations the PDPA government managed to survive against the Mujahideen until April 1992, when rebel forces finally seized Kabul. Najibullah attempted to flee the country, but blocked from doing so took refuge in a UN compound in Kabul. He would remain there until the Taliban seized power in 1996, where he was eventually captured, tortured and killed.

HISTORY

SOVIET WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

The war in Afghanistan was costly for the Soviet Union, with official casualty figures of over 14,000 killed and 50,000 wounded. Material losses were also high, with over 450 aircraft and many thousands of vehicles lost. The war was also a heavy financial burden, costing upwards of $50 billion (over $100bn adjusted for the current day). The war was even more devastating on Afghanistan itself, with an estimated 3,000,000 Afghan lives lost, a large number of them civilian. Following the Soviet withdrawal Afghanistan was left without a functioning government, with the PDPA unable to exert influence over large parts of the country, and the interim Afghan government in exile and beset by inter-factional rivalries and disagreements.

CIVIL WAR

The Afghan Civil war began in 1989 as Soviet forces withdrew. Fighting began between the PDPA goverment of Mohammad Najibullah and the Mujahideen, before subsequently spreading between the rebel groups themselves.

The PDPA government was expected to fall to the Mujahideen quickly, but the ongoing receipt of military aid from the Soviet Union enabled the communist government to fight on. The Afghan armed forces still possessed thousands of pieces of heavy military equipment, including over 2000 scud missiles that were regularly used to attack Mujahideen forces. Some pro-government militias also remained, with large paramilitary forces still available to Najibullah.

The Mujahideen consisted of many rival factions, including those of; Ahmad Shah Massoud, Gulbiddin Hekmatyar, Abdul Rasul Sayyaf and Jalaluddin Haqqani. Although notionally united in a common goal of defeating the Soviet occupation, the different rebel groups were also frequently fighting each other, with Hekmatyar's forces regularly clashing with Massoud's and each side targeting the other's senior figures.

The major battle of this period was at Jalalabad, which the Mujahideen - supported by the Pakistani Intelligence agency the ISI - attacked in the spring of 1989. The approximately 10,000 rebel fighters were drawn from the ranks of Hekmatyar's and Sayyaf's forces, and had initial successes in capturing Jalalabad's airfield. However in the face of strong government defenses, intensive air support and a large Scud attack of over 400 missiles, the attack would ultimately fail, demonstrating the Afghan armed forces were able to fight without Soviet intervention. The defeat was a serious blow to Mujahideen ambitions and damaged Pakistani plans to install Hekmatyar as the new Afghan leader.

Following the defeat at Jalalabad, Massoud's and Hekmatyar's forces continued to fight each other through the early 1990s. A major breakthrough for the Mujahideen then came in March 1991, when the city of Khost finally fell to the forces of Haqqani after years under siege.

By the fall of the Soviet Union in late 1991 and the arrival of Boris Yelsin as the leader of Russia, Afghanistan had become highly dependent on Soviet aid. When Yelsin turned off the taps and cut aid to the PDPA, the Afghan Air Force found itself starved of fuel and grounded, and the loyalty of the pro government militias soon began to waver as they stopped receiving weapons and ammunition. The final nail in the coffin of the PDPA came in 1992 when the leader of a prominent communist militia defected to the Mujahideen, forcing Najibullah to announce he would resign.

As the Afghan government began to break apart in March 1992, Massoud quickly moved to capture Mazar-e-Sharif. Negotiations between the rebel leaders and the UN began in an attempt to form a new Afghan government, with an invitation to attend being declined by Hekmatyar, who appeared intent on capturing Kabul himself. During the negotiations between the other Mujahideen leaders it had been agreed that they would accept a formal transfer of power from Najibullah, before allowing him to leave the country. Mujahideen forces were to remain outside Kabul during this process, however in the intervening period the various rebel factions began to creep up on Kabul, with Massoud's forces occupying the territory north of the city, while Hekmatyar's forces moved in from the south.

On the 16th April, the well laid plans were disrupted when Najibullah was finally removed from power by a coalition of his own generals, who invited Massoud to take control of the government - an offer that was declined. By the 24th, Hekmatyar was close to taking control of Kabul, prompting the entry to Kabul of Massoud in an attempt to block his great rival. Hekmatyar was forced to withdraw from the city by the 27th April and Sibghatullah Mojaddedi was proclaimed as the interim president of Afghanistan, pending elections in 18 months time. However the split between prominent Mujahideen leaders and the arrival of additional rebel groups in Kabul nullified the Mojaddedi government from the start, and Kabul would be left fighting as a further civil war flared up across the city and the wider country between at least five separate factions. The fighting would eventually allow the opportunity for the emergence of the Taliban in 1994, who would emerge victorious in 1996 to begin a new chapter in the history of Afghanistan.

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HISTORY

THE TALIBAN

The Taliban is an Afghani political and militant movement, founded with a combined Islamic fundamentalist ideology and Pashtun tribal code. The Taliban emerged as a major faction within Afghanistan in 1994 during the Afghan civil war, before establishing themselves as the dominant force in the country by 1996.

The Taliban originated from Pashtun culture, with the majority of prominent figures within the group being from the Ghilzai tribal organization. The movement was driven by students from Pashtun areas in eastern and southern Afghanistan, these students had been educated in traditional Islamic schools (or Madrasa) in Kandahar. The Taliban gained the support of Haqqani and the 'Haqqani Network', and led by Mullah Omar the group spread across the country, supplanting the power of the Mujahideen warlords.

The Taliban took control of the Afghan government in 1996 and established the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. They were opposed strongly by the Northern Alliance - led by famed Mujahideen leader Ahmad Shah Massoud - a collection of militias who resisted the Taliban and held the northeast of the country for the duration of the Taliban's rule. Notably, Massoud was assassinated on the 9th September 2001, just two days before the terror attacks in the United States. The two assassins, who were posing as journalists, detonated explosives hidden in their equipment during an interview with Massoud. The assassins had strong links to al-Qaeda, with Osama Bin Laden suspected of seeking to strengthen his relationship with the Taliban government by killing it's primary rival in the country.

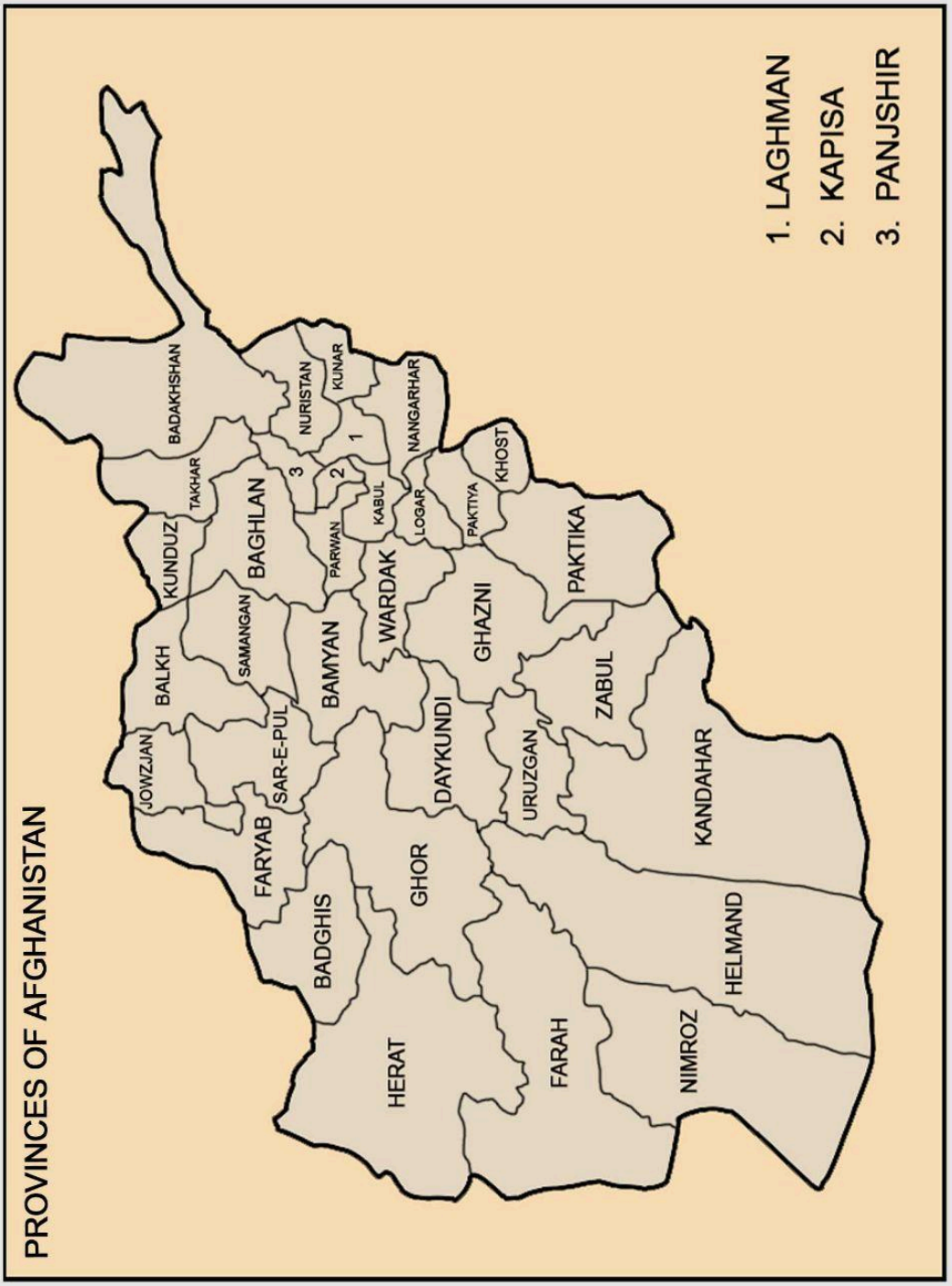
Once in power the Taliban made radical changes to Afghan law, implementing a strict form of Sharia (Islamic) law. During this process women were banned from most workplaces and education, and most forms of music, TV and entertainment were banned along with many sports and the internet. Strict penalties for crime were carried out, including amputation of limbs for thieves. Other forms of worship were outlawed and important cultural monuments were destroyed - most notably the Buddahs of Bamiyan. The Taliban also carried out systematic massacres of civilians and indiscriminate killings - including a large massacre at Mazar-e-Sharif that killed thousands.

Taliban rule over Afghanistan ended in in 2001 following the US led invasion in the wake of the September 11th attacks.

GOVERNMENT

The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was established in 2004, replacing the interim and transitional governments which supplanted the Taliban. The current head of government is President Hamid Karzai, formerly the chief of the Pashtun Popalzai tribe.

Central government consists of executive, judicial and legislative branches, in the form of the President, Supreme Court and National Assembly respectively. The National Assembly consists of an upper and lower house. Administratively, the country is divided into 34 provinces, the Governors of which are appointed personally by the President. The Governor of a province can wield a large amount of local power, controlling the flow of money and the armed forces and police of their province. Local governance is stronger within urban areas, but struggles to exert much influence on rural areas. As a result of the Presidential appointment system and the power of provincial Governors, corruption is a serious issue in Afghan politics.



AFGHAN NATIONAL SECURITY FORCES (ANSF)

The ANSF consists of three components; the Afghan National Army (ANA), the Afghan Air Force (AAF) and the Afghan National Police (ANP). A core part of the ISAF mission is the development of these forces in order to enable Afghanistan to provide it's own security in the future.

The ANA is a volunteer organization and is modeled on a modern professional army, although there is still some way to go to realize that goal. ANA forces are commonly paired with western forces, who are providing training, mentoring and support in the field. The ANA is being re-equipped with standard NATO weapons, but may still possess large numbers of non-western weapons, vehicles and artillery. Recruitment and retention are a major issue for the ANA, desertion rates are high and some units display a serious lack of discipline and leadership, with drug use common. This is not indicative of all ANA units however, and some units and officers are highly regarded by their mentors, especially in the SOF community.

The ANP is a national police force, responsible for maintaining law and order at the local level. At the current time the ANP is considered to be an ineffective force, rife with corruption, infiltrated by insurgents and narco groups and untrusted by the local population. Corruption is a major problem when dealing with the Taliban insurgency - many insurgents simply bribe their way to freedom.

The AAF is not yet fully mission capable, but training and development is ongoing to this end. Currently the AAF operates a variety of transport and attack helicopters as well as light fixed wing transport aircraft.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

9/11 ATTACKS & UNITED STATES INVASION

On September 11th 2001, four commercial airliners were hijacked by al-Qaeda terrorists. Two were crashed into the twin towers in New York, causing their collapse. Another hit the Pentagon and the fourth crashed in Pennsylvania following a passenger revolt. In total, 2977 people were killed, making the 9/11 attacks the most deadly terrorist attack in history.

Following the attacks the United States demanded the Taliban handover the suspected organisers - the Islamic terror group al-Qaeda and it's founder Osama bin Laden - who had been allowed to operate from the safety of Afghanistan by the Taliban since 1996. After the Taliban failed to hand over Bin Laden, the US made the decision to invade Afghanistan, with the aim of capturing Bin Laden, destroying terrorist infrastructure in the country and removing the Taliban from power.

The invasion began on the 7th October, 2001 when British and American warships and aircraft launched attacks on the Taliban. US Special Operations teams were also inserted into the north of the country, where they linked up with the Northern Alliance. Supported by US airpower and special forces, the Northern Alliance re-took Mazar-e-Sharif on the 9th November, before sweeping into Kabul just four days later. Kunduz was the last northern Taliban stronghold to fall, and was captured on the 26th November. In the south, Kandahar fell in December and the surviving Taliban fled to neighbouring Pakistan, where the porous border with the FATA (semi autonomous tribal region in northwest Pakistan) allowed easy escape routes.

The notable Pashtun leader Hamid Karzai became the Afghan interim leader on 5th December 2001, before being elected as President in 2004.

INSURGENCY

Following the initial US invasion, up to 10,000 Taliban were able to escape across the border into Pakistan. Here, left alone by the Pakistani authorities, they were able to regroup and rebuild their strength. In Afghanistan, Kabul was held by ISAF forces, but security in the majority of the country was scarce and a variety of warlords and opium barons started asserting control. By 2002 the Taliban were already planning a resurgence, and insurgent activity started to increase in 2003, with assassinations, kidnappings and attacks on government schools and clinics. In 2004 the Taliban leader Mullah Omar announced a full scale insurgency against ISAF and the Afghan government, with the aim of retaking the country for the Taliban. During this period the Taliban were able to infiltrate the country from Pakistan, establishing themselves in rural communities in Zabul, Kandahar and Helmand.

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OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

INSURGENCY

The 2004 Afghan presidential elections would be targeted by the Taliban, but failed in their attempt to stop Karzai being elected President and by 2006 the insurgency was beginning to escalate. After an initially receptive attitude towards ISAF, the Afghan population began to develop resentment towards the occupation and the Karzai government, in which corruption was rife. As the insurgency grew the coalition's hunt for 'terrorists' would result in incidents of collateral damage and raids on suspected insurgents homes, further alienating the population and driving Taliban recruitment. Local leaders and government officials who opposed the Taliban were either killed or intimidated and the Taliban also used an anti-occupation message to garner support for the insurgency, tapping into Afghanistan's history of repelling foreign invaders, it's role in Afghan identity and the populations' distrust of the Karzai government. Adding to the anti-government sentiment were the opium barons and farmers, whose fear of government-led poppy eradication programmes drove them into the arms of the insurgents.

As the fighting grew, the use of drones to track and engage insurgent targets became commonplace and ISAF troop numbers increased as the ISAF mission expanded. The insurgents, almost always outgunned by ISAF forces began to to switch tactics, and by 2009 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) had become the biggest threat to ground forces in Afghanistan, with intelligence to suggest the Iranian Quds force are supplying weapons and bomb making equipment to the insurgents. Suicide bombings also increased markedly during this period.

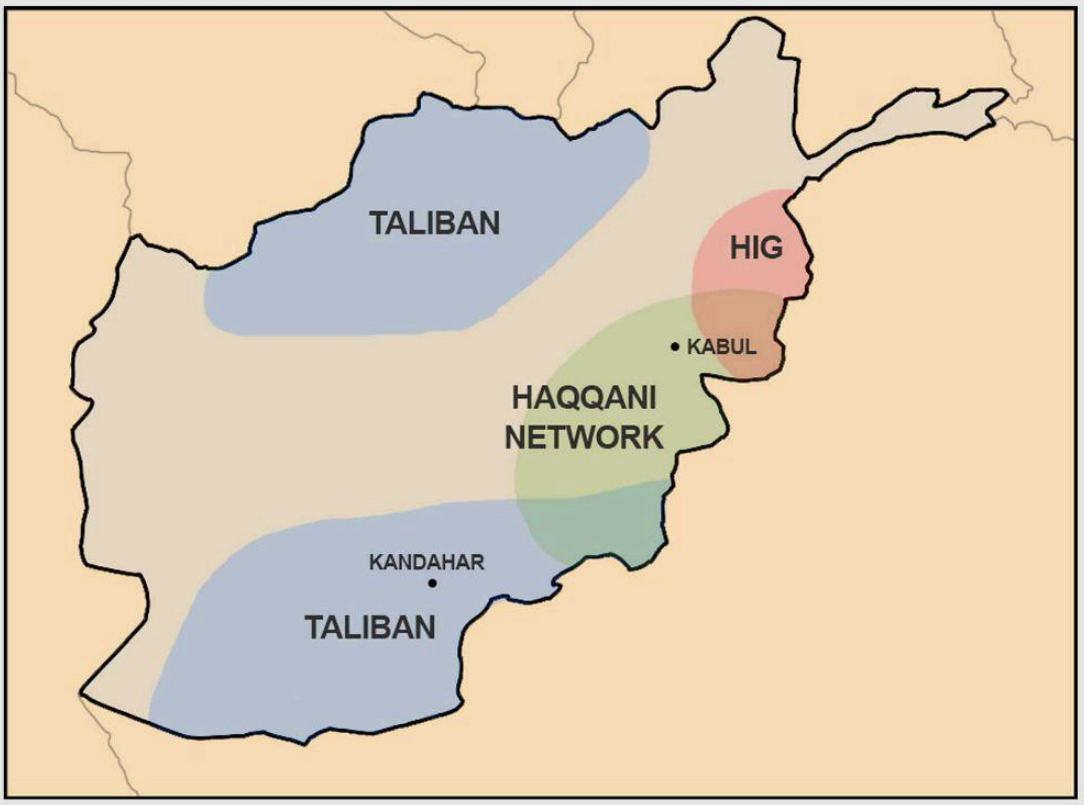
Although the ISAF mission is commonly thought of as a fight against the Taliban, the insurgency actually consists of a number of different organizations, reflecting Afghanistan's fractured past. However the primary insurgent force remains the Taliban, whose insurgency has successfully infiltrated a large portion of southern Afghanistan, along with areas in the north of the country. Estimates put the number of Taliban fighters at up to 25,000, with several thousand of these being experienced, battle hardened fighters.

Former Mujahideen Gulbuddin Hekmatyar controls another insurgent group, known as 'Hezb-I-Islami Gulbiddin' (HIG). After defeat by the Taliban in the Afghan civil war, Hekmatyar fled to Iran, before returning in 2002 to resist the ISAF occupation. Based out of Peshawar in Pakistan, HIG has successfully infiltrated the mountain communities in Nuristan and Nangarhar. Founded by another famed Mujahideen fighter, Jalaluddin Haqqani's 'Haqqani Network' is a significant insurgent group operating out of Pakistan's FATA tribal region. Estimated to have more than 10,000 fighters, the Haqqani Network is considered a highly capable insurgent group.

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INSURGENCY

Although Haqqani himself is not an active Taliban member, he did serve in the Taliban government and is aligned ideologically with their beliefs. The Haqqani network is believed to have helped shield Osama Bin Laden as he escaped Afghanistan in 2001. In the present day the Haqqani Network is operating in Nangarhar, Nuristan and Kunar as well as carrying out high profile attacks on Kabul.



ISAF

Following the unseating of the Taliban and appointment of Karzai, the UN authorized the creation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), with an original mandate to help the Afghans maintain security in Kabul and the surrounding areas, before expanding operations across the entire country by 2006. ISAF consists of deployments from all NATO member nations, along with additional partner nations such as Australia. The ISAF mission is to develop the Afghan armed forces and help rebuild a functioning government and democracy in Afghanistan, with the aim to prevent the return of the Taliban and deny refuge to terror organisations. A key part of the ISAF plan is the Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), which are tasked with coordinating, funding and developing local reconstruction projects in conjunction with local government. At present, ISAF numbers approximately 60,000 troops, deployed to over 200 bases across the country.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

ISAF COMMAND STRUCTURE

The ISAF mission operates under a four star command (COMISAF), currently held by US General Stanley McChrystal. Under COMISAF sit 5 regional commands, each with a geographic area of responsibility:

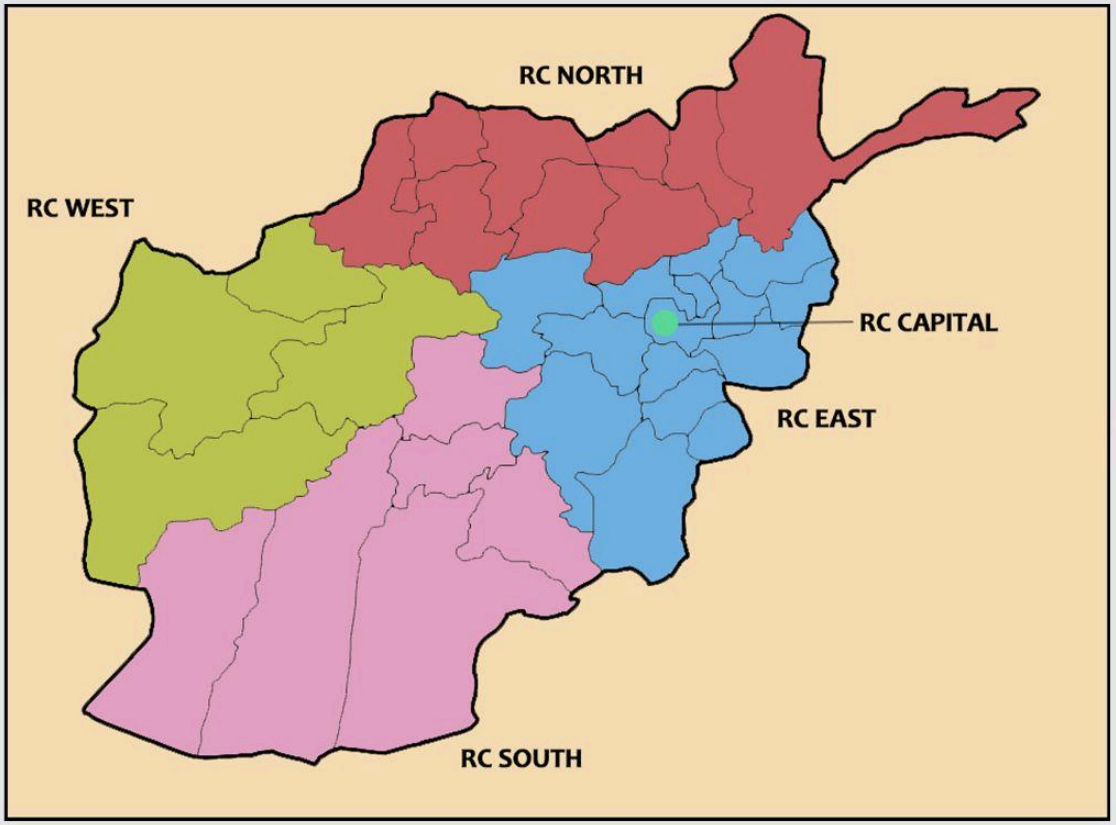
RC Capital is headquartered out of Kabul, and is currently led by France.

RC North is headquartered out of Mazar-e-Sharif, and is currently led by Germany.

RC West is headquartered out of Herat, and is currently led by Italy.

RC South is headquartered out of Kandahar, and is currently led by the Netherlands, supported by large British and Canadian deployments..

RC East is headquartered out of Bagram, and is currently led by the United States.



OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

PRESENT DAY

At the time of writing the insurgency in Afghanistan is widespread across the country. The main insurgent groups; the Taliban, HIG and the Haqqani Network exert a great deal of influence across Afghanistan. In addition to the three main insurgent groups, a number of smaller groups are also operating in Afghanistan, including the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU). The result is a disparate and decentralized insurgency, with insurgent groups operating independently of one another (and indeed at times in conflict with one another). The main insurgent leaders all reside in Pakistan, safe from the threat of US or ISAF attack, from where they can direct operations and funnel resources to the insurgency.

The insurgency is currently most active in the south, owing to the Taliban's connection to the area and the importance of Kandahar to the organization. Helmand's opium fields are also an important revenue stream for the Taliban while Helmand and Zabul provinces are important transit routes for Taliban crossing back into Afghanistan from Pakistan.

The second most active insurgent area of operations is in the east. Here all three main insurgent groups operate, with many crossing points to Pakistan within easy reach. The mountainous east also offers advantageous terrain for insurgents to hide in, as well as remote rural communities that the insurgents can easily influence and control.

As ISAF numbers have increased, insurgent tactics have moved towards more asymmetric warfare. IED attacks and suicide bombing have increased significantly in recent years, inflicting large numbers of causaltes at little cost to the insurgents, and having the advantage of reducing the mobility of ISAF ground forces. Indeed one British Army unit in Sangin, Helmand Province reported over thirty IEDS in one narrow street, making even short distance patrols a major expedition that would take hours to move even a few hundred meters.

Insurgent numbers have continued to increase as the insurgency has taken hold, driven by recruits fed into Afghanistan from the madrassas in western Pakistan, as well as Afghans motivated to side with the insurgents through coercion, financial incentives and opposition to ISAF occupation. A common Taliban tactic is to force an engagement with coalition forces in a populated area and await air attack, with the resulting collateral damage driving more recruits to the insurgency. There have been reports of the Taliban taking over family homes as fighting positions, forcing the family to remain so their resulting deaths can be used as propaganda to support the insurgency. Thus the avoidance of collateral damage and civilian casualties is currently a major factor in all ISAF operations.

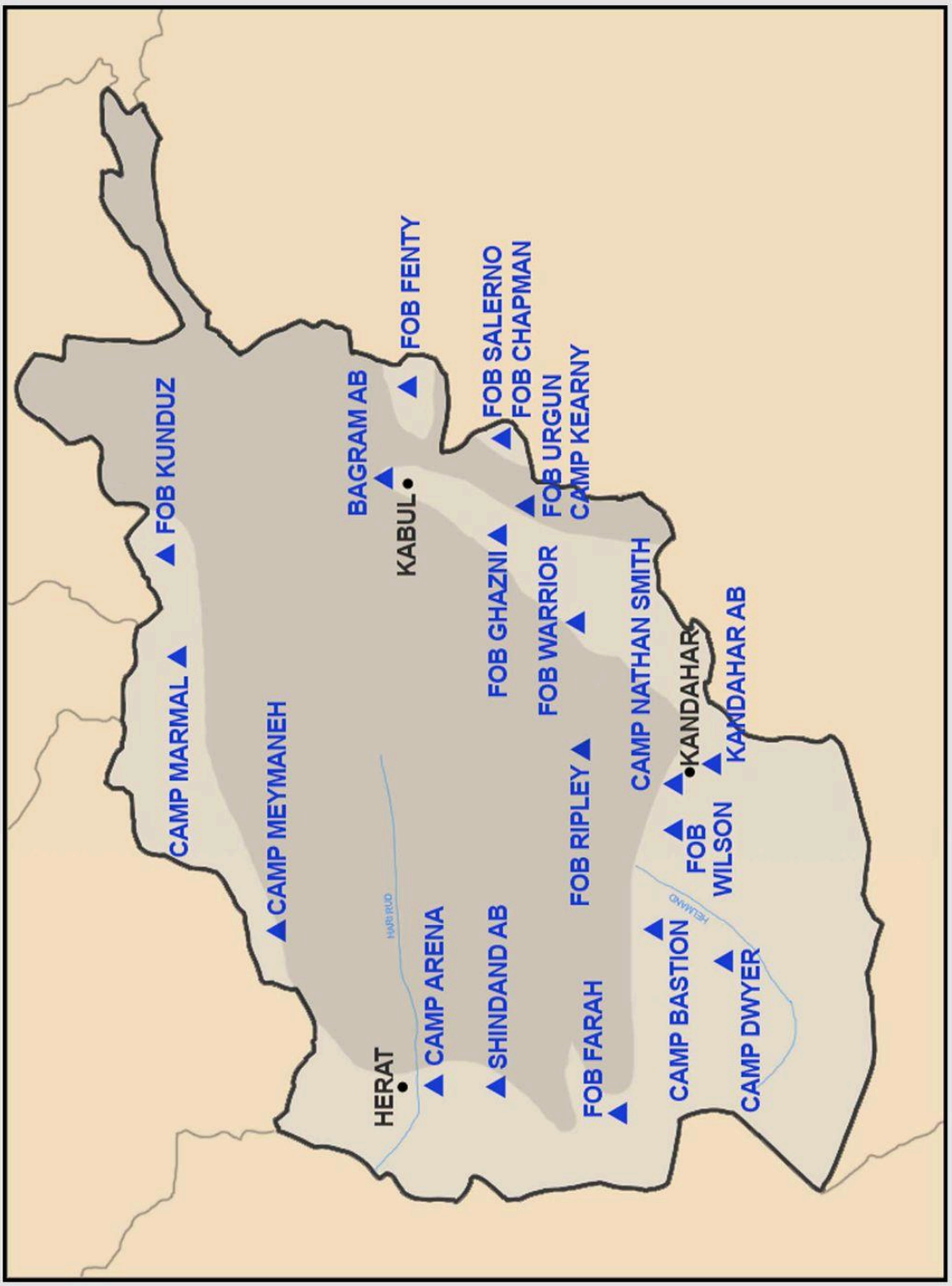
Insurgent leadership has proven highly effective thus far, with famed Mujahideen leaders such as Haqqani and Hekmatyar proving a draw to potential insurgents. While safely ensconced in Pakistan, it is unlikely that efforts to neutralise insurgent leaders will be successful.

Insurgent groups operate a variety of weapons systems, with both light and heavy weapons abundant in Afghanistan - a result of the Soviet occupation, porous borders and state support. Small arms such as Kalashnikov rifles and RPGs are extremely prevalent across the entire country and IEDs and home made explosives are commonplace, with support from the Iranian Quds force believed to be a factor in this. Mortars, rockets and heavy machine guns such DShKs are also regularly encountered, with the mounting of these weapons on 'technicals' commonplace. Threats to aircraft are rare, but there are potential threats that aircrew should be aware of, with heavy machine guns common across Afghanistan, posing a threat to slow moving, low flying aircraft. Several 23mm Soviet built ZU-23 cannons have also been previously sighted in Afghanistan. The MANPAD threat is more ambiguous, over two thousand US Stinger MANPAD missiles were supplied to the Mujahideen during the war against the Soviets, some of these weapons doubtless remain, but how many have survived and been maintained in a usable condition is unknown. However several aircraft have reported near misses by ground launched missiles in previous years.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

ISAF MAJOR FACILITIES

In addition to the major ISAF facilities shown below, hundreds of smaller FOBs, outposts and patrol bases are located throughout Afghanistan.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

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AIRFIELD INFORMATION

KANDAHAR

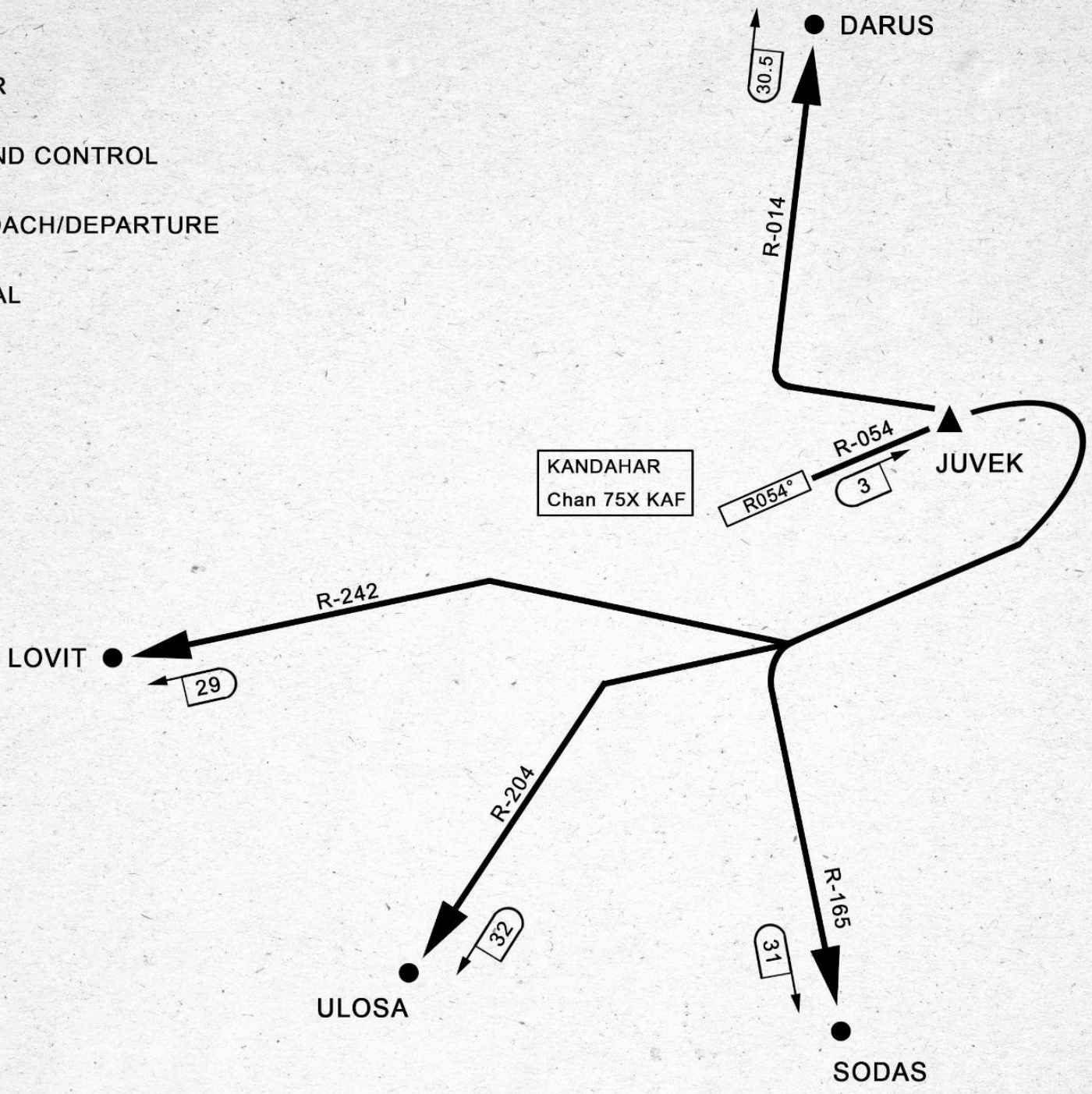
Coordinates:	North 31 30 21, East 65 50 53
Airfield Elevation:	3340 ft MSL
Runway Heading:	054 / 234
Runway Dimensions:	141 x 10,177 ft
Min. Taxiway Width:	G, W, F - 75 ft A, B, C, D, E - 100 ft

Taxiway G can be utilized for Emergency Landings (75 ft x 7552 ft)

Runway Dimensions:	141 ft x 10,177 ft
PAPI:	RWY 05 / RWY 23
TACAN:	KAF 75X
ATIS:	127.1 MHz
GROUND:	119.5 MHz
TOWER:	125.5 MHz
APPROACH/ DEPARTURE:	121.1 MHz
ARRIVAL:	124.0 MHz
HAZARDS:	Terrain - elev. 4540 ft MSL, 3.5nm NW of airfield. Terrain - elev. 4897 ft MSL, 13nm E of airfield.
RESTRICTIONS:	Min alt for overflight of KHAR Heliport 3900 ft MSL, restriction applies from north side of KHAR RWY to river 2nm NW. All airspace within 50nm of KAF and below FL200 under control of KHAR tower.


FARP
KAF HELIPORT
MUSTANG
SLING LOAD AREA
EMERGENCY LANDING
YANKEE
WHISKEY
UNIFORM
SIERRA
ZULU
X-RAY
UAE
VICTOR
TANGO
DAC
STALLION
TAXIWAY W
3306'
G5
TAXIWAY G
W1
3338'
G4
G3
G2
054
234
E
D2
D1
C2
C1
B2
B1
A
TAXIWAY F
QUEBEC
OSCAR
DOS
NOVEMBER
MIKE
LIMA
KILO
JULIET
INDIA
HOTEL
GOLF
PANTHER
AAF
DAC - DANGEROUS AIR CARGO
DOS - DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AAF - AFGHAN AIR FORCE

ATIS
127.1
TOWER
125.5
GROUND CONTROL
119.5
APPROACH/DEPARTURE
121.1
ARRIVAL
124.0



DEPARTURE ROUTE DESCRIPTION

TAKEOFF RWY 05: Climb on track JUVEK (KAF R-054/3DME), then...

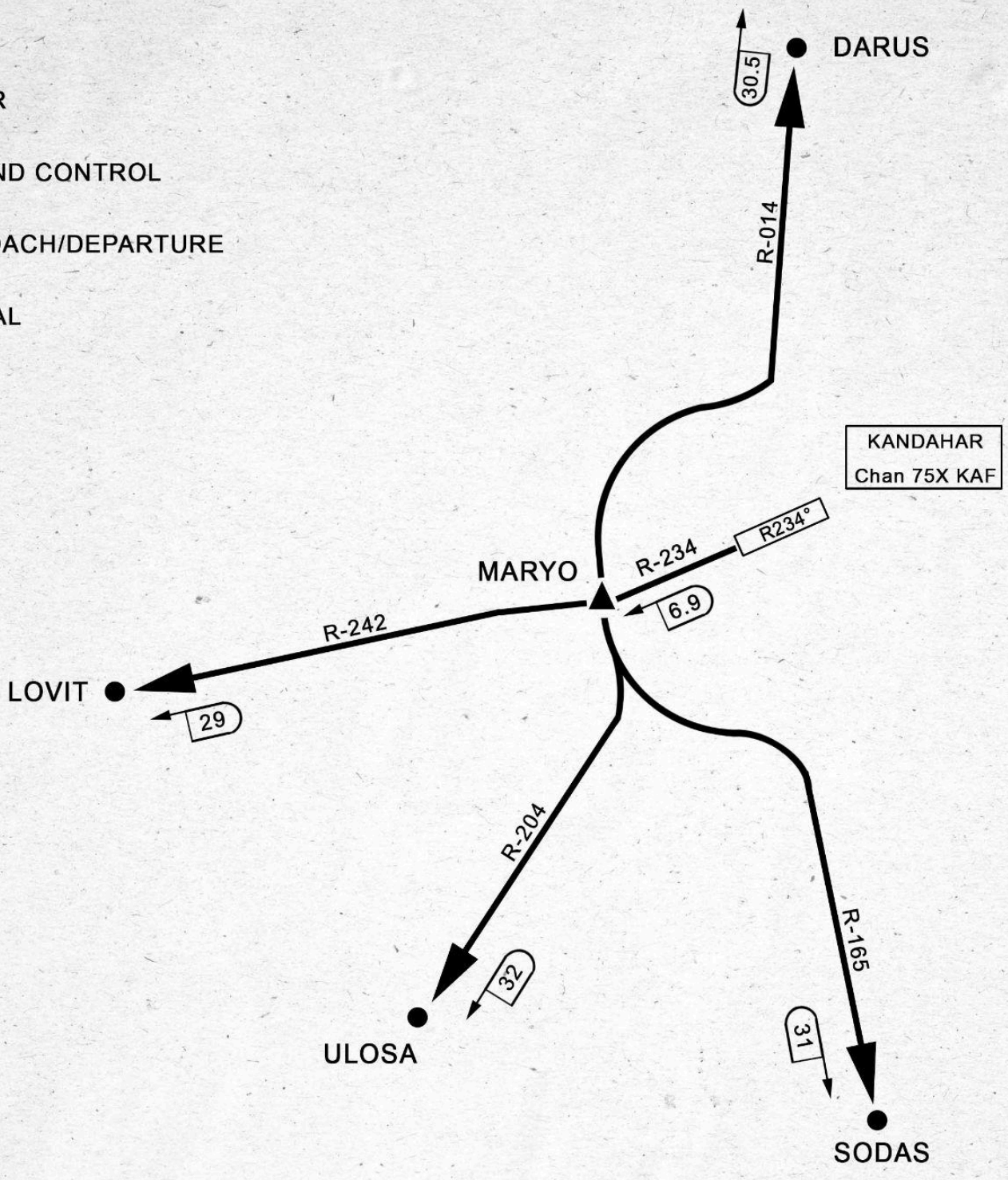
DARUS: left turn to intercept KAF R-014 DARUS (KAF R-014/30.5DME), climb assigned altitude.

LOVIT: right turn to intercept KAF R-242 LOVIT (KAF R-242/29DME), climb assigned altitude.

ULOSA: right turn to intercept KAF-204 ULOSA (KAF R-204/32DME), climb assigned altitude.

SODAS: right turn to intercept KAF-165 SODAS (KAF R-165/31DME), climb assigned altitude.

ATIS
127.1
TOWER
125.5
GROUND CONTROL
119.5
APPROACH/DEPARTURE
121.1
ARRIVAL
124.0



DEPARTURE ROUTE DESCRIPTION

TAKEOFF RWY 23: Climb on track MARYO (KAF R-234/6.9DME), then...

DARUS: right turn to intercept KAF R-014 DARUS (KAF R-014/30.5DME), climb assigned altitude.

LOVIT: right turn to intercept KAF R-242 LOVIT (KAF R-242/29DME), climb assigned altitude.

ULOSA: left turn to intercept KAF-204 ULOSA (KAF R-204/32DME), climb assigned altitude.

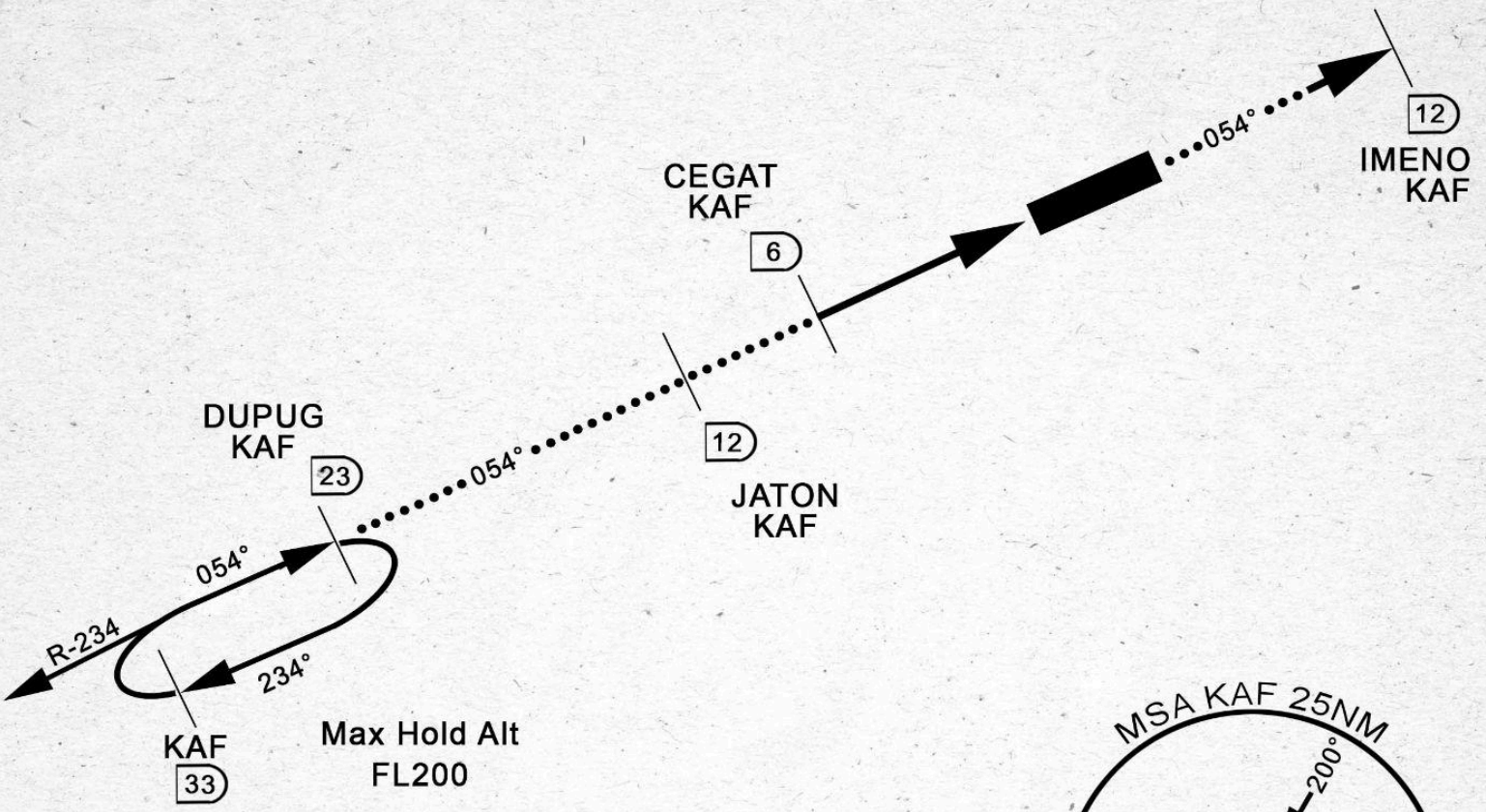
SODAS: left turn to intercept KAF-165 SODAS (KAF R-165/31DME), climb assigned altitude.

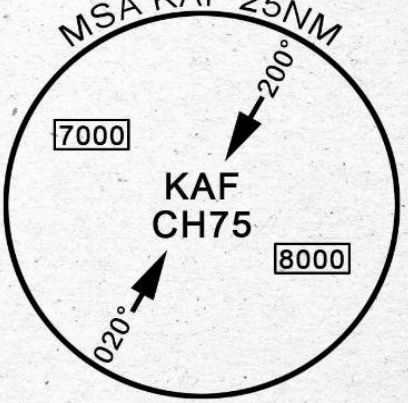
TACAN KAF Chan 75X	APCH CRS 055°	Rwy Idg 10,487 THRE 3306 Elev 3340

RWY 05 APPROACH

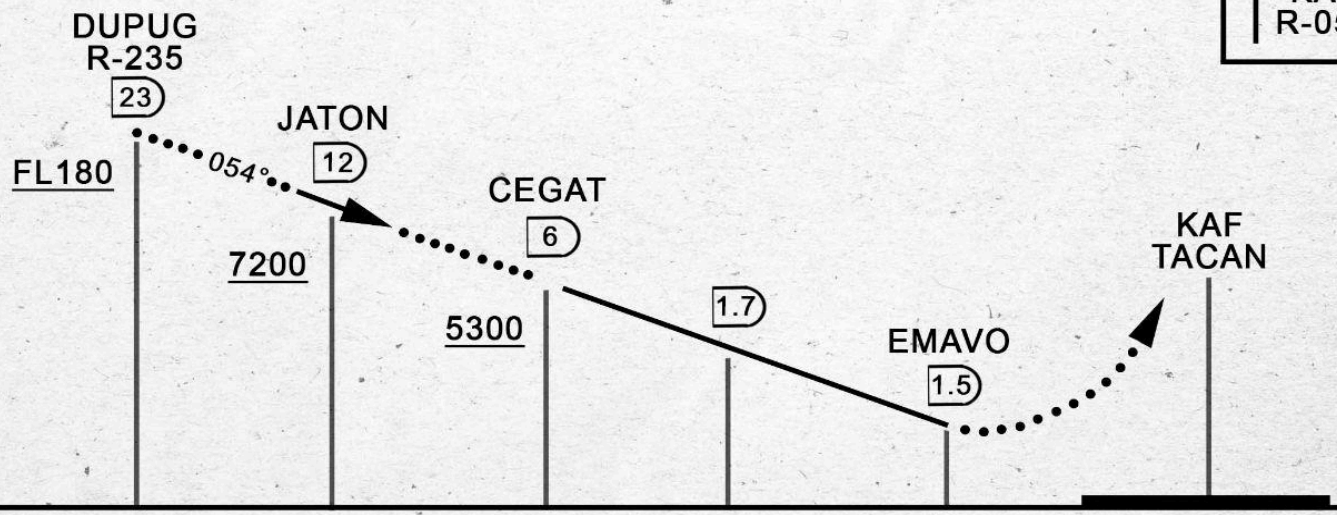
KANDAHAR (OAKN)

ATIS	KANDAHAR TOWER	KANDAHAR ARRIVAL	KAN'HAR APP	GROUND
127.1	125.5	124.0	121.1	119.5





8500 KAF R-052	IMENO KAF 12

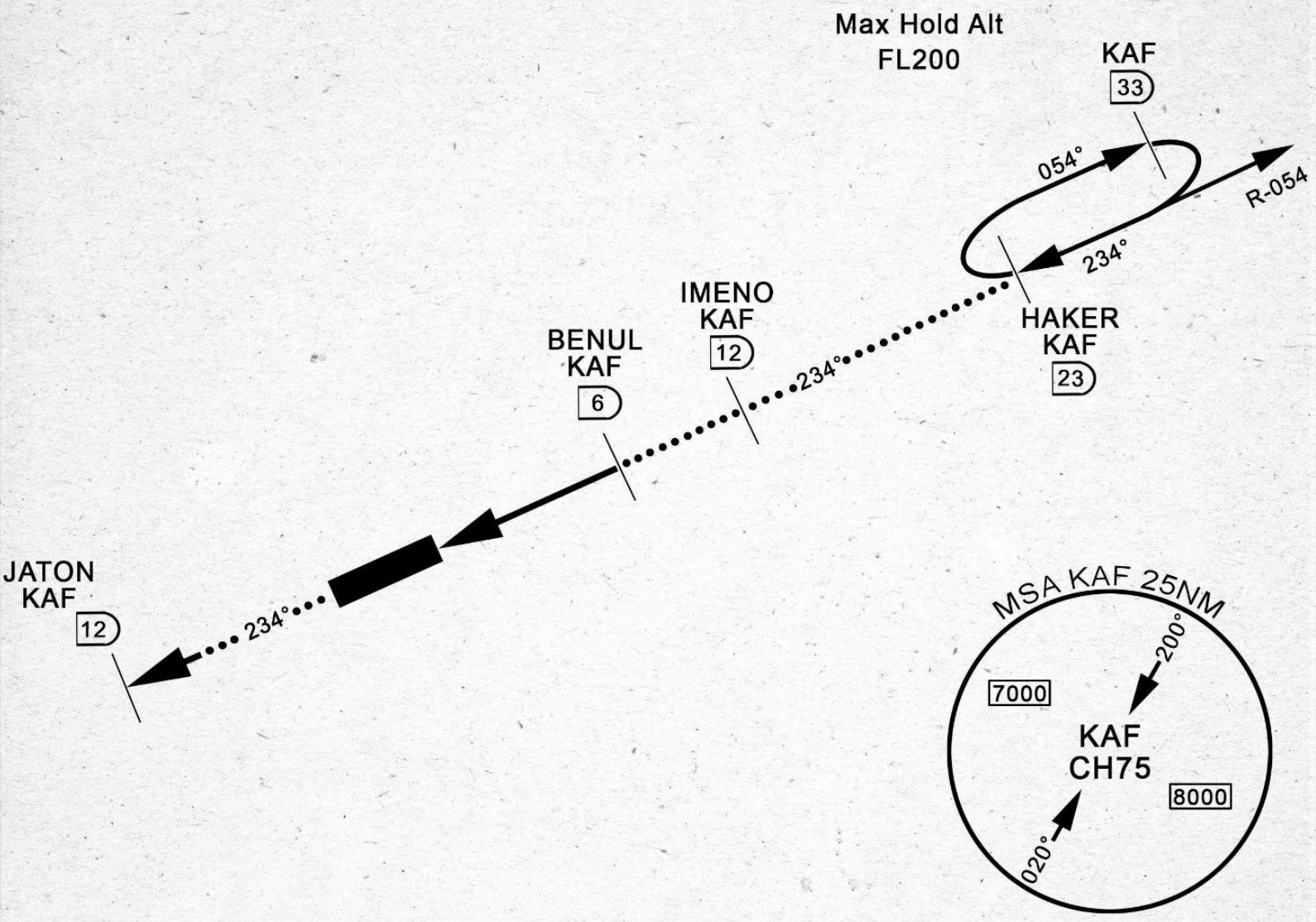


TACAN KAF Chan 75X	APCH CRS 232°	Rwy Idg 10,483 THRE 3340 Elev 3340

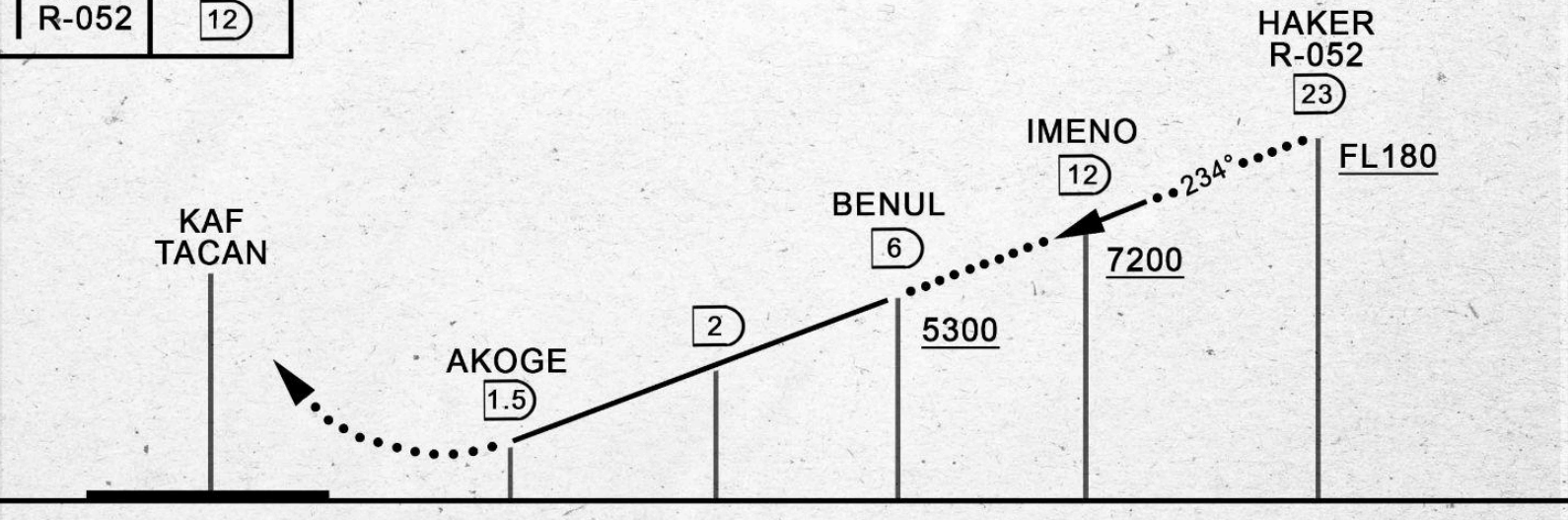
RWY 23 APPROACH

KANDAHAR (OAKN)

ATIS	KANDAHAR TOWER	KANDAHAR ARRIVAL	KAN'HAR APP	GROUND
127.1	125.5	124.0	121.1	119.5



8500 KAF R-052	JATON KAF 12



RWY 23 APPROACH

KANDAHAR (OAKN)

AIRFIELD INFORMATION

BAGRAM

Coordinates:	North 34 56 48, East 69 16 01
Airfield Elevation:	4895 ft MSL
Runway Heading:	027 / 207
Runway Dimensions:	150 x 11,850 ft
Min. Taxiway Width:	Juliet - 75 ft Zulu - 100 ft

Taxiway Zulu can be utilized for Emergency Landings (100 ft x 9415 ft)

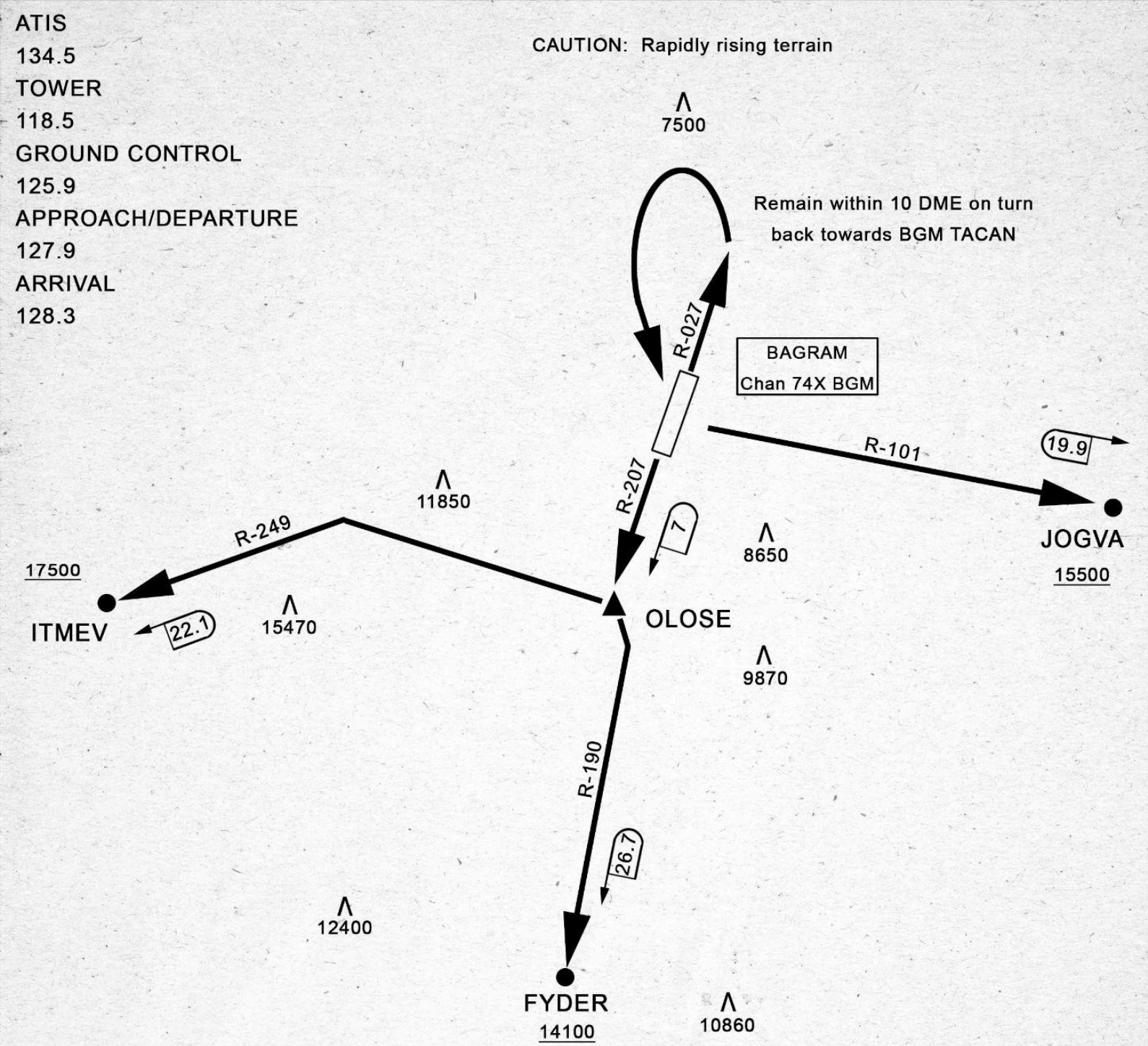
Runway Dimensions:	141 ft x 10,177 ft
PAPI:	RWY 03 / RWY 21
TACAN:	BGM 74X
ATIS:	134.5 MHz
GROUND:	125.9 MHz
TOWER:	118.5 MHz
APPROACH/ DEPARTURE:	127.9 MHz
ARRIVAL:	128.3 MHz
HAZARDS:	Terrain - elev. 5700 ft MSL, 4nm NE of airfield. Mountainous terrain to west, north and east of airfield.
RESTRICTIONS:	Min alt for overflight of Kabul IAP is 10,000 ft MSL. Restriction applies within 5 nm of Kabul IAP, excluding flight paths into and out of Bagram. Remain within 10DME BGM when departing RWY 03 or arriving RWY 21. All airspace within 30nm of BGM and below FL180 under control of BGM tower.


FOXTROT
DELTA
CHARLIE
ALPHA WEST
BRAVO
SIERRA
TANGO
ALPHA EAST
TAXIWAY JULIET
TAXIWAY ZULU
A1
A
F
E
L
C
027
207
4895’
4895’
P
N
M
E
L
K
ROMEO
PAPA
MIKE
ECHO
NOVEMBER
DAC
DAC - DANGEROUS AIR CARGO

OLOSE ONE DEPARTURE

BAGRAM (OAIX)

ATIS
134.5
TOWER
118.5
GROUND CONTROL
125.9
APPROACH/DEPARTURE
127.9
ARRIVAL
128.3



DEPARTURE ROUTE DESCRIPTION

TAKEOFF RWY 03: Climb on track 027, then make a left turn to climb direct BGM TACAN.

ITMEV: track 207 for OLOSE, then turn right to intercept BGM-249 ITMEV (BGM-249/22.1DME), cross ITMEV at 17500 or above.

FYDER: track 207 for OLOSE, then turn left to intercept BGM-190 FYDER (BGM R-190/26.7DME, cross FYDER at 14100 or above.

JOGVA: from BGM TACAN turn to intercept BGM-101 JOGVA (BGM R-101/19.9DME), cross JOGVA at 15500 or above.

OLOSE ONE DEPARTURE

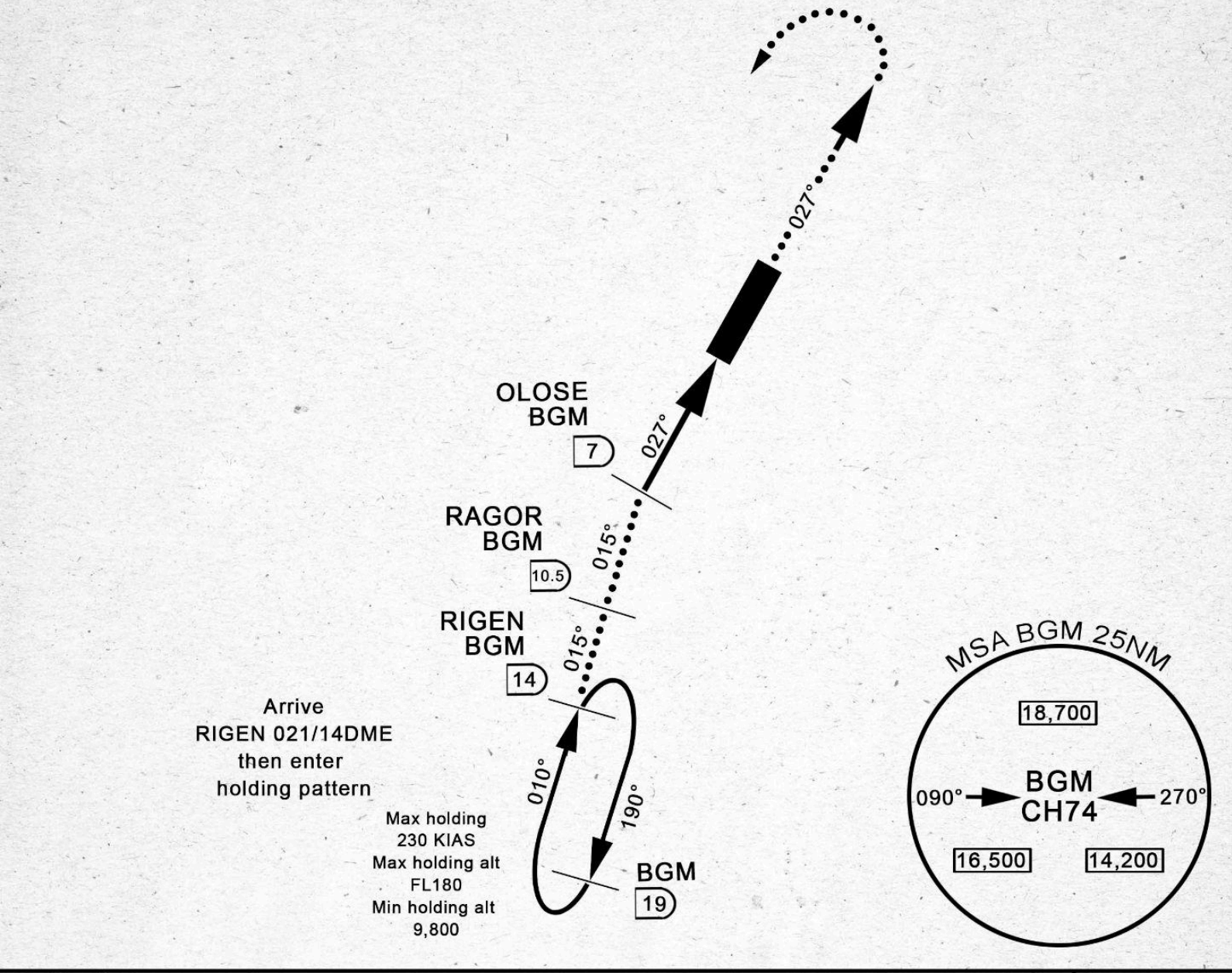
BAGRAM(OAIX)

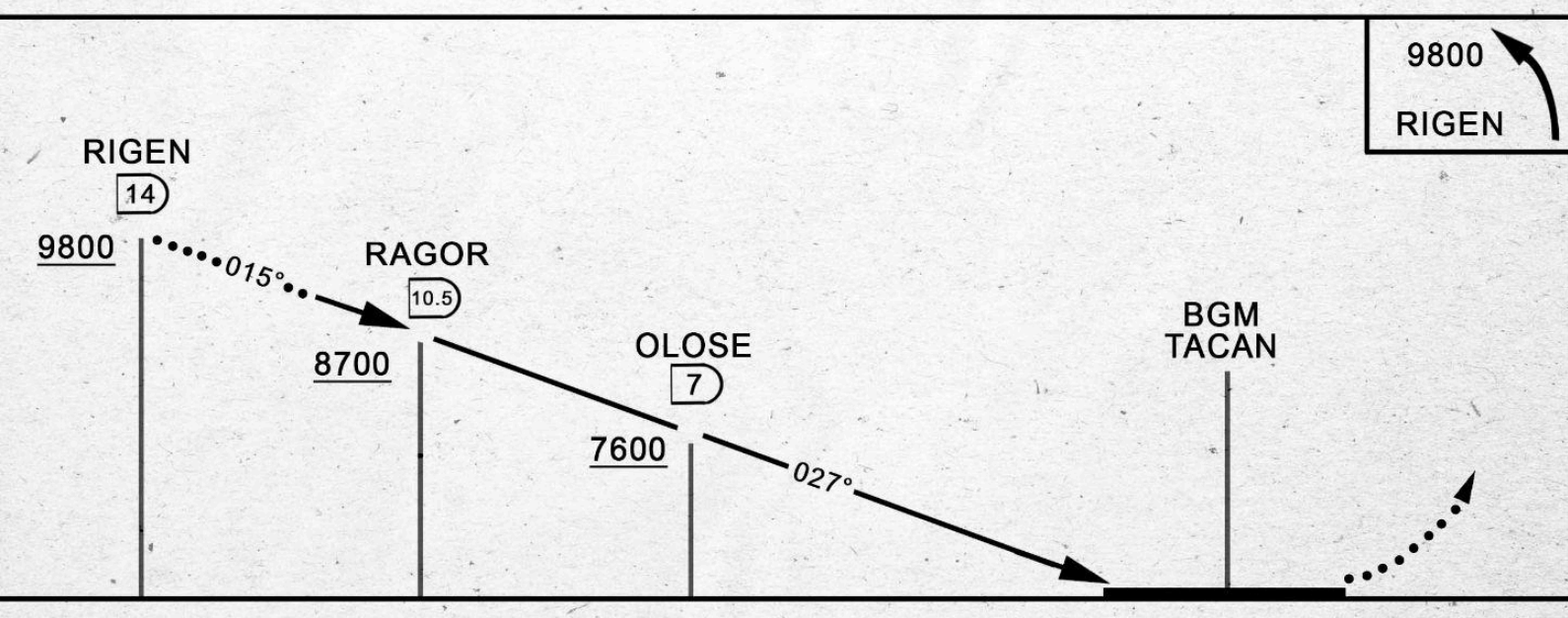
TACAN BGM Chan 74X	APCH CRS 027°	Rwy ldg 11,819 THRE 4868 Elev 4895

RWY 03 APPROACH

BAGRAM (OAIX)

ATIS	BAGRAM TOWER	BAGRAM ARRIVAL	BAGRAM APP	GROUND
134.5	118.5	128.3	127.9	125.9



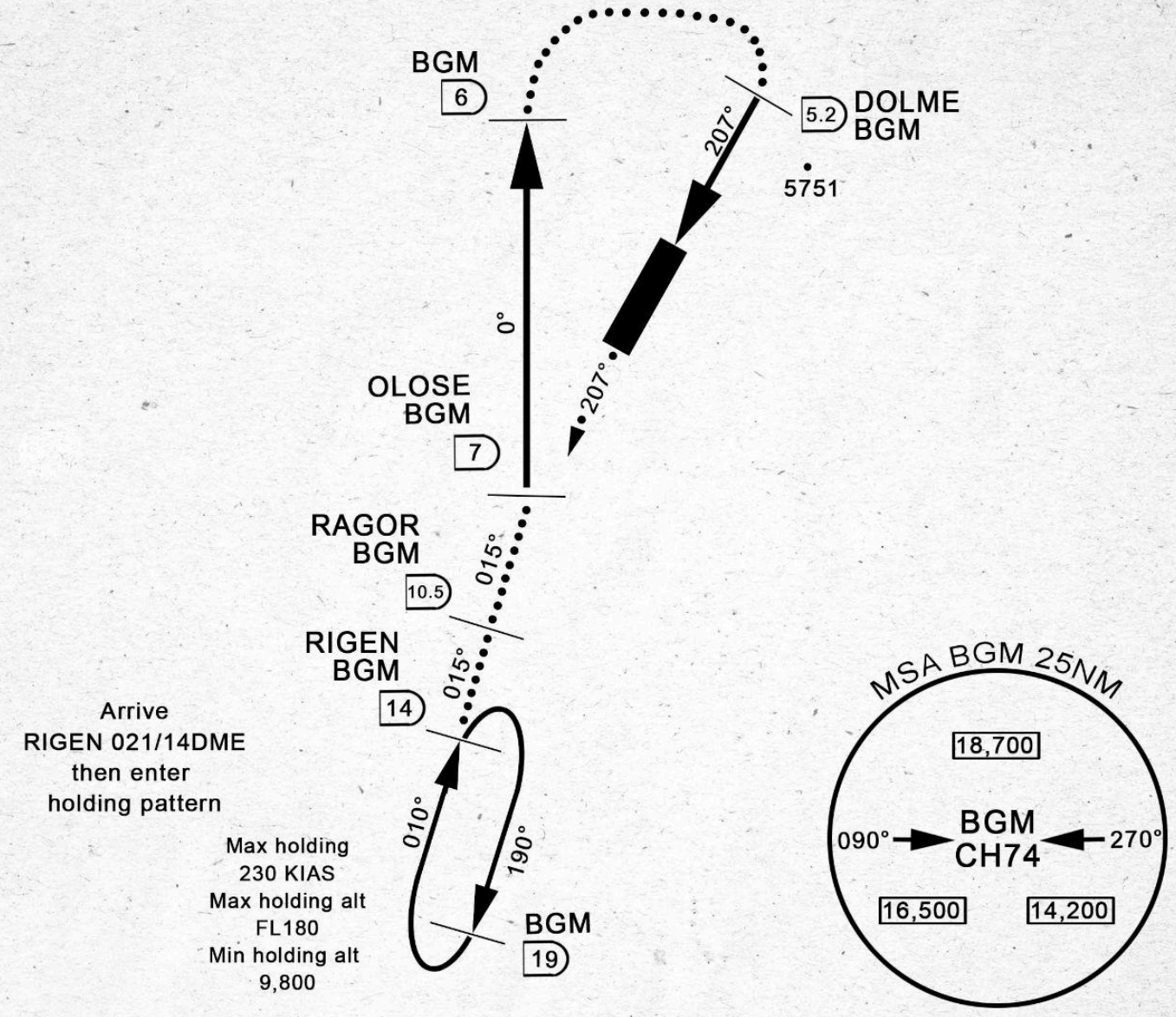


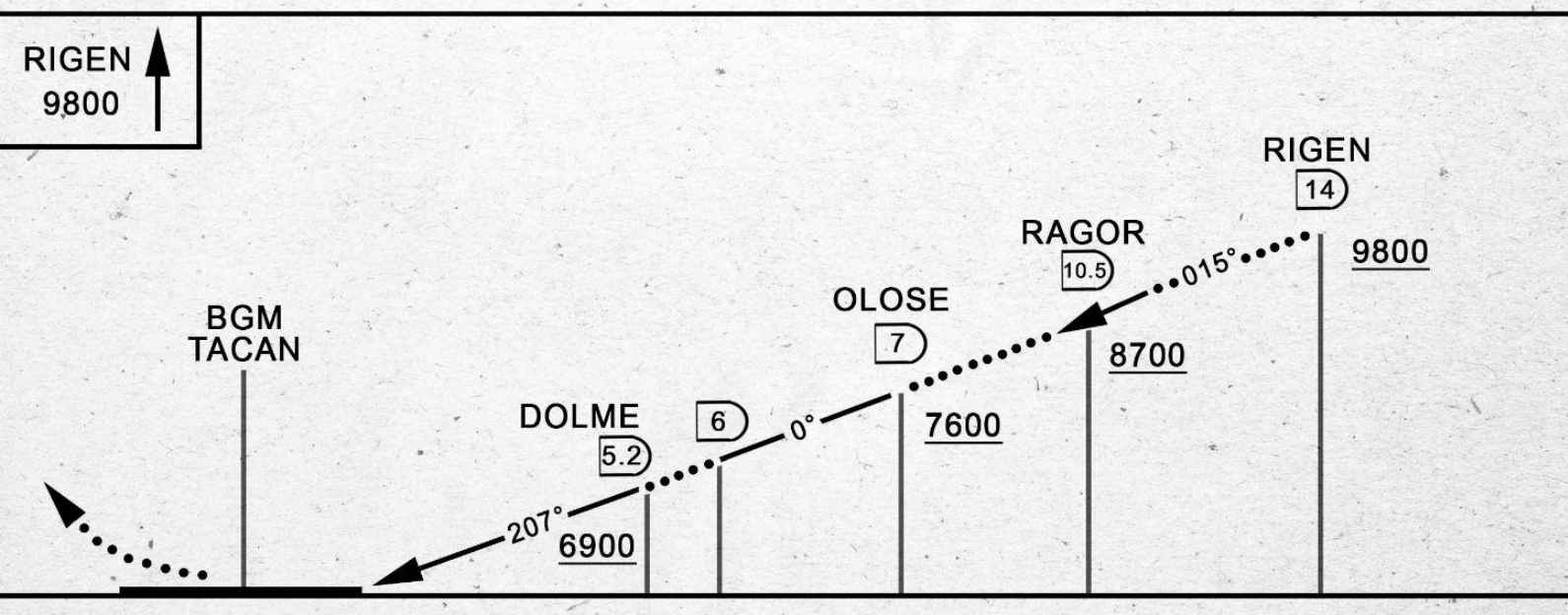
TACAN BGM Chan 74X	APCH CRS 207°	Rwy ldg 11,819 THRE 4868 Elev 4895

RWY 21 APPROACH

BAGRAM (OAIX)

ATIS	BAGRAM TOWER	BAGRAM ARRIVAL	BAGRAM APP	GROUND
134.5	118.5	128.3	127.9	125.9





COMMAND & CONTROL

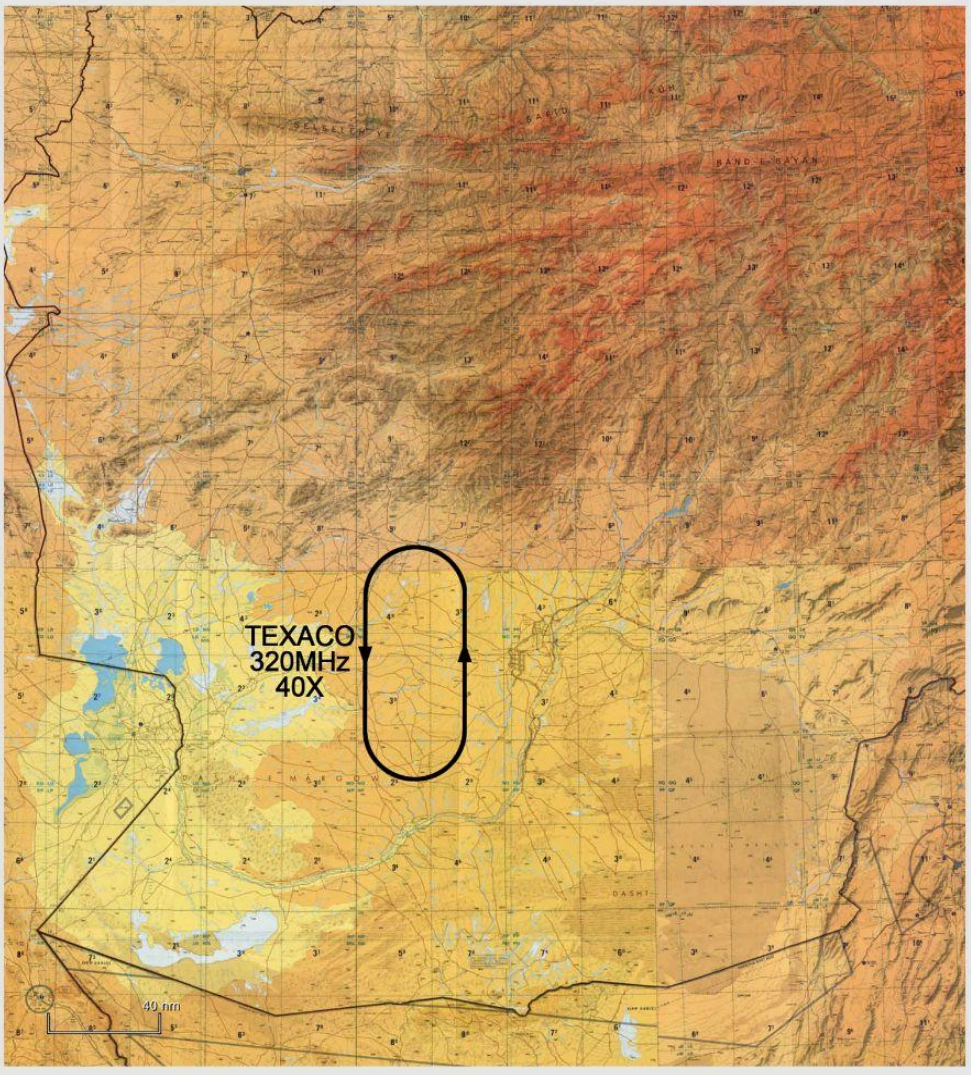
All ISAF air assets in Afghanistan fall under the jurisdiction of the Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC), headquartered at Al Udeid, Qatar. Subordinate to the CAOC is the Air Support Operations Centre (ASOC), based out of Bagram, which is responsible for all close air support operations. Requests for close air support will be collated, coordinated and assigned by the ASOC.

Continuous command and control (C2) coverage is provided by NATO E3 aircraft, who will maintain communications links between operational aircraft in theater and the CAOC and ASOC. NATO E3 aircraft carrying out this mission will operate under the callsign *Spartan*.

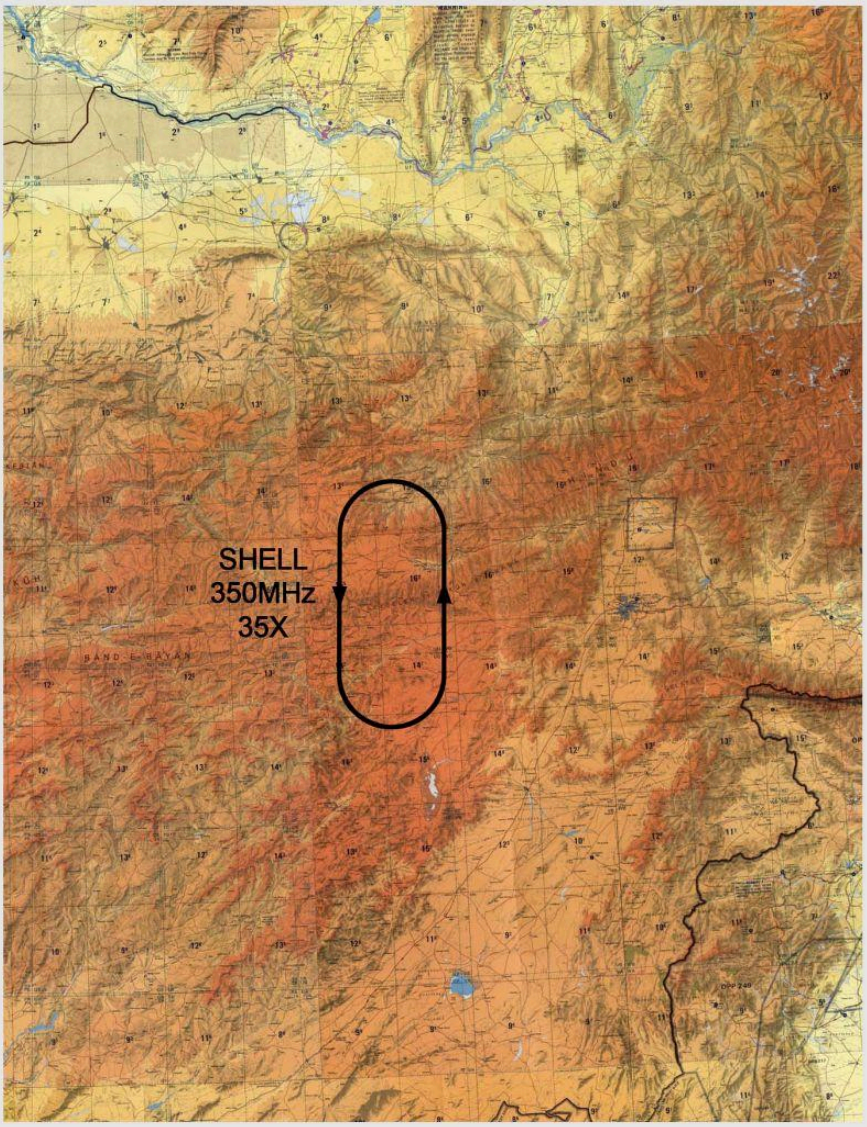
Spartan will also provide airspace management across Afghanistan, outside of local ATC.

AIR-AIR REFUELLING

Two permanent tanker tracks are currently established over Afghanistan. Track west is under the callsign Texaco (320 MHz, TACAN 40X), track east is under the callsign Shell (350 MHz, TACAN 35X). Standard operating altitude for tankers is 25,000 ft MSL.



AIR-AIR REFUELLING



CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PROCEDURES

The nature of combat in Afghanistan makes proper execution of close air support a critical task for coalition aircrew. The risk of fratricide and collateral damage must be mitigated through the accurate following of approved close air support procedures.

Close air support must be carried out in close coordination with a Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) or Forward Air Controller Airborne (FAC-A).

Upon checking in with the JTAC, the CAS platform will receive a CAS brief from the JTAC, including a nine line brief for the attack. Two methods of controlling CAS are utilized by JTACs in Afghanistan - through an Initial Point (IP) or through Keyhole CAS.

During the CAS brief the JTAC will provide target details, location of friendly forces or civilians and specify the attack details. The JTAC will specify the type of control authority they will have over the attack as detailed below:

Type 1:

JTAC requires control of individual attacks and must visually acquire the attacking aircraft and the target for each attack. Targets and friendly positions should be marked whenever possible.

Visual acquisition must be obtained through eyes-on or via optics such as binoculars, without the use of third party devices such as laptops or other digital imagery.

Control will be made over the attack direction of the aircraft to reduce the risk of collateral damage or the attack affecting friendly forces.

Type 2:

JTAC requires control of individual attacks but JTAC is unable to visually acquire the attacking aircraft at weapons release, unable to visually acquire the target, or the attacking aircraft is unable to acquire the mark/target prior to weapons release.

JTAC can acquire the target visually or use targeting data from a scout, fire support team, joint fires observer, unmanned aircraft (UA), special operations forces, CAS aircrew, or other asset with accurate real-time targeting information.

Type 3:

JTAC provides clearance for multiple attacks within a single engagement subject to specific attack restrictions.

JTAC does not need to visually acquire the aircraft or the target.

JTAC will provide attacking aircraft with targeting restrictions and then grant blanket weapons release clearance to meet the stated restrictions.

JTAC maintains abort authority.

CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PROCEDURES

The JTAC will provide the CAS platform with a 9 line specifying the instructions for the attack. The 9 line format is as follows.

1. Initial point (IP).
2. Heading from the IP to the target.
3. Distance from the IP to the target in nautical miles.
4. Target elevation in feet above mean sea level.
5. Target description.
6. Target location/target coordinates.
7. Type of mark.
8. Location of friendlies from the target, direction, and distance in meters.
9. Egress direction.

The pilot will respond by reading back lines 4, 6 and 8. If readback is successful the JTAC/FAC will pass remarks and restrictions, these will cover the process for the attacking aircraft to 'call in' on their attack run, weapons release heading/final attack heading and any relevant threats.

Terminology:

The JTAC and air support platform will communicate using set terminology. This terminology is detailed here.

Bomb on Target (BOT) - target location will be described, usually through a 'talk-on'.

Bomb on Coordinates (BOC) - target location will be passed as precise coordinates.

Cleared hot - air support is cleared to engage the target under type 1 or 2 control.

Cleared to engage - air support is cleared to engage the target under type 3 control.

Abort - If the JTAC/FAC calls abort then the attacking aircraft must safety weapons systems and maneuver off target immediately.

Contact - refers to spotting visual references used to talk onto a target.

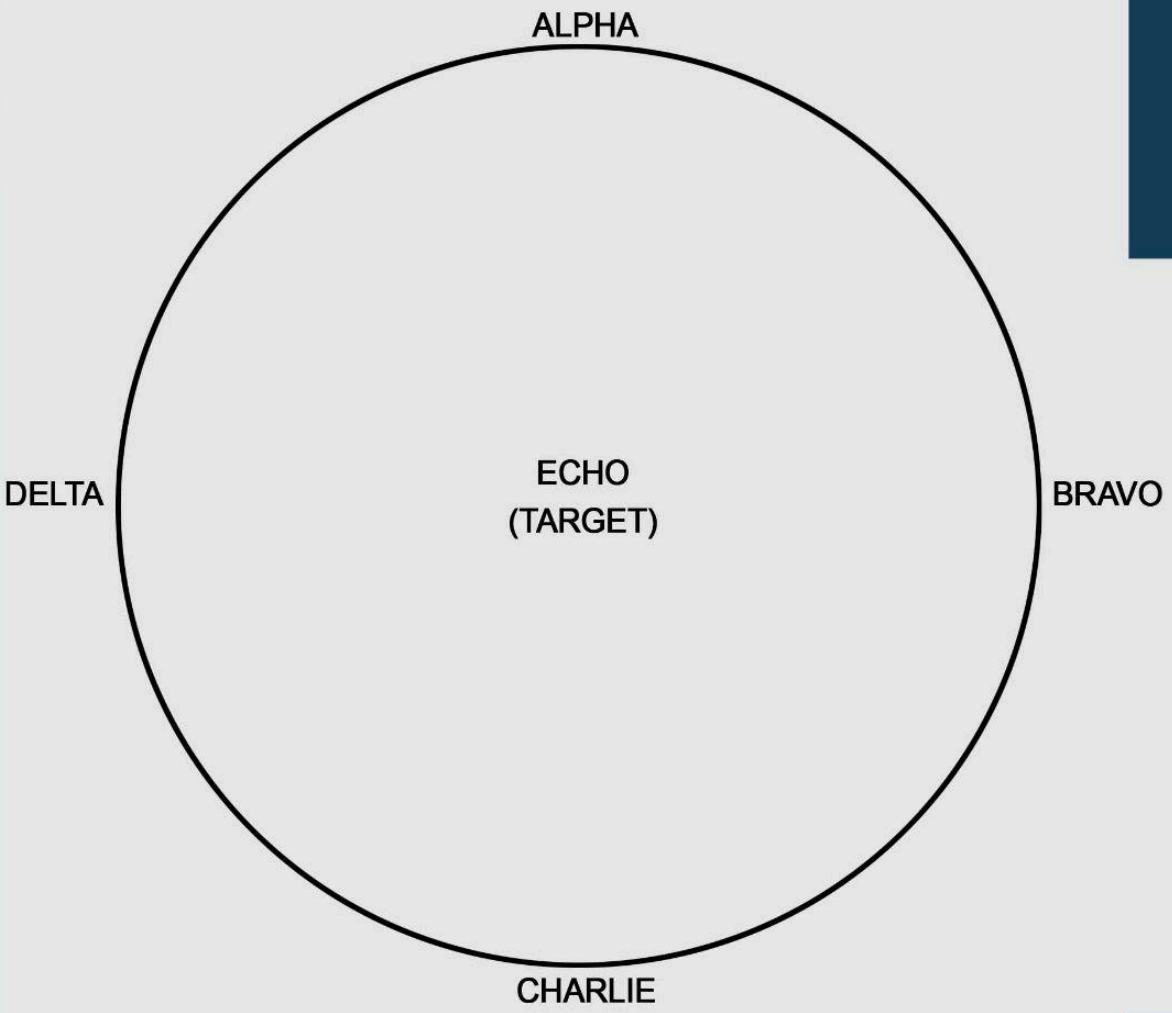
Tally - Visual confirmation by the pilot of the target.

Visual - Visual confirmation of friendly forces.

CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PROCEDURES

Keyhole CAS:

Keyhole CAS is an alternative method for establishing control points when a suitable IP cannot easily be identified. Upon making contact with the JTAC the CAS platform will be passed an Echo point - commonly the target. Using the Echo point as the centre, the JTAC will anchor each CAS platform at a distance and direction from the Echo point. Standard procedure is to label north as Alpha, east as Bravo, south as Charlie and west as Delta. For example, *IP Charlie 15* would translate as an IP 15 miles south of the target.



Emergency CAS:

E-CAS can be carried out in the absence of a JTAC in defense of friendly forces who are in clear and imminent danger and the target is confirmed as hostile.

Due to the increased risk of fratricide and collateral damage the use of E-CAS is considered a last resort.

CLOSE AIR SUPPORT PROCEDURES

Close air support communications between JTACs and aircraft will use a 'Ramrod'.

The Ramrod consists of thirty-one ten letter codewords, each of which contains no repeating letters. The active codeword will change daily, with the day of the month corresponding to the active Ramrod codeword. The Ramrod codeword will change daily with the UTC day.

To authenticate contact between the aircraft and JTAC, one of the parties will pass two letters from the daily codeword, the responding party will respond with the letter that lies between the two given letters.

For example:

Codeword - AFTERSHOCK

Challenge - "Tango, Romeo."

Correct Response - "Echo."

Coordinates or radio frequencies may also be passed using the Ramrod, for example:

A = 1
F = 2
T = 3
E = 4
R = 5
S = 6
H = 7
O = 8
C = 9
K = 10

"Alpha, Foxtrot, Romeo, Charlie, Alpha, Oscar" would equate to 125918.

AUTHENTICATION PROCEDURES

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Combat in Afghanistan will often result in a complex and dynamic operating environment with hostile and friendly forces both operating in close proximity to civilians. The following is a summary of the rules of engagement that apply to all air to surface operations within Afghanistan. For a more detailed explanation please consult the relevant JAG officer.

Predefined targets. Targets specifically defined within a briefing are pre-cleared for engagement providing the risk of fratricide and collateral damage is eliminated and the briefed details are followed precisely. Predefined targets will not require visual identification by the attacking aircraft to engage. For targets to meet the predefined condition precise coordinates must be available and the target must not be within an area requiring terminal attack control.

Dynamic Targets. Targets that do not meet the conditions for a predefined target will be considered a dynamic target. Dynamic targets may be assigned in the field via the CAOC, ASOC or through a JTAC. Dynamic targets that are assigned and are not under the control of a JTAC require visual identification from the attacking aircraft prior to engagement and clearance to engage from the senior CAOC duty commander. When an aircraft is under the control of a JTAC weapons release authority will be under the control of the JTAC at all times.

Hostile Intent. A combatant can be classified as hostile it meets one of the following criteria:

Observed engaging coalition or civilian forces with direct or indirect fire.

OR

Confirmed as supporting the weapons systems of other combatants, resulting in weapons release. Including but not limited to lasing, marking, and spotting for in-direct fire.

OR

Positively identified as a combatant belonging to a confirmed hostile force.

OR

Observed in the preparation of an ambush position, including but not limited to the positioning of weapons systems, explosives or significant obstructions in tactically advantageous positions.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT