



COALITION COMBAT AND ADVISORY FORCES IN AFGHANISTAN

AFGHANISTAN ORDER OF BATTLE

BY WESLEY MORGAN

December 1, 2015

This document describes the composition and placement of U.S. and other Western forces in Afghanistan down to battalion level. It includes advisory and “white” special operations units, as well as many of the units that support them: artillery, engineers, explosive ordnance disposal, aviation, but not some other categories such as logistics, medical, and intelligence units, and “black” special operations forces. Some of the organizational changes that accompanied the December 2014 transition from NATO’s International Security Assistance Force to the Resolute Support Mission and from the U.S. Operation Enduring Freedom to Operation Freedom’s Sentinel remain unclear—which U.S. units, for example, fall under Operation Freedom’s Sentinel but not under the Resolute Support Mission.

Resolute Support Mission / United States Forces—Afghanistan (Gen. John Campbell, USA)—Camp Resolute Support, Kabul

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

TF Golden Dragons / 2 - 14 Infantry (Lt. Col. Michael Kovacevic, USA)—U/I location; theater response force

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

Special Operations Task Force—Afghanistan / U/I Special Forces battalion (USA)—Bagram Airfield; supporting Afghan Defense Ministry special operations forces

ISAF Special Operations Forces (UK/Australia)—Kabul; supporting Afghan Interior Ministry special operations forces³

Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan (Maj. Gen Todd Semonite, USA) Kabul; U.S. institutional support to Afghan security forces

9th Air and Space Expeditionary Task Force—Afghanistan (Maj. Gen. Scott West, USAF)—Kabul International Airport; oversees U.S. Air Force units in Afghanistan⁴

455th Air Expeditionary Wing (Brig. Gen. Dave Julazadeh, 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 Afghanistan⁵

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

41st Airlift Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; transport support⁶

62nd Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron (USAF)—Bagram, Kandahar, and Jalalabad Airfields; surveillance support⁷

83rd Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; medical evacuation support⁸

421st Expeditionary Fighter Squadron (USAF)—Bagram Airfield; close air support⁹

Combined Joint Task Force 10 / 10th Mountain Division (Maj. Gen. Jeffrey Bannister, USA)—Bagram Airfield; U.S. national support element

TF Iron Shield / 1-265 Air Defense Artillery (Lt. Col. Mike Powers, USA)—Bagram Airfield; counter-rocket and -mortar mission at bases countrywide¹⁰

22nd Light Infantry Battalion (Georgia)—Bagram Airfield; base security¹¹

TF Destiny / 101st Combat Aviation Brigade (Col. Thomas Drew, USA)—Bagram Airfield; aviation support countrywide¹²

TF Expect No Mercy / 1-101 Aviation (USA)—Kandahar Airfield; aviation support for TAAC-South

TF Eagle Assault / 5-101 Aviation (USA)—Jalalabad Airfield; aviation support for TAAC-East

TF Shadow / 6-101 Aviation (USA)—Bagram Airfield; general aviation support

Joint Task Force ODIN (USA)—Bagram Airfield; countrywide surveillance support¹³

Joint Task Force Thor (USA)—Bagram Airfield; fixed-wing surveillance support¹⁴

Train, Advise, Assist Command Air / 438th Air Expeditionary Wing (Brig. Gen. Christopher Craige, USAF)—Camp Oqab, Kabul; supporting Afghan Air Force

438th Air Expeditionary Advisor Group (USAF)—Kabul International Airport; supporting Afghan Air Force units in eastern Afghanistan

738th Air Expeditionary Advisor Group (USAF)—Kandahar Airfield; supporting Afghan Air Force units in southern Afghanistan

Train, Advise, Assist Command Capital (Brig. Gen. Safak Gok, Turkey)—Camp Warehouse, Kabul; supporting Afghan security forces in Kabul¹⁵

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

Train, Advise, Assist Command East / 10th Mountain Division (Forward) (Brig. Gen. Michael Howard, USA)—FOB Gamberi, Laghman; supporting ANA 201st and 203rd Corps and police¹⁶

TF Patriot / 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Col. Guy Jones, USA)—Tactical Base Gamberi; supporting ANA 201st and 203rd Corps and police¹⁷

TF Wild Boar / 2-30 Infantry (Lt. Col. Brandon Teague, USA)—Tactical Base Gamberi; supporting ANA in Laghman Province

TF Slugger / 3-89 Cavalry (Lt. Col. Gregg Haley, USA)—Jalalabad Airfield; supporting ANA in Nangarhar Province

TF Buffalo (USA)—Bagram Airfield; supporting ANA in Parwan Province

TF White Eagle (Col. Dawid Kolosowski, Poland)—Bagram Airfield; supporting ANA 201st and 203rd Corps¹⁸

Train, Advise, Assist Command North (Brig. Gen. Andreas Hannemann, Germany)—Camp Marmal, Mazar-e-Sharif; supporting ANA 209th Corps and police¹⁹

Support Force Mazar-e-Sharif (Germany)—Camp Marmal; base security and support²⁰

Expeditionary Air Wing Mazar-e-Sharif (Germany)—Camp Marmal; fixed- and rotary-wing aviation support for northern Afghanistan²¹

Train, Advise, Assist Command South / 7th Infantry Division (Forward) (Brig. Gen. Tony Aguto, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; supporting ANA 205th and 215th Corps and police²²

TF Commando / 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division (Col. David Doyle, USA)—Kandahar Airfield; supporting ANA 205th and 215th Corps and police²³

TF Polar Bears / 4-31 Infantry (Lt. Col. Chris Landers, USA)—U/I location; likely at Kandahar Airfield supporting ANA in Kandahar Province

TF Wolverine / 1-89 Cavalry (USA)—Tactical Base Dwyer, Garmsir; supporting ANA in Helmand Province²⁴

Train, Advise, Assist Command West / “Aosta” Mechanized Brigade (Brig. Gen. Mario D’Ubaldo, Italy)—Camp Arena, Herat; supporting ANA 207th Corps and police²⁵

U/I regiment (Italy)—Camp Arena; force protection and quick reaction

TF Fenice (Italy)—Camp Arena; aviation support in western Afghanistan

NOTES

¹ 2 SCOTS relieved 1 RAR as the Kabul Support Unit in August 2015.

² Established in the summer of 2012, SOJTF-A/NSOCC-A is a two-star headquarters that oversees all three allied SOF commands in Afghanistan. Maj. Gen. Swindell took command of SOJTF-A in June 2015.

³ 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.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 451st AEG (formerly 451st AEW) operates MQ-1 and MQ-9 drones as well as E-11A piloted aircraft. See 451st AEG web site.

⁶ 41st AS is a C-130J squadron that deployed in September 2014.

⁷ 62nd ERS is an MQ-1 and MQ-9 drone squadron. Bagram Airfield web site.

⁸ 83rd ERQS is an HH-60G rescue helicopter squadron.

⁹ This F-16 squadron deployed in November 2015.

¹⁰ 1-265 ADA relieved 5-5 ADA in July 2015.

¹¹ The 22nd Battalion relieved the 43rd Battalion in October 2015.

¹² 101st CAB relieved 82nd CAB in early May 2015. See brigade Facebook page and battalion Facebook pages.

¹³ ODIN stands for Observe-Detect-Identify-Neutralize. The current leadership of JTF ODIN arrived in July 2014.

¹⁴ JTF Thor replaced the Air Force's 4th ERS as Afghanistan's MC-12 Liberty surveillance unit in October 2014.

¹⁵ RC-Capital transformed into TAAC-Capital in August 2014.

¹⁶ 10th Mountain Division (Fwd) relieved 3rd ID (Fwd) as RAAC-East in October 2015.

¹⁷ 3rd BCT, 10th Mountain relieved 3rd BCT, 101st Airborne in October 2015. See brigade and battalion Facebook pages.

¹⁸ The current command team of TF White Eagle took over in December 2015.

¹⁹ RC-North transformed into TAAC-North in July 2014.

²⁰ Unterstützungsverbandes MES replaced Partnering and Advisory Task Force MES and the Quick Reaction Unit in July 2014.

²¹ See RC-North Facebook page.

²² 7th ID (Forward) relieved 1st Cav (Forward) as TAAC-South in June 2015.

²³ 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain relieved 1st BCT, 101st Airborne in 2015.

²⁴ 1-89 Cavalry relieved 1-327 Infantry in Garmsir in September 2015.

²⁵ The "Aosta" Brigade relieved the "Julia" Brigade as TAAC-West in October 2015.