



Taliban Top 5 Most Deadly Tactics Techniques and Procedures

June 2010



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OEA Team Threat Report



Purpose

- To gain an understanding of the Top 5 casualty producing Tactics, Techniques and Procedures in Afghanistan
- To introduce the Top Threat Groups in Afghanistan and along the Pakistani border
- To understand the location of hostile action in Afghanistan
- To understand Threat weapon employment
 - Attack data
 - Technology used
 - TTP
- To introduce Threat use of Information Warfare (INFOWAR) across Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures

Product Caveat: *This presentation has been developed from multiple unclassified sources and is primarily intended for use as a training product for the Department of Army. This briefing should not be considered a finished intelligence product, nor used in such a manner.*



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Total US KIA in Afghanistan- 7 OCT 2001 to 1 MAY 2010

□ Breakdowns

- 969 Total American AF hostile and non-hostile deaths (as of MAY 2010)
- Of these 969 total deaths, 762 KIA
- Of these 762 KIA, 603 were KIA, while 159 died of wounds
- American KIA represent the bulk of ISAF casualties

Total US KIA in Afghanistan (762)





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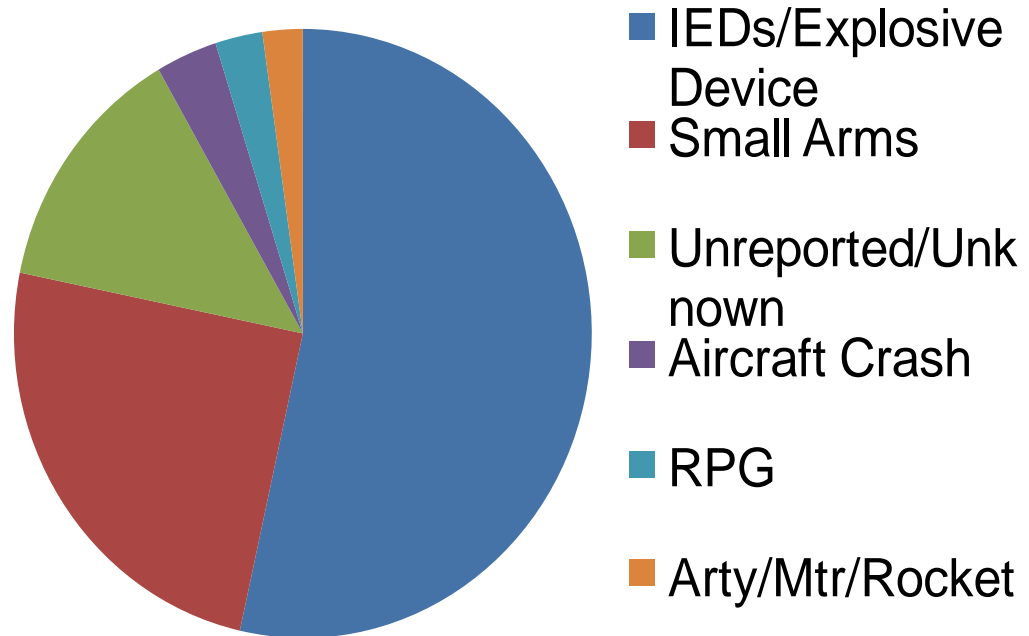


Top 5 Causes of US KIA in Afghanistan

□ Breakdown of 762 total KIA

- Explosive Device/IED (405)
- Small Arms Fire (187)
- Not Reported/Unknown (102)
- Aircraft Crash (26)
- RPG (20)
- Artillery/Mortar/Rocket (17)
- All Others (falls, vehicle crashes, grenade) (5)

Top 5 KIA causes-AF



Analyst's Assessment:

- While KIA from "Not reported/Unknown" causes is significant, it is not included in the following Tactics, Techniques and Procedures
- "Aircraft crashes" in this context refer to those KIA in an crash caused by a hostile act



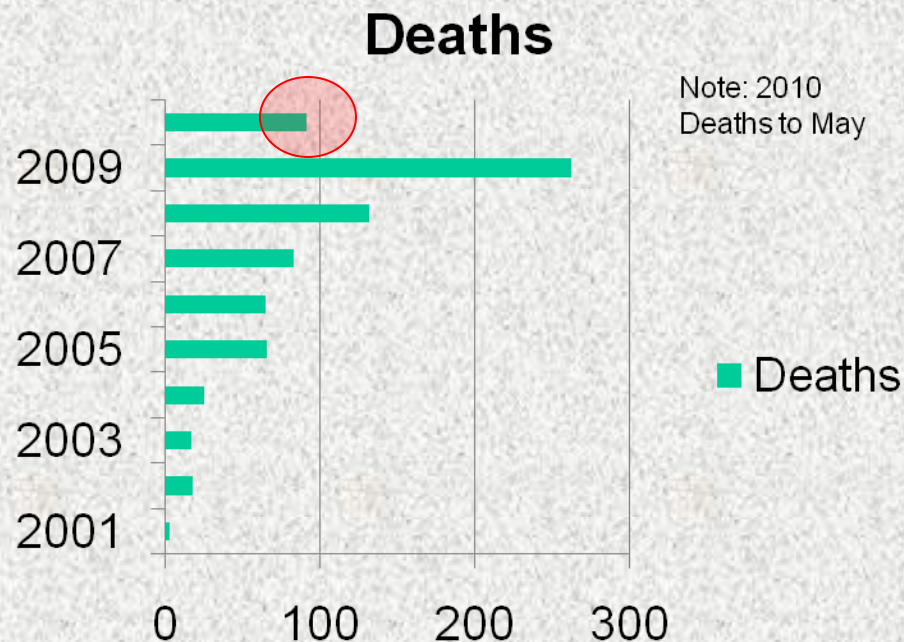
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US Hostile Deaths by Year-Afghanistan

- Hostile deaths are increasing in Afghanistan, and are a function of many factors

- A resurgent Taliban, enabled by the Pakistani Taliban
- Increasing Taliban operations to carve out operational space
- Evolving and effective enemy Tactics, Techniques and Procedures





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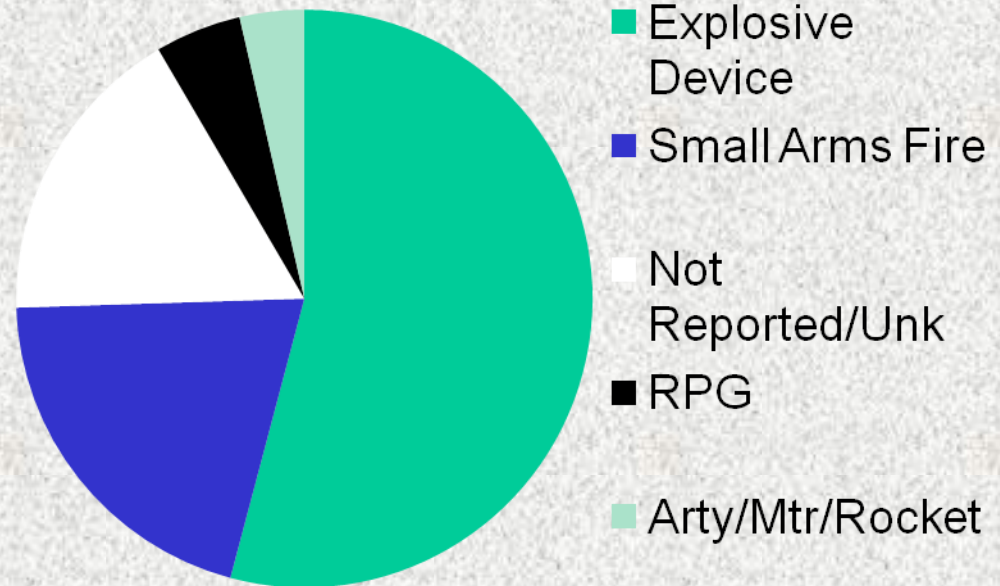


Top Causes of US Hostile WIA in Afghanistan

☐ Breakdown of AF 5730 total WIA

- Explosive Device/IED (3081)
- Small Arms Fire (1159)
- Not Reported/Unknown (970)
- RPG (275)
- Artillery/Mortar/Rocket (206)
- All Others (burns, falls, lacerations/stabbing, aircraft crash, vehicle crashes, grenades) (39)

Top 5 WIA causes-AF





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Threat Groups

- Quetta Shura Taliban (QST)
- Tehriki-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)
- Haqqani Network (HQN)
- Hizb-i Islami Gulbuddin (HiG)
- Facilitators/Enablers/Others
 - al-Qaeda
 - Uzbeks
 - Chechens/Central Asians/Uyghurs
 - Kashmiris
 - State Actors



Hakimullah Mehsud -TTP



Jalaluddin Haqqani -HQN



Mullah Omar-QST



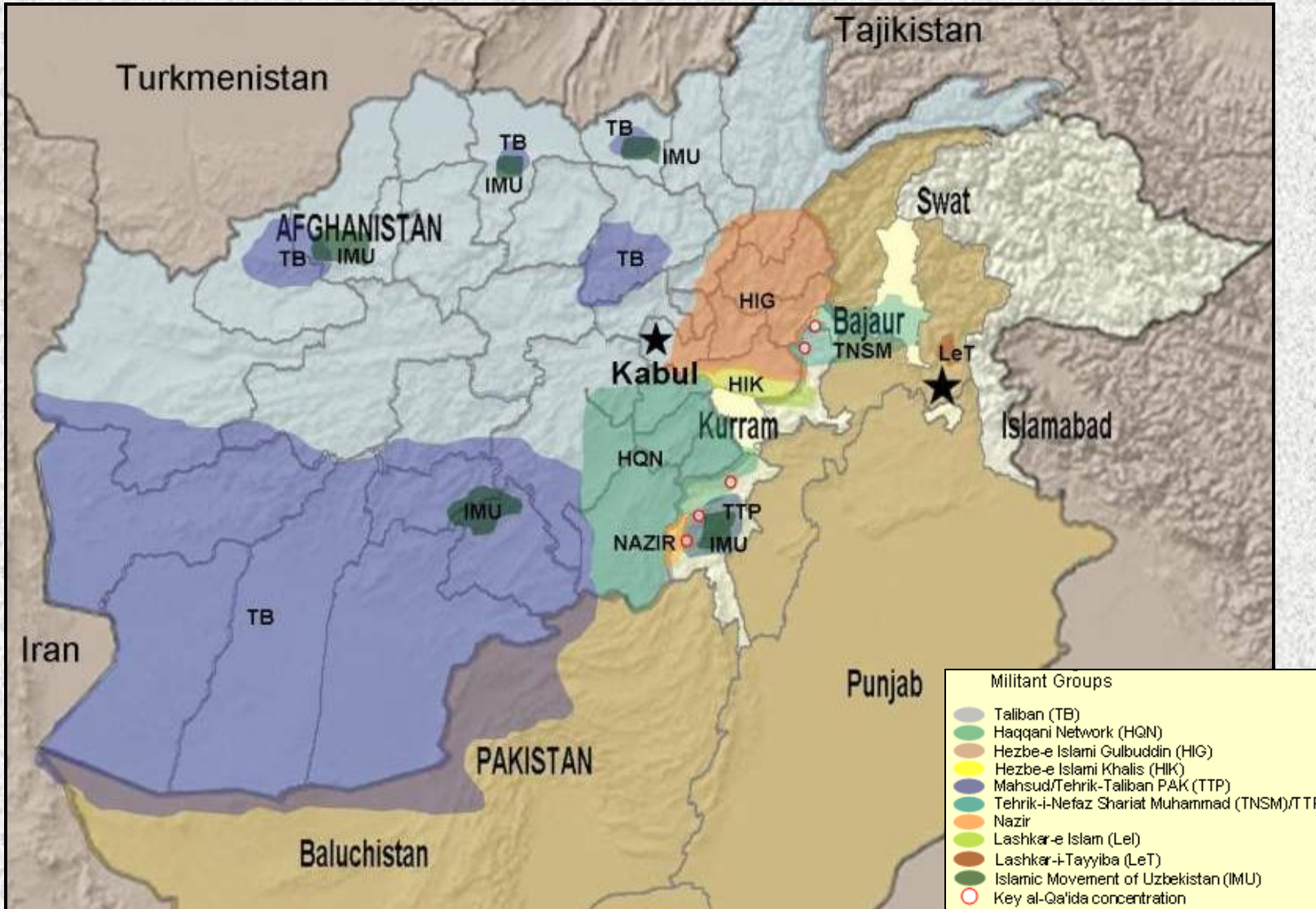
Hekmatyar Gulbuddin-HiG

Top 4 Threat Group Leaders



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Threat Group AOs





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Threat Group-Quetta Shura Taliban

- ❑ **Aliases:** Afghan Taliban

- ❑ **Leaders:** Mullah Omar

- ❑ **Description:** The group is a network rather than a single insurgent organization. The force consists of mainly Pashtuns from Afghanistan and Pakistan. Sunni-Deobandi Islamists allied with AQ and other related groups.¹ The organizational leadership consists of two main councils (shuras) in Quetta, Pakistan, and another based in Peshawar, Pakistan.¹ The group intends to overthrow the Karzai government and re-establish the Taliban regime and the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The group is anti-US/NATO forces.

- ❑ **Strength:** Unknown, approximately 15,000²

- ❑ **Activities:** Insurgency and terrorist attacks including IEDs, suicide attacks, mass casualty bombings, mortars, rockets, assassinations, kidnappings, executions, raids, assaults, and extensive Internet operations



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Threat Group-Tehriki-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)

□ Leader: Hakimullah Mehsud

□ Description: TTP is a mixture of threat groups that consisting mainly of Pashtuns from Pakistan. This group makes up most of the command and control for the Taliban in North and South Waziristan and large portion of insurgent activity in these areas.¹ The group is made up of Sunni-Deobandi Islamists allied with AQ and other related groups such as threat actors from Uzbekistan.² The group's intentions are to overthrow the Pakistani government and establish a Taliban regime and an Islamic Emirate of Pakistan. TTP is anti-US/NATO and has training and logistical bases in western Pakistan.

□ Strength: Unknown, approximately 15,000³

□ Activities: Insurgency and terrorist attacks including IEDs, suicide attacks, mass casualty bombings, mortars, rockets, assassinations (rumored Benazir Bhutto), kidnappings, executions, raids, assaults and extensive internet operations, extortion, and kidnapping for ransom.¹



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Threat Group-Haqqani Network (HQN)

- Leaders:** Jalaluddin Haqqani (former member of the Khalis faction). Reporting indicate that Jalaluddin Haqqani's son (Sirajuddin) is currently in charge of the network.¹
- Location:** The HQN area of operation consists of Pakistan's North Waziristan region and eastern Afghanistan
- Description:** HQN is a pro-Taliban and AQ. While closely associated with TTP, HQN operates separately from the TTP hierarchy (making its own military plans and carrying them out).¹ Jane's reports that "the Haqqani Network is one of Afghanistan's most significant insurgent groups."¹
- Strength:** Unknown. HQN is a major group and numbers are tend to be muddled with in the TTP's total strength
- Activities:** HQN operations include IEDs, suicide attacks, mass casualty bombings, mortars, rockets, assassinations, kidnappings, executions, raids, assaults, and limited internet operations



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Hizb-i Islami Gulbuddin (HiG)

- Leader(s)**: Hekmatyar Gulbuddin (AKA Hikmatyar.) Hekmatyar began living in Iran in 1996.¹

- Description**: HiG is a heavily armed Islamic extremist group under the command of Hikmatyar. HiG operates much like a crime family and a branch of al Qaeda.¹ They support the Taliban in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

- Background**: The radical Islamic group was founded in 1977 to combat Soviet forces in Afghanistan and received funding from US, Pakistani, and Saudi Arabian sources.¹

- Strength**: Unknown

- Activities**: IEDs, raids, ambushes, rockets, and mortars



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Threat Groups-Facilitators/Enablers/Others

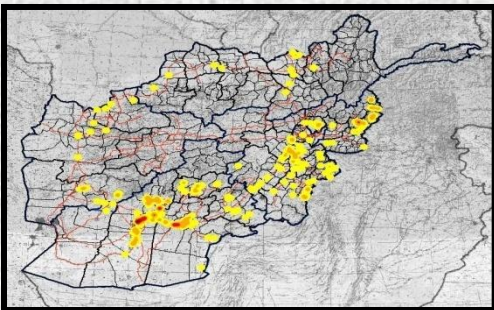
- al-Qaeda (AQ)**
 - Remains a prime facilitator of insurgent operations, primarily through financing and liaison between various insurgent groups
- Uzbeks**
 - Uzbek militant groups like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and its associates and spinoffs are small, but active, facilitators of insurgent operations
- Chechens**
 - Chechens, along with other Central Asian origin insurgents often serve as technical facilitators
- Kashmiris**
 - The term “Kashmiri” does not necessarily refer to ethnic Kashmiris (of the Kashmir region of Pakistan and India) but rather to insurgents trained by the Pakistani military and intelligence to operate against India, who are now engaged against Pakistan, Afghanistan, and ISAF.
- State Actors**
 - Iranian support to Taliban elements
 - Possible renegade Pakistani Interservices Intelligence Department (ISID)



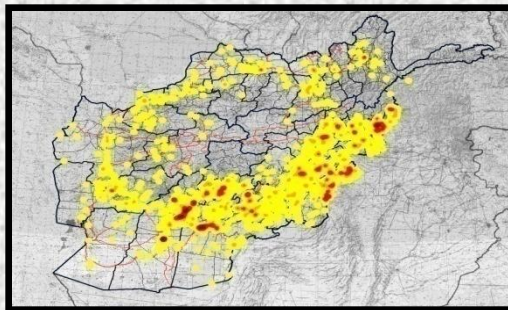
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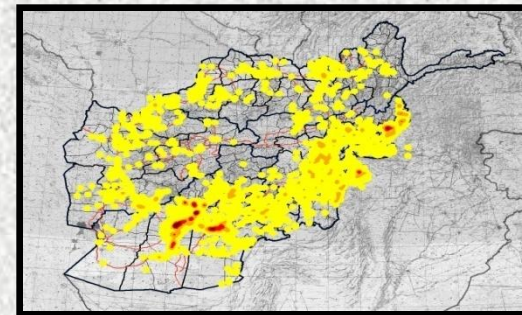
Kinetic Events-Threat Location



Kinetic Events 01 Jan 05 – 15 Dec 05

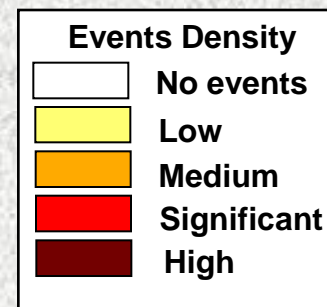


Kinetic Events 01 Jan 07 – 15 Dec 07



Kinetic Events 01 Jan 09 – 15 Dec 09

- Kinetic events are increasing in Afghanistan since JAN 05
- Regional Command South (RC-S) and Regional Command East (RC-E) are the heartland of the Taliban
- Fighting is spreading to other RCs, generally tracking the National Ring Road

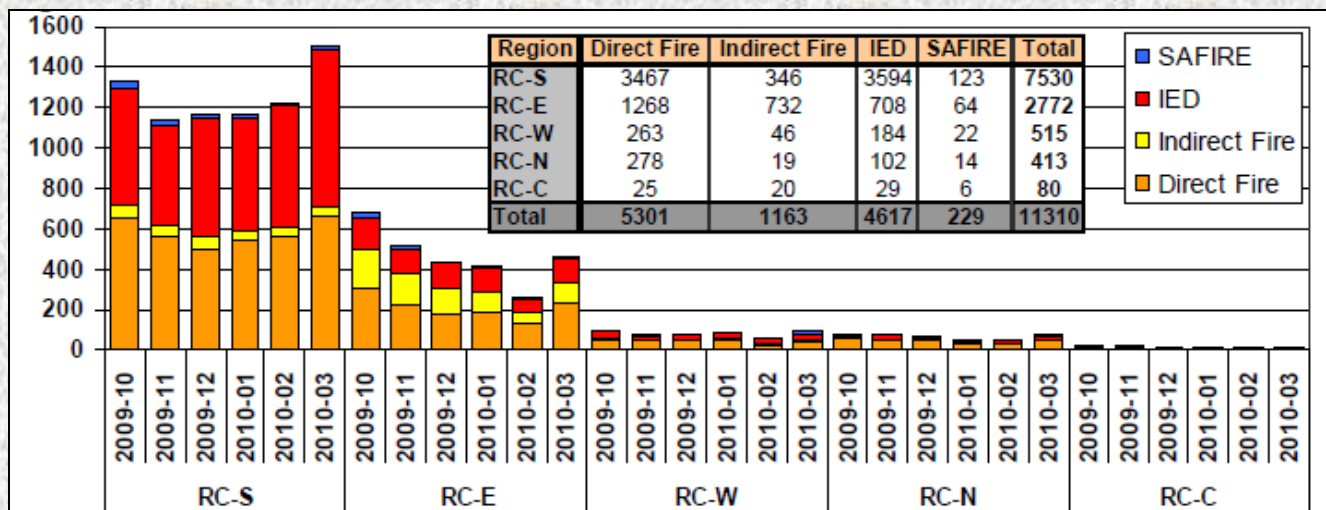




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Top 5 by Regional Command-Afghanistan



- ❑ RC-S and RC-E remain the heartland of the insurgency
 - The fight is occurring in the Pashtun homeland
- ❑ While aircraft crashes due to enemy action remain on the Top Five for KIA since the beginning of the conflict, the last 24 months have shown the Threat less able or unwilling to effectively target aircraft consistently
 - Thus, casualties will show IEDs and indirect/direct fire events exclusively in recent reporting



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Afghanistan Top 5 Enemy Tactics, Techniques and Procedures

- IEDs
- Small Arms Fire
- Aircraft crashes/attacks
- RPGs
- Artillery/Mortars/Rockets





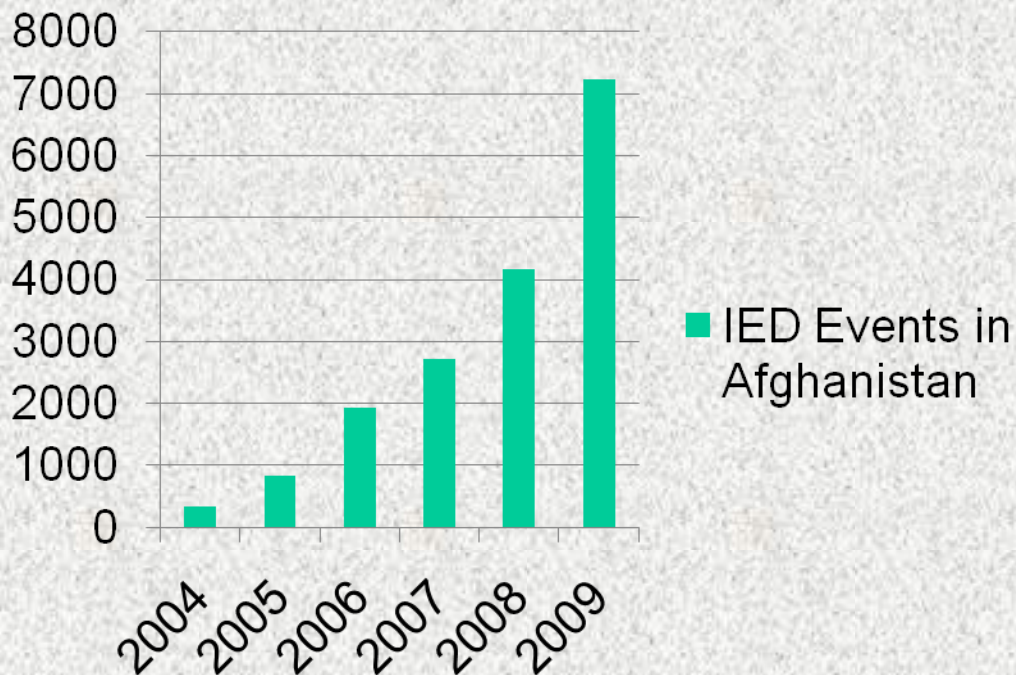
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Number 1: IEDs

- ❑ IEDs are the growing threat TTP in Afghanistan
- ❑ IEDs are growing in size and sophistication, hence lethality
- ❑ IED components are often locally sourced, making interdiction difficult
 - Shifting from military ordnance to homemade explosives
 - Charge size increasing

IED Events in Afghanistan





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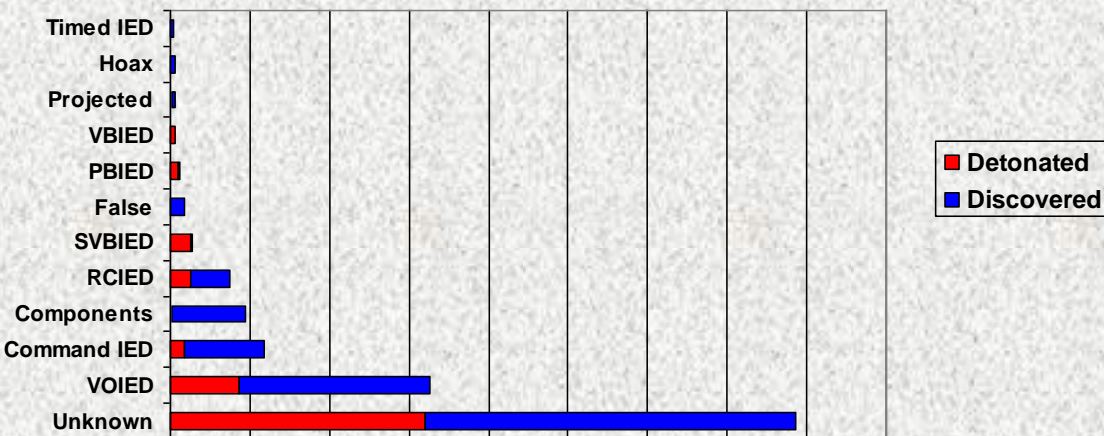
IED Types and Technology

- ❑ Shift from military ordnance to homemade explosives (HME)¹
 - Local sourcing of explosive makes interdiction functionally impossible¹
 - Troops should be aware of ammonium fertilizer as an explosive precursor²

- ❑ Victim operated (pressure plates) and Command are two most common initiators

- ❑ Suicide Vehicle Borne IED attacks are often high-profile, and are likely more difficult to interdict

IEDs by Type



IEDs by type, ISAF DEC 2009 State of the Insurgency briefing



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IEDs-The Strategic Enabler

- ❑ Threat forces use the aftermath of IEDs to enable three of the Threat's critical functions-Recruiting, Fundraising and Information Warfare
- ❑ Support to Threat forces is enabled by the recruiting and fundraising critical to survival¹
 - Videos of successful IED operations spur international fundraising, and local recruiting efforts
 - IEDs can give the tactical space from Government/ISAF forces for successive poppy harvests/heroin manufacturing operations
- ❑ Quetta Shura Taliban INFOWAR aims are served as every successful IED reinforces the twin Taliban INFOWAR messages¹
 - Government of Afghanistan powerlessness
 - QST capability
- ❑ IEDs are THE critical war-fighting component of the QST main effort, the INFOWAR Campaign¹

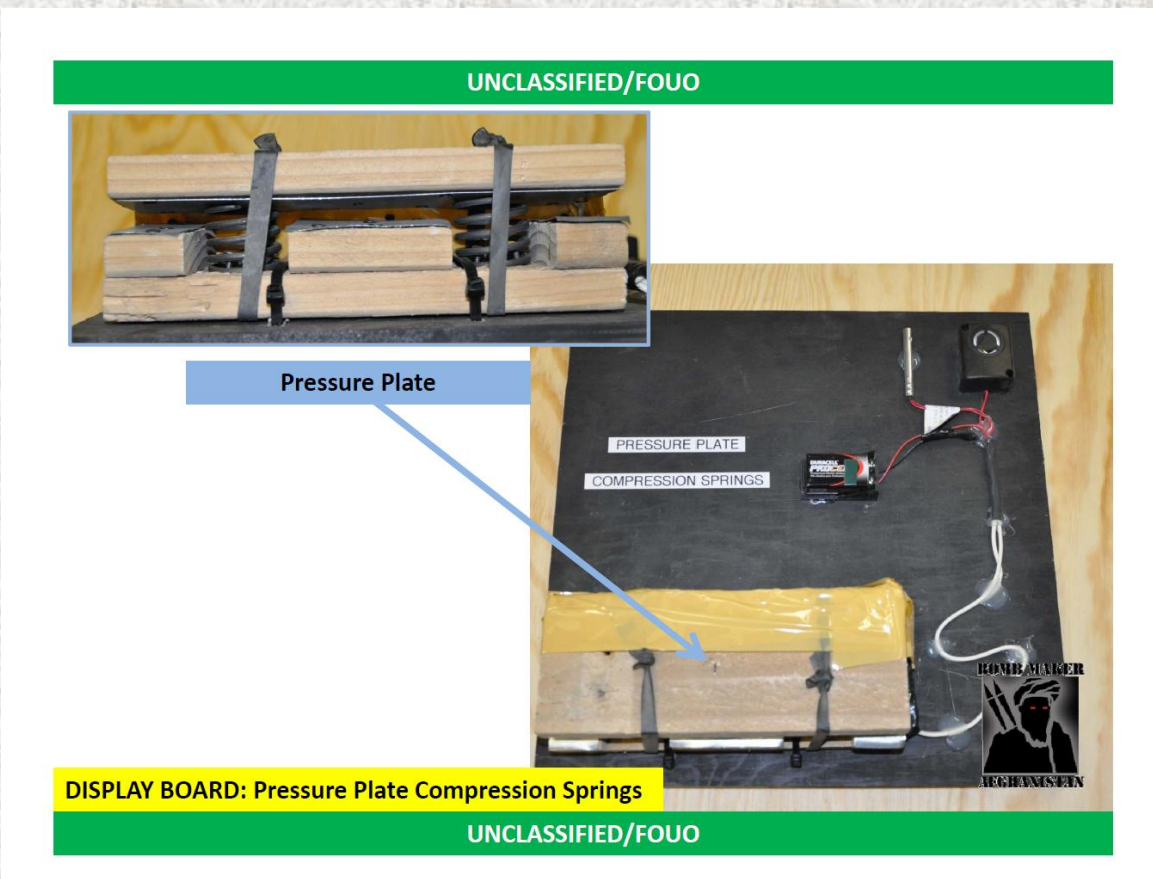


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Technology-IED Initiators-Pressure Plate

- ❑ Pressure plate and command wire are the two most significant IED initiators
- ❑ Pressure plates are generally the basis for VOIEDs, and VOIEDs are often staged to target first responders or to commence complex attacks
- ❑ Radio initiators are less common, but employed



Example of Pressure Plate IED initiator¹



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Technology-IED Initiators-Command Wire

- ❑ Command wire is often very resistant to various friendly IED countermeasures
- ❑ Command wire also allows the Threat to target specific elements of Friendly forces
 - This allows for economy of force to maximize effect of IED



Example of Command Wire IED initiator¹



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Technology-IED Initiators-Radio/Cell Phone

- ❑ Radio allows for standoff distance and IED cell survivability
- ❑ Cell phones require infrastructure like towers and switches, but provide even greater standoff
- ❑ Greater technical sophistication



Example of Cell Phone IED initiator



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Tactical Examples-IEDs

- ❑ In the first example, a roadside IED (like an RCIED) initiates a complex attack of crew-served weapons and small arms fire

- ❑ In the second example, the Taliban used IEDs to target specific vehicles
 - AARs are showing that the Taliban targeting is discriminating between SOF, General Purpose, and Logistics forces
 - Increased Threat targeting against ISAF logistics could be a future concern



(U) AF taliban convoy ied in kunar province 20feb09.wmv



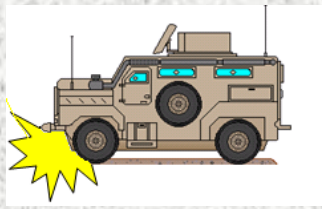
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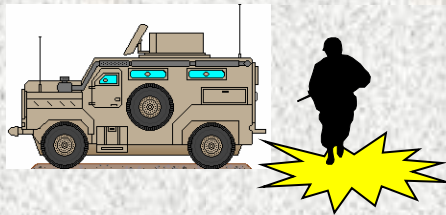
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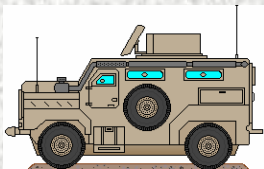
Tactical Example- Staged IED Attack in Nowaz¹



First, a small pressure plate IED causes a mobility kill on the lead MRAP.



Second, the first Marine to dismount from the rear hatch steps on another pressure plate that amputates both of his legs.



Last, the Marines from the vehicle behind him rushes to provide aid only to be killed by a third pressure plate IED.



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Number 2: Small Arms Fire

- ❑ Small Arms Fire (from ambushes to harassing fire) is a the second most common) threat TTP¹
- ❑ Precision sniper fire is less common than in Iraq
 - Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence; however, video exploitation and unit AARs are suggesting that precision fires aren't being employed as widely as in Iraq, possibly in part due to lack of a standardized training program as present in pre-OIF Iraq, and in the training of OIF insurgent facilitators, and tactical conditions, such as space
- ❑ The QST use a variety of baited ambushes²
- ❑ The 18+ inch mud wall construction of much of Afghanistan is impervious to small arms, 50 caliber, 40mm grenade or even 20mm fire, making effective targeting of enemy positions difficult²
- ❑ SAFIRE ambushes are often initiated by IEDs, RPG barrages, or mortars to fix ISAF/Afghan Security Forces (ASF)



Typical “murder hole” cut in mud wall used by insurgents to engage with small arms³



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Technology-Small Arms Fire

- ❑ **Soviet-designed small arms weapons are the common weapons for the QST**
 - **Groups are often armed with AKs, with PKs and RPGs as base of fire weapons**
- ❑ **While much material remains the remnant of the Afghan-Soviet War or of postwar Soviet aid, smuggled weapons and diversion from GIROA stocks represent other sources**
- ❑ **The PKM is often the basis of Threat small arms capability, due to range and effectiveness at 600 meter plus engagement ranges¹**



QST firing line with an assortment of small arms, including WWII Soviet rifles, AKs and RPKs

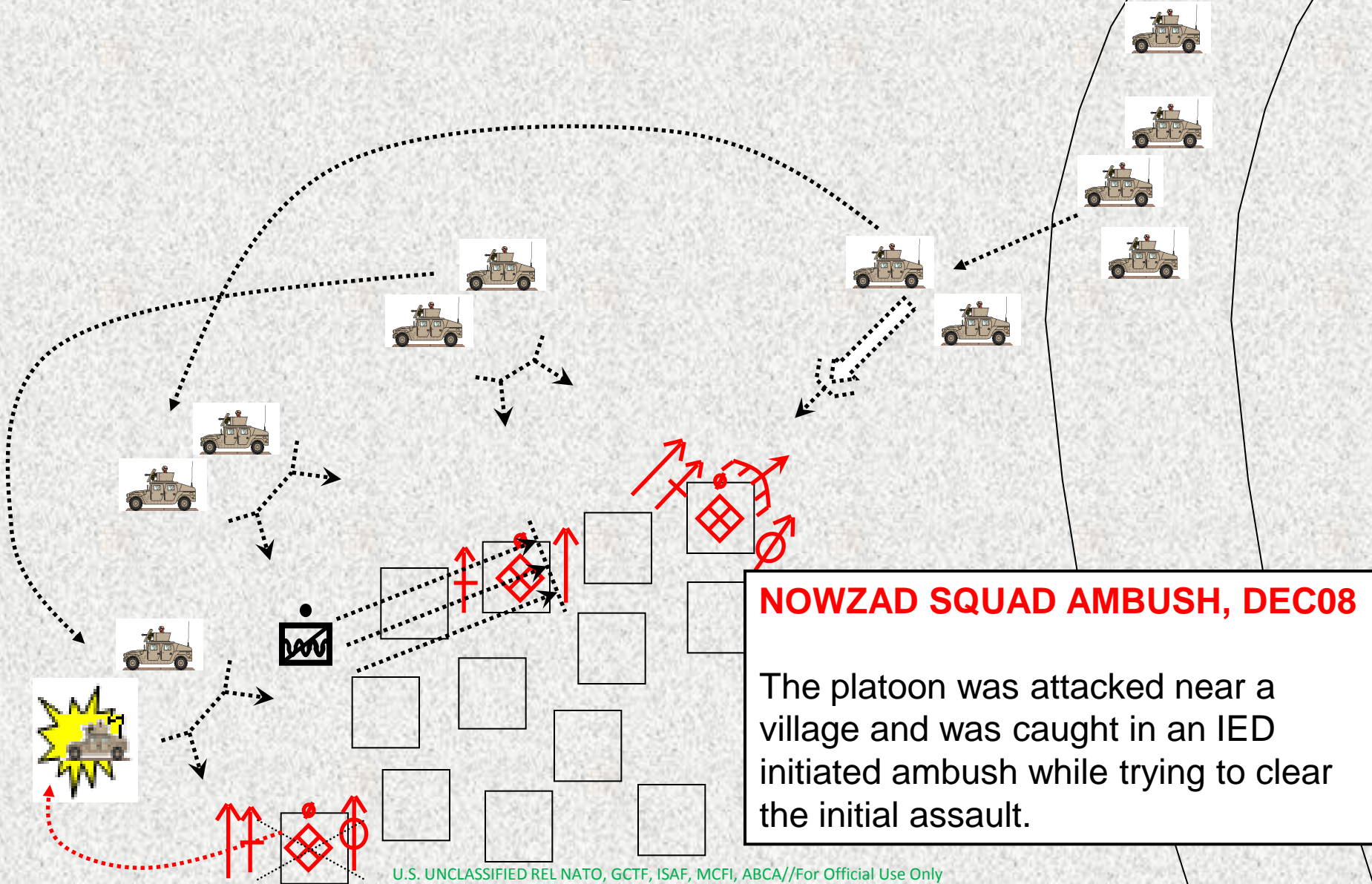


Soviet designed PKM MMG



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Tactical Example-Small Arms Fire¹



NOWZAD SQUAD AMBUSH, DEC08

The platoon was attacked near a village and was caught in an IED initiated ambush while trying to clear the initial assault.



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Intelligence Exploitation-Small Arms Fire

- Knowledge of AK series weapons markings can provide clues to weapons sources
- Ammunition headstamps can provide significant information
- The overall condition of captured weapons could yield important clues



Chinese AK-47 ammo headstamps: Top number is the factory number, and the bottom number is the Western year of manufacture²

MARKING	PRODUCER	MARKING	PRODUCER
	E. GERMANY (Suhl Factory)		E. GERMANY
	E. GERMANY (ErnstThaelmann Factory)		E. GERMANY
	BULGARIA		BULGARIA
	BULGARIA		POLAND
	ROMANIA		RUSSIA (Izhevsk Factory)
	RUSSIA (Izhevsk Factory)		RUSSIA
	RUSSIA (Tula Arsenal)		RUSSIA (Tula Arsenal)
	Russia (Polyany Arsenal)		N. KOREA
	PRC/CHINA (Polytec)		PRC/CHINA
	PRC/CHINA		PRC/CHINA (Norinco)
	PRC/CHINA		PRC/CHINA
	PRC/CHINA		EGYPT
	IRAQ		

NGIC 70399

UNCLASSIFIED

AK series manufacturer markings¹



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Number 3: Aircraft Attacks

- ❑ **While attacks on aircraft continue, deadly aircraft attacks have been limited in the recent past**
- ❑ **HMGs and RPGs are the anti-air weapons of choice**
- ❑ **The QST are aware of ISAF reliance on helicopters and will aggressively target probable helicopter LZs, as during the attack on COP Keating**
- ❑ **QST insurgents will often employ the high ground to engage with HMGs, while employing RPGs from well-camouflaged spider holes near probable LZs**
- ❑ **Aircraft remain an inviting target, especially for INFOWAR purposes**
 - **Many QST battle damage claims involve aircraft shoot downs**



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Tactical Example-Aircraft Attacks

- In the embedded video example, QST insurgents use a variety of weapons, including DsHK HMGs, AGS-17 Automatic Grenade Launchers, and RPGs
- An AH-64 is attacked with HMG fire, and a CH-47 is successfully targeted with an RPG at 3:16 in the video
- Notice the QST uses a combination of high terrain and close-in camouflaged positions to attack helos entering the LZ



(u) tb examples of surface to air fire.wmv



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Number 4: RPGs

- ❑ **RPGs are used as an indirect fire, direct fire and an anti-air weapon**
- ❑ **Engage by RPG is often intended to fix ISAF/ASF forces**
- ❑ **RPGs are often ripple fired to initiate complex ambushes and raids, such as the assault on COP Wanat**
- ❑ **RPGs are common, cheap, and available**



Selected RPG round types¹

PG-7VL: standard HEAT warhead for most vehicles and fortified targets (93mm)

PG-7VR: dual HEAT warhead for defeating modern heavily armored vehicles equipped with reactive armor (105mm)

TBG-7V: thermobaric warhead for anti-personnel and urban warfare (105mm)

OG-7V: fragmentation warhead for anti-personnel warfare (within caliber due to limitations of international treaties)



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Tactical Example-RPG

- Notice that the ambush was initiated by an IED, and followed with small arms and RPG fire (at 00:46)
- Ranges of greater than 200-300m greatly decrease the accuracy of the RPG, thus RPGs will be a harassing fire during long-range engagement, but are capable weapons during short-range engagements¹
- RPGs are also used for breaching during assaults on fixed positions²



(u) tb mujahideen iedambushrpg big rock 3feb09.wmv



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Number 5: Artillery/Mortars/Rockets

- ❑ Mortars are a very commonly employed support fire weapon
- ❑ Often, rounds are cached at firing points, and the weapon is put into position via vehicle/animal/manpack, employed and then exfiltrated¹
- ❑ Multiple AARs report use of forward observers, and competency in mortar operations, to include respect for counterbattery fire and fast retargeting²



Remote Rocket Launcher Initiator



107mm Rocket Launcher

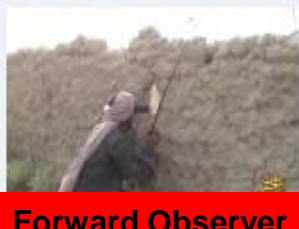


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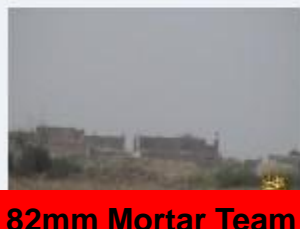
Tactical Example-Artillery/Mortars/Rockets

Screenshot taken by clearinghouse.infovlad.net



British Outpost is Target

Forward Observer



82mm Mortar Team





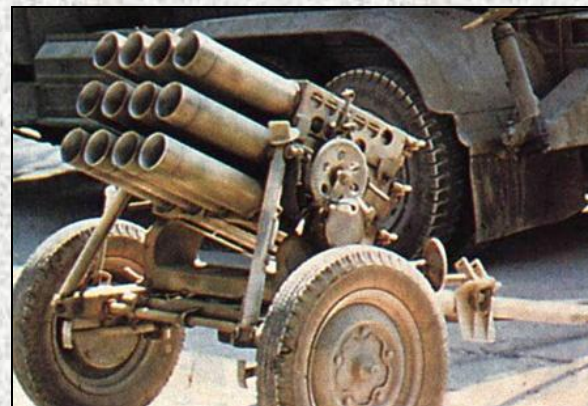
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Technology-Artillery/Mortars/Rockets

☐ Rockets

- 107mm (data for the Chinese built variant)¹
 - Firing range: 8.5 km
 - Rate of fire: 12 rounds in 7-9 seconds
 - Reloading time: 3 minutes
 - Kill Radius: 12.5 meters
- Mounted on vehicles, improvised stands, or wheeled mounts



Chinese Type 63 107mm Rocket Launcher

☐ Mortars

- 82mm
 - Predominately Russian and Chinese manufactured



Example of field expedient 107mm launcher



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INFOWAR Tactics, Techniques and Procedures

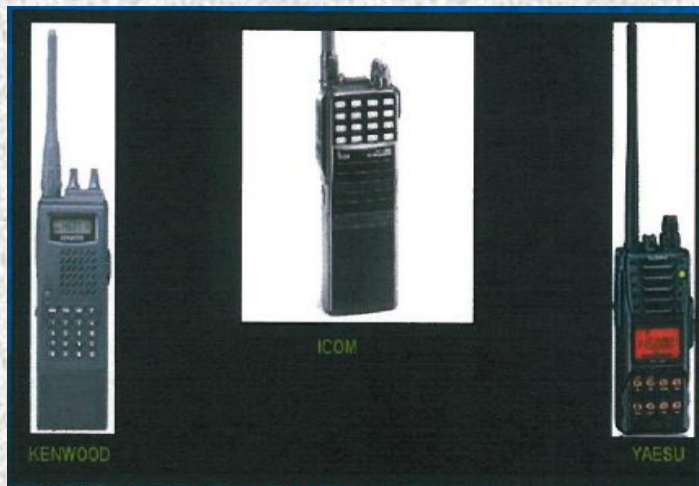
- ❑ The QST have been successful at disseminating an effective message through low-cost means like letters, radio, and the internet
- ❑ The QST INFOWAR campaign is assessed by ISAF J-2 as the prime effort in the Taliban war effort¹
- ❑ The QST will attempt to play up Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) incompetence and corruption, and portray the Taliban as truly Islamic
- ❑ The QST have instituted a code of conduct to govern conduct of Taliban
 - “This is our mission: to keep people and their property safe. Do not let those people that love money take our local people’s property and cause them problems.”
 - “Keep good relationships with your friends and the local people, and do not let the enemy divide / separate you.”
- ❑ The QST’s ultimate goals are to deny legitimacy to the GIROA, deny freedom of movement to ISAF/ASF, and to outlast the ISAF commitment to Afghanistan



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INFOWAR TTPs

- ❑ The QST generally use a variety of commercial handheld radios¹
- ❑ Commercial off-the-shelf radios (like those pictured below) are favored¹
- ❑ Insurgent will hold the INFOWAR high ground with the population due to factors of familiarity, lack of bureaucracy, and language





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Possible Future Trends

- Increased tactical use of SVBIEDs**
 - TTP uses SVBIEDs extensively

- Increased tactical sophistication and effectiveness**
 - Defeat anti-IED equipment like jammers and MRAPs

- Out-of-theater attacks**
 - Times Square Bombing attempt
 - Mimic Tehrik-Taliban Pakistan-use terror attacks, rather than face Pakistani security operations

- Recruiting of Westerners**
 - Increased capabilities for out-of-area, false-flag, and deception operations
 - Case study: The Islamization of Khalid Kelly

- Increased state aid to Taliban**
 - Quantity and types of Iranian lethal aid to Taliban



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Variable Implications

(Using PMESII-PT OE Variables)

Political:

- An understanding by the insurgents to our sensitivity to casualties drives Taliban actions
- Political weakness of and corruption within the Afghan government hampers ISAF operations

Military:

- The Afghanistan Threat is NOT the same as Iraq, with the exception of the importance of IEDs

Economic:

- The Afghan Threat is very cost effective; the fighters are often motivated by economic issues, and can be recruited, armed, and supported at low cost

Social:

- The Taliban is generally Pashtun in ethnicity, and tribal in affiliation



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Variable Implications

(Using PMESII-PT OE Variables)

Information:

- The Threat groups hold the INFOWAR high ground
- Taliban INFOWAR is effective and one of the prime elements of their efforts

Infrastructure:

- Where available, the Taliban will use the local resources like cell phones and power, but also understand our weakness of logistics and will target vulnerable chokepoints like bridges

Physical Environment:

- The mountainous terrain, along with safe havens along and in the border with Pakistan complicate ISAF and GIRoA operations
- The Taliban is very capable of using terrain features to defeat ISAF ISR assets, complicate ISAF targeting, and ensuring Taliban freedom of movement

Time:

- The Threat groups are pursuing a “Win by Outlasting” strategy



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POCs

**OEA Team
913-684-7920 (COMM)
552-7920 (DSN)**

**TRADOC G-2 Intelligence Support Activity (TRISA)
700 Scott Ave, Bldg 53
Ft Leavenworth, Ks 66027**



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❑ AKO:

<https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portal/index.jsp>

❑ Intelink

▪ Home:

<https://www.intelink.gov/sites/TRISA/default.aspx>

▪ Document Storage:

<https://www.intelink.gov/inteldocs/browse.php?fFolderId=21435>

Threat Products: AKO "Easy-Link"
Contemporary Operational Environment and Threat Integration Directorate

The screenshot shows the AKO 'Easy-Link' web interface. The interface includes a login section on the left with fields for 'Username' and 'Password', and a 'Login' button circled in red and labeled '1'. Below the login section is a 'CAC Login to AKO/DEO' section. The main content area shows a file explorer view with a tree structure on the left and a file list on the right. The tree structure includes folders for 'AKO Files Home', 'Army Organizations', 'TRADOC', and 'TRISA-CTID'. The file list on the right shows various documents, with 'TRISA-CTID' circled in red and labeled '4'. A red arrow points from the 'TRISA-CTID' folder in the tree to the file in the list. A search bar is visible at the top right, and a 'Files' button is circled in red and labeled '2'. A 'Search to:' field is labeled '3'.

1. Login
2. "Click" Files
3. Search to:
TRADOC G2
TRISA-CTID
4. "Click" & Find !



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❑ BCKS

- Direct Link: <https://dcsint-threats.leavenworth.army.mil/default.aspx>

