



The Police Challenge: Advancing Afghan National Police Training

AFGHAN NATIONAL POLICE WORKING GROUP

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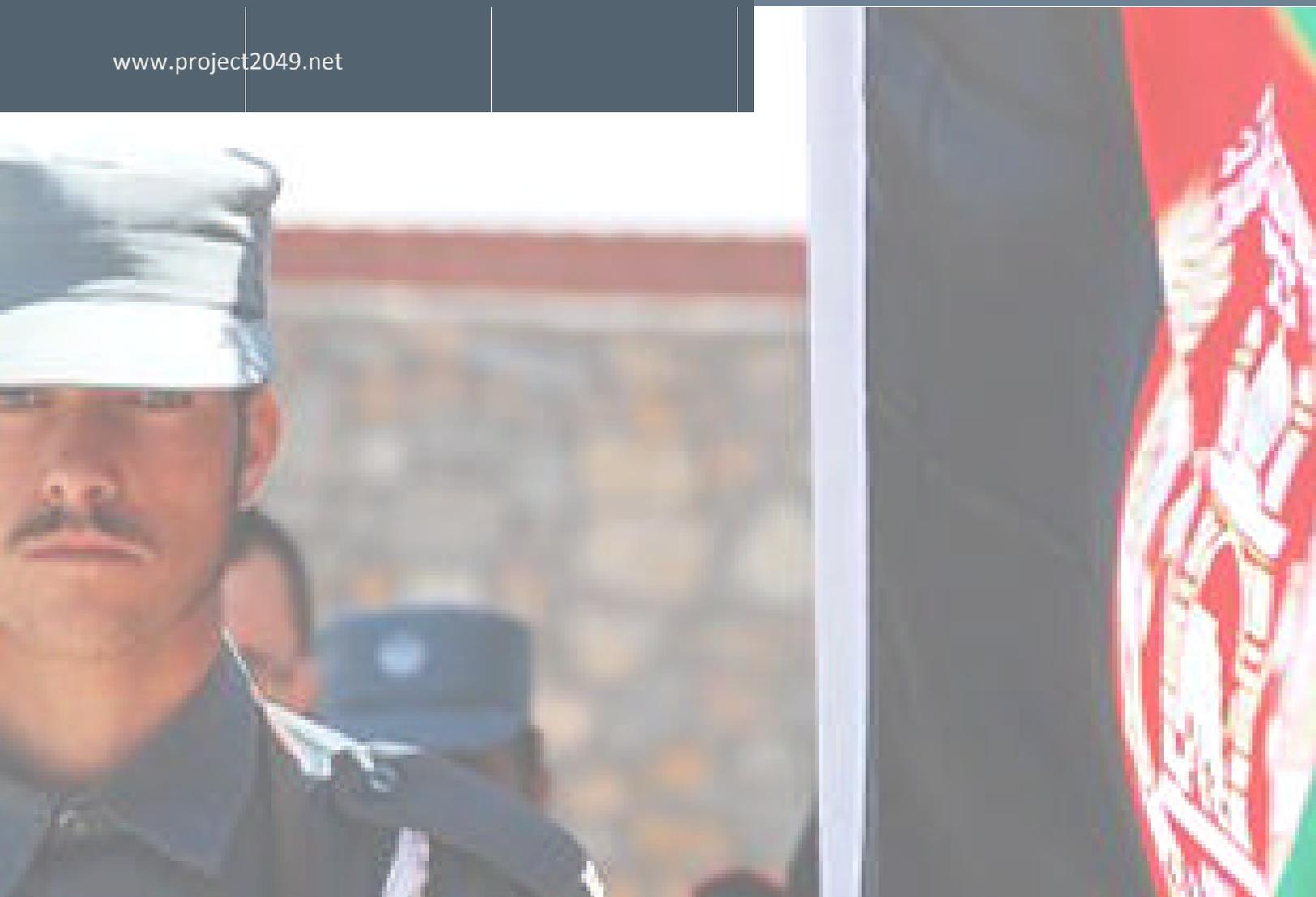
About the Project 2049 Institute:

The Project 2049 Institute, established in January 2008, is a 501(c)3 non-profit, non-partisan research organization. Project 2049 seeks to guide decision makers toward a more secure Asia by the century's mid-point. The organization fills a gap in the public policy realm through forward-looking, region-specific research on alternative security and policy solutions. Its interdisciplinary approach draws on rigorous analysis of socioeconomic, governance, military, environmental, technological and political trends, and input from key players in the region, with an eye toward educating the public and informing policy debate.

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Cover and above image: Members of the Afghan civil order police stand at the ANCOP graduation in Adraskan, Herat province.
Source: Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS).

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Foreword and Acknowledgements

In May 2010, the Project 2049 Institute convened a senior level study group to give comprehensive consideration to the current state of the Afghan National Police (ANP). In this report, the Project 2049 Institute seeks to examine and address the numerous challenges facing the ANP as well as prospects for improvement ahead of the transition to Afghan authorities. The report will provide some historical context to the current efforts, background to the formation of the current ANP, its evolution and current state, and enduring significance. The report will address current training initiatives and environmental challenges, as well as convey recommendations the study group believes can strengthen the training effort if implemented.

Although there are several sub-agencies within the ANP, the study group determined it to be of greatest value to focus on the Afghan Uniform Police (AUP), Afghanistan's principal civil law enforcement body, and the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), a more elite force that acts as a replacement for local ANP forces when they undergo training.

The Afghan National Police Working Group gratefully acknowledges the work of Ian Easton in authoring the report. In addition, the Group expresses their appreciation to Alexandra Matthews for her research support.



Image: Afghan policeman on patrol.
Source: Foreignpolicy.com.

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Executive Summary

Nearly ten years after the attacks of September 11th and the ensuing invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, the international community—particularly the United States—finds itself at a critical juncture in Afghanistan. After nearly a decade of effort, with countless lives lost and immense treasure spent, Afghanistan continues to be roiled by conflict. Failing to see enduring stability amidst continued attacks while undergoing a cautious transition process, much attention has been directed to the capacity of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to provide and maintain long-term security. For that reason, the Afghan National Police Working Group had dedicated itself to studying the state of the Afghan National Police (ANP), with a focus on the most visible and representative faces of the police force.

A functional Afghan police force is an essential element of promoting rule of law and development in Afghanistan. Officials within the Afghan military mission frequently comment on the importance of ANP training to maintaining a minimal level of stability, which the force has yet to achieve. Current estimates place nearly half of all ANP units at operational capacity. The ANP suffers from shortfalls in both institutional and individual capacity. Without a more professional, trustworthy, and capable police force, the security architecture necessary for sustainable post-conflict peace-building and development will likely fail. In fact, inadequate policing not only prevents the elimination of the insurgency, but also benefits it. In an environment where police commonly ask for bribes, are unable to resolve local disputes—let alone investigate criminal activity and arrest offenders—Afghan civilians may be more likely to lend their support to extremist groups, which emerges as a sub-optimal but necessary alternative to the inept police.

Challenges that this report seeks to illustrate and highlight include: the human capital deficit, the lack of a balanced approach to police development, the need to stop treating police professionalization as an iterative program, the inadequacy of police partnership programs, the ever-shifting ‘roles and missions’ changes affecting the force, the improper use and employment of uniformed police, and the institution failures of the Afghan government to set the conditions for police success.

The Working Group offers the following recommendations for consideration: 1) enhance Ministry-level reform and focus on “officer and patrolmen welfare”; 2) make ANCOP operations tempos predictable and sustainable; 3) introduce and plan for the necessary capacity for advanced professional and sustainment training for police beyond the basic training program currently provided; 4) introduce and plan for “collective training” experiences; 5) continue and, if possible, increase the deployment of qualified embedded mentors; 6) formally review and recalibrate as needed the “roles and missions” of the ANP, and adjust police training accordingly; and 7) enhance focus on an integrated approach to the overall law enforcement challenge.

While acknowledging the progress that has been made, as well as noting the strength of the team in place that continues to work on the challenges, the Working Group nonetheless believes we offer

observations and recommendations that can help. If accepted and implemented, we believe our recommendations would have a positive impact on qualitative measures such as production and retention rates, performance of officers and patrolmen, and relations between the police and the public. In doing so, the Working Group believes it is also important to strive toward realistic and achievable goals (the “perfect” should not be the enemy of the “good enough”), while fully recognizing political and resource constraints the United States and its allies will face going forward.

Introduction and Background

Attention is turning to the capacity of Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to provide and maintain long-term security. Within the ANSF, the Afghan National Police (ANP) is tasked with provision of day-to-day stability as well as more specialized roles such as border patrol and counterinsurgency operations (see Table 1). Despite these critical roles, a significant portion of the force is still unable to fulfill primary responsibilities for a myriad of reasons.

The future of Afghanistan’s police force is inextricably linked to the success or failure of other strategic objectives in the country, as a stable environment necessarily precedes sustainable political and development efforts. Going forward, a more capable national police—one of the most visible and tangible representation of the Afghan government—must be in place for a successful transition.

Branch	Role	Estimated strength
Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned to Police Districts and Provincial and Regional Commands. Includes Traffic Police, Fire and Rescue, and a United Nations Protective Force. 	92,500 personnel
Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialized police force trained and equipped to counter civil unrest. Nationally deployable police capability that maintains the rule of law and order. 	10,000
Afghan Border Police (ABP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General law enforcement capability at international borders, entry points, and in the Border Security Zone, which extends 50 km into Afghan territory. Deters and detects illegal entry and other criminal activity. 	19,600
Afghan Local Police (ALP) – established in August 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community focused program, provides interim community based security in areas. Foreseen to last two to five years to compensate for shortfalls in Afghan National Security Forces recruits. Recruits are vetted and approved by local <i>shuras</i> (committees) and district police chiefs. 	6,100 recruits

Table 1: Primary branches of the Afghan National Police force. *Source: NATO ISAF.*

While the progress and success of the police forces are difficult to comprehensively evaluate due to the absence of simply defined metrics, observable trends show some areas of progress and other areas that remain of great concern. In particular, the Afghan Uniformed Police (AUP) and the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) still face challenges in becoming a more capable force.

A functional Afghan police force is an essential element of rule of law and development in Afghanistan. Officials within the NATO-led Afghanistan International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission frequently comment on the importance of ANP training to maintaining a minimal level of stability, which the force has yet to achieve. Current estimates place nearly half of all ANP units at operational capacity. The ANP, which falls under the jurisdiction of Afghanistan’s Ministry of Interior (Moi), suffers from shortfalls in both institutional and individual capacity. Without a more

professional, trustworthy, and capable police force, the security architecture necessary for sustainable post-conflict peace-building and development will likely fail. In fact, inadequate policing not only hinders the elimination of the insurgency, but also benefits it. In an environment where police commonly ask for bribes, are unable to resolve local disputes—let alone investigate criminal activity and arrest offenders—Afghan civilians may be more likely to lend their support to the Taliban, which emerges as a sub-optimal but only alternative to the inept police.



ANP instructors stand alongside NATO Training Mission.
Source: DVIDS.

The Department of Defense (DoD) has recently assumed responsibility as the lead implementing agency for U.S. security efforts in Afghanistan. This has led to more cohesion in the overall approach and more progress than any other time since 2002. While this positive trajectory should be acknowledged, success still requires efforts beyond a military approach—the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan (NTM-A) now operates by integrating civilian police, paramilitary police from several nations, and contractors as well as military police. The ANP training program, led by the NTM-A along with the Combined Security Transition Command (CSTC-A) and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), has pursued a broad mandate to both improve the operational capacity of the police, as well as create a more comprehensive security structure starting at the MoI level.

The NTM-A and CSTC-A are responsible for all aspects of ANP training, including recruitment, training curriculum, equipment, and scheduling. The current U.S. government-led ANP training program is six weeks long and attempts to combine traditional police training with counterinsurgency (COIN) training.¹ While all training tasks were reportedly preserved when the program was recently reduced from eight to six weeks, many involved in the training expressed skepticism over the effectiveness of shortening the already highly abbreviated course to produce numbers quickly.

The range of challenges facing the ANP and recommendations from the Afghan National Police Working Group will be presented in this report.

The History of the Afghan National Police

It is important to understand that today's challenges stem from Afghanistan's fleeting and fragile police experience. Throughout its history, the nation has never enjoyed a period during which it benefited from a truly capable and effective civilian national police force.² For generations, systems of customary law, which varied greatly in interpretation and application across the country, relied on a combination of village councils and tribal elders to resolve disputes and mete out justice.³ These informal legal institutions were augmented by royal edicts and various constitutionally derived laws in the major cities. However, because Afghanistan has been so politically turbulent, with six constitutions since 1923, Islamic *Shari'a* law enforced at the local level in traditional (and often arbitrary) fashion has been the norm.⁴



Soldiers speak with village elders during a key leader engagement.

Source: U.S. Army.

Afghanistan first sought to develop a police force to project the power of the monarchy into both urban and rural areas in the 1930s. The Academy for Police and Gendarmerie was founded in 1935, first of its kind in Afghanistan, to serve as a police training institution and was staffed with technical advisors from Germany. However, training was interrupted in 1941 with the removal of the German advisors at the request of the Allies. Training was then briefly resumed from 1944 to 1948 as part of a British program to train Afghan officers in India but this was cut short by the partition in 1947. Subsequently, the Germans returned in 1953 to train the Afghan police as a junior wing of the armed forces under the regime of Prime Minister Daoud.⁵ This program was driven by the desire to counter the Soviet Union's growing influence over the Afghan army and its militarized nature did not represent the advent of a professional civilian police institution.⁶

Afghanistan's first short-lived experience with a modern civilian police force came in the 1960s during the reign of the former king, Mohammed Zahir Shah, with the creation of a national police force modeled on the European system. This nascent police force received training and developmental assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic;⁷ and was divided between a civil force that performed traditional police duties and a more mobile constabulary (gendarmerie) that could conduct public order, border patrol, and counter banditry operations.⁸ However, the political upheavals that plagued Afghanistan in the 1970s led to the militarization of the national police force, and the force ultimately ceased to operate as a civil institution.⁹

During the Soviet period, the police force was modeled on the two-tiered Soviet system with a powerful and educated officer corps commanding a force composed primarily of uneducated and untrained conscripts performing a compulsory two year service—often as an alternative to service in

the army.¹⁰ This period witnessed the police being employed as a light infantry force that battled the mujahidin and clashed with the Russian national security service KGB-trained State Information Service (KHAD) in bloody internecine power struggles.¹¹ The Afghan police experience in the latter half of the 1970s, especially after the Soviet invasion in 1979, is perhaps best characterized by its brutal and highly militarized nature, as well as its abrupt and traumatic departure from the civilian police force originally envisioned in the 1960s. Indeed, by the mid-1980s the police had grown into a 200,000 strong, heavily-armed counterinsurgency force that rivaled the army both in its level of influence and its paramilitary mission.¹²

The departure of Soviet forces in 1989 led to the re-opening of the German-built police academy in Kabul that same year. However, it was closed again in 1992 when the Soviet-backed government of President Najibullah was overthrown and the victorious mujahidin forces discharged all serving police conscripts.¹³ The continuing civil war between factionalized militia units resulted in a power vacuum at the central government level, and police and other government institutions ceased to exist altogether.¹⁴ The ensuing lawlessness contributed to the emergence of the Taliban, and facilitated its capture of Kabul in 1996.¹⁵ The Taliban eschewed the establishment of a civilian police force, and instead developed an extremist Islamic police modeled on Saudi Arabia's "Vice and Virtue Police."¹⁶ This resulted in widespread human rights violations being committed against women and girls as well as non-Pashtun minority groups.¹⁷

Post-Coalition Invasion

Afghanistan's limited and traumatic experiences with a national police force left the U.S. led-coalition with scant foundation upon which to build a new police force, following the removal of the Taliban regime in November 2001. This was equally the case in terms of institutions and human capital, as both had long since ceased to exist in any way meaningful for the construction of a civilian police force. It had been decades since Afghanistan had known even a fledgling civilian national police force, and whatever gains had been made in the 1960s and 1970s had long been reversed by incessant wars and civil strife.¹⁸

The Bonn Agreement of December 5, 2001 provided for an interim system of law and governance and assigned responsibility for providing security to the Afghans.¹⁹ Likewise, United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386 of December 20, 2001, which authorized the creation of ISAF to assist the Afghan interim government, sought to minimize the international community's role in providing for Afghanistan's domestic security. This program purposefully limited police oversight and material assistance.²⁰ Neither the Bonn Agreement nor the UN Resolution provided for police training or an UN police mission.²¹

As a result, the ad hoc police forces that took to the streets in 2002 were untrained, poorly equipped, largely illiterate (70-90 percent), predatory, and loyal to warlords and local leaders rather than to the interim government.²² This unprofessional police force was not representative of the country's ethnic composition and largely consisted of former mujahidin fighters coarsened by a lifetime of warfare and accustomed to acting with impunity. It also had some members of the militarized police from the brutal Soviet period.²³ This combination represented a profoundly poor starting point for a civilian police force representative of a new democratic order.²⁴ The weak police

foundation in place in early 2002 and the cacophonous approach taken to the police reconstruction efforts that followed, directly led to many of the problems that continue to plague Afghanistan.

A modest and grossly insufficient effort towards the reconstruction of the Afghan National Police was formally initiated in February 2002 with the agreement by donor nations to establish a multiethnic and sustainable 62,000 member civilian police service.²⁵ Germany volunteered to serve as lead nation to oversee and support reforms of the police sector, and by August 2002 had formally re-opened the Kabul police academy with 1,500 officer cadets enrolled in a five-year program.²⁶ The academy also provided a three month course for 500 non-commissioned officers. Police stations in Kabul were also refurbished and fifty police cars were donated; however, there was no focus on the need to rebuild the critically important Mol, with the German police mission belatedly assigning a mere single advisor to the Mol in 2003.²⁷ This initial failure to strengthen the management and structure of this powerful government institution undermined other early efforts to remake the national police.²⁸ Similarly, there was scant focus on the systems and processes that linked national to local-level police.

In 2003, recognizing the need to parallel the time-intensive German efforts with a separate program that could rapidly prepare large numbers of untrained individuals working in police roles, the United States established a training center in Kabul that offered in-service training for those currently conducting police work. This facility served as the prototype for the establishment of seven regional training sites that were constructed around the country. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) led the U.S. police assistance program that was contracted out to DynCorp International, which provided the project management, training center construction, and international instructor recruitment.²⁹

Upon the opening of the initial training center in Kabul in May 2003,³⁰ three American and six international instructors provided training modeled on the curriculum used at the Police Service School in Kosovo.³¹ This was designed as an eight-week course for literate trainees, a five week course for illiterate trainees, and a fifteen-day course for experienced policemen. In reality, since more than 70 percent of the trainees were illiterate, most of those trained received only the fifteen-day course.³² Like the German approach, the INL program focused only on police training and not on building the institutional capacity needed to support effective training outcomes.



ANP training under instruction of civilian contractor.
Source: *New York Times*.

Due to a subsequent need to centralize resources and surge training in light of the deteriorating security situation, the leadership of the U.S. police assistance program was transferred from INL to the Department of Defense in April 2005.³³ This transfer did little to impact the nature of the instruction provided to Afghan police trainees, as the basic training course continued to remain highly abbreviated in duration. Thus, despite the superficial transfer of responsibility, the period following from 2005-2009 was a de facto INL lead. While the U.S. program rapidly increased the number of Afghan police who received training, with the total number reaching 71,147 by July 2007, the training received was surface deep at best. No follow-on field training was provided—a sharp departure from previous U.S. programs in Panama, Haiti and the

Balkans—and no follow up was conducted to assess whether or not the training was being put into practice.³⁴

The U.S. police assistance programs in Afghanistan were also plagued by a lack of funding, a dearth of well-trained instructors, a deteriorating security situation, and a poor record of coordination with the other small-scale international police training programs in the country. These challenges were further compounded by endemic Afghan police corruption, drug use, Taliban infiltration, and attrition rates were estimated to be as high as 30 percent in late 2006.³⁵ Building a police force is a challenge under the best of conditions, building one in the midst of a continuing war is exponentially more difficult. As opposed to a stabilizing force that served to strengthen the nation's security environment and bolster governmental legitimacy, the Afghan National Police had become a source of insecurity, contributing to government illegitimacy and human rights abuses.³⁶

2006-2009 Developments

As the security situation continued to deteriorate and the Afghan Uniformed Police failed to inspire confidence despite its growing numbers—especially after its failure to respond to the May 2006 riots in Kabul—and an elite unit, the Afghan National Civil Order Police, was conceived in mid-2006.³⁷ ANCOP recruits were notionally required to have a third-grade proficiency in reading and writing. They were provided with 16 weeks of initial training³⁸ and served under stronger leadership with superior equipment than the AUP. ANCOP training included courses emphasizing crowd control, riot control, urban tactical operations, tribal relations, and ethics. Initial training was then followed by an introductory 60-day course on Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) and top graduates were selected for advanced SWAT training. ANCOP recruits also benefited from having embedded police mentor teams.³⁹ The first ANCOP units were initially charged with maintaining public order in large cities, providing a strong mobile presence in rural areas, and acting as a rapid reaction force to support other police units under duress.⁴⁰ Beginning in the fall of 2007, ANCOP's original mandate expanded and the force took a pivotal role in the most recent ANP reform initiative: the Focused District Development (FDD) program.⁴¹



PMT trains two ANCOPs disarming techniques, giving them the ability to go back to their districts and train their fellow police officers.
Source: DVIDS.

The FDD program targets the significant portion of untrained personnel within the AUP. The AUP includes members from the pre-2001 force who have never been trained and the priority given to ANCOP has also divided attention from AUP training. Estimates of untrained AUP stand as high as 40 percent of the force and ineffectiveness has the potential to negate progress made by other ANSFs.⁴²

The ongoing FDD program seeks to undercut the corruption within the ANP and professionalize the force by temporarily removing AUP units from their districts and replacing them with elite ANCOP units. The AUP units are then vetted at regional training centers, issued biometric identity cards, and trained intensively for six weeks. Rank and pay reform is carried out as well. At the end of the six week training period, AUP units return to their districts where they are monitored by embedded mentors. Meanwhile, ANCOP units, having served as a model stabilizing force to pave the way for the

AUP unit's return, rotate out of the district.⁴³ Furthermore, the FDD program is reported to be a good compromise between the abbreviated U.S. training effort to produce higher volumes of police and the prohibitively time-intensive German effort to produce a small number of highly trained officers. However, many long term challenges remain.⁴⁴ These challenges include the need to clarify the role of the police in a counterinsurgency; the need to strengthen leadership development and institutional reform; the need to combat Afghan police illiteracy, corruption, drug usage, and high attrition rates; and the critical need to train the Afghan police to suppress street crime.⁴⁵

ANP Training 2009-Present

A significant milestone in the rebuilding of ANP forces was reached in November 2009 when the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan was established to address the urgent challenges stemming from a lack of resources and an overly narrow mandate. This was followed by a new "Recruit-Train-Assign" method (compared to the previous "Recruit-Assign" practice) to ensure that all deployed AUP forces received an entry-level of professional training. Previously, most ANP personnel were recruited and fielded without training, and those that did receive training suffered from trainer-to-trainee ratios that reached as high as 1:466 in some locations.⁴⁶ The ANP personnel were not paid a living wage competitive with opportunities offered by insurgent groups and the Taliban. Changes made by the NTM-A resulted in considerable improvements in recruitment and quality, and formed the foundation for the professionalization of the ANP. This course of action should be sustained to ensure that outstanding challenges do not derail progress made to date.

U.S. and international efforts are currently underway to mitigate the tremendous challenges that the Afghan police face. For example, actions are being taken to combat police drug usage (most recently at a nine percent average across the force)⁴⁷ and illiteracy, which stands at 94.5 percent in the ANP.⁴⁸ The current goal is to increase police in literacy training to 20,000 by December 2010, and 40,000 by July 2011.⁴⁹ Remarkably, recent testing has shown that 94 percent of ANCOP personnel are also illiterate, despite initial reports suggesting that literacy was a core requirement for ANCOP recruits.⁵⁰ In August 2010, 592 ANCOP members were enrolled in literacy training at ten locations, with 39 having completed training and reaching a third-grade reading level by early October.⁵¹ From November, an expanded program aimed to produce 150 literate ANCOP members every six-week training cycle.⁵² The current goal is to bring all ANP personnel up to a third grade level of reading, although metrics for gauging success are yet unknown.⁵³

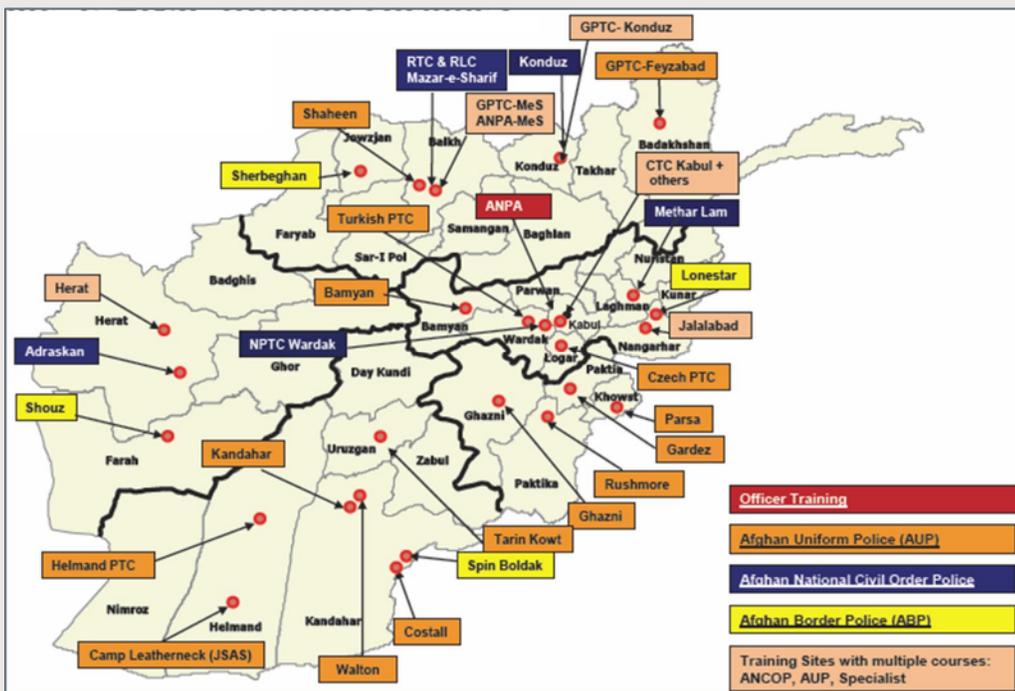


(From top to bottom): ANP map reading course; reading class at the Central Training Center; police literacy training; and literacy training in a classroom. Source: DVIDS; Washington Times; and CBS News.

High level reforms in the MoI have shown cause for cautious optimism. Bismillah Khan Mohammadi, a powerful Tajik leader with strong ties to the army and a track record of reform, was appointed as the new Minister of Interior in June 2010. Mohammadi's appointment ushered in subsequent efforts to begin fighting the corruption that has plagued his ministry and severely handicapped ANP development.⁵⁴ Ultimately, however, reform efforts in the MoI hinge upon the necessity of receiving high level support from the President's office, and this is far from assured given President Karzai's record of interfering with the justice process on behalf of his Pashtun supporters.⁵⁵ President Karzai's efforts to reconcile with the Taliban could also put him at odds with the MoI's leadership and organizational mission as well as NATO governments.⁵⁶ More than 200 American and international advisors are working with the MoI to help improve organizational capacity and quality leadership.⁵⁷

Assessments of the state of the ANP has tended to overstate quantitative factors, such as recruitment numbers, and underemphasized qualitative factors, such as human capital. Yet, the latter is a significant determinant of the former measurement. Among the ANP branches, ANCOP suffers from the greatest retention challenge due to continuous deployments in dangerous areas. Looking ahead, addressing qualitative issues related to institutional reforms, human capital investments, and training content will produce a truly capable and effective civilian national police force that transcend simply the numerical results.

Training for the ANP is currently being provided at seven regional training centers with one central training center and up to twenty-two training sustainment sites. Instruction is divided into three categories: basic, advanced, and specialized courses. Each course of instruction is designed to combine classroom instruction, hands-on application, and practical application. Periods of instruction are designed to maximize learning based on the limited literacy of the trainees, and courses taught by Afghan personnel are overseen by international partners.



Afghan National Police training sites.
Source: NTM-A Year in Review, 2009-2010.

AUP recruits receive instruction in over thirty individual courses. These courses include: the basic course, an advanced firearms (pistol/rifle) course, an advanced tactical training course, an advanced non-commissioned officer course, and a leadership and management course. Basic course trainees are evaluated on 17 core competencies, with ‘visual evaluation’ exercised via practical exercises and/or a question and answer process in lieu of written tests because the vast majority of students cannot read or write.⁵⁸



ANP recruit receives a certificate upon graduating the AUP Basic course.

Source: DVIDS

There are also partner-led supplementary courses taught after hours, including radio/Codan operator, basic logistics classes, and combat life saver.⁵⁹ After-hours courses are also provided on the subjects instructed that day to enhance learning. Instructors are evaluated once each quarter on 12 collective tasks and graded against ten criteria.⁶⁰ This training comes as part of a new effort to build upon the FDD program by the “Recruit-Train-Assign” model. This model attempts to cultivate a basic level of professionalism for all AUP trainees through mandatory training prior to deployment.⁶¹

At the same time, there has been a decline in the number of civilian advisors and mentors at the regional training centers and at the MoI. Civilian personnel were withdrawn from training support sites, and AUP training at regional training centers is being handed over to U.S. military and European Police (EUPOL) forces (French, Italian, Canadian, and Jordanian paramilitary police forces are providing training at a number of regional training centers).⁶² Training expansion sites are under construction in Jalalabad, Konduz, and Herat that will receive advisor support directed from either international partners or the Department of Defense.⁶³ This comes as part of a NTM-A effort to adjust to the security situation on the ground, with civilian trainers considered more constrained in areas of high violence when compared to their military counterparts.

While the U.S. military leadership maintains that the militarization of police training and mentoring suits the current security environment,⁶⁴ European partner nations have expressed a grave concern that such a shift could undermine the creation of a true civilian national police force and weaken the already tenuous democratic order in Afghanistan.

Current Challenges Facing the ANP

Human Capital:

Many of the ANP training and professionalization challenges stem from human capital limitations. Within the ANP, problems such as illiteracy and high drug use mirror the rates among the general population. There is no question that such personnel shortcomings throughout the force hinder the ability of officers and patrolmen to perform their duties.

Balanced Approach to Police Development:

Another important challenge relates to the diminishing time horizon. Under ideal circumstances, police reform, institution building, and training could be pursued over the course of decades as police development requires long term investment and sustained support. Yet, security and political imperatives are forcing an accelerated approach to training. This challenge should inform DoD's approach to training and lead designers of training programs to think both near term (what is 'good enough' and appropriate for the security conditions in Afghanistan today) as well as longer term (how do we plan to train a force for traditional policing once security conditions permit). Painstaking improvements should be reinforced by systems at the regional and provincial levels as well as within the MoI to continue advancements in police proficiency and professionalism. Standards should be raised over time because what is 'good enough' for today may not be one year from now.

Treating Police Professionalization as an Iterative Program:

In addition to the time horizon challenge, there is limited time allocated to individual training courses because of the urgent need for patrolmen and officers. Ideally, basic training and sustainment training would be adequate to equip police with the skills sets they need to perform their respective jobs. Yet, the lack of competent police on the job today compels DoD to attempt an expedited approach to fielding police in operational assignments. While this boosts the number of police in the field, it has the unintended consequence of producing patrolmen and officers who underperform or, worse, adopt corrupt practices.

Adequate Police Partnership Programs:

Societal and governance issues such as corruption, a poor relationship with the public, and a weak judiciary system pose severe challenges to legitimate policing. Police are often considered to be untrustworthy and are rarely sufficiently punished for their crimes or transgressions. Embedded mentors are often cited by U.S. government officials as the most effective way to mitigate these problems. The mentors not only advise their Afghan mentees on tactical, real time approaches to law enforcement, but they also serve as the conscience and moral compass for units. However, there is a deficiency of government employees of a sufficient rank to partner with Afghans to

monitor training and provide mentorship. While initially the partners may be mostly paramilitary police, as the violence goes down and security improves, the partners can transition from paramilitary to civilian police mentors. Unfortunately, despite marked improvements over the past year, the international community is still failing to deliver an adequate number of professional personnel for mentoring roles.

Understanding the “Roles and Missions” of the Police:

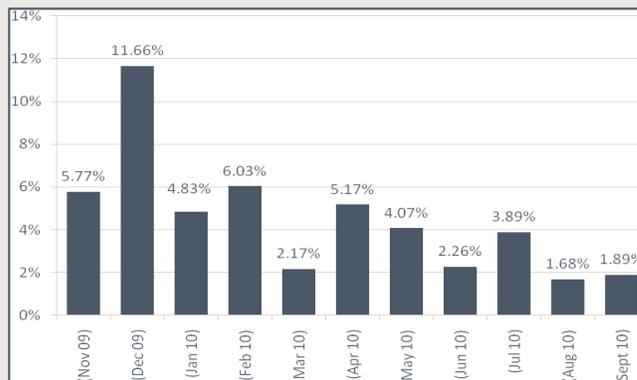


ANP casualty evacuation training; police casualties in action are 3 times that of the army.
Source: DVIDS.

One of the enduring challenges facing the ANP relates to identifying appropriate “roles and missions” for the operational units. There is an ongoing debate over the role of the AUP and the Afghan National Police more broadly in the counterinsurgency (COIN) efforts.

It has been noted that casualties sustained by these forces have been particularly high due to their employment as “little soldiers” or paramilitary forces supporting the army against the insurgents. The lack of training, equipment, and support to enable the police to carry out this mission resulted in some 3,400 casualties between January 2007 and March 2009—combat losses three times larger than those of the Afghan National Army.

These issues also contributed to a high attrition rate in the ANP, with an annual attrition rate of 20 percent in early 2009 from a mix of combat losses, desertion, illness and other causes.⁶⁵ This represents a serious impediment to reaching the goal of 18,500 ANCOF officers, and has highly negative implications for the development of experienced leadership given the high turn-over rates. In order to combat high attrition rates and improve leadership, ANCOF units have begun cross-training with U.S. Special Forces teams to reduce desertion rates and strengthen unit cohesion.⁶⁶ Despite a generally declining trend, levels of ANCOF attrition remain of concern.



ANCOF attrition rates from November 2009 – September 2010; the goal was 1.4% per month.

Source: NTM-A Year in Review, 2009-2010.

Proper Use and Employment of the Afghan Uniformed Police:

When AUP forces are deployed to areas yet to be cleared of insurgent violence, they may inadvertently undermine COIN efforts and strengthen insurgents in a number of ways. Security conditions vary to a considerable degree across Afghanistan, and many areas are not suitable for deploying regular police forces. Traditional COIN strategy calls for the transfer of security responsibilities as quickly as possible from the military to civil authorities in order to defeat the insurgency in its political dimension; however, this can only happen when areas are largely clear of insurgent violence.⁶⁷ When the AUP is deployed prematurely to insecure areas—as has often been

the case—it runs the risk of being caught up in offensive operations along with the military. Other times, the AUP is the only force facing better armed and well-organized insurgents after other security forces leave the area. This not only detracts and erodes the AUP’s inherently civil mission, but also delegitimizes it in the eyes of the public, particularly when it is unable to repel insurgents and protect civilians. Ultimately, enhancing public safety as a demonstration of good governance is the key to a victory in a COIN campaign because a viable insurgency depends upon exploiting the grassroots support that poor governance engenders.⁶⁸

The offensive operations required in insecure areas during a COIN campaign inevitably result in civilian casualties. This turns the public against the police while also setting the conditions for the police to view the public as an enemy to be fought instead of a group to be served and defended. Therefore, even in the ideal scenario in which the police can manage to temporarily win on the field of battle against the insurgents, they have lost the greater campaign to capture the support of the public and have inadvertently added fuel to the insurgency. In reality, the ideal scenario is the most unrealistic of possible outcomes. AUP units are handicapped by insufficient training, institutional support, and professionalism; and this all but assures that they will either fail in the fight against the insurgents or seek to avoid a fight at all (often through desertion, surrender or treason). In these outcomes, the insurgency is further boosted by the police’s failure—either active or passive—to provide for public security and fight street crime. This is especially troubling because the AUP represents the most salient form of government authority for most of the Afghan people, and thus AUP’s failures are equated with a broader failure of governance. Unfortunately, the factors that conspire against the AUP’s success are far from being overcome. If these challenges persist then the national police risks representing the opposite of that for which it was intended and, in so doing, further strengthen the insurgents.

The Context Within Which Policing Occurs:

One of the most pressing challenges facing the AUP and the ANCOP is the institutional failure of the Afghan government to set the conditions for their success. While much attention has been paid to the myriad problems involved in the creation of the Afghan security services, a vanishingly small amount of time and resources has been directed towards rebuilding the failed justice and interior ministries. The penal system has also suffered from a severe shortage of high level attention, and only recently has the MoI seen anything resembling long-term reform. All of these institutions directly impact the welfare of AUP and ANCOP personnel. For example, the problems encountered in the finance and interior ministries have resulted in the police going underpaid or unpaid, underequipped, and un-rested. These problems are combined with a woeful disregard for the welfare of police families—especially in the cases where AUP or ANCOP members are killed or permanently maimed—to create a severe morale problem. The high level corruption that plagues these ministries also has a trickle-down effect that further undermines the ability of the police to serve society and encourages the employment of predatory policing tactics. At the same time, the ongoing qualitative and quantitative poverty of prosecutors, judges, and jails further encourages the police to engage in corrupt and abusive prisoner handling.⁶⁹

Conclusions

The Afghan National Police Working Group has full appreciation for the magnitude of the task before NTM-A/CSTC-A. We note that the situation is fluid, and some of recommendations could quickly be overcome by events on the ground. NTM-A/CSTC-A is not standing still either—we find that innovative problem-solving is one of the hallmarks of their leaders and implementers.

While acknowledging the progress that has been made, as well as noting the strength of the team in place that continues to work on the challenges, the Afghan National Police Working Group strived to offer observations and recommendations for the next steps. In particular, the recommendations below focuses on improving police production and retention rates, performance of officers and patrolmen, and enhanced and improved relations between the police and the public. In doing so, the Working Group believes it is also important to strive toward realistic and achievable goals (the perfect should not be the enemy of the “good enough”), while fully recognizing political and resource constraints the United States and its allies will face going forward.

Before conveying our very specific recommendations, we note some observations that taken collectively provide an overarching framework that should inform more specific decision making related to policy training, and deployment.

Our first observation relates to the need to have police training and deployments appropriate for the local security conditions. The debate on whether to train police for counter-insurgency operations or for more traditional policing is ill-informed and can be quite misleading. The reality is that police in Afghanistan, at least for the foreseeable future, must be trained and equipped to do both, and that deployment and training decisions must be carefully managed in accordance with security conditions on the ground.

Local Security Conditions	Police Requirements	Taliban Influence
Poor	ISAF/ANCOP Clear and Hold; police trained and equipped for COIN	High (intimidation/coercion)
↓		↓
Fair	Ability to begin T=transition	Medium (ability to co-opt, corrupt)
↓		↓
Sufficient	AUP traditional policing	Low (greater public confidence)

While these principles are implicit in the Focused District Development program, they are yet to be fully embraced.⁷⁰ The FDD is a swap-out scheme that only works if ANCOP gains are fully successful in a pre-defined timeline, and that there is no backsliding in the security environment once the AUP returns. The FDD program also necessitates a sequential approach to district development, rather than something more fluid. The conceptual framework we suggest looks at an integrated approach to training and deployment of both ANCOP and AUP that is more fluid and flexible

Our second observation is related to the first. We believe there is a strong need to fully account for the dual nature of the challenge—both short term and urgent when considering the COIN challenge and poor police performance as well as long term when considering the need for institution building and planning for transition to a modified training regimen as conditions allow. A complete transition of security responsibilities to Afghan forces necessitates a training approach that is capable of evolving and developing to meet future needs. This is understandable given the immediate need to train and equip police to fill the void that is so evident and consequential. Yet, near term gains could attenuate and backslide if we are not planning for both the present and the future simultaneously. Ultimately, the approach to fielding police and law enforcement systems must be iterative—fielding what is necessary for today while embedding systems and process that will continually improve today's 'good enough' to 'better' as each year passes.

A sequential approach to training may actually become problematic over time. Imagine a future where training, equipping, and deploying ANP forces succeed beyond all expectations in helping the military defeat the Taliban and improve local security conditions. If planning and transition are not already underway in such a future scenario, Afghanistan will reach a juncture where ANP training has to be radically altered, and new police units must be churned out to meet the new law enforcement requirements. While making a radical turn such as this may ultimately be achievable, one must assume Afghanistan would be attempting the change at a time with lessening foreign interest and involvement, and would also need to do so while leaving in place police units ill-prepared to deal with traditional law enforcement challenges. A better approach would be integrated, fluid, and flexible.

A third observation is that we must recognize that connectivity should exist between the national level activities in Afghanistan (e.g. national institutions, national policy making, and national directives) and local level activities. For the sake of long term professionalization and sustainability, the ANP should have a national character, and must be defined by consistent, high quality training objectives, standards, and practices. Yet in the near term, local conditions will continue to vary dramatically. In this context, local conditions means not only the security environment, but the quality of the governance, the fairness and competence of the judicial system, and the fidelity of the penal system for confinement and/or enforcement of penalties. Analysts often speak of a 'three-legged stool' where policing and law enforcement share equal responsibility with the judicial system and the penal system to keep faithful law enforcement and governance operating. But the reality is, these three elements may develop and evolve at different paces and can vary across different locales. It is perhaps more useful to think of policing as resting in the center in a linchpin fashion as a necessary but insufficient element in the public's overall confidence in law enforcement and, in fact, overall governance.

Recommendations

The Afghan National Police Working Group offers the following, more specific recommendations for consideration:

1. Enhance Ministry-level reform and focus on officer and patrolmen welfare.

A competent and functioning police force cannot be achieved if the ministry under which the police are managed cannot consistently ensure the basic welfare of police and their families.

Improvement of police welfare and quality of life should be a priority when integrating ministry reform with the police training process. The administrative capacity of the Ministry should be seen as directly linked with the overall efforts to professionalize the police forces.

Our Working Group believes Ministry-level institutional reform has been inadequate. Corruption, inefficiency, and ethnic factionalism at a Ministry level directly impacts morale, professionalism, and ultimately the operational effectiveness of Afghan police forces. Improving quality of life through the very basic provision of regular paychecks, fidelity on family benefits, and the assurance of an achievable career path with potential performance and retirement benefits can have a much broader impact than simple efficiency in administration—such improvements will ultimately translate into better performance of duties.

In this area, we note some nascent efforts by NTM-A/CSTC-A that show promise and should be encouraged. For example, working with the MoI, the NTM-A/CSTC-A team has promoted the formalization of contract agreements between the Ministry and individual members of the ANP (so terms of service and compensation are clear and legally binding), has instituted direct deposit and electronic payment programs, has created mobile pay teams to ensure that problems do not fester, and has tried to promote transparency and understanding with respect to the promotion system.

Collectively, these aforementioned efforts represent a good start. But implementation will be the key for these efforts to be seen as more than simple gimmicks. Confidence and trust can only be gained over time when patrolmen and officers see their contracts honored despite grievances, understand that their pay consistently arrives on time in their accounts, and so forth.

2. ANCOP operations tempo must be predictable and sustainable.

Until very recently, members of ANCOP were deploying frequently, with little transparency regarding length of deployment and little confidence they could count on home leave at some early juncture



Demonstration of the pay-by-phone program to improve police pay by sending salary information via text messages.

Source: NTM-A.

after deployment. Again, NTM-A/CSTC-A has recognized the problems that such an operations tempo foster. Without a strategic plan for individual and unit rotations, there was little optimism that refresher training could be provided, and equally important, that time on leave with family could be realized. Undoubtedly, the high tempo of operations in the most dangerous environments in Afghanistan led to higher attrition rates. To improve retention, the NTM-A/CSTC-A and the MoI developed a cycle of six weeks deployment, six weeks of rest, and then six weeks of training, preparation, and deployment. This system has reduced attrition to as low as 1.4% in April, 2011, and facilitated the creation of new ANCOP brigades.

Just as important as sustained improvements, senior leadership must honor the implicit promises they make in creating plans for rotations. There will be tremendous pressure to cut leave and/or cut training if the security environment worsens—and it will thus take discipline and vision to allow their best assets to take time off for home leave when they are needed the most. But a breach of faith would be disastrous and would virtually guarantee even higher desertion rates.

3. Introduce and plan for the necessary capacity for advanced professional and sustainment training for police beyond the basic training program currently provided.

Attrition rates within the ANP are extremely high and contribute to overall ineffectiveness. The average police officer is put through a brief training program and is sent to the dangerous streets, without much incentive to remain committed to the job. There is a serious need for sustainment and professional training within the ANP. The potential advantages are several-fold. Sustainment training will assist in refreshing the basic skills taught in the introductory courses. It will also allow instructors to teach more advanced training and skills appropriate for police who are farther along in their careers.

Sustainment and advanced training can also be integrated into a transparent system for objective criteria for promotion. Patrolmen and officers should see advanced training as an opportunity to gain more skills—but they should also seek training as a means to achieve professional advancement. The MoI should make it policy to link training and education to promotion and pay increases, and build-in mechanisms the guarantee adherence to this policy along with metrics to measure progress.

Further, sustainment training will allow for the introduction of leadership training. Quality leadership at the small unit level is absolutely vital to the success of the police. Weak leadership is difficult to overcome. A more advanced training curriculum, developed by both foreign trainers and Afghans, would provide police with the tools needed to advance professionally and perform more effectively on the job.

4. Introduce and plan for “collective training” experiences.

In addition to advance professional and sustainment training, it will be important to introduce opportunities for units to have collective training experiences and to periodically pull units from the line to re-train at the unit level. Again, the advantages are several-fold. Collective training allows an even greater degree of realism in one’s training as patrolmen and officers would find themselves training alongside the same individuals that they serve with in the field of operation.

But of even greater importance, collective training provides an opportunity for unit members to develop trust, confidence, and affinity for *one another* that will likely translate into loyalty on the field of operation. Desertion becomes less likely if members develop loyalty—not just to their units and their organization—but to fellow patrolmen and officers as comrades-in-arms. Further, trust that colleagues can and will perform is bolstered if seen at first hand in training.

5. Continue and, if possible, increase the deployment of qualified embedded mentors.

Time and again government officials interviewed for this project cited the presence of qualified mentors as a common and identifiable determinant factor in the improvement of individual members and whole units of the ANP. There are multiple reasons for this. First, qualified embedded mentors become a means through which basic skills can be reinforced. Sustained mentoring and guidance by outside actors helps officers and patrolmen put into practice what they've been taught in the formal training environment. Second, qualified embedded mentors help with real-time, operational decision making. And third, qualified embedded mentors can serve as the conscience and moral compass of a unit to check against creeping corruption and ethical lapses. Arguably the greatest return on investment may come in the form of embedded mentors if they are qualified and have the opportunity for sustained engagement with ANP units.

6. Formally review and recalibrate as needed the “roles and missions” of the ANP, and adjust police training accordingly.

All stakeholders in the Afghan military mission must re-examine the roles and mission of the police, particularly within a counterinsurgency context. While it is true that roles and missions will vary by geographic location and security conditions, it is a false choice to say one can either train the police to be a counter-insurgency force, or a traditional police force but not both. A police force should not take on the function of the military, but the reality in Afghanistan is that the police have a necessary and vital role to play in fighting an insurgency and must be adequately prepared to do so. They must also be prepared to provide basic security, crime fighting, and civil order once the insurgency is contained.

A long-term plan to phase out COIN operations and transition to a fully functioning traditional civilian police force, when possible, should be implemented in the ANP training programs. It is critical that AUP officers be civilianized, especially in the eye of the Afghan public, which they interact with on a daily basis. Although the demilitarization of the entire ANP is a priority, COIN strategy may be more appropriate for ANCOP, an elite, temporary force tasked with maintaining order in times of emergency. In their limited time-span, training programs must strike an appropriate balance between the two types of policing. This may require localization of programs, as security conditions vary throughout the country. One possible solution could be expanding ANCOP forces to particularly insecure areas which will allow the AUP to focus on developing its capacity for civilian policing.

7. Enhance focus on an integrated approach to the overall law enforcement challenge.

As noted before, policing is one element, along with the judiciary and penal systems, of security and rule of law in Afghanistan. The development of these systems must be integrated, as they are

currently maturing at different rates. While the ANP has made considerable progress and has received the attention and resources of international donors and Afghan officials, less advancement has been made in strengthening the court system or increasing its transparency. Although resources are already strained, the judicial and corrections sectors must be professionalized, funded, and monitored.

Longer Term:

The Afghan National Police Working Group has dedicated its attention to the current challenge at hand—how to help build and train a police force that can meet the minimal goals associated with effective policing and law enforcement in Afghanistan today. Given the time horizon challenge previously noted, this leaves us little latitude to consider more radical changes to the approach currently taken to train the Afghan National Police. Through the course of our research and analysis, however, we have begun to form opinions related to the longer term challenges the United States and its allies potentially face going forward. The U.S. military and the U.S. government as a whole are not well-organized to the task of foreign police training in a counter-insurgency environment. More attention and analysis is required to foster a more effective approach to foreign police training in the future.

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¹⁹ David H. Bayley and Robert M. Perito, *The Police in War*, (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers) 2010, p. 18.

²⁰ Ibid.

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²⁴ For example, after the fall of the Taliban many warlords were given posts of police chiefs and their entire militia units were rebranded as police units. Many of these police chiefs used their positions to become large-scale drug traffickers and use "law enforcement" to eliminate drug competitors and rivals. So as the 2000s were unfolding, the posts of police chiefs were practically auctioned out since the buyers expected to make their investment back within 2 or 3 years on extortion and the drug traffic. Related police abuse has been extortion along police checkpoints, especially in the South, where was so bad that farmers found it completely unprofitable to transport legal crops to markets. By the time, they paid up at all police checkpoints, they had no profit left.

²⁵ Statement of Charles Michael Johnson Jr., "Afghanistan Security: U.S. Efforts to Develop Capable Afghan Police Forces Face Challenges and Need a Coordinated, Detailed Plan to Help Ensure Accountability," *U.S. Government Accountability Office*, June 18, 2008, p. 4.

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³³ In reality, the actual oversight was more convoluted, and defies easy description. From April 2005, DoD provided the bulk of the funding, and State provided the lead official in Afghanistan (who still reported to INL) although he was located in CSTC-A with reporting responsibilities to the CSTC-A CG. Thus in April 2005 DoD took a much more prominent role in police training, providing additional funding and increased oversight to the INL program, yet State (INL) still played a leadership role in this complex arrangement.

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⁴⁵ "DoD News Briefing with Lt. Gen. Caldwell via Teleconference from Afghanistan," *U.S. Department of Defense News Transcript*, August 23, 2010, at <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=4675>, accessed November 17, 2010.

⁴⁶ See NTM-A: NATO Training Mission Afghanistan, "Year in Review: November 2009 to November 2010," *NTM-A: NATO Training Mission Afghanistan*, undated. Accessible online at: <http://www.ntm-a.com/documents/enduringledger/el-oneyear.pdf>.

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⁴⁸ Special Inspector General Afghanistan Reconstruction "Report to the United States Congress," *Special Inspector General Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR)*, October 30, 2010, p. 71, at http://www.sigar.mil/pdf/quarterlyreports/Oct2010/Lores/Section3_2.pdf, accessed November 18, 2010.

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⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ Literacy issues aside, recent reports have suggested that the ANCOP experience has been somewhat mixed. For example, in Marja, at least in the first 2-3 months after deployment, the ANCOP unit there did not perform well. While not as abusive as the previous local police chief, its performance fell far below expectations. By way of contrast, in Kandahar in September and October 2010, ANCOP seemed to perform considerably better.

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⁵⁴ However, there are concerns that the new MoI leader will exacerbate the ethnic tensions that have long plagued the ministry. For example, Bismillah's performance in Afghan military when he was second in command to Wardak was reportedly very ethnically divisive, and the military was ethnically and factionally rift between the Pashtuns loyal to Wardak and the Northerners loyal to Bismillah. Unconfirmed reports from fall 2010 reported that that under the guise of anti-corruption efforts, Bismillah was purging out Pashtuns from upper-level MoI positions and giving police chief posts to Northern Alliance ex-Commanders, such as the Panshiris and Andarabbis, directly in the areas they previously operated their militias. The Pashtuns in Kabul were widely interpreting the MoI shakeup as Bismillah's effort to create an anti-Pashtun belt from Kabul north.

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⁵⁸ The 17 basic core classes are divided into 5 categories: 1) Civil Disturbance: proper use of equipment, various formations, ready/show of force positions; 2) Defensive Baton: interview/combat stance, proper striking techniques; 3) Firearms, Basic Rifle; 4) Tactical Training Program: tactical firearms, mine awareness, individual movement techniques/hand arm signals, unit movement/reaction to ambush/breaking contact, hasty defense/sectors of fire,

hasty arrest, high risk traffic stops, building searches, danger crossing, situational training exercise; 5) Handcuffing: searching position, apply handcuffs on a standing/kneeling/and prone suspect.

⁵⁹ These courses are taught by Revival Corporation, MPRI, and U.S. Military trainers, respectively.

⁶⁰ These criterion points are: attendance; attitude; acknowledgement of regulations; gives well prepared presentations; explains clearly, answers questions well; uses visual aids (blackboards, etc.); speaks well; encourages questions & class participation; stimulates interest in subject; and eye contact.

⁶¹ NTM-A: NATO Training Mission Afghanistan, "Year in Review: November 2009 to November 2010," *NTM-A: NATO Training Mission Afghanistan*, undated, p. 12. Accessible online at: <http://www.ntm-a.com/documents/enduringledger/el-oneyear.pdf>.

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⁶³ Private round table discussions with officials involved in ANP training, Washington D.C., November 2010.

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The Afghan National Police Working Group bios

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LTG James M. Dubik relinquished command of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq and NATO Training Mission-Iraq in 2008. Previously, LTG Dubik was the Commanding General of I Corps and Ft. Lewis. LTG Dubik commanded the US and Multi-national forces in northern Haiti during Operation Uphold Democracy and was the Deputy Commanding General for TASK FORCE EAGLE and Multinational Division (North) Operation Joint Forge in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

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