

GAO

Testimony
Before the Subcommittee on National
Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee
on Oversight and Government Reform,
House of Representatives

For Release on Delivery
Expected at 10:00 a.m. EDT
Wednesday, June 18, 2008

AFGHANISTAN SECURITY

U.S. Efforts to Develop Capable Afghan Police Forces Face Challenges and Need a Coordinated, Detailed Plan to Help Ensure Accountability

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Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.					
1. REPORT DATE 18 JUN 2008		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2008 to 00-00-2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Afghanistan Security. U.S. Efforts to Develop Capable Afghan Police Forces Face Challenges and Need a Coordinated, Detailed Plan to Help Ensure Accountability				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Government Accountability Office, 441 G Street NW, Washington, DC, 20548				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 23	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			



Highlights of [GAO-08-883T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

Since 2005, the Department of Defense (Defense), with support from the Department of State (State), has directed U.S. efforts to develop the Afghan National Police (ANP) into a force capable of enforcing the rule of law and supporting actions to defeat insurgency, among other activities. This testimony discusses (1) U.S. efforts to develop a capable ANP; (2) challenges that affect the development of a capable ANP; and (3) GAO analysis of U.S. efforts to develop a coordinated, detailed plan for completing and sustaining the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), which comprise the ANP and the Afghan National Army (ANA). This statement is based on a concurrently issued GAO report titled *Afghanistan Security: Further Congressional Action May Be Needed to Ensure Completion of a Detailed Plan to Develop and Sustain Capable Afghan National Security Forces*, GAO-08-661 (Washington, D.C.: June 18, 2008).

What GAO Recommends

To help ensure coordination and accountability of U.S. efforts to build a capable ANSF and facilitate assessment of progress, GAO has encouraged Congress to consider conditioning a portion of future appropriations on completion of a coordinated, detailed plan. Defense disagreed with conditioning future funding and State expressed similar concerns. GAO maintains that further action is needed to ensure completion of a coordinated, detailed plan.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-08-883T](#). For more information, contact Charles Michael Johnson, Jr., at (202) 512-7331 or johnsoncm@gao.gov.

AFGHANISTAN SECURITY

U.S. Efforts to Develop Capable Afghan Police Forces Face Challenges and Need a Coordinated, Detailed Plan to Help Ensure Accountability

What GAO Found

Although the ANP has reportedly grown in number since 2005, after an investment of more than \$6 billion, no Afghan police unit (0 of 433) is assessed by Defense as fully capable of performing its mission and over three-fourths of units (334 of 433) are assessed at the lowest capability rating. In addition, while the ANP has reportedly grown in number to nearly 80,000 personnel, concerns exist about the reliability of this number.

Defense Assessment of ANP Capabilities, as of April 2008

Number of ANP units	Fully Capable	Capable with Coalition Support	Partially Capable	Not Capable	Unit Not Formed or Not Reporting
433	0	12 (3%)	18 (4%)	334 (77%)	69 (16%)

Source: GAO analysis of Defense data.

Several challenges impede U.S. efforts to develop capable ANP forces. First, the shortage of police mentors has been a key impediment to U.S. efforts to conduct training and evaluation and verify that police are on duty. Second, the ANP continues to encounter difficulties with equipment shortages and quality. Third, the ANP faces a difficult working environment, including a weak Afghan judicial sector and consistent problems with police pay, corruption, and attacks by insurgents. Defense has recognized challenges to ANP development and, in November 2007, began a new initiative called Focused District Development—an effort to train the police as units—to address them. This effort is too new to fully assess, but the continuing shortfall in police mentors may put the effort at risk.

Despite a 2005 GAO recommendation calling for a detailed plan and a 2008 congressional mandate requiring similar information, Defense and State have not developed a coordinated, detailed plan with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, milestones for completing and sustaining the ANSF, and a sustainment strategy. In 2007, Defense produced a 5-page document intended to address GAO's 2005 recommendation. However, the document does not identify the role or involve the participation of State—Defense's partner in training the ANP. Further, State has not completed a plan of its own. In the absence of a coordinated, detailed plan that clearly defines agency roles and responsibilities, a dual chain of command exists between Defense and State that has complicated the efforts of mentors training the police. Defense's 5-page document also contains few milestones, including no interim milestones that would help assess progress made in developing the ANP. Without interim milestones, it is difficult to know if current ANP status represents what the United States intended to achieve by 2008. In addition, Defense's 5-page document lacks a sustainment strategy. Without a detailed strategy for sustaining the ANSF, it is difficult to determine how long the United States may need to continue providing funding and other resources for this important mission.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am pleased to be here today to discuss U.S. efforts to assist in the development of Afghan National Police (ANP) forces and the establishment of rule of law in Afghanistan. My testimony is based on our concurrently issued report¹ regarding U.S. efforts to develop the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), which consist of the Afghan National Army (ANA) and the ANP. According to Defense, an improved police force is vital to stabilizing and maintaining security throughout Afghanistan. U.S. support for the ANP began in 2002 and increased significantly in 2005 in response to deteriorating security in Afghanistan and concerns that ANP development was proceeding too slowly. U.S. activities currently include manning, training, and equipping of police forces as well as efforts to reform the Afghan Ministry of Interior, which oversees the ANP.²

My testimony today focuses on (1) U.S. efforts to develop capable ANP forces; (2) challenges that affect the development of capable ANP forces; and (3) our analysis of U.S. efforts to develop a coordinated, detailed plan for completing and sustaining the ANSF, including the ANP. Over the course of our work, we reviewed and analyzed Defense reporting and planning documents. In addition, we interviewed cognizant Defense, State, and contractor officials in Washington, D.C., as well as in Kabul, Afghanistan, where we also met with Afghan government officials. We also visited an equipment warehouse and police training facilities.

We conducted our work for the concurrently issued report from March 2007 through June 2008 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

¹GAO, *Afghanistan Security: Further Congressional Action May Be Needed to Ensure Completion of a Detailed Plan to Develop and Sustain Capable Afghan National Security Forces*, [GAO-08-661](#) (Washington, D.C.: June 18, 2008).

²GAO is currently performing a detailed review of U.S. efforts to reform the Afghan Ministry of Interior and National Police. This report is currently planned for release in early 2009.

Summary

Since 2002, the United States has provided about \$6.2 billion³ to train and equip the ANP. However, as of April 2008, no police unit was assessed as fully capable of performing its mission. Over three-fourths of the police units were assessed as not capable—the lowest capability rating Defense assigns to units that have been formed. As of the same date, the ANP had reportedly grown in number to nearly 80,000—about 97 percent of the force's end-strength of 82,000. However, the extent to which the ANP has truly grown is questionable given concerns that have been raised by Defense about the reliability of police manning figures.

Building a capable ANP requires manning, training, and equipping forces; however, several challenges have impeded U.S. efforts to build a capable ANP.

- The shortage of police mentors has impeded U.S. efforts to conduct training, evaluation, and verification that police are on duty.⁴ As of April 2008, only about 32 percent (746 of 2,358) of required military mentors were present in Afghanistan.⁵ According to Defense, the shortfall in military mentors is due to the higher priority assigned to deployments of U.S. military personnel elsewhere, particularly Iraq.
- The ANP continues to encounter difficulties with equipment shortages and quality. As of February 2008, shortages remained in several types of police equipment that Defense considers critical, such as trucks, radios, and body armor. In addition, Defense officials expressed concerns about the quality and usability of thousands of weapons donated to the police. For example, officials estimated that only about 1 in 5 of the nearly 50,000 AK-47 automatic rifles received through donation was of good quality. In addition, distribution of hundreds of equipment items on hand has been delayed due to limited police ability to account for equipment provided to them.

³This figure includes \$342 million appropriated and \$764 million requested in fiscal year 2008.

⁴In this testimony, personnel who train Afghan police in the field are collectively referred to as mentors. U.S. military personnel who train Afghan police in the field are referred to as military mentors, while contractors who train Afghan police in the field are referred to as civilian mentors.

⁵As of the same date, about 98 percent (540 of 551) of the authorized number of civilian mentors were present in country.

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- The ANP faces a difficult working environment. For example, although a working judiciary is a prerequisite for effective policing, State noted that much of Afghanistan continues to lack a functioning justice sector. In addition, police in the field face consistent problems with pay, corruption, and attacks.

In November 2007, Defense began a new initiative called Focused District Development to address some of these concerns. Under this initiative, the entire police force of a district is withdrawn to train as a unit—similar to the way Defense trains the Afghan army—and receive all authorized equipment. We have not fully assessed this new initiative; however, the continuing shortfall in police mentors may put this effort at risk.

Despite our 2005 recommendation and a 2008 congressional mandate, Defense and State have yet to develop a coordinated, detailed plan with milestones for completing and sustaining the Afghan police and army forces. In 2007, Defense produced a 5-page document intended to meet our 2005 recommendation. However, the document does not identify the role or involve the participation of State—Defense’s partner in training the ANP. Further, State has not developed a plan of its own. In the absence of a coordinated, detailed plan that clearly states the various agencies’ roles and responsibilities, a dual chain of command exists between Defense and State that has complicated the efforts of civilian mentors training the police.

Defense’s 5-page document also contains few milestones, including no interim milestones that would enable assessment of progress made in developing the ANP. While Defense maintains that its monthly status reports allow progress to be monitored, these status reports also lack the interim milestones and end dates needed to determine if U.S. efforts are on track. Similarly, although Defense’s newly adopted Focused District Development initiative involves considerable resources and is projected to last until 2012 at a minimum, Defense has not identified interim milestones or a consistent end date by which to gauge the progress of this new effort. Without interim milestones against which to assess the ANP, it is difficult to know if current ANP status represents what the United States intended to achieve by 2008.

In addition, Defense’s 5-page document lacks a sustainment strategy. U.S. officials have stated that until Afghan revenues increase substantially, the international community will likely need to assist in paying sustainability costs. Defense officials in Washington have not indicated how long and in what ways the U.S. government expects to continue assisting the ANSF.

Without a detailed strategy for sustaining the ANSF, it is difficult to determine how long the United States may need to continue providing funding and other resources for this important mission.

To help ensure accountability of U.S. efforts to build a capable ANSF and facilitate assessment of progress, we included a matter for congressional consideration in our report issued concurrently with this testimony encouraging Congress to consider conditioning a portion of future appropriations on completion of a coordinated, detailed plan to develop the ANSF. Defense disagreed with our matter for congressional consideration, stating that current guidance provided to the field is sufficient to implement a successful program to train and equip the ANSF. State also expressed concerns about conditioning future appropriations on the completion of a detailed plan. We continue to believe that a coordinated, detailed plan is essential to helping ensure accountability for U.S. investments and facilitating assessment of progress.

Background

Afghanistan's security institutions, including its police and judiciary, were severely damaged prior to the U.S. and coalition overthrow of the Taliban regime in 2001. Reconstitution of the ANP formally began in February 2002 when donor nations agreed to establish a multiethnic, sustainable, 62,000-member professional police service committed to the rule of law. Germany volunteered to lead the police reform effort; however, due, in part, to Afghanistan's pressing security needs and concerns that the German training program was moving too slowly, the United States expanded its role in the police training effort in 2005—including involvement, for the first time, of the U.S. Department of Defense, as well as increased funding.⁶ In May 2007, the Afghan government and its international partners approved an interim increase in the number of police forces from 62,000 to 82,000, to be reviewed every 6 months. The force structure for the police includes Ministry of Interior headquarters and administrative staff, uniformed police personnel, and several specialized police units. (See app. I for further details on the force structure and functions of the ANP.)

In addition to enforcing the rule of law, the role of the ANP is to protect the rights of citizens, maintain civil order and public safety, control national borders, and reduce the level of domestic and international organized crime, among other activities. Also, the deterioration in

⁶ Defense also leads U.S. efforts to develop capable ANA forces.

Afghanistan’s security situation since 2005 has led to increased ANP involvement in counterinsurgency operations, resulting in additional training in weapons and survival skills and counterinsurgency tactics.

U.S. efforts to organize, train, and equip the ANP are directed by Defense through its Combined Security Transition Command—Afghanistan (CSTC-A), with support from State, which provides policy guidance to the effort and oversight of civilian contractors implementing police training courses. The primary U.S. contractor involved in training the ANP is DynCorp International.

From 2002 to 2008, the United States provided about \$16.5 billion to train and equip the ANSF, including about \$6.2 billion for the ANP (see table 1). Over 40 percent (about \$2.7 billion) of funds for training and equipping the ANP were provided in fiscal year 2007, in an effort to accelerate ANP development and enhance its capability in response to increased levels of violence and insurgent activity.

Table 1: Defense and State Funding for Training and Equipping Afghan National Police, Fiscal Years 2002-2008

Dollars in millions								
Assistance program	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008 request ^a	Total
Afghan Police	\$25.5	\$5.0	\$223.9	\$837.9	\$1,299.8	\$2,701.2	\$1,105.6	\$6,198.8

Sources: GAO analysis of Defense and State data.

Note: Totals above include funding from a variety of Defense and State sources. In fiscal years 2007 and 2008, these sources included Afghan Security Forces Funding, Defense Counternarcotics funding, and International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement counternarcotics funding.

^aFiscal year 2008 includes approximately \$342 million that has been appropriated and approximately \$764 million that has been requested.

Defense has developed criteria—called capability milestones (CM)—to assess police and army capability. The table below provides descriptions of the capability milestones.

Table 2: Capability Milestones for Afghan National Security Forces

Capability milestone	Description
CM1	The unit, agency, staff function, or installation is capable of conducting primary operational mission(s). Depending on the situation, units may require specified assistance from the Coalition or international community.
CM2	The unit, agency, staff function, or installation is capable of conducting primary operational mission(s) with routine assistance from, or reliance on, international community support.
CM3	The unit, agency, staff function, or installation is capable of partially conducting primary operational mission(s), but still requires assistance from, and is reliant on, international community support.
CM4	The unit, agency, staff function, or installation is formed but not yet capable of conducting primary operational mission(s). It may be capable, available, or directed to undertake portions of its operational mission but only with significant assistance from, and reliance on, international community support.

Source: CSTC-A.

Most Afghan National Police Units Are Rated as Not Capable of Performing Their Mission

After an investment of more than \$6 billion, Defense reporting indicates that, as of April 2008, no police unit (0 of 433) was assessed as fully capable of performing its mission and more than three-fourths of units rated (334 of 433) were assessed as not capable (see table 3).⁷ Furthermore, among rated units, about 96 percent (296 of 308) of uniformed police districts and all border police battalions (33 of 33), which together comprise about 75 percent of the ANP's authorized end-strength, were rated as not capable.⁸

⁷CSTC-A provided us with capability ratings for 433 police units, which include uniformed police districts, civil order and border police battalions, and counter narcotics police units.

⁸This does not include 57 uniformed police districts that Defense assessed as not formed or not reporting.

Table 3: Defense Assessment of ANP Capabilities, as of April 2008

Police units	CM1 Fully Capable	CM2 Capable with Coalition Support	CM3 Partially Capable	CM4 Not Capable	Unit Not Formed or Not Reporting ^a
Uniformed Police Districts (365)	0	6	6	296	57
Border Police Battalions (33)	0	0	0	33	0
Civil Order Police Battalions (20)	0	6	2	2	10
Counter Narcotics Police Units (15)	0	0	10	3	2
Number of ANP units (433)	0	12 (3%)	18 (4%)	334 (77%)	69 (16%)

Source: GAO analysis of Defense data.

^aA uniformed police district that is categorized as “not formed or not reporting” has not been rated by Defense. A civil order police battalion or a counter narcotics police unit that is categorized as “not formed or not reporting” is a planned unit or in training.

Six of the remaining 12 uniformed police districts were rated as capable of leading operations with coalition support, and the other 6 as partially capable. Overall, Defense assessed approximately 4 percent (18 of 433 units rated) of police units as partially capable and about 3 percent (12 of 433 units rated) as capable of leading operations with coalition support. According to Defense reporting as of April 2008, the expected date for completion of a fully capable Afghan police force is December 2012. However, the benchmark set by the Afghan government and the international community for establishing police forces that can effectively meet Afghanistan’s security needs is the end of 2010.

Growth of Police Force Is Difficult to Quantify

Defense reporting indicates that, as of April 2008, nearly 80,000 police had been assigned out of an end-strength of 82,000. This is an increase of more than double the approximately 35,000 we reported as trained as of January 2005. Despite this reported increase in police manning, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the police force has grown. As we noted in May 2007, the Afghan Ministry of Interior produces the number of police assigned and the reliability of these numbers has been questioned. A Defense census undertaken since our May 2007 report to check the reliability of ministry payroll records raises additional concerns about numbers of police reportedly assigned. In September 2007, Defense

reported that it was unable to verify the physical existence of about 20 percent of the uniformed police and more than 10 percent of the border police listed on the ministry payroll records for the provinces surveyed. Because Defense's census did not cover all 34 Afghan provinces, these percentages cannot be applied to the entire police force. Nonetheless, the results of Defense's census raise questions about the reliability of the nearly 80,000 number of police reportedly assigned.

Several Challenges Impede Development of Capable Police Forces

Several challenges impede U.S. efforts to build a capable police force. These include (1) shortages in the police mentors needed to provide training and evaluation and verify that police are on duty; (2) shortfalls in several types of equipment that Defense considers critical; (3) a weak judicial system; and (4) consistent problems with police pay, corruption, and attacks by insurgents. Recognizing these challenges to ANP development, Defense began a new initiative in November 2007 to reconstitute the uniformed police—the largest component of the Afghan police. Although this effort is too new to fully assess, the continuing shortfall in police mentors may put the initiative at risk.

Shortage of Police Mentors Hinders Training, Evaluation, and Verification of Police on Duty

According to Defense officials, the shortage of available police mentors has been a key impediment to U.S. efforts to conduct training and evaluation and to verify that police are on duty. Police mentor teams in Afghanistan consist of both civilian mentors, who teach law enforcement and police management, and military mentors, who provide training in basic combat operations and offer force protection for the civilian mentors. As of April 2008, only about 32 percent (746 of 2,358) of required military mentors were present in country. Due to this shortage of military mentors to provide force protection, movement of available civilian mentors is constrained.⁹ According to Defense officials, the shortfall in military mentors for the ANP is due to the higher priority assigned to deploying U.S. military personnel elsewhere, particularly Iraq.

Defense officials identified the continuing shortfall in police mentors as an impediment to U.S. efforts to develop the Afghan police in three areas.

⁹Additionally, DynCorp officials stated that moving around Afghanistan to conduct mentoring operations is difficult due to the size of the country and the lack of roads. GAO is currently completing a review of U.S. and donor efforts to build roads in Afghanistan. This report is due to be released in July 2008.

First, senior Defense officials, including the commanding general of CSTC-A, stated that the ongoing shortfall in police mentors has been the primary obstacle to providing the field-based training necessary to develop a fully capable police force. Second, while Defense recently introduced a monthly assessment tool to be used by mentors to evaluate police capability and identify areas in need of further attention, CSTC-A identified extremely limited mentor coverage as a significant challenge to using this tool. Third, the shortage of available police mentors has impeded U.S. efforts to verify the number of Afghan police on duty. For example, as of April 2008, Defense could not verify whether any police were reporting for duty in 5 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces due to the lack of mentors. Without sufficient police mentors present to conduct field-based training and evaluation and verify police manning, the development of fully capable, fully staffed Afghan police forces may continue to be delayed.

Police Continue to Face Difficulties with Equipment Shortages and Quality

As of February 2008, shortages remained in several types of police equipment that Defense considers critical, such as trucks, radios, and body armor. In addition, Defense officials expressed concerns with the quality and usability of thousands of weapons donated to the police. For example, officials estimated that only about 1 in 5 of the nearly 50,000 AK-47 automatic rifles received through donation was of good quality (see fig. 1).

Figure 1: Donated Rifles of Variable Quality



Source: GAO.

Our analysis of weekly progress reports produced in 2007 by DynCorp civilian police mentors provides additional evidence of equipment-related challenges and other logistical difficulties.¹⁰ Specifically, 88 percent (46 of 52) of weekly reports contained instances of police operating with equipment of insufficient quality or quantity or facing problems with facilities or supplies. In addition, 81 percent (42 of 52) of weekly reports contained examples of limited police ability to account for the equipment provided to them.¹¹ In July 2007, CSTC-A initiated efforts to train the police in basic supply and property accountability procedures. According to CSTC-A, equipment is no longer being issued to police districts unless the

¹⁰We limited our analysis to 2007 reporting because State was unable to provide a complete set of weekly reports for prior years. Instances discussed in more than one report were only categorized and counted the first time they appeared.

¹¹GAO is currently performing a detailed review of the accountability of lethal equipment provided to the ANSF. This report is currently planned for release in early 2009.

districts' property officers are first trained. For example, according to Defense, more than 1,500 trucks have been on hand and ready for issue since late 2007 (see fig. 2), but the Afghan Minister of Interior has delayed distribution of these vehicles until adequate accountability procedures are established in the target districts.

Figure 2: Trucks Awaiting Distribution to ANP



Source: GAO.

Police Face Problems with Weak Judicial Sector, Pay, Corruption, and Attacks

Establishing a working judiciary in Afghanistan based on the rule of law is a prerequisite for effective policing. However, in 2005, we reported that few linkages existed in Afghanistan between the Afghan judiciary and police, and the police had little ability to enforce judicial rulings. Our 2005 report also noted that overall justice sector reform was underfunded and understaffed. Subsequently, we reported in 2006 and 2007 that rebuilding the Afghan judicial sector lagged behind the other four security pillars—army, police, combating drugs, and disarmament.¹² According to State, much of Afghanistan continues to lack a functioning justice system. In addition,

¹²GAO, *Afghanistan Drug Control: Despite Improved Efforts, Deteriorating Security Threatens Success of U.S. Goals*, [GAO-07-78](#) (Washington, D.C.: Nov. 15, 2006); [GAO-07-801SP](#).

according to CSTC-A, the slow rate at which the rule of law is being implemented across Afghanistan inhibits effective community policing.

Furthermore, our analysis of DynCorp’s weekly progress reports from 2007 indicates that police in the field also face persistent problems with pay, corruption, and attacks (see table 4).¹³

Table 4: Examples and Frequency of Problems Faced by ANP Relating to Pay, Corruption, and Attacks

Issue	Selected examples of problems cited	Frequency of related problems
Pay	Police not being paid for several months Police receiving incomplete pay Police quitting due to pay-related problems Remote location of payment sites leading police to spend part of pay on transportation	94 percent (49 of 52 weekly reports)
Corruption	Police personnel providing weapons or defecting to the Taliban High-ranking officials engaging in bribery or misconduct Police collecting unauthorized “tolls” from drivers	87 percent (45 of 52 weekly reports)
Attacks	Police targeted by suicide bombers or with improvised explosive devices Police stations overrun by insurgent forces Dangerous working conditions causing difficulties in retaining or recruiting police	85 percent (44 of 52 weekly reports)

Source: GAO analysis of documents provided to State by DynCorp.

Note: Examples provided are illustrative only and do not constitute the entirety of problems that we found.

¹³The security situation in Afghanistan, police performance, and retaining and recruiting police were other top issues identified in our analysis. These topics are discussed in our concurrently issued report.

New Initiative to Reconstitute Police Has Begun, but Limited Mentor Coverage Is a Risk Factor

Defense has recognized challenges to ANP development and began a new initiative called Focused District Development in November 2007 to address them. According to Defense documentation, the objective of this initiative is to focus resources on reforming the uniformed police—the largest component of the ANP—as the key to the overall reform of the ANP.¹⁴ Under this initiative, the entire police force of a district is withdrawn from the district and sent to a regional training center for 8 weeks to train as a unit—similar to how Defense trains the Afghan army—and receive all authorized equipment while their district is covered by the Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), a specialized police force trained and equipped to counter civil unrest and lawlessness.¹⁵ The police force then returns to its district, where a dedicated police mentor team provides follow-on training and closely monitors the police for at least 60 days. Defense expects to be able to reconstitute about 5 to 10 districts at a time, with each training cycle lasting about 6 to 8 months. Overall, according to State, it will take a minimum of 4 to 5 years to complete the initiative.

Defense documentation indicates that no districts had completed an entire Focused District Development cycle as of April 2008. Until an entire cycle is completed, it will be difficult to fully assess the initiative. However, limited police mentor coverage may complicate efforts to execute this new program. Defense documentation identifies sufficient police mentor teams as the most important requirement for successful reform. However, according to the commanding general of CSTC-A, the ongoing shortfall in police mentors available to work with newly trained district police will slow implementation of the initiative. In addition, a senior Defense official stated that unless the mentor shortage is alleviated, the number of police mentor teams available to provide dedicated training and monitoring will eventually be exhausted.

¹⁴Defense documents indicate that the Afghan border police will also eventually be reconstituted through the Focused District Development initiative; however, according to a Defense official, it is uncertain when such efforts will begin.

¹⁵Defense documents indicate that, in addition to being trained, a district police force undergoing Focused District Development will also have corrupt leaders replaced by nationally vetted ones, receive new salaries on parity with Afghan army salary rates, and have electronic funds transfer accounts established. Defense also has identified the development of the Afghan justice system as a goal of the Focused District Development initiative but anticipates limited integration of rule of law reform into the initiative until summer 2008.

Defense and State Have Not Developed a Coordinated, Detailed Plan for Completing and Sustaining the ANSF

In our June 2005 report, we recommended that the Secretaries of Defense and State develop detailed plans for completing and sustaining the ANSF that contain several elements, including milestones for achieving stated objectives and a sustainability strategy. Despite the concurrence of both agencies with our recommendation, Defense and State have not completed a coordinated, detailed plan for completing and sustaining the ANSF. In the absence of such a plan, coordination difficulties have occurred and progress is difficult to assess. In 2008, Congress mandated that the President, acting through the Secretary of Defense, submit reports to Congress on progress toward security and stability in Afghanistan, including a comprehensive and long-term strategy and budget for strengthening the ANSF.¹⁶ Congress also mandated that Defense submit reports on a long-term detailed plan for sustaining the ANSF.¹⁷ The first submission of each of these reports was due at the end of April 2008, but neither has yet been provided to Congress.

Recurrent Coordination Difficulties Have Arisen in the Absence of a Coordinated Plan

In February 2007, Defense provided us a 5-page document that, according to Defense officials, is intended to meet GAO's 2005 recommendation for detailed plans to complete and sustain the ANSF. Although Defense and State are partners in training the ANP, the Defense document does not identify or discuss the roles and responsibilities of State. State also did not contribute to the development of this document and has not developed a plan of its own. In the absence of such a plan, coordination has been a problem. For example, DynCorp stated that a dual chain of command between Defense and State has affected the efforts of civilian mentors in multiple ways, such as by producing conflicting guidance and complicating reporting, placement of personnel, the use of facilities, and training and mentoring activities. Prior work by the State and Defense inspectors general highlighted the same challenge over a year ago. While Defense and State have both cited improvements in coordination since our August 2007 visit to Afghanistan, a coordinated plan that clearly states the various agencies' roles and responsibilities would nonetheless be beneficial given the continuous turnover of U.S. government staff. For example, Defense officials told us that CSTC-A staff typically serve tours of 1 year or less and often have no period of overlap with outgoing officials during which to gain knowledge about their new positions. Given such turnover and loss of institutional knowledge, a coordinated, detailed

¹⁶National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, Pub. L. 110-181, sec. 1230.

¹⁷Pub. L. 110-181, sec. 1231.

plan that clearly identifies the agencies involved in developing the ANP and their respective roles and responsibilities could help incoming personnel become familiarized with their new duties.

Limited Milestones Hinder Assessment of Progress

Defense's 5-page document developed in response to our 2005 recommendation contains few milestones, including no interim milestones that would help assess progress made in developing the ANP. Furthermore, while Defense maintains that the monthly status reports it produces allow progress to be monitored, these status reports also lack the interim milestones needed to determine if the program is on track. For instance, Defense status reports as of April 2008 note that no ANP units (0 of 433) are rated as fully capable and 3 percent (12 of 433) are capable of leading operations with coalition support. Without interim milestones against which to assess the ANP, it is difficult to know if this status represents what the United States intended to achieve after 3 years of increased efforts and an investment of more than \$6 billion in the program.

Defense's monthly status reports also lack consistent end dates. In particular, completion dates cited in Defense status reports have shifted numerous times during the course of our review. For instance, the completion dates for development of the ANP stated in monthly status reports dated June 2007, November 2007, and May 2008 fluctuated from December 2008 to March 2009 to December 2012, with a 3-month period when the completion date was reported as "to be determined."

Similarly, although Defense's newly adopted Focused District Development initiative to reconstitute the uniformed police involves considerable resources and is expected to last 4 to 5 years at a minimum, no interim milestones or consistent end date for the effort are identified in Defense's 5-page document, monthly status reports, or briefings that outline the effort. In the absence of interim milestones and a consistent end date for Focused District Development, it will be difficult to determine if this ambitious new effort is progressing as intended. Furthermore, without an end date and milestones for the U.S. effort to complete and sustain the entire ANP, it is difficult to determine how long the United States may need to continue providing funding and other resources for this important mission—one that U.S. military officials stated may extend beyond a decade.

Defense Document Lacks Sustainment Strategy

Defense's 5-page document developed in response to our 2005 recommendation does not provide a detailed strategy for sustaining the ANSF. Defense currently estimates that approximately \$1 billion a year will be needed to sustain the ANP, and expects the sustainment transition to begin in fiscal year 2009. However, despite the estimate of U.S. military officials in Afghanistan that U.S. involvement in training and equipping the ANSF may extend beyond a decade, neither Defense nor State has identified funding requirements or forecasts beyond 2013.

U.S. officials stated that until Afghan revenues increase substantially, the international community would likely need to assist in paying sustainability costs. At present, Afghanistan is unable to support the recurring costs of its security forces, such as salaries, equipment replacement, and facilities maintenance, without substantial foreign assistance. According to Defense and State, sustainment costs will be transitioned to the government of Afghanistan commensurate with the nation's economic capacity, and the United States and the international community will need to assist Afghanistan in developing revenues. Defense officials in Washington have not indicated how long and in what ways the U.S. government expects to continue assisting the ANSF. Without a detailed strategy for sustaining the ANSF, it is difficult to determine how long the United States may need to continue providing funding and other resources for this important mission.

Conclusion

Establishing capable Afghan police is critical to improving security in Afghanistan. The United States has invested more than \$6 billion since 2002 to develop the ANP, but no police forces are assessed as fully capable of conducting their primary mission. As such, interagency coordination, assessment of progress, and estimation of long-term costs are particularly important given that Defense has begun a new initiative that is expected to last at least 4 to 5 years and military officials estimate that U.S. involvement in developing the ANP could exceed a decade. We believe a coordinated, detailed plan that outlines agency roles and responsibilities, lists clear milestones for achieving stated objectives, and includes a sustainment strategy may improve coordination and would enable assessment of progress and estimation of costs. However, despite our prior recommendation and a mandate from Congress that a plan be developed, Defense and State have not done so. Until a coordinated, detailed plan is completed, Congress will continue to lack visibility into the progress made to date and the cost of completing this mission—information that is essential to holding the performing agencies accountable.

Matter for Congressional Consideration

Because Defense and State have not developed a coordinated, detailed plan, we state in our concurrently issued report that Congress should consider conditioning a portion of future appropriations related to training and equipping the ANSF on completion of a coordinated, detailed plan. This plan should include, among other things, clearly defined objectives and performance measures, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, milestones for achieving these objectives, future funding requirements, and a strategy for sustaining the results achieved, including plans for transitioning responsibilities to Afghanistan.

Agency Comments and Our Evaluation

In response to our concurrently issued report, Defense disagreed that Congress should consider conditioning a portion of future appropriations on completion of a detailed plan to develop the ANSF, stating that current guidance provided by State and Defense to the field is sufficient to implement a successful program to train and equip the ANSF. State also expressed concerns about conditioning future appropriations on the completion of a detailed plan. We continue to believe that a coordinated, detailed plan that outlines agency roles and responsibilities and includes clear milestones is essential to ensuring accountability of U.S. efforts and facilitating assessment of progress.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, this concludes my prepared statement. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

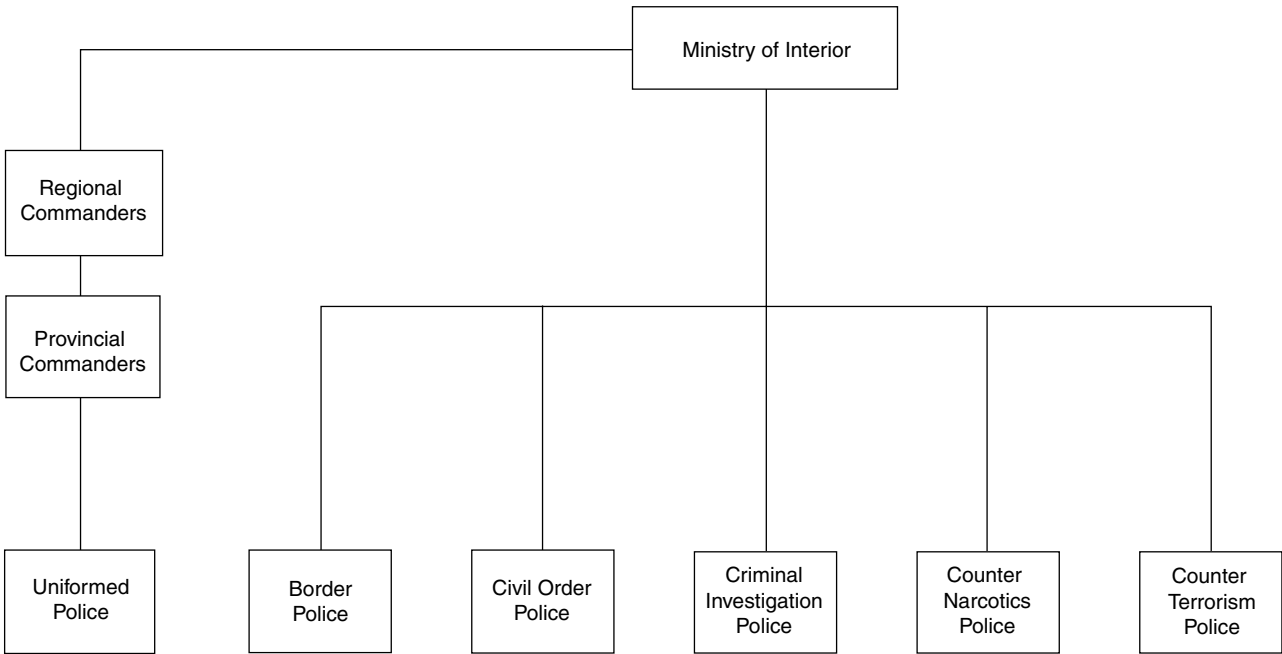
GAO Contact and Staff Acknowledgements

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Appendix I: Structure of the Ministry of Interior and Afghan National Police

The Afghan National Police (ANP) currently consists of six authorized components under the Ministry of Interior. The uniformed police, the largest of these six components, report to the police commanders of each Afghan province. Provincial commanders report to one of five regional commanders, who report back to the Ministry of Interior. The other five authorized components of the ANP all report directly to the ministry (see fig. 2).

Figure 2: ANP Chain of Command



Source: GAO analysis of Defense and State data.

Table 5 provides further detail on the Ministry of Interior and the various components of the ANP that it oversees.

Table 5: Structure of the Ministry of Interior and Afghan National Police

Component	Description
Ministry of Interior	Department of the Government of Afghanistan responsible for the protection of the country's international borders and the enforcement of the rule of law
Afghan Uniformed Police	Police assigned to police districts and provincial and regional commands; duties include patrols, crime prevention, traffic duties, and general policing
Afghan Border Police	Provide broad law enforcement capability at international borders and entry points
Afghan National Civil Order Police	Specialized police force trained and equipped to counter civil unrest and lawlessness
Criminal Investigative Division	Lead investigative agency for investigations of national interest, those with international links, and those concerned with organized and white-collar crime
Counter Narcotics Police of Afghanistan	Lead law enforcement agency charged with reducing narcotics production and distribution in Afghanistan
Counter Terrorism Police	Lead police and law enforcement efforts to defeat terrorism and insurgency
Standby Police/Highway Police/Auxiliary Police/Customs Police	No longer authorized

Source: GAO analysis of Defense data.

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