

**SUMMARY OF NZ SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES SUPPORT  
TO THE NZ PRT IN AFGHANISTAN**

**DEPLOYMENT**

1. The deployment of a Special Operations Task Force (SOTF) to Afghanistan was originally approved from late September 2009 for 18 months. This deployment was extended for a further 12 months and ceased on 31 Mar 2012. The initial deployment comprised of 81 personnel and at its height rose to 92 (including LAV crews). It then reduced to a mandate of <sup>PSR(S)2</sup> pers for rotations four to six (March 2011 to March 2012). The first three rotations were of six months duration with the last three being four month deployments. The deployment included NZDF support staff **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3** an NZDF Legal Officer, **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3** to Kabul, Afghanistan.

**MANDATES**

2. As a constituent part of ISAF, the SOTF had legal authority to carry out the ISAF tasks identified under UN Security Council resolutions 1386 (2001), 1510 (2003) and 1833 (2008). In the execution of ISAF tasks, the SOTF was covered by the Military Technical Agreement (MTA) between ISAF and Afghanistan, and related agreements and arrangements that had been entered into between NZ, NATO and the other Member States of ISAF.
3. In addition, the SOTF could also perform national tasks in direct support of the NZ PRT, NZDF personnel providing training assistance to the Afghan National Security Forces, and other NZ military or civilian personnel who were present in Afghanistan for the purpose of providing humanitarian or reconstruction assistance. Accordingly Task Force (TF) 81 personnel were covered by the MTA between NZDF and Afghanistan when conducting such tasks.

**TASKS**

4. Insurgents (INS) had continued to target Kabul from safe havens in provinces surrounding Kabul as they become increasingly pressured by ISAF/coalition operations. Targets included government officials and infrastructure, Afghan security forces, ISAF/coalition troops, embassies and hotels. Individual, high-profile incidents were having a disproportionate impact on the perceptions of international actors and the Afghanistan political elite located in Kabul. The capability of insurgents to act would be hindered by improved Afghan security force capacity in the capital and ISAF/National Directorate of Security (NDS) intelligence-led operations to disrupt insurgent networks operating in Kabul. The NZDF SOTF was deployed to maintain stability, defeat the insurgency, mentor the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) and enhance the reputation of the NZDF and GONZ.

**SPECIFIC TASKS**

5. The SOTF conducted the following tasks:

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- a. Special reconnaissance in Kabul and adjacent provinces to identify and detect insurgent forces and Improvised Explosive Device (IED) networks in order to interdict these before they resulted in attack against GIRoA, coalition and ANSF elements;
- b. Direct action tasks against insurgent networks in support of ISAF and GIRoA;
- c. Military assistance, support and influence tasks, including training support and mentoring to the CRU; and
- d. NZ national support tasks including support to NZDF elements in Afghanistan including SOLE support to the NZ PRT, VIP protection and hostage rescue as necessary.

### CONSTRAINTS

6. The following constraints were placed on this deployment:
  - a. SOTF to remain under NZ national command at all times;
  - b. Priority may be placed on NZ national tasks as and when required;
  - c. SNO SOTF is to be satisfied that the tasks assigned to the NZSOTF will receive the appropriate level of intelligence, logistic and combat support to ensure force protection and the maximum chance of mission success;
  - d. NZDF personnel will not conduct any cross border operations;
  - e. The conduct of operations beyond Regional Command (RC) Capital and its six surrounding provinces as directed by COM ISAF SOF is to be authorised by CDF.
  - f. NZDF personnel will not be involved in poppy eradication and CDF approval is required for any counter-narcotics operations<sup>1</sup>; and
  - g. Hostage rescue of NZ nationals will require PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3

### SUPPORT TO THE NZPRT

7. Over the period of the deployment the SOTF provided operational support to the PRT. Some examples include:

#### Kinetic interdiction

- Acquisition of RC-East and ISAF SOF Air and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) resources to support operations targeting Bamyán based Insurgents

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<sup>1</sup> There is a clear nexus between the Taliban and the narcotics industry and other criminal behaviour. In this regard the SOTF were requested to undertake specific operations against Taliban or installations involved in the supply or manufacture of narcotics.

- The conduct of four High Risk Arrest operations to detain insurgents responsible for or planning to conduct attacks on the NZPRT (BURNHAM, NOVA YAMAHA and PSR(sen)1)
  - BURNHAM was the response to the Lt O'Donnell incident conducted on 21 Aug 10 in Baghlan. Thirteen insurgents were killed by the SOTF.
  - NOVA was an op on 02 Oct 10 in Tala wa Barfek where drugs and weapons were recovered
  - YAMAHA was an op on 16 Jan 11 where five military aged males including three insurgents of significant interest were apprehended.
  - PSR(sen)1
- The development, liaison and handover of INS target to OEF SOF to conduct kinetic operations on behalf of SOFTF and NZPRT

Unrelated  
Operation outside  
ToR

#### Support and influence operations

- Establishment of Intelligence liaison between TF-954 <sup>PSR(S)1, PSR(S)</sup> and Bamyān NDS to identify INS network responsible for attacks on NZPRT
- Intelligence development of <sup>PSR(S)</sup> insurgents, facilitators and commanders responsible for planning and conducting attacks on NZPRT. This resulted in <sup>PSR(S)</sup> INS approved for ISAF targeting via ISAF SOF JPEL approvals process
- Intelligence monitoring of these targets to enable JPEL updates to maintain those INS as ISAF vetted targets
- Intelligence liaison with RC-N to enable SOF targeting of Baghlan based insurgents who pose a direct threat to NZPRT in Bamyān
- Ongoing All-Source development of Bamyān insurgent threat networks by TF954 enablers (Bunham IFC) to identify key threat nodes and TTP and assessment of role, function and future intent
- Ongoing monitoring of emerging threats to NZPRT for future kinetic operations

#### ISR support

- Obtaining ISAF SOF ISR support and resources to NZPRT to find and fix Bamyān/Baghlan based insurgents posing an immediate threat to NZPRT
- Obtaining ISAF SOF ISR support for target development of known INS groups posing a threat to NZPRT
- Provision of JTAC to control all ISR missions in support of NZPRT
- Provision of ISAF SOF imagery analysis capabilities in support of NZPRT force protection missions

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- Conduct of ground based reconnaissance to identify and locate insurgents and identify linkages to official groups in Kabul **PSR(sen)1**
  - **PSR(sen)1** was a JPEL tgt and the operational planner/shadow governor for the area. He was involved in the planning of the O'Donnel attack. When rotation three took over **PSR(sen)** was residing in PAK but travelling to KBL for meetings, and travelling to Bamyán now and then. SOTF isolated the link **PSR(sen)** was meeting in KBL, **PSR(S)1** Intent was to find where was meeting so could be uplifted in KBL.

Op advice, liaison and mentoring

- Provision of SOLE teams attached to NZPRT for over 12 months to identify and develop sound force protection tactics, procedures and measures within NZPRT patrols
- Provision of tactical advice to NZPRT Command and Operations staff during attacks on the NZPRT
- Provision of planning advice during NZPRT patrol planning to maximise force protection
- Provision of SOLE team to NZPRT during periods of heightened INS activity
- SOTF Ops liaison with ISAF and OEF SOF in RC-N to facilitate SOF operations against Baghlan based Insurgents who are responsible for or who pose an immediate threat to the NZPRT in Bamyán
- Liaison with ANSF at the directorate/ministerial level to enable Investigation and Prosecution of Bamyán based insurgents by the Afghan judicial system
- Ongoing ISAF Joint Command and Regional Command – East Headquarters staff work to secure ISAF supporting assets such as ISR, Rotary Wing transport, Air Reaction Force, CASEVAC/MEDEVAC, Indirect Fires and Air Weapons Teams **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3** as Force Protection options on behalf of the NZPRT
  - **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3**
- TF-954 transcends the Regional Command Boundary in close proximity to the NZPRT by instigating and maintaining ISAF Joint Command ISAF SOF and supporting assets rapid entry to the Baghlan area. **PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3**

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- LNO's to ISAF Joint Command and Regional Command – East <sup>PSR(S)2, PSR(S)3</sup>  
in order to allow ISAF SOF  
operations to disrupt INS threats to the NZPRT

**SUMMARY**

8. In addition, over the period of the deployment the SOTF defeated or disrupted 32 attacks on Kabul. It physically responded to and resolved 15 spectacular attacks on Kabul. It also supported many high risk arrests with it's partner force who were trained and mentored to a high standard.