



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.