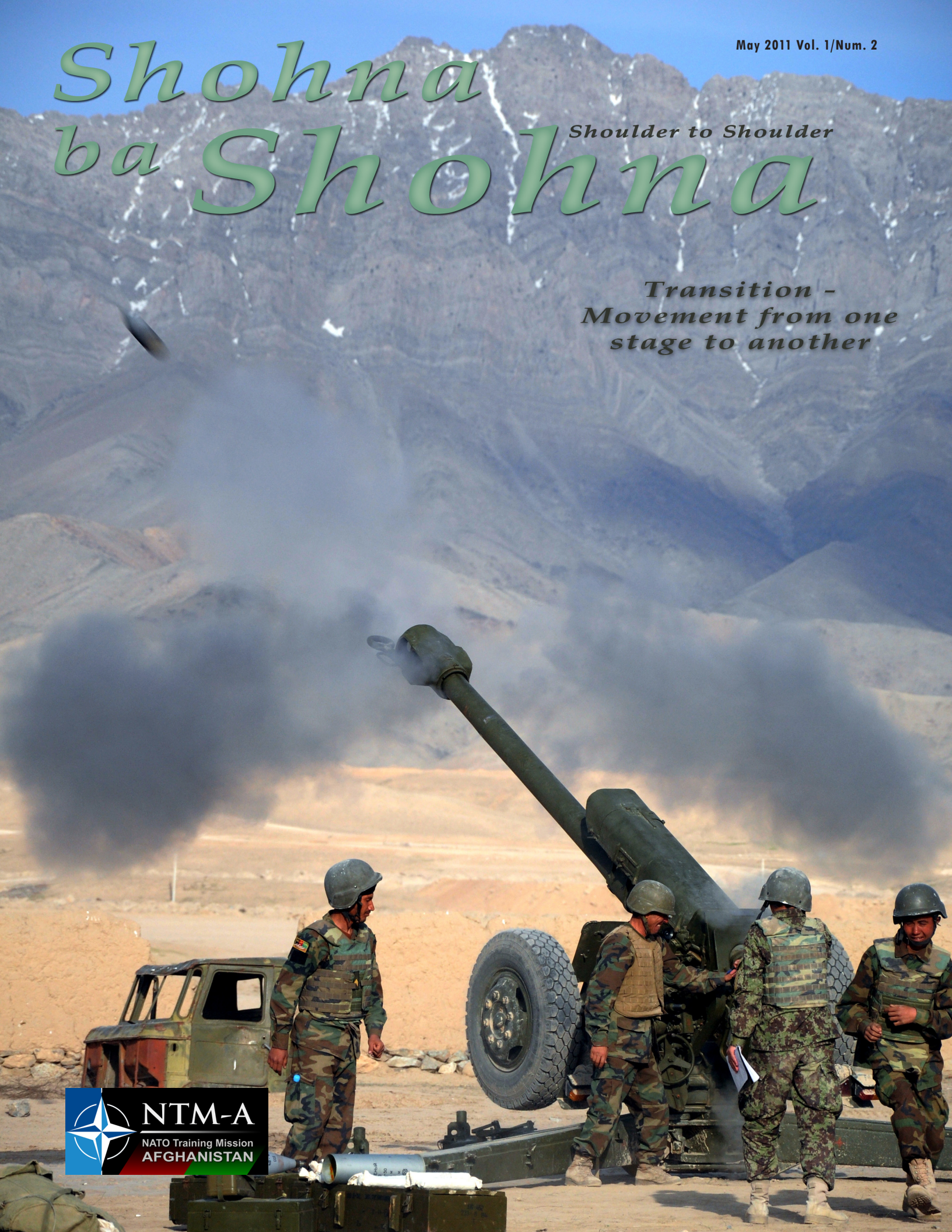


Shohna *ba Shohna*

Shoulder to Shoulder

*Transition -
Movement from one
stage to another*





Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell, IV

Transition. Transition is the word of the month in this May 2011 edition of *Shohna ba Shohna*, the monthly periodical published by Combined Security Transition Command- Afghanistan, Public Affairs Office. Transition, “movement from one stage to another”.

Spring is often times thought of as a great awakening of the earth... a transition from the cold and difficult weather of winter to the heat and outdoor activity of summer. Here in Afghanistan, we fully expect a challenging spring transition as the Taliban attempts to retake territory it has lost. While at the same time, the Afghan National Security Forces and international security forces fight to prevent that from occurring and continue to expand and secure additional areas.

Spring in Afghanistan also marks the graduation of the newest corps of the National Military Academy of Afghanistan lieutenants. They begin their military careers under the watchful eye of their president and other civilian leaders just like other democracies. Additional training highlights this spring include the largest graduation of police in a single week thus far and the graduation of army soldiers from third grade literacy classes. It was just over a year ago that literacy was optional let alone graduating soldiers from third grade literacy!

I hope you enjoy reading this *Shohna ba Shohna* as we here at NTM-A celebrate those new lieutenants’ transition to becoming officers and defending their nation, the announcement of security transition by President Karzai, and the transition to spring and summer.

Photo - Cover: Afghan National Army soldiers fire a Russian D-30 Howitzer during an artillery drill at the Combined Fielding Center in Kabul, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Katie Spencer/Released)

Photo - Top: Afghan National Army recruits attend a literacy training class at the Kabul Military Training Center in Kabul, Afghanistan. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael James/Released)

Photo - Back Cover: Afghan National Army recruits show for their first day of basic training at Kabul Military Training Center in Kabul, Afghanistan. (U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael James/Released)

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(U.S. Marine Corps photo)

Afghan National Security University: Coming into its own – present and beyond

By 1st. Lt. Steven Comerford, Deputy to NTM-A commander's office


The development of a professional military and police education program is critical to the future stability of Afghanistan – and the key institution for this development is the Afghan National Security University. As the Afghan National Security Education System develops and implements its Professional Military Education and Professional Police Education programs, ANSU will be well-postured to support these programs.

The ANSU campus will be built in three different construction phases; Phase I is 43 percent complete, with a completion date in the latter half of 2011. Phase II and III of the construction is due to be completed by fall of 2012.

ANSU is a \$245 million project on a 150 acre (projected 1,500 acres for further development) site at Qargha, 10 kilometers west of Kabul. The project is sponsored by the United Kingdom, United States of America, France, Germany, Canada, Turkey and Australia and has a partnership agreement with the UK Defense Academy. ANSU will be a subordinate command of Afghan National Army Training Command and will be commanded at the 2-star level. The university, when fully completed, will have a daily population of between 7,000 to 8,000

students and faculty – supporting the professional education requirements of the Afghan National Security Force.

This project will combine seven different schools (selected ANA colleges, academies and training centers), one headquarters and one installation battalion at a single location. The ANSU campus will be comprised of the Foreign Language Institute, Joint Service Academy (War College and Command and General Staff College), National Military Academy of Afghanistan, Bridmal (Sergeant's Major Academy) Academy, and the Counter Insurgency Training Center – Afghanistan. Collocated on the campus will be two branch schools – the Religious and Cultural Affairs School and Joint Legal School.

The Afghan National Security University will be an enduring institution for professional education programs in the Afghan National Security Force. ANSU, when fully operational, will provide the “crown jewel” of professional military and police education programs, ensuring the sustainability of a professional ANSF. The completion of ANSU is essential for the effective transition to a self-reliant, accountable and professionally led ANSF capable of defending Afghanistan and providing security that supports the continued development of Afghanistan. 

Father and Son: A legacy of service

NTM-A/DCOM-Army Public Affairs

Two men stood resplendent in dress uniform, congratulating the newest officers who graduated from the National Military Academy of Afghanistan. Only a year ago, these men celebrated amongst themselves, a father celebrating a son who will continue his legacy at Afghanistan's premier military institution.

Col. Amanullah Ghafari, the executive officer at NMAA has dedicated almost 40 years of his life to serving his nation and now his son 2nd Lt. Obaidullah Ghafari has taken up that cause with the same dedication and passion his father exhibits. They serve shohna ba shohna at the Academy.


“I let [my son] decide his own future and career, but come to find out that, his keen interest in the military made him enroll in the Academy. I highly encouraged and supported him in his decision,” said Amanullah.

“The only reason that I am a little successful in my field is because of my father. Every day when I look at him I learn something new from him, because he spent [almost] 40 years of his life in Army,” said Obaidullah, who graduated last year with a major in civil engineering and now teaches at the academy.

“When I was a cadet there were limited books, computers and internet connections but

now each cadet has a book with a computer in class rooms and computers in computer labs with [great] Internet connection,” said Obaidullah.

Amanullah's many years of service include assignments as a battery commander, an artillery battalion commander and 19 years as director of the artillery department at Kabul Military University. He has served as NMAA's executive officer for the past six years.

Obaidullah will continue the call to duty begun by his father, a shining example of one family's sacrifice for their country. 

Below: Afghan Army Col. Amanullah Ghafari and his son, 2nd. Lt. Obaidullah Ghafari stand in front of the flag poles at the National Military Academy of Afghanistan. Ghafari has served his nation for almost 40 years and his son hopes to follow in his footsteps. (U.S. Air Force photo by Capt. Benjamin S. Kline/Released)



NMAA trains future leaders

By Lt. Col. David Simons, NTM-A Public Affairs

The National Military Academy of Afghanistan is the heart and soul of its country's next generation of military leaders. NMAA is the premier military institution in Afghanistan and built on four pillars: academic, physical, military, and character development.

It is here, these future leaders, and now cadets, receive a broad, liberal education during four years of instruction. The importance of this institution was further heralded as President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, unveiled his plan for the nation's transition to leading their security effort in March. It is this instruction which will allow them to lead the transition of Afghanistan's fledgling army to an army responsible for the security of their country.



(U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class John R. Fischer/Released)
Above: NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan's Commanding General, Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, reviews a diploma with a recent graduate from the National Military Academy of Afghanistan.



(U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Mike James/Released)
Above: An Afghan National Army Artillery officer takes notes during training at the Kabul Military Training Center.

Founded in 2005, the school is modeled after the United States Military Academy, also known as West Point. Graduates of the university earn a four-year college level bachelors degree and are commissioned as 2nd lieutenants in either the Afghan National Army or the Afghan National Air Force. But, the elite training comes with a hefty commitment. All graduates must serve their country's military for ten years. Classes have graduated yearly since the first historic class received their sabres and diplomas in 2009.

When the Afghans selected West Point to be the model for their academy, a formal agreement between the two academies was established. That relationship was reaffirmed Jan. 5, 2011. Based on that relationship, West Point continues sending visiting professors to Afghanistan to provide mentorship to academy professors and cadets, curriculum overview and overall assistance to the institution.

The United States Air Force Academy has also recently begun to provide mentors for Afghanistan's developing Air Corps program. Both the Army and Air Force fall under the reigns of the Ministry of Defense. "We train future officers and we train



Cadets at the National Military Academy of Afghanistan stand in formation during their oath affirmation ceremony.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Quinton Burris/Released)

future leaders because these officers and leaders will help to make our Afghan national army stronger," said Maj.Gen. Shir Mohammad Zazai, NMAA Commander. "We have a lot of responsibility for promoting them for leadership purposes and this agreement shows that we will fulfil these responsibilities together."

"I have no doubt these new leaders will rise to great heights both in their professional ca-

reer as dedicated officers and as citizens who are committed to the future of their country. Just as it was for me at West Point nearly 32 years ago, cadet graduation marks the beginning of a life of public service for these young Afghan men," said Maj. Gen. Gary S. Patton, Deputy Commanding General-Army, NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan and a 1979 graduate of of the United States Military Academy.

An instructor checks soon-to-graduate National Military Academy of Afghanistan cadets before their oath affirmation ceremony.

(U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class John R. Fischer/Released)





(U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Marie Tillery/Released)

Above: A graduate from the National Military Academy of Afghanistan holds up his diploma and sabre to the crowd while shouting, "Jzeh-wand!" which means "life and service to the nation."

Jzeh-wand! "Life- Service to Nation"

By Maj. Gary Good, NTM-A Command Communications

What is it about a nation that readies it for defending itself? While there are undoubtedly a multitude of answers to that question, it was with great surprise that I saw an answer right before me on March 22. The answer was as clear as a bell as I watched the top 15 graduates of the National Military Academy of Afghanistan receive their sabres from President Hamid Karzai. As each received his sabre, he turned to the audience and proudly exclaimed, "Jzeh-wand!" which means "Life and Service to the nation!"

When the citizens of a nation decide it is their responsibility to defend it, the nation is on the right path to an enduring and self-sustaining capability. That is exactly what the graduation ceremony demonstrated to the citizens of Afghanistan and the rest of the world. On many levels, that day was a turning point for the nation of Afghanistan.

On one level President Karzai was announcing to everyone in attendance that he and the Afghan National Security Force was ready to take the lead for security, or transition security lead, in seven different areas of Afghanistan beginning this summer including three provinces and four cities. All those in attendance heard his words and undoubtedly rec-

ognized the importance of the moment they were witnessing. The attendees included the graduates of the academy, 33 news agencies, many civilian leaders of the Afghan government, and the group of invited international dignitaries. It was an historic moment for the nation.

The speech announced the beginning of the end for International Security Assistance Force led security. But, more importantly, it also marked the beginning of Afghan led security, known as "Security Transition", which will culminate with the ANSF ready to take the security lead across Afghanistan by the end of 2014.

While that was the news report that sounded around the world, the amazing thing to me was the look on all of those young Afghan's faces. The pride they had when they listened to their president speak of the confidence he had in their ability to secure their nation. Those 15 top graduates displayed such pride, and confidence, in their faces as they stood before their president, received their sabre, and turned to the audience resoundingly sounding off with "Jzeh-wand!" From the photos you see on this page, you too can see their faces.. the pride ... the confidence ... Can you see it? Can you feel it? Is there any doubt where these young men will take this Army? I would bet you could put those faces on

the graduates of any military academy and gain the same sense of duty, honor, and country.

I carefully watched the faces of the audience as Minister of Defense Wardak, and then President Karzai, each spoke of his confidence and pride in their skills. The faces displayed the unmistakable look of resolve to secure their own nation as each of these civilian leaders proclaimed their personal honor at graduating 299 of the nation's newest lieutenants. Next, they head to their branch schools and learn the additional skills necessary to be leaders of the ANA. After graduating from those branch schools, these lieutenants will take their sabres into battle against those who would try to retake Afghanistan and use it as the foundation of international terrorism and narco-trafficking. That resolve, those faces, told me that their future is bright.

"The intensity in those faces was unmistakable. It was the look of resolve of Jzeh-wand!"
- Lt. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV

Not only was the audience filled with current graduates and other distinguished attendees, it was also filled with current soldiers and Afghan National Police officers who are serving their nation already. Their faces beamed with pride in recognition that their president did not just speak of the skills of the newest graduates but also of the tremendous bravery and skills they have shown over the past 18 months during the internationally declared Afghan Surge. While the international security forces increased by about 48,000 strong, the ANA and ANP had grown by more than 85,000. Those forces were making conspicuous gains in securing Afghanistan under the careful guidance of ISAF. More and more often, and after receiving a significantly higher quality of training under NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, those Afghan forces were taking the lead on individual operations.

Undoubtedly, there is risk. There is risk of backsliding and all of the other issues that arise from a growing democracy and a growing security force. There will be individuals who will strive to break both the nation and its security force. Some of those might even be inside the circle of trust today.

However, without confidence, without pride, and without optimism, those opponents of this fledgling nation will not succeed in preventing transition.

At last year's graduation, many would not have imagined President Karzai having the ability to make that announcement just one year later. The challenges of fighting the Taliban while also building the security forces likely seemed insurmountable. But, one year has changed all of that. Just like other democracies where the civilian leadership decides when and where to use the military element of national power, the minister and president took center stage and made clear their role at this graduation. The president announced transition of those seven areas as the audience, and the world, listened carefully. The president took center stage and welcomed his newest graduates to his security force.

As each graduate turned to the audience and exclaimed Jzeh-wand!, I could not help but look over each of their shoulders to look at the president and try to ascertain his thoughts. The glint in his eyes was unmistakable... he too was saying Jzeh-wand with each of them. His nation is young... it is like a toddler finding his legs ... but now, with these graduates, it is starting to take strides, this nation, Afghanistan, is finding its JZEH-WAND!!!

(U.S. Navy photo by Lt. Marie Tillery/Released)





(U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Vladimir Potapenko/Released)

◀ AAF sets new C-27 record

The Afghan Air Force concluded the month of March with more than 300 hours of flight-time in the C-27 cargo/transport aircraft, setting a new mark for hours flown in what is seen as the centerpiece of the AAF's cargo/transport mission.

With a total of 304.6 hours in the air, the new record shatters the previous high of 190.5 hours set last December.

As the Antanov-32 transport aircraft comes closer to its retirement date set this summer, the need for Afghan pilots with a large amount of hands-on experience of flying the C-27 is increasing due to the burden they will soon carry flying both C-27 missions

and missions historically accomplished by the AN-32, said AAF Maj. Mohammed Shah, a C-27 pilot.

"The time spent flying is really helping; it is a very positive building experience that will push the AAF forward," said AAF Lt. Col. Abdul Karim Wardack, a C-27 pilot.

The increase in air time is also an example of the hard work and effort put in by NATO Air Training Command-Afghanistan advisors who work with the Afghan pilots to develop the an independent Afghan Air force, said Wardack.

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Vladimir Potapenko
NTM-A Public Affairs

ANA Signal School builds professionalization ▶

The Afghan National Army Signal School based at Kabul Military Training Center located northeast of Kabul teaches radio procedure and maintenance.

The school is playing an important role the development of communications across the country.

"The Afghan army is growing in size and professionalization; signal engineers and officers are playing a key role in that growth," said Maj. Gen. Gary S. Patton, deputy commander general-Army, NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, during a visit to the school April 6.

The school is led by mentors from five coalition partners; Finland, Sweden, Norway, United Kingdom and the United States supply signals instructors.

"I really enjoy working with the Afghans, it is very rewarding; the instructors take every chance to build

camaraderie in the class," said Swedish Sgt. Maj. Mats Lidell, senior mentor for the coalition at the Branch Signal School.

The school offers a six-week course of instruction, which focuses on radio communications but also includes intense literacy training.

"In the best class we begin with a 50 percent literacy rate," said Lidell. "The average rate is only 22 percent, so we spend as much time as possible on reading and writing."

"I have spoken to every corps commander in the ANA and they all say they need more communication specialists - Army at war has to be able to communicate," said Patton.

By Petty Officer 3rd Class Mike James
NTM-A/DCOM-A Public Affairs



(U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Mike James/Released)

◀ AUP graduates 98 recruits

Nearly 100 Afghan Uniform Police recruits graduated from basic training on April 7, 2011 at Joint Security Academy Southwest.

The 8-week course instructed trainees on patrolling, marksmanship and the detection of Improvised Explosive Devices.

Gulab Mangel, governor of Helmand Province said that the graduates were coming into a security situation that was improving, but still had work left to do.

"In the Helmand Province, the security is getting better," he said. "In the last two or three years, it was not that good. But nowadays, it's getting better and

it's improving. But that doesn't mean that Helmand Province is secure and we don't have any issues in the province."

Mangel noted that some of the issues still facing the province included the insurgency and securing the Helmand border. He pointed out that securing the border is a key task for eliminating the smuggling of opium and illegal drugs into the province.

He also stressed to the graduates that it is the responsibility of the officers to gain the trust of the public.

By Doug Magill, NTM-A/RSC SW Public Affairs



(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Adrienne Brammer/Released)



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