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## Australia's military involvement in Afghanistan since 2001: a chronology

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## Introduction

After the terrorist attacks against the United States (US) on 11 September 2001, Australia joined the US-led International Coalition against Terrorism (the Coalition) by committing military assets and personnel to Coalition operations in Afghanistan—the US-led action is known as [Operation Enduring Freedom](#) (OEF–A).<sup>1</sup>

OEF-A commenced on 7 October 2001 when the US and allied nations conducted military operations against al-Qa'ida and Taliban targets in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup> On 14 September 2001, the Australian Government cited the terrorist attacks against the US as sufficient basis for invoking the mutual-defence clauses of the [ANZUS Treaty](#). This was the first time the Treaty's clauses on acting to meet a common danger had been invoked since it was enacted in 1952.<sup>3</sup> Parliament supported this decision on 17 September 2001.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to Australia's commitment to OEF-A, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) also provided, and continues to provide, support to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-led [International Security Assistance Force](#) (ISAF) operations and activities in Afghanistan. ISAF was established on 20 December 2001 via United Nations Security Council Resolution 1386.<sup>5</sup>

## Australia's contribution

Australia continues to provide military support to mentoring, operational and reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. The level and type of commitment has varied since operations commenced in October 2001 and has been complicated by the dual deployment of forces to

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1. United States Central Command (CentCom), 'Coalition countries', CentCom website, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://www.centcom.mil/en/countries/coalition>
  2. S Bowman and C Dale, *War in Afghanistan: strategy, military operations, and issues for Congress*, Congressional Research Service, Washington, D. C., 2009, p. 7, viewed 25 June 2010, [http://dpl/Books/2009/CRS\\_WarAfghanistanStrategy.pdf](http://dpl/Books/2009/CRS_WarAfghanistanStrategy.pdf)
  3. J Howard (Prime Minister), *Application of ANZUS Treaty to terrorist attacks on the United States*, media release, 14 September 2001, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FYFY46%22>
  4. J Howard, 'Motion: United States of America: terrorist attacks', House of Representatives, *Debates*, 17 September 2001, p. 30739, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22chamber%2Fhansardr%2F2001-09-17%2F0004%22>
  5. United Nations Security Council, *Resolution 1386 (2001)*, [Situation in Afghanistan], 20 December 2001, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/2001/sc2001.htm> and K Sargent, 'Security, stability and reconstruction in Afghanistan', *Defence*, October 2005, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/editions/20051001/coverstory/coverstory.htm>

the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO). It is therefore a worthy exercise to track Australia's level of commitment since the conflict began.<sup>6</sup>

Australia's military contribution to the conflict in Afghanistan commenced in October 2001 when the first contingent of Special Forces troops departed Australia as part of [Operation Slipper](#).<sup>7</sup> This level of commitment to military operations in Afghanistan remained consistent until the end of 2002 when allied operations shifted from combat missions to reconstruction activities. At that time, the Australian Government announced there were insufficient tasks to warrant keeping Special Forces elements in Afghanistan. As a result, the 200-strong Special Forces Task Force was withdrawn in November 2002.<sup>8</sup>

Australia continued to have a very small presence in Afghanistan in the form of two uniformed officer positions rotating through United Nations and land mine clearing missions.<sup>9</sup> It was not until August 2005 that Australia re-entered the Afghanistan conflict. In July 2005, the Government announced that, at the request of the Afghanistan Government, the US and allies, Australia would deploy a force of approximately 150 personnel for a period of 12 months to undertake security tasks similar to those of 2001-02.<sup>10</sup> Initially a Special

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6. Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2003–04*, DoD, Canberra, 2004, p. 15, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/03-04/dar/download/full.pdf>
  7. P Reith (Minister for Defence), *Australia farewells Special Forces soldiers*, media release, 22 October 2001, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpre%2FVPF56%22>
  8. R Hill (Minister for Defence), *Australian Special Forces to return from Afghanistan*, media release, 20 November 2002, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpre%2F9NX76%22> R Hill (Minister for Defence), doorstop interview transcript, 21 November 2002, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpre%2F7ZY76%22> and M Hannan, 'Brigadier Mike Hannan provides an overview and update on the Australian Defence Force's contribution to global operations', press conference transcript, Media Monitors, 21 February 2003, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpre%2FEDEW6%22>
  9. DoD, *Army officer to work with UN mission in Afghanistan*, media release, 18 April 2003, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpre%2F2T0X6%22> and P Cosgrove (Chief of the Defence Force), 'Rebuilding communities post-war', speech to Engineers Australia, 44th Chapman Oration, 12 December 2003, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpre%2FDT0X6%22>
  10. J Howard (Prime Minister), *Troop deployment to Afghanistan, Telstra, Rau family*, press conference transcript, 13 July 2005, viewed 25 June 2010,

Forces task group was deployed in August 2005 and, a year later, Australia's first reconstruction task force deployed approximately 200 personnel.<sup>11</sup> Since then, the level of Australia's military commitment has continued to rise with Australia's authorised strength now reaching 1550 personnel.<sup>12</sup>

Operation Slipper involves not only military elements deployed to Afghanistan, but also forces dual assigned to provide command, communications and logistics support to the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO), including Afghanistan, Iraq (security and support for Australian embassy staff) and the Gulf of Aden (counter-terrorism and anti-piracy operations).

While this chronology aims to provide a comprehensive view of Australia's military commitment in Afghanistan—including, where possible, the individual ADF units deployed as part of Operation Slipper—it should be noted that each personnel deployment is not necessarily reported publicly via official channels and some details are not in the public domain. It is also important to note that the nature of military operations is fairly dynamic; personnel figures can alter daily due to continuous insertion and extraction activities. These factors impinge on the exercise of determining how many boots are on the ground at any given moment. As a baseline and for consistency, the Department of Defence provides an authorised personnel figure for each financial year—it is these estimates that are drawn upon in the table at Appendix 1. Also included in the table are the budget figures, where available, for each financial year of the campaign.

This chronology also highlights the varying lengths and nature of deployments for each service. For instance, some Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) deployments have been conducted over three to 3½ month periods whereas some Australian Army contingents have deployed for up to six or eight months in length.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, personnel have deployed to Afghanistan on specific tasks, separate to the routine operational missions. One such task was

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<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2F8QOG6%22>

11. K Gillespie (Vice Chief of the Defence Force) and R Moffitt (Deputy Chief of Joint Operations), 'Presentation to Defence Watch', speech, 16 September 2005, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FLT0X6%22>
12. DoD, *Operation Slipper*, DoD website, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/afghanistan/info/general.htm>
13. As of October 2008, the first eight-month deployment for an Australian Army unit commenced with the 1<sup>st</sup> Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force (MRTF-1) deployment to Afghanistan. J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), *Diggers return home from Afghanistan*, media release, 23 October 2008, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FP0XR6%22>

supporting the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to conduct national elections.<sup>14</sup> In a number of instances, official open source material announcing the departure and/or welcome home for certain contingents does not appear to be available. For example, [ADF medical personnel](#) deployments to Coalition medical facilities in Afghanistan are not specifically identified and certain farewell and welcome home ceremonies for particular force rotations are not always evident.<sup>15</sup> As such, a summary elucidating the timeframe for specific Afghanistan missions is included at Appendix 2.

Details about Australian military deaths in Afghanistan have been included at the end of this chronology at Appendix 3. They are also appropriately commemorated in the Afghanistan section of the Parliamentary Library's [Anzac Day Kit](#).<sup>16</sup>

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14. DoD, *Government announces increase in ADF forces in Afghanistan*, media release, 29 April 2009, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2F4T8W6%22>
  15. M Kelly (Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support), *Air Force members honoured by Netherlands Government*, media release, 26 May 2010, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22media%2Fpressrel%2FWQTW6%22>
  16. Australia, Parliamentary Library, *Anzac Day 2010*, Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security Section, Parliamentary Library, Canberra, 2010, viewed 25 June 2010, <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/anzac/afghanistan.htm>

## Chronology of Australia's military contribution in Afghanistan: 2001–current

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
14 September 2001	Prime Minister, John Howard, announced that the Government was invoking Article IV of the <a href="#">ANZUS Treaty</a> in response to the terrorist attacks against the US.	J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Application of ANZUS Treaty to terrorist attacks on the United States</a> , media release, 14 September 2001.
4 October 2001	The Government directed the Chief of the Defence Force to have a range of military assets, including Special Forces, available to support the US under the ANZUS Treaty.	J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Australia's involvement in a US led response: defence: leadership: APEC</a> , press conference transcript, Canberra, 4 October 2001.
22 October 2001	The first contingent of the Special Forces Task Group was officially farewelled in Perth as they departed to assist the US-led International Coalition Against Terrorism.	P Reith (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australia farewells Special Forces soldiers</a> , media release, 22 October 2001.
25 October 2001	The Government announced the deployment of Royal Australian Navy, Army and Air Force assets and personnel in support of Coalition operations.  16 <sup>th</sup> Air Defence Regiment (16AD Regt) was officially farewelled from Adelaide to support the Australian maritime element in the war against terrorism.	J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Address to the Australian Defence Association</a> , speech, 25 October 2001.  Department of Defence, <a href="#">Defence Minister farewells Adelaide Air Defence soldiers</a> , media release 25 October 2001.
9 November 2001	A contingent of four F/A-18 Hornets was officially farewelled from RAAF Base Williamstown as part of Australia's contribution to the fight against terrorism. While it was not disclosed at that time, the detachment was based at Diego Garcia.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Coalition F/A-18 fighter pilots and crew farewelled</a> , media release, 9 November 2001.
27 November 2001	The remaining soldiers from the Special Forces Task Group, making a total of 150 personnel, departed Perth to assist the Coalition in Afghanistan.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australia deploys remaining Special Forces soldiers</a> , media release, 27 November 2001.

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Milestones	Details	Source Documents
3 December 2001	The Australian Defence Forces (ADF) advance party arrived in Afghanistan and were operating under Australian command in theatre.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian Defence Forces in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 3 December 2001.
5 December 2001	Additional ADF personnel arrived in Afghanistan to assist the advance party.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">More Australian Defence Force personnel arrive in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 5 December 2001.
15 January 2002	Minister for Defence, Robert Hill, confirmed that around 150 Special Forces personnel were in Afghanistan.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian High Commission, London</a> , press conference transcript, 15 January 2002.
24 January 2002	The Australian Government announced that Brigadier Gary Bornholt would replace Brigadier Ken Gillespie (now Chief of Army) as Australian Force Commander of Australia's contribution to the Coalition in March 2002.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Defence Minister announces new Australian Force Commander in international coalition against terrorism</a> , media release, 24 January 2002.
February 2002	<p>The second contingent of approximately 80 personnel, forming the RAAF F/A-18 Hornet detachment, was officially farewelled for operations in support of the Coalition in mid-February.</p> <p>On 17 February 2002, the first contingent of RAAF F/A-18 Hornet personnel was officially welcomed home to RAAF Base Williamtown following a 3½ month deployment.</p>	G Bornholt (Department of Defence spokesperson), <a href="#">Update briefing: Australia's commitment to the coalition against terrorism</a> , press conference transcript, 19 February 2002.
1 March 2002 – 17 March 2002	Australian Special Forces Task Group soldiers took part in <a href="#">Operation Anaconda</a> involving United States, Afghan and coalition forces.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Coalition against terrorism update</a> , media release, 5 March 2002.
15 March 2002	The first contingent of B-707 Tanker Transport aircraft, aircrew and support personnel from RAAF 84 Wing prepared to depart for Manas, Kyrgyzstan. The aircraft would provide air-to-air refuelling support for operations in Afghanistan.	D Vale (Minister for Veterans' Affairs), <a href="#">B707 crews farewelled as they prepare to join the international coalition against terrorism</a> , media release, 15 March 2002.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
28 March 2002	The second contingent of the Special Forces Task Group was officially farewelled in Perth.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Special Forces Task Group farewelled</a> , media release, 28 March 2002.
March – April 2002	<p>On 28 March, the first RAAF B-707 aircraft arrived at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, and was shortly followed by a second RAAF tanker. A small team of RAAF mechanics and technicians and a team of logistics experts were deployed as part of the detachment.</p> <p>After six months in theatre, the first contingent of the Special Forces Task Group in Afghanistan was replaced by the second contingent.</p>	<p>D Tyler (Department of Defence spokesperson), <a href="#">Australian Defence Force's commitment to the coalition against terrorism</a>, press conference transcript, 3 April 2002.</p> <p>D Tyler and K Gillespie (Department of Defence spokespersons), <a href="#">Australian Defence Force's commitment to the coalition against terrorism</a>, press conference transcript, 16 April 2002.</p>
3 April 2002	The first contingent of the Special Forces Task Group was officially welcomed home from Afghanistan at Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne, WA, following their six-month deployment. One member was presented with the Distinguished Service Cross.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Warm welcome for Special Forces Task Group</a> , media release, 3 April 2002.
19 April 2002	<p>Australia's continued military commitment to the war against terrorism was assured by the Minister for Defence, Robert Hill, who pledged:</p> <p>Australia is in for the long haul ... After careful consideration and in close consultation with the coalition forces leadership, we have decided that from mid-year Australia's military commitment to the coalition against terrorism will continue primarily through our Special Forces, deployment of 707 air-to-air refuellers and the Navy's contribution to the Multinational Interception Taskforce.</p> <p>A new rotation of Special Forces Task Group personnel have deployed to Afghanistan and are preparing for operations ... The RAAF F/A-18</p>	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian Defence Force contribution to the war against terrorism</a> , media release, 19 April 2002.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	fighter aircraft currently providing air defence will complete their deployment in the middle of this year having done a great job in assisting the coalition from Diego Garcia.	
7 May 2002	It was announced that the RAAF F/A-18 Hornet detachment deployed to Diego Garcia had completed their mission and would return to Australia. This was the second air combat contingent under Operation Slipper and it was not replaced.	M Hannan (Defence spokesperson), <a href="#">Australian Defence Force's commitment to the coalition against terrorism</a> , press conference transcript, 7 May 2002.
21 May 2002	The F/A-18 Hornet detachment deployed to Diego Garcia as part of Australia's commitment to the Coalition, was officially welcomed home to RAAF Base Williamtown following a 3½ month deployment.	T Bloomfield (Defence spokesperson), <a href="#">Australia's coalition against terrorism update</a> , press conference transcript, 21 May 2002.
16 June 2002	<p>Minister for Defence, Robert Hill, announced:</p> <p>... [a] third rotation of Special Forces Task Group soldiers will deploy to Afghanistan in August as part of Australia's ongoing contribution to the international coalition against terrorism.</p> <p>The authorised strength of Special Forces personnel operating in Afghanistan at that time was 150.</p>	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Rotation of SAS troops to Afghanistan</a> , media release, 16 June 2002.
18 June 2002	A second RAAF B-707 contingent was officially farewelled from RAAF Base Richmond, NSW, to support air-to-air refuelling operations in Afghanistan from neighbouring country Kyrgyzstan.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">707 crews depart to support the coalition against terrorism</a> , media release, 18 June 2002.
3 July 2002	The first contingent of B-707 aircrew and support personnel officially returned to RAAF Base Richmond following a 3½ month deployment in support of the Coalition.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Air Force personnel welcomed home following Kyrgyzstan deployment</a> , media release, 3 July 2002.
22 July 2002	ADF personnel deployed to Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and the Gulf, in support of Coalition operations, had reached around 850 to 1300.	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Hill in mission over Southern Afghanistan</a> , media release, 22 July 2002.
30 August 2002	Six months after departing Australia, the second contingent of the Special Forces Task Group was officially welcomed home from Afghanistan at	R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Special Forces Task Group welcomed</a>

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	Campbell Barracks, Swanbourne, WA.	<a href="#">home</a> , media release, 30 August 2002.
29 September 2002	<p>Approximately 80 RAAF personnel returned to RAAF Base Richmond following a 3½ month deployment to Kyrgyzstan. This was the final deployment of the RAAF's B-707 aircraft to Kyrgyzstan as the fleet of B-707's were progressively retired from service (the last B-707 Tanker Transport was retired in <a href="#">June 2008</a>).</p> <p>Responsibility for air-to-air refuelling operations was transferred to Australia's European coalition partners.</p> <p>The RAAF prepared to deploy two AP-3C Orion aircraft for maritime operations in the Gulf.</p>	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Air force personnel home safely from Kyrgyzstan deployment</a> , media release, 29 September 2002.
20 November 2002	<p>As the focus of Coalition operations in Afghanistan moved towards reconstruction efforts, the Government announced:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">... that the third rotation to Afghanistan will complete Australia's special forces contribution. The SASR Task Group will begin withdrawing from Afghanistan in late November ...</p> <p>The Minister noted that operational tasking for Australia's Special Forces elements in Afghanistan was insufficient to justify their continued deployment.</p>	<p>R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian Special Forces to return from Afghanistan</a>, media release, 20 November 2002.</p> <p>R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">US coalition against Iraq; SAS; weapons of mass destruction; Afghanistan; North Korea; counter-terrorism capability; Special Forces</a>, press conference transcript, 21 November 2002.</p>
17 December 2002	The third contingent of the Special Forces Task Group, which deployed to Afghanistan in August 2002, officially returned to Perth. On their return, the Meritorious Unit Citation was awarded to the Special Air Services Regiment.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Special Forces Task Group home from Afghanistan</a> , media release, 17 December 2002.
21 February 2003	<p>By February 2003, approximately 2000 ADF personnel were reportedly involved in two operations in the Middle East: Operation Slipper and Operation Bastille (the latter involved the forward deployment of ADF elements to the Middle East).</p> <p>Australia's military commitment in the Middle East at that time comprised an Australian command team 'in tactical control of the</p>	M Hannan (Defence spokesperson), <a href="#">Brigadier Mike Hannan provides an overview and update on the Australian Defence Force's contribution to global operations</a> , press conference transcript, 21 February 2003.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	<p>multinational interception force in the Persian Gulf' to support the enforcement of United Nations sanctions against Iraq.'</p> <p>Australia maintained tactical control of six coalition vessels, including HMA Ships <i>Anzac</i>, <i>Darwin</i> and <i>Kanimbla</i>. In addition, a RAAF AP-3C Orion aircraft detachment had been deployed to the Middle East in January 2003 and continued to conduct maritime patrols in the Gulf.</p>	
18 April 2003	<p>Following the withdrawal of Special Forces elements at the end of November 2002, it would appear that Australia's military contribution to Afghanistan had been reduced to an Army officer deployed to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) under Operation Palate.</p>	<p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">Army officer to work with UN mission in Afghanistan</a>, media release, 18 April 2003.</p>
November 2003	<p>An Army engineering officer was deployed to Afghanistan to contribute to the coalition Mine Action Co-ordination Centre. Australia reportedly contributed to mine clearance operations previously in Afghanistan between 1989 and 1993.</p>	<p>P Cosgrove (Chief of the Defence Force), <a href="#">Rebuilding communities post-war</a>, speech, 12 December 2003.</p>
13 July 2005	<p>The Government announced Australia's renewed military commitment to Afghanistan with a deployment of 150 Special Forces personnel to conduct similar tasks undertaken during the 2001–02 deployment. The Special Forces deployment was approved for a 12 month period.</p>	<p>J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Troop deployment to Afghanistan, Telstra, Rau family</a>, press conference transcript, 13 July 2005.</p>
24 August 2005	<p>The first contingent of the Special Forces Task Group was deployed to Afghanistan; the first since Australian forces withdrew in September 2002.</p> <p>The Task Group comprised approximately 190 personnel from Special Air Services Regiment, 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, Incident Response Regiment and logistics support.</p> <p>The Task Group's mission was to conduct combat patrols in remote areas as well as reconnaissance and surveillance operations in collaboration with other contributing countries. The mission was scheduled to run until September 2006.</p>	<p>J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Deployment of Special Air Services Regiment to Afghanistan</a>, speech, 24 August 2005.</p> <p>R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Special Forces task group deploy to Afghanistan</a>, media release, 24 August 2005.</p> <p>P Lindsay (Member for Herbert), <a href="#">Townsville troops to be deployed to Afghanistan</a>, media release, 24 August 2005.</p>

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
16 September 2005	<p>The ADF flagged that a military provincial reconstruction team might be deployed to Afghanistan around mid 2006.</p> <p>It was also noted that Army mine clearance specialists had been deployed to Afghanistan since 2003 and continued to assist in the removal of unexploded ordnance under Operation Slipper.</p> <p>An Army officer role, deployed to the United Nations in Afghanistan under Operation Palate, has also remained in place since 2003.</p>	<p>R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Talks on Afghanistan with NATO chief</a>, media release, 16 September 2005.</p> <p>K Gillespie (Vice Chief of the Defence Force) and R Moffitt (Deputy Chief of Joint Operations), <a href="#">Presentation to Defence Watch</a>, speech, 16 September 2005.</p>
10 January 2006	<p>The Government announced that an Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter detachment would be deployed to Afghanistan in March 2006. The detachment was expected to remain in Afghanistan for the duration of the Special Forces Task Group deployment (until September 2006). However, should Australia deploy a reconstruction task force, the detachment's mission could be extended.</p>	<p>R Hill (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Chinooks to deploy to Afghanistan</a>, media release, 10 January 2006.</p>
21 February 2006	<p>The Government announced that Australia would contribute a 200-strong reconstruction task force to Afghanistan for a period of two years.</p>	<p>J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Australian contribution to a provincial reconstruction team in Afghanistan</a>, media release, 21 February 2006.</p>
25 February 2006	<p>After arriving back in Australia from Afghanistan in January 2006, west coast-based Special Forces Task Group members were officially welcomed home.</p> <p>Two members of the Special Air Services Regiment received the Medal for Gallantry.</p> <p>The second contingent of the Special Forces Task Group took over from the first contingent sometime in early 2006 (no specific date was provided and there does not appear to be any official media release or statement about the contingent's farewell ceremony in Australia).</p> <p>The Special Forces Task Group mission was expected to remain in Afghanistan until September 2006.</p>	<p>J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Address at the Special Forces Task Force welcome home</a>, speech, 25 February 2006.</p> <p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">Afghan veterans welcomed home: soldiers' gallantry honoured</a>, media release, 25 February 2006.</p>

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
4 March 2006	East coast-based Special Forces Task Group members were officially welcomed home from Afghanistan.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Afghan veterans welcomed home</a> , media release, 4 March 2006.
13 March 2006	110 members of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment were deployed to Afghanistan with two CH-47 Chinook helicopters. The contingent was to provide heavy troop and medical evacuation airlift support to the 200-strong Special Forces Task Group already operating in Afghanistan.	B Nelson (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Defence Minister Dr Brendan Nelson farewells Army aviation troops bound for Afghanistan</a> , media release, 13 March 2006.  Department of Defence, <a href="#">Australian Chinooks fly in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 6 April 2006.
8 May 2006	The first Australian reconstruction task force for Afghanistan was announced—expected to comprise a 240 personnel deployment in July 2006.  The CH-47 Chinook helicopter mission was extended until April 2007 to support the insertion of the reconstruction force.	J Howard (Prime Minister) and B Nelson (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Reconstruction Task Force in Afghanistan: Budget. Access Card: Private Jacob Kovco: Beaconsfield mine: Richard Carleton</a> , joint press conference transcript, 8 May 2006.
13 June 2006	The Government announced that, from July 2006, the ADF would contribute a reconstruction task force to Uruzgan province in Afghanistan. The first Reconstruction Task Force (RTF) was expected to deploy in July 2006.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Commander of reconstruction task force to Afghanistan announced</a> , media release, 13 June 2006.
25 July 2006	The first rotation of personnel from the Australian Army's CH-47 Chinook helicopter 5 <sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment departed for Afghanistan.  The Army helicopter commitment was scheduled to cease in July 2007.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Rotation of troops in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 25 July 2006.
9 August 2006	The Government announced an additional 150 personnel would deploy to reinforce the RTF-1 and provide increased protection. This would bring the total RTF commitment to 400 personnel.	J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Ministerial statement to Parliament on the Australian Defence Force commitment to Afghanistan</a> , speech, 9 August 2006.
23 August 2006	The first Reconstruction Task Force (RTF-1) advance party departed for Afghanistan.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Afghanistan deployment begins</a> , media release, 22 August 2006.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
18 September 2006	Approximately 400 personnel forming the RTF-1 arrived in Afghanistan.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Aussie reconstruction task force on the ground</a> , media release, 18 September 2006.
26 November 2006	<p>East coast-based members from the 200 strong Special Forces Task Group were officially welcomed home in Sydney.</p> <p>Two members received gallantry awards (Star of Gallantry and the Medal for Gallantry) and a Unit Citation for Gallantry was awarded to combat elements of the task group. The task group as a whole received the Meritorious Unit Citation.</p> <p>According to a statement made by the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, the Special Forces Task Group was deployed for a period of 12 months and conducted three rotations (each approximately four months in duration). There do not appear to be any media releases or ministerial statements announcing the dates for the departure and arrival of the second contingent nor the departure date of the third contingent, so the exact timeframe for their deployment cannot be accurately traced.</p>	<p>J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Address at the Special Forces Task Group welcome home ceremony and award presentation</a>, speech, 26 November 2006.</p> <p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">Australian Commandos receive decorations for gallantry</a>, media release, 26 November 2006.</p> <p>A Houston (Chief of the Defence Force), evidence to Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, <a href="#">Supplementary budget estimates</a>, <i>Hansard</i>, 1 November 2006, p. 12.</p>
2 December 2006	<p>West coast-based members from the Special Forces Task Group were officially welcomed home.</p> <p>Four members received gallantry awards and a unit citation for Gallantry was awarded to combat elements of the Task Group. As a whole, the Task Group received the Meritorious Unit Citation.</p>	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Afghanistan veterans welcomed home: soldiers' gallantry honoured</a> , media release, 2 December 2006.
22 February 2007	<p>Minister for Defence, Brendan Nelson, noted that the Special Forces Task Group had returned to Australia in September 2006 and Australia's military commitment to Afghanistan in February 2007 was approximately 400 personnel, including trade, engineer and infantry personnel.</p> <p>A small scoping group had been sent to Afghanistan to determine the appropriate level of Australia's military contribution in theatre.</p>	D Koch, <a href="#">Interview with Brendan Nelson</a> , <i>Sunrise</i> , transcript, Defence Direct, 22 February 2007.
8 April 2007	Members from the 5 <sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment, comprising 110 Australian Army personnel and	P Lindsay (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	<p>two CH-47 Chinook helicopters, returned to Australia following their deployment to Afghanistan.</p> <p>The Army's CH-47 Chinook helicopters were not deployed again to Afghanistan until 8 February 2008 following an upgrade of all <a href="#">six aircraft</a>.</p>	<p>for Defence), <a href="#">Return of CH-47 Detachment</a>, media release, 8 April 2007.</p>
10 April 2007	<p>The Prime Minister, John Howard, announced that another Special Operations Task Group of around 300 personnel were to deploy to Uruzgan province, this time for a two-year mission.</p> <p>The role of the Reconstruction Task Force Protection Company Group, around 120 personnel, was extended until August 2008.</p> <p>75 RAAF personnel were to deploy to Kandahar airfield to provide an air surveillance radar capability and 'assume control of a portion of Afghan operational air space from mid-2007'.</p> <p>The overall military commitment to Afghanistan was expected to reach 950 personnel by mid 2007, eventually peaking at around 1000 personnel in mid 2008.</p>	<p>J Howard (Prime Minister), <a href="#">More troops for Afghanistan</a>, media release, 10 April 2007.</p>
15 May 2007	<p>Special Operations Task Force deployed to Afghanistan in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) operations in Uruzgan province.</p> <p>The Task Force was made up of personnel from the Special Air Services Regiment, 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (Commando) Incident Response Regiment and logistics support.</p>	<p>B Nelson (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Special operations task group deploy to Afghanistan</a>, media release, 15 May 2007.</p>
29 May 2007	<p>The main RAAF contingent, including members from Darwin based 114 Mobile Control and Reporting Unit (114 MCRU) and the RAAF's Combat Support Group, was farewelled from Darwin shortly after a small advance party from RAAF 41 Wing (Williamtown) had arrived in Afghanistan.</p>	<p>B Nelson (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Farewell of Air Force personnel to Afghanistan</a>, media release, 29 May 2007.</p>
3 September 2007	<p>The Government announced the addition of a 10-man mortar section, to support RTF operations in Afghanistan. Personnel were to be drawn from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment.</p>	<p>B Nelson (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Mortar section to enhance Reconstruction Task Force capability</a>, media release,</p>

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
		3 September 2007.
4 October 2007	By October 2007 approximately 900 ADF personnel had been deployed to Afghanistan (predominantly in Uruzgan and Kandahar) and another 110 were expected to deploy in February 2008 with two CH-47 Chinook helicopters.	B Nelson (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Signing of contracts to build three Air Warfare Destroyers: Afghanistan deployment</a> , press conference transcript, 4 October 2007.
<b>Federal election held on <a href="#">24 November 2007</a>—Change of Government</b>		
8 February 2008	Two of the 5 <sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment's recently upgraded CH-47 Chinook helicopters were deployed to Afghanistan.  The last CH-47 Chinook helicopter deployment to Afghanistan was completed in April 2007 as the aircraft underwent engine upgrades.	M Kelly (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence), <a href="#">CH-47 detachment departs for Afghanistan</a> , media release, 8 February 2008.
19 February 2008	Minister for Defence, Joel Fitzgibbon, announced that the Government would maintain its current commitment in Afghanistan but would place a new emphasis on training Afghan national army members.  Mr Fitzgibbon announced that an Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) would soon be embedded within an Afghan army battalion (known as a Kandak).	J Fitzgibbon, 'Ministerial statements: Afghanistan', House of Representatives, <a href="#">Debates</a> , 19 February 2008, pp. 692–3.
20 February 2008	During the February 2008 Senate Additional Estimates hearing, the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, noted that Australia's contribution to Operation Slipper included, at that time:  ... 125 national command, liaison and embedded personnel; a reconstruction task force of almost 400; a special operations task group of 300; a 75-personnel-strong mobile control and reporting unit at Kandahar Airfield; and a force level logistic asset of approximately 60 personnel in Kandahar. In addition, Operation Slipper receives support from the RAAF AP-3C aircraft and the C-130 Hercules aircraft which are dual assigned to both Operation Slipper and Operation Catalyst. This month we	A Houston (Chief of the Defence Force), evidence to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade <a href="#">Additional Budget Estimates</a> , <i>Hansard</i> , 20 February 2008, p. 8.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	<p>also redeployed two CH-47 Chinook medium-lift helicopters with associated flight crew and support staff, which totals 93 personnel.</p> <p>...The government yesterday announced that further adjustment to the reconstruction task force is warranted to increase emphasis on the training of Afghani security forces. The provision of an operational mentoring and liaison team, or OMLT, will see us developing and mentoring an Afghan Kandak, or infantry battalion. This adjustment will be achieved within our existing force capability; that is an authorised establishment of 1,078.</p>	
13 March 2008	15 soldiers from Darwin's 8/12 Medium Regiment, who spent six months in the United Kingdom as part of a bilateral program, were deployed in support of United Kingdom operations in Helmand province.	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian artillerymen deploy to Afghanistan in support of UK operations</a> , media release, 13 March 2008.
April – May 2008	In April 2008, Reconstruction Task Force Three (RTF-3) completed its six-month tour of Afghanistan and was replaced by RTF-4 comprising 400 combat engineers, infantry, cavalry and support staff.	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">New reconstruction task force takes reins in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 18 April 2008.
4 June 2008	Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Peter Leahy, announced that Army operational tours would be extended from six to eight months, beginning with the first Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force (MRTF-1) to be deployed to Afghanistan in October 2008.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Eight month operational tours</a> , media release, 4 June 2008.
29 June 2008	The Army's CH-47 Chinook helicopter detachment was officially welcomed home after being replaced by elements from Townsville's 5 <sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment.	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Rotary wing group welcomed home from Afghanistan</a> , media release, 29 June 2008.
10 July 2008	RAAF personnel deployed to Afghanistan's Control and Reporting Centre in Kandahar for six months were officially welcomed home. The RAAF had provided personnel to this theatre of operations since April 2007. A third RAAF contingent had already deployed to Afghanistan	G Combet (Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Procurement), <a href="#">41 Wing's outstanding achievements in Afghanistan acknowledged</a> , media release, 10 July 2008.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	with a fourth contingent commencing force preparation training.	
15 July 2008	<p>In his speech to the <a href="#">Brookings Institution</a>, the Minister for Defence, Joel Fitzgibbon, summarised Australia's contribution and rationale for operations in Afghanistan:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Australia's contribution in Afghanistan is a substantial one. It includes a Reconstruction Task Force of some 400 personnel, a Special Operations Task Group of around 300 Special Forces soldiers, an Air Force Control and Reporting Centre, a Rotary Wing Group, logistics support and a national Command Element. More than 1000 personnel in all. This makes us the ninth largest troop contributor and the largest non-NATO force in Afghanistan ...</p>	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Speech by the Minister for Defence to the Brookings Institution Washington DC</a> , transcript, 15 July 2008.
8 September 2008	Darwin-based troops from the Army's 1 <sup>st</sup> Brigade (Light Armored Brigade) deployed to Afghanistan as part of the MRTF-1.	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Darwin farewells 1400 soldiers</a> , media release, 8 September 2008.
21 October 2008	<p>The MRTF-1 took over from RTF-4 on 16 October 2008.</p> <p>In addition to reconstruction efforts in Uruzgan province, the new rotation's role also included capacity building and mentoring of the Afghan National Army.</p> <p>The RTF mission ran for over two years with the first deployment commencing in August/September 2006. Four rotations took place during this time. However, there do not appear to be any available media releases or ministerial statements announcing the departure and arrival dates for some of these deployments. As such, the exact timeframe for each deployment is not identified in this chronology.</p>	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">New role for diggers in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 21 October 2008.
23 October 2008	Members of the RTF-4 were officially welcomed home following their six-month deployment in Afghanistan.	J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Diggers return home from Afghanistan</a> , media release,

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
2 November 2008	<p>Two Army CH-47 Chinook helicopters and 65 personnel were officially welcomed home following their eight-month deployment to Afghanistan.</p> <p>A third rotation was expected to deploy in February 2009 and begin flying operations in March.</p>	<p>23 October 2008.</p> <p>J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Army Chinooks return to Australia</a>, media release, 2 November 2008.</p>
16 January 2009	<p>Trooper Mark Donaldson was awarded the <a href="#">Victoria Cross</a>:</p> <p>For most conspicuous acts of gallantry in action in a circumstance of great peril in Afghanistan, as part of the Special Operations Task Group during Operation SLIPPER, Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan.</p>	<p>Department of Defence (DoD), <a href="#">Awarded the Victoria Cross for Australia: Trooper Mark Gregor Donaldson</a>, Department of Defence website.</p>
23 January 2009	<p>The first Force Support Unit (FSU-1) deployed to the MEAO to provide logistic support for all Australian military operations in the Middle East Area of Operations and Afghanistan.</p>	<p>W Snowdon (Minister for Defence Science and Personnel), <a href="#">Force Support Unit off to the Middle East</a>, media release, 23 January 2009.</p>
29 April 2009	<p>The Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, announced that Australia would increase its troop commitment in Afghanistan to 1,550 personnel. The increased troop level aimed to enhance the ADF's training mission so that the Afghan National Army could take responsibility for security in the Uruzgan Province sooner. This announcement was the first statement made about Australia's future military draw down.</p> <p>120 additional personnel would be deployed as part of the Election Support Force.</p>	<p>K Rudd (Prime Minister), <a href="#">Troop deployment in Afghanistan; COAG; welfare; tax bonus payments</a>, press conference transcript, 29 April 2009.</p> <p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">Government announces increase in ADF forces in Afghanistan</a>, media release, 29 April 2009.</p>
5 May 2009	<p>Australian Army officer, Brigadier Damian Cantwell, was announced as the commander of the ISAF Election Task Force.</p>	<p>J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian face for military support to Afghan elections</a>, media release, 5 May 2009.</p>
15 May 2009	<p>Around 600 military personnel, predominantly from the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, were deployed to Afghanistan as part of the second MRTF contingent.</p>	<p>J Fitzgibbon (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Minister farewells troops</a>, media release, 15 May 2009.</p>
9 July 2009	<p>The RAAF's two-year mission commanding the</p>	<p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">Air Force completes 'eye</a></p>

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	Control and Reporting Centre at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan was officially completed. The command role was transferred to the United States Air Force.	<a href="#">on the sky' mission</a> , media release, 13 July 2009.
8 August 2009	Personnel from the MRTF-1 were officially welcomed home to Australia after their eight-month deployment to Afghanistan.	G Combet (Minister for Defence Personnel, Materiel and Science), <a href="#">The 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade welcome home parade</a> , speech, 8 August 2009.
12 August 2009	The contingent of 120 personnel, who had arrived in Afghanistan on <a href="#">24 July 2009</a> , commenced operations in support of Afghan national elections.	J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Afghan election support force commences operations</a> , media release, 12 August 2009.
20 August 2009	Afghanistan's second presidential election was held along with provincial council elections. The first presidential election was held on <a href="#">9 October 2004</a> .	J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Afghanistan election</a> , media release, 21 August 2009.
11 October 2009	Members of the RAAF's 41 Wing were officially welcomed home and acknowledged for completing the ADF's two-year commitment commanding the Control and Reporting Centre in Kandahar.	G Combet (Minister for Defence Personnel, Materiel and Science) <a href="#">41 Wing's outstanding achievements in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 11 October 2009.
23 October 2009	The 4 <sup>th</sup> CH-47 Chinook helicopter detachment prepared to return home to Australia following their eight-month deployment to Afghanistan.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Army helicopters return to Australia after a successful deployment to Afghanistan</a> , media release, 23 October 2009.
4 December 2009	The ADF's Force Communications Unit 3 (FCU-3) was officially farewelled as part of Operation Slipper. FCU-3 is a joint deployment with elements located in the <a href="#">MEAO and Afghanistan</a> .	J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Defence Minister farewells communication contingent and visits 2<sup>nd</sup> Command Regiment</a> , media release, 4 December 2009.
13 January 2010	Australia's first leased Heron Uninhabited Aerial Vehicle (UAV) commenced initial operations in Afghanistan. Five months prior to this announcement, an Australian contingent of predominantly RAAF personnel had commenced working with the Canadian UAV detachment in Afghanistan to gain familiarity with the system.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Heron UAV to support Australian troops in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 13 January 2010.
20 January 2010	Members of the first Mentoring Task Force (MTF-1) contingent, mostly made up from the	G Combet (Minister for Personnel, Materiel and

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	<p>Army's 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, deployed to Afghanistan at the same time as communication and logistic support elements were deployed to the Middle East Area of Operations.</p> <p>While the term reconstruction has been removed from the title, the MTF-1 continues the same <a href="#">reconstruction activities</a> that were previously conducted by MRTF's 1 and 2.</p>	<p>Science), <a href="#">1000 troops farewelled in Brisbane</a>, media release, 20 January 2010.</p>
11 February 2010	<p>Members of MRTF-2 were officially welcomed home from Afghanistan following their eight-month deployment.</p>	<p>J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian troops return home after successful Afghanistan tour</a>, media release, 11 February 2010.</p> <p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">Changing of the guard for Australian soldiers—mission continues</a>, media release, 16 February 2010.</p>
26 February 2010	<p>Major General Ash Power was appointed as the first Australian officer to serve as the Senior Military Advisor to Afghanistan's Defence Minister, General Abdul Rahim Wardak.</p>	<p>J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Australian appointed as the Senior Military Advisor to the Afghanistan Defence Minister</a>, media release, 26 February 2010.</p>
3 March 2010	<p>The first Mentoring Task Force (MTF-1) trains the Afghan National Army's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Kandaks:</p> <p>MTF-1 works closely with officers from other Australian government agencies, including the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as part of a programme to provide comprehensive support and assistance to the ISAF campaign and the people of Uruzgan Province.</p>	<p>Department of Defence, <a href="#">First Mentoring Task Force proves mission readiness</a>, media release, 3 March 2010.</p>

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
18 March 2010	<p>The Minister for Defence, John Faulkner, announced that the personnel strength currently deployed to Afghanistan will remain at 1550 for the year.</p> <p>The Government announced that ten personnel will be drawn from within Defence's embedded Afghanistan staff 'to develop a training concept for Afghanistan's Combat Arms Artillery School ...' located in Kandahar.</p>	J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Ministerial statement on Afghanistan</a> , speech, 18 March 2010.
30 March 2010	The 5 <sup>th</sup> helicopter detachment comprising two CH-47 Chinook helicopters commenced operations in Afghanistan and is expected to remain for eight months.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Army Chinooks commence summer operations in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 30 March 2010.
17 April 2010	The second contingent of the Second Force Support Unit returned to Australia from the MEAO and Afghanistan after being replaced by the Third Force Support Unit, which commenced operations on 11 April 2010.	Department of Defence, <a href="#">The Second Force Support Unit completes operations in Afghanistan and returns to Australia</a> , media release, 17 April 2010.
31 May 2010	<p>The ADF's mentoring role training elements of the Afghan military was expanded when MTF-1 assumed responsibility for mentoring the Afghan National Army's 4<sup>th</sup> Brigade and a Kandak previously mentored by the Netherlands.</p> <p>The Dutch are expected to transition further Kandak elements to the ADF as they withdraw from Afghanistan by August 2010.</p> <p>A French mentored Kandak will also transition to Australian responsibility later in the year.</p>	Department of Defence, <a href="#">Australian Forces continue mentoring expansion in Afghanistan</a> , media release, 31 May 2010.
23 June 2010	<p>Minister for Defence, John Faulkner, announced that with the Dutch withdrawing in August 2010, ISAF have agreed to new arrangements establishing a US-led multi-national command structure in Uruzgan province, which will comprise military and civilian elements. He also revealed the potential for Australia's military presence in Afghanistan to be drawn down within the next two to four years:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">After the Netherlands starts drawing down after August 1, a new multinational International Security</p>	J Faulkner (Minister for Defence), <a href="#">Ministerial statement on Afghanistan</a> , transcript, 23 June 2010.

Milestones	Details	Source Documents
	<p>Assistance Force (ISAF) structure will take command in Uruzgan. Under the new arrangements, the United States will lead a multi-national "Combined Team – Uruzgan" (CTU) under an ISAF flag... Australia will provide a civilian leader for the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) ... On the basis of solid progress in our training efforts to date, CDF has recently advised me that within two to four years we should be able to transition the main security responsibility for the province to the Afghan National Army. Following a successful transition of this responsibility, I expect consideration would be given for the ADF to move into an overwatch role.</p>	
9 July 2010	<p>A RAAF C-130 Hercules detachment was officially welcomed home following a deployment to the MEAO in support of Operations Slipper and Kruger. Their replacements had already commenced flying operations in the Middle East.</p>	<p>Department of Defence, C-130 <a href="#">Hercules rotation returns home after successful deployment</a>, media release, 9 July 2010.</p>

## Appendix I: Operation Slipper—authorised strength and annual funding

Below is a year-by-year breakdown of authorised Australian military personnel strengths for Operation Slipper as well as the budget allocations and actual expenditure (where available) for each financial year since operations began in 2001. This information has been compiled using Defence annual reports, portfolio budget statements, portfolio additional estimates statements and statements made at Defence Portfolio Senate Estimates hearings.

The budget ‘estimate’ and ‘actual’ figures provided below are the net additional costs for Operation Slipper.<sup>a</sup>

It is important to note that personnel and funding figures for Operation Slipper are not necessarily exclusive to Afghanistan deployments. In some instances, operations conducted in the Middle East Area of Operation (MEAO) are also included. For example, the table below shows that funding for Operation Slipper during financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 was incorporated under Operation Catalyst (the ADF’s contribution to the US-led Multinational Force in Iraq). While the maritime intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance components were reportedly dual assigned to Operation Slipper, only a maximum of two military personnel continued to deploy to Afghanistan during that time.

Financial Year	Strength summary	Budget (\$ million)				Difference	Net additional cost for all ADF operations
		Estimate	Revised	Actual			
<b>2010–11</b>	1551 <sup>b</sup>	1125.70 <sup>c</sup>	Not available	Not available	Not available	1366.6 <sup>d</sup>	
<b>2009–10</b>	1550 <sup>e</sup>	1381.10 <sup>f</sup>	1398.70 <sup>g</sup>	Not available	17.6 <sup>h</sup>		
<b>2008–09</b>	1200	619	661	702	40	1,195 <sup>i</sup>	
<b>2007–08</b>	1080	575.3	623.2	394.9	-228.3	1149.10 <sup>j</sup>	
<b>2006–07</b>	840	124.5	243.2	223.3	-19.9	842.5 <sup>k</sup>	
<b>2005–06</b>	550	111.8	94.6	91	-3.6	516.7 <sup>l</sup>	
<b>2004–05</b>	1 <sup>a</sup>	0.0	0	0	0	278.40 <sup>m</sup>	
<b>2003–04</b>	2	0	0	0	-5	910.9 <sup>n</sup>	
<b>2002–03</b>	2	199	199	176	-23	710.6 <sup>o</sup>	
<b>2001–02</b>	1100	-	-	Unknown	Unknown	807 <sup>p</sup>	

- a. Mark Thomson from the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI) best defines net additional cost: 'Defence is supplemented for the *net additional* cost of any major military operation ... in principle at least, it ensures that Defence does not have to compromise peacetime training to fund operations, and avoids them having to maintain a contingency reserve to cover unanticipated costs. This practice was suspended in 2008–09 because of a surplus of funding. It was then reinstated in 2009–10 before being applied only in part' in 2010. 'The net additional operations cost includes the additional cost of personnel allowances, shipping and travel, repair and maintenance, health and inoculations, ammunition, contracted support, fuel, inventory, consumable etc.' This information was cited in M Thomson, *The cost of Defence: ASPI Defence Budget brief 2010–2011*, Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), Barton, May 2010, p. 177, viewed 16 June 2010, [http://dpl/Ejournals/ASPI\\_TheCostOfDefence/INDEX.htm](http://dpl/Ejournals/ASPI_TheCostOfDefence/INDEX.htm)
- b. Department of Defence (DoD), *Global Operations: Afghanistan*, DoD website, viewed 16 June 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/index.htm>
- c. Australian Government, *Portfolio budget statements 2010–11: budget related paper no. 1.5A & 1.5C: Defence Portfolio*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2010, p. 23, viewed 16 June 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/10-11/pbs/index.htm>
- d. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- e. Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, A Houston, Defence Portfolio, Additional Estimates 2009–10, 10 February 2010, p. 9, viewed 16 June 2010, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p?query=Id%3A%22committees%2Festimate%2F12758%2F0001%22>
- f. Australian Government, *Portfolio budget statements 2009–10: budget related paper no. 1.4A & 1.4C: Defence Portfolio*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2009, p. 26, viewed 16 June 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/09-10/pbs/2009-2010\\_Defence\\_PBS\\_07\\_pbs\\_full.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/09-10/pbs/2009-2010_Defence_PBS_07_pbs_full.pdf)
- g. 'The Government has approved an increase in funding for new and enhanced infrastructure projects to ensure appropriate levels of force protection that include improved working facilities. The Government has also approved the acquisition of additional counter improvised explosive device equipment (\$40m) to provide additional protection for troops deployed on Operation Slipper. This funding is being absorbed by Defence.' This information was cited in Australian Government, *Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements 2009–10: Defence Portfolio*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra, 2009, p. 26, viewed 24 March 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/09-10/paes/2009-2010\\_Defence\\_PAES\\_02\\_Department.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/09-10/paes/2009-2010_Defence_PAES_02_Department.pdf)
- h. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- i. The actual expenditure for Operation Slipper increased by \$40.9 million 'due to the incorporation of broader Middle East Area of Operation activities as a result of the re-assignment of Force Elements from Operation Catalyst.' This information and the figures included in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2008–09*, Canberra, 2008, pp. 121 and 129, viewed 24 March 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/08-09/dar/2008-2009\\_Defence\\_DAR\\_v1full.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/08-09/dar/2008-2009_Defence_DAR_v1full.pdf)
- j. The actual expenditure for financial year 2007–08 was less than originally anticipated 'due mainly to an over-estimate of surveillance requirements, garrison support and strategic lift costs.' This information and the figures included in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2007–08*, DoD, Canberra, 2007, pp. 45, 50 and 51, viewed 24 March 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/07-08/dar/2007-2008\\_Defence\\_DAR\\_13\\_v1\\_full.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/07-08/dar/2007-2008_Defence_DAR_13_v1_full.pdf)
- k. The actual expenditure for financial year 2006–07 was less than originally anticipated 'due to delays in the purchase of equipment and lower strategic lift costs achieved through more efficient contracting arrangements.' This information and the figures in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2006–07*, DoD, Canberra, 2006, pp. 50, 57 and 280, viewed 24

March 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/06-07/dar/2006-2007/Defence\\_DAR\\_13\\_v1\\_full.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/06-07/dar/2006-2007/Defence_DAR_13_v1_full.pdf)

- l. The actual expenditure for financial year 2005–06 was less than originally anticipated ‘due mainly to delays in the purchase of equipment for the CH-47 helicopters and lower strategic lift costs achieved through more efficient contracting arrangements partially offset by higher than expected logistic support costs.’ With the Government’s announcement to deploy a Reconstruction Task Force to Afghanistan, Operation Slipper’s budget was supplemented with \$218.2 million over three years. The authorised personnel strength was originally 310 with approximately 240 additional personnel expected to deploy late-2006 as part of the Provincial Reconstruction Team. This information and the figures included in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2005–06*, DoD, Canberra, 2005, pp. 52 and 96, viewed 24 March 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/05-06/dar/downloads/2005-2006/Defence\\_DAR\\_19\\_v1full.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/05-06/dar/downloads/2005-2006/Defence_DAR_19_v1full.pdf)
- m. An Army officer was assigned to coalition headquarters in Afghanistan. Other assets and personnel deployed under Operation Slipper (a headquarters element; one frigate and two AP-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft) were predominantly deployed in support of the multinational maritime interception force in the Persian Gulf. No actual expenditure was recorded for Operation Slipper for this financial year. This information and the figures included in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2004–05*, DoD, Canberra, 2004, pp. 52 and 96, viewed 24 March 2010, [http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/04-05/dar/downloads/0405\\_DAR\\_10\\_full.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/04-05/dar/downloads/0405_DAR_10_full.pdf)
- n. An Army officer was assigned to coalition headquarters in Afghanistan with other assets and personnel deployed in support of the multinational maritime interception force in the Persian Gulf. Additionally, one ADF member was deployed to the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) under Operation Palate (from April 2003 to June 2004). While no actual expenditure was recorded for Operation Slipper during financial year 2003–04 ‘... there are support elements assigned to both the coalition operation against terrorism and the rehabilitation operation in Iraq (Operation Catalyst). As assets deployed under Operation Slipper are dual assigned to Operation Catalyst, any expenditure for Operation Slipper is captured and reported against Operation Catalyst’ (p. 54). \$5 million of funds originally allocated in financial year 2003–04 were not used. This information and the figures included in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2003–04*, DoD, Canberra, 2003, pp. 51, 56 and 98, viewed 24 March 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/03-04/dar/download/full.pdf>
- o. One military member had been deployed to UNAMA since April 2003 and an Army officer had been assigned to the coalition headquarters in Afghanistan (p. 97). In addition, a Special Forces contingent had been deployed to Afghanistan. The exact number of Special Forces personnel was not disclosed in the *Defence Annual Report 2002–03*. Two B-747 air-to-air refuellers had been deployed to Kyrgyzstan to support operations in Afghanistan (p. 98). The actual expenditure for financial year 2002–03 was less than the revised estimate ‘due to the purchase of specialist equipment costing less than originally estimated. This information and the figures in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2002–03*, DoD, Canberra, 2002, pp. 45, 97 and 98, viewed 24 March 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/02-03/dar/pdf/dar0203full.pdf>. The then Chief of the Defence Force, General Peter Cosgrove, advised during a Senate Estimates hearing on 4 July 2003 that activities under the name Operation Slipper had been dormant since January 2003 and military elements had been deployed as part of Operations [Bastille](#) and [Falconer](#). However, the RAAF’s C-130 Hercules AP-3C Orion aircraft had been dual assigned to Operation Slipper. P Cosgrove, Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee, Defence Portfolio, Budget Estimates 2002–

03, 4 July 2003, p. 357, viewed 24 March 2010,

<http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22committees%2Festimate%2F6484%2F0005%22>

- p. The overall Operation Slipper deployment included elements from Operation Damask (the multinational maritime interception force in the Persian Gulf), a naval task group (two frigates and an amphibious ship on a rotating basis), a Special Forces task group, B-707 air-to-air refuellers, F/A-18 and C-130 Hercules aircraft and a national headquarters and support staff. This information and the figures in this row were cited in Department of Defence (DoD), *Annual Report 2001–01*, DoD, Canberra, 2001, pp. 68 and 74, viewed 24 March 2010, <http://www.defence.gov.au/budget/01-02/dar/full.pdf>

## Appendix 2: Operation Slipper—mission timeframe

The following table draws together information contained in the chronology to better illustrate the capabilities deployed and timeframes allocated to ADF elements under Operation Slipper.

This is not an exhaustive list. For instance, there are a number of elements that provide communications and logistical support to Operation Slipper but are dual assigned to the Middle East Area of Operations (MEAO). This list summarises the major deployments to Afghanistan.

For more detailed information about current force elements allocated to Joint Task Force 633 in the MEAO, under which Operation Slipper falls, visit the Defence website at: <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/afghanistan/info/factsheet.htm>

ADF element	Deployment timeframe
<b>Special Forces Task Group</b>	October 2001 – November 2002 (three rotations) August/September 2005 – September 2006 (three rotations) May 2007 – present
<b>CH-47 Chinook helicopter (Rotary Wing Group) (two aircraft)</b>	March 2006 – present (seasonal rotations usually conducted between February/March to November)
<b>Reconstruction Task Force</b>	August/September 2006 – October 2008 (four rotations)
<b>Mentoring and Reconstruction Task Force</b>	September 2008 – February 2010 (two rotations, each eight months in length)
<b>Mentoring Task Force</b>	February 2010 – present
<b>Control and Reporting Centre Kandahar Airport</b>	April/May 2007 – July 2009 (four rotations)
<b><a href="#">C-130 Hercules detachment</a> (three aircraft dual assigned MEAO/Operation Slipper)</b>	February 2003 – present
<b><a href="#">AP-3C Orion detachment</a> (two aircraft dual assigned MEAO/Operation Slipper)</b>	January 2003 – present
<b><a href="#">C-17 Globemaster</a> (strategic airlift dual assigned MEAO/Operation Slipper)</b>	October 2008 – present

## Appendix 3: Operation Slipper—ADF personnel killed in action

Australian forces have so far suffered 17 combat deaths as a result of the conflict in Afghanistan:

Name	Incident	Tributes
<a href="#"><u><b>Sergeant Andrew Russell</b></u></a> (Special Air Service Regiment)	Killed on 16 February 2002 when his patrol vehicle hit a land mine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Condolence motion</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• No inquiry details</li> <li>• Australian War Memorial (AWM) <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u><b>Trooper David Pearce</b></u></a> (2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment)	Killed on 8 October 2007 as a result of a roadside improvised explosive device attack on the vehicle in which he was travelling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u><b>Sergeant Matthew Locke</b></u></a> (Special Air Service Regiment)	Killed by Taliban insurgent small arms fire on 25 October 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u><b>Private Luke Worsley</b></u></a> (4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (Commando))	Killed during an attack on a Taliban bomb-making factory on 23 November 2007.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public Tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u><b>Lance Corporal Jason Marks</b></u></a> (4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (Commando))	Killed by insurgent small arms fire on 27 April 2008.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u><b>Signaller Sean McCarthy</b></u></a> (Special Air Service Regiment)	Killed when the vehicle in which he was travelling in was struck by an improvised explosive device on 8 July 2008.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#"><u><b>Lieutenant Michael Fussell</b></u></a> (4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment)	Killed by an improvised explosive device while conducting a dismounted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> </ul>

Name	Incident	Tributes
(Commando))	patrol on 27 November 2008.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#">Private Gregory Sher</a> (1st Commando Regiment)	Killed during a rocket attack on a military compound on 4 January 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#">Corporal Mathew Hopkins</a> (7th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment)	Killed during an engagement with Taliban insurgents near Tarin Kowt on 16 March 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#">Sergeant Brett Till</a> (Incidents Response Regiment)	Killed while attempting to diffuse a bomb on 19 March 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• No inquiry details</li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#">Private Benjamin Ranaudo</a> (1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment)	Killed by an improvised explosive device on 18 July 2009.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Inquiry findings</a></li> <li>• AWM <a href="#">Roll of Honour</a></li> </ul>
<a href="#">Sapper Jacob Moerland</a> (2nd Combat Engineer Regiment)	Killed by an improvised explosive device on 7 June 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• No inquiry details</li> <li>• AWM Roll of Honour</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Sapper Darren Smith</a> (2nd Combat Engineer Regiment)	Killed by an improvised explosive device on 7 June 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> <li>• No inquiry details</li> <li>• AWM Roll of Honour</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Private Timothy Aplin</a> (2nd Commando Regiment)	Killed in a helicopter crash on 21 June 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#">House of Representatives</a> and <a href="#">Senate</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Public tribute</a></li> </ul>

Name	Incident	Tributes
<a href="#"><u>Private Benjamin Chuck</u></a> (2nd Commando Regiment)	Killed in a helicopter crash on 21 June 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No inquiry details</li><li>• AWM Roll of Honour</li><li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#"><u>House of Representatives</u></a> and <a href="#"><u>Senate</u></a>)</li><li>• <a href="#"><u>Public tribute</u></a></li><li>• No inquiry details</li><li>• AWM Roll of Honour</li></ul>
<a href="#"><u>Private Scott Palmer</u></a> (2nd Commando Regiment)	Killed in a helicopter crash on 21 June 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Condolence motions (<a href="#"><u>House of Representatives</u></a> and <a href="#"><u>Senate</u></a>)</li><li>• <a href="#"><u>Public tribute</u></a></li><li>• No inquiry details</li><li>• AWM Roll of Honour</li></ul>
<a href="#"><u>Private Nathan Bewes</u></a> (6 <sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment)	Killed by an improvised explosive device on 9 July 2010.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Condolence motions (House of Representatives and Senate)</li><li>• <a href="#"><u>Public tribute</u></a></li><li>• No inquiry details</li><li>• AWM Roll of Honour</li></ul>

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