



CRS Report for Congress

U.S. Forces in Afghanistan

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Summary

As interest in troop level deployments continues, President Bush announced in a February 15, 2007, speech the administration's plans for an increase in U.S. forces in Afghanistan, including a planned gradual increase of 3,200 U.S. troops on the ground in the coming several months. This report provides official Department of Defense (DOD) statistical information on U.S. forces now serving in Afghanistan with comparisons to earlier force levels. It also provides brief official information on the military units extended or scheduled for the next rotation of duty into Afghanistan. As of July 1, 2007, according to DOD, the United States had 23,881 troops stationed in Afghanistan — 20,995 active component and 2,886 National Guard or Reserves. They are serving in two missions — a NATO-led peacekeeping mission and a separate U.S.-led combat effort still called Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). For security reasons, DOD does not routinely report the composition, size, or specific destination of military forces deployed to the Persian Gulf. This report will be updated upon receipt of new DOD data. For additional information on U.S. forces, see CRS Report RL30588, *Afghanistan: Post-War Governance, Security and U.S. Policy* by Kenneth Katzman, and CRS Report RL33503, *U.S. and Coalition Military Operations in Afghanistan: Issues for Congress*, by Andrew Feickert.

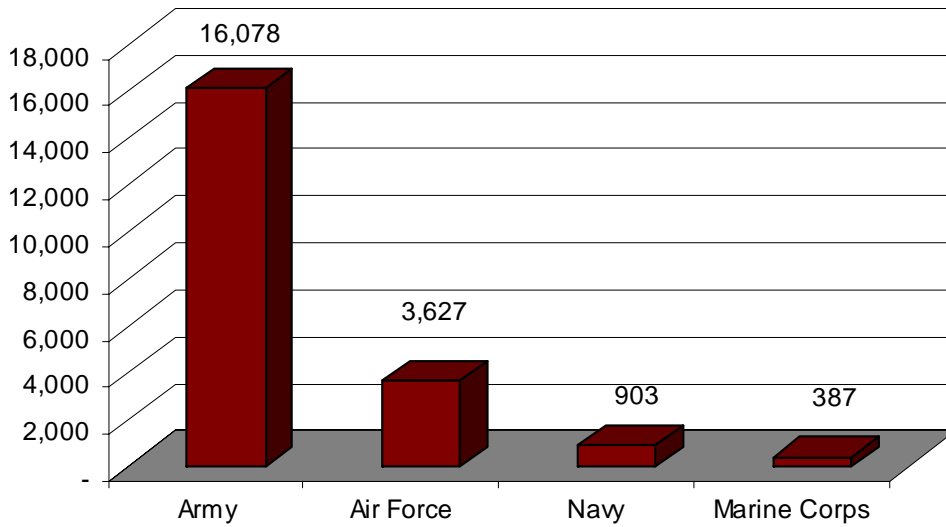
Force Levels

As of July 1, 2007, according to Department of Defense (DOD), the United States had 23,881 military personnel deployed in Afghanistan. Of these, 20,995 were active component personnel and 2,886 were National Guard and Reserves. **Figures 1 and 2** provide the distribution by armed service of active component personnel. These totals do not include 12,000 military support personnel in Kuwait, nor naval personnel aboard ships patrolling through the Persian Gulf.¹

¹ DOD Fact Sheet, *Global Commitments*, Jan. 9, 2007.

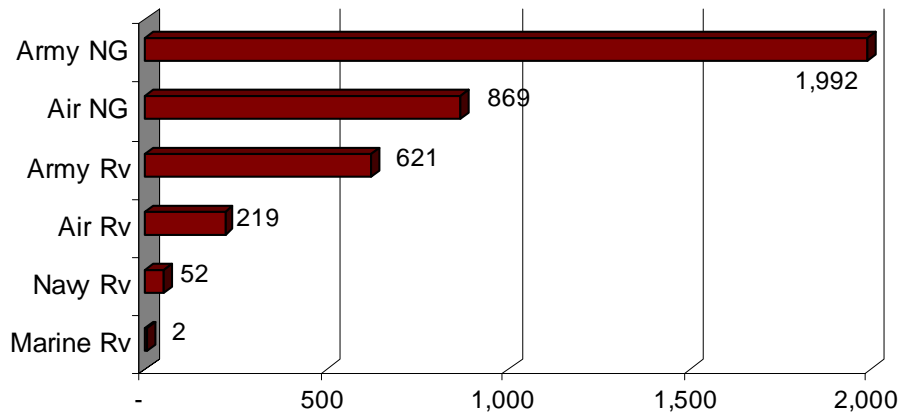
Amid concerns about U.S. troop levels in Iraq, in a February 15, 2007, speech, President Bush announced an extension of deployment for more than 3,200 U.S. troops in Afghanistan over the next several months as part of a new initiative in ongoing efforts to stabilize the security situation and to confront a resurgent Taliban. These forces are to be added to the personnel stationed in Afghanistan as reported by DOD on March 1, 2007. Additional deployment information is available from DOD's Directorate for Information Operations, which posts quarterly reports on casualties and worldwide active duty military personnel deployments by region and country online at [<http://siadapp.dior.whs.mil/personnel/MILITARY/Miltop.htm>].

Figure 1. Active Component Personnel in Afghanistan (as of July 1, 2007)



Source: Department of Defense, Office of Joints Chiefs of Staff, "Boots on Ground" data.

Figure 2. Reserve Component Personnel in Afghanistan (as of July 1, 2007)



Source: Department of Defense, Office of Joints Chiefs of Staff, "Boots on Ground" data.

Comparative U.S. Force Levels. Overall U.S. force levels in Afghanistan have been increasing since 2006, in both active duty and the reserve component. Based on DOD statistics, **Figures 3, 4, and 5** provide comparative data on both active and reserve component force levels. DOD officials have declined to project the timing or size of future force reductions, noting these will depend upon the security situation within Afghanistan. Of the forces shown, about 60% serve in the NATO-led peacekeeping force called the “International Security Assistance Force (ISAF),” and the remainder continue to serve under direct U.S. command in counter-terrorism combat missions and Afghan security forces training. This mission is still called Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The U.S. forces under NATO command have served in that capacity since October 2006, when NATO/ISAF took over peacekeeping responsibility for all of Afghanistan.

Figure 3. Comparative OEF Active Component Force Levels (February 2006/July 2007)

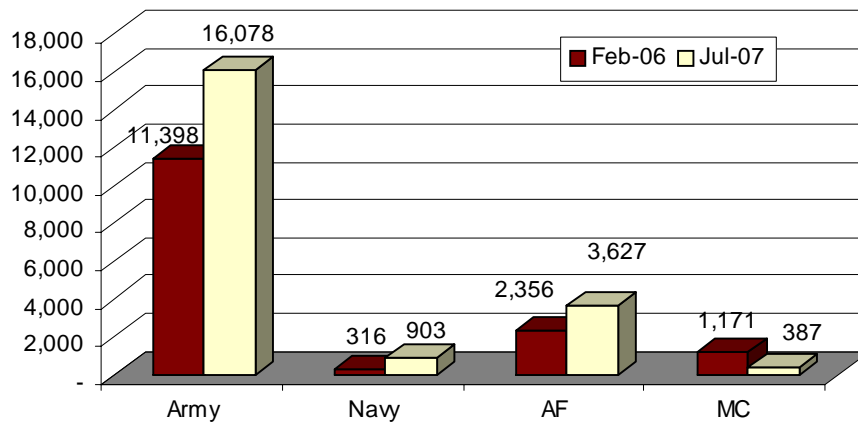
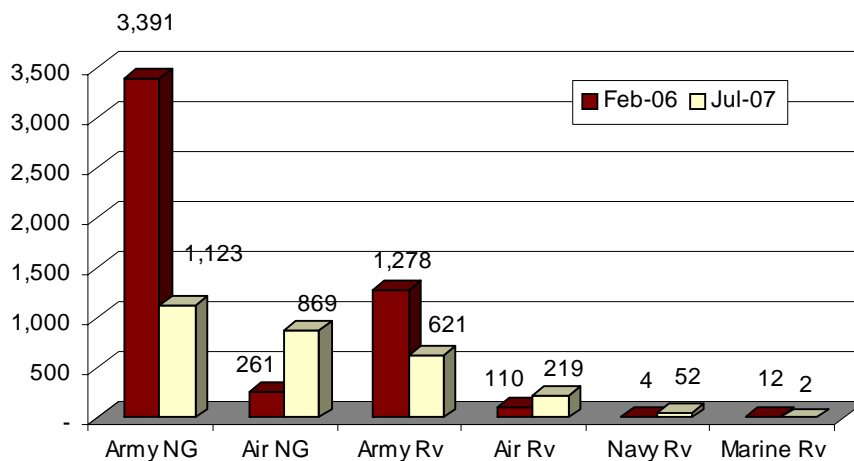
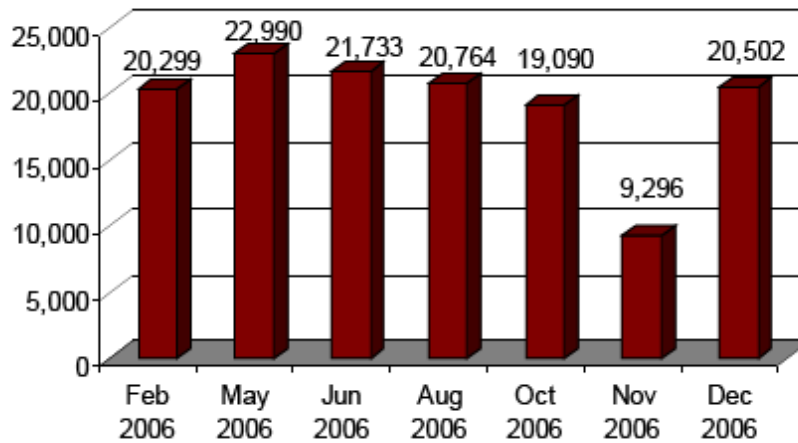


Figure 4. Comparative OEF Reserve Component Force Levels (February 2006/July 2006)



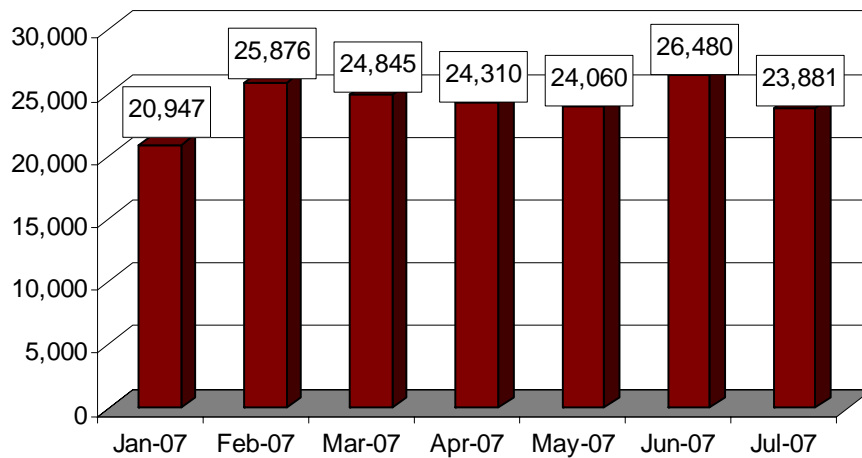
Source: Department of Defense, Office of Joints Chiefs of Staff, “Boots on Ground” data.

Figure 5. Comparative U.S. Force Levels in Afghanistan (February 2006-December 2006)



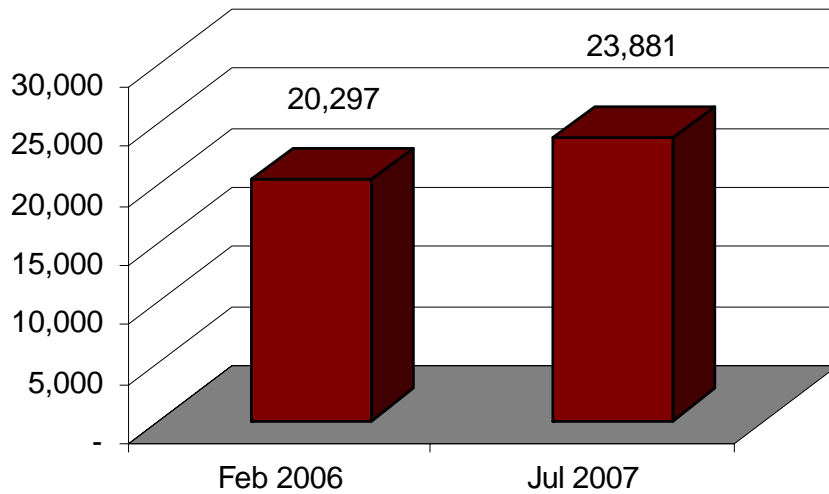
Source: Department of Defense, Office of Joints Chiefs of Staff, “Boots on Ground” data, November 1, 2005, through January 1, 2007.

Figure 6. Comparative U.S. Force Levels in Afghanistan (January 2007-July 2007)



Source: Department of Defense, Office of Joints Chiefs of Staff, “Boots on Ground” data, January 1, 2007, through July 1, 2007.

Figure 7. Comparative U.S. Force Levels in Afghanistan (Years 2006 and 2007)



Source: Department of Defense, Office of Joints Chiefs of Staff, “Boots on Ground” data.

U.S. Troop Rotations for Afghanistan. On May 9, 2007 DOD announced its latest scheduled troop deployment adjustments and schedule for rotations to Afghanistan in conjunction with the two missions under which they serve. This initial 2008 schedule for the affected Army units is summarized in **Table 1** below. Rotations for Army units normally last for 15 months.

Table 1. Operation Enduring Freedom Rotational Units

| Military Unit | Home Military Base | 2008 Transitions |
|--|--------------------|------------------|
| Army | | |
| 101 st Airborne Division Headquarters | Fort Campbell, KY | Early 2008 |
| 4th Brigade Combat Team, 101 st Airborne Division | Fort Campbell, KY | Early 2008 |