



## CRS Report for Congress

### U.S. Forces in Afghanistan

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#### Summary

As interest in troop level deployments continues, there remains an increase of U.S. forces in Afghanistan. Last year, 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. 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 January 2, 2008, according to DOD, the United States had 26,607 troops stationed in Afghanistan — 20,940 active component and 5,667 National Guard or Reserves. They are serving in two missions — a NATO-led peacekeeping mission and a separate U.S.-led combat effort 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

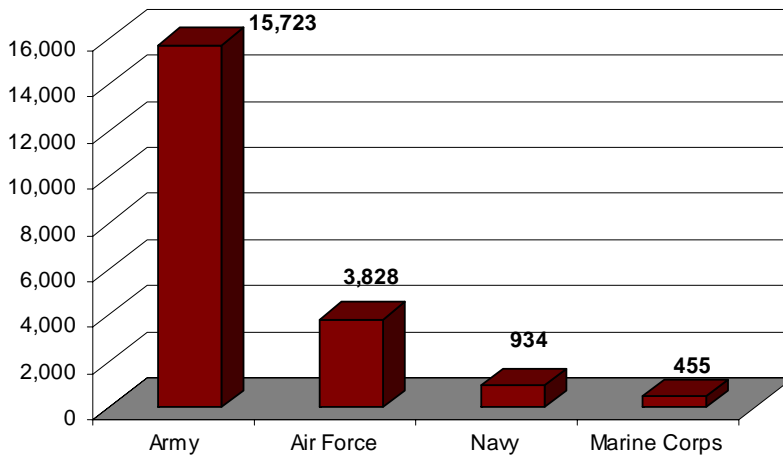
As of January 2, 2008, according to Department of Defense (DOD), the United States had 26,607 military personnel deployed in Afghanistan. Of these, 20,940 were active component personnel and 5,667 were National Guard and Reserves. **Figures 1 and 2** provide the distribution by armed service of active component personnel. These totals do not include 23,000 military support personnel in Kuwait, or naval personnel aboard ships patrolling through the Persian Gulf.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> DOD Fact Sheet, *Global Commitments*, December 14, 2007.

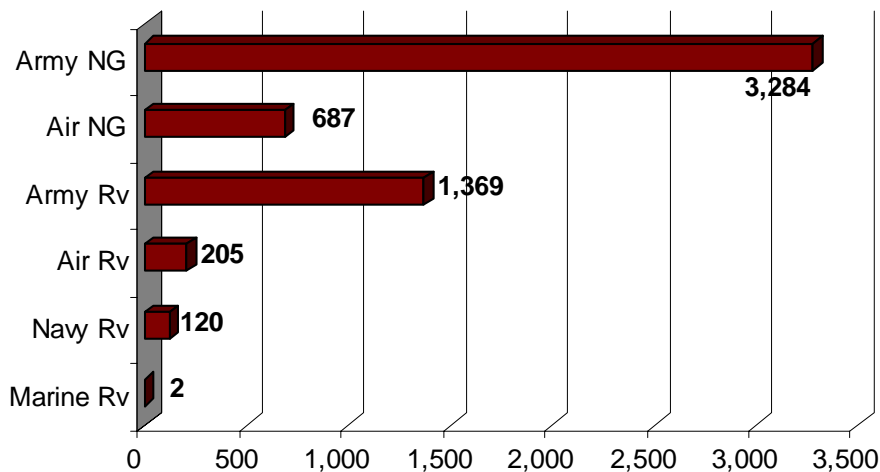
Amid concerns about U.S. troop levels, in a February 15, 2007 speech, President Bush announced an extension of deployment for more than 3,200 U.S. troops in Afghanistan as part of a new initiative in ongoing efforts to stabilize the security situation and to confront a resurgent Taliban. Since the speech on troop deployments by President Bush, the number of troops to Afghanistan has fluctuated between February through November 2007. However, there has been a steady increase in troop deployments to Afghanistan since December 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.dmdc.osd.mil/personnel/MILITARY/Miltop.htm>].

**Figure 1. Active Component Personnel in Afghanistan (as of January 2, 2008)**



Source: Department of Defense, Office of the Joint Chief Staff, "Boots on Ground" data.

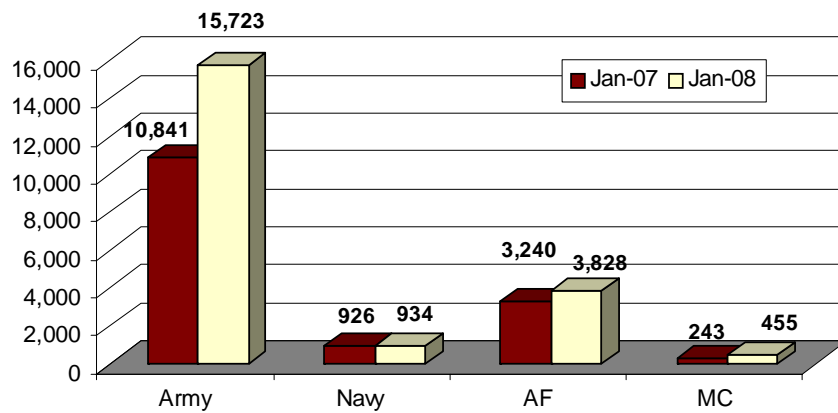
**Figure 2. Reserve Component Personnel in Afghanistan (as of January 2, 2008)**



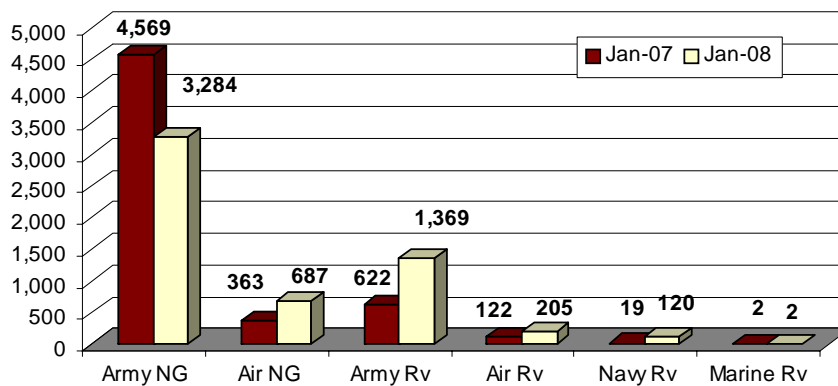
Source: Department of Defense, Office of the Joint Chief Staff, "Boots on Ground" data.

**Comparative U.S. Force Levels.** Overall U.S. force levels in Afghanistan have been increasing since 2006, in both active duty and the reserve components. Based on DOD statistics, **Figures 3** through **6** provide comparative data on both active and reserve component force levels. Data in the figures below include month-to-month and year-to-year comparisons of U.S. troops in Afghanistan. DOD officials have declined to project the timing or size of future force reductions, stating 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 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 (January 2007/January 2008)**

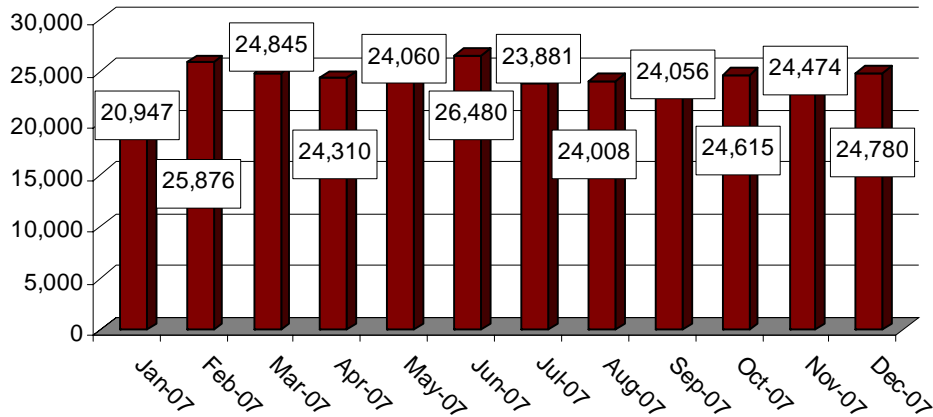


**Figure 4. Comparative OEF Reserve Component Force Levels (January 2007/January 2008)**



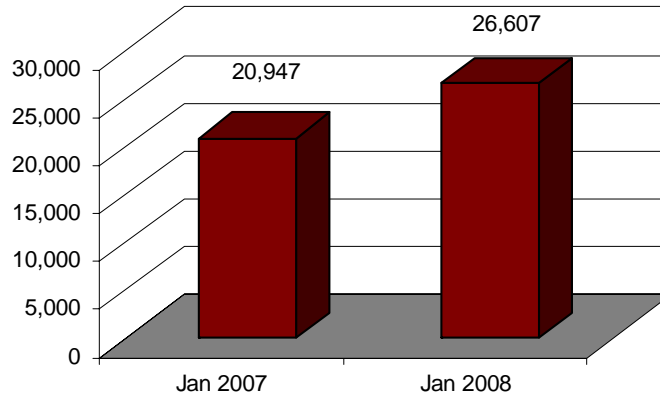
**Source:** Department of Defense, Office of the Joint Chief Staff, “Boots on Ground” data.

**Figure 5. Comparative U.S. Force Levels in Afghanistan (January 2007 - December 2007)**



**Source:** Department of Defense, Office of the Joint Chief Staff, “Boots on Ground” data, January 1, 2007, through December 1, 2007.

**Figure 6. Comparative U.S. Force Levels in Afghanistan (Years 2007 and 2008)**



**Source:** Department of Defense, Office of the Joint Chief Staff, “Boots on Ground” data.

**U.S. Troop Rotations for Afghanistan.** On May 9, August 1, and October 19 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 2008 schedule for the affected regular Army and National Guard 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
<b>Army</b>		
101 <sup>st</sup> Airborne Division Headquarters	Fort Campbell, KY	Early 2008
4th Brigade Combat Team, 101 <sup>st</sup> Airborne Division	Fort Campbell, KY	Early 2008
27 <sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Army National Guard	Syracuse, NY	Early to Mid 2008
33 <sup>rd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, Illinois Army National Guard	Urbana, IL	Late 2008

**Source:** Department of Defense News Releases May 9, August 1, and October 19, 2007.