

OCT
2016

Taliban Take and Lose Kunduz



TRADOC G-2 ACE Threats Integration

DISTRIBUTION RESTRICTION:
Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

Threat Action Report



Purpose

- To describe the Taliban occupation of and subsequent withdrawal under pressure from Kunduz City, Afghanistan, in 2015.
- To inform the Army training community of current examples of a dispersed attack and an area defense utilized by an insurgent group.
- To identify current tactics and techniques used by the Taliban in Afghanistan and show the connectivity to the tactics, threat doctrine, and conditions presented in other training materials such as the [Decisive Action Training Environment \(DATE\)](#).

Executive Summary

- The Taliban secured areas surrounding Kunduz, Afghanistan, in the fall of 2015, from which it launched a successful attack on Kunduz against a much larger force.
- Taliban control of road networks leading into Kunduz delayed military reinforcements sent to support Afghan security forces in Kunduz.
- While Taliban elements pressured security forces that were held up at the airfield, other elements set up combat security outposts with checkpoints, road blocks, and designated kill zones to delay and provide early warning at Kunduz entry points.
- Inside the city, Taliban fighters set up improvised explosive devices and other obstacles throughout the city to delay and challenge Afghan security forces.
- Taliban elements damaged and destroyed critical infrastructure and attempted to destroy bridges into the city.
- The Taliban attempted to control the narrative of the operation and influence target populations through use of social media.
- Taliban fighters conducted a withdrawal under pressure into their areas of strength surrounding Kunduz, from which they continue to launch attacks against Kunduz and other targets.

This (U) **Threat Action Report (TAR)** was produced in accordance with (U) *Intelligence Community Directive Number 203: Analytical Standards* (Effective: Jan 2015). This TAR was coordinated with:

- National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC)—Ms. Chrystal Yauch
- HQDA DCS G-2—MAJ Amber Holmes
- FMSO—Mr. Tom Wilhelm

Comments and feedback are welcome.

Jon S. Cleaves
Director, ACE Threats Integration

Cover photo: [Afghan forces prepare counter-attack on Taliban in Kunduz](#), 29 September 2016.



Introduction

In April 2015, the Afghan Taliban began its summer military operations in the north with a particular focus on Kunduz Province and its capital city, Kunduz. Over a period of months, the Taliban encircled Kunduz City and easily captured it on Monday, 28 September 2015. The fall of the city represented the biggest military victory for the Taliban since 2001. It also boosted the Taliban's information warfare campaign, lending credibility to its recently-installed head, Mullah Akhtar Mohammad Mansour, as one who can deliver victory.¹ This *Threat Action Report: Taliban Take and Lose Kunduz* provides a detailed analysis of the attack and the subsequent retaking of Kunduz by Afghan security forces, supported by NATO-led Operation Resolute Support assets.

Kunduz Province is one of the wealthiest in Afghanistan. With a population estimated at just under 225,000, the capital and fifth-largest Afghan city, Kunduz City, is on a major international trade route, with Pakistan, Iran, and Tajikistan as its primary international trading partners. It is also the closest provincial capital to the Tajikistan Shir Khan border crossing, an entry into Central Asian markets.² In addition, the city is a hub for trading routes throughout Afghanistan.³ Its geographic location makes Kunduz City a lucrative target for Taliban leaders.

Prior to the successful attack on Kunduz, the Taliban gained control of key ground surrounding the city. Through a deliberate effort beginning in April 2015, Taliban forces secured almost all of the government's land supply routes into Kunduz City while maintaining control of their own supply routes. In April 2015, the Taliban captured Gortepa, an area composed of 40–50 villages extending northwest of Kunduz for about 15 kilometers. Bordered on either side by rivers, Gortepa connects Chardara and Qala-i-Zal districts. A decision by Afghan forces to not clear this region and only set up outposts to protect the city allowed the Taliban to thrive in this area.⁴ Additionally, Taliban forces strengthened their hold on the surrounding Imam Sahib district to the northeast, Khanabad district to the southeast, and Ali Abad district to the south.⁵

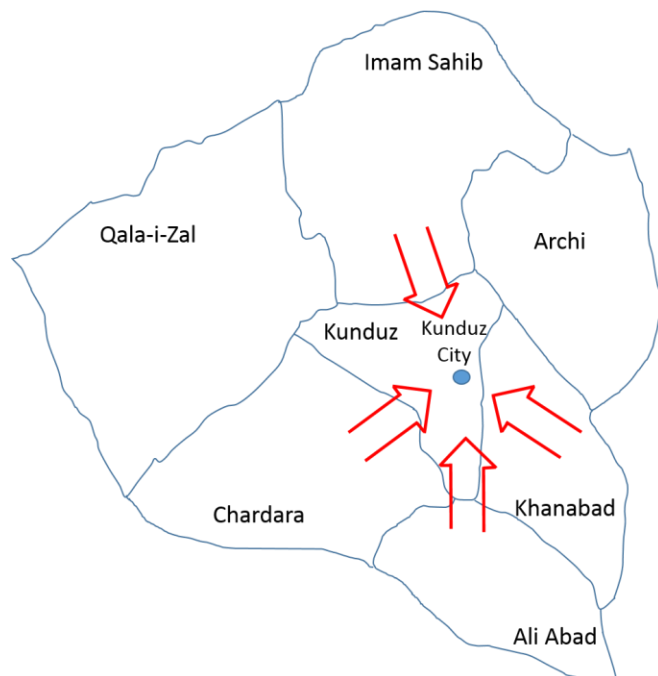


Figure 1. Taliban attack routes

Taliban Take Kunduz

On Monday, 28 September 2015, several hundred Taliban fighters conducted a dispersed attack on Kunduz, a city defended by an estimated 7,000 Afghan security and militia forces.⁶ Taliban elements attacked from positions of strength in the surrounding districts and quickly overwhelmed Afghan security forces. Previous Taliban attacks on urban areas had been limited to suicide attacks by individuals or small

Threat Action Report



groups. The Taliban's well-organized attack on Kunduz and its intent to hold the city surprised the Afghan security forces and the Afghan government.⁷

The dispersed attack consisted of Taliban fixing, assault, and exploitation elements. For two days, the Taliban fixing elements blockaded around 200 Afghan security soldiers within the Bala Hisar hilltop fortress that overlooks the city, preventing them from supporting the town's defense. The Taliban finally forced the Afghan units to withdraw under pressure after they ran out of food and ammunition.⁸ A Kunduz police spokesman stated the withdrawal occurred at about 1700 on 30 September with Afghan military, police, and intelligence cooperation and assistance. Taliban leaders offered amnesty to those who surrendered, but afterwards claimed that all government military personnel had been killed during the attack.⁹

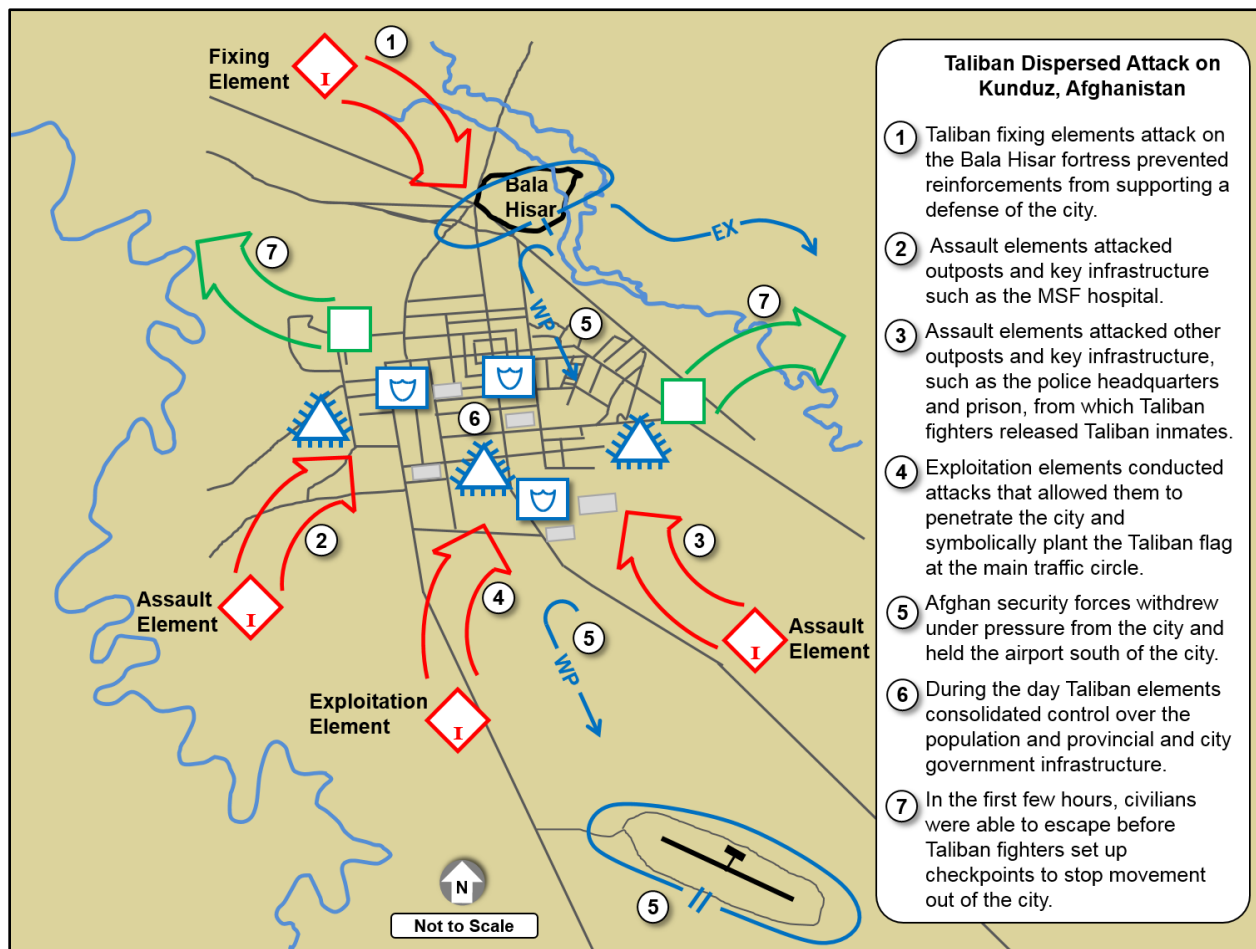


Figure 2. Taliban dispersed attack on Kunduz

Taliban assault elements attacked from multiple directions. The attacks focused first on combat outposts, often referred to as checkpoints, that served as a defensive perimeter around the city. Some resistance continued as these outposts fell and government forces persisted in fighting within the city. Once the Taliban entered the city, it focused on civilian, government, and military infrastructure. Taliban fighters



targeted the *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF; Doctors Without Borders) hospital, where they searched for possible wounded or hiding security personnel; police stations and other security-related buildings; the prison, from which they released inmates; and municipal and provincial government buildings.¹⁰

Exploitation elements penetrated into the city and planted the Taliban flag in the central traffic circle, symbolically announcing the group's triumph over government security forces. Elements within the city facilitated the success of the exploitation elements. There is evidence of Taliban fighters infiltrating the city, hiding in homes, and disguising themselves in Afghan security force uniforms prior to the attack. Other reports indicate that citizens disenchanted with the government may have also joined Taliban fighters.¹¹ With insider information, Taliban fighters sought key government, military, police, intelligence, non-governmental organization (NGO), and other officials, particularly those deemed a threat to the occupation.¹² Taliban fighters took money from the Kunduz banks and seized weapons and armed vehicles. Soon after occupying the city, they sought to control the population by setting up checkpoints to block civilians who were trying to leave the city, and instituting and enforcing rules.¹³

Despite being heavily outnumbered, Taliban fighters took control of the city with relative ease. Afghan security forces withdrew under pressure to the safety of the airfield south of the city. In the first few hours of the attack, many civilians, to include government officials and NGO workers, escaped the city as well. The Taliban quickly shut down escape routes through the use of checkpoints. Poor coordination and communication between Afghan security forces further facilitated Taliban control of the city by the end of the day.¹⁴

In the face of reports of atrocities being committed by Taliban elements in Kunduz, the Taliban began utilizing social media to shape the story on the ground in its favor.

Kunduz Recaptured

Taliban strength in the areas surrounding Kunduz allowed it to delay Afghan security forces' attempts to rush reinforcements to Kunduz. As Afghan forces moved toward Kunduz from other areas, Taliban elements engaged in harassment ambushes, frustrating attempts to support the besieged security forces held up at the airport south of Kunduz. The Afghan government attempted to move troops and ammunition north from Baghlan to Kunduz, as an example, but Taliban roadblocks and ambushes along the route stalled the movement. Taliban attacks along other supply routes further hindered Afghan security forces from reaching Kunduz quickly.¹⁵

On Tuesday, 29 September 2015, following their quick occupation of Kunduz, Taliban assault elements seized the momentum gained and attacked the airport. The Taliban claimed it temporarily penetrated the airport perimeter, while government sources claimed its defense of the airport held. Each side had a vested interest in shaping the information warfare (INFOWAR) narrative to its benefit and published conflicting reports of casualties and what was happening on the ground.¹⁶

In consultation with surprised and concerned Afghan leaders, NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) deployed air assets beginning on Tuesday, 29 September 2015.¹⁷ As Taliban elements intermingled with the Kunduz population, bombing targets became more difficult. During an air attack on 3 October, an AC-130U Gunship aircrew attacked an MSF trauma center, causing both damage to the hospital and killing and injuring of innocent staff and patients.¹⁸

Threat Action Report



To defend itself within the city, the Taliban prepared an area defense with combat security outposts (CSOPs) intended to protect key avenues of approach.¹⁹ The CSOPs allowed for flexibility in choosing between several different missions. According to [Training Circular \(TC\) 7-100.2, *Opposing Force Tactics*](#), CSOPs are positioned to fulfill one or more of the following missions:

- **Ambush:** used to avoid contact with superior enemy forces, only engaging key enemy targets.
- **Attack by fire:** attempts to shape the battlefield in some fashion, either by turning an attacking enemy force into a kill zone or by denying the enemy a key piece of terrain.
- **Delay:** attempts to buy time to accomplish some other task such as defensive preparations, launch of a counterattack, or complete a withdrawal. Normally, the CSOP will withdraw after engaging for a set amount of time.
- **Disrupt:** attempts to weaken an enemy attack by using fires to cause premature commitment of the enemy, break apart his formation, and desynchronize his plan.
- **Fix:** uses fires to prevent a key element of the enemy force from moving from a specific place or halt it for a specific amount of time.²⁰

The relatively small number of Taliban defenders knowingly faced a significantly larger Afghan security force with the inevitable support of ISAF. Despite its ease in taking the city of Kunduz, the Taliban likely realized it would not be able to hold the city indefinitely; particularly as Afghan security forces slowly recaptured portions of the city over subsequent days. The CSOPs played a critical role in providing early warning, delaying entry into the city, and causing casualties to the Afghan security forces before the Taliban would eventually relinquish control back to the better-armed and -resourced Afghan security forces supported by ISAF.²¹

While Afghan security forces controlled major portions of Kunduz by the first days in October, Taliban resistance resulted in heavy street fighting before the government forces finally wrested control of the city from Taliban fighters. Taliban elements took advantage of the time it took the Afghan security forces to finally take the city by placing improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and other obstacles throughout the city and within buildings to challenge, delay, and increase the number of security force casualties. The Taliban divided itself into elements of 10–12 fighters each, using civilian houses and tops of high-rise buildings from which to fire on Afghan security forces. Street fighting devastated large areas of Kunduz, destroying shops and homes.²²

Before withdrawing under pressure, Taliban elements attempted to destroy key infrastructure necessary for governance, public services, and security. On 12 October, Afghan security forces prevented several attempts to destroy the Chardara and Alchin bridges. Destruction of these bridges would have isolated Kunduz from reinforcements in the surrounding districts and denied it road networks to other areas of Afghanistan.²³ In other areas, the Taliban was more successful. It left in its wake looted and destroyed electricity and water infrastructure, police stations, government buildings, and businesses. In addition to looting the Central Bank, Taliban elements bombed other banks in the city. The Taliban dealt a significant and lingering blow to the Afghan government as it now has to rebuild the infrastructure and the trust of the city's residents.²⁴

During the entirety of its operation, the Taliban used social media to refute claims made by the Afghan government, give the impression of calm, and bolster its claim of liberating Kunduz. One of its videos posted on Facebook was viewed over 200,000 times in four hours.²⁵ A Taliban spokesman claimed that

Threat Action Report



“life in Kunduz is normal” and urged Kunduz residents to stay off the streets until the fighting was over for their safety.²⁶ Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid posted on a Twitter account pictures of Kunduz citizens greeting Taliban fighters entering Kunduz.²⁷ Other pictures posted on Taliban Twitter accounts included civilians cheering for and taking pictures with Taliban fighters after the city was occupied, prisoners being freed from the jail, and Taliban fighters taking over the local hospital.²⁸ With increasing evidence of Taliban atrocities, a Taliban spokesman countered with messages denying the charges.²⁹

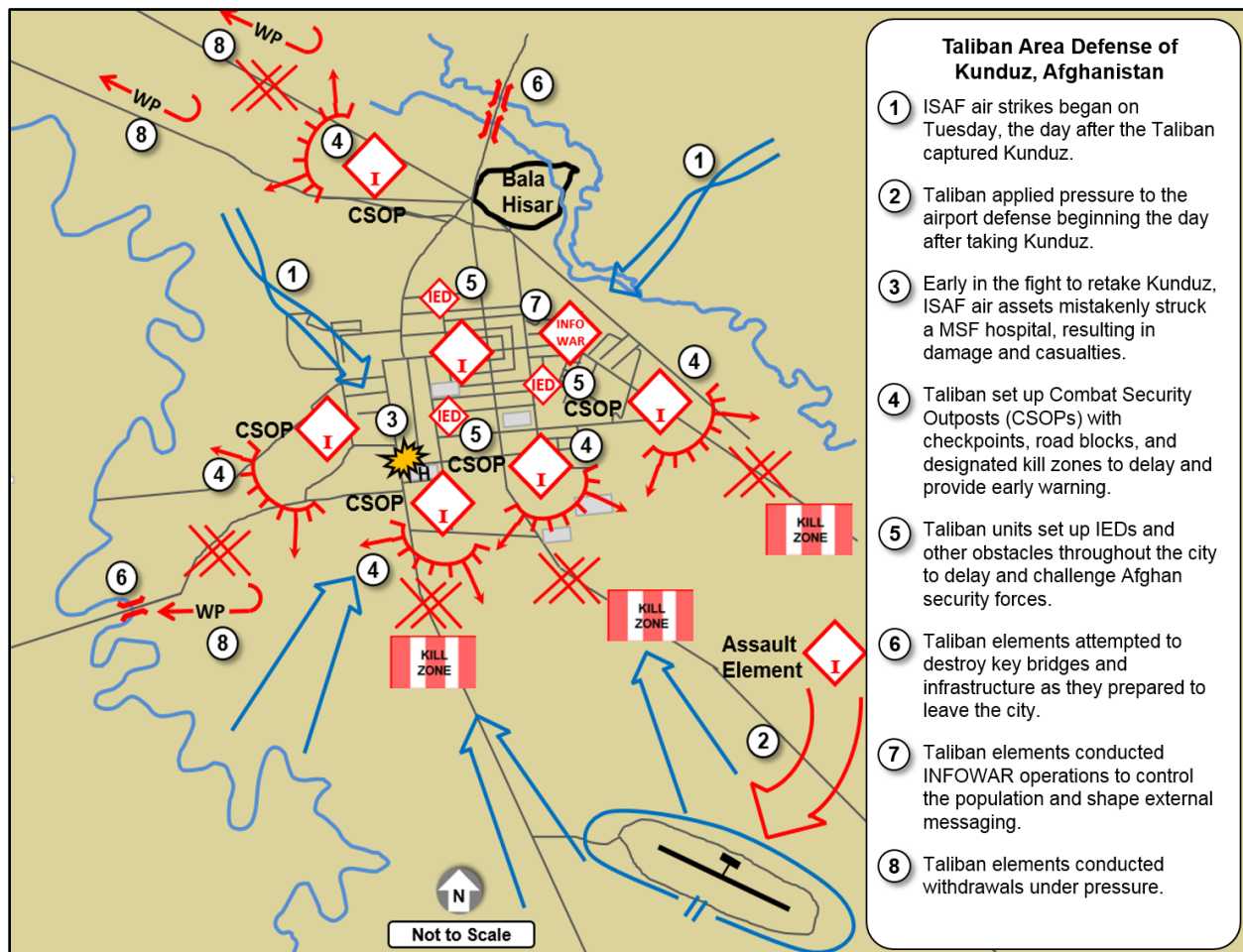


Figure 3. Taliban area defense of Kunduz

During the intense street fighting, both the Afghan government and the Taliban pushed out media messages that denied the claims of the other side. While Afghan security forces claimed victory, Taliban sources claimed, “Enemy claims regarding the Kunduz situation are not true. Mujahideen [Taliban fighters] are resisting in the city’s security circle” and declared that it still controlled most of the city and the districts around the city.³⁰

On 13 October 2015, over a week after the Afghan government had initially announced its victory over the group, the Taliban published on its website that it had withdrawn its fighters from Kunduz.³¹ A Taliban spokesman stated the “fruitless cost of corporeal and material losses to Mujahideen in the protracted

Threat Action Report



battle in defense of Kunduz City” prompted it to withdraw to the rural areas outside the city.³² The Taliban stated it had “ordered its mujahideen to withdraw from the main square, markets and government buildings to the outlying rural areas...in order to reinforce their defense lines and reserve their strength for effective future operations.”³³

In another statement, a Taliban spokesman outlined what he considered to be the successes of the short-lived occupation of Kunduz:

1. Taliban elements conducted “a well-organized operation on Kunduz city and within a few hours broke through enemy defenses and took over the entire city barring the airbase;”
2. From the prison it released hundreds of “Mujahideen and other innocent individuals accused of supporting Jihad;”
3. The operation caused “a wave of panic in the enemy ranks” by occupying a regionally strategic and command center;
4. Before withdrawing from Kunduz, the Taliban “Seized military equipment, APCs, launchers, tons of heavy and light arms ammunition;”
5. Taliban fighters obtained “archived documents from the ministry of national directorate services and other organs;”
6. The Taliban proved that it could achieve its objectives in “every part of the country” even with foreign militaries stationed in Afghanistan; and
7. The operation resulted in minimal Taliban losses and civilian casualties “were also kept at a bare minimum.”³⁴

Taliban fighters left the city of Kunduz, but returned to area strongholds in the districts surrounding it from which they continue to apply pressure on Kunduz. On 20 August 2016, Kunduz was on the verge of capture yet again. A similar picture developed with civilians and leaders retreating to the airfield to the south as Taliban elements threatened from the captured Khanabad district to Kunduz’s east as well as from positions on the north side of the city. Reports indicate that the Taliban tried to destroy a key bridge connecting the city to Tajikistan, which would have left the Baghlan-Kunduz highway—temporarily blocked by the insurgents in the morning—as the only major road out of Kunduz. As a precaution and wanting to not repeat the events of September 2015, Afghan security officials moved prisoners from the prison to the airfield. This time, despite complaints of air support and ground reinforcements being slow to arrive, Afghan security forces repelled the attack.³⁵

Analytical Assessment

A number of lessons can be learned from the Taliban capture of a major Afghan urban area. An organized use of dispersed attack tactics that included fixing, assault, and exploitation elements contributed to Taliban success. Prior to the attack, Taliban fighters spent weeks consolidating their control of the areas surrounding Kunduz City. The Afghan security forces inadvertently assisted the Taliban in thriving and increasing in strength, as they established a perimeter around the city but failed to clear the Taliban strongholds surrounding it. The Taliban reportedly infiltrated the city with fighters who, prior to and during the attack, provided intelligence and facilitated success. Discontent with the government created other readily-available partisans. Neglect and poor communication and coordination on the part of the Afghan security forces’ leadership also factored into the Taliban success.



It is unlikely the Taliban expected to hold Kunduz; however, the longer it was able to hold, the greater the propaganda value. The relative ease with which the Taliban took Kunduz inflicted damage on the central Afghan government's reputation. Taliban control of the area surrounding Kunduz further delayed the arrival of reinforcements, allowing Taliban elements time to fix forces at the airfield, to which most of the Afghan security forces had withdrawn, and set up CSOPs along the major roads into Kunduz. The Taliban also utilized intelligence collected from government and other offices to target leaders and their property, while using restrictive measures to control the population. Taliban leaders positioned IEDs, snipers, and marksmen in anticipation of the inevitable time when Afghan security forces would penetrate their perimeter.

Once inside the city, Taliban elements used cultural standoff to limit the effectiveness of ISAF air assets, as ISAF wished to avoid collateral damage. Urban and densely populated areas where hospitals, schools, and other civilian buildings can be occupied by both civilians and enemy elements present particularly challenging targeting problems for air assets.³⁶ Such controversies as the bombing of the MSF hospital can easily be exploited by the Taliban and other terrorist organizations in its INFOWAR operations, adding increased complexity to operations.³⁷

The failure of the Afghan security forces to adequately clear the areas surrounding Kunduz continues to cause lingering security challenges for the city. As the Taliban withdrew under pressure from Kunduz, it simply flowed back into places of strength in the rural areas surrounding the city. The Taliban met its objectives by temporarily occupying a major city and could afford to lose territory even as it continued to threaten other areas. The definition of success is different for the Afghan government and the Taliban. Even when victorious against the Taliban, the government can still appear to be weak and unable to protect its citizens; a situation that the Taliban can exploit, especially in the media.

TRAINING IMPLICATIONS

- The Taliban utilized a dispersed attack to occupy Kunduz and an area defense to defend it, as outlined and defined in [TC 7-100.2, *Opposing Force Tactics*](#). This training reference, combined with the others in the [TC 7-100 series](#), contains important tactics and techniques information used by the hybrid threat. The [Decisive Action Training Environment \(DATE\)](#) contains an operational environment in which to develop scenarios for training.
- The following are some aspects of the Taliban occupation of Kunduz that could be considered in creating realistic training scenarios.
 - Afghan security forces failed to clear the areas surrounding Kunduz, allowing the Taliban to build areas of strength in the rural areas around the city.
 - Taliban control of supply and transit routes surrounding Kunduz delayed the arrival of reinforcements to support the Afghan security forces.
 - CSOPs set up on major routes into the city provided Taliban elements with flexible and adaptable mission opportunities to include ambush, attack by fire, delay, disrupt, and fix.
 - The urban terrain allowed Taliban fighters to hide within the Kunduz population, limiting the advantage of ISAF air assets.

Threat Action Report



- The Taliban used marksmen and sniper teams effectively in the Kunduz urban environment to create casualties; impede movement; instill fear; influence enemy decisions, actions, tactics, and techniques; lower morale; damage or destroy materiel; and disrupt enemy tempo.
- Once it had withdrawn under pressure, Taliban fighters moved back into areas of strength in the surrounding districts where they continue to threaten Kunduz.

Related Products

Follow these links to view related products:

- [Capture of Kunduz](#)
- [The Fall of Ramadi: ISIL on the March](#)
- [Menagh Airbase Siege: Menagh, Syria](#)
- [ISIL Attack on the Tabqa Airbase, Syria](#)
- [Threat Tactics Report: ISIL](#)
- [Guerilla and Insurgent: Describing Threats in Complex Environments](#)

See also the [Red Diamond Newsletter](#), which contains current articles on a variety of topics useful to both soldiers and civilians ranging from enemy tactics and techniques to the nature and analysis of various threat actors.

For detailed information on weapons and equipment, see the [Worldwide Equipment Guide](#).

To see more products from ACE-TI, visit the Army Training Network (ATN) with CAC access: https://atn.army.mil/dsp_template.aspx?dpID=377

POC

Author

Rick Burns
913-684-7987 (COMM)
552-7987 (DSN)

TRADOC G-2 Analysis and Control Element Threats Integration (ACE-TI)
803 Harrison Drive, BLDG 467
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027

Jon Cleaves, ACE-TI Director
Jennifer Dunn, ACE-TI Deputy Director
Jon Moilanen, ACE-TI Operations

Threat Action Report



Note: Not all references listed in this publication are readily available to the public; some require a government common access card (CAC) to view.

Figure Credits

Figure 1. Taliban attack routes. Source: ACE Threats Integration. 2016

Figure 2. Taliban dispersed attack on Kunduz. Source: ACE Threats Integration. 2016

Figure 3. Taliban area defense of Kunduz. Source: ACE Threats Integration. 2016

Endnotes

- ¹ Sune Engel Rasmussen. "[Taliban Capture Key Afghan Provincial Capital.](#)" The Guardian. 28 September 2015.
- ² UN Habitat. "[State of Afghan Cities Report 2015.](#)" 2015.
- ³ Rod Nordland. "[Taliban End Takeover of Kunduz After 15 Days.](#)" The New York Times. 13 October 2015.
- ⁴ Joseph Goldstein and Mujib Mashal. "[Taliban Fighters Capture Kunduz City As Afghan Forces Retreat.](#)" The New York Times. 28 September 2015; Patricia Gossman. "[Afghanistan: After Kunduz.](#)" The Diplomat. 16 December 2015.
- ⁵ Sayed Salahuddin. "[Taliban Seizes District in Kunduz Province, Afghan Officials Say.](#)" The Washington Post. 20 August 2015. Borhan Osman. "[The Fall of Kunduz: What Does it Tell Us about the Strength of the Post-Omar Taleban?](#)" Afghanistan Analysts Network. 30 September 2015; Joseph Goldstein and Mujib Mashal. "[Taliban Fighters Capture Kunduz City As Afghan Forces Retreat.](#)" The New York Times. 28 September 2015.
- ⁶ For a description of a dispersed attack, see: Headquarters, Department of the Army. [Training Circular 7-100.2, Opposing Force Tactics](#). TRADOC G-2 Analysis and Control Element (ACE) Threats Integration. 9 December 2011. Paras 3-74 through 3-84.
- ⁷ Rod Nordland. "[Taliban End Takeover of Kunduz after 15 Days.](#)" The New York Times. 13 October 2015.
- ⁸ BBC. "[Taliban Tighten Grip on Afghan City of Kunduz.](#)" 30 September 2015.
- ⁹ Hidayatullah Hamdard. "[Security Forces Retreat from Kunduz City's Bala Hisar.](#)" Pajhwok Afghan News. 30 September 2015.
- ¹⁰ Rod Nordland. "[Taliban End Takeover of Kunduz After 15 Days.](#)" The New York Times. 13 October 2015; Ayaz Gul and Fern Robinson. "[Taliban Seizes Kunduz, Afghanistan.](#)" Voice of America. 28 September 2015; Joseph Goldstein and Mujib Mashal. "[Taliban Fighters Capture Kunduz City As Afghan Forces Retreat.](#)" The New York Times. 28 September 2015; Lynne O'Donnell. "[The Taliban Takes over Kunduz.](#)" US News & World Report. 29 September 2015.
- ¹¹ Patricia Gossman. "[Afghanistan: After Kunduz.](#)" The Diplomat. 16 December 2015; Rod Nordland. "[Taliban End Takeover of Kunduz After 15 Days.](#)" The New York Times. 13 October 2015; Sune Engel Rasmussen. "[Taliban Capture Key Afghan Provincial Capital.](#)" The Guardian. 28 September 2015.
- ¹² Patricia Gossman. "[Afghanistan: After Kunduz.](#)" The Diplomat. 16 December 2015.
- ¹³ Krishnadev Calamur. "[The Fall of Kunduz.](#)" The Atlantic. 28 September 2015; Lynne O'Donnell. "[The Taliban Takes over Kunduz.](#)" US News & World Report. 29 September 2015.
- ¹⁴ Sune Engel Rasmussen. "[Taliban Capture Key Afghan Provincial Capital.](#)" The Guardian. 28 September 2015.
- ¹⁵ Gran Hewad. "[The 2015 Insurgency in the North \(4\): Surrounding the Cities in Baghlan.](#)" Afghanistan Analysts Network. 21 October 2015; Mirwais Harooni and Jessica Donati. "[Taliban Attack Airport after Seizing Northern Afghan City.](#)" Reuters. 29 September 2015; Alissa J. Rubin. "[Afghan Forces Rally in Kunduz, but Fight Is Far from Decided.](#)" The New York Times. 1 October 2015; Franz-Stefan Gady. "[Afghanistan: Offensive to Retake Kunduz Fails.](#)" The Diplomat. 30 September 2015.
- ¹⁶ Mirwais Harooni and Jessica Donati. "[Taliban Attack Airport after Seizing Northern Afghan City.](#)" Reuters. 29 September 2015.
- ¹⁷ BBC News. "[Kunduz Bombing: MSF Demands Afghan War Crimes Probe.](#)" 7 October 2015
- ¹⁸ Joseph Votel. "[Pentagon Releases Report on MSF Hospital Bombing in Kunduz.](#)" C-SPAN. 29 April 2016; Thomas Gibbons-Neff and Dan Lamothe. "[Pentagon: 2015 Strike on Doctors Without Borders Hospital in Afghanistan Was Not a War Crime.](#)" The Washington Post. 29 April 2016; Africa World News. "[Afghanistan: Air Strike Kills 'Doctors Without Borders' MSF Medical Staff.](#)" The African Nation. 3 October 2015.
- ¹⁹ Al Jazeera. "[Afghan Forces Battle to Retake Kunduz from Taliban.](#)" 29 September 2015.
- ²⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army. [Training Circular 7-100.2, Opposing Force Tactics](#). TRADOC G-2 Analysis and Control Element (ACE) Threats Integration. 9 December 2011. Section 4-112.

Threat Action Report



- ²¹ Paul Armstrong. [“Taliban Exit Afghan City of Kunduz but Claim Mission Was Successful.”](#) CNN. 14 October 2015; Wakil Kohsar. [“Afghan Forces Push into Kunduz City Captured by Taliban.”](#) Agence France-Presse. 1 October 2015.
- ²² “The Horn News. [“Afghan Army Engage in Fierce Street Fights Against Taliban,”](#) 1 October 2015; BBC. [“Afghan Taliban Attack: Fierce Clashes for Control of Kunduz.”](#) 2 October 2015.
- ²³ Rod Norland. [“Taliban End Takeover of Kunduz After 15 Days.”](#) The New York Times. 13 October 2015.
- ²⁴ Sudarsan Raghavan, [“Kunduz Faces Tough Resurrection after Brief Taliban Takeover.”](#) The Washington Post. 21 October 2015.
- ²⁵ Robert Mackey. [“Taliban Pose for Victory Selfies in Afghan City.”](#) The New York Times. 28 September 2015.
- ²⁶ Al Jazeera and the Associated Press. [“Afghan Troops Push into Kunduz as Taliban Retreat.”](#) Al Jazeera. 1 October 2015; Joseph Goldstein. [“Taliban Rout Afghan Forces, Take over Key Northern City.”](#) The Boston Globe. 28 September 2015.
- ²⁷ John J. Xenakis. [“World View: Afghan Taliban Capture Kunduz Has Major Repercussions for Central Asia.”](#) Breitbart. 29 September 2015.
- ²⁸ Deutsche Welle. [“How Taliban Use Social Media to Romanticize Kunduz’s Takeover.”](#) 30 September 2015.
- ²⁹ Ayaz Gul. [“Taliban Atrocities Alleged in Kunduz.”](#) Voice of America. 1 October 2015; BBC. [“Afghan Taliban Attack: Fears for Civilians in Kunduz.”](#) 2 October 2015; Deutsche Welle. [“Amnesty Condemns Taliban’s ‘Reign of Terror’ in Kunduz.”](#) 2 October 2015; Deutsche Welle. [“How Taliban Use Social Media to Romanticize Kunduz’s Takeover.”](#) 30 September 2015; Joseph Goldstein. [“Taking Hold in Kunduz, Afghanistan, New Taliban Echoed the Old.”](#) The New York Times. 1 October 2015.
- ³⁰ Reuters. [“Afghan Officials Say Govt Retakes Kunduz; Taliban Denies.”](#) Hindustan Times. 1 October 2015; ITV. [“Afghan Forces ‘Recapture Kunduz from Taliban’.”](#) 10 October 2015; Krishnadev Calamur. [“Kunduz Regained?”](#) The Atlantic. 1 October 2015.
- ³¹ Lynne O’Donnell. [“Afghan Troops Push into City of Kunduz, Taliban in Retreat.”](#) Associated Press. 1 October 2015.
- ³² Paul Armstrong. [“Taliban Exit Afghan City of Kunduz but Claim Mission Was Successful.”](#) CNN. 14 October 2015.
- ³³ Agence France-Presse. [“Taliban Announces Withdrawal from Afghanistan City of Kunduz.”](#) 14 October 2015.
- ³⁴ Paul Armstrong. [“Taliban Exit Afghan City of Kunduz but Claim Mission Was Successful.”](#) CNN. 14 October 2015.
- ³⁵ Najim Rahim and Fahim Abed. [“Afghan Troops Hold Off the Taliban in Kunduz.”](#) The New York Times. 20 August 2016; Al Jazeera. [“Taliban Seizes Khanabad in Afghanistan’s Kunduz.”](#) 20 August 2016; BBC. [“Afghan troops ‘retake Kunduz district from Taliban’.”](#) 20 August 2016.
- ³⁶ US CENTCOM FOIA Library. [“Airstrike on the MSF Trauma Center in Kunduz Afghanistan: 3 October 2015.”](#) 16 February 2016; US CENTCOM. [“Summary of the Airstrike on the MSF Trauma Center in Kunduz, Afghanistan on October 3, 2015: Investigation and Follow-on Actions.”](#) 16 February 2016.
- ³⁷ Brakkton Booker. [“Taliban Announces it Has Withdrawn from Afghan City of Kunduz.”](#) KUER. 13 October 2015; Human Rights Watch. [“Afghanistan: US Should Conduct Criminal Inquiry in MSF Attack.”](#) 21 December 2015.