

Department of Defense Contractor and Troop Levels in Iraq and Afghanistan: 2007-2014

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Introduction

This report provides background information for Congress on troop and contractor levels in the Department of Defense (DOD) in support of military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

For more information on DOD's use of contractors to support military operations, see CRS Report R43074, *Department of Defense's Use of Contractors to Support Military Operations: Background, Analysis, and Issues for Congress*, by Moshe Schwartz.

The Role of Contractors in Military Operations

Throughout its history, DOD has relied on contractors to support a wide range of military operations. Operations over the past 30 years have highlighted the critical role that contractors play in supporting U.S. troops—both in terms of the number of contractors and the type of work being performed. Over the last decade in Iraq and Afghanistan, and before that, in the Balkans, contractors averaged 50% or more of the total DOD force in country.

As of December 2014, there were approximately 40,000 DOD contractor personnel in Afghanistan, compared to 10,600 U.S. troops, with contract personnel representing 79% of the total DOD presence (see **Table 1**) in country.¹ Of the 40,000 DOD contractor personnel, approximately 1,500 were private security contractors (PSC) (see **Table 2**). Over the past eight fiscal years, DOD obligations for contracts performed in the greater Iraq and Afghanistan areas of operation were approximately \$215 billion in FY2015 dollars (see **Table 5**).²

A number of analysts have raised questions about the reliability of the data gathered by DOD. For a discussion on the reliability of historical data listed below, see CRS Report R40764, *Department of Defense Contractors in Afghanistan and Iraq: Background and Analysis*, by Moshe Schwartz and Joyprada Swain.

¹ Department of Defense, Contractor Support of U.S. Operations in the USCENTCOM Area of Responsibility to Include Iraq and Afghanistan, January 2015; Boots on Ground Report, February 2015.

² Iraq areas of operation are Iraq, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Jordan. Afghanistan areas of operation are Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

| | Troop Levels | Total Contractors | U.S. Nationals Contractors | Foreign and Host Country National Contractors |
|------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Sept. 2007 | 24,500 | 29,473 | 3,387 | 26,086 |
| Dec. 2007 | 24,600 | 36,520 | 5,153 | 31,367 |
| Mar. 2008 | 28,800 | 52,336 | 4,220 | 48,116 |
| June 2008 | 34,000 | 41,232 | 4,724 | 36,508 |
| Sept. 2008 | 33,500 | 68,252 | 5,405 | 62,847 |
| Dec. 2008 | 32,500 | 71,755 | 5,960 | 65,795 |
| Mar. 2009 | 52,300 | 68,197 | 9,378 | 58,819 |
| June 2009 | 55,107 | 73,968 | 10,036 | 62,932 |
| Sept. 2009 | 63,950 | 104,101 | 9,322 | 94,779 |
| Dec. 2009 | 69,000 | 107,292 | 10,016 | 97,276 |
| Mar. 2010 | 79,100 | 112,092 | 16,081 | 96,011 |
| June 2010 | 93,800 | 107,479 | 19,103 | 88,376 |
| Sept. 2010 | 96,600 | 70,599 | 20,874 | 49,725 |
| Dec. 2010 | 96,900 | 87,483 | 19,381 | 68,102 |
| Mar. 2011 | 99,800 | 90,339 | 20,413 | 69,926 |
| June 2011 | 98,900 | 93,118 | 23,294 | 69,824 |
| Sept. 2011 | 98,200 | 101,789 | 23,190 | 78,599 |
| Dec. 2011 | 94,100 | 3,49 | 25,287 | 88,204 |
| Mar. 2012 | 88,200 | 117,227 | 34,765 | 82,462 |
| June 2012 | 85,600 | 113,736 | 30,568 | 83,168 |
| Sept. 2012 | 76,500 | 109,564 | 31,814 | 77,750 |
| Dec. 2012 | 65,800 | 110,404 | 33,444 | 76,960 |
| Mar. 2013 | 65,700 | 107,796 | 33,107 | 74,689 |
| June 2013 | 61,300 | 101,855 | 32,442 | 69,413 |
| Sept. 2013 | 55,800 | 85,528 | 27,188 | 58,340 |
| Dec. 2013 | 43,300 | 78,136, | 23,763 | 54,373 |
| Mar. 2014 | 33,200 | 61,452 | 20,865 | 40,587 |
| June 2014 | 31,400 | 51,489 | 17,404 | 34,085 |
| Sept. 2014 | 27,800 | 45,349 | 17,477 | 27,872 |
| Dec. 2014 | 10,600 | 39,609 | 14,222 | 25,387 |

Table I. DOD Contractor Personnel and Troop Levels in Afghanistan (September 2007-December 2014)

Source: CENTCOM Quarterly Census Reports and "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports to Congress.

Note: DOD did not begin releasing data on contractors in CENTCOM until the second half of 2007.

| | Troop Levels | Total PSCs ^a | U.S. National PSCs | Foreign and Host Country National PSCs | |
|------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| Sept. 2007 | 24,500 | | _ | _ | |
| Dec. 2007 | 24,600 | _ | _ | _ | |
| Mar. 2008 | 28,800 | 6,982 | 167 | 6,815 | |
| June 2008 | 34,000 | 3,537 | 5 | 3,532 | |
| Sept. 2008 | 33,500 | 3,847 | 9 | 3,838 | |
| Dec. 2008 | 32,500 | 3,689 | 15 | 3,674 | |
| Mar. 2009 | 52,300 | 4,373 | 17 | 4,356 | |
| June 2009 | 55,107 | 5,198 | 19 | 5,179 | |
| Sept. 2009 | 63,950 | 11,423 | 76 | 11,347 | |
| Dec. 2009 | 69,000 | 14,439 | 114 | 14,325 | |
| Mar. 2010 | 79,100 | 16,733 | 140 | 16,593 | |
| June 2010 | 93,800 | 17,932 | 152 | 17,780 | |
| Sept. 2010 | 96,600 | 18,869 | 197 | 18,672 | |
| Dec. 2010 | 96,900 | 18,919 | 250 | 18,669 | |
| Mar. 2011 | 99,800 | 18,971 | 250 | 18,721 | |
| June 2011 | 98,900 | 15,305 | 693 | 14,612 | |
| Sept. 2011 | 98,200 | 21,544 | 603 | 20,941 | |
| Dec. 2011 | 94,100 | 20,375 | 570 | 19,805 | |
| Mar. 2012 | 88,200 | 26,612 | 519 | 26,093 | |
| June 2012 | 85,600 | 28,686 | 480 | 28,206 | |
| Sept. 2012 | 76,500 | 18,914 | 2,014 | I 6,850 | |
| Dec. 2012 | 65,800 | 19,414 | 2,094 | 17,320 | |
| Mar. 2013 | 65,700 | 17,993 | 1,378 | 16,615 | |
| June 2013 | 61,300 | 16,218 | 873 | 15,345 | |
| Sept. 2013 | 55,800 | 14,056 | 844 | 13,212 | |
| Dec. 2013 | 43,300 | 11,332 | I,007 | 10,325 | |
| Mar. 2014 | 33,200 | 5,591 | 641 | 4,950 | |
| June 2014 | 31,400 | 3,177 | 424 | 2,753 | |
| Sept. 2014 | 27,800 | 2,472 | 252 | 2,220 | |
| Dec. 2014 | 10,600 | 1,511 | 317 | 1,194 | |

Table 2. DOD PSC Personnel and Troop Levels in Afghanistan

(September 2007-December 2014)

Source: CENTCOM Quarterly Census Reports and "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports to Congress.

Notes: DOD did not begin releasing data on PSC personnel levels within Afghanistan until March 2008.

a. Includes most subcontractors and service contractors, armed and unarmed, hired by prime contractors under DOD contracts.

| | Troop Levels | Total Contractors | U.S. National Contractors | Foreign and Host Country National Contractors | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| Sept. 2007 | 169,000 | 154,825 | 26,869 | 127,956 | |
| Dec. 2007 | 165,700 | 163,591 | 31,325 | 132,266 | |
| Mar. 2008 | 160,500 | 149,378 | 29,35 I | 120,027 | |
| June 2008 | 153,300 | 162,428 | 29,611 | 132,817 | |
| Sept. 2008 | 146,800 | 163,446 | 28,045 | 135,401 | |
| Dec. 2008 | 148,500 | 148,050 | 39,262 | 108,788 | |
| Mar. 2009 | 141,300 | 132,610 | 36,061 | 96,549 | |
| June 2009 | 134,571 | 119,706 | 31,541 | 88,165 | |
| Sept. 2009 | 130,000 | 3,73 | 29,944 | 83,787 | |
| Dec. 2009 | 114,300 | 100,035 | 27,843 | 72,192 | |
| Mar. 2010 | 95,900 | 95,461 | 24,719 | 70,742 | |
| June 2010 | 88,320 | 79,621 | 22,761 | 56,860 | |
| Sept. 2010 | 48,410 | 74,106 | 20,981 | 53,125 | |
| Dec. 2010 | 47,305 | 71,142 | 19,943 | 51,199 | |
| Mar. 2011 | 45,660 | 64,253 | 18,393 | 45,860 | |
| June 2011 | 46,010 | 62,689 | 18,900 | 43,789 | |
| Sept. 2011 | 44,755 | 52,637 | 16,054 | 36,583 | |
| Dec. 2011ª | 11,445 | 23,886 | 11,237 | 12,649 | |
| Mar. 2012ª | _ | 10,967 | 3,260 | 7,707 | |
| June 2012ª | _ | 7,336 | 2,493 | 4,843 | |
| Sept. 2012ª | _ | 9,000 | 2,314 | 6,686 | |
| Dec. 2012ª | _ | 8,449 | 2,356 | 6,093 | |
| Mar. 2013ª | _ | 7,905 | 2,125 | 5,780 | |
| June 2013ª | _ | 7,735 | 1,898 | 5,837 | |
| Sept. 2013ª | _ | 6,624 | 1,626 | 4,998 | |
| Dec. 2013ª | _ | 3,234 | 820 | 2,414 | |

Table 3. DOD Contractor Personnel and Troop Levels in Iraq (September 2007-December 2013)

Source: CENTCOM Quarterly Census Reports and "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports to Congress.

Notes: DOD did not begin releasing data on contractors in CENTCOM until the second half of 2007, and ceased reporting data on DOD contractor personnel in Iraq in December 2013.

Following the conclusion of the U.S. combat mission in Iraq in December 2011, the "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports ceased providing separate troop levels for Iraq. However, a residual U.S. force remained in county to provide embassy security and security cooperation assistance. In 2014, in response to the military successes of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), additional U.S. military personnel were assigned to Iraq as observers and trainers for the Iraqi Armed Forces.

a. Includes DOD contractors supporting U.S. Mission Iraq and Office of Security Cooperation Iraq.

| | | | | Foreign and Host Country National | |
|------------|--------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| | Troop Levels | Total PSC s ^a | U.S. National PSCs | PSCs | |
| Sept. 2007 | 169,000 | — | — | _ | |
| Dec. 2007 | 165,700 | 9,952 | 830 | 9,122 | |
| Mar. 2008 | 160,500 | 7,259 | 515 | 6,744 | |
| June 2008 | 153,300 | 7,704 | 1,540 | 6,164 | |
| Sept. 2008 | 146,800 | 10,446 | 886 ^b | 9,560 | |
| Dec. 2008 | 148,500 | 9,218 | 727 ^b | 8,436 | |
| Mar. 2009 | 141,300 | 12,942 | 681 | 12,261 | |
| June 2009 | 134,571 | 15,279 | 802 | 14,477 | |
| Sept. 2009 | 130,000 | I 2,684 | 670 | 12,014 | |
| Dec. 2009 | 114,300 | 11,095 | 776 | 10,319 | |
| Mar. 2010 | 95,900 | 11,610 | 1,081 | 10,529 | |
| June 2010 | 88,320 | 11,413 | 1,030 | 10,383 | |
| Sept. 2010 | 48,410 | 11,628 | 1,017 | 10,611 | |
| Dec. 2010 | 47,305 | 8,327 | 791 | 7,536 | |
| Mar. 2011 | 45,660 | 9,207 | 917 | 8,290 | |
| June 2011 | 46,010 | 10,414 | 935 | 9,479 | |
| Sept. 2011 | 44,755 | 9,554 | 844 | 8,710 | |
| Dec. 2011 | 11,445 | 8,995 | 751 | 8,244 | |
| Mar. 2012 | _ | 3,577 | 288 | 3,289 | |
| June 2012 | _ | 2,407 | 116 | 2,291 | |
| Sept. 2012 | _ | 2,116 | 102 | 2,014 | |
| Dec. 2012 | _ | 2,281 | 235 | 2,046 | |
| Mar. 2013 | _ | 2,359 | 259 | 2,100 | |
| June 2013 | _ | 2,148 | 217 | 1,931 | |
| Sept. 2013 | _ | 2,409 | 147 | 2,262 | |

Table 4. DOD PSC Personnel and Troop Levels in Iraq

(September 2007-September 2013)

Source: CENTCOM Quarterly Census Reports and "Boots on the Ground" monthly reports to Congress.

Notes: DOD did not begin releasing data on PSC personnel levels in CENTCOM until December 2007, and ceased reporting data on DOD PSC personnel in Iraq in September 2013. See **Table 3** for further discussion of U.S. troop levels in Iraq since December 2011.

- a. Includes most subcontractors and service contractors, armed and unarmed, hired by prime contractors under DOD contracts.
- b. CENTCOM Quarterly Census Reports from September 2008 and December 2008 also included Coalition personnel in the reported totals of U.S. PSC personnel.

| | | FY2007 | FY2008 | FY2009 | FY2010 | FY2011 | FY2012 | FY2013 | FY2014 | Total |
|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Iraq Theater | Iraq | \$14,418,984,598 | \$17,179,224,801 | 10,393,927,137 | \$7,744,927,647 | \$5,120,478,380 | \$605,967,682 | \$526,941,419 | \$69,106,272 | \$56,059,557,93 |
| | Bahrain | 578,237,988 | 1,273,362,413 | 2,152,284,192 | 597,903,874 | 515,958,188 | 331,965,002 | 866,735,405 | 207,986,147 | 6,524,433,209 |
| | Kuwait | 4,892,672,002 | 4,712,302,313 | 5,718,484,773 | 4,955,382,926 | 3,905,527,319 | 2,562,622,784 | 3,078,668,866 | 1,766,331,986 | 31,591,992,97 |
| | Qatar | 317,593,274 | 448,159,323 | 870,790,222 | 344,833,195 | 824,216,055 | 854,299,424 | 405,269,426 | 171,843,321 | 4,237,004,24 |
| | Saudi Arabia | 206,780,470 | 358,879,938 | 971,859,274 | 791,265,876 | 294,763,138 | 558,937,253 | 939,427,647 | 1,222,026,823 | 5,343,940,419 |
| | Turkey | 369,077,787 | 184,526,776 | 306,280,173 | 140,545,007 | 182,299,190 | 280,896,896 | 187,867,519 | 180,721,947 | 1,832,215,29 |
| | UAE | 256,585,844 | 1,266,959,336 | 300,384,114 | 2,612,062,529 | 1,039,096,756 | 1,439,826,891 | 2,236,882,688 | 1,717,422,417 | 10,869,220,57 |
| | Oman | 92,573,656 | 102,710,852 | 83,806,356 | 123,512,497 | 139,382,545 | 210,600,465 | 224,343,954 | 104,187,867 | 1,081,118,192 |
| | Jordan | 82,325,718 | 88,153,188 | 14,552,136 | 13,508,498 | 39,223,115 | 53,140,014 | 173,624,808 | 164,418,350 | 628,945,82 |
| | Total Iraq Theater | 21,214,831,336 | 25,614,278,939 | 20,812,368,378 | 17,323,942,050 | 12,060,944,688 | 6,898,256,411 | 8,639,761,731 | 5,604,045,130 | 1 18, 168, 428, 66 |
| Afghanistan Theater | Afghanistan | 3,731,701,987 | 6,755,707,881 | 8,055,859,632 | 12,833,666,909 | 17,744,487,919 | 18,960,225,954 | 14,608,564,108 | 6,084,225,214 | 88,774,439,60 |
| | Kazakhstan | 5,950,300 | 29,471,833 | 47,216,635 | 65,041,837 | 73,797,554 | 77,023,003 | 91,733,604 | 55,091,189 | 445,325,95 |
| | Kyrgyzstan | 419,235,732 | 19,885,188 | 367,855,438 | 131,613,936 | 889,060,715 | 1,951,004,664 | 1,983,521,912 | 655,342,129 | 6,417,519,71 |
| | Pakistan | 73,130,509 | 230,182,015 | 249,444,591 | 176,123,388 | 63,809,068 | 16,975,334 | -3,579,388 | 20,827,510 | 826,913,02 |
| | Tajikistan | 0 | 12,450 | 1,070,207 | 3,724,176 | 3,476,626 | 8,705,935 | 9,074,121 | 7,171,476 | 33,234,99 |
| | Turkmenistan | 440,413 | 18,917,328 | 9,076,647 | 23,755,574 | 10,245,183 | 4,359,512 | 13,694,025 | 1,413,830 | 81,902,51 |
| | Uzbekistan | 13,687,920 | 15,744,936 | 9,727,406 | 22,303,767 | 16,120,951 | 23,370,798 | 18,720,497 | 21,225,757 | 140,902,03 |
| Total | Afghanistan Theater | 4,244,146,861 | 7,069,921,632 | 8,740,250,556 | 13,256,229,587 | 18,800,998,017 | 21,041,665,201 | 16,721,728,878 | 6,845,297,104 | 96,720,237,83 |
| Total Iraq | and Afghanistan | 25,458,978,198 | 32,684,200,570 | 29,552,618,933 | 30,580,171,636 | 30,861,942,705 | 27,939,921,612 | 25,361,490,610 | 12,449,342,234 | 214,888,666,49 |

Table 5. DOD Contract Obligations in Iraq and Afghanistan Theaters of Operation

(FY2007-FY2014; in FY2015 dollars)

Source: Federal Procurement Data System, as of July 2015 for FY2007-FY2014 data; CRS adjustments for inflation using deflators for converting into constant dollars derived from Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Department of Defense, *National Defense Budget Estimates for FY2015*, "Department of Defense Deflators – TOA By Category 'Total Non-Pay," Table 5-5, p. 56-57, April 2014.

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