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

**Heidi M. Peters, Coordinator**

Information Research Specialist

**Moshe Schwartz**

Specialist in Defense Acquisition

**Lawrence Kapp**

Specialist in Military Manpower Policy

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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.<sup>1</sup> 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**).<sup>2</sup>

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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

	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	113,491	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

**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.

**Table 2. DOD PSC Personnel and Troop Levels in Afghanistan**  
(September 2007-December 2014)

	Troop Levels	Total PSCs <sup>a</sup>	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	16,850
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	1,007	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

**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.

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

	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	29,351	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	113,731	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. 2011 <sup>a</sup>	11,445	23,886	11,237	12,649
Mar. 2012 <sup>a</sup>	—	10,967	3,260	7,707
June 2012 <sup>a</sup>	—	7,336	2,493	4,843
Sept. 2012 <sup>a</sup>	—	9,000	2,314	6,686
Dec. 2012 <sup>a</sup>	—	8,449	2,356	6,093
Mar. 2013 <sup>a</sup>	—	7,905	2,125	5,780
June 2013 <sup>a</sup>	—	7,735	1,898	5,837
Sept. 2013 <sup>a</sup>	—	6,624	1,626	4,998
Dec. 2013 <sup>a</sup>	—	3,234	820	2,414

**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 country 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.

**Table 4. DOD PSC Personnel and Troop Levels in Iraq**  
(September 2007-September 2013)

	Troop Levels	Total PSCs <sup>a</sup>	U.S. National PSCs	Foreign and Host Country National 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 <sup>b</sup>	9,560
Dec. 2008	148,500	9,218	727 <sup>b</sup>	8,436
Mar. 2009	141,300	12,942	681	12,261
June 2009	134,571	15,279	802	14,477
Sept. 2009	130,000	12,684	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

**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.

**Table 5. DOD Contract Obligations in Iraq and Afghanistan Theaters of Operation**  
(FY2007-FY2014; in FY2015 dollars)

		<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2011</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Iraq Theater</b>	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	\$56,059,557,935
	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	31,591,992,970
	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	4,237,004,240
	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	1,832,215,296
	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	10,869,220,575
	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	628,945,828
<i>Total Iraq Theater</i>		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	118,168,428,662
<b>Afghanistan Theater</b>	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	88,774,439,604
	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	445,325,957
	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	6,417,519,714
	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	826,913,026
	Tajikistan	0	12,450	1,070,207	3,724,176	3,476,626	8,705,935	9,074,121	7,171,476	33,234,991
	Turkmenistan	440,413	18,917,328	9,076,647	23,755,574	10,245,183	4,359,512	13,694,025	1,413,830	81,902,512
	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	140,902,033
<i>Total Afghanistan Theater</i>		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	96,720,237,836
<b>Total Iraq and Afghanistan</b>		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	214,888,666,498



**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.

## **Author Contact Information**

Heidi M. Peters, Coordinator  
Information Research Specialist  
hpeters@crs.loc.gov, 7-0702

Moshe Schwartz  
Specialist in Defense Acquisition  
mschwartz@crs.loc.gov, 7-1463

Lawrence Kapp  
Specialist in Military Manpower Policy  
lkapp@crs.loc.gov, 7-7609