

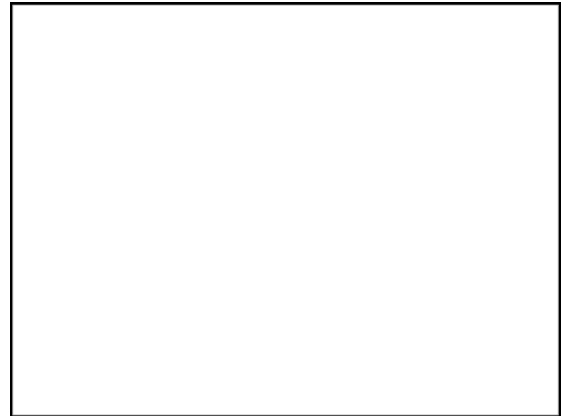


## **(S//REL) Innovative 'Super Sized' SIGINT Facility Opens in Afghanistan**

FROM: [REDACTED]  
Afghanistan/Pakistan Mission Management Team (AF/PAK MMT)  
Run Date: 11/06/2009

(S//REL) The Afghanistan Regional Operations Cryptologic Center (A-ROCC) officially stood up 1 on 5 October, the first step towards developing it as a SIGINT processing center providing linguistic and threat-warning support to US and Coalition forces throughout the country.

(S//SI//REL) Located in Bagram, Afghanistan, the A-ROCC will be a unique facility when completed in winter 2010: a true center of national/tactical integration and a model for Second and Third Party partnerships. The A-ROCC will combine state-of-the-art capabilities and tools with a first-class facility, home to over 250 SIGINTers (120 of whom will be linguists) and configured for sustained 24/7 operations in a combat area. Already there are US, UK, and French personnel working side-by-side to execute the most important SIGINT priorities of GEN McChrystal, the ISAF Commander. At completion, they will be joined by personnel from Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Denmark, and possibly the Netherlands.



### **(U) Why the Expansion?**

(S//REL) The build-out of the A-ROCC is part of the Afghanistan strategic shift; as the number of Coalition forces has increased, the need for SIGINT support has risen as well. There has been a "ROCC" in place since 2005 supporting primarily ISAF's Regional Command - East, but the A-ROCC takes this concept and "super sizes" it to include a more robust air mission element, mission-management functions, Coalition partners, and double the amount of available linguists. This upgrade will provide the additional SIGINT processing, exploitation, and dissemination (PED) capacity we need.

### **(U) Collection**

(S//SI//REL) Collection will come from numerous tactical and national platforms. The ISR-Task Force 2 is sending at least 35 new SIGINT air platforms to Afghanistan, and the A-ROCC will be responsible for providing the language translation, transcription and tactical reporting for that collection. Additionally, numerous ground-based VHF/UHF platforms and insurgent GSM/VoiceSail communications will be prosecuted at the A-ROCC. The intent is eventually to process collection from Second and Third Party systems at the A-ROCC, as well. The resultant reporting will be disseminated in some appropriate form to the 43 countries that comprise ISAF.

### **(U) Innovative IT Systems and Sharing Policies**

(S//REL) The information technology that allows nine SIGINT coalition nations to work together as one will be unique within the Intelligence Community. It has been designed specifically for the A-ROCC and protects each nation's equities. The software allowing tippers to be pushed to users (most of whom may have access only to ISAF SECRET systems) is also a change to the way SIGINT has been pushed to customers in the past. It has required heroic efforts from NSA organizations 3 to create the necessary filters to provide as much information as possible to our customers, as safely as possible.

(S//SI//REL) Fundamentally, SID has had to make major policy decisions that have changed the

way we collaborate with our partners. Who could have imagined even a year ago that a French linguist, using US collection sources, would be providing tactical support for operations being carried out by Polish forces on behalf of ISAF?

**(U) Logistical Feat**

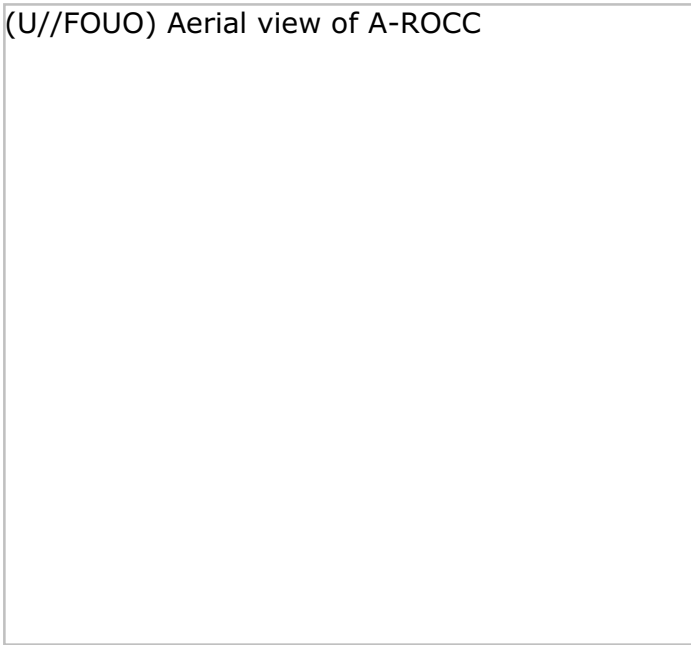
(U//FOUO) Getting the A-ROCC facilities to this point has been a huge accomplishment, as well. One of three planned mission buildings is completed and occupied. Housing facilities, a small MWR facility, a fitness facility and other support structures had to be completed as well. All the material used to construct the buildings, and all of their contents, had to be moved by air or by sea and land from the US to Bagram. Building a facility in the US can be difficult enough, but building a facility in a war zone in the middle of a major troop increase adds not a small degree of difficulty -- the first thing that had to be done was to clear away unexploded ordinance, including a 500lb bomb found in the area during construction.

(U//FOUO) Building 17,000 square feet of office space required more than 1 million pounds of material, shipped directly to Bagram Airfield on six Boeing 747s. In addition, twenty-eight housing units, a laundry and three latrine units were shipped by sea to Karachi, Pakistan, and then transported overland via the Khyber Pass to Bagram. The final result provides protected office space for more than 240 A-ROCC personnel, housing for 224, connection to base power, back-up generators, and HVAC and chillers. [4](#)

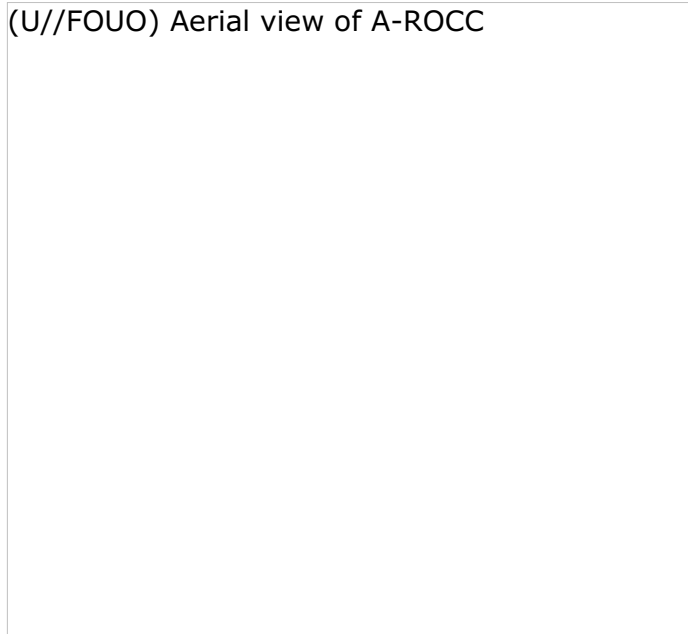
**(U) Kudos!**

(U//FOUO) This was truly a team effort working under demanding conditions and short timelines. The A-ROCC was not contracted out as a turnkey operation, so many unsung people [5](#) stepped up to get this facility delivered and operational by 5 October. It was truly a feat of willpower across the entire enterprise to get to this point, and we pass our thanks to all of them.

(U//FOUO) Aerial view of A-ROCC

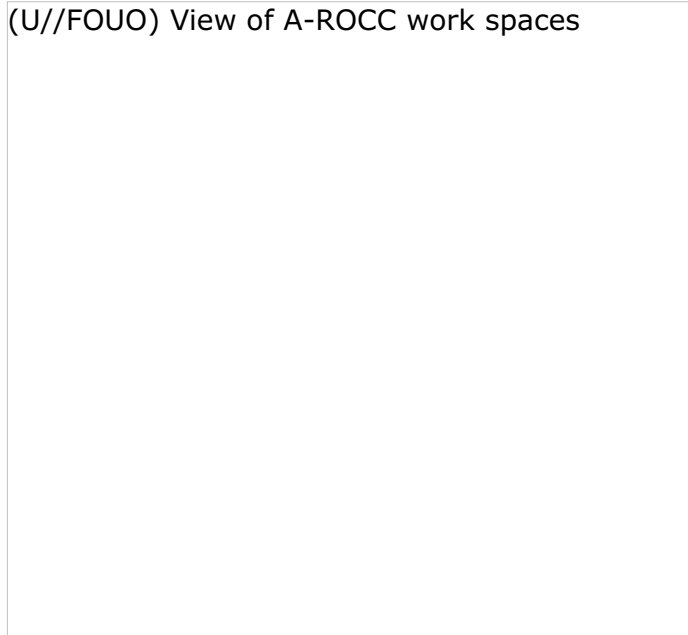


(U//FOUO) Aerial view of A-ROCC

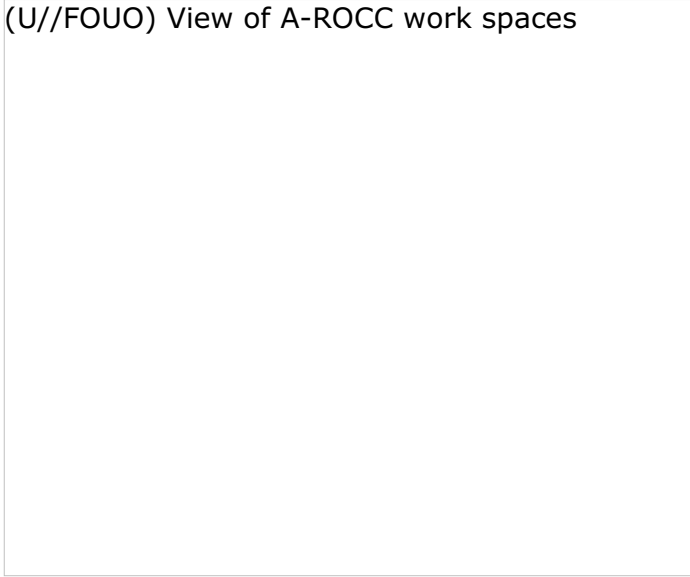


***Photographs are classified U//FOUO; click for larger view.***

(U//FOUO) View of A-ROCC work spaces



(U//FOUO) View of A-ROCC work spaces



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(U) Notes:

1. (U) I.e., it achieved initial operational capability (IOC).
2. (U//FOUO) Secretary Gates chartered an Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Task Force (ISR-TF) to rapidly develop and field improved ISR capabilities to the warfighter in Iraq and Afghanistan.
3. (U//FOUO) NSA's Enterprise Information Technology (T3), MINUTEMAN (S3314), and Information Assurance Directorate all contributed greatly to this effort.
4. (U) The work by Facilities in getting the site prepared and the building built represents a major achievement to enable mission success.
5. (U//FOUO) These heroes work in the areas of mission planning, finance, contracting, facilities, ITD, SID, and NCR CENTCOM and NCR Afghanistan.

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