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Soviet Long-Range Communications in  
Afghanistan (S)

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## **SOVIET LONG-RANGE COMMUNICATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN (S)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. Imagery from  shows that the Soviets have established an extensive communications network in Afghanistan to facilitate long-range command and control between the army-level command elements in Kabul, subordinate units throughout the country, and command authorities in the Soviet Union. Because of the mountainous terrain and the distance between installations in Afghanistan, reliance on satellite and troposcatter communications is heavy. The Soviets have also combined satellite, troposcatter, and high-frequency (HF) communications to ensure reliable contact among most major facilities. This report delineates the types and deployment patterns of equipment used. It includes one annotated map, three annotated photographs, and one table which lists all known Soviet long-range communications facilities in Afghanistan and equipment present at these facilities. (S/WN)

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### **DESCRIPTION**

2. Soviet long-range communications in Afghanistan link regimental and division headquarters with the 40th Army Headquarters in Kabul and with other command authorities in the Soviet Union (Figure 1).<sup>1</sup> These communications nets use PARK DRIVE and WOOD BINE satellite communications sets; TWIN DISH, TWIN PLATE, modified TWIN PLATE, TWIN EAR A, and TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted troposcatter communications sets; and HF antenna fields (Table 1). Satellite communications systems are also used by all division headquarters as well as 40th Army Headquarters (Figure 2). Additionally, four motorized rifle regiments are equipped with WOOD BINE sets, indicating that these units may act as independent regiments (satellite communications equipment is normally used only by division- and high-level echelons). (S/WN)

3. Troposcatter communications equipment is widely used for Soviet long-range communications in Afghanistan. A major TWIN DISH/TWIN PLATE/modified TWIN PLATE troposcatter communications net links Kabul in Afghanistan with Termez—a major Soviet border transshipment point—via Pol-E Khomri (Figure 3), which serves as a troposcatter relay position. A TWIN DISH link also extends between Termez and Kunduz (Qonduz) in Afghanistan. TWIN EAR troposcatter links are also used extensively to join high- and low-level echelon units and to connect these units to the main Kabul-Termez troposcatter net. In addition, a TWIN EAR A and a TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted link connect Kushka, another Soviet border point, via Herat, with Shindand, in western Afghanistan. A TWIN EAR A link also connects Herat and Shindand (Figure 4). The Soviets have also constructed HF antenna fields at installations in the Kabul area. (S/WN)

4. The use of various combinations of satellite, troposcatter, and HF communications at most major Soviet deployments provides redundant communications links between these facilities. Some units, however, such as those at Kandahar (Qandahar) and Ghazni, both in Afghanistan, do not appear to have redundant communications links and may utilize tactical communications equipment with relays or existing Afghan equipment for backup communications. (S/WN)



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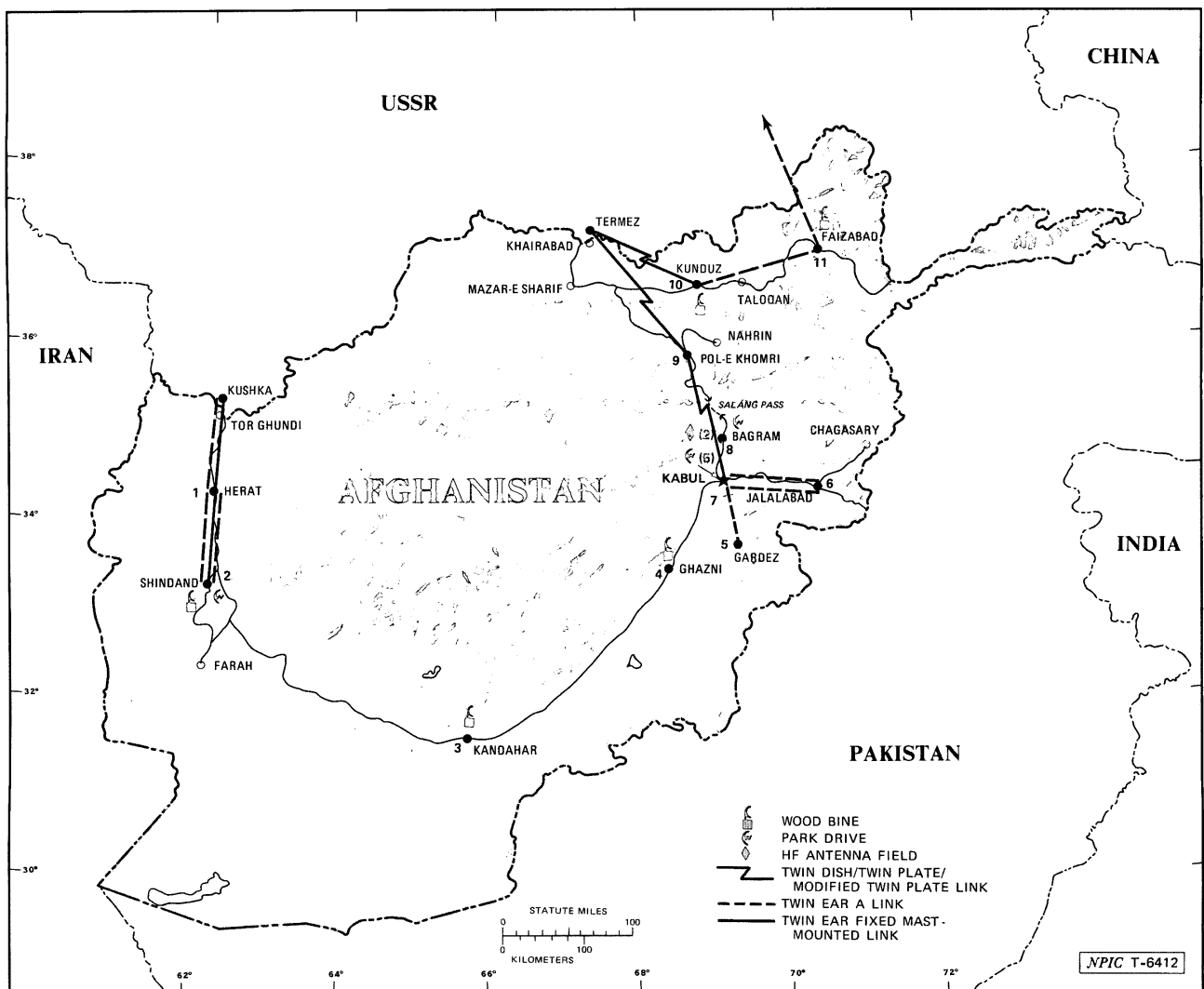


FIGURE 1. SOVIET LONG-RANGE COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS IN AFGHANISTAN

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**Table 1.**  
**Soviet Long-Range Communications Equipment in Afghanistan**

Item	Facility/BE No./ Coordinates	Equipment	Remarks**	
1	Herat R-412 Tropo Site 5 [redacted] 34-11-17N 062-13-42E	Three TWIN EAR A; two TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted	One TWIN EAR A and one TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted oriented north toward Kushka; two TWIN EAR A and one TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted oriented south toward Shindand	25X1
2	Shindand Deployment Area [redacted] 33-25-10N 062-18-14E	One WOOD BINE;* two TWIN EAR A; one TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted	WOOD BINE and TWIN EAR are in the 5th Motorized Rifle Division (MRD) Hq. area. TWIN EAR A and TWIN EAR fixed mast-mounted oriented north toward Herat	25X1
	Shindand Airfield [redacted] 33-23-25N 062-15-20E	One PARK DRIVE*	PARK DRIVE associated with the Soviet FROGFOOT A squadron	25X1
3	Kandahar Soviet MRR Bivouac [redacted] 31-29-35N 065-52-20E	One WOOD BINE*	Existing Afghan HF antenna fields may also be utilized by the Soviets	25X1
4	Ghazni Soviet Military Camp SE [redacted] 33-29-40N 068-30-00E	One WOOD BINE*	One R-409 radio relay set near the WOOD BINE, in conjunction with a relay site, could be used as a backup communications system	25X1
5	Gardez New Airfield [redacted] 33-36-45N 069-12-21E	One TWIN EAR A	TWIN EAR A oriented north toward Kabul	25X1
6	Jalalabad Army Camp Soviet Bivouac 3 [redacted] 34-22-30N 070-35-49E	One WOOD BINE,* two TWIN EAR A	TWIN EAR A oriented west toward Kabul	25X1
7	Kabul Deployment Area SW [redacted] 34-27-45N 069-05-10E	Four PARK DRIVE,* HF antenna field	The four PARK DRIVE probably support 40th Army Hq.; a fifth PARK DRIVE is sometimes present; HF antenna field consists of two fishbone 2-2-2 and two quadrant antennas; extra troposcatter communications sets stored there	25X1
	Kabul Soviet Commo Site [redacted] 34-33-21N 069-03-13E	Two TWIN DISH sets, two Modified TWIN PLATE sets, two TWIN EAR A	TWIN DISH and modified TWIN PLATE sets oriented north toward Pol-E Khomri; one TWIN EAR A oriented east toward Jalalabad; one TWIN EAR A oriented south toward Gardez	25X1
	Kabul Deployment Area NW [redacted] 34-34-28N 069-06-30E	HF antenna field	HF antenna field consists of two frequency diverse pairs of double rhombic, eight quadrant, and six probable horizontal dipole antennas	25X1
	Kabul Communications Satellite A Radcom Sta [redacted] 34-31-48N 069-11-23E	One PARK DRIVE*	PARK DRIVE have been observed temporarily deployed there several times since 1978	25X1
8	Bagram Soviet Barracks Area [redacted] 34-55-45N 069-15-01E	One PARK DRIVE*	PARK DRIVE is associated with 108th MRD Hq.	25X1
9	Pol-E Khomri Sov Deployment Area [redacted] 35-52-14N 068-47-30E	Four TWIN DISH sets, four modified TWIN PLATE sets, one TWIN PLATE set	Two TWIN DISH sets and three modified TWIN PLATE sets oriented north toward Termez; two TWIN DISH sets, one modified TWIN PLATE set, and one TWIN PLATE set oriented south toward Kabul; equipment on ridgeline 2 nm WNW of the installation at 35-53-00N 068-45-45E	25X1
10	Kunduz Airfield [redacted] 36-39-38N 068-54-33E	One WOOD BINE,* one TWIN DISH set, one TWIN EAR A	WOOD BINE is in the 201st MRD Hq. area; TWIN DISH set oriented NW toward Termez; the TWIN EAR A oriented east toward Faizabad	25X1
11	Faizabad Airfield [redacted] 37-07-05N 070-31-15E	One WOOD BINE,* two TWIN EAR A	One TWIN EAR A oriented west toward Kunduz; one TWIN EAR A oriented north toward the USSR; TWIN EAR are on a hill 3 nm east of the airfield at 37-06-15N 070-34-20E	25X1

\*The orientation of WOOD BINE and PARK DRIVE SETS could not be accurately determined at these facilities.

\*\*Unit Designators are taken from Reference Document 1.

*This table in its entirety is classified SECRET/WNINTEL*

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**IMAGERY**

All applicable satellite imagery acquired from January 1980 through [redacted] was used in the preparation of this report. (S/WN)

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**DOCUMENT**

- 1. DIA. DDB-1100-UR-81, *Ground Order of Battle: USSR (U)*, Jan 81 (SECRET/NOFORN/WNINTEL\*)

\*Extracted information is releasable to [redacted]

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**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

NPIC IAR-0032/82-1, *Upgrading of Communications Network between USSR and Afghanistan*, Jun 1982

[redacted]

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DIA, DIAIAPPR 57-82, *USSR: Command and Control Communications Below Army Level (U)*, 25 May 1982 (SECRET/NOFORN/WNINTEL)

Comments and queries regarding this report are welcome. They may be directed to [redacted]

[redacted]

Third World Forces Division, Imagery Exploitation Group, NPIC, [redacted]

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