

GLOSSARY FOR *FIRST CASUALTY: THE UNTOLD*

STORY OF THE CIA MISSION TO AVENGE 9/11.

AC-130: American helicopter gunship based on the C-130 Hercules transport plane. First used in Vietnam in 1967.

AK-47: *Avtomat Kalashnikova 1947*, or Automatic Kalashnikov Rifle, developed by Mikhail Kalashnikov for the Soviet Union in 1947.

AKM: *Avtomat Kalashnikova Modernizirovanniy*, or Kalashnikov Automatic Rifle Modernized.

AKMS: *Avtomat Kalashnikova Modernizirovanniy Skladnoy*, or Kalashnikov Automatic Rifle Modernized Folding. Issued to Team Alpha at CIA headquarters. An AKMS rifle with counterfeit Chinese markings was found in Osama bin Laden's compound in Abbottabad, where he was shot dead by US Navy SEALs in May 2011; that rifle is now in the CIA Museum. Mike Spann's AKMS, which he, and subsequently David Tyson, fired at Qala-i Jangi is also in the museum.

AKSU-74: *Avtomat Kalashnikova Skladnoy Ukorochenniy 1974*, or Kalashnikov Automatic Rifle Folding, Shortened 1974.

Alec station: The Bin Laden Issue Station, based inside CTC in CIA headquarters. Named after the son of its first chief, Michael Scheuer. Founded in 1996, its role was to track Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. Some twenty-five people worked there on 9/11 under Rich Blee, chief since June 1999.

Al-Qaeda: Arabic for *The Base*. An Islamic fundamentalist network founded by Osama bin Laden in Peshawar, Pakistan, in 1988. Responsible for Africa embassy bombings (1998), attack on USS *Cole* (2000), 9/11 terrorist attacks.

ANGLICO: Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company. A Marine Corps unit tasked with calling in air strikes and *artillery*. Mike Spann had been a member.

ARSOF: Army Special Operations Forces.

AWACS: Airborne Warning and Control System.

Bingo: Phrase used by aviators upon reaching minimum fuel needed to return to base.

Black Hawk: US Army's UH-60, a four-bladed, twin-engine, medium-lift utility helicopter.

BLU-82: A 15,000-pound conventional bomb used by US forces since Vietnam, when it was nicknamed the "Daisy Cutter" because it could flatten areas of vegetation.

BM-21: *Boyevaya Mashina*, or Combat Vehicle. Russian armored vehicle fitted with an M-21OF rocket.

BMP: *Boevaya Mashina Pehoty*, or Infantry Combat Vehicle. Russian armored vehicle.

Bossman: The radio call sign for an AWACS plane.

Breaking the deck: Descending below an aircraft's minimum altitude restriction.

Brigade 055: An Al-Qaeda-trained unit of mainly Arab fighters that fought with the Taliban. Also referred to as the 55th Arab Brigade, the Arab Brigade, or Ansar. John Walker Lindh was a member.

BTR-60: *Bronetransporter*, or armored transporter. An eight-wheeled Soviet personnel carrier, introduced in 1961. Succeeded by the BTR-80.

Burqa: A shapeless, one-piece outer garment that covers the body and face and is worn by women observing strict Islamic precepts.

Buzkashi: A game popular in northern Afghanistan in which horseback riders vie to seize and keep control of a goat or calf carcass. From the Persian term for "goat dragging." Dostum was an avid player.

C-17: A large military cargo plane used to transport troops and supplies. Also known as the Globemaster.

CAOC: Combined Air Operations Center. Used to coordinate aircraft. In 2001, the CAOC for Afghanistan was at Prince Sultan Air Force Base in Saudi Arabia.

CAS: Close Air Support, or air strikes against enemy troops in proximity to friendly forces.

Case officer: The CIA term for an agent handler. Member of the Directorate of Operations who has undergone training at The Farm.

CE Division: Central Eurasian Division of the CIA.

CENTCOM: Central Command, or the US regional military command covering Afghanistan and the Middle East. Headquartered in Tampa, Florida, and led by General Tommy Franks from July 2000 until July 2003.

Chapan: A heavy coat worn over clothes like a thick robe in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

Chinook: CH-47 twin-rotor medium-lift helicopter; used for troop movement, casualty evacuation, and logistics.

CIA: Central Intelligence Agency. Formed in 1947 to conduct foreign intelligence collection and covert action. Also responsible for providing analysis of intelligence to US policymakers.

Conspicuous Gallantry Cross: Second-highest British military award for bravery in action, after the Victoria Cross.

CSAR: Combat Search and Rescue.

CTC: CIA's Counterterrorism Center. Led by Cofer Black in 2001. Founded in 1986, it was separate from the CIA's geographic divisions and was a place where operators and analysts, traditionally separated, worked together. By 9/11 around 350 people worked there; shortly after, that number swelled to 2,000.

CTC/SO: The CIA's Counterterrorism Center/Special Operations. Formed after 9/11 and led by Hank Crumpton.

CTPT: Counterterrorism Pursuit Team. A covert Afghan unit run by the CIA, usually against Al-Qaeda targets.

DAP: Direct Action Penetrator. A Black Hawk helicopter configured for an assault role.

Darya: Dari word for river. Hence, Amu Darya and Darya Suf.

DIA: Defense Intelligence Agency. The Pentagon's intelligence arm.

Diemaco: A 5.56mm rifle similar to the US M16. Also known as the C7, it was made by the Diemaco company in Canada. Used by the SBS in Afghanistan in 2001.

Distinguished Intelligence Cross: The CIA's highest award. Inscribed "For Valor."

Distinguished Service Cross: The US Army's second-highest award for bravery, after the Medal of Honor.

DO: CIA's Directorate of Operations.

DShK: *Degtyaryova-Shpagina Krupnokaliberny*, or Degtyaryov-Shpagin Large-Calibre. Soviet. 50 caliber machine gun developed in the 1930s. The standard Soviet heavy machine gun during World War II, it was used by the mujahideen in Afghanistan.

DUSTWUN: Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown. Designation for a US service member who is missing and not confirmed dead or captured. A DUSTWUN status can last a maximum of ten days.

F-14: Tomcat twin-seat jet used by the US Navy for air defense, intercept, strike, and reconnaissance roles.

F-14 Tomcat: Twin-seat jet used by the US Navy for air defense, intercept, strike, and reconnaissance roles.

F-18 Hornet: single-seat jet used by the US Navy and Marine Corps in fighter and attack roles.

Farm: CIA facility at Camp Peary, near Williamsburg, Virginia. Known as The Farm, all CIA case officers receive their initial training there.

Fatwa: A decree handed down by an Islamic religious leader or scholar.

FLIR: Forward-Looking Infrared Radar.

GPMG: General-purpose machine gun. Usually belt-fed. The SBS used them at Qala-i Jangi.

GPS: Global Positioning System; a network of navigation satellites providing location data anywhere in the world.

Hawala: Arabic for “transfer,” an unregulated banking system used to move money via informal networks.

Hazaras: Dari-speaking Shia ethnic group native to central Afghanistan. Constituted 19 percent of the Afghan population in 2001, when their leaders were Karim Khalili and Mohammed Mohaqeq. The Hazaras suffered ethnic cleansing at the hands of the Taliban, who viewed them as non-Muslims.

Hezb-i-Wahdat: The principal Shia party in Afghanistan, made up mainly of ethnic Hazaras. Founded in 1989 by Abdul Ali Mazari to unite eight Shia parties, it was led by Mazari until his assassination by the Taliban in 1995, when Karim Khalili took over. Has received strong support from Iran.

HUM: Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, or Movement of Holy Warriors. An Islamist group based in Pakistan that operated primarily in Kashmir. Linked to Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda. John Walker Lindh trained with HUM close to the Kashmir border before entering Afghanistan.

IMU: Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan; a Sunni fundamentalist group aligned with Al-Qaeda.

Intelligence Star: Medal awarded by the CIA for “voluntary acts of courage performed under hazardous conditions or for outstanding achievements or services rendered with distinction under conditions of grave risk.” Equivalent to the Silver Star.

ISAF: NATO’s International Security Assistance Force.

ISI: Inter Services Intelligence, or Pakistan’s spy agency. Though courted by the CIA, the ISI secretly provided aid to Al-Qaeda.

Islamic State: Also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), or Daesh. An Islamist fundamentalist group founded in 1999 by Jordanian jihadist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Rose to prominence in early 2014, when it captured key Iraqi cities. Beheaded five Western hostages in 2014–15. Lost most of its territory by late 2017 but continued to operate around the world, including Afghanistan.

JDAM: Joint Direct Attack Munition. A guidance kit affixed to “dumb”—free-falling—bombs that converts them to “smart”—laser-guided—bombs.

Jamiat: Shortened form of Jamiat-i Islami, or “Islamic Society,” the ethnic Tajik political party founded in 1968 by Burhanuddin Rabbani (president of Afghanistan from 1992 to 1996). Atta Muhammed Noor was the leading Jamiat figure in northern Afghanistan.

Jawbreaker: The CIA teams that flew into Afghanistan’s Panjshir Valley from 1999 onward. Also used for the Northern Alliance Liaison Team (NALT), led by Gary Schroen, after 9/11.

Jemaah Islamiyah: Islamist group that perpetrated the Bali bombings in 2002.

Jihad: Arabic for “struggle.” Also means “holy war,” hence the term “jihadist” for an Islamist fighter.

Joker: Phrase used by aviators who have run low on fuel and must begin disengaging to return to base. Joker is a predetermined amount of fuel, in excess of Bingo.

JSOC: Joint Special Operations Command.

JSOTF: Joint Special Operations Task Force.

Jumbesh-i Milli: National Islamic Movement of Afghanistan; ethnic Uzbek political party founded by Abdul Rashid Dostum in the late 1980s and still led by him in 2021. Usually referred to as the Jumbesh, a term also used for Dostum’s fighters.

K2: The Karshi-Khanabad air base in southern Uzbekistan, used as a jumping-off point for US troops bound for Afghanistan. Established after 9/11 and used by US forces until 2005.

Kalashnikov: Russian rifle designed by Mikhail Kalashnikov. The term encompasses the AK-47, AKM, AKMS, AKSU-74, and several other models.

KIA: Killed In Action.

Kmart: Call sign for the CAOC.

M4: A 5.56mm US infantry rifle, shorter and lighter than the M16.

madrassa: Arabic word for “school,” used to refer to a place of religious learning. Often linked to Islamic fundamentalism.

MH-47: A Chinook helicopter.

MIA: Missing In Action.

MI6: The British foreign intelligence service.

Mi-17: Russian military helicopter used extensively during the Soviet- Afghan War. Later Ahmad Shah Massoud used Mi-17s, including to fly CIA teams into the Panjshir Valley. By 2001, the CIA had bought its own Mi-17, which was used to fly in the Jawbreaker team to link up with Fahim Khan.

MiG-15: Mikoyan-Gurevich 15. Single-seat Soviet jet fighter first flown in 1947, used extensively in the Korean War, and supplied to Afghanistan in the late 1950s.

Military Cross: British military decoration for heroism, below the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross. The equivalent of the Silver Star.

MMR: Multi-Mode Radar.

MRE: Meal, Ready-to-Eat; US military rations in lightweight packets, designed to be consumed in the field. MREs replaced MCIs (Meal, Combat, Individual) in 1981.

Mujahideen: Guerrilla soldiers in Afghanistan who fought the Russians in the Soviet-Afghan War of 1979–1989. It is the plural form of “mujahid”—Arabic for “one engaged in jihad.”

NALT: Northern Alliance Liaison Team. A group formed by NE Division and sent into the Panjshir Valley from 1998 onward. Its missions alternated with those of CTC’s Jawbreaker.

Navy Cross: The US Navy’s second-highest award for bravery, after the Medal of Honor.

NE Division: The Near East Division of the CIA’s Directorate of Operations.

Night Stalkers: The 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR) that provided Black Hawk and Chinook helicopter support for Special Forces and the CIA in 2001.

Northern Alliance: Coalition founded in 1996 by Ahmad Shah Masoud as the “Supreme Council for the Defense of the Motherland” or “United Front.” It comprised forces led by Dostum, Atta, Mohaqeq, and Fahim. Principally non-Pashtun and made up of Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, and Turkmen fighters.

NSC: National Security Council. Based at the White House, its members advise the US president on foreign policy and defense.

NVGs: Night Vision Goggles.

ODA: Operational Detachment Alpha. A Special Forces unit twelve men strong, sometimes referred to as an Alpha Team or an A Team. ODAs were given a three-digit number to identify them. A 5 indicated 5th Group. A 1, 2 or 3 as the second number indicated 1st Battalion, 5th Group. A 4, 5 or 6 indicated 2nd Battalion, 5th Group. A 7, 8 or 9 indicated 3rd Battalion, 5th Group. Thus, ODA 534 was from 1st Battalion, 5th Group, ODA 555 was from 2nd Battalion and ODA 595 was from 3rd Battalion.

ODB: Operational Detachment Bravo, or the headquarters element of a Special Forces company. In 2001, an ODB commanded six ODAs.

ODC: Operational Detachment Charlie, or the headquarters element of a Special Forces battalion. In 2001, an ODC commanded three ODBs and eighteen ODAs.

OMS: The CIA’s Office of Medical Services.

Open source: Drawn from publicly available material.

Op order: An operations order, or military directive outlining the plan for a specific task.

OSS: Office of Strategic Services; founded in 1942, it was the forerunner of the CIA.

Pakol: A traditional Afghan hat, favored particularly by Tajiks.

Pashtun: The largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, it is made up of Sunni Muslims who speak the Pashto language. The bulk of Pashtuns occupy the region stretching from southeast Afghanistan to north-west Pakistan. The Taliban is overwhelmingly Pashtun.

PDB: President's Daily Brief. A written summary of intelligence, produced by the CIA that is presented verbally to the President and other top policymakers.

PK: *Pulemyot Kalashnikova*, or Kalashnikov Machine Gun. A Russian 7.62mm machine gun that entered service with Soviet forces in 1961.

PKM: *Pulemyot Kalashnikova Modernizirovanniy*, or Kalashnikov Machine Gun Modernized. An updated version of the PKM, it entered service in 1969.

PPSh-41: *Pistolet-Pulemyot Shpagina*, or Shpagin's Machine Pistol. A Russian submachine gun, designed by Georgi Shpagin and fed by a drum magazine, that Al-Qaeda prisoners used during the uprising at Qala-i Jangi.

PRC: Portable, Radio, Communication. A hand-held survival radio with built-in GPS. The CIA used the PRC-112B1. One of the PRCs used in Afghanistan in 2001 is now in the CIA Museum.

Predator: A CIA or US Air Force drone armed with Hellfire missiles.

PX: Post Exchange. A retail store on a US military base.

Q Course: The initial training course for all US Army personnel seeking to become Green Berets. Formally called the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC).

Quds Force: The branch of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) that specializes in unconventional warfare and military intelligence, supporting terrorist and insurgent groups overseas. Designated a terrorist group by the US in 2019.

Quick Reaction Force: A military unit kept in a state of immediate readiness should an operation go wrong.

ROE: Rules of Engagement, or military guidelines laying out when it is permissible for troops to use lethal force.

ROTC: Reserve Officers' Training Corps.

RPG: Rocket-propelled grenade. In Afghanistan it normally referred to the Russian-designed, shoulder-launched RPG-7, whose warhead explodes on impact or self-destructs at a distance of about half a mile, causing it to burst in midair.

SAD: Special Activities Division. The paramilitary arm of the CIA included Ground Branch, Air Branch, and Maritime Branch; it later became the Special Activities Center. Mike Spann and three other Team Alpha members were in SAD.

SAS: Special Air Service. The British special-operations unit on which Delta Force was modeled.

SATCOM: Satellite communications.

SBS: Special Boat Service. A British unit equivalent to the US Navy SEALs.

SEALs: A US Navy special-operations unit that is active on **SEa, Air, and Land**.

Sharia law: A version of Islamic law based on a punishingly strict interpretation of the Koran.

Shia: The less populous of the two main branches of Islam. The Shia believe that Muslim leadership properly belongs to Muhammad's son-in-law, Ali, and his descendants. In Afghanistan, the Hazaras are Shia and maintain close links with neighboring Iran, a Shia state.

Silver Star: An American medal awarded for heroism.

SOFLAM: Special Operations Forces Laser Acquisition Marker.

Sunni: The more populous of the two main branches of Islam. Sunnis generally regard the faith as mainstream and traditionalist, recognizing the first four caliphs as the Prophet Muhammad's rightful successors. The Taliban and Al-Qaeda are Sunnis, as are all main ethnic groups in Afghanistan apart from the Hazaras.

Tajik: A Dari-speaking Sunni ethnic group, native to Tajikistan and Afghanistan. Tajiks made up 25 percent of the Afghan population in 2001. Ahmad Shah Massoud, Atta Mohammed Noor, and Fahim Khan were Tajiks.

Taliban: Pashto for "students." A fundamentalist Islamic group, founded in Kandahar in 1994, that formed the Afghan government from 1996 until 2001, imposing Sharia law and attempting to society based on the 7th-century ideals of the Prophet Mohammed. Waged an insurgency after 2001, regaining control of much of the country and in 2020 entering negotiations in Doha, Qatar, over a power-sharing deal.

Taqiyah: Arabic name for a short, rounded prayer cap worn by Muslim men, often beneath the turban.

TF: Terrain Following, a type of radar.

TF Dagger: The Joint Special Operations Task Force (North) commanded by Colonel John Mulholland and based at K2. Linking the US military with the Northern Alliance, its main units were the 5th Special Forces Group and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.

Tomahawk: A sea-launched long-range cruise missile.

TTPs: Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures, or the military's standard way of doing things.

Turkmens: A Turkic ethnic group native to Central Asia, living mainly in Turkmenistan and northern Afghanistan. Closely aligned with Uzbeks—and largely indistinguishable from them to the outsider—Turkmens constituted about 3 percent of the Afghan population in 2001. Sunni Muslims, they were led by Dostum.

UAZ: A Russian truck, manufactured by the Ulyanovsk Automobile Plant (*Ulyanovsky Avtomobilny Zavod*), whose UAZ-469 off-road jeep saw wide use in Afghanistan.

UBL: Abbreviation for the Al-Qaeda leader. Most English-language sources style the name Osama bin Laden but the US military used Usama bin Laden.

Uzbeks: A Turkic ethnic group native to Central Asia that predominates in Uzbekistan and is a minority in northern Afghanistan. Made up about 9 percent of the Afghan population in 2001 and were led by Dostum. Name derives from Öz Beg, a Mongol khan. The Uzbeks are Sunni Muslims who originate from a mingling of ancient Iranian populations and nomadic Mongol or Turkic tribes that invaded the region between the 11th and 15th centuries. Many arrived in Afghanistan as refugees in the 1920s and 1930s to escape repression by the Soviet Union, of which Uzbekistan was part.

Unconventional warfare: The use of indigenous allies or proxy forces to overthrow an enemy state. This is a primary mission of US Special Forces.

VMFA: Fixed-wing Marine Fighter Attack squadron. The V denotes fixed wing.

VMI: Virginia Military Institute. A public military college in Lexington, Virginia, sometimes referred to as “the West Point of the South.” Students, known as cadets, are required to be members of ROTC; more than half go on to receive military commissions. VMI graduates in Afghanistan included Justin Sapp, Scott Spellmeyer, and Paul Syverson.

VS-17: A marker panel used to alert aircraft to the position of friendly ground forces.

Wahhabism: A fundamentalist strain of Sunni Islam that originated in Saudi Arabia. Named after its founder, Mohamed ibn Abdul Wahhab.

Winchester: Phrase used by aviators upon running out of ammunition. **WMIK:** Weapons Mount Installation Kit. Used to describe a British Land Rover 110 vehicle that has been hardened into a mobile weapons platform, with a strengthened chassis and added roll bar cage and weapons mounts.

ZiS-3: *Zavod Imeni Stalina* or Factory Named After Stalin. A Russian anti-tank gun used by the Afghans for all artillery tasks, though it was limited by its maximum elevation of thirty-seven degrees, in Afghanistan it was used by the Soviets, the mujahideen, the Northern Alliance, and the Taliban. Two decommissioned ZiS-3s stood outside the gate of Qala-i-Janghi in 2001 and remained there twenty years later.

ZSU: *Zenitnaya Samokhodnaya Ustanovka*, or Antiaircraft Self-propelled System. A Russian-made tracked artillery piece, used by the Taliban and sometimes referred to as “a Zeus” or “the sewing machine.”