

**COMBINED JOINT TASK FORCE- 101  
OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM  
BAGRAM AIR FIELD, AFGHANISTAN  
APO AE 09354**

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## **Declassified data reveals insurgent use of white phosphorus**

BAGRAM, Afghanistan (May 11, 2009) – Today, CJTF-101 has declassified a report of 38 events in which insurgents have used or stockpiled white phosphorus munitions in the Regional Command-East area of operations.

The declassification and release are in response to claims that insurgents do not use, nor have access to, white phosphorus.

The data, obtained from incident reporting from February 2003 through the present, show that insurgents have stockpiled and used white phosphorus against personnel in both indirect fire attacks as well as Improvised Explosive Devices.

ISAF and Coalition forces use white phosphorus in compliance with rules of engagement and international law.

White phosphorus is employed for obscuration, marking targets, illumination, as well as destruction of unoccupied bunkers, buildings and weapons systems, and the destruction of otherwise flammable materials such as ammo and petroleum products.

It is used as a smoke-producing agent common to the arsenals of many nations, and is classified as conventional ordnance. It is not designed for use against personnel and is neither an incendiary weapon nor a chemical weapon.

The declassified data is contained in an attached information paper.

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**Reported Insurgent White Phosphorus Attacks and Caches  
in Regional Command-East, 2003-present**

*Declassified for Public Release on 11 MAY 09 by CJ2-Foreign Disclosure Office, CJTF-101  
For inquiries, contact CJTF-101 Public Affairs Office, [bagrammediacenter@afghan.swa.army.mil](mailto:bagrammediacenter@afghan.swa.army.mil)*

(U) **Background:** In response to claims that insurgents in Afghanistan are not using, nor have access to, white phosphorus (WP) munitions, ISAF RC-East conducted a summary database query, by which a total of 44 instances of reported enemy WP incidents were uncovered and declassified on 11 MAY 09. Thirty-eight of those occurred in RC-East and are released in this document. Our research also revealed six WP events that occurred in other ISAF regions; this list is available upon request from ISAF PAO press office at [pressoffice@hq.isaf.nato.int](mailto:pressoffice@hq.isaf.nato.int).

(U) **Discussion:** Three means of white phosphorus use and access by insurgents can be identified: 1) improvised explosive devices, 2) indirect fire attacks, and 3) ordnance caches or UXO. It is notable that the enemy has stockpiled and used white phosphorus in attacks since 2003 and as recently as the week prior to this release. It should also be noted that these instances have occurred in nearly every province in RC-East, which demonstrates the wide availability of white phosphorus to insurgents. Finally, it is important to note that insurgent stockpiles do not necessarily derive from old Soviet-era left-behind stocks; the white phosphorus munitions found in these 38 events have their origins in a wide range of countries. Also, the vast majority of white phosphorus rounds found in listed caches were determined to be in serviceable condition.

**1. Improvised Explosive Devices using White Phosphorus:**

(U) 1.1 On 5 FEB 2009, an ISAF unit observed a white phosphorus detonation, determined to be a 107mm WP rocket IED, near a civilian district center in Sabari District, Khost province.

(U) 1.2 On 15 SEP 2008, an ISAF patrol conducting road clearance discovered an IED rigged with one 120mm white phosphorus round, in the Sabari District of Khost province.

(U) 1.3 In MAR 2008, an ISAF convoy in Mandozai District, Khost province, was struck by a vehicular suicide IED, wounding one service member and one local national. Investigators later determined that the IED charge contained both white phosphorus and high explosives.

(U) 1.4 On 9 FEB 2008, a white phosphorus round exploded in the vicinity of an ISAF forward operating base, in Behsood District, Nangarhar province.

(U) 1.5 On 10 JAN 2008, an ISAF EOD team destroyed a Russian 122mm white phosphorus round placed in the vicinity of an ISAF forward operating base in Nader Shah Kwot District, Khost province.

(U) 1.6 On 1 DEC 2007, Coalition forces on patrol discovered an 81mm white phosphorus mortar round set in the vicinity of a convoy in Waza Khwa District, Paktika province.

(U) 1.7 On 23 MAR 07, an ISAF EOD team discovered and defused a 122mm white phosphorus mortar round emplaced on the side of a road in Gardez District, Paktya province.

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### **2. Indirect Fire Attacks using White Phosphorus:**

- (U) 2.1 On 7 MAY 2009, an ISAF outpost reported receiving two rounds of indirect white phosphorus fire, in Charkh District, Logar province.
- (U) 2.2 On 11 AUG 2008, ISAF forces on patrol located a 107mm white phosphorus rocket tube that insurgents had prepositioned to fire in the direction of a nearby ISAF forward operating base in Goshta District, Nangarhar province.
- (U) 2.3 On 28 JUN 2008, insurgents fired a white phosphorus rocket at an ISAF outpost in Bermel District, Paktika province.
- (U) 2.4 On 4 JAN 2008, insurgents fired nine white phosphorus rounds at an ISAF forward operating base in Darreh-ye Pich District, Kunar province.
- (U) 2.5 On 21 NOV 2007, insurgents fired at least one white phosphorus rocket at an ISAF forward operating base in Zadran District, Paktya province.
- (U) 2.6 On 2 OCT 2007, insurgents fired two 107mm white phosphorus rockets at an ISAF forward operating base in Gelan District, Ghazni province.
- (U) 2.7 On 4 AUG 2007, insurgents launched an indirect fire attack on an ISAF outpost, using HE and white phosphorus rounds in Dara Pech District, Kunar province.
- (U) 2.8 On 25 MAY 2007, an insurgent mortar team fired two white phosphorus rounds at an ISAF bridge construction site in the Darreh-ye Pich District, Konar province.
- (U) 2.9 On 25 MAY 2007, insurgents bombarded an ISAF outpost with 10 rounds of white phosphorus, in Darreh-ye Pich District, Kunar province.
- (U) 2.10 On 13 MAY 2007, insurgents fired five white phosphorus mortar rounds at an ISAF outpost in Chawki District, Kunar province.
- (U) 2.11 On 11 APR 2007, insurgents fired five white phosphorus mortar rounds at an Afghan National Army compound in Watah Pur District, Konar province.
- (U) 2.12 On 26 MAR 2004, Afghan locals intercepted and drove off an insurgent mortar team setting up a group of rockets in the vicinity of an ISAF forward operating base. Coalition responders later destroyed the rockets, including one white phosphorus round, in Khost District of Khost province.

### **3. Insurgent Caches and UXO Finds of White Phosphorus:**

- (U) 3.1 On 20 JAN 2009, ISAF troops discovered a diverse weapons and ammunition cache that included three 82mm white phosphorus mortar rounds, in Chowreh District, Oruzgan province.
- (U) 3.2 On 24 NOV 2008, an ISAF EOD team located and collected a weapons cache including two 107mm white phosphorus rockets, in Pol-e 'alam District, Logar province.
- (U) 3.3 On 06 JAN 07, an ISAF patrol detected and destroyed an unexploded ordnance find that included one 122mm white phosphorus round in Terezai District, Khost province.

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- (U) 3.4 On 27 OCT 2006, an ISAF EOD team found a major ordnance cache that included six 122mm white phosphorus rounds in Bagram District, Parwan province.
- (U) 3.5 On 23 DEC 2005, a Coalition unit discovered a sizable cache of ammunition and ordnance, including six 82mm white phosphorus mortar rounds, in Kohe Safi District, Parwan province.
- (U) 3.6 On 12 DEC 2005, Afghan National Police found a cached mortar assembly, including one white phosphorus round, in Jaguri District, Ghazni province.
- (U) 3.7 On 9 JUL 2005, an ISAF unit discovered hundreds of rounds of cached ordnance, including 27 rounds of 82mm white phosphorus mortar ammunition, in Qalandar District, Khost province.
- (U) 3.8 On 26 MAR 2005, an Afghan National Police patrol reported a cache of various munitions, which ISAF responders identified and removed, including one 82mm white phosphorus mortar round, in Jalrez District, Wardak province.
- (U) 3.9 On 19 MAR 2005, an ISAF unit found a cache of ordnance and IED-making materials including five 82mm white phosphorus mortar rounds, in Sharana District, Paktika province.
- (U) 3.10 On 13 MAR 2005, Coalition troops discovered a cache of various ordnance including one 82mm white phosphorus round in Shahid E-Hassas District, Oruzgan province.
- (U) 3.11 On 12 MAR 2005, local nationals led an ISAF unit to a cache of ordnance, including eight 107mm white phosphorus rockets, in Mosa Khail District, Khost province.
- (U) 3.12 On 19 FEB 2005, an ISAF unit received a tip of a weapons cache in Khogyani District, Nangarhar province. The search revealed IED-making materials as well as two 82mm white phosphorus rounds.
- (U) 3.13 On 1 OCT 2004, an ISAF unit discovered an ordnance cache containing an 82mm white phosphorus mortar round and other munitions of Chinese, Russian, Iranian, British origin, in Waza Khwa District, Paktika province.
- (U) 3.14 On 13 SEP 2004, an ISAF unit located a cache of ordnance and weapons of various origin, including one round of Russian white phosphorus mortar ammunition, in Orgun District, Paktika province.
- (U) 3.15 On 24 MAY 2004, an ISAF unit discovered an ordnance cache that included one 81mm and two 122mm white phosphorus rounds, in Zarghunshahr District, Paktika province.
- (U) 3.16 On 5 APR 2004, an ISAF EOD team destroyed multiple weapons caches that included four white phosphorus rounds of various national origin, in Sarowbi District, Kabul province.
- (U) 3.17 On 15 MAR 2004, Afghan security forces led ISAF troops to a large cache containing several hundred rounds of ordnance, including six 107mm white phosphorus rounds, in Qareh Bagh District, Ghazni province.
- (U) 3.18 On 22 APR 2003, Coalition personnel located an ordnance cache that included four 82mm white phosphorus mortar rounds in Khar Konar District, Konar province.
- (U) 3.19 On 6 FEB 2003, ISAF units, following a local tip, destroyed a 107mm white phosphorus rocket found in Bermel District, Paktika province.

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