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US Rocket System Back in Use Days after Killing 12 Civilians

Posted By [Jason Ditz](#)

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The details of the Sunday rocket attack on a house full of women and children in Marjah remain shrouded in mystery, but one thing is certain: the [High Mobility Artillery Rocket System \(HiMARS\)](#), barred from use by NATO after the killings amid reports of failures, [has been returned to duty](#).



When the US initially reported the [killings of the 12 civilians on Sunday, they claimed that the HiMARS had malfunctioned and sent the rocket some 300 meters from where they aimed it](#) (at a group of insurgents), destroying a random house full of civilians.

By yesterday, however, [NATO had completely claimed the story, insisting that the HiMARS had not malfunctioned, that the rockets hit what they were supposed to hit, and that the US Marines had deliberately targeted the houseload of civilians](#) on the belief there may have been Taliban inside.

That claim too seems to be falling by the wayside, however, as the [Marines at the site insist that there were no insurgents in the house and that they never ordered the house targeted with the HiMARS](#). The Afghan government still seems to be selling the idea that 3 of the civilians (the only three that weren't women or children) were secretly insurgents, but this claim too seems farcical as the Marines note there were no weapons in the house.

It seems there is still no entirely consistent narrative offered by any of these groups about the Marjah killings, which were made doubly embarrassing for international forces after they insisted that civilians “stay put” during the invasion. Whatever actually happened, it seems that the official policy will be more or less the state ex ante. HiMARS’ three day “barring” and an open-ended investigation notwithstanding.