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Man in Afghan Army Uniform Opens Fire on NATO Troops

By John Glaser

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A gunman wearing an Afghan army uniform [opened fire on NATO troops](#) in western Afghanistan, wounding several them before being killed himself in return fire.

The attack took place on Saturday at an outpost in Bala Boluk district, west of Kabul. NATO and Afghan officials refused to say whether the gunman was actually a member of the U.S.-trained Afghan army, instead explaining the incident would be investigated.

If it turns out the attacker was a member of the Afghan army, it would be only the latest instance of such attacks. [A number](#) of so-called [rogue shootings](#) have [occurred](#) in recent months, killing and wounding several NATO troops. Often the Taliban will, accurately or not, take responsibility for the attacks.

The government has been mum about previous such incidents because it flies in the face of, for example, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta's comment this month [that the U.S. is "winning" in Afghanistan](#). A central goal of the mission is to [train an Afghan army](#), but so far [the army is made up of](#) illiterate criminals and drug addicts who sometimes attack NATO soldiers and quit in droves. The rate of attrition in the Afghan army is as high as ten percent, according to [some reports](#).

The Afghan police commander in Kandahar, [General Abdul Raziq](#), is an illustration of this kind of failure. He has been accused of involvement in drug production, corruption, the killing and torture of civilians, et al. despite continuing to receive U.S. resources and training.

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Lt. Gen. William Caldwell, the US Commander responsible for training those Afghan forces, said in September that [not a single Afghan army battalion can operate without assistance from US or allied units](#). Out of approximately 180 Afghan National Army battalions, only two operate “independently,” but he qualified by conceding that even those units rely on daily US support.