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Marines in Afghanistan Charged With Reclaiming Areas They Once Held

US Marines have been operating in Helmand Province nearly through the entire Afghan War. This area was the center of the capture-and-hold strategy for years. But Taliban gains are mounting in recent years, and they control more territory than any other time in the war.

Now, US Marines are [being sent back to Helmand and the surrounding area](#) with a familiar goal, retake all those Helmand districts they used to hold. That may not be as easy as it used to be for US troops.



Afghan forces around Helmand are more and more limited, and under growing pressure. Much of the

Marines' focus is defending those allies. Officials are trying to put a positive spin on that, saying they can improve intelligence sharing from the Afghans.

But those Afghans are always under pressure, and that means that a lot of Marines will be stuck dealing with that, with few left to try to retake territory. The soaring amount of territory the Taliban is contesting also means that, while trying to reclaim districts, the Marines are racing to try to gain more than the Afghans lose.