

# VFMA-323 Operation Scorpion's Sting



## Mission 01: Guardian Angel

Date/Time: 10 May 2012 0412LT (2342UTC)

|             |           |         |            |          |                   |
|-------------|-----------|---------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Weather:    | Clear     | Temp:   | 19°C /66°F | Sunrise: | 0542LT            |
| Visibility: | 10+ miles | Clouds: | 8,202 ft   | Wind:    | GRND 90°, 4 m/s   |
| QNH:        | 29.98     | Alt:    | 3,338 ft   |          | 8000m 80°, 10 m/s |

---

### Campaign Overview

The year is mid 2012. While officially "winding down," the conflict in Afghanistan has seen a resurgence of militant activity, particularly in the historically volatile Helmand and Kandahar provinces. A new, highly organized and technologically adaptable insurgent faction, dubbed "Lashkar al-Haqq" (The Army of Truth), has emerged. Unlike previous iterations, "Lashkar" employs sophisticated communication intercepts, a decentralized command structure, and surprising proficiency with anti-aircraft weaponry, including shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and heavy anti-aircraft machine guns (AA MG). They've also shown an alarming ability to melt into the civilian population, using schools, mosques, and even hospitals as staging areas and storage depots.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) and Police (ANP), though growing, are still largely reliant on coalition air support for critical offensive and defensive operations. Civilian casualties remain a paramount concern, making precision strikes and strict rules of engagement crucial. US forces are focused on training and transitioning security responsibilities, but the rise of "Lashkar" demands a robust and flexible response.

VMFA-323 "Death Rattlers" (F/A-18C Hornets) are deployed to Kandahar Airfield (KAF), forming a crucial part of the air component. Their multi-role capability – air-to-air, air-to-ground, and reconnaissance – makes them indispensable in this complex environment. The squadron is equipped with advanced targeting pods (ATFLIR), GPS-guided munitions (JDAMs, GBU-38/54), laser-guided bombs (LGBs), 20mm cannon, and AIM-9X Sidewinders and AIM-120 AMRAAMs for self-defense.

The primary objective is to degrade "Lashkar" command and control, disrupt their logistics, and provide close air support (CAS) to embattled ground forces. Intelligence gathering is critical, as Al-Nahar's tactics emphasize stealth and deception. The terrain is a mix of arid deserts, craggy mountains, and fertile river valleys dotted with traditional villages and fields. Weather can be extreme – scorching hot days, freezing nights, and sudden, blinding dust storms.

### Situation

Intelligence tells us that "Lashkar" is preparing a long range MLRS attack on a FOB to the North. Based on intercepted cell phone conversations, there's strong expectations that the target of choice is Camp Bastion.

As "Lashkar" is adept at blending in with the surroundings, they often move these high value assets during the cover of darkness. There's a high degree of probability they've selected a desolated patch of desert West of the town of Garmsir deep in the desert of Helmond Province which is close enough to engage Camp Bastion yet isolated and difficult for us to find without advanced knowledge of this operation. Our intelligence teams predict they'll settle within a 200 square mile target box.

# VFMA-323 Operation Scorpion's Sting



## Mission 01: Guardian Angel

Date/Time: 10 May 2012 0412LT (2342UTC)

Weather: Clear Temp: 19°C /66°F Sunrise: 0542LT  
Visibility: 10+ miles Clouds: 8,202 ft Wind: GRND 90°, 4 m/s  
QNH: 29.98 Alt: 3,338 ft 8000m 80°, 10 m/s

### Blue Task

You need to destroy all mobile MLRS launchers in the target killbox.

We are not aware of the number of units possibly in the box. Reports of at least one group with 2 possible launchers were passed through our interpreter network. Often this information is unreliable and simply used as directional guidance. Expect the unexpected.

You're loaded with JDAMs and LGBs for this mission. Be aware - these MLRS units are high value and often travel with AAA defenses. Expect MANPADs at a minimum but we often see insurgent ZU-23s mixed in with these mobile units.

MISSION: Destroy MLRS artillery in the defined killbox

### Mission Elements

- [-01-] COLD START from Kandahar
- [-02-] Depart to the West on RWY 23
- [-03-] Rally flight at WP1 and continue West until reaching the IP
- [-04-] WP04-WP07 outline the killbox. Search for targets within this box and destroy all MLRS assets
- [-05-] Return to Kandahar through defined WP08

| FLIGHT PLAN |                   |        |       |          |                             |
|-------------|-------------------|--------|-------|----------|-----------------------------|
| WP          | DESCRIPTION       | ELEV   | SPEED | DISTANCE | REMARKS                     |
| WP01        | Rally Point       | 15,000 | 350   | 11mi     | Gather Team Together        |
| WP02        | Push              | 15,000 | 411   | 72mi     | Fly through: Garmsir        |
| WP03        | IP                | 15,000 | 411   | 28mi     | 10 miles to Killbox         |
| WP04        | Killbox Corner SE | 15,000 | 411   | 10mi     | Southeast Corner of Killbox |
| WP05        | Killbox Corner NE | 15,000 | 411   | 20mi     | Northeast Corner of Killbox |
| WP06        | Killbox Corner NW | 15,000 | 411   | 10mi     | Northwest Corner of Killbox |
| WP07        | Killbox Corner SE | 15,000 | 411   | 20mi     | Southwest Corner of Killbox |
| WP08        | Egress            | 15,000 | 411   | 37mi     | Exit corridor to Kandahar   |
| WP09        | Fly Through       | 6,000  | 375   | 100mi    | Kandahar Approach           |
| WP10        | Land              | 3,338  | 140   | 5mi      | Kandahar Landing            |

# VFMA-323 Operation Scorpion's Sting



## Mission 01: Guardian Angel

Date/Time: 10 May 2012 0412LT (2342UTC)

Weather: Clear Temp: 19°C /66°F Sunrise: 0542LT  
Visibility: 10+ miles Clouds: 8,202 ft Wind: GRND 90°, 4 m/s  
QNH: 29.98 Alt: 3,338 ft 8000m 80°, 10 m/s

### Communications

Besides Kandahar airport, the only other relevant communication option is a refueling tanker orbiting in a racetrack pattern between your operational area and Kandahar. Should you need to contact them, their color is GREEN.

Player communications are established on 251.000 Mhz

| PRIMARY COMM PLAN |         |     |         |           |            |
|-------------------|---------|-----|---------|-----------|------------|
| AGENCY            | COLOR   | CH. | FREQ    | TCN       | REMARKS    |
| FLIGHT            | AQUA    | 1   | 251.000 | -         | PLAYERS    |
| KANDAHAR          | MAGENTA | 2   | 360.200 | 75X : KAF | Home Plate |
| REFUEL            | GREEN   | 3   | 255.000 | 55X : TEX | Texico     |

### RED assets

You're likely looking for the 9A52 300mm "Smerch" MLRS system. These assets never travel alone and are most often accompanied by armed insurgent militia with small arms and MANPADs. Historically, where available, we've encountered mobile ZU-23s mounted in the back of pickups. Low tech, but deadly.

Keep in mind these AAA defenses have an effective ceiling of approximately 2 miles, so observe the Hard Deck of 12,000' established for the killbox.



|             |           |         |            |          |                   |
|-------------|-----------|---------|------------|----------|-------------------|
| Weather:    | Clear     | Temp:   | 19°C /66°F | Sunrise: | 0542LT            |
| Visibility: | 10+ miles | Clouds: | 8,202 ft   | Wind:    | GRND 90°, 4 m/s   |
| QNH:        | 29.98     | Alt:    | 3,338 ft   |          | 8000m 80°, 10 m/s |

## Additional charts and maps

