



Two light tactical vehicles, painted red for the Afghan National Police's Fire Department, are part of a larger donation of gear to help bolster the department's aging equipment, some of which is more than 30 years old.

# U.S. blazes in, to outfit Afghan firefighters

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**KABUL, Afghanistan** – The United States government donated firefighting equipment to the Afghan National Police Saturday, in a first step to build the infrastructure and capability of the firefighters throughout the country.

Light tactical vehicles and personal protective equipment known as bunker gear were transferred to the general in charge of the Afghan National Firefighters. The LTVs are light pick-up trucks; the same type used by the ANP and will be the primary command and control vehicles for the fire departments.

“This is a monumental event,” said Capt. Adam Minnich, police reform directorate, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan. “We are turning over 10 red utility vehicles and \$500,000 of protective equipment. They are getting the latest and greatest in fire fighting equipment. All of it is top of the line.

“The current state of equipment issue for the fire departments across Afghanistan is unacceptable. This came to light a few months ago, after a major fire ripped though the city of Jalalabad.”

Currently the fire department in Kabul has about 10 Russian fire trucks, all are about 30-50 years old.

“The U.S. embassy asked us what are we going to do about equipping the fire department,” Minnich said. “We are preparing to provide protective gear, pumpers, tenders and crash fire rescue vehicles, starting here in Kabul and over the next couple of years have enough for all the provinces in Afghanistan.”

Brig. Gen. Alhaj Amanullah, Afghan National Fire Chief,



**Brig. Gen. Gregory Young, Deputy Commanding General, Combined Security Transition Command, Afghanistan hands over a ceremonial key to the Fire Department's chief.**

was eager to accept the equipment.

“We needed this equipment desperately,” Amanullah said. “The equipment we have is old and outdated and is not enough for the exploding population growth Afghanistan has seen in the past 30 years. We just do not have enough equipment to keep our people safe right now if a fire breaks out.”

The upcoming months will see more equipment flow into the hands of firefighters throughout Afghanistan. Currently more than \$59 million of equipment is on order to be delivered to the department.

“The trucks and gear will help the people of Afghanistan be safer in the event of a fire,” Amanullah said. “We have a long way to go to improve the overall infrastructure of the department, but this is a great start.” 