

# BEAR TRAP

THE SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR | 1979-1989



## RULES OF PLAY

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

*Bear Trap* is a 2-player game depicting the Soviet-Afghan War (1979-1989).

One player takes command of the ruling Democratic Republic of Afghanistan and its forces, supported by the Soviet 40<sup>th</sup> Army—for brevity, this side is referred to here as the *Soviets*, or the *Soviet player*. The other player takes command of the local tribal rebels (the Lashkar) and Mujahideen guerrilla fighters—this side is referred to here as the *Insurgents* or the *Insurgent player*. The Soviet player seeks to prop up the sympathetic local government and eliminate resistance, while the Insurgent player seeks to expel the foreign invaders and overthrow the secularist government.

Players will take turns activating blocks, engaging in combat, resupplying to draw new cards and place additional blocks, and playing special strategy cards.

Play is interrupted periodically by a Geneva Talks process when one player exhausts their deck, during which several scoring conditions are checked, new strategy cards are added, and their deck is replenished and shuffled.

Victory is achieved by a comparison of Soviet Fatigue (for Insurgents) with Soviet Control (for Soviets) at the end of the game, or immediately when either side reaches a score of 9 Fatigue or Control during play, or by triggering an automatic victory condition for either side: capture of Kabul for the Insurgents, or elimination of all Insurgent blocks in Afghanistan for the Soviets.

**Important!** New players may wish to start by reading the full example of play in the Playbook, then setting up the Introductory Scenario also described there.

## 2.0 GAME COMPONENTS

- A 22" x 34" mounted game board
- 115 playing cards:
  - 31 Insurgent standard cards
  - 16 Insurgent strategy cards
  - 33 Soviet standard cards
  - 16 Soviet strategy cards
  - 3 Solitaire Opponent Posture cards
  - 16 Solitaire Opponent Priority cards
- 63 wooden blocks:
  - 33 tan Insurgent blocks
  - 30 red Soviet blocks
- One counter sheet
- One sticker sheet
- Two player aid sheets and one foldout Solitaire Opponent aid sheet
- One Solitaire Opponent sideboard sheet
- One 6-sided die (for solitaire play only)
- One draw bag
- One Playbook
- This rulebook

Cover image: Mujahideen in Kunar, Afghanistan (erwinlux CC BY-SA 3.0)

Box cover image: "The First Sting" (Stuart Brown)

## 2.1 Stickered Blocks

The wooden blocks represent the forces of the two sides, red for the Soviet player and tan for the Insurgent player. Before your first game, you must sticker the blocks.

**Important!** A sticker is only ever applied to one side of each block.

Apply the following stickers to one side of the red blocks:



14 DRAF



9 Soviet Infantry



5 Soviet Armor



1 Spetsnaz



1 Soviet Rumors

And apply the following stickers to one side of the tan blocks:



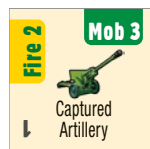
7 Shia Mujahideen



7 Sunni Mujahideen



11 Lashkar



4 Captured Artillery



1 Warlord Stronghold



3 Insurgent Rumors

**Important!** Blocks on the board should usually be aligned so that only the owner can see its stickered side; they will typically only be revealed during combat.

The Soviet player controls the Soviet Infantry, Soviet Armor, and Democratic Republic of Afghanistan Forces (hereafter abbreviated as DRAF)—as well as the Spetsnaz block (if it enters play). The Spetsnaz is a special block that will only enter play through the use of a strategy card (9.0).

The Insurgent player controls the Lashkar (local tribal forces), hardened Mujahideen (Sunni and Shia), and those insurgents with heavier weaponry (Captured Artillery). They also control one static Warlord Stronghold block.

**DESIGN NOTE:** Each block represents a variable number of individuals. For instance, each Afghan Mujahideen block represents between several thousand and many times more fighters, whereas each DRAF block represents roughly 4,500 Afghan Army regulars. However, this should just be taken as a rough guideline, as the way blocks represent forces in Bear Trap will vary throughout the war as well as at any given time to simulate the mobility of both sides and uncertainty about enemy force strength.

Shia Mujahideen mainly represent fighters associated with the Tehran Eight political union, while Sunni Mujahideen are a shorthand for the Peshawar Seven alliance. While Afghanistan is principally Sunni Muslim, and Bear Trap allows for historically accurate playthroughs where there are more Sunni Mujahideen than Shia Mujahideen, it is possible to see ahistorical representations of the war where the minority Shia Muslims are the more active insurgent fighters. Some Shia Mujahideen blocks can also be understood to represent other minority insurgent groups who could come into conflict with the Peshawar Seven and struggle to coordinate with them.

Both players also have Rumors blocks, which act as if they were Soviet Armor and Lashkar Forces outside of combat. They must be immediately removed from play as soon as they are revealed—this most commonly will occur in combat. The Soviet Rumors block starts the game in a USSR area, but whenever it is removed from play the Soviet player immediately places it in the Turkestan Military HQ area.

**DESIGN NOTE:** The Rumors blocks add to the Fog of War. In this way, Rumors blocks further represent uncertainty around opposing force strength and presence; deriving reliable information on the movement of opposing forces raised difficulties reflected here.

See section 3.1 below for more on how the different blocks and their orientation affect gameplay. All blocks, whenever removed or eliminated from play, are returned to the owning player and added to their pool of available blocks to (re)enter play.

**Important!** A block must be revealed to the other player any time it is eliminated or otherwise removed from play. Which blocks, and how many of each type, each player has in their off-board pools is hidden information for the other player (e.g., the Soviet player should not know how many Lashkar, Rumors, or Mujahideen blocks the Insurgent player doesn't have in play, as this would also reveal how many they do have in play).

## 2.2 Cards

Each player has their own deck composed of two kinds of cards: standard cards that form their initial deck, and strategy cards that are added to the deck during play. These cards are used:

- to activate areas on your turn,
- to force march blocks,
- to commit blocks during combat, and
- to resolve the effects on a strategy card when it's played for its effect.

All discarded and played cards are public (revealed face-up) at the time of being discarded or played. A player may look through their own discard pile at any time but cannot look through the discard pile of the other player or through either deck.

**DESIGN NOTE:** Cards are used in Bear Trap to represent the variable strength of forces in terms of preparedness and willingness to fight. The way players must manage their hand size in Bear Trap simulates the difficulties around supply management, communication, and coordination of forces. The greater the number of cards in a player's hand, the more prepared and coordinated their forces are for upcoming operations.

### 2.2.1 Standard Cards

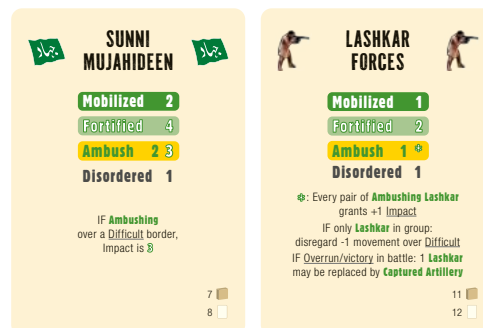
The Soviets have 33 standard cards while the Insurgents have 31 standard cards:

- Soviet standard cards:** 15 DRA Forces, 7 Soviet Armor, 10 Soviet Infantry, 1 KhAD
- Insurgent standard cards:** 12 Lashkar Forces, 8 Sunni Mujahideen, 8 Shia Mujahideen, 3 Defectors

Each player will add all these cards to their own individual draw decks at the start of the game. Each card contains a summary of the block type it corresponds to, or of the Loyalty Challenge (8.4) rules in the case of Defectors and KhAD.



Examples of some Soviet standard cards



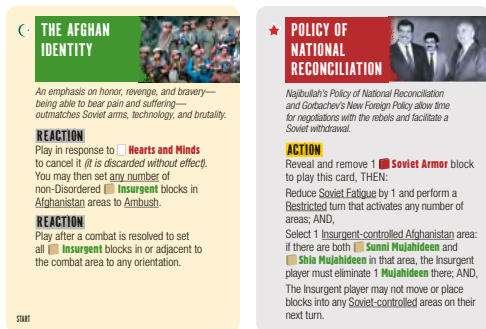
Examples of some Insurgent standard cards

## 2.2.2 Strategy Cards

Each player also has one pair of eight different strategy cards (16 strategy cards each in total):

- Soviet strategy cards: **Landmines**, **Soviet Air Strikes**, **Spetsnaz**, **Policy of National Reconciliation**, **Russian Determination**, **Hearts and Minds**, **Normative Fire**, and **Enhanced Border Patrols**
- Insurgent strategy cards: **CIA Intervention**, **Western Media**, **Iranian Training Camps**, **Pakistani Training Camps**, **Insurgent Tribal Warlords**, **Warriors of God**, **The Lion of Panjshir**, and **The Afghan Identity**

Each player will start with one (Insurgent) or two (Soviet) of their strategy cards in their individual draw decks at the start of the game and will be able to add additional strategy cards to their decks over the course of the game.



*Examples of an Insurgent and Soviet strategy card*

## 2.3 Game Board

The game board features a map of Afghanistan and the border regions of three surrounding nations: USSR, Pakistan, and Iran. The board also features three tracks used over the course of the game along with six overflow holding boxes that can be used if any map areas become too crowded.



### 2.3.1 Map Areas

The map is divided into irregular-shaped areas that can hold blocks and sometimes other markers.

- Colored (green or tan) **Afghan** areas can hold blocks of either side.
- The **Iran** area and the two **Pakistan** areas (Balochistan Province and North-West Frontier Province) can only hold Insurgent blocks, as indicated by the crossed out Soviet star icon.
- The **Turkestan Military HQ** area can only hold Soviet blocks, as indicated by the crossed out Insurgent crescent icon.

- The four **SSR** areas (Turkmen SSR Mary South, Turkmen SSR Chardzhou South, Uzbek SSR South, and Tajik SSR) can hold any kind of block aside from DRAF.
- The **Turkestan Military HQ** and **SSR** areas are sometimes collectively referred to as the **USSR**.

### 2.3.2 Map Borders

Areas sharing a border are adjacent. The borders between areas denote the kind of terrain dividing them, with different effects on block movement:

- Thin brown **Local Roads** that have no additional effect on movement. These borders represent local minor roads but also the absence of major roadways or the presence of some rough terrain.
- Thick brown **Difficult** borders that are harder to cross when more than one block is moving across them at the same time. These borders represent a variety of difficult terrain such as mountains, and the absence of developed roads.
- White **Highway** borders, intersected by the thick gray Highway route, that facilitate faster movement. Note that the thick gray Highway route itself does not divide areas but instead indicates the supply route used by the Soviet player for scoring (4.0).
- Dark gray **Impassable** borders separate the USSR, Pakistan, and Iran from each other, marked with a raised hand icon. Blocks may never move between these areas (but may move between them and Afghanistan, within the restrictions noted above).

### 2.3.3 Other Map Features

There are several other features marked on the map:

- Three **City** areas within Afghanistan, marked with octagonal icons: Herāt, Kandahār, and Kabul. Cities serve as Soviet strongholds that are important for scoring, and Kabul is additionally marked in red with a star icon, to indicate its special importance for the Insurgent instant victory condition (4.0).
- Ten **Town** areas within Afghanistan are marked with black circles (e.g., Zaranj). Towns serve as recruitment grounds for Insurgent Lashkar Forces during Resupply turns (6.1.1).
- A thick gray **Highway** route links the USSR to all three Cities and is important for Soviet scoring (4.0).
- Two **Airbridge** areas in Kabul and the Turkestan Military HQ are marked with a red helicopter icon. These allow fast movement between the two areas for Soviet blocks only (7.0).
- Two special areas near Kabul, **Hazarajat** and **Panjshir Valley**, that are important for two Insurgent strategy cards (**Iranian Training Camps** and **The Lion of Panjshir** respectively). These areas otherwise have no additional game effect.



### 2.3.4 Tracks

Three numbered tracks on the left side of the board are used to mark different game states:

- **Combat Impact** is used to mark the cumulative impact of each player during combat (8.0), using Impact counters in both player colors.
- **Soviet Status** is used to mark progress toward victory for both players (4.0), using the Soviet Control and Soviet Fatigue counters (2.4.3).
- **Geneva Talks** is used to mark the total number of Geneva Talks rounds that have occurred, with the game ending when the seventh Geneva Talks is triggered (10.0).

### 2.3.5 Holding Boxes

Six holding boxes along the right side of the board can be used in conjunction with their matching overflow markers to indicate the location of large groups of blocks that do not fit conveniently on the map. Simply place the blocks in an available holding box and place the corresponding overflow marker to indicate which area the blocks are in, with the marker flipped to the side matching the block color of the player using it. Three holding boxes correspond to the three Cities, which as key areas are often liable to become overcrowded, while three other 'Army' holding boxes may be used generically for any large group of blocks.

## 2.4 Counters

Several counters are used to mark various game states. In addition to those listed here, other counters are used only for the Solitaire Opponent rules described in section 11 and are listed separately there.

### 2.4.1 Impact

Each player has a counter used on the Combat Impact track to mark how much impact they accumulate during a combat (8.0). Both Impact counters can be flipped to their reverse '+15' side to track Impact totals greater than 15.



Insurgent Impact



Soviet Impact

### 2.4.2 Devastation



Ten Devastation counters are used in conjunction with two of the Soviet strategy cards, **Soviet Air Strikes** and **Normative Fire**, to mark affected Town areas. An area marked by a Devastation counter is no longer considered to be a Town for the purposes of Insurgent Resupply (6.1.1) and enhances the effects of the Insurgent **Pakistani Training Camps** strategy card.

### 2.4.3 Soviet Fatigue and Soviet Control

These counters are used on the Soviet Status track to mark the accumulation of Soviet Fatigue and Soviet Control throughout the game, which is relevant for one of the victory conditions for each player (4.0).



Soviet Fatigue



Soviet Control

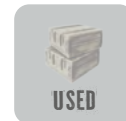
### 2.4.4 Geneva Talks



This counter is used on the Geneva Talks track to mark the number of times the players have reshuffled their decks throughout the game, with each reshuffle triggering a Geneva Talks process for that player (10.0). The game ends when the seventh Geneva Talks is triggered.

### 2.4.5 Resupply

A Resupply counter in each player color can be used as a reminder that a player cannot Resupply on their next turn, typically after a Resupply turn has just been taken (6.1.1). Place the counter on or near that player's deck, flipped to its 'Used' side, then remove it or flip it to 'Available' after they complete their next turn.



### 2.4.6 Activation

Six double-sided Activation counters can be used to indicate when an area has been selected for block activation during a normal Activation turn (6.1.3).



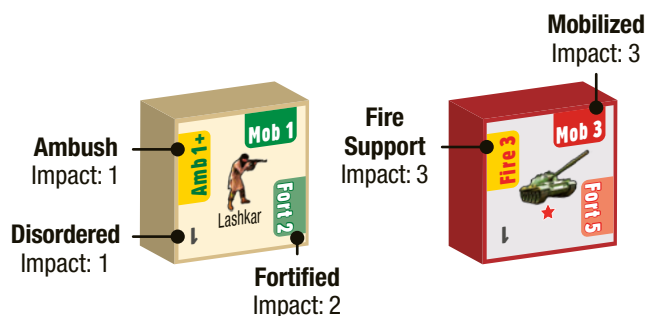
## 3.0 KEY CONCEPTS

Several key concepts relating to blocks and how they are used are explained in this section.

### 3.1 Block Orientation

Blocks should always be placed upright (along a narrow side) with their sticker side facing toward the controlling player, with their type and orientation only revealed to the other player when committed in combat or when removed or eliminated. The use and impact value of a block in combat is determined by the top edge of its current orientation:

- **Mobilized:** The default orientation of a block, indicating readiness for combat. Blocks always become mobilized when activated to move (7.0).
- **Fortified:** Indicates that a block has taken up a defensive posture, with a higher combat impact value.
- **Fire Support:** Indicates that a block is prepared to deliver long range fire to an adjacent combat area, while still being able to fight in its own area if attacked there. Fire Support may be used in an adjacent area only when attacking there (8.3.1.4), and only across a non-Difficult border (2.3.2).
- **Ambush:** Indicates that a block is prepared for an ambush, either in its own area or to support an adjacent combat area. Ambush may be used in an adjacent area only when defending there (8.3.1.3). Note that Lashkar Forces and both types of Mujahideen have a variable Ambush value, described in more detail in section 8.3.1.3.
- **Disordered:** The unlabeled edge indicates that a block is in disarray and currently unable to be activated. Blocks typically become Disordered after being defeated in combat (8.6.2) and are restored to Mobilized status when taking a Resupply turn (6.1.1).



The current orientation of both of the above blocks is Mobilized.

#### 3.1.1 Rumors

Each player has one (Soviet) or three (Insurgent) ‘Rumors’ blocks that may be used to deceive the other player. The orientation of a Rumors block does not matter, but a player may wish to adjust it as though it were another type of block in order to heighten the deception. For the purposes of movement only, the Soviet Rumors block is treated as Soviet Armor and Insurgent Rumors blocks are treated as Lashkar Forces. If the Soviet Rumors block is ever removed from the map it is immediately placed back into the Turkestan Military HQ.

### 3.1.2 Warlord Stronghold



The Warlord Stronghold is a special block placed on the board during the setup by the Insurgent player. The orientation of Warlord Stronghold does not matter, but the Insurgent player may wish to adjust it as though it were another type of block in order to disguise it. Several special rules apply to the Warlord Stronghold:

- It may never be activated to move (7.0) and is immediately eliminated if forced to retreat in combat (8.6.2).
- It has an impact value of 1 and may be committed in combat without playing a card (8.3.1.1). The Insurgent player wins ties in combat if the Warlord Stronghold is committed.
- The **Insurgent Tribal Warlords** strategy card may be used to place Captured Artillery in the area with the Warlord Stronghold.
- If the Warlord Stronghold is eliminated in combat, either as a casualty or after retreat, Soviet Control is increased by 1 (4.0).

***DESIGN NOTE:** Warlords asserting regional domination have had an influence in Afghanistan for some time. The representation of Afghan warlords in Bear Trap captures the role they played during the war.*

### 3.2 Area Control

Each map area is at all times considered to be either uncontrolled, Soviet-controlled, or Insurgent-controlled:

- Cities and SSR areas are considered Soviet-controlled unless occupied by Insurgent blocks, in which case they are Insurgent-controlled.
- Towns are considered Insurgent-controlled unless occupied by Soviet blocks, in which case they are Soviet-controlled.
- All other areas are considered uncontrolled unless occupied by blocks, in which case they are considered controlled by the owner of the occupying blocks.
- Areas with unresolved combat are considered controlled by the defender until the combat is resolved, at which point they will become controlled by whichever player still has blocks there (outside of combat, an area will never contain blocks belonging to both players).

### 3.3 Soviet Block Elimination

If a Soviet Infantry, Soviet Armor, or Spetsnaz block is eliminated as a casualty in combat (8.6), from a movement overrun (7.2), or by the effect of an Insurgent strategy card (9.0), Soviet Fatigue is increased by 1 (4.0). Soviet blocks eliminated in this way are not usually returned to play, except by using the **Russian Determination** strategy card to return an eliminated Soviet Infantry block.

**Important!** The elimination of DRAF blocks does not affect Soviet Fatigue, and neither does the removal of a Soviet Armor block with the **Policy of National Reconciliation** strategy card.

## 4.0 VICTORY CONDITIONS

A game of *Bear Trap* will end (i) as soon as one player has satisfied one of their automatic victory conditions, or (ii) when the Geneva Talks counter reaches the ‘7’ space (after the players have collectively exhausted their decks seven times). In both cases the game may end in the middle of a player’s turn, even if there are still unresolved combats. The conditions below are also summarized on page 23 of the Playbook.

**Important!** In *Bear Trap* the Geneva Talks counter always progresses with deck exhaustion by either player (e.g., a game could end after four Soviet decks and three Insurgent decks, or two Soviet decks and five Insurgent decks, etc.).

Both players have two ways to achieve instant automatic victory during play:

- **The Insurgent player** wins instantly if they gain control of Kabul, or if Soviet Fatigue reaches 9.
- **The Soviet player** wins instantly if there are ever no Insurgent blocks in Afghanistan, or if Soviet Control reaches 9.

Soviet Fatigue is adjusted in the following ways:

- Increased by 1 for each Soviet Infantry, Soviet Armor, or Spetsnaz block that is eliminated by overrun, in combat, or by play of the **CIA Intervention** strategy card.
- Increased by 1 for each play of the **Western Media** and **CIA Intervention** strategy cards.
- Increased by 1 for each City controlled by the Insurgents during the Geneva Talks process (resolved by either player).
- Increased by 1 if any SSR areas are controlled by the Insurgents during the Geneva Talks process (resolved by either player).
- Decreased by 1 for each play of the **Policy of National Reconciliation** strategy card (so long as a Soviet Armor can be removed).

Soviet Control is adjusted in the following ways:

- Increased by 4 if all Cities are Soviet-controlled and a path of Highway spaces without Insurgent control connects them to the USSR, during the Geneva Talks process (resolved by either player).
- Decreased by 1 if the previous condition is not met during the Geneva Talks process (resolved by either player).
- Increased by 1 if the Warlord Stronghold is eliminated in combat, or if the **Russian Determination** strategy card is in play during the Geneva Talks process (resolved by either player) and no Cities or SSR areas are Insurgent-controlled.

**Important!** Insurgent blocks in SSR areas do not interrupt the path from City areas to the USSR. It’s not necessary for the Soviet player to maintain control of these areas between Geneva Talks, only that they satisfy this condition when working through the reshuffle process during the Geneva Talks.

If the Geneva Talks counter reaches the ‘7’ space, the Soviets win if Soviet Control is greater than Soviet Fatigue; likewise, the Insurgents win if Soviet Fatigue is greater than Soviet Control. If the Soviet Fatigue and Soviet Control counters are on the same space, both players lose.

**Strategy Tip:** To block Soviet victory, the Insurgent player needs to use the pacing of the reshuffles to control key areas at the right times; to block Insurgent victory, the Soviet player needs to use the DRAF as the ‘tip of the spear’ to protect their Soviet units from being eliminated as casualties. In both cases, this is easier said than done. The Insurgent player must lay well-devised traps, striking the right balance between cautious defensive play and bold, aggressive, and well-timed attacks. The Soviet player must dodge those traps and also avoid becoming overstretched in the process.

**DESIGN NOTE:** The victory conditions pressure the players to make historically motivated decisions. Soviet Control represents the Soviets’ efforts to establish a ‘new status quo’ of control and authority over a sufficient period—i.e., the notion that, if the Soviets could hold the key cities and passageways for a sufficient period, the Soviets could claim ‘Mission Accomplished’ as a new normal would exist within Afghanistan (even if pockets of the country remained rebel held). Soviet Fatigue, on the other hand, simulates the limits of the USSR—as a political entity and as a populace—to endure Soviet losses and setbacks as part of the Brezhnev Doctrine. Soviet Fatigue suffered for Insurgent blocks in SSR areas represents the raids Mujahideen fighters made into the USSR in the later segment of the war.

## 5.0 SETUP

Place the game board between both players and place the Impact, Fatigue, Control, and Geneva Talks counters on the ‘0’ spaces of their respective tracks. Then complete the following steps for each player (these are also summarized on page 23 of the Playbook).

**DESIGN NOTE:** The game begins shortly after “Operation Storm-333” was executed at the end of 1979—in this coup, Hafizullah Amin (General Secretary of the People’s Democratic Party of Afghanistan) was killed and Babrak Karmal, a Soviet loyalist, replaced him.

### 5.1 Soviet Setup

Complete the following steps in this order:

1. Set aside the Spetsnaz block, which will only enter the game through the play of the **Spetsnaz** strategy card.
2. From your set of 16 strategy cards, choose one of the following pairs of cards marked ‘START’: **Soviet Air Strikes**, **Spetsnaz**, **Normative Fire**, **Hearts and Minds**. Do not reveal the chosen pair to your opponent.

**Strategy Tip:** For new players unsure of which card to choose, consider **Soviet Air Strikes** as it’s easiest to use effectively. **Spetsnaz** would, instead, allow you to flexibly and quickly “plug holes” in your defences, while **Normative Fire** is useful if you want to directly thwart your opponent’s plans and **Hearts and Minds** supports a more defensive strategy.

3. Shuffle the chosen pair of strategy cards with your standard cards to form your initial draw deck (35 cards total).
4. Draw eight cards, then discard any number of those cards and draw additional cards equal to the number just discarded (so you will always start the game with eight cards in hand).

**DESIGN NOTE:** *The opportunity to discard allows the player to regulate their starting hand of cards, as well as impact the initial pace of the game.*

5. Place all Soviet Infantry, Soviet Armor, and the Soviet Rumors blocks in the draw bag. Place two randomly drawn blocks in each of the four SSR areas, and the rest in the Turkestan Military HQ area. Set all these blocks to their Mobilized orientation as you place them, facing toward you.
6. Place 1 Disordered DRAF block in each City.
7. Finally, take your remaining 14 strategy cards, shuffle them, and draw one—do not reveal it to your opponent. Find its matching card from the remaining 13 strategy cards and return these two cards to the game box (face down). They will not be available throughout this game.

## 5.2 Insurgent Setup

Complete the following steps in this order:

1. From your set of 16 strategy cards, choose one of the following cards marked 'START': **The Lion of Panjshir**, **Warriors of God**, **The Afghan Identity**, **Insurgent Tribal Warlords**. Do not reveal it to your opponent.

**Strategy Tip:** For new players unsure of which card to choose: consider **Warriors of God** as it's easiest to use effectively. However, **Insurgent Tribal Warlords** may be worthwhile if you plan to adopt an aggressive play style, or **The Lion of Panjshir** if you intend to focus on winning the game by taking control of Kabul, while **The Afghan Identity** may enable you to bounce back from early setbacks.

2. Shuffle one copy of the chosen strategy card with your standard cards to form your initial draw deck (32 cards total).
3. Draw six cards, then discard any number of those cards and draw additional cards equal to the number just discarded (so you will always start the game with six cards in hand).

**DESIGN NOTE:** *The opportunity to discard allows the player to regulate their starting hand of cards, as well as impact the initial pace of the game.*

4. Place Mujahideen (Sunni and Shia) in the draw bag, then place one randomly drawn Mujahideen, one Insurgent Rumors, and the Warlord Stronghold in three different Afghan non-Highway areas. Place the Mujahideen Disordered.
5. Finally, take your remaining 15 strategy cards, shuffle them, and draw three—do not reveal them to your opponent. Return these three cards to the game box (face down). They will not be available throughout this game.

Play then begins with the Soviet player taking their first turn.

## 6.0 SEQUENCE OF PLAY

The game begins with the Soviet player taking the first turn, followed by the Insurgent player, and then alternating between players until a victory condition (4.0) is met. When a player's deck is empty and they choose to draw a card, play immediately pauses to perform the Geneva Talks process (10.0). This will most commonly occur when a player draws cards during a Resupply turn (6.1.1) or after combat (8.6.5).

### 6.1 Turn Sequence

On their turn, the active player may take either a (i) Resupply turn, (ii) a Strategy turn, or (iii) an Activation turn. At the end of every turn, resolve combat (8.0) in any area occupied by blocks from both sides (this will most commonly happen after movement during an Activation turn, but can also occur as a result of Lashkar placement during an Insurgent Resupply turn, and following play of some Strategy cards).

**Important!** A player who takes a Resupply turn cannot take a Resupply turn on their next turn. If desired, flip their Resupply counter to its 'Used' side to indicate this, then flip it back after they complete a non-resupply turn.

#### 6.1.1 Resupply Turn

A Resupply turn lets the active player bring new blocks into play and refresh their hand of cards. A player may never take a Resupply turn twice in a row. A Resupply turn consists of the following steps taken by the active player in this order:

1. Discard half the cards in their hand, rounding up the number of cards discarded (e.g., if they have 5 cards in hand, discard 3).
2. Set all their Disordered blocks to Mobilized.
3. Draw up to five cards—they may choose to draw fewer than five cards if desired.
4. **Soviets only** may then discard up to half their hand again, rounding up the number of cards discarded, then draw an equal number of new cards (e.g., if they have five cards in hand, they can discard up to three cards, then draw that many new cards).
5. Optionally, place additional blocks on the board:
  - If the **Soviets** are the active player, they may place up to one Mobilized DRAF in each Soviet-controlled City (the Soviet player controls a city if it is free of Insurgent blocks). For each DRAF block placed, the Soviet player must discard any one card from their hand.
  - If the **Insurgents** are the active player, they may either: (i) discard any three cards from hand in order to place one randomly selected Disordered Mujahideen in any Afghan area which already contains Insurgent blocks, or (ii) discard any one card from hand to place all available Insurgent Rumors and up to half available Lashkar Forces, rounded up, placing at most one block (Mobilized if Lashkar Forces) in each Town. Note that:

The **Insurgent** player may choose to place fewer than all available Rumors and fewer Lashkar Forces than the total number they are allowed to place.

Control of Town areas is not needed for the Insurgent player to

be able to place blocks in them. If a Lashkar Force is placed in a Soviet-controlled Town it will trigger combat at the end of the turn.

Areas with Devastation counters are no longer considered Town areas, and so blocks cannot be placed there.

**Important!** Only the active player completes the above steps.

### 6.1.2 Strategy Turn

A Strategy turn allows the active player to choose one strategy card from their hand and do one of two things with it:

1. They reveal it, resolve its Action effect, and then place it in their discard pile.
2. They permanently remove the card from the game, choose a new strategy card from their available pool of strategy cards, then reveal it to their opponent and place it in their discard pile.

The Soviet strategy card **Russian Determination** may remain on the table until the next Geneva Talks, if that option is selected.

### 6.1.3 Activation Turn

An Activation turn allows the active player to discard zero, one, or two cards from their hand to activate their blocks as follows:

| <i>Cards Discarded</i> | <i>Activation Type</i> | <i>Effect</i>                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0                      | <b>Urgent</b>          | Activate one non-Disordered block.                                                                                                         |
| 1                      | <b>Essential</b>       | Activate all non-Disordered blocks in one area.                                                                                            |
| 1                      | <b>Restricted</b>      | Activate all non-Disordered blocks in up to three areas, but the activated blocks may not be moved into areas that would result in combat. |
| 2                      | <b>Major</b>           | Activate all non-Disordered blocks in up to six areas.                                                                                     |

Cards of any type may be discarded but will have no effect other than determining how many blocks can be activated. Activation markers may be used to track which areas are being activated. When a block is activated, it can either:

- i. Remain where it is and do nothing.
- ii. Move according to the rules in the next section (7.0).
- iii. Remain where it is and have its orientation changed to any other orientation.

Note that ‘Restricted’ area activation cannot be used to move blocks into an area that would start combat. That is, while they can overrun enemy blocks (see 7.2), they cannot otherwise be moved into areas with enemy blocks.

**Important!** Disordered blocks cannot be activated, but an area with some Disordered and some non-Disordered blocks can still be selected for activation. Any given area may only be activated once per turn and any given block can only be activated once per turn (e.g., if a block is activated and moved to another area which is activated later this turn, that block cannot be activated again).

## 7.0 MOVEMENT

Blocks are moved, in groups, from one area to an adjacent area by crossing borders. A group is defined as between one and nine blocks which start and end movement together. A moving group must adhere to the following rules:

- A block can be part of at most one group per turn.
- A group cannot pick up or drop off blocks during its movement.
- A group must stop upon entering an area containing enemy blocks, unless an overrun occurs (see 7.2).
- Insurgent groups must stop upon crossing an international boundary, or when moving from one SSR area to another SSR area.
- A group must complete its movement before another group can be moved.
- Each border may only be crossed by one group per turn (this does not apply to retreats after combat, see 8.6.2).
- DRAF blocks cannot be moved into the USSR.
- Soviet blocks cannot be moved into Pakistan or Iran.
- Insurgent blocks cannot be moved into the Turkestan Military HQ (but can be moved into other SSR areas).
- Blocks cannot be moved directly between Iran, Pakistan, or SSR areas (these areas are not considered adjacent).
- The borders between SSR areas are considered Highway borders only for Soviet groups; they’re considered Local Roads for Insurgent groups.

**Important!** After any block finishes moving, its orientation must be set to Mobilized.

A group can move up to its movement allowance, as described below (7.1)—each border the group crosses will cost it one point of movement allowance.

When an area is activated, the blocks there can form multiple different groups. The active player decides which blocks within an area are part of which groups.

**Important!** You can move multiple groups from one activated area, but each border may only be crossed once during an activation, so they would need to go in different directions.

**Example:** Kandahār contains 6 non-Disordered Soviet blocks. When the Soviet player activates the area, they may, for instance, create a group of 2 blocks and move them. Then, from the remaining 4 blocks, they may create another group of 3 blocks and move them in a (different) direction to another area. And they may choose to leave the last block where it is, as is, or leave it where it is and change its orientation, or move it as its own group.

## 7.1 Movement Allowance

The base movement allowance for a group is one (i.e., it may only move to an adjacent area). This movement allowance can be modified by a variety of factors. If the movement allowance for a group, after modifiers, is zero or less, the group cannot be moved. The following table summarizes all movement allowance modifiers, which are then described in more detail below:

| Type                | Move | Notes                                                       |
|---------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Only Highway</b> | +1   | Modifier for Insurgents; not between SSR areas              |
|                     | +2   | Modifier for Soviets                                        |
| <b>Force March</b>  | +1   | Must discard a card from hand                               |
| <b>Only Armor</b>   | +1   | Not over Difficult borders                                  |
| <b>Difficult</b>    | -1   | Not groups containing a single block or only Lashkar blocks |
| <b>4-6 Blocks</b>   | -1   |                                                             |
| <b>7-9 Blocks</b>   | -2   |                                                             |
| <b>Airbridge</b>    |      | Special Soviet move only, two non-DRAF blocks max           |
| <b>Airlift</b>      |      | Special Soviet <i>Urgent</i> activation for non-Armor only  |

**Important!** These modifiers are cumulative, e.g., if a group of three Soviet Armor blocks moves only over Highway borders, and the Soviet player discards a card to force march the group, this group could move up to five areas away from its starting area.

- If the Insurgent player moves a group over **Only Highway** borders, its movement allowance is increased by one; if the Soviet player does so, its movement allowance is increased by two instead.
- The active player may discard a card from their hand to **Force March** a group, increasing its movement allowance by one. Each card discarded for a Force March only affects one group, and a group can only be Force Marched once per turn.
- If a Soviet group contains **Only Armor** blocks, its movement allowance is increased by one, unless its movement would pass over a Difficult border.
- The movement allowance of a group over a **Difficult** border is reduced by one. This does not apply if the group contains a single block, or if the group contains only Lashkar blocks.
- If a group contains **4-6 Blocks**, its movement allowance is reduced by one.
- If a group contains **7-9 Blocks**, its movement allowance is reduced by two.
- **Airbridge** movement is a special option available only to the Soviet player. This special move allows a group of up to two Soviet blocks, but not DRAF, to move directly from the Turkestan Military HQ to Kabul, or from Kabul to the Turkestan Military HQ, and no further.
- **Airlift** movement is a special option available only to the Soviet player. This special move allows one non-Armor block (i.e., DRAF, Soviet Infantry, Rumors, or Spetsnaz only) to move from

a City area to any Afghan area that's not Insurgent-controlled and no further. The Soviets can only make use of this special move as part of an Urgent turn, which activates only the single block moved in this way.

Note that a group of four or more blocks cannot be moved unless they receive a positive movement allowance modifier, i.e., from **Only Highway**, **Force March**, or **Only Armor**. 10 or more blocks cannot form a group and therefore cannot be moved together.

## 7.2 Overruns

Overruns occur when a sufficiently large moving group overwhelms an area with fewer enemy blocks. Overruns can never occur in Cities, Soviet blocks cannot be overrun in SSR areas, and Soviet groups may only overrun Insurgent blocks if they are moving across a Highway border.

To overrun, the group being moved by the active player must usually contain at least **four times** as many blocks as there are enemy blocks in the area being moved into, with two exceptions:

- If the Soviet player is moving a group that contains **only Armor** blocks, the group only needs to contain at least **three times** as many blocks as there are enemy blocks in the area.
- If the Insurgent player is moving a group that contains **only Lashkar** blocks, the group must instead contain at least **five times** as many blocks as there are enemy blocks in the area.

Rumors blocks can be used to meet the above thresholds. That is, for instance, a group of two Armor and one Rumors could overrun a single Insurgent block, and a group of four Lashkar and one Rumors could overrun a single Soviet block.

When an overrun occurs, all the enemy blocks in the area are eliminated. When being overrun, the type and orientation of the enemy blocks being overrun are irrelevant. After an overrun is resolved, the group of overrunning blocks may continue to move after the overrun process is complete if their movement allowance allows it.

For each Spetsnaz, Soviet Armor, or Soviet Infantry block eliminated by the Insurgent player during overrun, move the Soviet Fatigue counter up one space along its track (3.3).

When a group of moving Insurgent blocks overruns one or more enemy blocks, the Insurgent player may cease moving and replace a Lashkar block in that area where the overrun occurred with a Disordered Captured Artillery block (as if they had won a combat, see 8.6.4).

**Important!** An overrun does not initiate a combat—overruns are resolved immediately. However, overrunning is not mandatory—e.g., a player could move four blocks into an area with one enemy block, move no further, and declare that combat will be resolved instead of an overrun.

**DESIGN NOTE:** In Bear Trap, overruns represent relatively quick or surprisingly one-sided battles. The disparity in blocks present from the two sides signifies that the overrunning group is sufficiently well-prepared and coordinated that players need not go through the process of a combat on this occasion—despite what cards the players may or may not have in hand.

## 8.0 COMBAT

Combat is resolved as the last step at the end of each player turn, in every area in which there are now both Soviet and Insurgent blocks—called the **combat area**.

Combat will normally be initiated during Activation turns in which the active player moves blocks into areas containing enemy blocks, but it is possible for combat to occur at the end of other turns as well, e.g., by the Insurgent player placing Lashkar Forces in Soviet-controlled Towns during a Resupply turn.

**Example:** The Soviets have two blocks in the Kandahār area. It's the Insurgent turn, and they move three blocks into the Kandahār area. At the end of the Insurgent turn combat will be resolved in Kandahār (and any other areas that now have blocks from both players present).

If there are multiple combats, the active player decides the order in which they'll be resolved. After one combat is resolved, the active player chooses the next to be resolved, and so on until all are resolved.

When resolving combat, blocks are committed (8.3) to produce impact (8.5). All blocks in the area remain upright (concealed to the opponent) until committed, at which point they're revealed to assess their impact value.

At the end of combat, casualties are eliminated from the board (8.6.1), all revealed blocks are again put upright (concealed to the opponent), and the side which lost the combat retreats any remaining blocks (8.6.2).

**DESIGN NOTE:** *Because of the timescale over which Bear Trap is played, combats resolved by the players do not represent quick affairs resolved in mere hours. Instead, they typically represent weeks-long engagements over an area that could span as much as 15,000 km<sup>2</sup>.*

### 8.1 General Rules

Note the following general rules governing the resolution of a combat:

- At the start of every combat, the Impact counters of both players must be reset to 0.
- The active player (who is always the attacker) starts by committing the first block, then the player now with initiative commits the next block (8.2), and so on.
- Combat ends when the player with initiative either cannot, or chooses not to, commit any additional blocks and therefore passes.
- When calculating initiative and resolving the outcome of combat, the Soviets win ties (unless the Warlord Stronghold has been committed to the combat, in which case the Insurgents win ties).

### Combat Process Summary

Each combat follows the following steps, resolved in this order, the details of which are explained in the subsequent subsections:

#### 1. START OF COMBAT:

- If they are defending, the Soviet player may play a **Landmines** strategy card from their hand.
- If the Soviets played **Landmines**, the Insurgent player may play a **Western Media** strategy card from their hand in response.

#### 2. FORCE COMMITMENT:

- At the beginning of combat the attacker (always the active player) has initiative (8.2) and must commit a block to the combat (8.3).
  - If they cannot or choose not to, the combat ends immediately and all their blocks in the Combat area are eliminated—i.e., all other steps in the combat process are skipped. They draw no cards during the hand replenishment step, as that step is skipped.
  - If they commit a block, their opponent may play a Loyalty Challenge card from their hand (8.4).
  - The Impact total is updated (8.5), based on the outcome of any Loyalty Challenge (8.4).
- Initiative is then reassessed, going to the player who is currently losing the combat: the side with lowest total Impact, or the Insurgents if tied, unless the Warlord Stronghold has been committed (8.2).
- The player now with initiative must commit a block (8.3) or pass.
  - If they pass, move straight to Combat Resolution (8.6).
  - If they commit a block, their opponent may play a Loyalty Challenge card from their hand (8.4).
  - The Impact total is updated (8.5), based on the outcome of any Loyalty Challenge (8.4).
- Repeat steps 2.b and 2.c until the player with the initiative passes.

#### 3. COMBAT RESOLUTION:

- The player with the highest Impact total wins, with ties going to the Soviets unless the Warlord Stronghold has been committed, in which case the Insurgents win ties.
- The losing player reveals all their uncommitted blocks in the combat area and takes casualties equal to the difference in total Impact between the two players (8.6.1).
- The losing player then sets all their remaining blocks in the combat area to Disordered and retreats them out of the combat area, eliminating any blocks that cannot retreat (8.6.2).
- The winning player sets all of their committed blocks to Mobilized, except for blocks Ambushing from an adjacent area containing enemy blocks, which are instead set to Disordered (8.6.3). They will now control the combat area, as it will contain only their blocks.
- If the Insurgent player won, they may replace a Lashkar Forces block in the combat area with a Disordered Captured Artillery block (8.6.4).
- Both players discard all cards played during this combat, then may replenish their hands by drawing up to an equal number of new cards, plus up to one extra card for each non-Rumors

block of theirs that was eliminated during this combat (8.6.5). It is never compulsory to draw any cards at this time, but doing so may trigger a Geneva Talks process (10.0), interrupting play while it is resolved.

The combat is then complete, leaving the winning player in control of the combat area. If there are any more areas with both Soviet and Insurgent blocks, the active player now chooses which combat to resolve next, and so on until all combats have been resolved.

## 8.2 Initiative

At the start of combat, the active player holds the initiative and must either commit a block (8.3) or concede the combat. At all other times the player who is currently losing the combat holds the initiative, meaning that they will have the next choice of whether to pass or commit a block.

The side with the lowest total Impact is losing the combat, or the Insurgents if tied, unless the Warlord Stronghold has been committed, in which case the Soviets are losing the combat while the Impact total is tied.

**Example:** The Soviets commit the first block, a Mobilized DRAF (2 Impact). Initiative then passes to the Insurgents, who now have less total Impact and are therefore losing the combat. They commit a Fortified Lashkar (2 Impact). The total Impact is now equal, but because the Soviets win ties, the Insurgents retain the initiative.

The player with the initiative must either (i) commit a block to the combat (8.3), or (ii) pass. If they pass, the combat ends and the players proceed to the resolution steps (8.6). This means that combat ends as soon as one player passes, and the other player does not get another opportunity to commit more blocks.

**Important!** Combat can end with the Impact totals tied, typically when the Insurgents have the initiative but opt to pass. In this case, the passing player will lose the combat and be forced to retreat but will not lose any blocks as casualties.

## 8.3 Committing Blocks

Blocks are typically committed to combat by playing a matching card (see 8.3.1 for some exceptions). The card used to commit a block must usually name that block, unless the block is Captured Artillery or Spetsnaz, in which case a Mujahideen (either Sunni or Shia) or Soviet (either Infantry or Armor) card may be used to commit it. A block can only be committed once per combat, and a card can only be used to commit one block.

The card used to commit a block should be played face up and then placed in a temporary combat discard pile until the end of the combat (in order to track how many replacement cards can be drawn after combat, see 8.6.5).

**Important!** There are no dedicated Captured Artillery cards for the Insurgent player. These units are taken to be Mujahideen fighters. Thus, during combat, the Insurgent player may use any Mujahideen card (either Sunni or Shia) to commit a Captured Artillery block. Similarly, for the Soviets, the Spetsnaz block can be committed in combat using either a Soviet Armor or Soviet Infantry card.

Committed blocks should be tipped so they are revealed to the opponent, with the edge facing the opponent indicating their current orientation. When a block is committed to combat, the owning player gains an amount of Impact equal to the Impact value of its current orientation—unless the other player successfully played a Loyalty Challenge (8.4). Adjust the owning player's Impact counter on the Combat Impact track to indicate the new total impact.

**Important!** When committing a block, it's crucial that in the process of revealing it, its orientation remains unchanged, i.e., if a committed block's current orientation is Mobilized, it should be made clear to the opponent that this is its current orientation, which determines its Impact value.



*The Soviet player could play a Soviet Armor card from their hand to commit a Soviet Armor block in the combat. In this case, because the block is Mobilized (“Mob”) the Soviet player would move their Impact counter up three spaces on the Combat Impact track.*

### 8.3.1 Special Block Commitments

Certain types of blocks may be committed in special or unusual ways in certain situations, described in this section.

#### 8.3.1.1 Warlord Stronghold

If the Warlord Stronghold is in the combat area, the Insurgents can commit it anytime they have the initiative, without playing a card. It always has an Impact value of 1, but also makes the Insurgents win ties in combat once it is committed. It cannot retreat after combat and will therefore automatically be eliminated if the Insurgents lose, so they will typically want to commit it to any combat where it is present.

#### 8.3.1.2 DRAF Defending a City

If the combat is taking place in a City area and the Soviets are defending, they can commit one DRAF block without playing a card anytime they have the initiative (but can only do so once per combat).

### 8.3.1.3 Ambush

The defender can commit blocks set to the Ambush orientation in two special ways: without playing a card if they are in the combat area, and with a card if they are adjacent to the combat area (blocks adjacent to the combat area cannot usually be committed at all).

| Block orientation | Block location          | Card Required to Commit? |
|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ambush            | Combat Area             | No                       |
| Ambush            | Adjacent to Combat Area | Yes                      |

A block in the combat area set to Ambush can be committed by the player with initiative without having to play a card. This will only be possible when defending, as any attacking blocks must necessarily be set to Mobilized when they move into or are placed in the combat area.

A defending player with the initiative can commit a block set to Ambush located in an Afghanistan area adjacent to the combat area by playing a matching card. The block is then committed in the usual way but should be kept in its current area (not moved to the combat area).

**Important!** The attacking player can never commit Ambush blocks from adjacent areas, and Ambush blocks may never be committed from outside of Afghanistan (e.g., from Pakistan across the border into Afghanistan). Blocks committed to combat from adjacent areas are still revealed, but they remain in their current area. Blocks in adjacent areas containing enemy blocks can be committed for Ambush, however, at the end of the present combat, they will become Disordered (before resolving the combat due to take place in their own area).

There are two special cases that affect the Impact value of committed blocks set to Ambush:

- **Lashkar Forces** have an Ambush Impact value of ‘1+’, indicating that while an individual Lashkar set to Ambush only contributes 1 Impact, each pair of Lashkar set to Ambush that are committed to combat contributes a total Impact of 3.

**Example:** The Insurgent player commits one Lashkar (Ambush) in the combat area, without playing a card. This increases their Impact total by 1. They still have the initiative and commit another Lashkar (Ambush)—whether located in the combat area or in an adjacent area—which moves their Impact total up by another 2, for 3 total Impact from the pair of committed Lashkar (Ambush). Committing a third Lashkar (Ambush) would again only increase the Impact total by 1, while committing a fourth Lashkar (Ambush) would again increase the Impact total by another 2.

- **Mujahideen** (both Sunni and Shia) have an Ambush Impact value of ‘2 (3)’, indicating they have an Ambush Impact value of 3 when committed from an adjacent area across a Difficult border, and an Ambush Impact value of 2 in all other cases.

***DESIGN NOTE:** The Mujahideen here represent the more experienced, trained, and better equipped insurgents. This variable ambushing impact value simulates their familiarity with the difficult terrain passes and skilled guerrilla tactics.*

### 8.3.1.4 Fire Support

The attacker can commit blocks set to Fire Support from adjacent areas across non-Difficult borders without playing a card. Defending blocks set to Fire Support in the combat area must be committed in the normal way, by playing a card. Attacking blocks in the combat area will never be set to Fire Support, as any attacking blocks in the combat area must necessarily be set to Mobilized when they move into or are placed in the combat area.

| Block orientation | Block location                                      | Card Required to Commit? |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Fire Support      | Combat Area                                         | Yes                      |
| Fire Support      | Adjacent to Combat Area across non-Difficult border | No                       |

An attacking player with the initiative can commit a block set to Fire Support located in an area adjacent to the combat area across a non-Difficult border, without playing a card. The block is then committed in the usual way but should be kept in its current area (not moved to the combat area).

**Important!** The defending player can never commit Fire Support blocks from adjacent areas and must play a matching card (as usual) to commit Fire Support blocks in the combat area.

## 8.4 Loyalty Challenges

Immediately after a player commits a block in any way, their opponent has the opportunity to initiate a Loyalty Challenges by playing a KhAD or Defectors card from their hand. This opportunity arises after the player with the initiative has declared the block being committed, revealed it, and played a card to commit it (if required)—but before the Impact value of that block is added to their total on the Combat Impact track.

The way Loyalty Challenges are initiated varies slightly for the two players:

- **The Soviet player** can initiate Loyalty Challenges by playing the KhAD card, which can only be played in reaction to the Insurgent player committing a Lashkar or Mujahideen (Sunni or Shia) block (Captured Artillery or the Warlord Stronghold cannot be targeted for a Loyalty Challenge).
- **The Insurgent player** can initiate Loyalty Challenges by playing a Defectors card, which can only be played in reaction to the Soviet player committing a DRAF or Soviet Infantry block (Soviet Armor and Spetsnaz blocks cannot be targeted for a Loyalty Challenge).

In either case, if the challenged player can reveal a card from their hand capable of committing the targeted block, the Loyalty Challenge fails without further effect. The revealed card isn’t considered played and is returned to the player’s hand, but the KhAD or Defectors card is still considered played (place it in the temporary combat discard pile until the combat is resolved).

The Soviet strategy card **Russian Determination** can also be played in response to **Defectors**, in which case both cards are discarded and placed in their respective player's temporary combat discard piles until the combat is resolved.

If the player with the initiative cannot, or chooses not to, reveal a card from hand that could commit the block targeted by the Loyalty Challenge, the Loyalty Challenge is said to have succeeded. The effect of a successful Loyalty Challenge depends on which player initiated it:

- A successful **Soviet** Loyalty Challenge, from play of the KhAD card, results in the challenged Lashkar or Mujahideen block being eliminated and a Disordered DRAF being placed in the combat area and immediately committed to the combat (increasing the Soviet Impact total by 1).
- A successful **Insurgent** Loyalty Challenge, from play of a Defectors card, results in a challenged DRAF block being eliminated or a challenged Soviet Infantry block being set to Disordered and uncommitted. In either case, a randomly selected Mujahideen (Sunni or Shia) is then placed in the combat area and committed to the combat, set to Disordered (increasing the Insurgent Impact total by 1).

These outcomes are summarized on the **KhAD** and **Defectors** cards, but a few other general points also apply to successful Loyalty Challenges:

- Do not add the Impact value of the challenged block to the Impact total (even if it is a Soviet Infantry block that is not automatically eliminated).
- Any card that was played to commit the challenged block is still treated as having been played and should be placed in the temporary combat discard pile until the combat is resolved.
- A new DRAF or Mujahideen block can only be placed if the challenging player has any blocks available to be placed but is committed to the combat without having to play a card.
- The other player could immediately play their own Loyalty Challenge against the newly committed block.
- DRAF blocks cannot be placed in SSR areas, so if a KhAD Loyalty Challenge is successful during a combat in a SSR area no DRAF block is placed (but the challenged Insurgent block is still removed as usual).
- If any Soviet Infantry are eliminated as the result of a combat where any Defectors cards were played, one played Defectors card must be removed from play for each Soviet Infantry that is eliminated.

After resolving the Loyalty Challenge, play then continues as normal by determining who now has the initiative (8.2).

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**DESIGN NOTE:** During the war, defections from the DRA Army were not uncommon. For many, the DRA offered a mere paycheck, and the soldiers were often not well motivated to fight against their fellow Afghans. There were also cases, although far less common, where conscripts in the Soviet Army defected to the Mujahideen (e.g., the case of Kazbek Hudalov). Meanwhile, the Soviets and DRA would try to persuade locals to betray the freedom fighters through direct threats, propaganda, and an assortment of promises, most notoriously by the DRA's Khadamat-e Aetla'at-e Dawlati (State Intelligence Agency, commonly abbreviated KhAD).

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## 8.5 Assessing Impact

Impact is the measurement of effectiveness in combat—how much pressure is being brought upon the other side to compel them to yield and retreat. Impact is recorded on the Combat Impact track using the corresponding Impact counters in each player color. Each player keeps track of their own cumulative impact separately.

After a player commits a block, determine the Impact value of the block based on its orientation and add it to their total Impact on the Combat Impact track. However, if their opponent reacts with a Loyalty Challenge (8.4), the Loyalty Challenge should be resolved before adjusting Impact.

A player is winning a combat if their total Impact is greater than the total Impact of their opponent. If their Impact totals are tied, the Soviet player is winning the combat, unless the Warlord Stronghold has been committed, in which case the Insurgent player is winning the combat. The player who is not winning the combat is always losing the combat.

## 8.6 Combat Resolution

When the player with the initiative passes, they lose the combat. The player with the highest Impact total always wins combats, with ties going to the Soviets unless the Warlord Stronghold has been committed, in which case the Insurgents win ties.

### 8.6.1 Casualties

The losing player must reveal all their uncommitted blocks in the combat area (maintaining their orientation) and remove blocks as casualties with equal or greater total Impact value than the current difference in Impact totals on the Combat Impact track. All revealed Rumors blocks are also immediately removed at this point (3.1.1, place Soviet Rumors in Turkestan Military HQ).

The losing player must prioritize removing blocks in the following order, but can choose which blocks to remove first within each category:

1. **Disordered** blocks in the combat area
2. **Committed Fortified** blocks in the combat area
3. **Other committed** blocks in the combat area
4. **Committed blocks** in adjacent areas
5. **Uncommitted blocks** in the combat area

They stop removing casualties as soon as the total Impact value of the removed blocks, according to their current orientation, is equal to or greater than the difference in Impact totals on the Combat Impact track. If there are still further casualties to be taken once all eligible blocks have been removed, all further casualties are ignored.

For the purposes of taking casualties, if a Shia or Sunni Mujahideen block set to Ambush was committed over a Difficult border it would count for 3 Impact toward total casualties, otherwise it would only count for 2 Impact. Each Lashkar set to Ambush only ever counts for 1 Impact toward total casualties, even if multiple of them are removed.

**Important!** Anytime the Warlord Stronghold is eliminated through combat (either as a casualty or if forced to retreat), increase the Soviet Control total by 1. Anytime a Soviet Infantry, Soviet Armor, or Spetsnaz block is removed as a casualty, increase the Soviet Fatigue total by 1. Either effect may result in the game immediately ending if Soviet Control or Soviet Fatigue is now at 9 (see section 4.0).

### 8.6.2 Losing Blocks Retreat

After all casualties have been taken, any remaining blocks on the losing side (either committed or in the combat area) are set to Disordered and then placed upright (hidden from the opponent), and then the losing player must retreat all their blocks out of the combat area (committed blocks adjacent to the combat area become Disordered but do not need to retreat).

Blocks may only retreat to areas adjacent to the combat area that are not enemy controlled. If the defender lost the combat, they cannot retreat to the areas that the attacking blocks came from. There are further restrictions on how many blocks may be retreated across each border, depending on which player is retreating:

| Border            | Soviets | Insurgents |
|-------------------|---------|------------|
| Difficult terrain | 1       | 3          |
| Local Roads       | 2       | 2          |
| Highways          | 3       | 1          |

Additionally, whether attacker or defender, blocks cannot retreat into:

- an area with enemy blocks (including unresolved combats), or
- Iran or Pakistan areas. Insurgent blocks can never retreat into a USSR area (even if already occupied by other Insurgent blocks). The Warlord Stronghold may never retreat so will always be eliminated if it is on the losing side of a combat, even if not committed (3.1.2).

The losing player may otherwise choose where to move each retreating block to, but any blocks that are unable to retreat within these restrictions are instead eliminated.

### 8.6.3 Winning Blocks Mobilized

Blocks committed to the combat by the winning player that were either already Disordered or committed in Ambush from an adjacent area containing enemy blocks must be set to (or remain) Disordered. All other blocks committed to the combat by the winning player must be set to Mobilized. The winning player will now control the combat area as it contains only their blocks.

**DESIGN NOTE:** Some might wonder ‘why does a victorious defender have to turn all their committed blocks to Mobilized?’ or ‘wouldn’t Fortified blocks stay what they were?’ They become Mobilized because they’ve expended resources, revealed their positions, been ordered to engage in the combat, likely had their built-up defences damaged in the process; this sort of “cost” to them is reflected in-game by having them become Mobilized as part of the after-action resolution. Moreover, if a victorious defender’s committed blocks stayed as they were, it would reward defensive “turtling” too much.

### 8.6.4 Insurgent Veterans and Captured Weapons

If the Insurgent player won the combat, they may immediately replace a Lashkar Forces block in the combat area with a Disordered Captured Artillery block.

**DESIGN NOTE:** This simulates not only the seizure of Soviet equipment by the Insurgent forces but also the development of more experienced and hardened fighters.

### 8.6.5 Hand Replenishment

Hand replenishment occurs as the final step at the end of each combat. Both players count all cards they played during the combat, which should have been set aside into a separate temporary combat discard pile. This includes all cards used to commit blocks as well as any Defectors, KhAD, or strategy cards played.

Each player then moves the cards they played during the combat to their discard piles and may draw up to an equal number of cards from their deck, plus an additional card for each of their non-Rumors blocks that were eliminated during the combat.

If either player exhausts their deck and still chooses to draw new cards at this point, play is immediately paused to conduct a Geneva Talks process (10.0), then they continue drawing any remaining cards. If both players exhaust their deck in this way, perform two consecutive Geneva Talks, beginning with the active (attacking) player. The combat area is controlled by the winning player for the purposes of scoring during the Geneva Talks, while any unresolved combat areas are still controlled by the defending (inactive) player.

**Important!** A player cannot draw a card in this step as a result of the loss of a Rumors block, no matter the circumstances of its removal from play.

## 9.0 STRATEGY CARDS

Strategy cards provide players with unique opportunities and effects beyond those allowed by the usual game rules.

Each player will start with one (Insurgent) or two (Soviet) strategy cards in their deck and will add two additional strategy cards each time they reshuffle their deck during the Geneva Talks process (10.0).

The effect of each strategy card is indicated on the card itself and also explained in more detail in the Playbook entry for each card. The rest of this section outlines some general points relating to the play of strategy cards.

**DESIGN NOTE:** These cards are powerful and represent paradigm shifts that the sides make in their strategic approach to fighting the war. For instance, the Soviets used their air power throughout the war but if a Soviet player opts to draft the ‘Soviet Air Strikes’ card, they’re opting to escalate their focus and increase their reliance on it (relative to other changes to their overarching strategy they could make instead). So when the Soviets play the Soviet Air Strikes card, it isn’t representing the one time over a year or two that an air strike occurred—instead it’s representing a noteworthy major air action with a potentially significant impact on the course of the war. Similarly with Spetsnaz, CIA Intervention, etc.

## 9.1 Active Strategy Cards

Some strategy cards are played actively when a player chooses to take a Strategy turn (6.1.2). When such a card is played the active player should resolve all text under its ‘Action’ heading, then discard the card. An active strategy card may also have additional text under a ‘Reaction’ heading, which should be ignored when it is played during a Strategy turn. The strategy cards with active effects are as follows:

- **Soviets:** **Russian Determination**, **Enhanced Border Patrols**, **Spetsnaz**, **Hearts and Minds**, **Normative Fire**, **Soviet Air Strikes**, **Policy of National Reconciliation**
- **Insurgents:** **Warriors of God**, **Insurgent Tribal Warlords**, **The Lion of Panjshir**, **Iranian Training Camps**, **Pakistani Training Camps**

## 9.2 Reactive Strategy Cards

Some strategy cards are played reactively, in response to a particular game state or an action taken by the other player. When such a card is played the reacting player should resolve all text under its ‘Reaction’ heading, then discard the card. A reactive strategy card may also have additional text under an ‘Action’ heading, which should be ignored when it is played reactively. The strategy cards with reactive effects, and when they can be played, are as follows:

- **Soviets:** **Landmines** (start of combat as defender), **Russian Determination** (in response to **Defectors** or **Warriors of God**), **Enhanced Border Patrols** (in response to Insurgent blocks moving across an international border), **Spetsnaz** (with initiative in combat)
- **Insurgents:** **CIA Intervention** (in response to **Soviet Air Strikes**, **Enhanced Border Patrols**, or Airlift or Airbridge movement), **Western Media** (in response to **Landmines**, **Normative Fire**, or a Soviet overrun), **Warriors of God** (with initiative in combat), **Insurgent Tribal Warlords** (if the Warlord Stronghold is removed during combat), **The Afghan Identity** (in response to **Hearts and Minds** or after combat is resolved)

## 9.3 Devastation Counters



Through the resolution of the **Normative Fire** and **Soviet Air Strikes** cards, the Soviet player will be able to place Devastation counters on Town areas of the map. Areas with a Devastation counter are treated as though there is no Town there for all game purposes, but primarily affecting the placement of Lashkar Forces during Insurgent Resupply turns (6.1.1).

# 10.0 GENEVA TALKS

Whenever a player needs to draw a card, and their draw pile is out of cards, play is immediately interrupted and that player completes the following Geneva Talks steps in this order:

1. The Insurgent player must reveal and remove any Insurgent Rumors blocks in SSR areas.
2. Check if the Soviet player controls all three Cities and can trace a path of Highway areas without Insurgent control connecting all three Cities to the USSR. If so, increase Soviet Control by 4; otherwise, reduce Soviet Control by 1. If Soviet Control is now at least 9 the game ends with a Soviet victory.

3. Increase Soviet Fatigue by 1 for each Insurgent-controlled City, and by 1 if any SSR areas are Insurgent-controlled. If Soviet Fatigue is now at least 9 the game ends with an Insurgent victory.
4. Advance the Geneva Talks counter by 1. If it's now on the 7 space the game ends immediately and victory is determined (4.0). Otherwise, continue the Geneva Talks process.
5. **Soviet Geneva Talks only:** From each City area that they control, the Soviet player must choose and reveal one Soviet Infantry, Soviet Armor, Spetsnaz, or Soviet Rumors block. The revealed block is then moved to the Turkestan Military HQ area and placed there Mobilized (or just upright if Rumors). If a Soviet-controlled City has no eligible blocks, the Soviet player must instead set half (rounded down) of the DRAF blocks in that city to Disordered.
6. **Insurgent Geneva Talks only:** If the Warlord Stronghold is not in play, the Insurgent player must place it in any Afghan area that is not a City, a Town, or Soviet-controlled. The Insurgent player may also place any number of available Rumors in any Insurgent-controlled Afghan areas at the same time.
7. The player resolving the Geneva Talks may choose up to two new strategy cards and add them to their discard pile, without revealing them to their opponent. The Insurgent player must choose two different Insurgent strategy cards, whereas the Soviet player must choose two identical Soviet strategy cards. The player then reshuffles their discard pile to form a new draw pile and finishes drawing any cards that they had left to draw before beginning the Geneva Talks.

***DESIGN NOTE:** The requirement for the Soviets to choose identical strategy cards simulates the ‘top-down’ strategic policy set by the Soviets. In contrast, the Insurgents are a decentralized and more flexible force but lack any centralized structure that could define an overarching strategy.*

**Important!** Both players may go through the Geneva Talks process during a single player's turn, e.g., when drawing cards after a combat. This would count as two Geneva Talks and may result in a sudden game end.

***DESIGN NOTE:** After the adoption of Resolution ES-6/2 at the Sixth Emergency Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in January 1980, negotiations began between Afghanistan, Pakistan, the United States, and the Soviet Union to end the Afghan crisis. Beginning in June 1982, and continuing until the Soviet withdrawal, there were a number of negotiation rounds—commonly referred to as the Geneva talks—which ultimately led to the Geneva Accords (1988).*

*The timing of these talks is captured in the game through the timing of when players reshuffle their decks. While other events are also simulated during the reshuffle process, a key aspect is the relative strength of the USSR's position in the talks (specifically, how much of a compelling case are they able to make that a new ‘status quo’ exists in Afghanistan), which contributes to how the Soviet player can win the game by gaining ‘Soviet Control’.*

*Each time a player plays through their entire deck represents the passage of roughly 16-20 months.*

## 11.0 SOLITAIRE OPPONENT

While *Bear Trap* is first and foremost a two-player game, this Soviet Solitaire Opponent (SO) offers you the opportunity to play the game on your own. Even though block wargames are typically ill-suited to solitaire play, due to the way they simulate the ‘fog of war’ through hidden information, these rules aim at maintaining that element of surprise while keeping gameplay simple, intuitive, and fast moving.

The human player must assume the role of the Insurgents, and the rules governing the human player are the same as in the two-player game. The SO system assumes the role of the Soviets, using a modified set of rules to determine every decision made by the Soviet ‘player’. Unless otherwise noted, all usual two-player game rules still apply to the Soviet side when controlled by the SO, and victory is determined in the usual way.

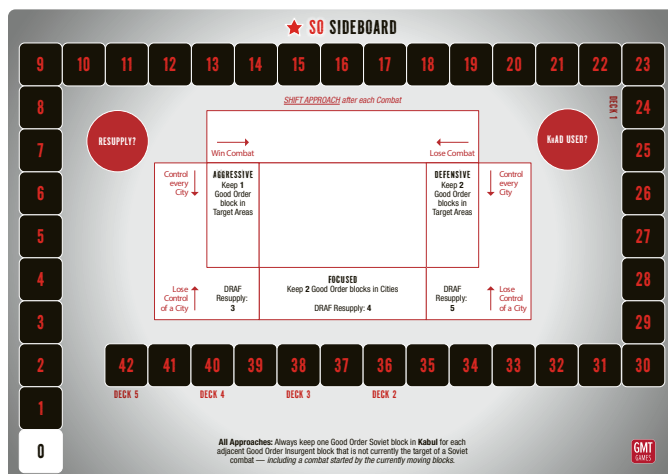
**Important!** Familiarity with the two-player rules is assumed. If you are learning the game by yourself, it’s not recommended that you use this solitaire system to do so. A more effective way to learn the game would be to play a normal two-player game by playing both sides. You should only explore this solitaire system once you have a good grasp of how the normal two-player game plays. A full solitaire example of play can be found in the Playbook.

### 11.1 Components and Key Concepts

The SO uses an additional sideboard to track information, a unique deck of 16 SO cards, a set of three Posture/Approach cards, and a set of SO tables that determine its behavior during the game. It also uses the standard Soviet blocks and some Soviet strategy cards in a slightly different way than in the normal two-player game. Each of these additional SO components and concepts are introduced and explained in this section.

#### 11.1.1 SO Sideboard

The numbered track on the SO sideboard is used to track the current size of the SO’s hand and deck (see next section). The sideboard also contains a central area where the SO’s current Posture card is placed, with its exact position in this area indicating the SO’s current Approach (11.1.4). Finally, there are two additional spaces for the KhAD counter (indicating whether the SO has played its KhAD card during the current deck) and the Resupply counter (indicating whether the SO conducted a Resupply during its previous turn).



#### 11.1.2 SO Hand and Deck

The normal deck of Soviet cards is not used in the standard way when playing against the SO. Instead, the current size of the SO’s deck is tracked on the sideboard with the Deck Size counter, and the current size of its hand is similarly tracked on the sideboard with the Hand Size counter. Any time that the SO would play cards from its hand according to the normal two-player rules the Hand Size counter should be decreased accordingly, and any time that it draws cards from its deck the Hand Size counter should be increased and the Deck Size counter should be decreased.

When the Deck Size reaches 0, the SO must immediately perform the Geneva Talks sequence (11.3.2), then continues to “draw” cards as above.

The Cards Played counter is used during combats to track how many cards the SO has played (11.5), which can never exceed the current position of the Hand Size counter.



Deck Size



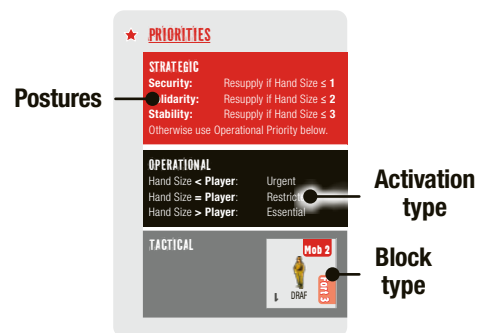
Hand Size



Cards Played

The SO also uses a special deck of 16 cards, referred to as the SO Deck and SO Cards in these rules. This deck and its discard should be shuffled together at the start of each combat and whenever it is reduced to a single remaining card. SO Cards are drawn for various purposes throughout the game. Each SO Card has the following features:

- A **Strategic Priority** (11.3) section at the top of the card, which is used at the start of each SO turn to determine whether the SO will play a Strategy card, perform a Resupply turn, or perform a regular Activation turn, usually with reference to the SO’s current Posture and hand size.
- An **Operational Priority** (11.4) section in the middle of the card, which is used to determine what kind of Activation (Urgent, Restricted, Essential, or Major) the SO will perform, usually with reference to the relative hand sizes of the SO and the player, and sometimes to the SO’s Approach.
- A **Tactical Priority** (11.5) at the bottom of the card, which will either indicate a **block type** or a **KhAD** icon. This indicator is used to randomly determine what type of unit an activated Soviet block is (usually during combats, but also at other times). When instructed to determine the identity of a Soviet block, draw an SO Card and use the block type at bottom right, redrawing if the **KhAD** icon is drawn. The **KhAD** icon, if drawn during combat, instead indicates that the SO will use its KhAD card (if available) or commit a DRAFF block if defending in a City.



SO card anatomy

### 11.1.3 SO Blocks

Soviet blocks are used slightly differently in the solitaire game: the block type as indicated by its sticker is ignored, and instead each block's type is determined only when necessary (most typically during combat, but also at other times).

When you need to determine what type a Soviet block is, draw a card from the SO Deck and consult the Tactical Priority icon in the bottom right corner (if the icon is KhAD, draw another card unless instructed otherwise). The identity of each Soviet block is not tracked from one turn to the next, so it will always be a surprise to the player what they are facing.

**Note:** This means that the Soviet blocks may seem to move around in ways that would not be possible for a human player, but on the other hand it also means that the SO cannot “plan” on a specific block being available for any given combat.

The current orientation of Soviet blocks is determined by their position on the board:

- Blocks lying flat with their sticker revealed (face-up) are **Disordered**.
- Blocks lying flat with their sticker hidden (face-down) are simultaneously **Fortified** and **Fire Support**.
- Upright blocks facing away from you (the normal orientation during a two-player game) are **Mobilized**.

**DESIGN NOTE:** Blocks which are lying face-down are considered to be both *Fortified* and *Fire Support*, until they're committed in combat and their “true” state is determined.

Soviet blocks that are not Disordered, i.e., either face-down (Fire Support/Fortified) or upright facing away from the player (Mobilized) are considered to be in **Good Order**, as are the Insurgent player's non-Disordered blocks (it is assumed that the SO is able to keep track of which Insurgent blocks are Disordered, as they cannot move). The total number of available Soviet blocks is still a limit on how many can be in play, and if a Soviet Infantry or Soviet Armor block is removed as a casualty it should be removed from play as usual.

Finally, it's assumed that the SO will always have “mixed forces” groups in Afghan areas (i.e., DRAF, Infantry, and Armor intermixed in all groups, even if they are not deployed during combat). As a result, the SO will never use the +1 movement bonus for groups that contain only Armor blocks (even if only a single block is moving), and will never be able to overrun Insurgent groups using only three Armor blocks.

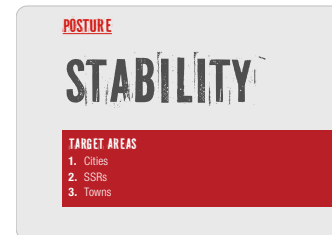
### 11.1.4 SO Posture and Approach

The behaviour of the SO is partly determined by its current Posture and Approach, with Posture indicating its broad strategic goals while Approach indicates its current attitude toward taking risks in order to achieve those goals.

The SO's Posture is indicated by the Posture card currently placed on the sideboard, with a new card being selected at the start of the game (11.2.1) and during the SO's Geneva Talks Sequence (11.3.2). Each Posture card indicates which map areas should be

considered **Target Areas** while that Posture is in effect, and the order of priority for selecting between these Target Areas:

- **Stability:** All Cities, SSRs (not Turkestan Military HQ), and Towns are Target Areas (in that order of priority).
- **Solidarity:** All Cities and Highways in Afghanistan are Target Areas (in that order of priority).
- **Security:** All Cities and any Insurgent-controlled areas in Afghanistan are Target Areas (in that order of priority).



*Stability Posture card*

The SO's Approach is indicated by where the Posture card is positioned on the sideboard, which is adjusted dynamically after each combat is resolved. The arrows on the sideboard indicate the direction you slide the SO's current Posture card after combat—the Posture card should always cover the other two Approaches that are not in effect. The SO will begin the game in the **Aggressive** Approach, shift to **Defensive** after losing a combat, shift to **Focused** whenever the Insurgents gain control of a City, and shift back to **Aggressive** after winning a combat or regaining control of all three Cities.

Each Approach indicates how many cards to flip for DRAF placement during the Geneva Talks sequence (11.3.2), and which Soviet blocks it is willing to move out of an area (such blocks are called **Mobile**):

- **All Approaches:** The SO will always keep one Good Order Soviet block in Kabul for each adjacent Good Order Insurgent block that is not currently the target of a Soviet combat (including a combat that is about to be started by the currently moving blocks).
- **Aggressive:** The SO switches to Aggressive whenever it wins a combat and controls all three Cities. While it is Aggressive the SO keeps one Good Order Soviet block in each Target Area, and all other Good Order Soviet blocks are considered to be Mobile.
- **Defensive:** The SO switches to Defensive whenever it loses a combat and controls all three Cities. While it is Defensive the SO keeps two Good Order Soviet blocks in each Target Area, and all other Good Order Soviet blocks are considered to be Mobile.
- **Focused:** The SO switches to Focused whenever it loses control of a City, and will remain Focused until it regains control of all three Cities, then revert to Aggressive. While it is Focused the SO keeps two Good Order Soviet blocks in each City, and all other Good Order Soviet blocks are considered to be Mobile.

Blocks kept in Kabul by the **All Approaches** condition above should also be counted toward the specific conditions for its current Approach. For example, if there were three Good Order Insurgent blocks adjacent to Kabul and the SO was in the Focused Approach, it would need to keep three total Good Order Soviet blocks in Kabul, not five. If, during an Activation

turn, the SO is moving Soviet blocks from Kabul to initiate combat in an area adjacent to Kabul, do not count the Insurgent blocks in that area toward the total Soviet blocks that must be kept in Kabul.

**Example:** The SO is in the Aggressive Approach. There are five Good Order Soviet blocks in Kabul and three Good Order Insurgent blocks in one area adjacent to it. Normally this would mean that only two Soviet blocks could be moved away from Kabul, but if they were moving to initiate combat with the three adjacent Insurgent blocks then up to four of the Soviet blocks in Kabul could be moved.

### 11.1.5 SO Priority Tables

The Solitaire Opponent Player Aid sheet contains several different tables that are used throughout the game to determine what the SO will do. These are separated into three groups, each explained in more detail in the sections that follow:

- **Strategic Priorities** (11.3), used to determine how the SO performs Resupply turns and the Geneva Talks sequence, and how it selects and uses Strategy cards.
- **Operational Priorities** (11.4), used to determine how it executes regular Activation turns (Urgent, Essential, Restricted, and Major), and where it chooses to move blocks to.
- **Tactical Priorities** (11.5), used to determine which blocks the SO commits during combats, which of its own blocks it removes as casualties, and where it retreats to.

In general each Priorities table is used in the same way: beginning at the top, work your way down the left-hand column until a condition applies, then perform the instruction in the adjacent right-hand column. Some conditions are further restricted by a yellow checkmarked statement and should be skipped if this statement does not apply. How to use each table is explained in more detail in the subsequent sections.

### 11.1.6 SO Strategy Card Deck

The SO keeps its available Strategy cards in a separate deck, shuffled together for random selection when an SO card indicates that the SO will use a Strategy card on its turn (11.3). Initially this deck will be composed of two Soviet Infantry cards as placeholders, both of which will be replaced with a real Strategy card pair when one is drawn (with the type of Strategy card being selected using the Strategy Card Priorities table, 11.3.3). Two additional Soviet Infantry placeholder cards are added to the deck during each Soviet Geneva Talks sequence (11.3.2).

**Note:** The SO Strategy card “deck” will initially consist of just two Soviet Infantry cards, both of which will be replaced with a real Strategy card pair when one is drawn. It is possible for additional Soviet Infantry placeholders to be added before this happens, in which case the deck may consist of two, four, or even six Soviet Infantry placeholders. Each time one of these is drawn it should be replaced with a real Strategy card pair, and a second Soviet Infantry placeholder should be found and removed, then the deck is shuffled.

### 11.1.7 Glossary of Key Concepts

- **Good Order:** Any non-Disordered block is considered to be in Good Order.
- **Mobile:** The SO will only move Soviet blocks that are considered to be Mobile. All Good Order blocks are considered to be Mobile, except as necessary to meet the following conditions:
  - Always keep one Good Order Soviet block in Kabul for each adjacent Good Order Insurgent block that is not currently the target of a Soviet combat (including a combat that is about to be started by the currently moving blocks).
  - **Aggressive:** Also keep one Good Order Soviet block in each Target Area.
  - **Defensive:** Also keep two Good Order Soviet blocks in each Target Area.
  - **Focused:** Also keep two Good Order Soviet blocks in each City.
  - All other Good Order Soviet blocks are **Mobile**.
- **Target Area:** Target Areas are defined according to the SO's current Posture and are used to determine which blocks are Mobile and what areas the SO will select as destinations when carrying out activations. Note that Cities are always considered to be Target Areas.
  - **Stability:** All Cities, SSRs (not Turkestan Military HQ), and Towns are Target Areas (in that order of priority).
  - **Solidarity:** All Cities and Highways in Afghanistan are Target Areas (in that order of priority).
  - **Security:** All Cities and any Insurgent-controlled areas in Afghanistan are **Target Areas** (in that order of priority).
- **Force March:** The SO will only Force March if the SO Hand Size is greater than moving blocks and greater than Soviet blocks in any pending combat (check each separately), and only if necessary to reach its chosen destination with any blocks (or with a Viable Combat Group if one is required).
- **Out of Supply:** A City is Out of Supply if it is either Insurgent-controlled or a path of Highway spaces free of Insurgent control from it to an SSR area cannot be drawn.
- **Random Selection:** If instructed to select randomly between spaces, assign equal odds to each space and roll a die to select one.
- **Overrun:** If movement results in overrun, use the current table to select a new destination that the activated blocks can reach and continue moving.
- **Soviet Blocks:**
  - Upright = Mobilized
  - Face-down = Fortified/Fire Support
  - Face-up = Disordered (ignore unit type)
- **Viable Combat Group:** An activated group of Soviet blocks constitutes a Viable Combat Group if the number of Insurgent blocks in its destination is equal to or less than the number of blocks in the activated group plus the number of Fortified Soviet blocks adjacent across a non-Difficult border to the destination.
- **Within Reach:** A group of Soviet blocks is within reach of a destination if they could reach it in one move. The SO will always prefer to move a group without using Force March if possible.

## 11.2 Setup and General Sequence of Play

### 11.2.1 SO Setup

The player should first set up for the Soviet side as follows:

- Set aside the standard Soviet card deck and form an initial SO Strategy deck using two Soviet Infantry cards as placeholders (11.1.6).
- Place one face-up (Disordered) Soviet block in each City, two upright (Mobilized) Soviet blocks in Turkmen SSR Chardzhou South, Tajik SSR, the Highway area immediately south of Herāt, the Highway area immediately north of Kabul, and Kabul, then place three upright (Mobilized) Soviet blocks in Turkmen SSR Mary South and Uzbek SSR South (see diagram below).
- Place out the SO sideboard, with the Deck Size counter on 24, the Hand Size counter on 6, and the Cards Played counter on 0. Place the KhAD and Resupply counters on their 'Available' sides in their respective spaces.
- Shuffle the three SO Posture cards to determine the SO's initial Posture (place the stack of three Posture cards on the sideboard in the Aggressive Approach position, with the topmost card indicating the current Posture).
- Shuffle the SO Deck and place it near the sideboard.

After completing the Soviet setup, the player should complete their Insurgent setup as normal, then take the first turn of the game.

**Note:** The Soviet setup assumes that the SO has already performed an initial Major Activation turn, which will ensure a consistent opening position for the SO. This is why the SO begins the game with a reduced Hand Size and Deck Size, and why the player takes the first turn.

### 11.2.2 SO General Sequence of Play

The general sequence of play for each SO turn is outlined below, while player turns are carried out in the usual way, using the SO Tactical Priorities (11.5) when combat is initiated and consulting the Strategy Card Instructions table to resolve some specific Insurgent strategy cards.

- At the start of each SO turn, draw one card from the SO Deck to determine what kind of turn the SO will perform. The Strategic Priorities (11.3) section of the card will indicate whether it performs a Resupply turn, uses a Strategy card, or activates Soviet blocks.
  - When the SO performs a **Resupply turn** use the Resupply Sequence table (11.3.1).
  - When the SO plays a **Strategy card**, draw one card from the SO Strategy deck, using the Strategy Card Selection Priorities table (11.3.3) to replace a pair of Soviet Infantry placeholders if one is drawn. Then, reduce the SO Hand Size by 1 and

*Solitaire Opponent setup diagram*



resolve the drawn Strategy card, using the Strategy Card Instructions table (11.3.4) if necessary.

- When the SO **activates Soviet blocks**, use the Operational Priorities tables (11.4) to determine how the activation is resolved.
- During combats initiated by either side, use the Tactical Priorities tables (11.5) to determine which blocks the SO commits, whether it plays the KhAD card, which blocks it removes as casualties, and (if necessary) where it retreats to.
- If the Deck Size counter would ever be reduced below 0, immediately perform the Soviet Geneva Talks sequence using the SO Geneva Talks table (11.3.2), then continue reducing the Deck Size counter from its new position (and increasing the Hand Size accordingly).

The game ends and victory is determined in the usual way, either when Soviet Fatigue or Soviet Control reaches 9, when the Geneva Talks counter reaches 7, or when automatic victory is triggered for one side (4.0).

**Important!** The rules that follow are written out versions of procedures found on the SO cards and Solitaire Opponent Player Aid sheet, and are intended to be used as a reference.

## 11.3 Strategic Priorities

At the start of each SO turn, draw an SO card and consult the top Strategic Priority box to see what kind of turn the SO will perform:

- If the instructions indicate that the SO will perform a Resupply turn, use the Resupply Sequence table to resolve this (11.3.1). If the Resupply marker is flipped to 'Used', or if any Cities are Out of Supply, the SO Deck Size is below 5, and the SO Hand Size is at least 4, instead move down to the Operational Priority section of the card (11.4) to determine what kind of activation the SO will perform.
- If the instructions indicate that the SO will use a Strategy card, draw a card from the SO Strategy deck and use the Strategy Card Instructions table (11.3.4) to resolve that card, then place it in a separate Strategy card discard pile. If the drawn card is a Soviet Infantry placeholder, instead use Strategy Card Selection Priorities table (11.3.3) to select a new pair of Soviet Strategy cards. Then, reduce the SO Hand Size by 1 and resolve the drawn Strategy card, using the Strategy Card Instructions Table (11.3.4) if necessary. If there are no cards remaining in the SO Strategy deck, instead move down to the Operational Priority section of the card (11.4) to determine what kind of activation the SO will perform.
- Otherwise, move down to the Operational Priority section of the card (11.4) to determine what kind of activation the SO will perform.

### 11.3.1 Resupply Sequence Table

Use this table to resolve SO Resupply turns, following each instruction in sequence. Note that the top row of the table might instruct you to use the Operational Priority on the drawn card instead, in which case a Resupply turn will not be performed.

### 11.3.2 Geneva Talks Sequence Table

Use this table to resolve SO Geneva Talks sequences, following each instruction in sequence. After completing the sequence, the SO will continue "drawing" cards as necessary, reducing Deck Size by 1 and increasing Hand Size by 1 for each card "drawn".

### 11.3.3 Strategy Card Selection Priorities Table

Use this table to determine which pair of new Strategy cards the SO will select whenever a Soviet Infantry placeholder card is drawn from the SO Strategy card deck. Start at the top of the table and check each condition, skipping any that do not apply or that indicate a Strategy card pair that is already in the deck. Stop at the first condition that applies and take both copies of the indicated strategy card: use one to replace the currently drawn Soviet Infantry card and the other to replace a second Soviet Infantry card from the SO Strategy card deck, then shuffle the SO Strategy card deck. Finally, reduce the SO Hand Size by 1 and resolve the Strategy card that was just selected.

**Note:** This procedure for determining the identity of Soviet Strategy cards may mean that the SO in effect selects a starting pair that a Soviet player could not normally select – this is okay!

### 11.3.4 Strategy Card Instructions Table

This table contains additional instructions for how to resolve SO strategy cards. Note that the SO uses **Landmines** and **Spetsnaz** in a slightly different way to how a human player would, but all other cards are resolved in the usual way, just using these additional instructions to make any necessary decisions. There are also additional instructions for when the player uses two types of Insurgent Strategy cards, **CIA Intervention** and **Warriors of God**, which are otherwise resolved in the usual way.

## 11.4 Operational Priorities

When instructed to by the Strategic Priority section of an SO card (11.3), use the Operational Priority section to determine what kind of activation the SO will perform, with reference to the relative hand sizes of the SO and the player.

Once an activation type has been selected, use the matching Operational Priorities table to determine how to resolve the activation. Each table consists of three columns: the first indicating the conditions under which each row is used, the second indicating what kind of action the SO will take, and the third indicating which blocks it will activate.

### 11.4.1 Using Operational Priorities Tables

For each activation, start from the top of the indicated table, check each query in the leftmost column and perform the indicated activation in the central column if that query applies, using the rightmost column to select which blocks to activate and referring to the Destination and Origin Priorities tables as indicated. If a query does not apply or the indicated activation cannot be performed, move down to the next row of the table and continue by checking the next query. If you reach the bottom of the table, instead perform an SO Resupply turn if possible (11.3.1), or pass play back to the player if not (assume that the SO performed an Urgent activation with no effect).

### 11.4.2 Urgent Priorities Table

Stop once one block has been activated and do not reduce the SO Hand Size. Note that, like a human player, the SO may only use Airlift during an Urgent Activation turn, and will do so if instructed to by the Origin Priorities table (11.4.6).

### 11.4.3 Essential Priorities Table

First reduce the SO Hand Size by 1, or if this is not possible instead activate one block using the Urgent Priorities table (11.4.2). If a destination space is ruled out due to no Viable Combat Group being within reach, use the same instructions to select another space if possible, or continue to the next row if not. Stop once one area has been activated, unless it did not begin combat, in which case continue to activate two more areas using the Restricted Priorities table (11.4.4).

### 11.4.4 Restricted Priorities Table

First reduce the SO Hand Size by 1, or if this is not possible instead activate one block using the Urgent Priorities table (11.4.2). Stop once three areas have been activated.

### 11.4.5 Major Priorities Table

First reduce the SO Hand Size by 2, or if this is not possible instead activate one area using the Essential Priorities table (11.4.3). If a destination space is ruled out due to no Viable Combat Group being within reach, use the same instructions to select another space if possible, or continue to the next row if not. Stop once six areas have been activated.

### 11.4.6 General Destination and Origin Priorities Tables

When instructed to move blocks, use these tables to select the destination and origin, modified where relevant by specific instructions from the Operational Priorities tables described above. Skip any rows that do not apply, use each subsequent row to narrow down the possible spaces, and stop once a single space has been selected.

### 11.4.7 Overruns

If an overrun occurs, use the current table to find a new destination within reach of the activated blocks and continue moving them if possible (this does not count as a new activation).

### 11.4.8 Force March

The SO will only Force March if the SO Hand Size is greater than the number of moving blocks and greater than the number of Soviet blocks in any pending combat (check each separately), and only if necessary to reach its chosen destination with any blocks (or with a Viable Combat Group if one is required).

## 11.5 Tactical Priorities

When resolving combats against the SO, use the following general principles:

- On the Soviet turn, resolve battles in Target Areas first, then Highways, then SSRs, then fewest Soviet blocks, then selected randomly. During the Insurgent turn the player chooses the order of combats as usual.

- Shuffle the SO Discard Pile into the SO Deck at the start of each combat.
- To commit a Soviet block, draw one SO card to determine its type (using the Tactical Priority section), then place the card near it to indicate what type of block it is (for the duration of the combat).
- If the player plays Defectors, draw SO cards up to SO Hand Size minus Cards Played to check for a match (if no match, Defectors succeeds, but keep the Disordered Soviet block's SO card out to mark its identity).
- Increase Cards Played by 1 for each card that the SO would have to play to commit a block (or play KhAD) in combat (as indicated on the 'Start of Soviet attack or Soviet initiative' table).
- After each combat, increase SO Hand Size by 1 for each Soviet block removed, decrease SO Deck Size by Cards Played plus 1 for each Soviet block removed, then reset Cards Played to 0.

### 11.5.1 Tactical Priorities Table

Whenever the SO has initiative, draw a card from the SO deck then consult the 'Start of Soviet attack or Soviet initiative' table, starting from the top row and checking each condition in turn. Once one condition has been met, carry out the indicated instruction, then assess initiative again.

### 11.5.2 Casualty Priorities Table

Use this table to determine which SO blocks to remove as casualties when it loses a combat, respecting the usual order in which casualties must be removed (8.6.1). If unidentified Soviet blocks need to be removed, draw SO cards to identify all possible casualties, then use this table to select from among them.

### 11.5.3 Retreat Priorities Table

Use this table to determine where to retreat SO blocks to, within the usual limitations.

## KEY TERMS INDEX

**Activation:** Use of turn to activate blocks for movement or orientation adjustment; counter used to indicate when an area has been activated. (6.1.3; 2.4.6)

**Afghan areas:** Green and tan colored map areas that fall within Afghanistan. (2.3.1)

**Airbridge:** A special movement option allowing the Soviets to move two non-DRAF blocks directly between Turkestan Military HQ and Kabul. (7.1)

**Airlift:** A special movement option allowing the Soviets to move one non-Armor block directly from a City to any Afghan area that's not Insurgent-controlled. (7.1)

**Ambush:** Block orientation that allows for defensive commitment in adjacent combat areas. (3.1)

**Block:** Wooden block marked with a sticker that indicates what type of force it represents. (2.1)

**Captured Artillery:** Insurgent forces block equipped with heavier weaponry. (2.1)

**Casualties:** Blocks eliminated from the losing side after combat (8.6.1).

**City:** Special map areas that are important for Soviet DRAF placement and scoring during Geneva Talks. (2.3.3)

**Combat:** Conflict procedure triggered whenever Soviet and Insurgents blocks are in the same area at the end of a turn. (8.0)

**Controlled:** Area with one player's blocks, or Cities and SSR areas without any blocks (Soviet-controlled), or Towns without any blocks (Insurgent-controlled). (3.2)

**Devastation:** Counter placed on Towns by some Soviet strategy cards that prevents their use by the Insurgent player. (2.4.2)

**Difficult:** Border type that restricts movement. (2.3.2)

**Disordered:** Weakened block orientation that prevents a block from being activated. (3.1)

**DRAF:** Basic Soviet forces block representing the armed forces of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. (2.1)

**Fire Support:** Block orientation that allows for offensive commitment in adjacent combat areas. (3.1)

**Force March:** Option to spend a card to increase the movement allowance of a group of blocks by one. (7.1)

**Fortified:** Block orientation with an enhanced impact value when defending in combat. (3.1)

**Geneva Talks:** Scoring sequence triggered when either player exhausts their deck. (10.0)

**Hazarajat:** Special map area used for the **Iranian Training Camps** strategy card. (2.3.3)

**Highway:** Border type that allows faster movement and indicates the supply route for Soviet scoring. (2.3.2, 4.0)

**Impact:** Measure of combat effectiveness, used to determine outcome and casualties in combat. (8.5)

**Impassable:** Special border between foreign spaces that cannot be crossed by any blocks. (2.3.2)

**Initiative:** The player due to act next in combat, usually with lower total Impact. (8.2)

**Iran:** Foreign map area that provides a haven for Insurgent forces that Soviet forces may not enter, and used for the **Iranian Training Camps** strategy card. (2.3.1)

**Lashkar:** Basic Insurgent forces block representing local tribal forces. (2.1)

**Local Roads:** Standard border type with no modifier. (2.3.2)

**Loyalty Challenge:** Triggered by play of KhAD or Defectors in combat. (8.4)

**Mobilized:** Basic block orientation that blocks automatically adopt when activated to move. (3.1)

**Mujahideen:** Elite Insurgent forces block, either Sunni or Shia. (2.1)

**Orientation:** Facing of block that indicates its status and impact value in combat. (3.1)

**Overrun:** Automatic elimination of enemy blocks by large group of moving blocks. (7.2)

**Pakistan:** Foreign map areas that provide a haven for Insurgent forces that Soviet forces may not enter, and used for the **Pakistani Training Camps** strategy card. (2.3.1)

**Panjshir Valley:** Special map area used for **The Lion of Panjshir** strategy card. (2.3.3)

**Resupply:** Use of turn to refresh blocks and draw cards, never twice in a row. (6.1.1)

**Retreat:** Movement of blocks on losing side from combat area. (8.6.2)

**Rumors:** Special blocks used for deception, immediately removed if revealed. (3.1.1)

**Soviet Armor:** Elite and heavily armored Soviet forces block. (2.1)

**Soviet Control:** Counter tracking progress toward Soviet victory. (2.4.3, 4.0)

**Soviet Fatigue:** Counter tracking progress toward Insurgent victory. (2.4.3, 4.0)

**Soviet Infantry:** Elite Soviet forces block. (2.1)

**Spetsnaz:** Special Soviet forces block that only enters play through use of a strategy card. (2.1)

**SSR:** Foreign map areas that DRAF may not enter and are important for Insurgent scoring. (2.3.1)

**Standard card:** Regular cards used to commit blocks and trigger Loyalty Challenges during combat. (2.2.1)

**Strategy card:** Special cards with unique effects. (2.2.2)

**Town:** Special map areas that are important for Insurgent Lashkar placement. (2.3.3)

**Turkestan Military HQ:** Foreign map area that DRAF and Insurgent forces may not enter, used for Soviet Airbridge movement. (2.3.1)

**Warlord Stronghold:** Special Insurgent block that cannot move and allows Insurgents to win ties in combat in its area. (3.1.2)

## Insurgent Strategy Cards

|                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Warriors of God           | <b>ACTION</b> Reveal and remove 1 non-Rumors Insurgent block from an Afghanistan area to force the Soviet player to remove 1 DRAF block from an adjacent area (if possible).                                                                                                                                                     | <b>REACTION</b> Play when you have the Initiative during combat to eliminate 1 committed Mujahideen block and add its Impact value to your Impact total again.                                                                                |
| Insurgent Tribal Warlords | <b>ACTION</b> Place 1 Disordered Captured Artillery in the area with the Warlord Stronghold. You may also remove 1 non-Rumors Insurgent block from the same area to place 1 more Disordered Captured Artillery there.                                                                                                            | <b>REACTION</b> Play after the Warlord Stronghold is removed in combat to prevent the Soviet player from gaining +1 Control, then immediately place the Warlord Stronghold in any other non-Highway Insurgent-controlled area in Afghanistan. |
| The Afghan Identity       | <b>REACTION</b> Play in response to <b>Hearts and Minds</b> to cancel it (it is discarded without effect). You may then set any number of non-Disordered Insurgent blocks in Afghanistan areas to Ambush.                                                                                                                        | <b>REACTION</b> Play after a combat is resolved to set all Insurgent blocks in or adjacent to the combat area to any orientation.                                                                                                             |
| The Lion of Panjshir      | <b>ACTION</b> Place 1 random Disordered Mujahideen in the Panjshir Valley area, then EITHER: Immediately take another turn and the Soviet player cannot Resupply on their next turn; OR, Force the Soviet player to discard cards equal to the number of blocks in the Panjshir Valley (max half their hand size, rounded down). |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| CIA Intervention          | <b>REACTION</b> Play in response to <b>Soviet Air Strikes</b> or <b>Enhanced Border Patrols</b> to increase Soviet Fatigue by 1 and cancel the Soviet Strategy card (it is discarded without effect).                                                                                                                            | <b>REACTION</b> Play after any Soviet blocks are moved by Airlift or Airbridge to force the Soviet player to eliminate 1 block and Disorder the other (if any).                                                                               |
| Iranian Training Camps    | <b>ACTION</b> Place 2 Mobilized Shia Mujahideen in Iran and one in the Hazarajat area (even if Soviet-controlled).                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Pakistani Training Camps  | <b>ACTION</b> Place 1 Mobilized Sunni Mujahideen in each Pakistan area, plus 1 more Mobilized Sunni Mujahideen in each Pakistan area for every Devastation counter on the map.                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Western Media             | <b>REACTION</b> Play in response to <b>Landmines</b> , or <b>Normative Fire</b> that places a Devastation counter, or a Soviet Overrun, to increase Soviet Fatigue by 1.                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

## Soviet Strategy Cards

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hearts and Minds                  | <b>ACTION</b> Place 1 Disordered DRAF in each Soviet-controlled City. The Insurgent player must remove all their Rumors from the board and cannot Resupply on their next turn.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Normative Fire                    | <b>ACTION</b> Place a Devastation counter in 1 Soviet-controlled Town (if possible), then EITHER: Declare how many Soviet blocks are set to Fire Support and force the Insurgent player to Disorder that many non-Disordered Insurgent blocks in Afghanistan, then you may immediately take another turn; OR, Set any number of non-Disordered Soviet blocks to Fire Support, and the Insurgent player must discard half their cards (rounded down).                     |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Soviet Air Strikes                | <b>ACTION</b> Eliminate all Insurgent blocks in 1 Afghanistan area, then place a Devastation counter there if it is a Town.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Spetsnaz                          | <b>ACTION</b> Place the Spetsnaz block, set to any orientation, in any Afghanistan or SSR area that's not Insurgent-controlled, then immediately take another turn.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>REACTION</b> Play when you have the Initiative during combat to place the Spetsnaz block, set to Ambush, in any area adjacent to the combat area that's not Insurgent-controlled. |
| Landmines                         | <b>REACTION</b> Play at the start of a combat where you are the defender to force the Insurgent player to immediately eliminate 1 Insurgent block in the combat area.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Russian Determination             | <b>ACTION</b> Place 1 eliminated Soviet Infantry block, set to any orientation, in the Turkestan Military HQ, then immediately take a Resupply turn.<br><b>ACTION</b> Place this card in front of you. At the start of the next Geneva Talks, gain 1 Soviet Control if no Cities or SSR areas are Insurgent-controlled, then discard this card.                                                                                                                          | <b>REACTION</b> Play in response to <b>Defectors</b> or <b>Warriors of God</b> to cancel that card (it is discarded without effect).                                                 |
| Enhanced Border Patrols           | <b>ACTION</b> Eliminate all non-Fortified Insurgent blocks in 1 Afghanistan area adjacent to Iran, Pakistan, or the USSR.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>REACTION</b> Play after any group of blocks is moved into or out of Iran, Pakistan, or the USSR to eliminate all blocks in that group.                                            |
| Policy of National Reconciliation | <b>ACTION</b> Reveal and remove 1 Soviet Armor block to play this card, THEN: Reduce Soviet Fatigue by 1 and perform a Restricted turn that activates any number of areas; AND, Select 1 Insurgent-controlled Afghanistan area: if there are both Sunni Mujahideen and Shia Mujahideen in that area, the Insurgent player must eliminate 1 Mujahideen there; AND, The Insurgent player may not move or place blocks into any Soviet-controlled areas on their next turn. |                                                                                                                                                                                      |