



TF RAKKASAN OPERATION ANACONDA

THE BATTLE OF SHAH-I-KOT VALLEY
2 - 13 MARCH 2002





AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

AREA OF OPERATIONS / INTEREST

ENEMY SITUATION

BRIGADE MISSION

BRIGADE COMMANDER'S INTENT

TASK ORGANIZATION

CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION

THE BATTLE: DAY-BY-DAY

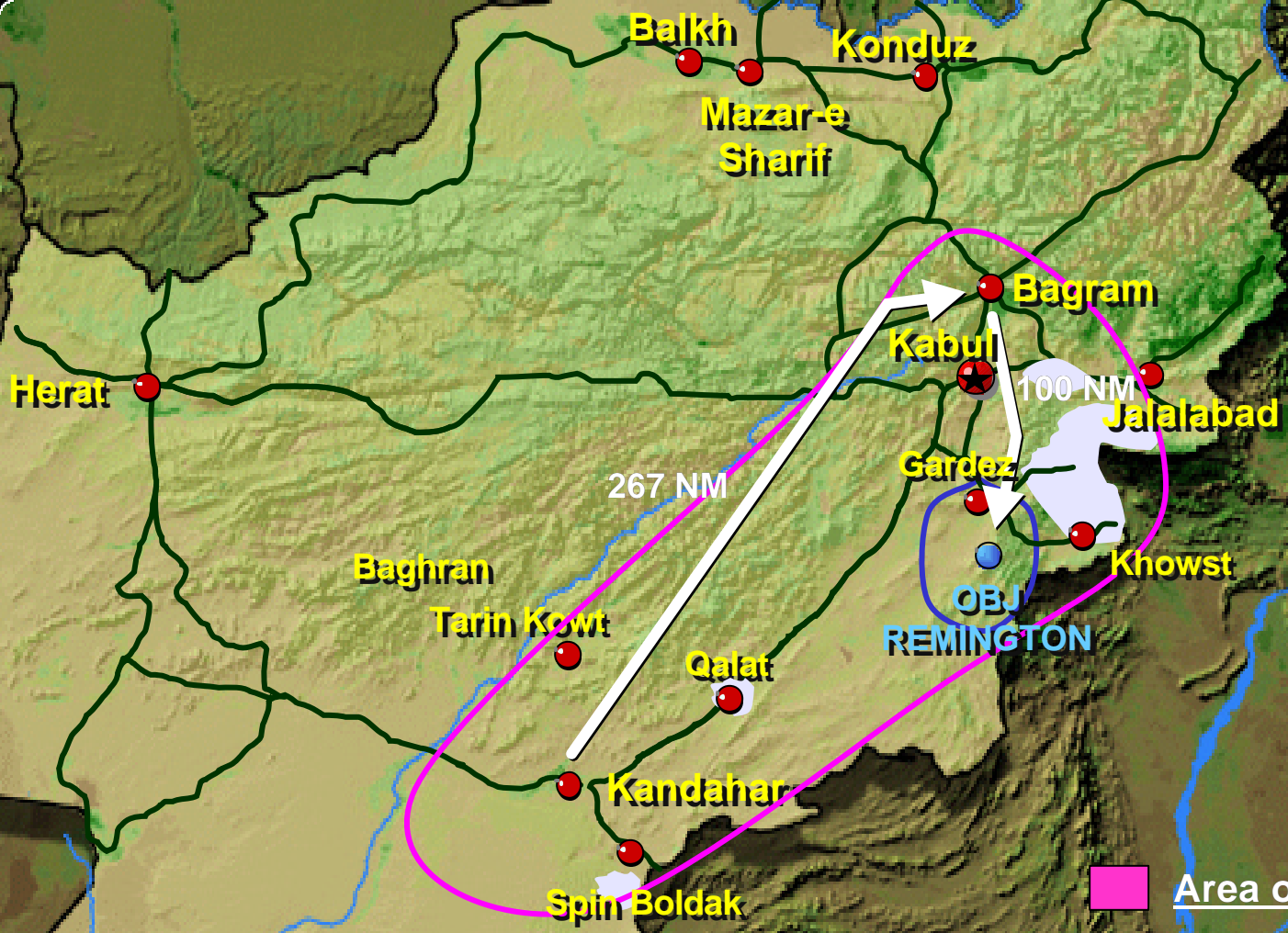
LESSONS LEARNED


CONCLUSION

AIRBORNE



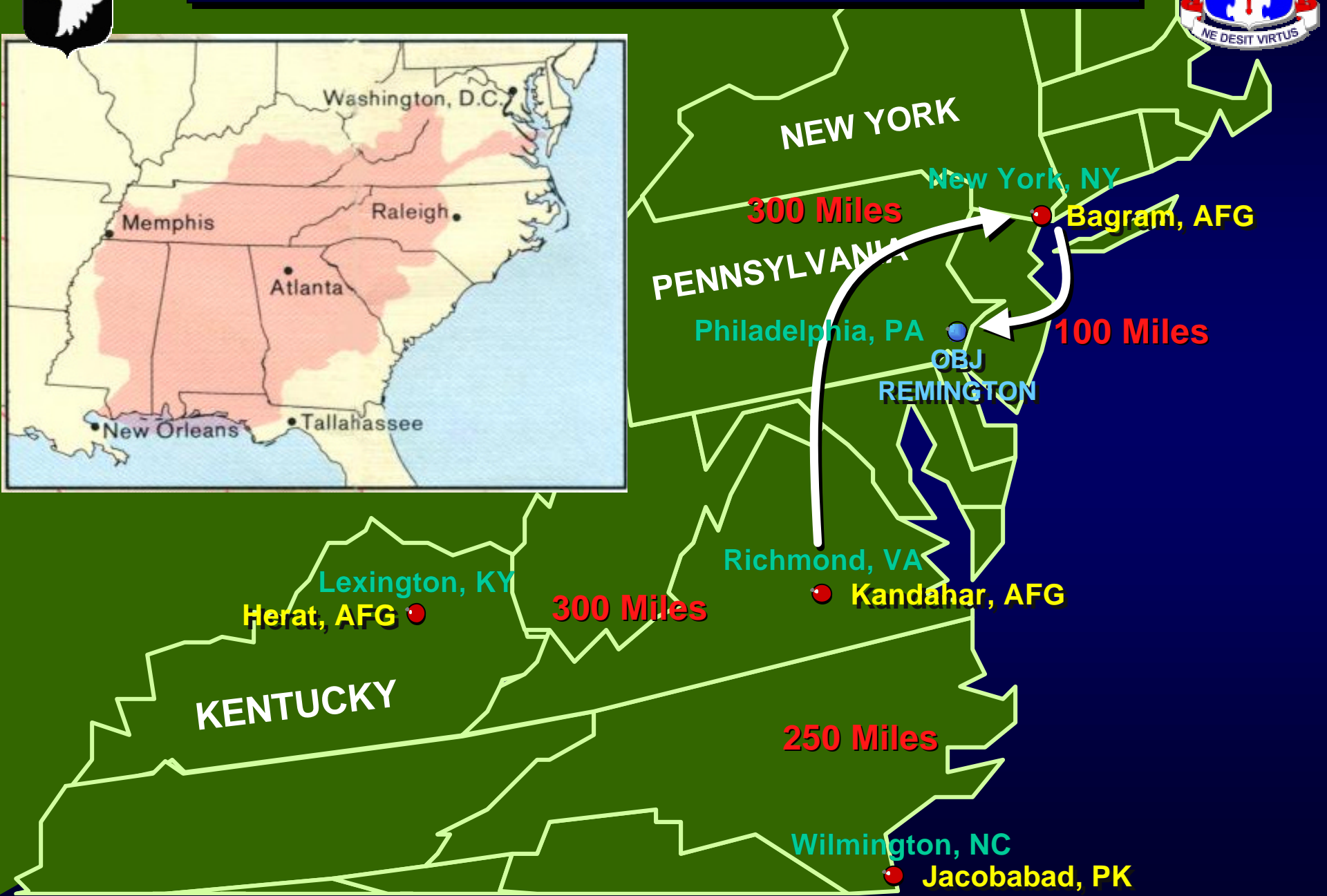
AREA OF OPERATIONS/ AREA OF INTEREST



 Area of Interest
 Area of Operations



DISTANCES: A PERSPECTIVE





AREA OF OPERATIONS



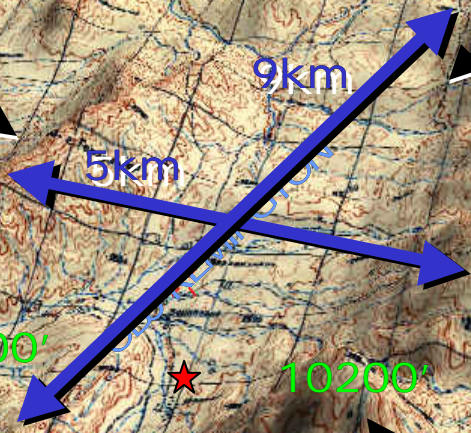
GARDEZ

ZURMAT

LOWER SHAH-I-KOT VALLEY

"THE WHALE"

11000'



UPPER SHAH-I-KOT VALLEY

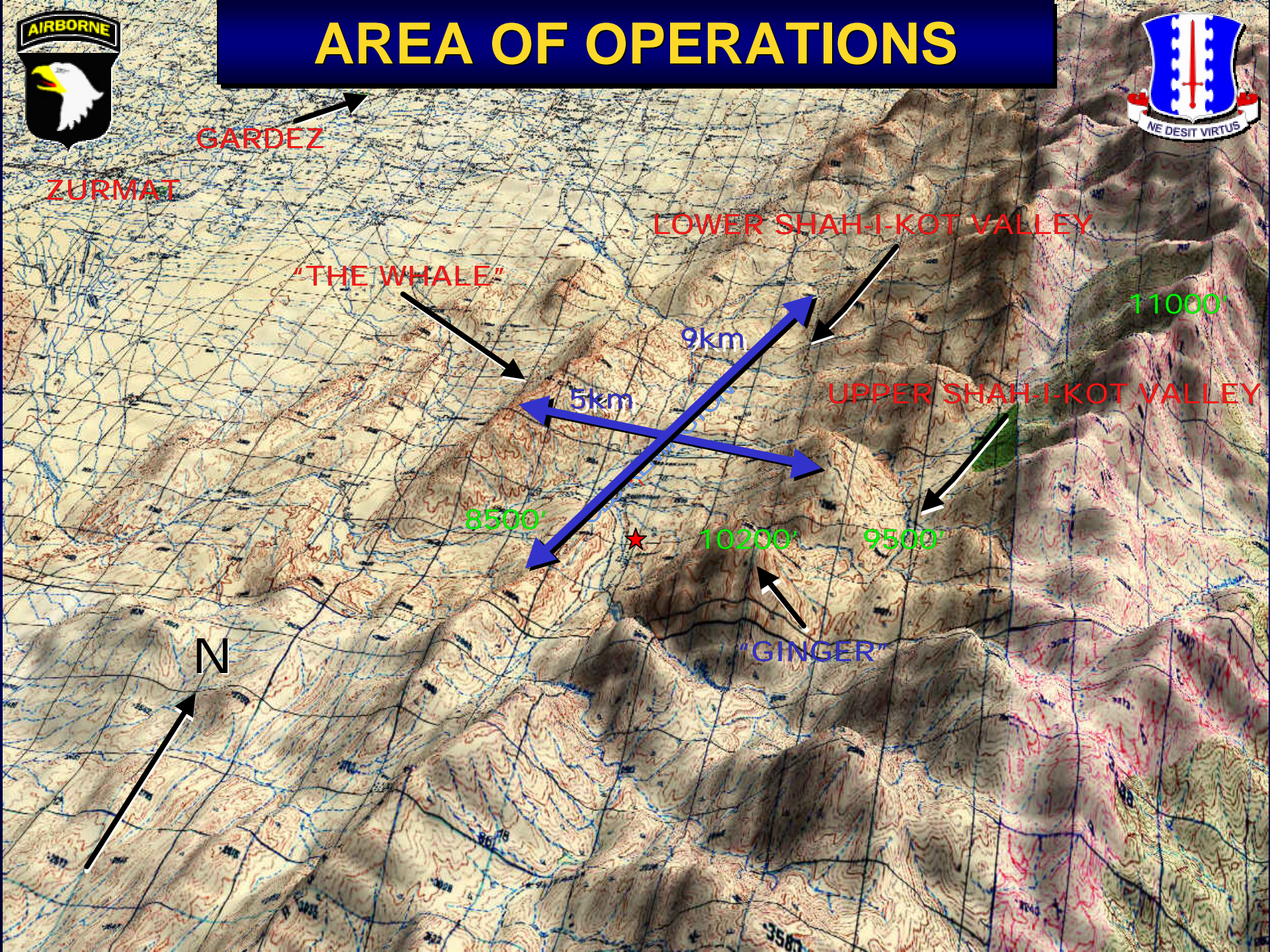
8500'

10200'

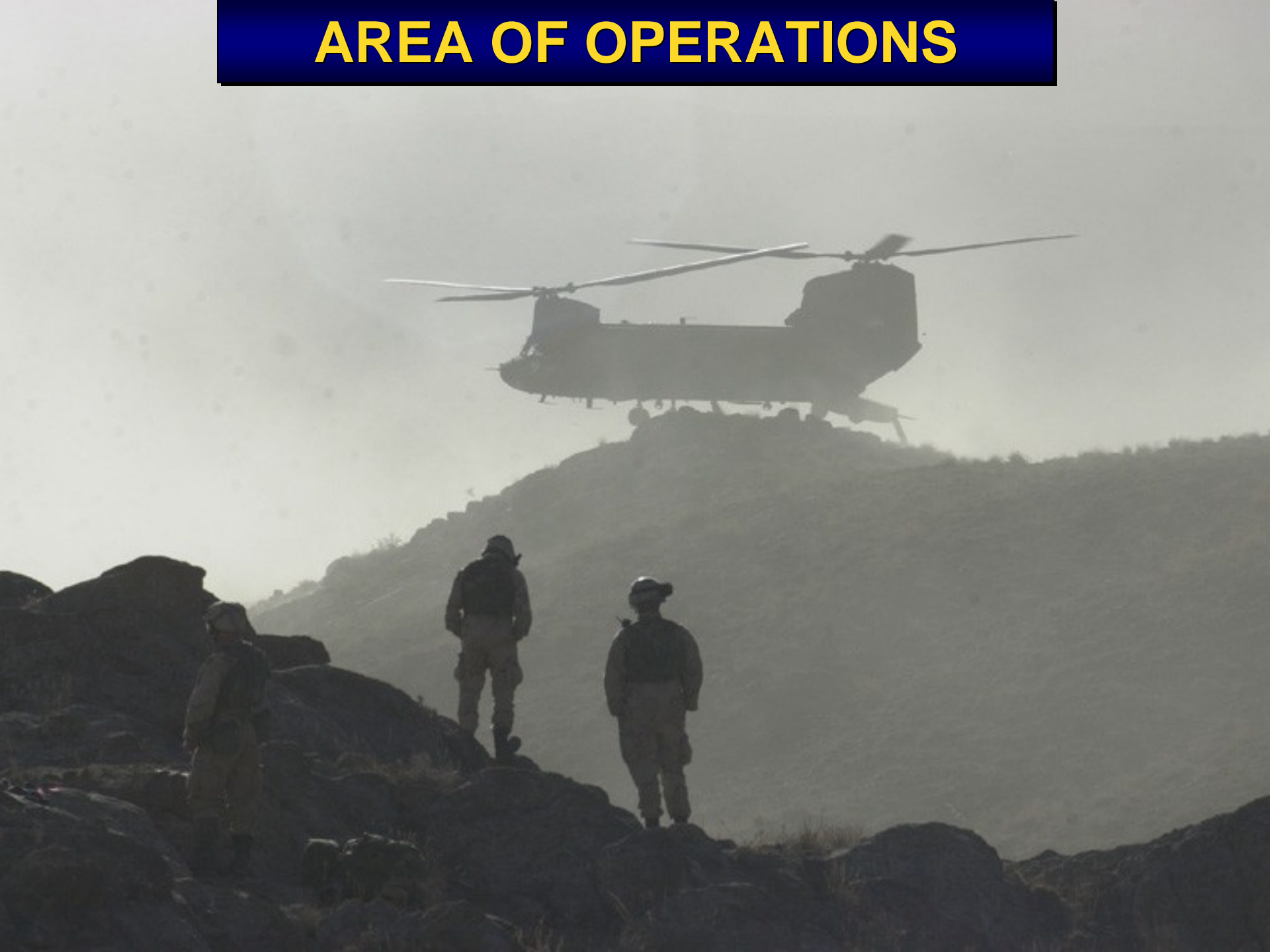
9500'

"GINGER"

N



AREA OF OPERATIONS



AREA OF OPERATIONS





THE ENEMY



- **82mm MORTAR: USED FOR HIGH VALUE TARGETS SUCH AS COVERING POTENTIAL LZS, AVENUES OF APPROACH, AND SUPPORTING FIRE ON TARGETS WITHIN A KILL ZONE.**



THE ENEMY



- **DSHk-38: EMPLOYED WITH EACH FIGHTING POSITION OR BUNKER ORIENTED TOWARDS THE AVENUE OF APPROACH.**



THE ENEMY



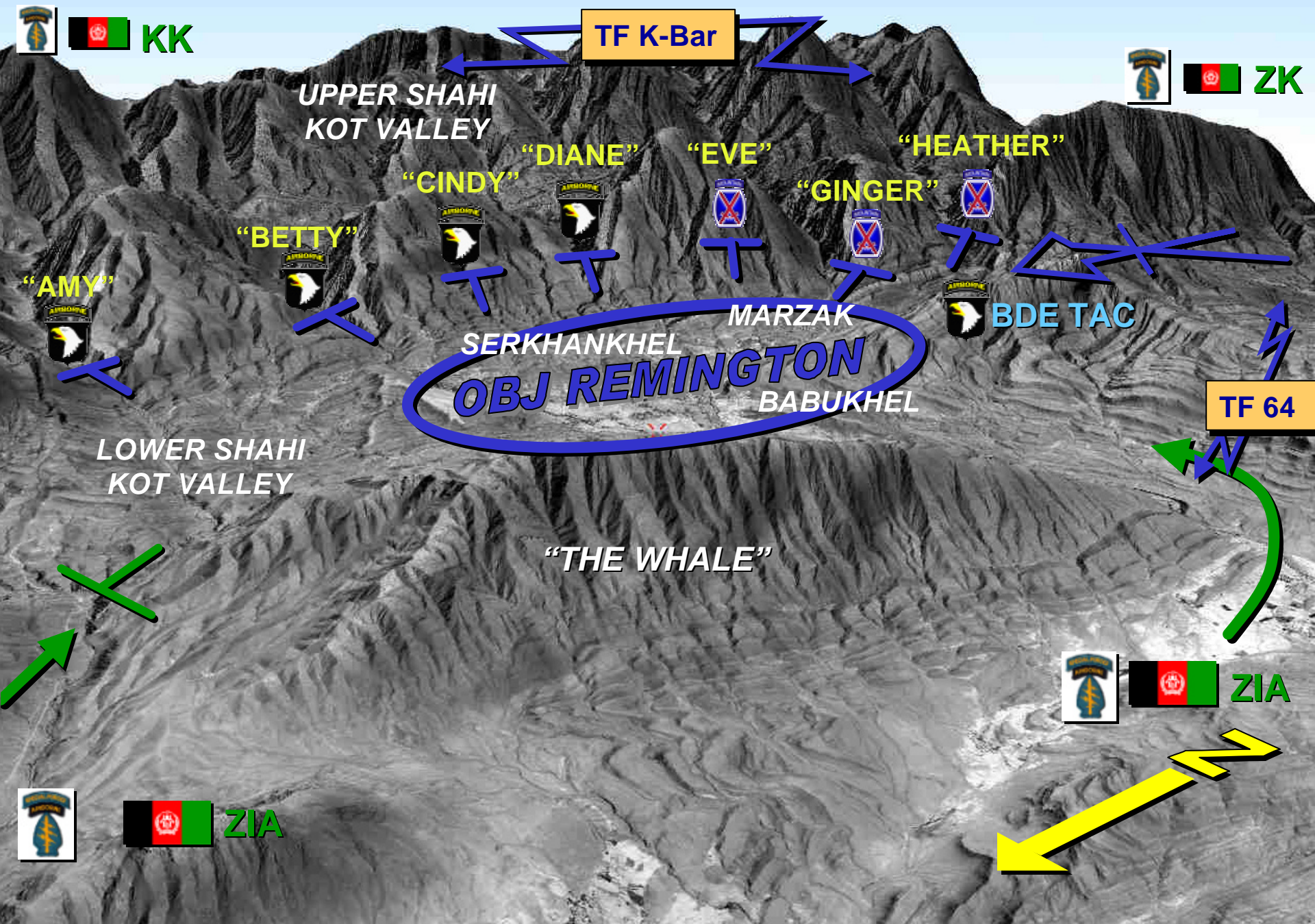


TF RAKKASAN MISSION



Task Force Rakkasan air assaults H-Hour, D-Day (0200Z, 2 March 2002) into Area of Operations EAGLE to block Al Qaeda withdrawal from Objective REMINGTON in order to enable the combat operation of Commander Zia's Afghan Forces (the main effort). On order, Task Force Rakkasan assists Afghan Forces to block Al Qaeda escape routes into Pakistan to complete the destruction of the enemy in Area of Operations EAGLE. On order, redeploys to Kandahar Airfield to prepare for future operations.

CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION





PRIOR TO D-DAY



- **REFINEMENT OF PLAN**
- **REHEARSALS**
- **BATTLE DRILLS**
- **INDIVIDUAL TRAINING**
- **FLY-AWAY REHEARSAL**



D – 4: Division Back-Brief



D – 2: Sub-Unit Rehearsal



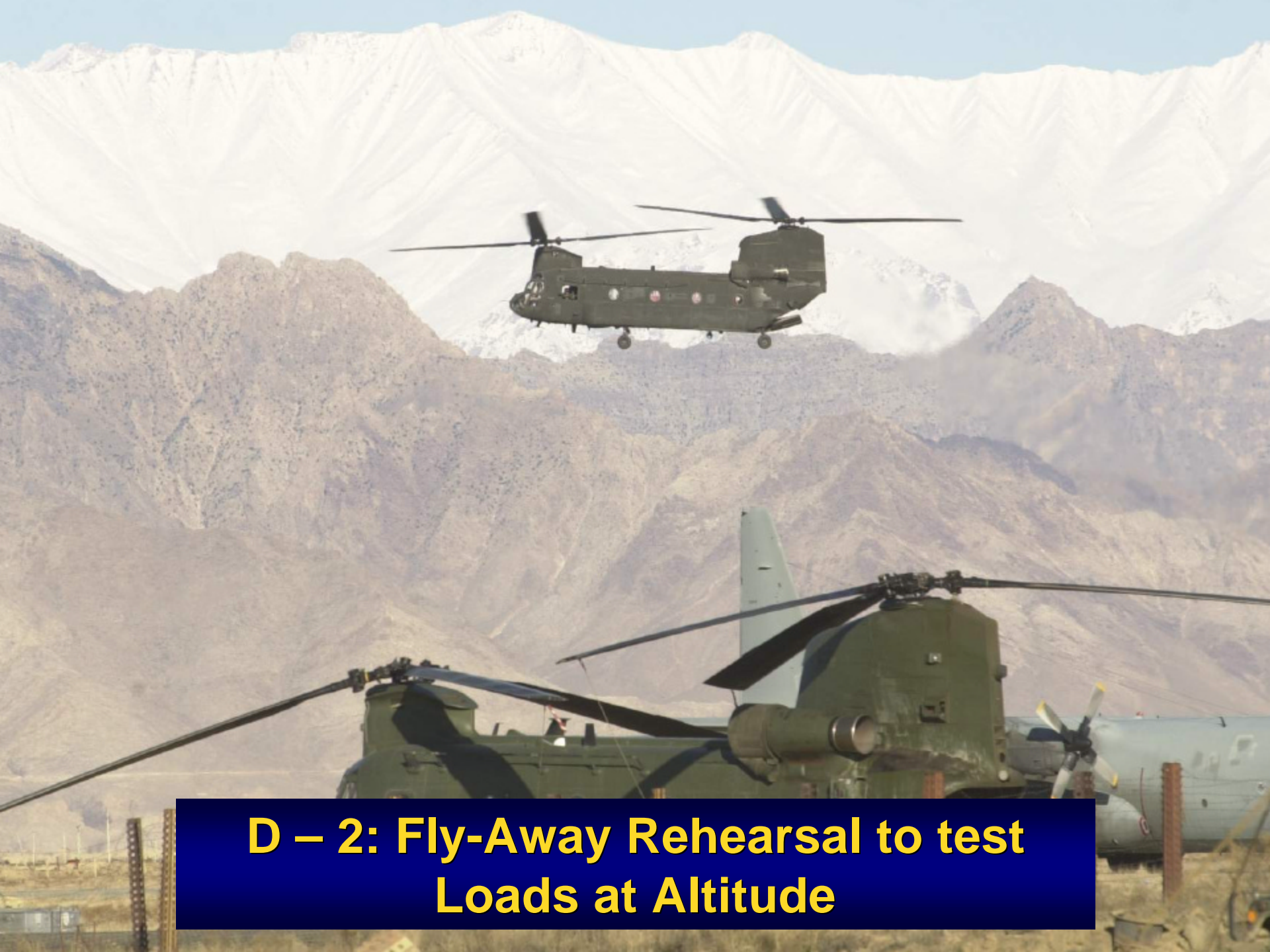
D – 2: Pre-Combat Preparations



D – 2: Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse!



D – 2: TF RAKKASAN Conducts Fly-Away Rehearsal



**D – 2: Fly-Away Rehearsal to test
Loads at Altitude**



**D - Day: Lift 1, Serial 1
waits to board aircraft**



D - Day: Lift 1, Serial 1 prepares to take off



TF K-Bar

TF 64



"AMY"

"BETTY"

"CINDY" "DIANE" "EVE"

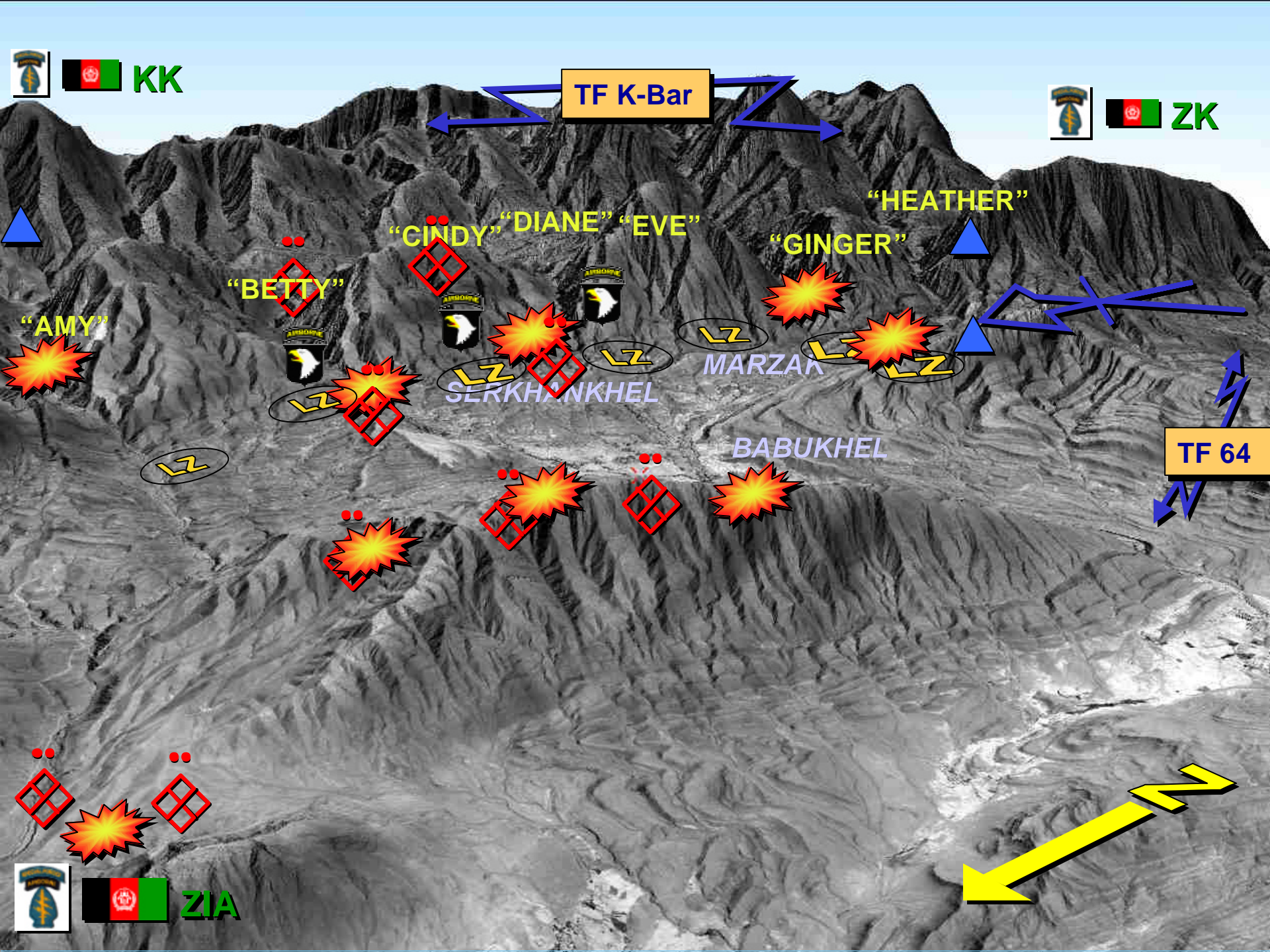
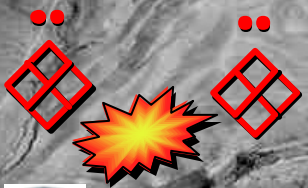
"GINGER"

"HEATHER"

MARZAK

SERKHANKHEL

BABUKHEL





D - Day: Fire and Maneuver



D - Day: A Forward Observer reports his location



D - Day: An Apache moves into position to answer a call for support



**D - Day: AQ Position known as “The Compound,”
located west of Blocking Position Cindy**

View looking southeast



TF K-Bar

TF 64

"AMY"

"BOB"

"CINDY" "DIANE"

"EVE"

"GINGER"

"HEATHER"

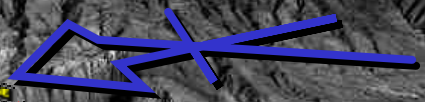


SERKHANKHEL

MAJGA

BDE TAC

BABUKHEL

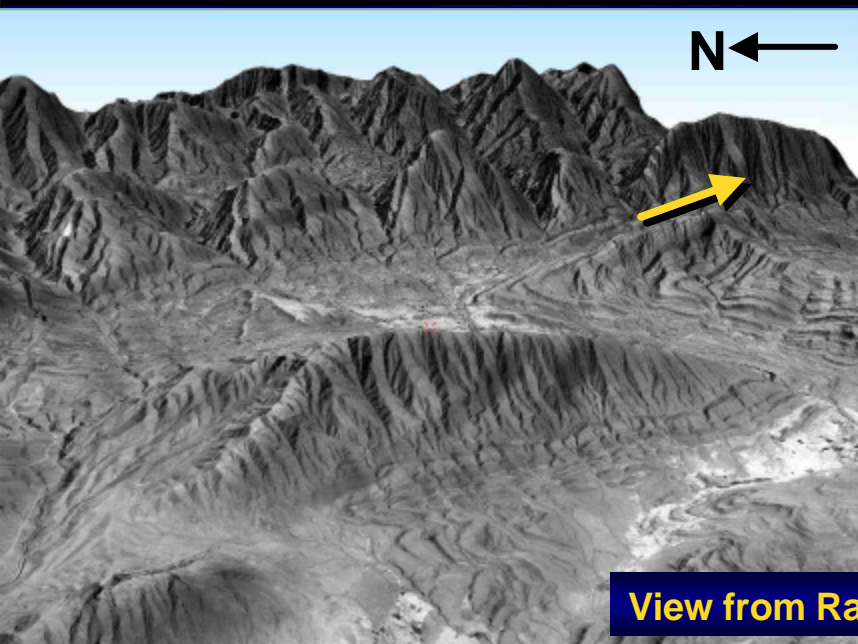


D-Day: Command and Control aircraft landing at "RAK TAC Ridge"



View from Rak TAC looking Northeast

D-Day: The Air Liaison Officer calls in an air strike from "RAK TAC Ridge"

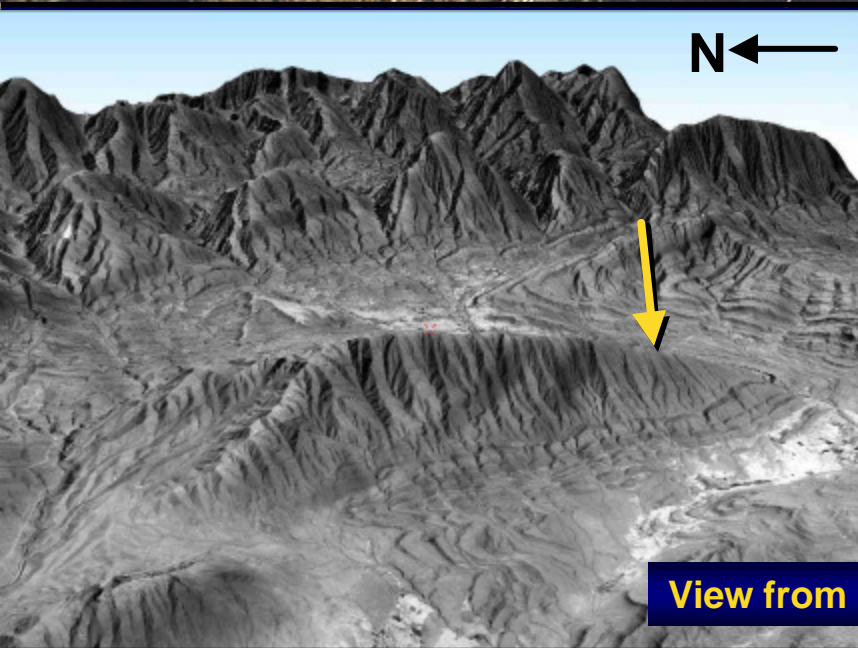


View from Rak TAC looking Southeast

D-Day: Partial view of "The Whale"

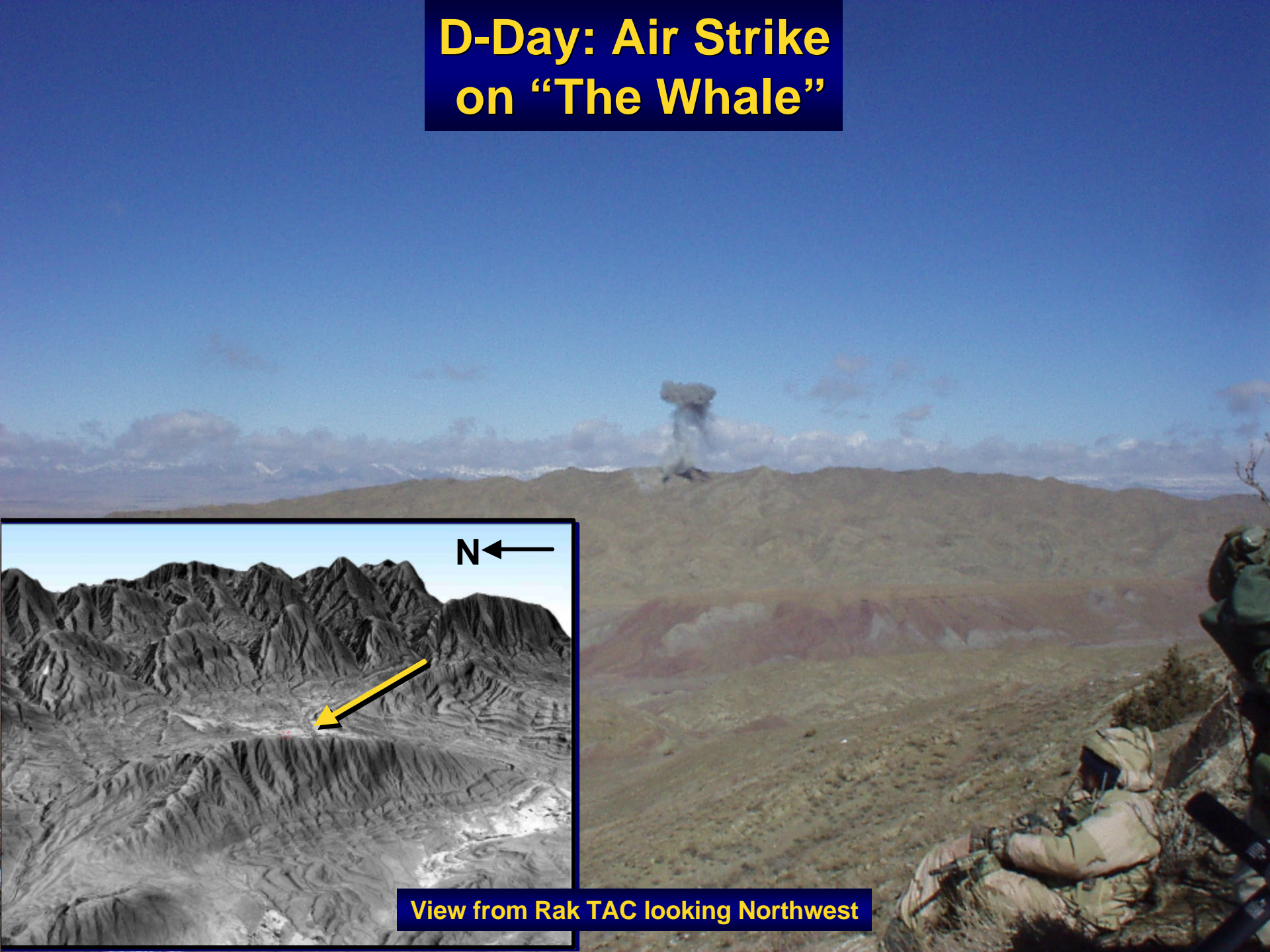


"The Whale"



View from Rak TAC looking West

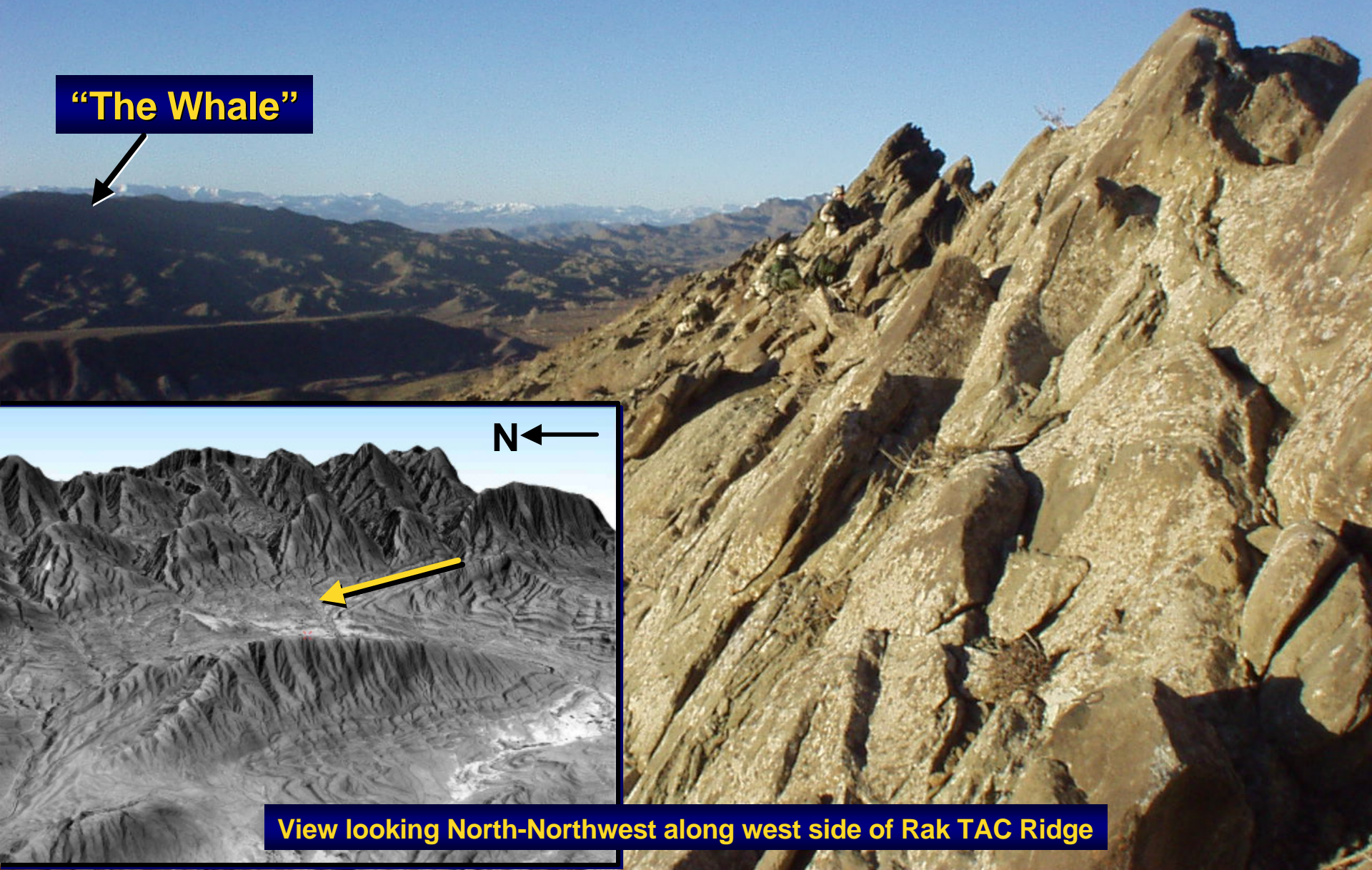
D-Day: Air Strike on "The Whale"



View from Rak TAC looking Northwest

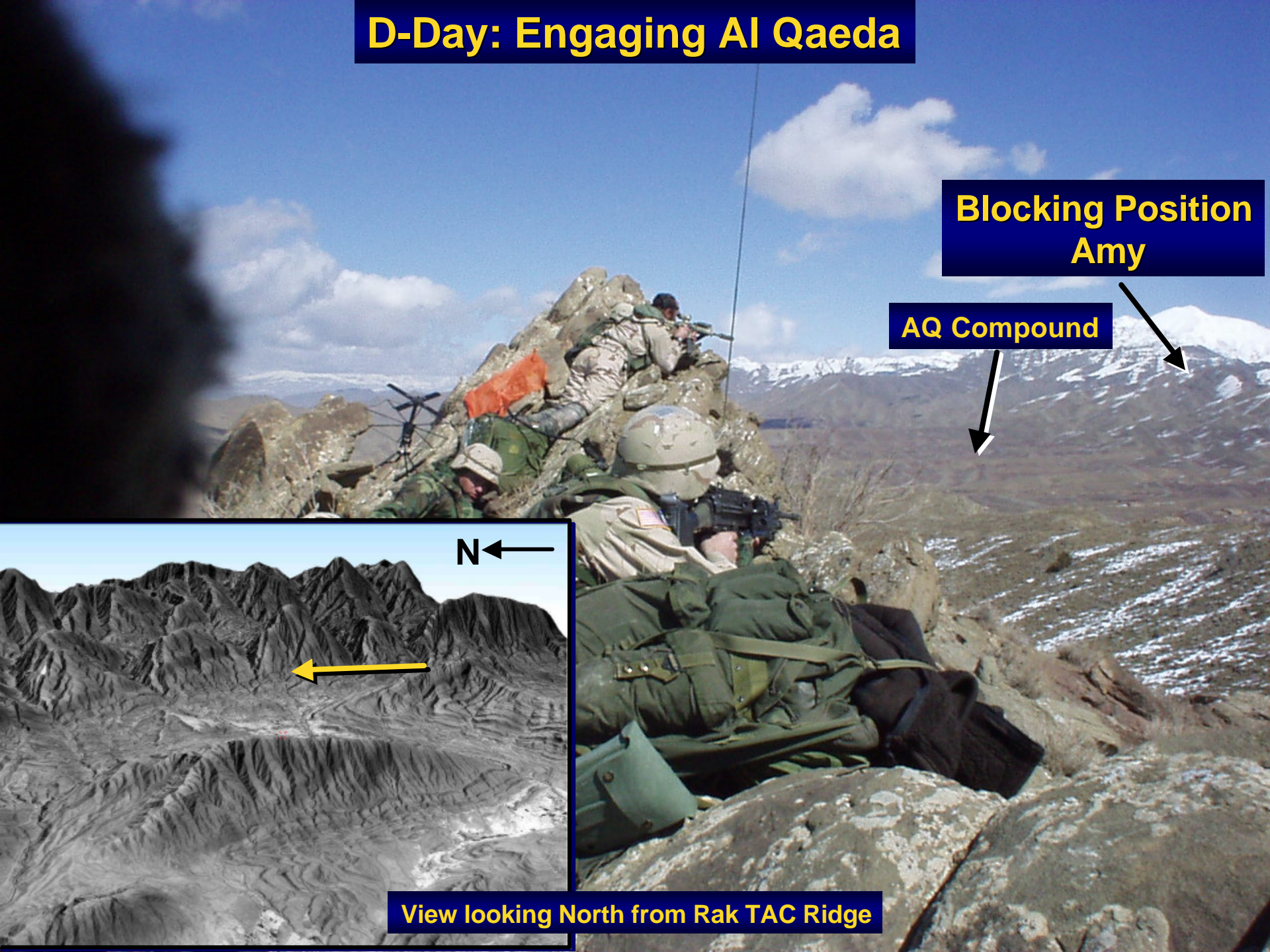
D-Day: Recon/Security team on "Rak TAC Ridge"

"The Whale"



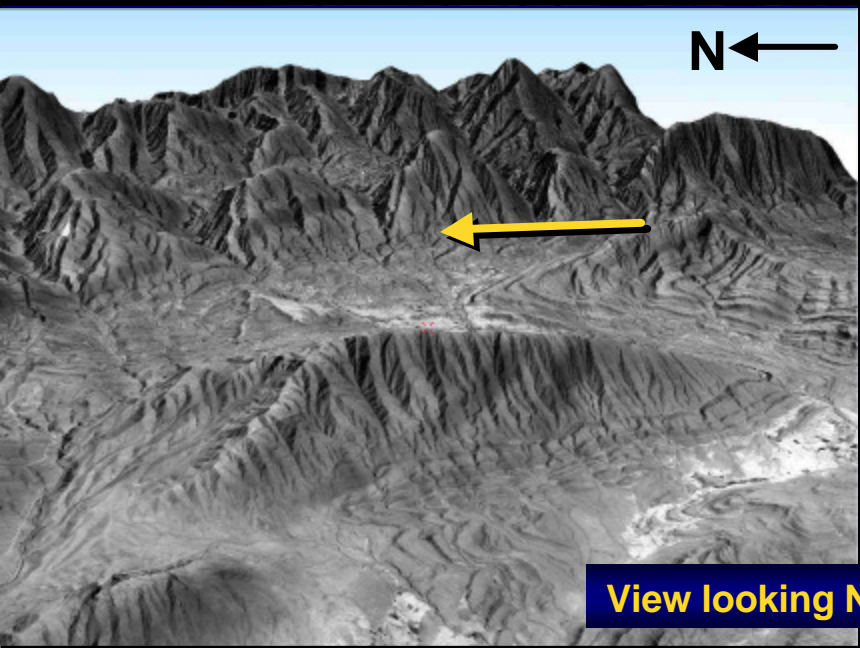
View looking North-Northwest along west side of Rak TAC Ridge

D-Day: Engaging Al Qaeda



**Blocking Position
Army**

AQ Compound



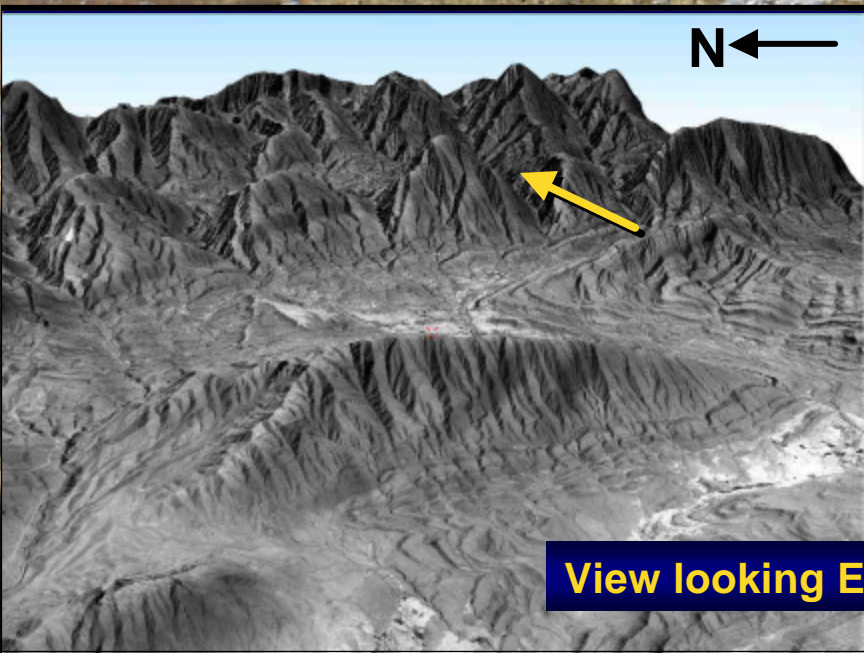
View looking North from Rak TAC Ridge

D-Day: Air strike into "Ginger Pass"

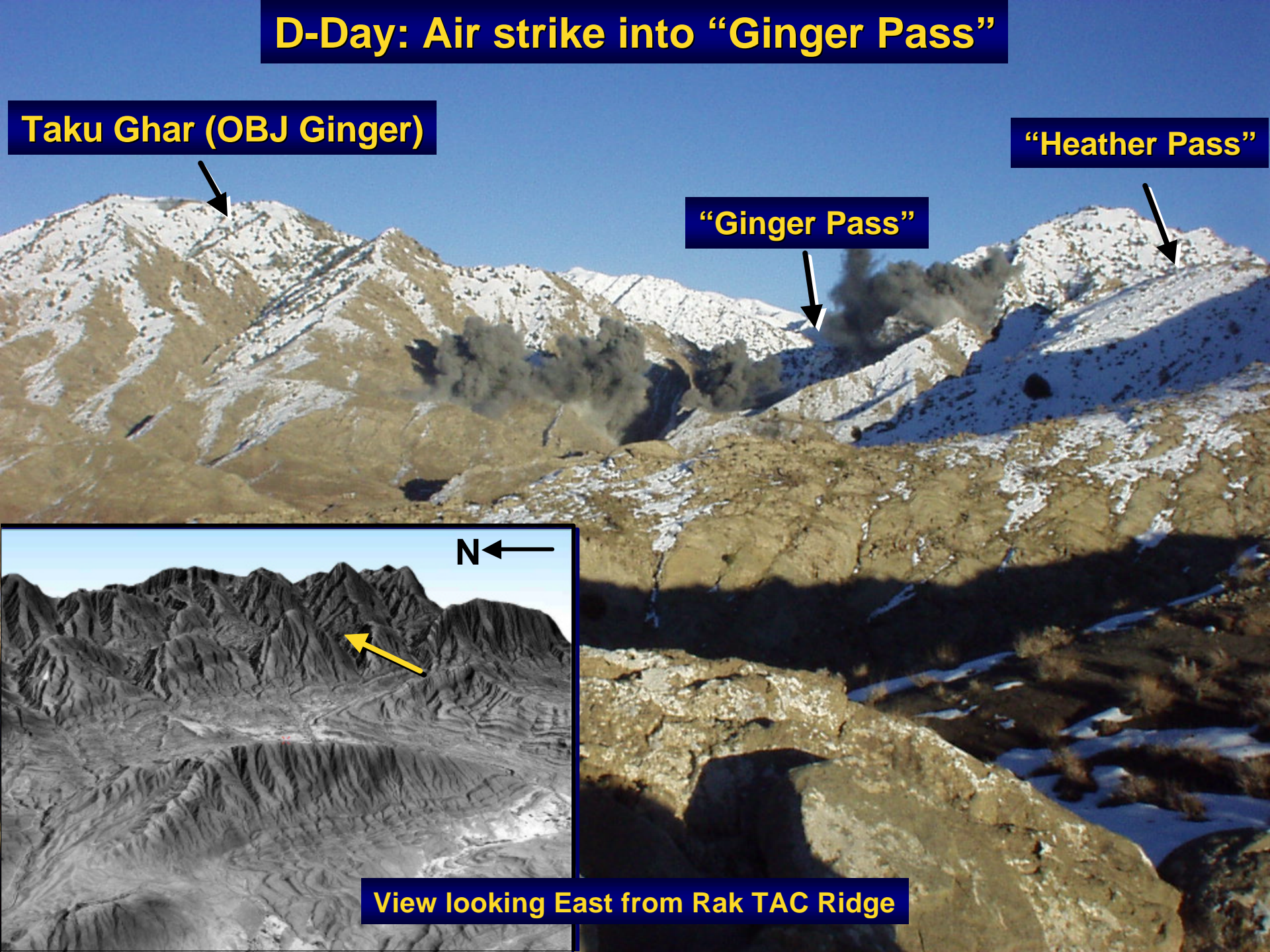
Taku Ghar (OBJ Ginger)

"Heather Pass"

"Ginger Pass"



View looking East from Rak TAC Ridge





D + 1: CH-47s returning to Bagram after successful insertion of 1-187

D + 2: Reoccupying Blocking Position Amy



View looking east into "Amy Pass"



**D + 2: Air Defense Gun found during
Exploitation of Blocking Position Army**



D + 2: The “Gator” is Introduced to combat



D + 2: Scanning the ridgeline for enemy observation posts

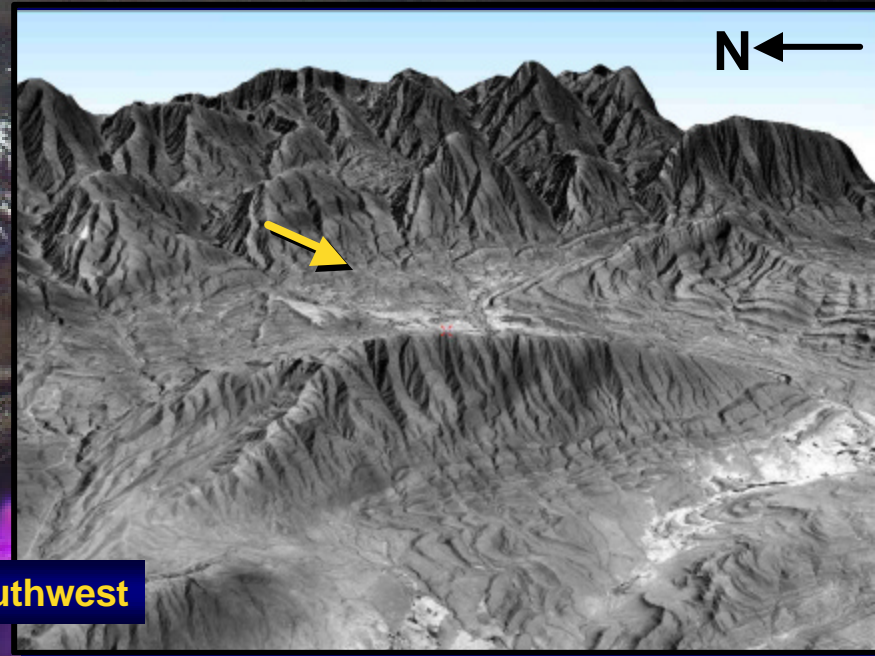
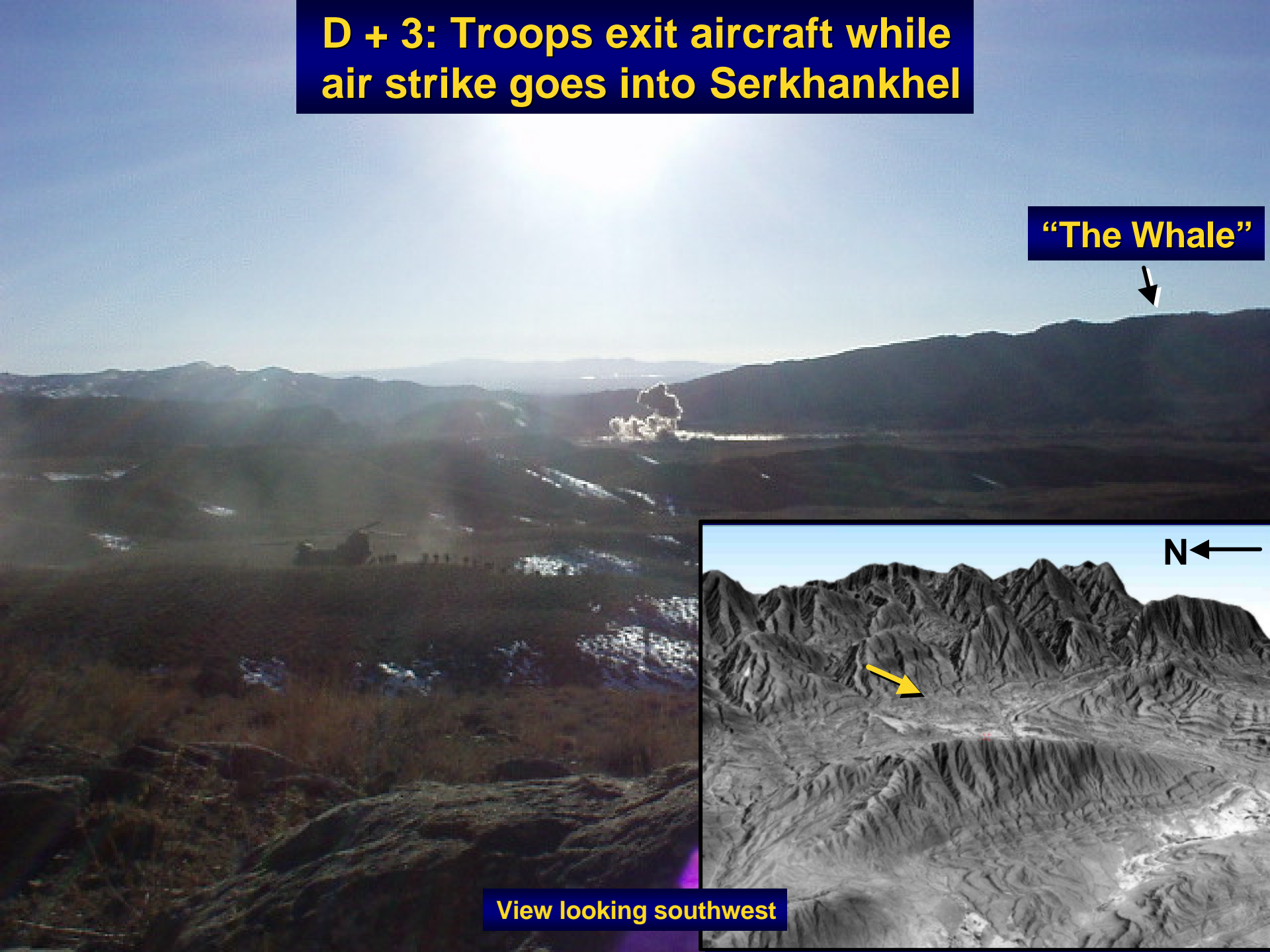
D + 3: CH-47D dropping off 81mm mortars vic 1-187 BN TAC



View looking southwest

**D + 3: Troops exit aircraft while
air strike goes into Serkhankhel**

“The Whale”



View looking southwest



TF K-Bar

TF 64

"AMY"

"BETTY"

"CINDY" "DIANE" "EVE" "GINGER"

CBJ

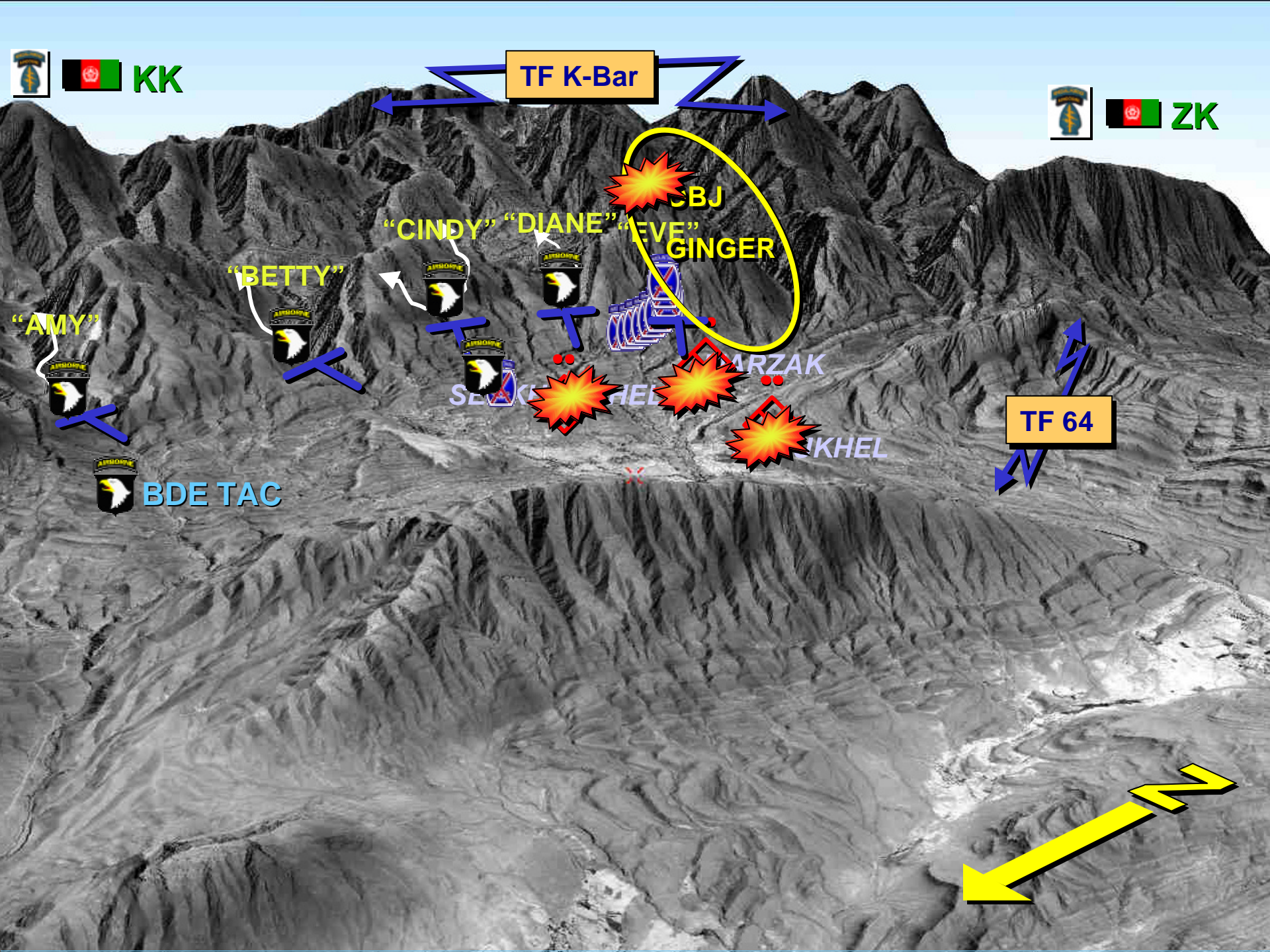
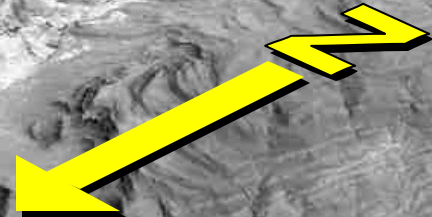
SEAKI

HEL

ARZAK

KHEL

BDE TAC





**D + 4: A CH-47D slinging
in supplies**

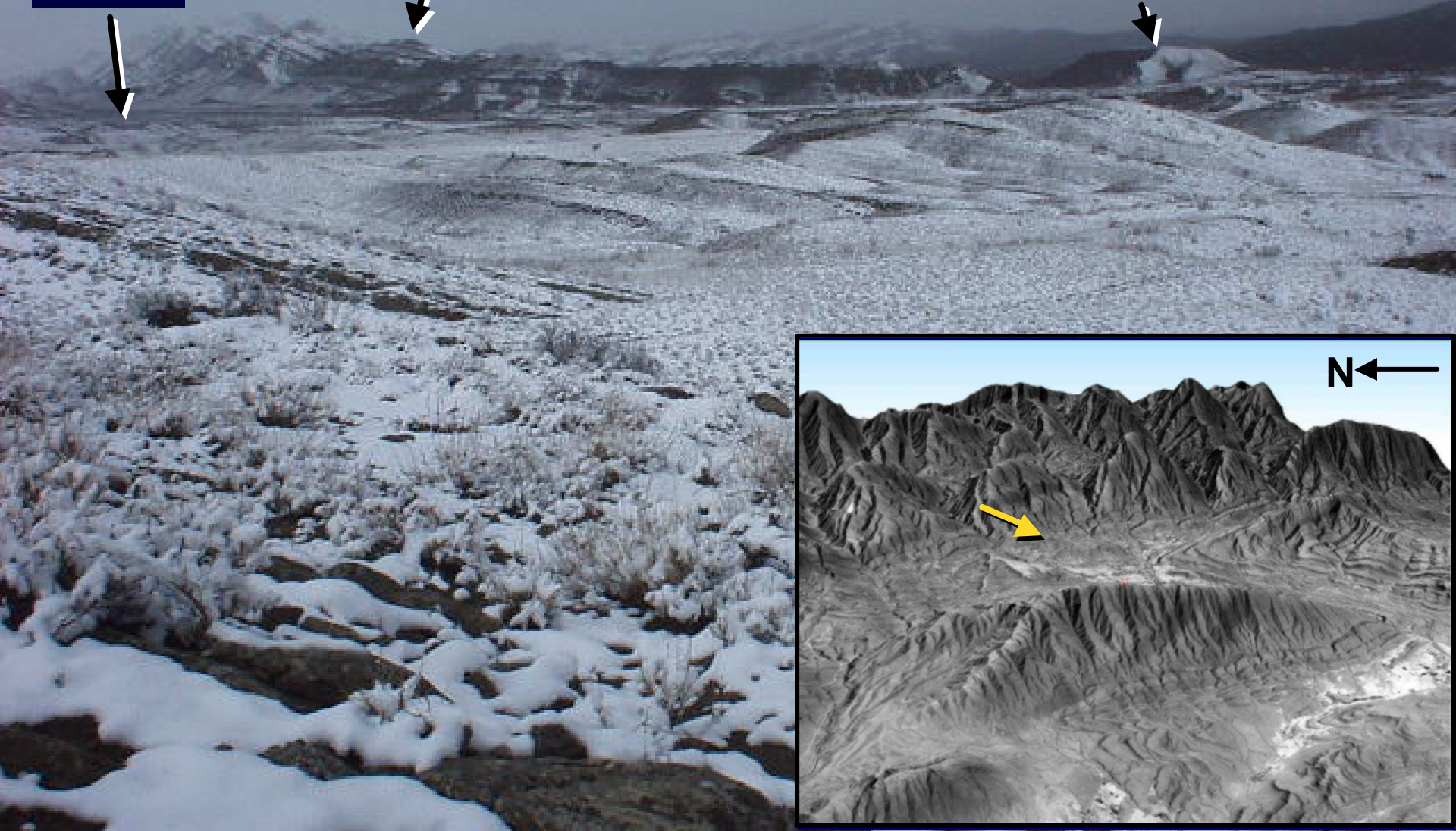
D + 4: View Looking Southwest from Blocking Position Cindy

Marzak

“RAK TAC Ridge”

“The Mesa”

“The Whale”

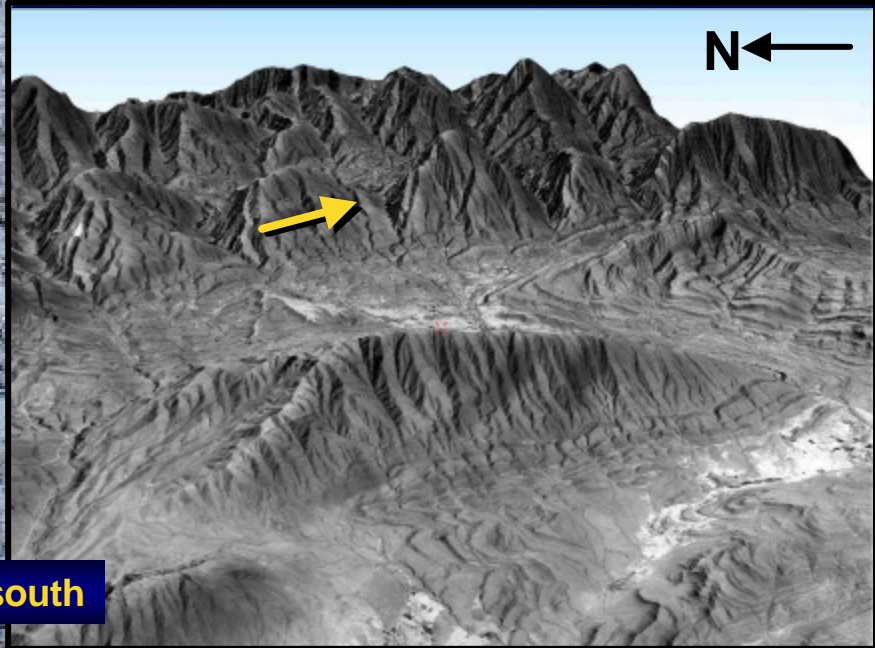
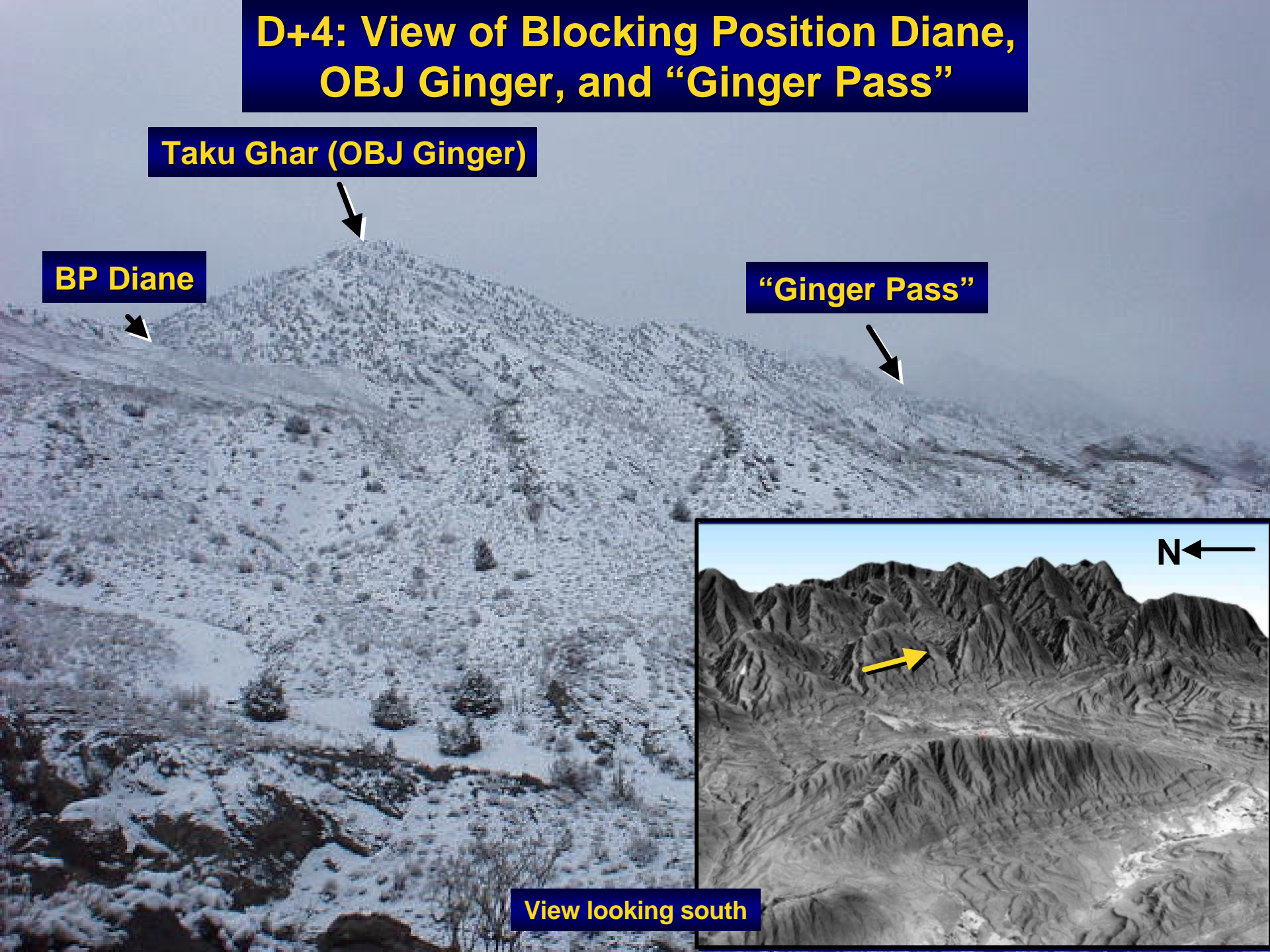


D+4: View of Blocking Position Diane, OBJ Ginger, and "Ginger Pass"

Taku Ghar (OBJ Ginger)

BP Diane

"Ginger Pass"



View looking south



D+6: Firepower



**D + 6: Air strike
into Serkhankhel**



**D + 6: Air strike
on Babukhel**

D + 9: Apaches engage targets In Serkhankhel





D+11: Insertion of 3PPCLI for Operation Harpoon



**D + 11: Elements of 3PPCLI
land vicinity of “The Whale”**

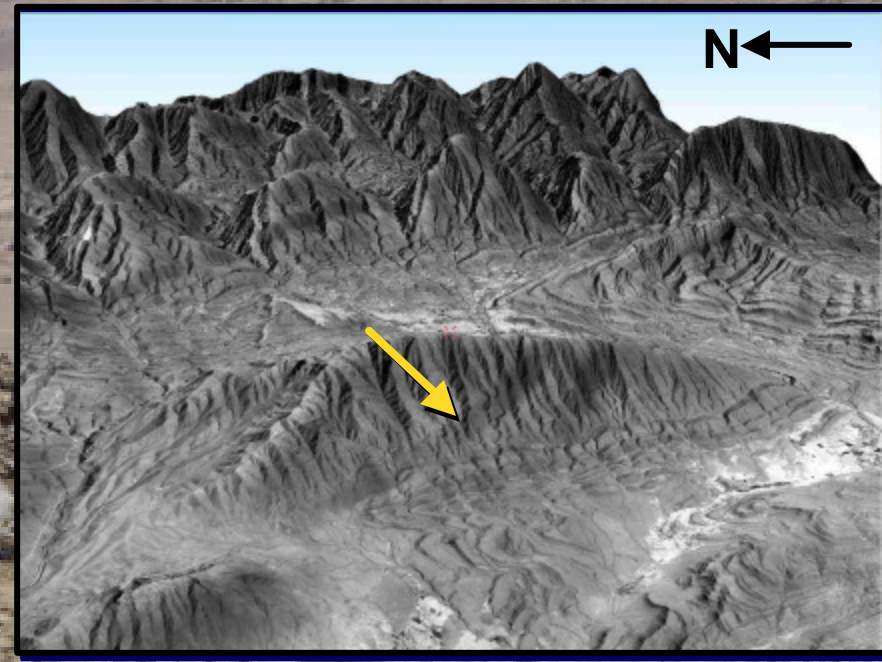
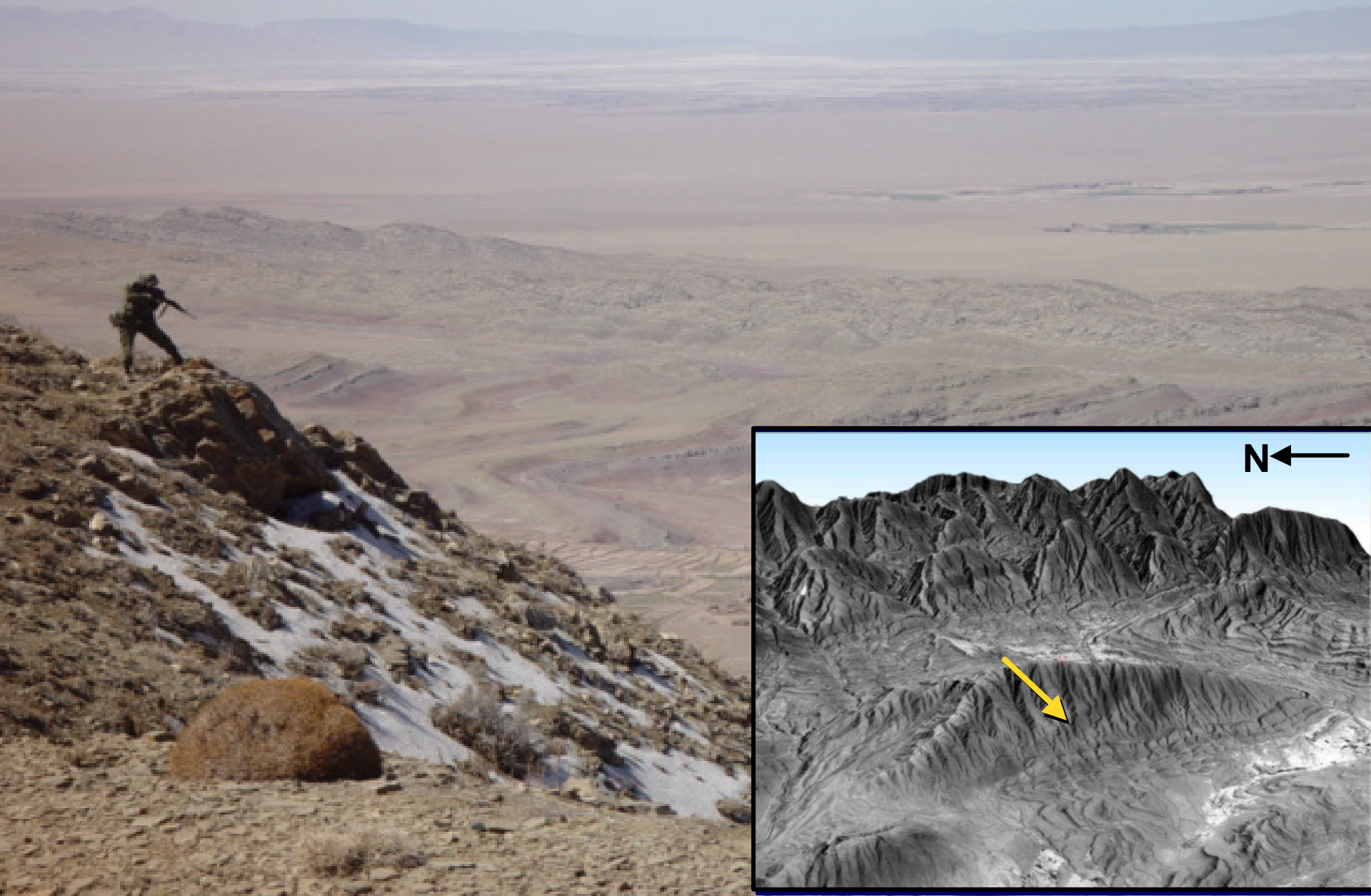


D + 11: 3PPCLI conducts sweep of “The Whale”



D + 11: 3PPCLI riflemen provide overwatch of a cave

**D + 13: View looking southwest
from the top of "The Whale"**





**D + 14: C Co, 3PPCLI loads
CH-47 for return to Bagram**



LESSONS LEARNED



- **MUST HAVE OVER-THE-HORIZON COMMS FOR OUR AIRCRAFT AND C2 NODES.**
- **NEED INTRA-THEATER FIXED-WING RESUPPLY CAPABILITY DEDICATED TO THE AIR ASSAULT FORCE.**
- **PLAN AND RESOURCE FOR FIRE-SUPPORT SYSTEMS ALL WEATHER AND ALL TERRAIN.**
- **NEED THE LIGHT WEIGHT COUNTER-MORTAR RADAR FOR PORTABLE, OMNI-DIRECTIONAL CAPABILITY.**
- **C2 AIRCRAFT (FIXED OR ROTARY-WING) IS A MUST-HAVE.**
- **NEED LIGHT WEIGHT MOBILITY ONCE ON GROUND.**
- **EMBEDDED MEDIA ACCURATELY PORTRAY THE ARMY STORY.**
- **CONTINUE TO PRACTICE INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES.**
- **OPERATION WAS A VALIDATION OF THE ARMY'S CTCs.**



NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



- **FIRST CONVENTIONAL BATTLE OF OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM – AND LARGEST**
- **LARGEST AND LONGEST-DURATION LIGHT-INFANTRY ENGAGEMENT SINCE VIET NAM**
- **HIGHEST-ALTITUDE LAND BATTLE IN U.S. HISTORY**
- **14 COMBAT AIR ASSAULTS PERFORMED DURING THE OPERATION WITHOUT THE LOSS OF A SINGLE SOLDIER OR AIRFRAME IN TASK FORCE RAKKASAN – 1,411 SOLDIERS INSERTED, 1,411 EXTRACTED**
- **FIRST CANADIAN GROUND COMBAT SINCE KOREA**
- **OPERATION WAS UNDERTAKEN BY A COALITION OF SEVEN COUNTRIES**
- **CLOSE COMBAT ATTACK MISSIONS WITH APACHE HELICOPTERS**
- **PROOF OF SURVIVABILITY AND LETHALITY OF APACHE AIRFRAME**
- **INTRODUCTION OF THE 'M-GATOR' TO COMBAT IN AIR-MECHANIZED ROLE**
- **TRUE JOINT FIGHT: USA, USAF, USN, USMC, AND SOF**



TF RAKKASAN



“I do not think we fully appreciated how devastating Anaconda was. I do not think the enemy is going to try to attack and take on the strongest military power in the Western World.”

- Brigadier Roger Lane, CDR, UK Royal Marines