

## Military Units in Southern Yemen: Abyan, Aden, Dhaleh, and Lahij

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*This document presents a draft command structure for armed units affiliated with Yemen's Southern Transitional Council (STC) and analyzes dynamics among unit commanders based on publicly available sources. This command structure is not exhaustive and identifies those units formally subordinated to the Yemeni Defense Ministry and Interior Ministry. The author recognizes several gaps, including additional military axes and smaller formations not present in this document.*

*Data cutoff: October 13, 2022*

### **Definitions and Acronyms:**

- **Republic of Yemen Government (ROYG).** Yemen's internationally recognized government, which was led by former President Abdu Rabbu Mansour Hadi until April 2022. Saudi Arabia brokered the formation of the Presidential Leadership Council (PLC) in April 2022 to replace Hadi.
- **Southern Transitional Council (STC).** A southern Yemeni political organization supporting secession from Yemen. The STC is both a component of and a competitor to the ROYG. It backs some military forces.
- **Presidential Leadership Council (PLC).** Saudi Arabia negotiated the formation of the eight-person PLC to replace President Hadi in April 2022. President Rashad al Alimi leads the PLC. The other seven PLC members represent ROYG's major factions, including the STC.
- **Military Axes.** Task forces deployed to geographically defined areas.
- **Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP).** The YSP led South Yemen before 1990. It had two primary factions: one based in Lahij and Dhaleh governorates and another based in Shabwah and Abyan governorates.

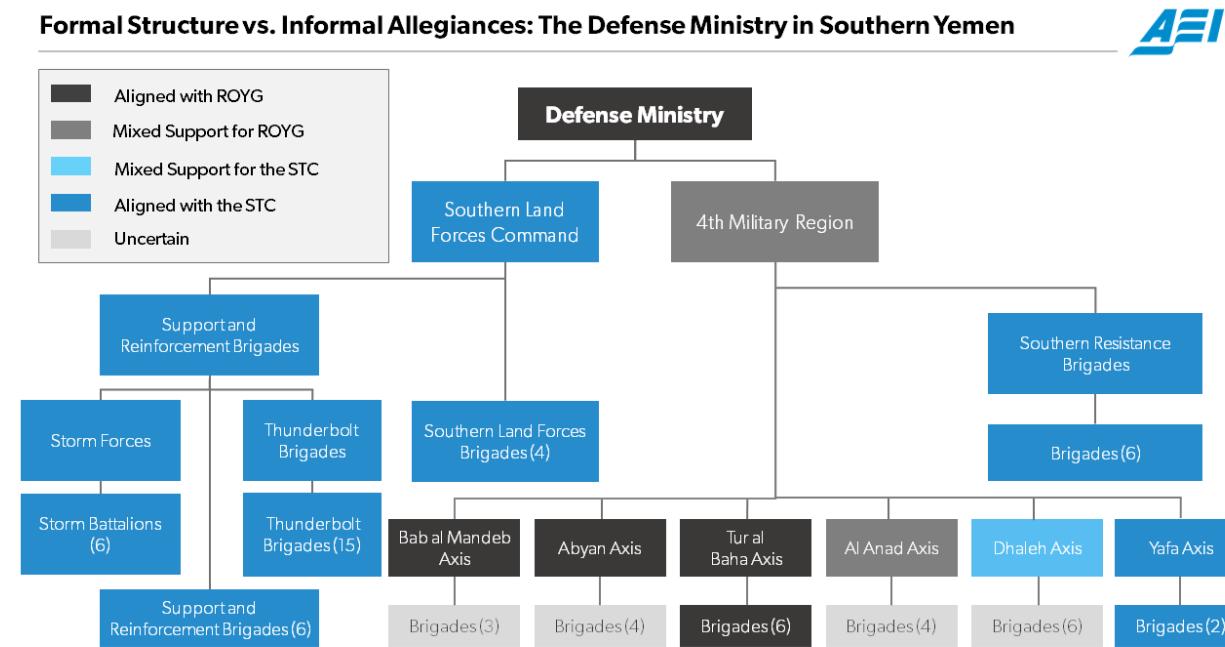
**The Southern Transitional Council (STC), a United Arab Emirates (UAE)-backed political organization seeking southern independence, is the most influential coordinator of armed groups in Abyan, Aden, Dhaleh, and Lahij.** The STC is a political organization with control over some military forces in southern Yemen. These STC-backed forces are part of the ROYG, but they often compete with ROYG-backed forces. The STC has secessionist aims but cooperates with other Yemeni factions for the time being, mainly due to Saudi pressure.<sup>1</sup> The formation of the Presidential Leadership Council, which nominally brought together STC President Aydarous al Zubaidi and other leaders across political divides to lead the ROYG in April 2022, has not stopped competition for influence between STC-backed forces and their political competitors. The STC's primary rival is the Islamist Islah party, which the STC rhetorically equates with al Qaeda and the Islamic State. STC-ROYG competition came to a head in 2019, when the two factions fought each other in Abyan and Aden governorates.<sup>2</sup> Similar flare-ups have occurred since. Most recently, the STC-backed 111th Infantry Brigade attempted to block several ROYG brigades under the Abyan Military Axis—task forces deployed to geographically defined areas—from entering Ahwar district in eastern Abyan governorate in May 2022.<sup>3</sup>

The UAE helped create the armed groups that would become the STC beginning in 2015.<sup>4</sup> The UAE funded southern commanders to retake Aden in 2015 but also ensured that these commanders

operated outside of the Yemeni government's formal chain of command. This autonomy allowed the UAE to maintain its control over the proxies it created at the expense of the broader Saudi-led coalition and ROYG. The UAE continued the practice of dividing the formal chain of command after Zubaidi formed the STC in 2017.<sup>5</sup> STC-backed units do not answer to a coherent chain of command, even within the STC itself, and fissures between various units and commanders create divisions the UAE can use to control STC-backed units.

The UAE seeks to maintain control over the groups it supports in Yemen to pursue its own objectives, which diverge from the Saudi-led coalition's objectives.<sup>6</sup> The UAE has withdrawn the bulk of its forces from Yemen since 2019, but it supports a large constellation of armed groups.<sup>7</sup> Its objectives include securing international waterways, countering political Islamists (ranging from the violent Salafi-jihadi al Qaeda to the political Islamist party Islah), and countering the Houthis.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 1. Formal Structures vs. Informal Allegiances: The Defense Ministry in Southern Yemen**



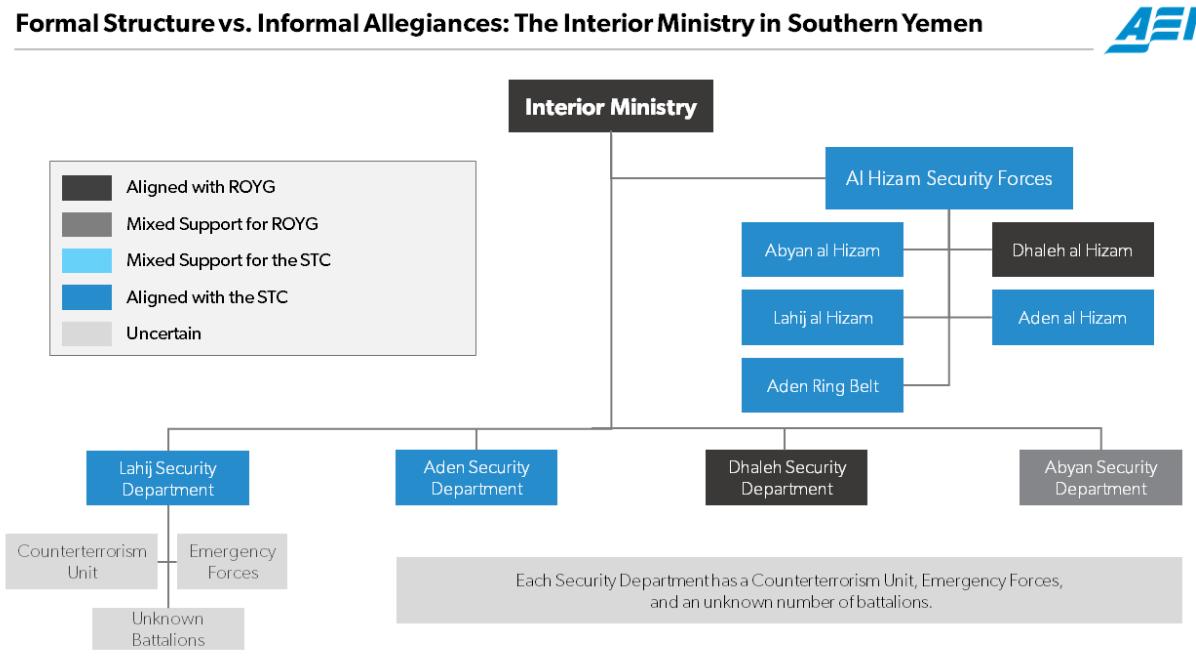
Source: Author's research.

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate quantity of the unit.

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Source: Author's research.

**Figure 2. Formal Structures vs. Informal Allegiances: The Interior Ministry in Southern Yemen**



*Source: Author's research.*

**Southern Yemeni military forces are part of a formal chain of command but often respond to informal structures determined by a commander's relationships and political allegiance.** For example, the Counterterrorism Units fall under the ROYG Interior Ministry and the Southern Resistance Brigades fall under the ROYG Defense Ministry, but both cite former Aden Security Department chief Shalal Shaye'a, who falls outside of this hierarchy, as their overall commander.<sup>9</sup>

This dichotomy between personal relationships and formal command structures affects larger units as well. STC President Zubaidi formally subordinated the Support and Reinforcement Brigades (SRB) to the ROYG Defense Ministry in 2021, placing them under the command of the Yemeni president through the defense minister. Despite being outside the formal chain of command, Zubaidi continued to order the SRB's troop movements through at least September 2022.<sup>10</sup> Zubaidi remains outside the chain of command, even in his position as deputy on the Presidential Leadership Council, an 8-person council led by Yemen's president. Zubaidi and other STC officials—including Aden Governor and STC Secretary-General Ahmed Lamlas and Shaye'a—continue to remove and appoint commanders down to at least the brigade echelon.<sup>11</sup>

Southern Yemeni leadership networks often reflect political allegiances dating back to the 1986 and 1994 Yemeni civil wars. One faction of the Yemeni Socialist Party (YSP) from Dhaleh and Lahij fought another faction of the YSP from Abyan and Shabwah in 1986. Many members of the Abyan- and Shabwah-based faction of the YSP, including former President Abdu Rabbuh Mansour Hadi, fled into exile in North Yemen after 1986.<sup>12</sup> Zubaidi's Lahij-Dhaleh faction won the 1986 war and agreed to unification with North Yemen in 1990. The Saleh regime failed to integrate South Yemen, leading

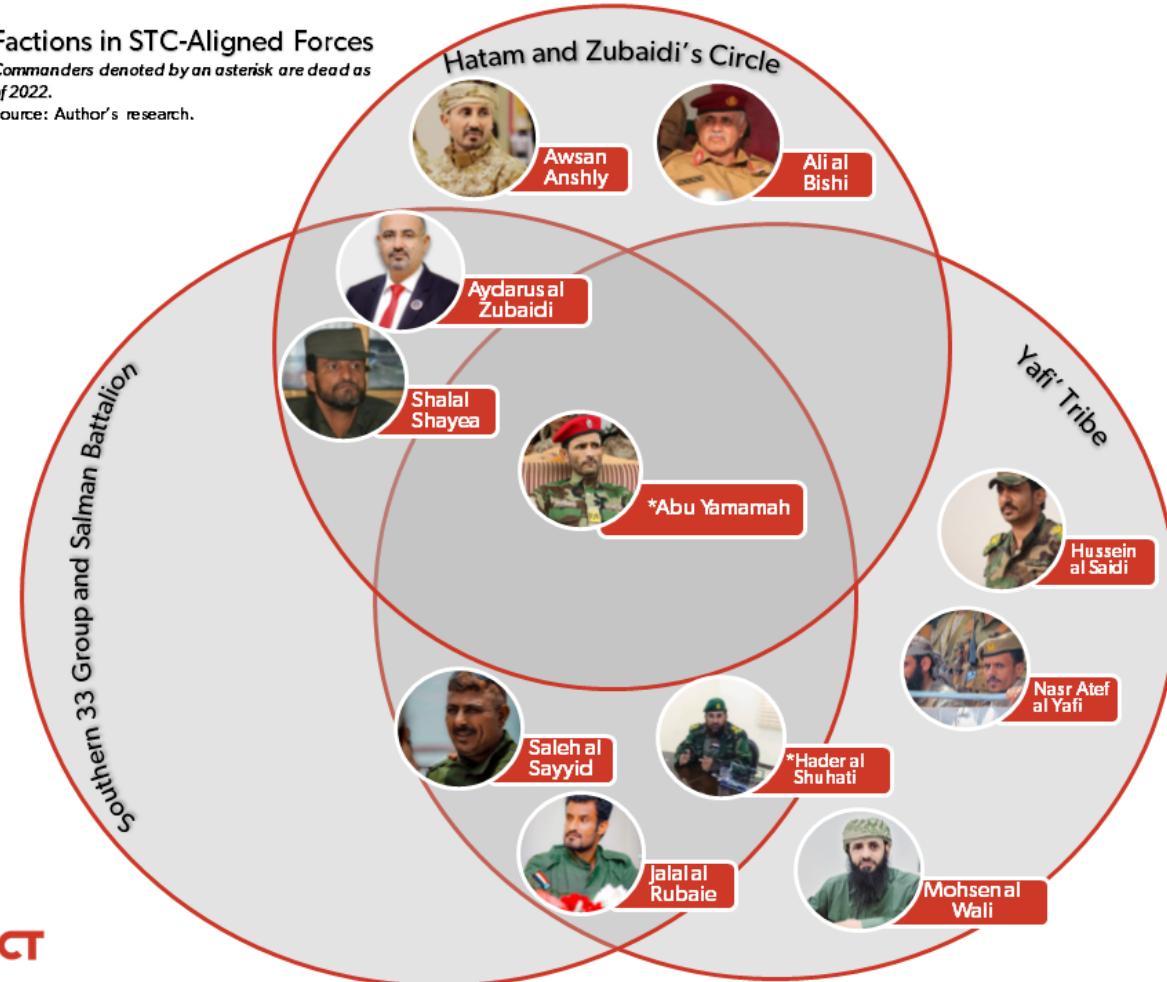
southerners to fight for independence in 1994.<sup>13</sup> Hadi, a part of the ousted Abyan-Shabwah faction from the 1986 war, helped to suppress the 1994 uprising.<sup>14</sup> The national government stripped the Lahij-Dhaleh faction members of their positions, pensions, and salaries and forced many into exile.<sup>15</sup>

The STC is attempting to expand its influence in southeastern Yemen to the detriment of its rivals, leading to increasing competition with the ROYG today.<sup>16</sup> The STC is competing with the ROYG politically and militarily in Abyan, Hadramawt, Mahra, and Shabwah governorates.<sup>17</sup> The STC is co-opting military units in Abyan governorate and maintains close ties with UAE-backed forces in Shabwah governorate.<sup>18</sup> The organization is also using the anti-Houthi fight and Saudi-backed security sector reform to demand the withdrawal of the Islah-backed 1st Military Region from Hadramawt governorate. The STC began signaling in September 2022 that it would militarily “confront terrorism” in Hadramawt and Mahra.

**STC-backed and ROYG-backed commanders both cooperate and compete on the ground.** The STC moved to co-opt commanders previously close to Hadi after his removal in April 2022.<sup>19</sup> The STC co-opted previously Hadi-backed commanders to facilitate the STC’s military takeover of Abyan governorate in August 2022 without provoking fighting against previously pro-ROYG forces.<sup>20</sup> UAE funding likely enabled the STC to co-opt some previously pro-ROYG units. Some Yemeni government units can draw on other patronage networks. The pro-ROYG Tur al Baha and Abyan axes have fought and been threatened by STC-backed units in 2021 and 2022, demonstrating that the risk for conflict between the STC and government forces remains.<sup>21</sup>

**Pro-secession and UAE-backed commanders dominate the STC’s military leadership.** Key STC members from the YSP’s Lahij-Dhaleh faction in southern Yemen, including Zubaidi, fought for South Yemen in 1994 before retreating into exile.<sup>22</sup> These former exiles created political parties whose membership now forms the core of the STC’s military and political leadership. Most core STC leaders are likely secessionists. The UAE supported these secessionists in addition to other Salafi and ROYG-linked commanders in 2015 to stop the Houthis’ southward advance and then fight AQAP.<sup>23</sup>

**Figure 3. Factions in STC-Aligned Forces**



Source: Author's research.

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**Most senior STC-backed military commanders are personally close to STC President Zubaidi or worked with secessionist parties supported by Zubaidi.** These commanders are officially subordinate to the ROYG Defense or Interior Ministries, but in practice, most commanders answer to Zubaidi.<sup>24</sup> Membership in either the Yafi' tribe, secessionist Southern 33 Group, or Zubaidi's personal circle increases a commander's likelihood of occupying key positions.<sup>25</sup> Zubaidi has also positioned trusted commanders and units to check the influence of units over which he may exert less control.

Zubaidi does not have complete control over all STC-backed units and commanders. Some commanders, including the overall al Hizam Security Forces commander, have fallen out of favor with Zubaidi, but a deputy Zubaidi trusts checks these officers.<sup>26</sup> Lahiji Yafi' tribesmen occupy key positions in the SRB, but Zubaidi has sought to check their power by appointing commanders from outside Yafi' territory to other units. Zubaidi appointed commanders from his home governorate, Dhaleh,<sup>27</sup> to the Thunderbolt Brigades. He also placed a military officer loyal to him in command of the force. The Thunderbolt Brigades are likely a counterweight to the Lahiji Yafi'-led SRB.<sup>28</sup>

**The STC backs some commanders in southern Yemen who lack personal ties to Zubaidi and may have fought against South Yemen in 1994.** Some commanders defected from ROYG for political expediency or UAE financial support. The UAE provides significant funding to forces in southern Yemen, and UAE financial support is more reliable than ROYG salaries.<sup>29</sup> For example, the current ROYG 4th Military Region commander fought alongside secessionist groups as a battalion commander during the fight to recapture Aden from the Houthis in 2015. He also cooperated closely with the UAE. He subsequently refused to fight STC forces on behalf of the ROYG in 2019.<sup>30</sup> This commander retains his ROYG position as 4th Military Region Commander, but the ROYG does not attach some military axes to his command. This decision indicates lower levels of ROYG trust in the regional commander.<sup>31</sup>

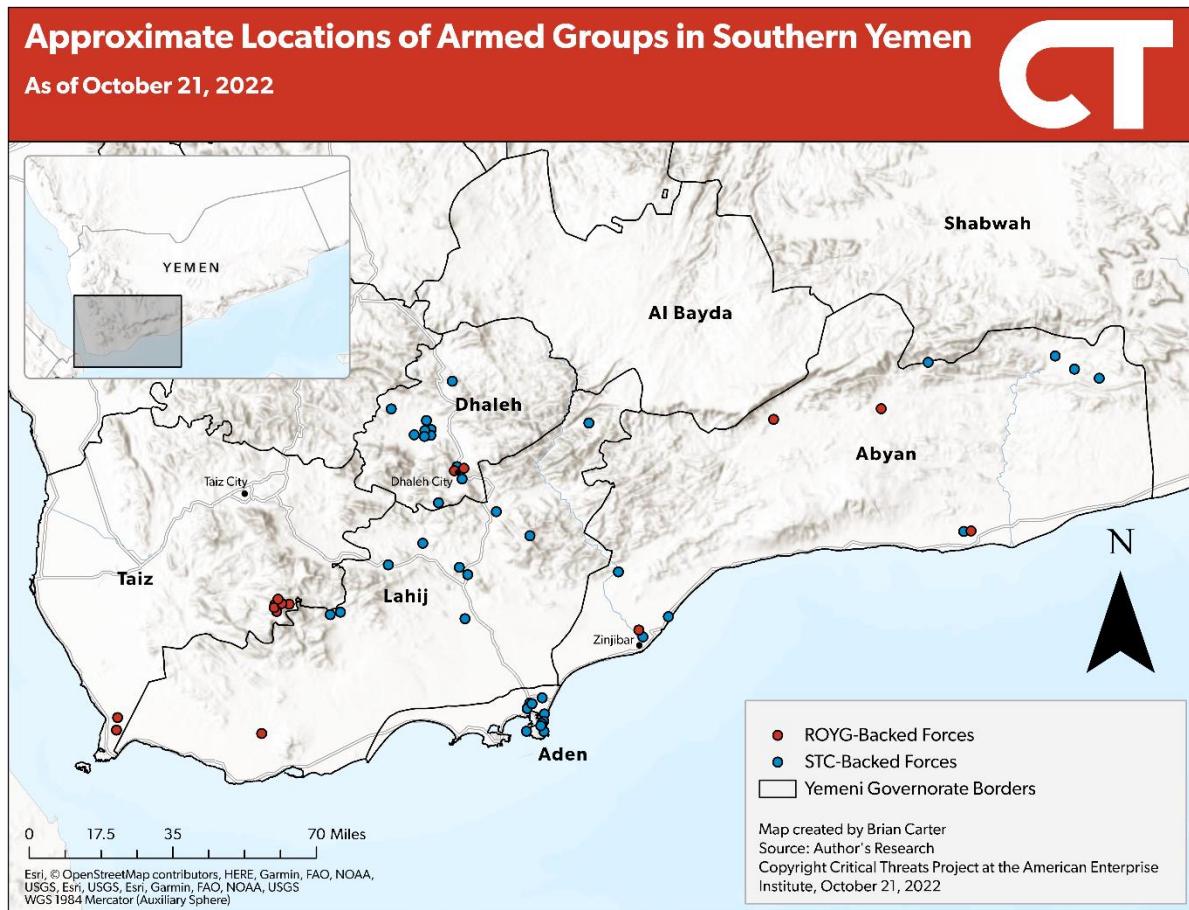
Former Yemeni President Hadi likely appointed other commanders to undermine STC power in certain areas. Hadi appointed loyal commanders to the Abyan, Bab al Mandeb, and Tur al Baha axes.<sup>32</sup> These commanders have fought against STC-backed forces directly since 2015 or southern forces in 1994.<sup>33</sup> Hadi's removal as president in April 2022 may be driving some commanders' recent shifts toward supporting the STC.<sup>34</sup>

Disunity exists between different political organizations but also within political factions. The STC is not a unitary actor, despite the overlap between interest groups, and friction between different STC-backed commanders exists. Some STC-backed commanders are also not in ideological alignment with the organization's secessionist aims. The 4th Military Region commander likely fought for the north in 1994 and against the Houthis during the Sa'ada wars, indicating that he was not a member of the Southern Movement and likely supports a united Yemen.<sup>35</sup> Competition over funding has also created friction in STC units. Zubaidi removed the former commander of the SRB, Mohsen al Wali, for his efforts to increase the 3rd SRB Brigade's independence by creating an oil company with the 3rd SRB Brigade's commander.<sup>36</sup>

**The disunity among southern armed groups weakens the fight against AQAP and the Houthis.** The Houthis could take advantage of infighting in the Yemeni government in southern Yemen, as the Houthis have done elsewhere in Yemen. The Houthis took advantage of divisions in the Yemeni government in 2015 to conquer northern Yemen and overthrow Yemen's internationally recognized government.<sup>37</sup>

Likewise, fighting between the government and the STC causes counterterrorism pressure to decrease. A decrease in counterterrorism pressure allows AQAP to reconstitute its capabilities and embed itself in local communities. Some of the STC's "counterterrorism" operations prioritize improving the STC's political position instead of setting conditions for AQAP's defeat. Local level agreements in southern Yemen are usually personality based and do not solve friction between STC-backed and ROYG-backed forces.<sup>38</sup>

Figure 4. Approximate Locations of Armed Groups in Southern Yemen



Source: Author's research.

#### YEMENI DEFENSE MINISTRY

**Defense Minister:** Lt. Gen. Mohsen Mohammed al Da'ari (ROYG)

#### SOUTHERN LAND FORCES COMMAND<sup>39</sup>

Established 2021<sup>40</sup>

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Ali al Bishi<sup>41</sup>

**Staff Officer:** Saleh al Sayyid (STC)

1st Southern Land Forces Brigade<sup>42</sup>

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Ali al Bishi (STC)<sup>43</sup>

2nd Southern Land Forces Brigade—Dhaileh governorate<sup>44</sup>

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Abdulaziz al Hadaf (STC)<sup>45</sup>

3rd Southern Land Forces Brigade—possibly near Yafa, Lahij governorate<sup>46</sup>

**Commander:** Akram al Hanash (STC)<sup>47</sup>

Southern Land Forces Command continued on page 8.

4th Southern Land Forces Brigade—Abyan governorate<sup>48</sup>

*Commander:* Ali Nasser al Muaker<sup>49</sup>

This unit is also a component of the Abyan Axis.<sup>50</sup>

#### **SUPPORT AND REINFORCEMENT BRIGADES (UAE-created)<sup>51</sup>**

*Commander:* Saleh al Sayyid (STC)<sup>52</sup>

1st Support and Reinforcement Brigade—Aden city<sup>53</sup>

*Commander:* Nasr Atef al Yafi (STC)<sup>54</sup>

2nd Support and Reinforcement Brigade—Zinjibar, Abyan governorate<sup>55</sup>

*Commander:* Mohammed Ali Mahdi<sup>56</sup>

3rd Support and Reinforcement Brigade—Lahij governorate<sup>57</sup>

*Commander:* Nabil al Mashushi (STC)<sup>58</sup>

4th Support and Reinforcement Brigade—Lahij governorate<sup>59</sup>

*Commander:* Mohammed Nasser al Shuhati (likely STC)<sup>60</sup>

*Previous Commander:* Hader al Shuhati (STC),<sup>61</sup> note that a Houthi sniper killed Shuhati on September 6, 2022<sup>62</sup>

5th Support and Reinforcement Brigade—Radfan, Dhaleh governorate<sup>63</sup>

*Commander:* Mukhtar al Nubi (STC)<sup>64</sup>

7th Support and Reinforcement Brigade (formed by Zubaidi in June 2021)<sup>65</sup>—

Habileen, Lahij governorate<sup>66</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Ahmed Mahmoud Hassan al Bakri (likely STC)<sup>67</sup>

*Staff Officer:* Col. Amin Nasser Sheikh Alawi al Saqqaf<sup>68</sup>

*Operations Officer:* Col. Saeed Ali Saleh al Saidi<sup>69</sup>

Facilities Protection Forces—Aden city

*Commander:* Ahmed bin Afif (has been pro-ROYG but may be shifting to pro-STC)<sup>70</sup>

#### **THUNDERBOLT BRIGADES<sup>71</sup>**

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Ali al Bishi (STC)<sup>72</sup>

1st Thunderbolt Brigade—Dhaleh governorate<sup>73</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Karim al Solani<sup>74</sup>

2nd Thunderbolt Brigade—Hajjar front, Dhaleh governorate<sup>75</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Mohammed Mohsen Mahdi (Abu Bakil)<sup>76</sup>

3rd Thunderbolt Brigade—al Jab front, Dhaleh governorate<sup>77</sup>  
*Commander:* Col. Mohammed Qasim al Zubaidi (STC)<sup>78</sup>

4th Thunderbolt Brigade—Arr camp, Yafa front, Lahij governorate<sup>79</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Abdul Aziz al Mansoori (STC)<sup>80</sup>

5th Thunderbolt Brigade—Dhaleh governorate<sup>81</sup>  
*Commander:* Col. Yusuf al Hakim (Abu Majid)<sup>82</sup>

6th Thunderbolt Brigade—al Battar front, Dhaleh governorate<sup>83</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Obaid Muthanna Laram<sup>84</sup>

7th Thunderbolt Brigade—al Jab front, Dhaleh governorate<sup>85</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Abdul Aziz al Hadaf<sup>86</sup>

8th Thunderbolt Brigade—Zinjibar, Abyan governorate<sup>87</sup>  
*Commander:* Col. Ameed Qassem al Marami<sup>88</sup>

9th Thunderbolt Brigade—Tur al Bahia, Lahij governorate<sup>89</sup>  
*Commander:* Farouk al Kalouli (STC)<sup>90</sup>

10th Thunderbolt Brigade—Habeel Hanash front, Lahij governorate<sup>91</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Rushdi al Houshabi<sup>92</sup>

11th Thunderbolt Brigade—Abyan governorate<sup>93</sup>  
*Commander:* Akram al Hanashi<sup>94</sup>

12th Thunderbolt Brigade—Abyan governorate<sup>95</sup>  
*Commander:* Col. Abdu Nasser al Azraqi<sup>96</sup>

13th Thunderbolt Brigade—al Rahda, Taiz governorate (on the border of Lahij governorate)<sup>97</sup>  
*Commander:* Ali Saleh al Nubi<sup>98</sup>

14th Thunderbolt Brigade—Abyan governorate<sup>99</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Othman Haidara Moawadeh<sup>100</sup>

15th Thunderbolt Brigade—Abyan governorate<sup>101</sup>  
*Commander:* Col. Nabil al Hanashi<sup>102</sup>

#### STORM FORCES (UAE-created)<sup>103</sup>

*Commander:* Awsan al Anshly (STC, likely personally loyal to Zubaidi)<sup>104</sup>

1st Battalion—not specified

Storm Forces continued on page 10.

2nd Battalion—Coast Guard Camp, Aden city<sup>105</sup>

3rd Battalion—Mount Hadid Camp, Aden city<sup>106</sup>

4th Battalion—Camp 20 in Crater, Aden city<sup>107</sup>

5th Battalion—Alam Point, Aden city<sup>108</sup>

6th Battalion—Midwar Palace, Aden city<sup>109</sup>

#### **4th MILITARY REGION**

**Commander:** Fadl Hassan Mohammed (pro-STC)<sup>110</sup>

111th Infantry Brigade—Ahwar district, Abyan governorate<sup>111</sup>

**Commander:** Mohammed Ahmed Mulhem al Umaisi (pro-STC)<sup>112</sup>

4th Hazm Brigade—Haifan front, Tur al Baha, Dhaleh governorate<sup>113</sup>

**Commander:** Wafi al Ghabs al Subayhi (pro-STC)<sup>114</sup>

#### **Bab al Mandeb Axis**

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Abdul Ghani Ali Mohi al Din al Subayhi (ROYG)<sup>115</sup>

3rd Hazm Brigade—Kharaz Camp<sup>116</sup>

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Mahmoud Saeed Sael al Subayhi (likely ROYG)<sup>117</sup>

1st Hazm Brigade, also known as the “Zayed Brigade”<sup>118</sup>—Lahij governorate<sup>119</sup>

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Abdul Ghani Ali Mohi al Din al Subayhi (likely ROYG)<sup>120</sup>

#### **Bab al Mandeb Brigade**

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Majid Omar Seif<sup>121</sup>

#### **Abyan Axis**

**Commander:** Maj. Gen. Abu Bakr Hussein (ROYG)<sup>122</sup>

**Staff Officer:** Brig. Gen. Louay al Zamki (likely Islah)<sup>123</sup>

103rd Infantry Brigade

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Abdul Qader al Jaari<sup>124</sup>

3rd Presidential Guard Brigade

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Louay al Zamki (likely Islah)<sup>125</sup>

89th Infantry Brigade  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Mohammed Ali Jabr<sup>126</sup>

115th Infantry Brigade  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Saif Ali al Qufaish<sup>127</sup>

**Dhaleh Axis**  
**Commander:** Maj. Gen. Ali Muqbel Saleh (likely STC)<sup>128</sup>

33rd Armored Brigade:  
*Commander:* Maj. Gen. Ali Muqbel Saleh (likely STC)<sup>129</sup>

30th Armored Brigade  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Hadi al Awlaki<sup>130</sup>

83rd Artillery Brigade  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Adel Saleh al Shaybah<sup>131</sup>

191st Infantry Brigade  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Naji al Khairani<sup>132</sup>

4th Reserve Brigade  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Fadl Abd al Rab<sup>133</sup>

Military Police Branch  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Fadl al Uqla<sup>134</sup>  
*State media also reported the al Hizam Security Forces in Dhaleh work alongside the Dhaleh Axis.*<sup>135</sup>

**Al Anad Axis**  
**Last Known Commander:** Maj. Gen. Thabet Jawas (pro-STC)<sup>136</sup>  
*Staff Officer:* Brig. Gen. Najib Saad al Subayhi (likely pro-STC)<sup>137</sup>

131st Infantry Brigade<sup>138</sup>  
*Last Known Commander:* Maj. Gen. Thabet Jawas (pro-STC)<sup>139</sup>

2nd Hazm Brigade<sup>140</sup>—Al Anad Airbase<sup>141</sup>  
*Commander:* Fadl Hassan Mohammed (pro-STC)<sup>142</sup>  
*Chief of Staff:* Brig. Gen. Najib Saad al Subayhi (likely pro-STC)<sup>143</sup>

201st Mechanized Brigade<sup>144</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Fadl Ahmed Tahsha<sup>145</sup>

1st Reserve Brigade<sup>146</sup>

*Commander:* Abdul Hakim al Shuaibi<sup>147</sup>

**Tur al Baha Axis<sup>148</sup>**

**Commander:** Maj. Gen. Abu Bakr al Jaboli (Islah)<sup>149</sup>

*Head of Operations:* Brig. Gen. Faris al Hafidhi<sup>150</sup>

9th Infantry Brigade<sup>151</sup>

*Commander:* Col. Munif Abdullah Norman al Atwi<sup>152</sup>

120th Artillery Brigade<sup>153</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Rami al Somati<sup>154</sup>

8th Reserve Brigade<sup>155</sup>

*Last Known Commander:* Brig. Gen. Yasser al Somali (resigned in March 2021)<sup>156</sup>

4th Mountain Infantry Brigade<sup>157</sup>

*Commander:* Maj. Gen. Abu Bakr al Jaboli (Islah)<sup>158</sup>

6th Support and Reinforcement Brigade

*Commander:* Noaman Dukman (Islah)<sup>159</sup>

Unknown Coastal Defense Brigade<sup>160</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Zaki Abdullah Hassan<sup>161</sup>

**Yafa Axis**

**Commander:** Abdulaziz al Mansoori (STC)<sup>162</sup>

*Staff Officer:* Hader al Shuhati<sup>163</sup> (killed in action on September 6, 2022)<sup>164</sup>

4th Thunderbolt Brigade<sup>165</sup>—Arr camp, Yafa front, Lahij governorate<sup>166</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Abdul Aziz al Mansoori (STC)<sup>167</sup>

*Also in the Thunderbolt Brigades*

4th Support and Reinforcement Brigade<sup>168</sup>—Lahij governorate<sup>169</sup>

*Commander:* Mohammed Nasser al Shuhati (likely STC)<sup>170</sup>

*Prev. Commander:* Hader al Shuhati (STC);<sup>171</sup> note that a Houthi sniper killed Shuhati on September 6, 2022<sup>172</sup>

*Also in the Support and Reinforcement Brigades*

**SOUTHERN RESISTANCE BRIGADES**

Only the 6th Southern Resistance Brigade is confirmed as part of the 4th Military District,<sup>173</sup> though it is likely that all six are part of the Ministry of Defense's structure.

1st Southern Resistance Brigade—Radfan, Dhaleh governorate<sup>174</sup>  
*Commander:* Col. Basil Saif Sakara<sup>175</sup>

2nd Southern Resistance Brigade—Maris Front, Dhaleh governorate<sup>176</sup>  
*Commander:* Mohammed Ali Mohsen<sup>177</sup>

3rd Southern Resistance Brigade—Jir Sabira, Dhaleh governorate<sup>178</sup>  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Zakaria Omar Qahtan Qaboos<sup>179</sup>

4th Southern Resistance Brigade—Dhaleh governorate<sup>180</sup>  
*Commander:* Awsan al Shaeri<sup>181</sup>

5th Southern Resistance Brigade—Dhaleh governorate<sup>182</sup>  
*Commander:* Mahmoud al Batool<sup>183</sup>

6th Southern Resistance Brigade—Dhaleh governorate<sup>184</sup>  
*Last Known Commander:* Mohammed al Shobaji<sup>185</sup>

**YEMENI INTERIOR MINISTRY**

*Minister of Interior:* Ibrahim Haidan

**AL HIZAM SECURITY FORCES (UAE-created)<sup>186</sup>**  
**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Mohsen al Wali (STC)<sup>187</sup>  
**Deputy Commander:** Brig. Gen. Jalal al Rubaie (STC)<sup>188</sup>

Al Hizam Security Forces in Abyan  
*Commander:* Abdullatif al Sayyed<sup>189</sup>  
Rapid Intervention Forces in Abyan  
*Commander:* Abdullatif al Sayyid<sup>190</sup>

Al Hizam Security Forces in Dhaleh  
*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Ahmed Qaid al Qubba (ROYG)<sup>191</sup>  
*Deputy Commander:* Walid al Dame<sup>192</sup>  
Rapid Intervention Forces in Dhaleh  
*Commander:* Moadh Ali Saleh al Ma'ada<sup>193</sup>

Al Hizam Security Forces in Lahij

*Commander:* Hussein al Saidi (STC)<sup>194</sup>

Rapid Intervention Forces in Lahij

*Last Known Commander:* Ahmed al Lahiji<sup>195</sup>

Al Hizam Security Forces in Aden

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Jalal al Rubaie (STC)<sup>196</sup>

Rapid Intervention Forces in Aden

*Commander:* Capt. Qaid al Hattas<sup>197</sup>

Aden Ring Belt (*This unit may not be part of the Yemeni Interior Ministry*)

*Commander:* Col. Naji al Yahri (STC)<sup>198</sup>

#### **ADEN SECURITY DEPARTMENT**

**Commander:** Maj. Gen. Muthar al Shouabi (UAE-based General People's Congress faction)<sup>199</sup>

Emergency Forces

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Mohammed al Khaili<sup>200</sup>

Counterterrorism Unit

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Yusran al Maqtari<sup>201</sup>

*The Aden Security Department also has an additional six battalions numbering 5,000–6,000 personnel. Most personnel are from Dhaleh.<sup>202</sup> It is unclear if other governorate security departments also have additional battalions, but they likely have some forces in addition to Emergency Forces and Counterterrorism Units.*

#### **ABYAN SECURITY DEPARTMENT**

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Ali Nasser Bouzid Baazab (pro-ROYG, Southern National Coalition)<sup>203</sup>

Emergency Forces

*Commander:* Ali Awad al Mahawari

Counterterrorism Unit

*Commander:* Col. Abdul Rahman Nasser Abdullah al Shenini (likely pro-STC)<sup>204</sup>

#### **DHALEH SECURITY DEPARTMENT**

**Commander:** Brig. Gen. Ahmed Qaed al Qubba (ROYG)<sup>205</sup>

Emergency Forces

*Commander:* Moadh Ali Saleh al Ma'ada<sup>206</sup>

Counterterrorism Unit

*Last Known Commander:* Col. Mohammed al Shobaji (STC)<sup>207</sup>

#### LAHIJ SECURITY DEPARTMENT

*Commander:* Saleh al Sayyid (STC)

Emergency Forces

*Commander:* Unknown

Counterterrorism Unit

*Commander:* Unknown

#### **ADDITIONAL COMMANDS**

CTP cannot verify if these commands fall under an ROYG ministry. They may be independent, but it is possible they also fall under the Defense or Interior Ministries.

#### **1st MOUNTAIN INFANTRY BRIGADE**

*Commander:* Aydarus al Zubaidi<sup>208</sup>

**AMAJID BRIGADE**—either Lawdar district, Abyan governorate, or Mudiyah, Abyan governorate<sup>209</sup>

*Commander:* Brig. Gen. Salih Salim al Sharji (from Abyan)<sup>210</sup>

*Spokesperson:* Fahd al Barsha<sup>211</sup>

This unit is likely not a part of an official ROYG ministry as of 2020. The unit numbers about 5,000–6,000 personnel, and Saudi Arabia funds the brigade.<sup>212</sup>

*The Critical Threats Project at the American Enterprise Institute sometimes cites sources from foreign domains. All such links are identified with additional parentheses inserted into the URL for the reader's awareness.*

#### Notes

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<sup>211</sup> Roy and Sulz, “The Amajid Brigade.”

<sup>212</sup> Roy and Sulz, “The Amajid Brigade.”