



DUST OFF

AIR AMBULANCE, HELMAND PROVINCE

In the wake of the 10th anniversary of the Twin Towers coming down in New York, Afghanistan remains the deadliest place on the planet.

Australian and American troops remain locked in a bitter battle with the Taliban to dominate the ground in their respective areas of operation.

The Taliban seem to be gaining small victories as the coalition forces squeeze them out of their comfort zones and from the villages that they once dominated.

In recent times, the Taliban have claimed credit for the assassinations of President Karzai's half brother and the governor of Kandahar, as well as the much-publicised attack on the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul back in June.

Then, on 6 August, a United States' CH-47 Chinook helicopter with a special-force's quick reaction force (QRF) on board began taking deadly small-arms fire during a pursuit of insurgents, and eventually crashed when it was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade (RPG).

WORDS AND PICS GARY RAMAGE

