



Australian weapons and equipment have repeatedly been discovered among Taliban stockpiles, raising fears that Afghan troops trained by Diggers have been pilfering military supplies.

Documents released by the WikiLeaks website show that in the past six years International Security Assistance Force troops have uncovered Australian mortar shells, a hand-grenade and other equipment when defusing roadside bombs and capturing Taliban weapons stores.

Australian soldiers have trained hundreds of Afghan army soldiers, and work alongside Afghan police. Last December a NATO patrol found Australian equipment in a Taliban weapons cache, alongside AK-47 rifles and materials to make roadside bombs. The equipment found is used by Australian soldiers to ensure their safety during offensives, and if used by insurgents it could disrupt the distinct advantage held by NATO troops.

The Defence Department has asked the Herald not to publish any details identifying this equipment. The department is reviewing the tens of thousands of WikiLeaks documents and did not respond directly to the reports about Australian weapons, other than saying "an important part of this review will be determining whether there are force protection implications for our personnel".

Last year the US found there were incomplete records for about a third of \$US4 billion (\$4.4 billion) worth of US-purchased weapons used by the Afghan military.

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