

Change detection imagery is useful to highlight areas of change but must be interpreted with caution. Areas in which no changes are apparent can also be of interest. The features indicated at A3 in Figure 7(b) are not evident in Figure 7(c). They might be aircraft, because they appear dark against a dark background in the 1988 image but they are not very apparent. The features identified as A8 in all three images might also be aircraft. Since there was something at that location when both of the images were acquired, there are no indications of any changes. Aircraft will often be routinely parked in the same location at different times, although they will not necessarily be the same aircraft.

The airport in Kabul is a civilian as well as a military facility. Specific kinds of aircraft cannot be identified directly, making it difficult to distinguish between military and civilian aircraft. One might assume that civilian aircraft will be located in the civilian section of the airport. The civilian airport terminal is located at A9, in the south-east end of the airport, with a terminal building and an access road leading to it. Aircraft located nearby (A10) could be civilian. However, it is not possible to be certain of this based solely upon this imagery.

Monitoring Helicopters

Two areas that are apparently being used as landing pads for helicopters are labelled H1 in Figures 7(a), 7(b) and 7(c). Once again, the shapes of the helicopters are undefined. It is possible to interpret them only if they are located at sites that are clearly prepared for use by helicopters.

Change imagery can help distinguish helicopters from non-moveable features about the same size. This kind of interpretation, relying heavily upon association, is subject to great uncertainty. Not all moveable objects at those locations have to be helicopters. As well, it is possible for a helicopter to be at the same location when *both* images are acquired, making it appear that nothing has moved.

Monitoring Vehicles and Equipment

Using SPOT imagery, with its spatial resolution of 10 m or more, all but the largest military vehicles will be smaller than even a single image pixel. Nevertheless, imagery of this quality might provide some limited evidence of large-scale migration of vehicles from an area.

Figures 8(a), 8(b) and 8(c) show part of the North East (NE) Camp in Kabul. The Soviet 108 Motorized Rifle Division was based in the NE Camp.¹⁶ The red areas in the change image are indicative of dark-toned features that existed in 1987 but not in 1988. The thin lines at V1 and the smaller features at V2 might be vehicles parked in rows and next to a building. The thicker red areas, such as those indicated at V3, might be vehicles parked several rows deep.