



The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and tribal fighters with Coalition air support recaptured Hit District on April 14 as part of an ongoing operation to remove ISIS from the Euphrates River Valley. Security forces began operations to connect Ramadi to Hit District on March 12 and quickly recaptured Kubaisah, west of Hit, on March 25. From there, the ISF attacked Hit from the north and west, breaching the center of Hit on April 7 and securing the district on April 14. The ISF will now work to connect Hit with al-Baghdadi Sub-District, north of Hit, along the Euphrates River by securing control over the remainder of the Haditha-Baghdad highway. Doing so will grant the ISF control over the Euphrates River Valley from Haditha to Ramadi. ISW is thus changing the Hit District and the terrain between Hit and Ramadi from ISIS control to ISF control.

The Joint Operations Command, largely driven by Iranian proxy militias, launched a three-day offensive on March 1 to clear the Samarra desert from as far south as Lake Thar Thar and north towards Tikrit. The offensive concluded on March 3. Despite the difficulty of controlling desert terrain, the area has not witnessed ISIS attacks since the offensive. As such, ISW is changing key roadways from contested to ISF- and militia-controlled terrain, though ISW cannot assess with confidence if villages in the Jazeera Desert west of Samarra are under ISF and militia control. These areas thus remain contested.

Popular Mobilization forces continue to clash with ISIS in the Makhoul Mountains, north of Baiji. Popular Mobilization efforts have effectively cost ISIS its unilateral control in the area, though Iraqi Shi'a militias have not succeeded in securing uncontested control over any territory north of Baiji. Therefore, ISW is changing the area from ISIS-held to contested terrain.