Please cite as: EUAA, '2.2.4. South West - Checkpoints and road security ' in *COI Report – Somalia: Security Situation* , May 2025.

2.2.4. South West - Checkpoints and road security

A report published by the RVI and other organisations noted that, as of October 2023, 26 % of all of Somalia's checkpoints were located in South West State, the majority (66 %) in Lower Shabelle region.837 IPIS mapped multiple checkpoints on routes located between Mogadishu and Baraawe (where Al-Shabaab controlled several checkpoints in Qoryooley town and around Janale), on the Mogadishu–Afgooye–Baidoa–Doolow road (mostly under non-Al-Shabaab control), and along routes in Bakool (where Al-Shabaab held checkpoints in Yeed and Tayeeglow).838 Major checkpoints in the state included Daynuunaay near Baidoa (held by Al-Shabaab as of October 2023), Jamecada in Buur Hakaba, and Bar Ismail, an entry point to Afgooye.839 For an overview on checkpoints at country level see section 1.7 and Map 4.

Al-Shabaab controlled a number of key supply routes across the state, including the road between Aawdiinle and Bardale (Bay region),840 and aimed to gain control over the main routes connecting Lower Shabelle, Bay, and Banadir regions.841 The group carried out multiple attacks on key supply routes heading into Mogadishu, including the Mogadishu–Afgooye road.842 The numerous Al-Shabaab-imposed sieges of cities in South West State made travel on roads 'difficult and dangerous'.843

Particularly the key supply and transit route from Mogadishu to Baidoa,844 running through Wanla Weyn (Lower Shabelle) and Buur Hakaba (Bay),845 has been a focal area of Al-Shabaab attacks that mostly took the form of small-scale raids and ambushes,846 while the group has also ambushed the main supply route around Janale.847 In Bakool, the SNA reclaimed control of the strategic Xudur–Qurajome road from Al-Shabaab in August 2024.848

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