

Serving the Afghanistan Engineer District - South

Engineering Freedom

July/August 2010



U.S. Army Corps
of Engineers®
Afghanistan Engineer District - South



AES holds first Change of Command Ceremony

Commander

Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser

Command Sergeant Major

Command Sergeant Major Rickie Virgil

Deputy Commander

Lt. Col. Martha E. Kiene

Public Affairs Officer

Brenda L. Beasley (Acting)

COMM: 540-665-5064

DSN: 312-265-5064

Editor and Graphic Designer

Brenda L. Beasley

COMM: 540-665-5064

DSN: 312-265-5064

Engineering Freedom is the field magazine of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District - South (AES); and is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. It is produced bi-monthly for electronic distribution by the Public Affairs Office, AES. It is produced in the Afghanistan theater of operations.

Views and opinions expressed in the Engineering Freedom are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Articles or photographic submissions are welcome and should arrive in PAO by the 15th of each month preceding publication. They can be mailed to the below address or they can be e-mailed. If electronically submitted, all stories should be in Word document format and all photographs should be high resolution (at least 5x7 inches and 300 dpi) and include photo caption information.

All photographs appearing herein are by the AES Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of Engineering Freedom is to support the Commander's Internal Communication Program for AES. It also serves as the Commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies, operations, technical developments, and command philosophy to AES.

Submissions can be e-mailed to:
TAS.AES.PAO@usace.army.mil

Submissions can be mailed to:
Public Affairs Office
USACE-AES
APO AE 09355

Engineering Freedom
is available online at
www.aed.usace.army.mil/AES

FEATURES

- 6 Father and son team up in Herat
- 8 USACE team redesigns COIN tactics
- 10 AES holds first Change of Command Ceremony
- 14 Projects improve Afghan quality of life and aid counterinsurgency *(a series of articles by Capt. Tamara Gonzales)*
 - 14 New facilities aid counterinsurgency
 - 14 Medical facility gets built
 - 15 Afghans build national police facility
 - 16 Regional Logistics Center supplies ANP
 - 17 Afghan Air Force gets new compound



DEPARTMENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Commander's Message | 3 |
| Command Sergeant Major's Message | 4 |
| Afghanistan Safety 101 | 9 |
| News Briefs | 19 |
| On the Move | 20 |

Checkout Afghanistan Engineer District South on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Army-Corps-of-Engineers-Afghanistan-Engineer-District-South/199033262376?ref=ts>

On the cover ...

Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser (right) takes responsibility for commanding the Afghanistan Engineer District - South when he accepts the Corps flag from Brig. Gen. William M. Buckler (left) at a Change of Command Ceremony. See story beginning on page 10. (photo by Brenda Beasley)



Commander's message ...

Hail ...

To the Afghanistan Engineer District-South Team,

I want to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation of what you do each day in this contingency environment and for your tremendous hospitality you greeted me with when I arrived.

What a great bunch of people ... smart, professional and incredibly selfless. I look forward to serving with you these next 12 months.

I have spoken with many of you but wanted to pass on my command philosophy to make AES the best district it can be.

First, I will continue to emphasize **Safety** - Safety for our employees and Soldiers. This contingency environment is filled with risks. We must keep safety at the forefront and mitigate the risks we identify in all we do. As a lean organization, every team member is a valued part of the lineup and any loss requires the rest of the team to carry the additional load. Additionally, you are all appointed as "safety officers" and I expect you to stop any unsafe actions you encounter and ask that you share them with

the chain of command. Safety is the foundation of our trust, and we will maintain it as the primary criteria of our actions and decisions.

Second, I want each of us to **improve our areas of responsibility daily**. If there is one thing I have learned over the years in the Army, it is that we must improve our foxhole each day. We must make our organizations, relationships and teams better than they were yesterday. We must raise the bar daily to grow as an organization. If everyone ends each day making some aspect of their workplace better, then we can only get better overall as an organization.

Next is **Discipline**. I want our organization to have systems in place to do routine things routinely. We have people constantly rotating through our team so it is imperative that we build continuity books and use established QMS processes to maintain momentum. We also need to ensure we ask ourselves, who else needs to know this information and communicate with them. Then we can deal with those last-minute issues that require leader focus together. We need our team to continue to enforce standards, set the example, meet suspenses and



Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser

only promise what you can keep for our organization and for our partners and stakeholders.

Finally, we need to sustain our greatest strength -- **Teamwork**. We have strength when we work together and move in the same direction. This increases our effectiveness as an organization and makes coming to work fun.

Again, I truly look forward to meeting each of you and serving together in such an important and noble mission to serve our Nation and the great Soldiers of our country.

Building Strong!
Rebel 6 🇺🇸

and Farewell ...

Where does the time go? Hard to believe a year ago we were activating Afghanistan Engineer District-South. It wasn't easy, we faced numerous challenges. But, as I sit here now and reflect on the past year, we have come a long way. I know there is only a few folks left in the district who were



Col. Kevin J. Wilson

here for the activation, you can count them on one hand. But our success in standing up the District isn't the result of one person or even a handful of individuals. It is about the entire team putting their shoulder to the load and heaving together. Folks rotate out and the new members shoulder the load with equal enthusiasm. I believe every member of AES, past and present, can be proud of what they have accomplished. It isn't every day you get a chance to standup a district in combat. Granted there are easier things to do, but the easy tasks don't make a difference in the lives of the service members we support or the Afghans we are trying to build a better life for. This is the stuff you can

tell your grandchildren about.

You have to look no further than our own compound to realize how far we have come. Last summer we had the J3 building, formerly known as the KPO building, the day room and eight-plex and the three trailers with a couple tents. We opened building five in June and the day room and eight-plex are coming down to be replaced with buildings six and seven that will provide for the District HQs, expanded office space, transient billeting and multi-purpose facilities so we can expand our capacity development activities. Building six and seven will be on line by December if not sooner.

This month we also see the transition of some of the key leaders: Gil Kim, Pete Perez, Lt. Col. Samantha Ross and Command Sergeant Major John Werner. They have all played key roles in making the District what it is today. I, as the commander, could not ask for a better team. Standing up a District is as much an art as it is a science. It is about having the right people with the right skill sets at the right time. Kim, Perez, Ross, and Werner all came with the right skill sets at the right time. We will miss them and wish them all the best in the future.

This is my final column for Engineering Freedom Magazine. On July 9, I turned the command over to Col. Tony Funkhouser. Tony is a gifted leader, one of the finest leaders in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. I am excited to be turning over the District to Tony; he is the right individual taking the District at precisely the right time to bring it to even a level of greater success. I wish him all the best and know the AES team will support him as well as they have supported me.

Finally, I wish I could be saying farewell however I have been asked to stay on a few months more. I will be standing up Task Force Breshna Barq (electric power), also known as TFB2. The task force is a small group of folks with a mission to increase the power to Kandahar City – to counter the insurgency you need economic development, the latter doesn't happen without power. Once the task force is up and running I will redeploy. In the mean time, I look forward to the continued camaraderie even if I am the former commander of the Afghanistan Engineer District – South.

Wish you all the best. I will see you on the high ground.

Essayons! 🇺🇸

Command Sergeant Major's message ...

Hail ...

To all Afghanistan Engineer District - South, Soldiers and Civilians alike,

Let me begin by saying "thank you" for the warm reception I received upon arrival. I look forward to a year of hard work and fun getting to know and work with each and every one of you.

First, I would like to echo the Commander's philosophy:

1. **Safety.** Safety is everyone's number one job. If we all mitigate risks every day, there will be zero avoidable accidents. Remember, we are in a combat zone, so risk mitigation will always encompass that as part of what we do here.

2. **Improve our areas of responsibility daily.** Strive to make a positive difference every single day. It's very clear that our predecessors, Col. Kevin Wilson



Command Sergeant Major Rickie Virgil

and Command Sergeant Major John Werner, did an excellent job of standing up AES and getting a standard that we can build on. Make it better each day!

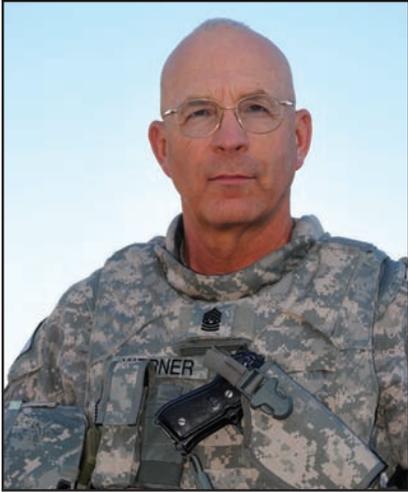
3. **Discipline.** Do routine

things routinely. There are many very smart people here, so let's act like it! If you don't know what right looks like, ask, because I will be telling those who are doing it wrong.

4. **Teamwork.** Many hands make light work. If we work together and build teams, every job will be easier. Remember, not all perceptions are the same. Communicate and make sure that your perceptions are understood and kept in context. Sometimes, people say the same things in different ways. Let's put our heads together and choose the right course of action. We will all benefit from it.

Lastly, I want to be very clear on this, I have one boss here, and that's Col. Anthony Funkhouser. He and I will do our best to promote a safe, fair and clean working environment for all to work in. 🇺🇸

and Farewell ...



Command Sergeant Major
John S. Werner

As many of you know, my tour of duty here has come to an end. It's been 12 months. Hard to believe how fast it went by.

After 41 years of service to the Army and the people of the United States, I return home to my family and take off the uniform for the last time.

Ever since that day in November

1969 when I took the enlistment oath, I have strived to uphold the responsibilities of what it means to be an "American Soldier." I served a tour of duty in Vietnam and one here in Afghanistan. In between, "Uncle Sam" has sent me around the world to some interesting places – not all have been garden spots, that I can assure you. My varying assignments and trips have one thing in common – the Soldiers and Civilians I have met, all doing their Nation's work, but all talking about their families and homes.

As I have traveled around this District, I have been amazed and intrigued by the conversations and family stories you have shared with me, whether it's been at a job site or as we sat around your areas as I



have over-nighted at your locations. One word sums up your families' backgrounds and professional experiences – amazing. Not all of our personnel are career Corps employees, many are "Schedule A" employees who wanted an opportunity to serve and brought their skill and passion to AES.

To the veterans who fill our ranks as Civilian employees, to the person who grew up behind the "Iron Curtain", to the person who grew up without a father, because he was shot down over Vietnam, to the person whose brother was a comrade of Fidel Castro and Ché Guevara and was assassinated, to the person who was member of the 3rd Infantry, "Old Guard" at Arlington Cemetery ... I could go on, but suffice it to say that we all have interesting stories to tell, all are so different, yet all are similar in who we are and why we are here. It's who we are as a people and a Nation. **We are Americans.**

We care enough to sacrifice our time, because "**We Care.**" Always be proud of what you have done and all that we have accomplished during our "Tour of Duty" here while assigned to Afghanistan Engineer District – South. I can honestly say that I have learned a lot from you and hopefully you have learned something from me.

For me, I head back to Barb, a wonderful woman who has been my wife for 38 years, and a loving family who have been the center of both our lives. They, most of all, have waited patiently for my service to be complete. Look for me back in Minnesota and along the north shore of Lake Superior. Truly, God's Country.

God Bless each of you and your families. See you down the trail, "*On the Higher Ground.*"



Father and son team up in Herat

Story by Brenda Beasley

Being away from family and friends to work in a foreign country can sometimes be a scary journey to make alone. Taking that first step can be a little frightening. Like that first day of school when the world seems larger and it's hard to let go of the parent's hand being gripped. Then sometimes, it's just knowing someone else in that unfamiliar world that makes it easier to take that first step.

Although they didn't make the steps in unison, a father and a son from Rochester, Minn., made the steps when they decided to journey to a foreign country to work - steps made a little easier taken together.

James (Jim) J. McWilliams (father) and Jason R. McWilliams (son) took the steps and teamed up to work in the Herat Area Office (Herat, Afghanistan) for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District - South headquartered in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Jim deployed first and is serving as a project engineer/construction representative. Jason, a Specialist in the U.S. Army Minnesota National Guard, where he specializes as a Chinook helicopter mechanic, joined his Dad in Herat and is serving as an office engineer.

At the Herat Area Office, Jim manages projects in the Farah and Shindand area, as well as the Afghan National Army Training Range at Camp Zafar. Projects range from \$5 to \$34 million and aren't without challenges. He also works with and mentors local national engineers and quality assurance representatives assigned to each of these projects.

"We're used to a certain quality of construction standards in the United States, but we need to understand that we're going from a modern 21st century type of setting to a less refined 15th century type level of technology and materials," said Jim. "However, knowing that someday they'll be taking over these projects makes this a very rewarding experience."

Engineering graduates from universities throughout Afghanistan, the LNs receive



Courtesy photo

Jason R. McWilliams (left) and James (Jim) J. McWilliams (right) visit with an Afghan child.

mentoring on becoming project engineers while the LN-QARs provide onsite quality assurance 24/7. They're able to provide continuity to projects as they maintain point of contact relations with the contractor and the Corps QAR, filling the void as newly deployed Corps project engineers are transitioned into country. "As Afghans, they have the ability to go where we can't," said Jim, "like projects at hostile or remote locations."

A licensed general contractor in the state of Minnesota, Jim spent 16 years as an architect and 22 years as a construction manager. He was with the Corps' Fort Benning Area Office, Savannah District, for two years before deploying to AES. One of the best parts about working in Herat, according to Jim, is that he's getting to learn the Corps' processes and systems at an accelerated pace.

As a project engineer, he manages the daily activities of Corps projects using Resident Management System, a project-unique software program. His work involves official correspondence, finances, submittals, and QA/AC reporting and scheduling.

Jim and Jason discuss the construction of an ANA facility in Herat.



Courtesy photo



Courtesy photo

Jim checks out the electrical set up on a project site in Herat.

Although Jim and Jason are at the same location in Afghanistan, they only work together on occasion.

As an office engineer, Jason tracks project activities and assists project engineers in the implementation and processing of the contract. Since father and son have worked together in the past, Jason picks up on a lot of issues that need Jim's expertise without Jim having to go into a lot of detail.

Jason also works directly with the area engineer of the Herat Area Office doing "like placements," which is projecting the actual payments made for each contract. He works with all of the project engineers, tracking everything from system payments to contract modifications to contract submittals. "Coming

from the private sector, it's a different challenge gaining Corps experience," said Jason, "But it's very rewarding to be a part of helping complete projects that are improving the quality of life for the Afghan people."

In the United States, Jason spends his days as a construction project manager. He is a nationally certified Emergency Medical Technician, has Fire Fighting I and II certification and holds a bachelor's degree in Business Management and Biblical Studies from Crown College in St. Bonifacius, Minn.

In Herat, most of his days are spent in RMS and closing out projects, which sometimes requires a lot of research and tracking down old files to complete. His evenings are sometimes spent keeping up with family and friends on Facebook.

Working in a foreign country is not always an easy journey to make. Getting calls from family and friends or seeing them on Facebook enjoying a higher quality of life makes it less easy. However, knowing what to expect when you arrive in a foreign country or knowing someone who's already there can make it a lot easier.

"Our offices may be in different buildings," said Jason, "But being able to just walk over and see my Dad or ask him about anything makes it much easier to be here." 🇦🇫

USACE team redesigns COIN tactics

Story and photo by Mark Abueg, public affairs officer
FEST-M, 579th Engineer Detachment

A blend of civilian and military members in an Active Duty U.S. Army unit are proving to be a relevant force to battle insurgents in Afghanistan. But not in the typical “battle” sense accustomed to war doctrine.

These Department of the Army Civilians aren’t providing security for convoys.

These U.S. Army Soldiers aren’t raiding enemy hideouts.

This hybrid field force engineering team is helping bring stability to the city of Kandahar through a counterinsurgency (COIN) effort, which aims to protect local residents from insurgents and provide Afghans with a functioning society focused on development and governance.

Hamkari Baraye Kandahar, or Cooperation for Kandahar, in the language Dari, is a multi-layered joint military-civil operation. The Civilians and Soldiers of the 579th Engineer Detachment (FEST-M), based out of Vicksburg, Miss., have established a presence on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, where they are taking engineering projects of this operation and outlining a process for the Afghan people to take control against the Taliban.

“Hamkari for us includes everything from designing government buildings to remodeling police substations,” Col. Richard W. Dean II, FEST-M commander said. “It’s a cooperation of Afghan, U.S., International and NATO forces working together on projects trying to build up the local Afghan infrastructure.”

Projects include taking deconstructed buildings and then making them into usable facilities for the local government.

“Some include Afghanistan’s Department of Public Health and the Department of Human Rights,” Dean said. “The engineers are taking some of their existing buildings and then redesigning and adding services such as electricity, air conditioning, and plumbing to them. Basic services that we may sometimes take for granted.”

Other times the engineer team is starting from scratch and designing buildings for the



Photo outline: Javed Ahmed, Alfonso Santa, Maj. Ronnie Davis, and Sam Stacy, left to right, go over the many Hamkari engineer projects in Afghanistan assigned to the 579th Engineer Detachment (FEST-M).

Afghans, Dean added.

“From President Hamid Karzai to local mayors to local jirgas,” Dean said. “These are the people we are aiding.”

Coming off two of the deadliest months in Afghanistan, new buildings may prove to just be new targets for the enemy. But they are also a symbol of hope and stability for the war-torn nation.

“If we build a police station, Afghans will have some kind of security they know they’re going to be safe from the Taliban,” said Ronnie J. Davis, FEST-M operations officer. “We build and redesign schools and hospitals, and they’ll have a place to go to and they can use these facilities.”

“So hopefully that will detour the Taliban in some way. This will show the locals rejecting the insurgency and supporting their government.”

By improving their way of life, it’s also about building their self-esteem, Davis added.

In a war that began in 2001, operations hang on the balance of Hamakari’s success.

To win the lucrative “hearts and minds” of the people, the engineers first need to win the support of the people. Then they can give the nation hope for the future.

“As long as we try,” said Davis. “That’s all we can do is try.”

Afghanistan Safety 101

by Cedric J. Pelt, safety officer

What are you doing to make it safe?

The Safety Office needs your help in promoting its Safety Award Program. Each team member here in Afghanistan Engineer District - South is a safety officer, and we all have a responsibility to ensure the safety and health of all our team members.

We would like to hear what you are doing to help keep us safe. You can share your safety stories with us so that we may share them with others and learn from your successes.

We want to give out safety awards to those who are promoting safety within and around their areas.

You can nominate someone

or you can nominate yourself for a District Commander Safety Award. Also, you can nominate your office or a group based on a team effort to promote safety within your office.

We have a contractor structured Safety Award Program for nominating our contractors for quarterly and annual Safety Awards. Please share this information with our contractors. Conduct the assessments of each contractor within your area and nominate the highest rated one to the Safety Office for a quarterly and annual safety award to be present by the Commander.

Submit all Safety Award Program nominations through your supervisors before



Cedric J. Pelt

submitting them to the Safety Office. For more information, contact the Safety Office at 540-678-1980 (commercial), 381-814-1980 (DSN), or 079-948-6844 (Roshan mobile).

Corps Resident Office enforces safety

Decades of war and absence of contemporary construction methods have catalyzed the Afghan construction culture to be one that is desensitized to common safety practices. USACE contractor Highland AI-Hujuz, an Iraqi firm which has had prior work with USACE, has been making significant strides towards changing the mind set of the everyday Afghan construction laborer involved with the Corps Support Battalion project. They have



provided training and guidance on different facets of safety and have taken a hands-on approach towards mentoring. HLH's recent investment of self-retractable lanyards for its Afghan subcontractors is indicative of their high regard to safety and the length the company is willing to go to in providing a safe and efficient construction environment. (From Maj. Andrew L. Olson, officer in charge, Kandahar Vicinity Resident Office.)



Staying in perfect step to the playing of "Ruffles and Flourishes," the Color Guard marches to post colors at the beginning of the ceremony. L to R: Army Spc. Josue Flores, Marine Staff Sgt. Bryan Alfaro, Army Sgt. Marie Vernon, Air Force Senior Airman Kirby McDonald, and Air Force Staff Sgt. Denise Kerley.

AES holds first Change of Command Ceremony

Story and photos by Brenda Beasley

Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser succeeded Col. Kevin J. Wilson as District Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District - South, at a ceremony July 9 in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Entrance of the official party to the playing of the "General's March," announced the beginning of AES' first Change of Command Ceremony. After the colors were posted, Chaplain (Capt.) William Kneemiller delivered the invocation and then honors were rendered for the playing of the National Anthem.

Senior commander for the ceremony, Brig. Gen. William M. Buckler, commanding general, Joint Forces Engineer Command, extolled the Corps' accomplishments and ability to successfully embed with tactical forces in his speech to the more than 300 people in attendance.

"The best thing about being an engineer is that you get to see the changes you do to change the face of the earth," said Buckler. "The biggest change that the South District has had is not just in building a building or leaving a facility, but by standing up the Afghanistan Engineer District South. You've been able to impact the operation, making a difference on today's battlefield today."

He then presented outgoing

commander Wilson with his end of tour award. He also presented him with the Silver Order of the de Fleury Medal in recognition of his superior service to the Engineer Regiment as it supports the Army to assure mobility, enhance protection, enable expeditionary logistics, and build capacity in order to provide battle space commanders with the freedom of action required for full spectrum operations in an era of persistent conflict.

"Setting up a district in combat is no easy task," said Wilson. "I just want to say that by the grace of God, the dedication of the great AES team members, both Military and Civilian, as well as the friendship of others, I had a great run. I'll see you on the high ground. Essayons!"

Wilson has been reassigned to the newly established Task Force Breshna Barq (Electric Power) in Kandahar, Afghanistan, where he is serving as leader of the team working on Kandahar City Power Programs.

Following the awards presentation, the official party assembled in a square position on the stage to begin the passing of the district's colors. Navy Lt. Nicholas Long, master of ceremonies, proceeded to explain how the traditional event was rich with symbolism and heritage, dating back to medieval times.





Intently observing the ceremony battle rhythm she orchestrated, AES Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Samantha Ross (left) sits on the front row next to AES' incoming Command Sergeant Major Rickie Virgil (right).

Throughout military history, unit colors have marked the position of the commander on the battlefield and served as a rallying point. While attacking or rallying on the battlefield, Soldiers would follow the standard of their leader, most often found at the forward edge of the battle. In more recent times, the colors represent not only the heritage and history of the unit, but also the unity and loyalty of its Soldiers.

“The colors are the commander’s symbol of authority,” said Long. “The passing of the district’s colors represents the transfer of authority and responsibility from one commander to another.”

To begin the transfer, guardian of the district’s



Greeting the long line of AES employees as the new commander, Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser (right) shakes hands with Contracting Division’s Prixie Cruz (center). Next in line is Sonny Sapida and Thomas Devlin.

colors and principle advisor to the district commander Command Sgt. Maj. John S. Werner passed the colors to

Wilson signifying his last act of allegiance to him. Wilson passed the colors to the senior tactical commander,



Relinquishing his year as commander, Col. Kevin J. Wilson (right) passes the Corps of Engineers Flag to Brig. Gen. William M. Buckler (left).

Buckler, signifying that the district is never without officer leadership.

During the reading of the Assumption of Command Orders, Buckler passed his trust and transferred responsibility for the district and its personnel by giving the colors to the incoming commander, Funkhouser. By passing the colors back to Werner, Funkhouser displayed his confidence in the

noncommissioned officer corps.

Werner completed the transfer and showed his first act of allegiance to the new commander by returning the colors to the color bearer's sling. Afterwards, the official party returned to their respective seats, with the incoming and outgoing commanders switching seats, signifying the change in their positions.

As the new commander,

Funkhouser is now responsible for commanding a 230-person engineering, design and construction management organization that covers all of Western and Southern Afghanistan with a projected workload of over \$1.5 billion.

Funkhouser comes from the Corps' Tulsa District where he served three years as commander, which also included one year of doubling as the commander of the Corps' Southwestern Division in Dallas, Texas.

Born in Keyser, W.Va., Funkhouser holds a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the U.S. Military Academy, a master's degree in Engineering Management from the University of Missouri-Rolla, a Military Art and Science degree from the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and a master's degree in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

His numerous assignments from platoon leader to battalion commander to division commander have led him to this one-year old Corps district. When he addressed the crowd, Funkhouser said it was incredible to see everything that AES had accomplished in the past year. He added that AES will continue to do everything possible to support the warfighters and our NATO and Afghan partners.

"My promise is to continue the legacy that AES has established," said Funkhouser. "I just thank you for allowing me to serve with you. Thanks and Building Strong! Hooah!"

Projects improve Afghan quality of life and aid counterinsurgency

Stories and photos by Army Capt. Tamara Gonzales

Editor's note: Army Capt. Tamara Gonzales is a public affairs specialist in the Public Affairs Office for NATO Training Mission - Afghanistan, headquartered in Kabul. She provided these stories from her visit to several different project sites while in Kandahar.

New facilities aid counterinsurgency

The Afghan National Police are actively engaged in fighting the counterinsurgency and to aid in this effort Afghans and coalition forces are rapidly building ANP facilities throughout the Kandahar Province.

The area's Afghan Border Police will soon have safe places they can call home after working along the Pakistani border. The compounds will contain living quarters, administrative offices, dining facilities, laundry facilities, warehouses and ammunition storage areas completely surrounded by security walls interspersed with guard towers. They will also be completely self-sufficient with power plants, water wells and sewage systems.

"This will give them the basic tools they need so that ultimately they can conduct the mission on their own," said Oscar Lopez, a construction representative with the Kandahar Vicinity Resident Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineering District – South.

USACE-AES engineers, along with NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan, Combined-Joint Engineers, designed the project and are providing project oversight for the ABP compounds.

The southern region Afghan Uniform Police, police providing security for Afghans citizens living in cities throughout Kandahar, will also have new buildings throughout the districts.

Unfortunately, the construction workers are coming across some challenges such as the threat of working in hostile environments like improvised explosive devices and receiving personal threats upon their lives. One of these



An Afghan construction worker runs electrical wires at the Surosahan Afghan Border Police compound. The compound is one of eight locations that will provide a secure place for the border police to live while serving along Afghanistan's border.

threats included demanding employees leave the construction site by 4p.m. or they and their families would be harmed. This not only affected the employees but also their work productivity. The threats also exist to the local populace near the surrounding towns where villagers are being killed. Some of these locations are not being built at this time because the areas are too dangerous for the construction contractor companies. Despite these threats, Afghans are continuing the construction for their border and uniform police, giving them better facilities in which to serve their country.

"Building the police headquarters for them to work out of will hopefully increase the number of ANP," said Master Sgt. Michael Wanner, a quality assurance representative with USACE-AES.

New medical facility gets built

Afghans and coalition forces are working together to create even greater medical facilities for the Afghan National Army. The hospital staff not only serves local ANA but also meet

emergency medical demands of ANA throughout Helmand Province and local ANA family members.

The hospital is the most advanced one in the area, providing both outpatient and inpatient care, as well as emergency and trauma cases, some of which are caused by Taliban attacks.

While this addition will provide much-needed hospital services, the current Afghan construction company has had its share of challenges getting it built. Many of these challenges stem from the first company not fulfilling its contract such as not meeting the International Plumbing Code, poor wiring, laying substandard foundations and improper window installation, according to Richard S. Jamar, the project manager with the Kandahar Vicinity Resident Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District - South.

“We are removing the deficiencies,” said Faroz Ahmad Zai, contracting company acting project manager and quality control manager.

To overcome these deficiencies, Afghan workers are re-installing all wiring and plumbing to standard and re-installing the windows. They are also rebuilding parts of the foundation to meet higher requirements for electrical loads, all in an effort to ensure the hospital is a safe place to treat patients.

“We are turning a challenge into a success,” said Maj. Andrew Olson, officer-in-charge at the USACE-AES Kandahar Vicinity Resident Office. “In the end, it is going to benefit the hospital.”



An Afghan construction worker helps to assemble ventilation for the Afghan National Army Hospital's addition in Kandahar, July 5.

The USACE-AES along with NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan, and Combined-Joint Engineers designed and are providing project oversight for the \$3 million project.

The funds and construction will provide 50 additional beds to the current 100- bed hospital plus 22 more administrative offices, an isolation ward, an additional pharmacy, family waiting areas, plus support facilities such as laundry services.

“Fifty more beds will help us very much,” said ANA Hospital Deputy Director Col. Naqibullah Rahemi. “We hope to have a bigger hospital very soon.”

Afghans build national police facility

Afghans and coalition forces built the first Afghan National Police compound incorporating the Afghan Border Police, Afghan Uniform Police, Afghan National Civil Order Police and the Regional Logistics Center at one location.

“The Joint Regional Afghan National Security Force Command combines all aspects of the ANP and a Regional Logistics Center, enabling them to react quickly to situations requiring an immediate police presence,” said U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Jacob Botello, ANP program manager for the ABP with NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan. “Co-locating the three police services together allows for a cohesive relationship to build and increase police capability.”

NTM-A, CSTC-A, CJ-Engineers provided the engineering management needed for completion of this \$50 million project. They also served as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District - South's customer as it was the Corps' engineers who contracted and provided project oversight.

The JRAC will provide a site for these Kandahar ANP headquarters police to live and work in a secure perimeter while granting easier access to logistical requirements at the RLC.

The ANP will now have a place to eat, do laundry and sleep, as well as a place to relax and exercise at an outdoor soccer field. Additionally, they will have new facilities in

which to work such as administrative offices, warehouses and more. The AUP section will have an additional Counter Intelligence Department with interrogation rooms and jail cells. There will also be an ANSF Regional Logistics Forensic Laboratory where ANSF forces will perform investigative work.

JRAC recent additions include a Ministry of Interior building, where MoI personnel provide administrative support and resources for the ANP, and an Operational Control Center, similar to a command post that will provide communications to the entire site.

“We support the Afghan people and ANP,” said Sayed Arif Habidi, the MoI’s site building program manager with Technologists Incorporated. “Our police support our guys in Afghanistan.”

Just as important, the police living and working on this compound will be completely self-sufficient with the facility having a sewer plant, a power plant, water wells and vehicle fuel points.

While the area’s ANP will benefit from the facility, the workers and coalition forces overcame many challenges to get to this point. One of these challenges included learning to accept each other’s ways of completing an assignment.

“They still get the job done,” said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Michael Wanner, a quality assurance representative with the Kandahar Vicinity Resident Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District – South. “The specifications are still met, the job is just done differently.”

Some of the challenges were structural, such as the perimeter wall needing to be reconstructed to provide a stronger foundation for the wall’s sniper section. Another challenge included adding outside faucets to the buildings, which were an original part of the contract. Afghans have genuine concerns about growing trees and raising fresh fruits and vegetables; the faucets are needed for irrigation.

Not only did the coalition forces and Afghans overcome these challenges, they also found ways to make even more improvements to the compound as they built the facilities. Additions to the dining facility included adding outside wood burners, an Afghan cultural means of



An Afghan construction worker checks the concrete masonry unit for accurate vertical measurement at the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center serving as the first joint Afghan National Police facility.

cooking, and adding a door to the dining facility between the serving area and the kitchen.

Future plans include the AUP, ANCOP, and RLC logisticians moving into their completed facilities, building a road from the JRAC to Kandahar Air Field, and having enough room to possibly expand the entire compound and MoI to meet the growing needs of the ANP.

Regional Logistics Center supplies ANP

Afghans and coalition forces are working shoulder-to-shoulder to supply Afghan National Police. The job of supplying the police is becoming more efficient with the building of the Kandahar Regional Logistics Center at the Joint Regional ANP Center.

The RLC serves as a processing line for issuing equipment to deploying ANP, providing boots, uniforms, weapons holsters, t-shirts, socks and much more.

“Anything the ANP needs to go out to the field, any item they are authorized we have on hand,” said Capt. Ryan Randall, RLC senior advisor.

Afghan construction workers are building the new RLC while the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with NATO Training Mission – Afghanistan, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan, Combined-Joint Engineers, are providing project design and oversight for the facility.

The JRAC will be a joining of the RLC, the



An Afghan construction worker checks concrete masonry block placement for the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center where ANP will receive more efficient logistical support at the Regional Logistics Center.

Afghan National Civil Order Police, the Afghan Border Police and the Afghan Uniform Police Kandahar headquarters all within the same location. Currently, ANP logisticians have to travel from their unit's location in Kandahar to the RLC for each supply transaction.

When each of these facilities are in one location, the ANP logisticians simply walk to the RLC, place their order and wait for the new shipment of supplies to arrive. This will also prevent the ANP from having to spend time on the road when they could be using that time to accomplish their security mission.

"The departments are going to work together," said Sefai Hameedi, Afghan interpreter who has worked at the RLC for more than two years. "Supplies come here with the proper paperwork versus going to Kabul. We are getting enough supplies to support them from here."

The new RLC will also contain facilities where ANP can take weapons and vehicles to be repaired and maintained on site. Currently, these facilities are located in separate areas

making it a challenge to maintain and repair vehicles and weapons.

Throughout the move, RLC logisticians will have to settle into the new location while continuing to provide for the ANP. However, the team is determined to complete the move by the end of summer, said Randall.

Overall, the new facility will give ANP logisticians the resources they need at their fingertips, not only giving them greater capability of accomplishing their tasks but also allowing them to supply their police more efficiently.

"They won't have to go to different locations, they can go to one central point and get all the supplies they need," said Randall.

Afghan Air Force gets new compound

The Afghan Air Force is a fairly new addition to the Afghan fighting force. Still a young force, their capabilities are increasing everyday including the number of service members, the number of aircraft and now the building of the

Kandahar AAF base.

This compound will greatly benefit the AAF and their state of self-sufficiency; however, there have been some challenges in building the facility. Some of these challenges include importing construction material into the country, working in the Afghan heat and the limitations of pouring concrete in certain temperatures. Not to mention the fact of overcoming obstacles of working in a combat zone such as employees leaving the area to move their families to safe locations, the threat of enemy contact and finding unexploded ordnance far below ground level. The employees are trained in unexploded ordnance recognition and know how to react in case they encounter one. This has resulted in more than 1.7 million accident-free work hours.

Despite these struggles, the compound is being built from the ground up. Here, the AAF can both live and work in a protected environment with perimeter walls surrounding the entire area interspersed with guard towers providing 360-degree security. They will live in environmentally controlled quarters, eat at a state-of-the-art dining facility, receive treatment at the new medical clinic, and use the first laundry facility constructed for an AAF base. They will also have access to recreational facilities such as a Morale, Welfare and Recreation field for playing soccer and cricket (two commonly played sports in Afghanistan), an outdoor exercise area, a post exchange store and a gymnasium.

Within the same compound, the AAF will perform their mission of providing flight capabilities for the 205th and 215th Afghan National Army Corps. The flight facilities will include a fire station, an air/main transportation control office, a taxi-lane to a taxi-way, a maintenance facility and a bulk fuel station.

“The fuel station will provide sustainability for their own aircraft so they can conduct refueling operations themselves,” said U.S. Air Force Capt. David Lasagna, a civil engineer with the 738th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group. “The air/main transportation control office will provide a good view of the flight line.”



Afghan construction workers build the Afghan Air Force base from ground-up in Kandahar, June 30. The facility will provide a place for AAF members to live and work in a secure environment while increasing the AAF’s capabilities.

Currently, ANA soldiers have to line up on the tarmac for their flights. The new compound will have a passenger/cargo terminal where they can sit and wait inside with separate inbound and outbound passenger waiting areas. Additionally, AAF members will become even more self-sufficient with their own power plant, fuel point station, generators and other basic utilities, said Randall.

Not only is this compound improving flight processes, while improving AAF living conditions, it is also providing Afghan jobs while increasing Afghans’ skills, said Bruce Beckstrom, URS health, safety, environmental, manager.

Ninety percent of the employees working on the project are Afghans. Additionally, the contracting company, URS, is providing 30-hours of OSHA safety training. Through this instruction the employees receive a certification card helping them to gain future employment at other companies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“We are providing education and ensuring we have qualified personnel working for us,” said Beckstrom. “Our mission here is to support the government in Kabul and support AAF as part of that government.” 🇦🇫

News briefs

Applying to vacancy announcements

by Gloria Dyson, HR Specialist

When applying to vacancy announcements for Afghanistan positions, make sure that you apply to the correct announcement.

At the top of each announcement it states who can apply - for example - "This announcement is for current civilian Army employees only." (This means that if you are a current Department of the Army employee, then you need to apply to this announcement).

It is your responsibility to make sure that you apply to the correct announcement and have a current resume on file that reflects your unique qualifications.

Remember that your resume will be rated and ranked along with all the other applicants that may apply.

It is not HR's responsibility to inform applicants which announcements to apply against.

Details of a tasker

by Gloria Dyson, HR Specialist

A Tasker is a Detail to a temporary assignment of an employee to a different position or set of duties for a specified period with the employee returning to his/her original position at the end of the Tasker.

Officially, the employee continues to hold the same position, status and pay of their permanent position and may not meet the grade level indicated in the Tasker request.

Employees do not need to meet qualification standards in order to be Detailed. However, employees must meet positive education requirements and special licensure requirements in order

to be Detailed into a position with these requirements.

An employee cannot be promoted on a Tasker. There are different procedures to follow for a promotion.

Out Processing from AES

by Gloria Dyson, HR Specialist

If you are leaving AES, End of Tour (EOT), be sure to use the out processing checklist.

It can be found on the SharePoint site under the HR tab.

J1 will be your final stop for out processing.

Stop by on the day that your flight departs to sign out. If you have an early morning flight, you can sign out the day before.

New Process for UDC Redeployments

by UDC Redeployment Cell

Employees who redeploy through the UDC at the end of their tour now have a new process to follow.

The primary day for redeploying is the first Tuesday of the first week of the pay period, with the first Wednesday being the back up if the Tuesday class is full. The second week of the pay period is the beginning of your 5-day reintegration leave. A copy of the email receipt of class registration must accompany your EOT travel packet.

The UDC is going to an automated redeployment scheduler. No redeployees will be accepted on Mondays. If Monday is a holiday, no redeployees on Tuesday. These days will be blocked out on the calendar. Right now it goes out to the end of the 2010 calendar year.

You can change your times if your departure dates change; however, you can only register

once.

Once the redeployment class is filled up, you will not be able to register for that day and will have to pick the next available date.

Once you register, an e-mail confirmation will be sent to you telling you what time to report and some things that can speed up the redeployment process while you are there.

Emergencies will be handled on an as needed basis.

The links to register for a redeployment date are posted on your SharePoint servers. It is in the left hand column on the bottom. It is called "UDC Redeployment Tracker"

If you get a message that states the class dates are full, email the UDC Redeployment Cell at their email address: DLL-CETAM-UDC-Redeployment and let them know you need to be redeployed and the class is full.

If you have any questions please contact the J1 office.

J3 Air Movement Requirements

by MSG Charles Yepa

In order for passengers to fly on the Global fixed wing or rotary wing and the ISAF flights, they'll need to provide their Name, Rank/Civilian grade, Last 4 SSN, Blood Type, Cell phone number, and Weapon(s) serial numbers (if it applies) to J3 Operations.

Correction

In our last issue, in the story titled "In remembrance of ..." on page 6, it was reported that **Adam Spain** was a native son of Chattanooga, Tenn., and went to school there. This information was incorrect. Mr. Spain was a native son of **Nashville, Tenn.**, and completed high school there. 

ON THE MOVE

Moving in



Michelle Bannister



George Bittorf



James Buckalew



SSGT Laura Burton



Erwyn Calderon



Staci Claunch



Vivian Coleman



Donny Davidson



Norma Dean



Gloria Dyson



Annette Evans



Mark Fleck



Greg Gerding



Annette Hawkins



Tracy Haywood



Frances Hinkley



Scott Hughes



Juan Jaramillo



Jeffrey Johnson



Jon Jorgenson



Dora Karnes



SSGT Denise Kerley



Mark LaFleur



Joanne Long



LT Nick Long



Glen Matsuyama



Walter McCracken



Janiera Palo



Greg Reiff



Chad Richards



Michael Scarano



Joseph Schwing



Irby Tucker



Roger Vogler



Lindsey Wetzel



Kalid Williams



Breeanna Witt



Basher Yared



Brett Young



Prixie Cruz



COL Anthony Funkhouser



LTC Martha Kiene



CSM Rickie Virgil

Moving out

Ezra Abraham
MSGT Stephen Allwes
Pat Anderson
Roland Belew
Dale Berry
Thomas Blankenhorn
Shawn Boone
SSG George Bowyer
Geneva Brown
William Caswell
Jessica Chermis
Stanley Clark
LTC Donald Davis
Thomas Devlin
George Flickner
Carlos German-Guzman
MAJ Thomas Giannini
Timothy Gordon
MSG Stephen Gray

Terry Guagliano
Woodie Hemmingway
MAJ Andrew Howes
James Jones
Gill Kim
Trevor Kough
CAPT Elbert Laza
Tony LeDuc
Michael McCollum
Mitchell Moore
Eric Morrison
Robert Mueller
William Nielsen
Roger Nowicki
MAJ Mike Odette
MAJ Mark Osborne
Pete Perez
Joe Peters
Lawrence Piazza

MAJ John Raso
Joseph Rath
LTC Samantha Ross
Victor Ross
John Rowland
Patricia Ryan
Phil Schmitt
John Segon
Mark Stephenson
Timothy Taylor
Nancy Traywick
Michael VonBuhr
Joe Wade
CSM John Werner
SGT Steven Wilson
SGM Terry Woosley
Joel Yancey

Photos unavailable at press time: PFC Ronny Alvarez, CW5 Thomas Black, SFC Daniel Brady, Mark Burlas, LTC John Carpenter, Ronald Cates, Jonathan Duncan, SSG Albert Garcia, SGT Tommy Hamilton, SFC Donald, Jordan, SPC Jarred Kato, MSgt Irene Mason, SPC McInnes, Robert McKechnie, MAJ Oscar Portillo, MSgt Eric Smith, CAPT Kimberly Taisipic, and SGM David Tindall.