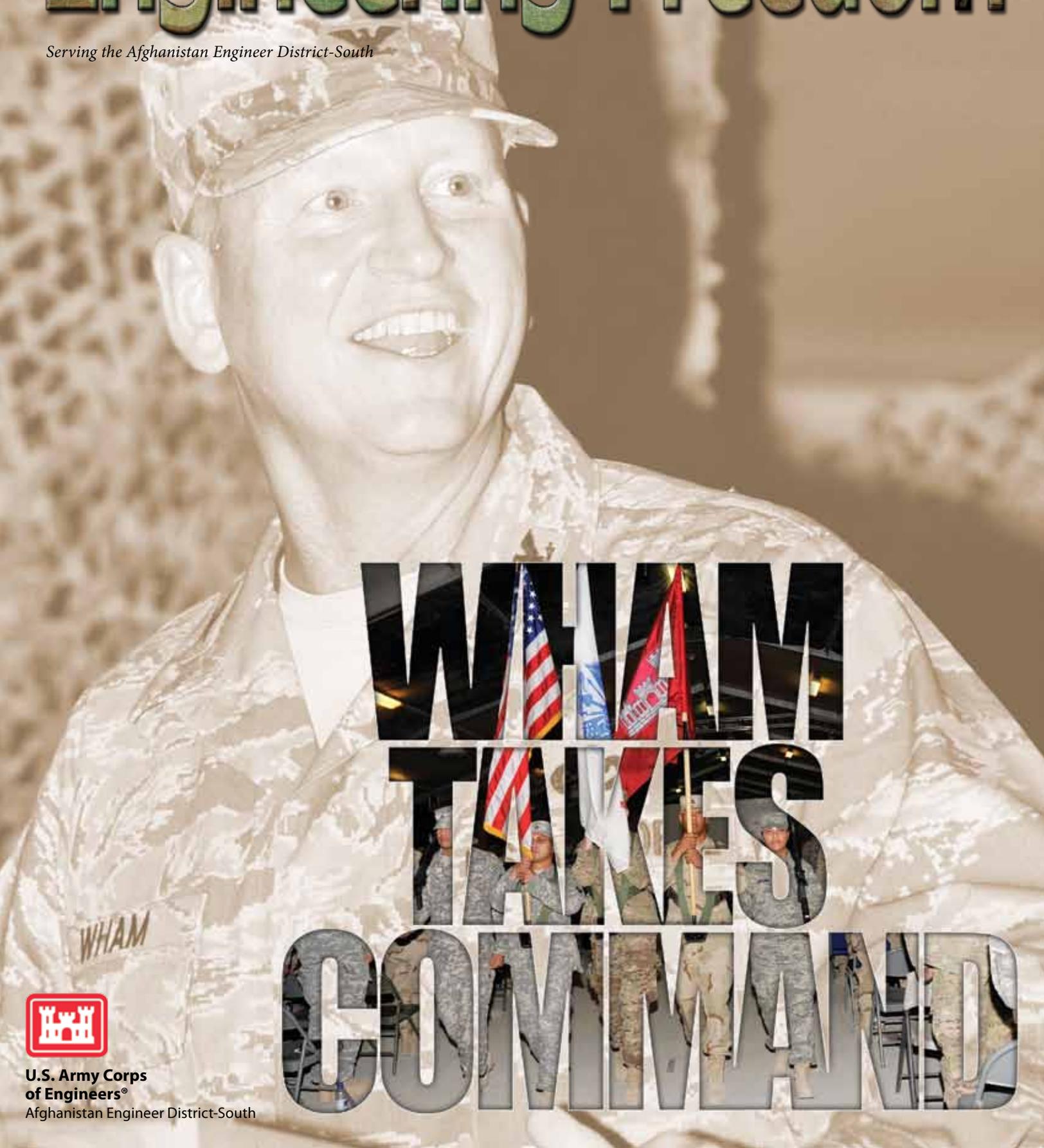


Engineering Freedom

JULY/AUGUST 2011

Serving the Afghanistan Engineer District-South



WHAM TAKES COMMAND



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

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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. All photographs should be high resolution (at least 5x7 inches and 300 dpi), include photo caption information, and be submitted as separate .jpg or .tif image files.

All photographs appearing herein are by the AED-South Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

The mission of Engineering Freedom is to support the Commander's internal communication program for AED-South. It also serves as the Commander's primary communication tool for accurately transmitting policies, operations, technical developments and command philosophy to AED-South team members.

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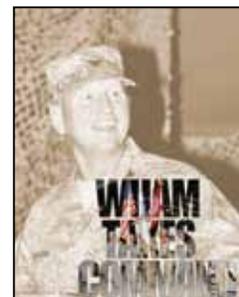
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On the cover ...

Air Force Col. Benjamin Wham takes command of the Afghanistan Engineer District-South. See story on page 14.
(Photo by Brenda L. Beasley)



Commander's message ...

Greetings, AED-South family. It is my distinct honor and pleasure to serve as the third commanding officer of this exceptional team of U.S. civilians, contractors, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Afghan civilians. I am thankful to Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp (former Chief of Engineers) and Maj. Gen. Timothy A. Byers (U.S. Air Force) for the opportunity to command what has been accurately described as the most productive, per capita, district in the entire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

I have enjoyed my first few weeks of command, following the July 8 change of command ceremony, and I am astounded at the enormous breadth and depth of engineering tasks that this district is striving to accomplish. I am grateful to Col. Tony Funkhouser for forging such an outstanding sense of leadership and teamwork, and I wish him the best as he moves on to a critically important position as the Division Chief, Joint Capabilities Division, J8, Joint Staff, the Pentagon.

As an Air Force officer, I have always been a customer of the Army Corps of Engineers. My first exposure to military engineering occurred when I was a freshman student at The Citadel in Charleston, S.C.; I was on a field trip to a USACE dredge operating in Charleston Harbor. My first TDY as a new second lieutenant in the Air Force was to USACE headquarters in Washington, D.C., for a military construction design review of a facility on Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. As a squadron commander in Mountain Home, Idaho, I broke ground and cut ribbons on facilities supporting one of the largest fighter wings in the Air Force.

Finally, as AFCENT's (U.S. Air Forces Central) engineer forward, one my hats was the AFCENT Chief of Construction Management; there I had an opportunity to work with some exceptional USACE professionals, led by my good friend, Gharib Ibrahim. When the opportunity arose to command a USACE district, I was the first in line with my Air Force leadership volunteering to seize the opportunity. What a reward!

Since arriving, I have travelled extensively around the district's area of responsibility and met some exceptionally dedicated USACE employees. I spent three days with the area office staff in Herat, reviewing construction projects around Herat City, cutting the ribbon on the new Regional Counternarcotics Law Enforcement Center and meeting with a highly motivated staff of Afghan engineers and quality assurance representatives who are enabling us to execute a difficult mission throughout Regional Command West.

I travelled to Shindand Air Base where we dedicated a new taxiway that will allow C-17 aircraft to exit the runway to load and off-load passengers and cargo while allowing the runway to stay open to support the mission of training Afghanistan's next generation of pilots. I drove around Camp Leatherneck and Camp Shorabak and reviewed construction to support U.S. Forces-Afghanistan and Regional Command Southwest, as well as the new facilities under construction for the Afghan National Army.

When I arrived on station, I quickly assessed the current workload and operational tempo of AED-South and established my five priorities for the district:

- Protect our people.
- Complete our work.
- Execute our work efficiently.
- Follow the core (Corps) processes.
- Have fun doing it!

The priorities are not a change in direction from the business practices of the Corps of Engineers, but rather my way to codify and emphasize the work that this district accomplishes on a daily basis.

We practice personal protection on a daily basis. Our superb MRAP teams and our contracted security liaison teams train on a continuous basis to protect us outside the wire. Our supervisors are responsible for the accountability of all their people. Protecting our people is Job No. 1 in ensuring that we get the mission done safely.

Completing our work is the



Photo by Joan F. Kibler

key to success for our nation, our coalition partners and the Afghanistan government. In some of the toughest locations imaginable throughout the southern part of the country, AED-South is building and expanding Afghanistan National Security Forces projects as well as constructing roads and water and electrical infrastructure. The entire AED-South team is focused on getting the work done.

While we are executing our work, we are always mindful that this work is being accomplished with the treasure of our nation and the coalition. The AED-South team strives to review, improve and implement continuous improvement for the betterment of our mission and those we serve. All AED-South leaders are focused on ensuring that areas are improved and that lessons are learned and implemented. We will not settle for "good enough for government work."

Finally, while the deployed environment is conducive to working long, hard hours, the AED-South team always has the time to share a laugh, have fun and spread our goodwill. I have thoroughly enjoyed the games of volleyball at Herat, the tour of the softball diamond at Camp Tombstone, the fine fitness facilities on Kandahar Airfield, and the time that the entire AED-South team took to support and honor our wounded warriors. Each of these activities puts a smile on a teammate's face and helps us accomplish our priorities.

I am greatly honored to be part of AED-South and to serve as your commander. I look forward to the coming year and all the great work that we will continue to accomplish in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Bulldog 6

Command Sergeant Major's message ...

I want to thank all of you for the warm reception as your new command sergeant major. In the last seven weeks I have had the opportunity to travel to all of our area offices and several of our resident offices and meet many of you. I am more than impressed with the amount of work being done, as well as the quality of that work. I realize just how lucky I am to have been selected to be command sergeant major of AED-South.

Our new commander has hit the ground running, and I am trying to keep up with him as he travels to assess the district's projects. If we haven't visited your site yet, expect us soon. 📷



Photo by Joan F. Kibler

AED-South team competes in 10-mile combat relay by Steve Belmore

A team from the Afghanistan Engineer District-South finished ahead of more than 30 other teams with a time of two hours, nine minutes, in the annual 10th Mountain Division, 10-mile combat relay race at Kandahar Airfield July 17.

Teams consisting of five members each were required to traverse a two-mile course, one team member at a time, over hurdles and through ditches while carrying a weapon and a 30-pound pack. The AED-South team included Jeff Ball, contract specialist; Andrew "Andre" Phillips, project manager; Karla Marshall, public affairs specialist (nicknamed Kitty); Raymond Greenheck, contracting officer (nicknamed Radical Ray); Steve Belmore, project manager (nicknamed Sketchy); and back-up team member Raquel Blankenhorn, contracting officer. The team nickname "Hello Kitty" was coined when one of the race organizers asked Andre and Jeff if the team could place the 30 pounds in a Hello Kitty bag and carry it during the race.

"I'm definitely among my peers here," said team member Kitty, jokingly referring to the many super-fit warriors competing in the race. "I've never done this before, but, it's only two miles," she



Photo by Raquel Blankenhorn

AED-South team, left to right, Raymond Greenheck, Karla Marshall, Andrew Phillips, Jeff Ball and Steve Belmore.

added. The event featured more than 110 five-member teams from 10 different countries, including Afghanistan.

Team Captain Jeff and Co-captain Andre began training the team in late June. "The early morning training was a real shocker," said Jeff, an Army veteran. "Running in an IBA (interceptor body armor) was something we had never done before. But like Kitty said, it's only two miles." The team, except for Kitty

who was brought on just two days before the event, met six times for training at 4:45 a.m. and traversed the combat relay course while wearing IBA and combat boots, which added an extra 30 to 40 pounds to each person.

On race day, Captain Jeff started off the race, completed his leg, and continued to run beside each team member providing support and encouragement. "Jeff was amazing," said Andre, referring



Steve Belmore, left, and Jeff Ball, right, pause for a moment during their early morning practice runs.

Photo by Raquel Blankenhorn



Courtesy Photo

“Survey Monkey” wears his team uniform made by Raquel Blankenhorn.



Photo by Raquel Blankenhorn

Raymond Greenheck navigates an obstacle during the 10-mile relay.

to Jeff’s endurance and team support during the race. New England native Sketchy said, “My legs are rubba,” at about the one-mile mark of the course. Jeff continued to run beside Sketchy right up to the ditch obstacle near the end of the course.

AED-South’s Command Sgt. Maj. Lorne R. Quebodeaux, although not a team member, provided support for the team by running beside Andre during his leg of the race. “It was great to see the CSM Soldier-up for us,” remarked Andre.

Kitty was a tremendous help, serving as a last-minute back-up to replace one of the team members who unexpectedly could not compete on the day of the event. Raquel “Q” Blankenhorn was also a stand-by participant, but severe blisters that she obtained during training made Kitty a better choice.

Radical Ray was leaving for his rest and recuperation that very afternoon but was “absolutely 100 percent committed” to completing the race before leaving for a well-deserved break from KAF.

It was easy to spot the AED-South team members from a distance since the team mascot, “Survey Monkey” was strapped to the pack, creating instant team visual recognition during the race. The race announcer referred to the AED-South team as “the team with a monkey on their back” as each team member approached the relay transfer point.

In the end, it was all about lighthearted camaraderie within the AED-South team, while providing a real appreciation of what our warriors endure on a regular basis. “This is a lifetime memory,” added Andre at the end of the race. It certainly was. 🇺🇸

NEWS BRIEFS

Can your photo make the cut?

Beginning with the next issue, the Engineering Freedom Magazine will have a “Featured Photo” column. Rules of engagement: photo must be taken in Afghanistan; photo can be of people, places or things; photo cannot have been featured in another publication; photo must be taken by individual who submits it. Thanks to Maj. Ferdinand Desir for this wonderful idea. Break out the camera and send your best shot to TAS.AES.PAO@usace.army.mil.

In this “Featured Photo” - Lunar Eclipse 2011

PHOTO BY BRENDA L. BEASLEY, JUNE 15, 11:58 P.M., KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN

The year’s first total eclipse of the moon lasted one hour and 40 minutes on June 15. The last time the moon was covered for this long was in July 2000. The next total lunar eclipse will fall on Dec. 10 with best viewing from Asia and Australia. The moon will be completely blotted out for 51 minutes. Only parts of the U.S. including Hawaii and the Pacific Northwest will catch

a glimpse. The rest of the continental U.S. will have to wait until April 15, 2014, to witness a total lunar eclipse. 🇺🇸



American Soldiers together with Afghan police team members board a Black Hawk helicopter to perform their first joint security detail for AED-South July 13.

“We are grateful to Americans who left their comfortable lives. They put their lives at risk for the Afghan people and government. The Afghan people will never forget the efforts of Americans here. At first we had nothing; now, everything we have is because of Americans and their generosity,” said the Afghan colonel through an interpreter.

USACE creates a new opportunity for joint U.S. military, Afghan police cooperation

Story and photos by Karla K. Marshall

Whenever the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers travels to project sites in Afghanistan, a security team accompanies them. Until mid-July, the teams who accompanied the Afghanistan Engineer District-South were always American. However, thanks to the efforts of Lt. Col. John Carpenter, the AED-South intelligence chief, one personal security detail team had a new composition.

“The PSD team was my idea,” said Carpenter. “I’ve been reading about COIN (counterinsurgency) operations for a long time now and how General Petraeus placed emphasis on developing host-nation security forces. I just leveraged the training the Security Force Assistance Team provides to the Afghan National Police with a practical exercise that benefits everyone.”

U.S. Army Gen. David Petraeus, the former commander of International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan, made COIN the overarching military strategy for ISAF.

For Carpenter, that was the inspiration he needed to help AED-South develop a better relationship with its customer, the Afghan Uniform Police and a group of Afghans in Daykundi province.

On July 13, AED-South inspected a project site high in the mountains near Ashterlee with a partnered U.S. Army and AUP security team. The mission started the day before at Kandahar Airfield. Part of the team assembled at KAF and via Chinook helicopter flew to the Afghan National Army’s Camp Hero, just a few kilometers from KAF and adjacent to Forward Operating Base Lindsey. There they picked up the partnered security team and continued on to Tarin Kowt.

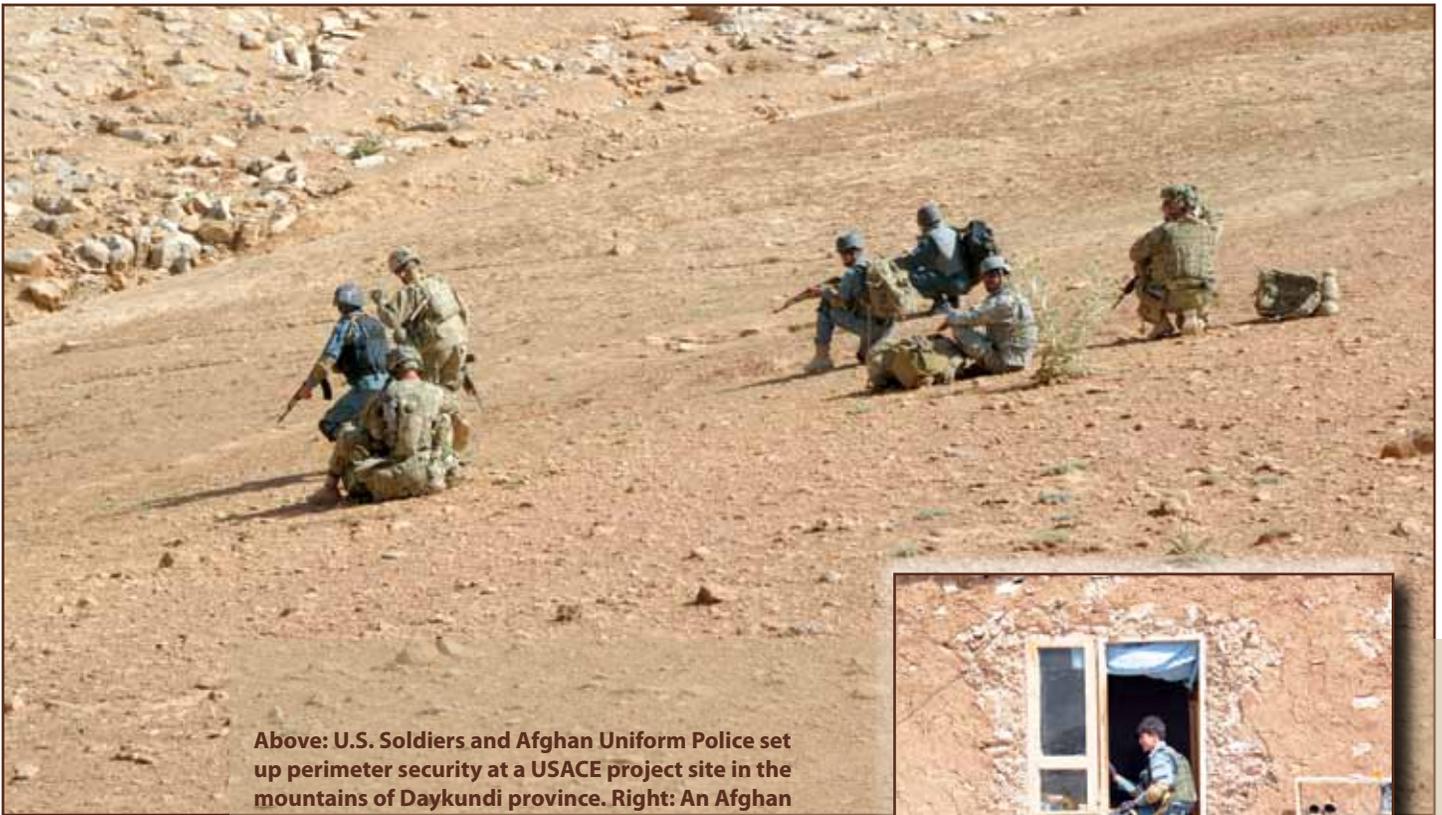
The team included U.S. Army Maj. David Steele, 1st Lt. Ross Creel, Staff Sgt. Jonathan Irwin, Spc. Christopher Hess, Spc. Justin Gleisner, Pfc. Daniel Salcido and Pfc. Jonathan Goodluck. Accompanying them were an AUP colonel from the 404th Maiwand Zone in Kandahar, an AUP sergeant and two patrolmen.

After landing at Tarin Kowt, the team unpacked their gear at the USACE camp, joked with one another and planned the next day’s mission. “This is a great opportunity for the AUP to perform a new skill,” said the Afghan colonel through an interpreter after the mission briefing. “My U.S. mentor told me of this opportunity and I wanted my men to do something new and important.”

The colonel, who served in the Afghan army for 18 years and with the AUP for eight, said although the security situation in the area was unclear, the people living near the construction site were friendly so Ashterlee was an ideal place for the first mission of this type.

“AUP leadership does not get to that area often, so this is a good chance for us to evaluate the situation at the district and bring any concerns to our headquarters,” he said.

One of the patrolmen, a fresh-faced, 18-year-old who had been with the AUP for one year, said that for him, this mission was important because he wanted



Above: U.S. Soldiers and Afghan Uniform Police set up perimeter security at a USACE project site in the mountains of Daykundi province. Right: An Afghan patrolman interviews a resident in his home just outside the USACE Afghan Uniform Police District Headquarters construction project in Daykundi province.



to do his part to secure Afghanistan.

“If the younger generation joins the police, we can make things better. I will do anything to make Afghanistan better,” he said through the translator.

Nodding in agreement, the sergeant added, “we want to help our people and help our country improve.”

The Americans, who are veterans at performing this type of security detail, have a primary mission of training Afghan soldiers at Camp Hero.

“This is a change from our regular jobs; we get to see places we otherwise wouldn’t see, so we like doing USACE missions when we can,” said Creel, a 25-year-old from Lubbock, Texas. “We’ve accompanied USACE about five times now, but this is the first time we’ve gone with Afghans on our PSD team.”

Early the next morning, the team assembled. Irwin, the team’s NCOIC and a combat-wounded veteran of the U.S. Marines’ Second Battle of Fallujah in Iraq, reviewed the mission plan with the team.

“This is a pretty straightforward mission,” said Irwin before renewing his banter with the 21-year-old team medic, “Doc Gleisner,” and downing another bottle of water. “I’m confident the team will work well together.”

After checking and re-checking their radios and equipment, the PSD team

packed their gear and departed for the airfield. Following a short wait, the group boarded two Black Hawk helicopters en route to Ashterlee where AED-South is building an AUP district headquarters compound.

With doors wide open and team members securely buckled in, the two helicopters flew to the construction site 8,000 feet high in the mountains of Daykundi. For the Afghans, this was a day of firsts — their first ride in a Black Hawk and their first PSD mission.

The Afghans were in the first helicopter and the first out the door. They were followed closely by two American counterparts and began setting up perimeter security before the second helicopter, carrying the balance of the team and the USACE employees, arrived.

“It’s good for Afghans to be first out the door,” said Carpenter.

Not only were they the first faces seen by the local AUP and area residents, but the Afghan colonel was the first to shake hands and greet them.

“Putting an Afghan face on our PSD puts the residents at ease,” Carpenter said. “I’ve worked really hard to get this mission going and I’m thrilled that it is now a reality.”

The AUP colonel and the local residents conducted a shura (meeting)

while the AED-South project manager, Hans Miller, deployed from USACE’s Fort Worth District, checked on construction progress.

“They (the construction contractor) have come a good way since I was here last,” he said. “We’ve got our challenges, but construction is moving forward.”

“Traveling to this remote region can only be accomplished via helicopter, so I don’t get to inspect the site as often as I’d like,” Miller said. “I wasn’t expecting what I see here today. The progress is a pleasant surprise.”

After a short meeting with the local AUP chief to discuss the project and concerns, Miller, the PSD and the other AED-South employees remounted the Black Hawks and returned to Tarin Kowt, Camp Hero and KAF, respectively.

“This was a successful mission,” said Carpenter. “It went really well and the partnered PSD team worked together smoothly. When AED-South shows up at a construction site unannounced and without language skills, sometimes the encounter is tense and uncomfortable. With Afghans leading the team, it’s a win-win. The Afghan government’s credibility grows and we get to inspect sites unobtrusively.”

Putting the COIN in civil works

Story by M. Annette Evans

*Zabul, Kajaki, Dahla, Tangi and Spin Boldak ...
Arghistan, Zaranj and Qalah-ye Now ...
Shorandam, Bagh-e-Pol and Maiwand.*

Members of AED-South use these location names and many others every day. Although we may mispronounce these names, we are committed to promoting the future stability of southern and western Afghanistan through implementing civil works projects that improve the lives of Afghan citizens throughout these areas.

Typical projects include road, bridge, water resources, hydroelectric and electrical power projects. We are able to accomplish them only with the help of the military battle space owners, U.S. government agencies, and other multi-national organizations. That foundation starts with a partnering relationship with International Security Assistance Force Regional Commands South, Southwest and West.

Our civil works projects support the Afghan government's efforts to provide sustainable governance, economic development and security, thus creating a counterinsurgency, or COIN, effect. We carry out this work through the district's water and infrastructure program.

Our program is similar to a U.S.-based Corps of Engineers civil works program despite our contingency location. Projects must be authorized and followed by a separate funding process, but the processes occur much faster than they do stateside. Also similar to the U.S. civil works program, projects are initiated at the local level – in this case, by BSOs. The BSOs work with Afghan leaders to identify projects that will assist local populations. BSOs approve smaller projects, and the regional commands sponsor larger projects. After approval – and based on the size and scope of the project – the sponsor may request that AED-South serve as the construction agent for the project.

The program portfolio includes potable water supply for Kandahar, Farah and Zaranj cities; irrigation and dam improvements in the Helmand and Arghandab Valleys; watershed studies in western Afghanistan; transportation infrastructure to and from the Pakistan and Iranian borders; and hydroelectric and electrical power improvements in both neighborhood and regional locations.

COIN Construction

The Corps of Engineers' role in COIN – as well as its concurrent role in Operation Enduring Freedom – is essential to ISAF strategy. ISAF Joint Command acknowledges that “construction must focus on projects that connect the government to the people, build Afghan capacity and enable employment opportunities for the local population” (Operations Order 1390, Appendix 4). Revitalizing a village, city or region's capability and capacity is a lynchpin in the COIN strategy.

The regional commands identified many civil works projects having COIN objectives and outcomes. Our most critical civil works projects,



Courtesy Photo

A view of the Arghistan Bridge, Highway 4, near Kandahar City. This stretch of road is part of the Southern Economic Corridor in Helmand and Kandahar provinces. AED-South is managing the Arghistan Bridge Bypass project to facilitate import and export traffic between Kandahar City and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

supported by the Afghan Ministry of Energy and Water and provincial government officials, include:

- Improvements to the Southern Electrical Power System, which will provide household and local industry access to electricity throughout southwestern and southern Afghanistan, including Kandahar City. Reliable electrical supply will stimulate job creation and commerce and enhance the credibility of the Afghanistan government to provide energy services. In the Bagh-e-Pol area of Kandahar City, for instance, a Double Cola bottling plant has reenergized its production of bottled water and soda because of the diesel generator power plant that we built in conjunction with Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat, the Afghan power utility provider.

- Raising Dahla Dam's embankment to provide increased water storage for irrigation and potable water for residents of Kandahar City and the Arghandab Valley. Pomegranates, pistachios, almonds, grain and other fruit exports have declined due to the absence of functioning irrigation networks. Raising the Dahla Dam embankment by five meters will reinvigorate the valley's rich agricultural heritage and supply water to city households and industry. The planning phase alone has elicited COIN effects through a number of media releases made by the provincial governor.

- Kajaki Dam refurbishment, a project supported by the Helmand-Arghandab Valley Authority, will repair the irrigation components. Valves, instruments and equipment repair will improve water management as well as dam safety, which is vital to the hydropower generated for Helmand and Kandahar provinces. The decision to improve Kajaki Dam, an Afghan national icon, is the perfect example of a civil works project with far-reaching COIN effects. Generations of Afghans link the 1950s dam construction by the United States to a bright spot in Afghanistan's history. Winning the hearts of the Afghan public through this civil works project is a COIN effect.



Afghan citizens at Dahla Dam. (Courtesy Photo)

From COIN to capacity building

Success in counterinsurgency operations includes the host nation's ability to provide essential services for its citizenry. However, the appetite for immediate COIN effect generated by a civil works project must not supplant the relationship with the host nation community and its own strategic plan and vision.

Our approach to collaboration with Afghan engineers, officials and workers is the key to "people supporting what they help to create." Eventually all civil works projects, including their operations and maintenance, will be the responsibility of the Afghans. In our civil works projects, this is best evidenced by the partnership that we foster with DABS on any projects that improve power generation. DABS leads many of our projects while we provide materials, equipment and training to support their efforts to improve power generation and distribution.

Vocational and professional training programs, mentoring and support for secondary and university educational programs will create a strong foundation for generations of Afghan engineers. Our current partnership with Kandahar and Herat University Engineering Departments is the cornerstone to leadership development. We are gearing up to provide textbooks and materials, training and internship opportunities. It will be exciting to work with these engineering students.

The Southern Electrical Power System, Dahla Dam improvements and Kajaki Dam refurbishment projects are just waiting for the next round of graduates. ☒



Regional Command Southwest and USACE team members discuss plans to improve the irrigation tunnel at Kajaki Dam, which provides hydroelectric power to both the Helmand and Kandahar provinces. Providing electricity to businesses and residents creates a counterinsurgency effect by demonstrating that the Afghan government is providing essential services to its people. (Courtesy Photo)

Editor's note: M. Annette Evans served as the Water and Infrastructure program manager from June 2010 to July 2011. Upon redeployment, she relocated to Vicksburg, Miss., as the deputy to the commander, USACE Engineer Research and Development Center.

New switch center helps DABS improve power from Kajaki Dam power house

Story by
Joan F. Kibler

Residents in Helmand and Kandahar provinces will get some improvement in the amount of electricity they receive, thanks to an interim measure designed to reduce the number of daily circuit interruptions occurring at the Kajaki Dam power house on the Helmand River.

While residents will see the results of the interim measure – the installation of a primary switch center – Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat, the Afghan utility company, will benefit from fewer shutdowns that cause wear and tear on the turbines generating this power.

The net result is twofold: more electricity for citizens and a prolonged lifespan for the two turbines.

Kajaki Dam has long been recognized as the source for sustainable and renewable power for Helmand and Kandahar provinces. Afghanistan and U.S. agencies are partnering to increase power generation and distribution over the next three years; part of the solution lies in installing a third turbine at the Kajaki power house and making other electrical repairs.

Recognizing the need to make immediate fixes until the longer term projects are complete, International Security Assistance Force Regional Command Southwest asked DABS what could be done quickly to provide the most benefit, according to Jim Murray, project manager for power, Afghanistan Engineer District-South.

The answer was feeder circuit protection for the turbines.

Switch center installed to absorb faults

On July 11, technicians from DABS and AED-South finished a nine-day project that will reduce the number of faults – electrical overloads and shorts – causing the turbines to shut down.

“The new primary switch center will absorb many of the faults, so they won’t make their way to the turbines and shut them down,” Murray said. “When the switch center trips, the DABS operator resets the switch, which takes about 15 minutes, but the turbines remain operating. Previously, when the turbines shut down because of faults, the operators had to synchronize both of them to bring them back on line; this process generally took about an hour each time.

“Resetting the switch center is similar to resetting a circuit breaker in your home electrical panel when the circuit breaker has tripped, though on a much larger scale,” Murray said.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Thomas Black and his team of power specialists – Staff Sgt. Alex Brown, Sgt. Terry Dietrick and Sgt. Joshua Strausbaugh – worked with DABS to install the switch center. Black is deputy commander of Task Force Breshna Barq, a unit within AED-South charged with providing engineering and construction services to support projects for the Southern Electrical Power System which serves the Kandahar, Helmand and Uruzgan provinces. The power specialists are from the



Top: DABS technicians connect the riser cables on the air switch assembly at Kajaki Dam power house. (Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Thomas Black). Inset: The team, from left, Sgt. Joshua Strausbaugh, Staff Sgt. Alex Brown, Sgt. Terry Dietrick and Chief Warrant Officer 5 Thomas Black. (USACE Photo)

The II Marine Expeditionary Force airlifts the primary switch center and other equipment to Kajaki Dam power house.

(Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Thomas Black)



249th Engineer Battalion (Prime Power).

“The switch center has measures that will protect the turbines,” Dietrick said. “It’s costly to repair or replace them, so the longer you can extend their life, the better.”

Faults in the transmission lines

The Kajaki power house distributes electricity through two lines: a 13.8kV line that transmits to Tangi and Kajaki villages and a 110kV line that transmits to Lashkar Gah and Kandahar City. Most of the faults occur in the 13.8kV line because of two failing circuit breakers that could not protect the turbines from faults. The new switch center replaces these circuit breakers.

According to Black, the new switch center will not stop the faults completely, but it will isolate many of them from getting to the turbines and thus taking down the entire grid. In addition, the switch center will lessen the impact of any faults that do make it to the turbines.

DABS power house operators told Black that circuit interruptions on the 13.8kV line occurred as many as 10 times a day before the switch center was installed, thus shutting down the turbines. Consequently, no power was distributed over either line until the turbines were powered up again.

“Residents served by the Kajaki power house will now have more electricity because the turbines will be down less,” Murray said. “For people on the 13.8kV line, this doesn’t mean they won’t have outages. When outages are stopped at the switch center, they only last a short period.”

Collaboration among many

Black said this project was a collaborative effort, representative of all the work being done by Afghan and U.S. partners to improve SEPS.

“DABS engineers did the majority of the work to construct the air switch assembly, which we call the rack,” Black said. “They removed the inoperable switches, helped to install the switch center and made the connections on the 13.8kV line.

“The II MEF (Marine Expeditionary Force) transported our team, airlifted our equipment and provided security,” Black continued. “Black and Veatch (the company working for the U.S. Agency for International Development on the power projects) provided lift assets and our basic life support needs. Without their assistance lifting the rack into place, our work would have been much more labor intensive and taken much longer.”

The joint team spent the first few days inventorying equipment and materials, testing cables and fabricating the frame. When it was time to begin the installation, DABS disconnected the 13.8kV line from the grid.

“The line was out of service for just over three days, with no

power provided to Kajaki and Tangi villages since there was no safe way to create a bypass transmission line,” Black said. “DABS met with the elders in advance to explain why it was necessary to disconnect the power line. We wanted the citizens to fully understand that their power would be disrupted while we worked on improving the amount of power they receive.”

The technicians partner

Dietrick, the project manager for the switch installation, said that while the project was about helping to bolster the infrastructure, it was also about building capacity with the DABS technicians.

“The work came easy to them because of their practical experience,” Dietrick said. “We showed them how to operate the switches correctly and the industry standards for safely handling cable. They did the work on their own fairly quickly.”

The joint team worked from sun up to sun down every day. “The DABS technicians were with us every step of this project,” Strausbaugh said. “They stayed with us until the mission was done. They have a good work ethic. It was a great experience for them and us. Because of this project, they will have more reliable power, and that’s important for winning the hearts and minds of the people.”

“This project helped strengthen the relationship between DABS and Corps of Engineers technicians,” Brown said. “There is a lot of work that needs to be done to improve the power system. This small project will help in the short term until the major upgrades begin.

As part of the plan to improve SEPS, USAID will install a third turbine at Kajaki Dam to increase generation capacity from the current 32 megawatts to approximately 52 megawatts.

The United States built the Kajaki Dam power house in the 1950s, but it has deteriorated due to decades of conflict. In the last few years, USAID rehabilitated the two existing generators to restore power production to its current level.

In addition to installing the third turbine, the Afghan and U.S. governments are planning projects to provide sustainable and affordable power throughout southern Afghanistan to foster economic growth and improve the lives of citizens. ■

Border control begins at Weesh

Story by Joan F. Kibler

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and its partners celebrated the start of construction for a new project that will improve border control in the Spin Boldak district of Kandahar province. The groundbreaking ceremony was held July 6.

The new border control point will be constructed at the crossing between Weesh (Afghanistan) and Chaman (Pakistan), a key entry point for trade passing through Pakistan from East Asia to Afghanistan.

“Customs, the gateway to Afghanistan through Spin Boldak, is in fact a crucial point of entryway to this country,” said Brig. Gen. Abdul Razziq, Kandahar police chief, through an interpreter.

“The Weesh-Chaman crossing is the second busiest entry point into Afghanistan,” said Annette Evans, program manager, Water and Infrastructure Branch, AED-South.

“The border control point will provide the immigration and customs facilities needed by the Afghan border police to improve the flow of traffic across the border,” Evans said. “Because the border control point is designed to make moving goods more efficient, the new facility will increase business opportunities and the collection of customs revenues. This contributes to improved commerce in Afghanistan.”

The existing border facility cannot keep up with the increasing needs, according to an article from the Wakht News Agency.

In addition to Razziq, the groundbreaking ceremony was attended by Associate Professor Dr. Tooryalai Wesa, governor of Kandahar province; Abdul Ghani, district governor; Tim Martin, Representative of Canada in Kandahar; Col. James Edwards, commander, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade; several Afghan media representatives; and others.

Evans said that the new entry control point has been in the works for years, and getting to the point of contract award was a collective effort among the government of the Kandahar province, Canada, and the United States.

“The Canadian government through the Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team played a pivotal role in the success of this project,” said Elliott Porter, project manager, Water and Infrastructure Branch. “When GIRoA determined the location for the border control point, there were some 80 businesses that were located on that site.

“The relocation was a collective effort among the Afghan, Canadian and U.S. governments,” Porter said. “It was important to the Afghan government to take care of the businesses, and Governor Wesa, General Razziq and the Minister of Finance participated in the discussions. The Afghanistan government provided a land grant for their relocation.

“KPRT developed the plan for relocating the businesses, keeping in mind any cultural sensitivity,” he continued. “They inventoried the businesses and provided them the same

amount of space in their new location. They helped them move and compensated them during the move. This was done thoughtfully; it took about 18 months to complete the entire process.”

During the ceremony, Razziq said, “The people that were compensated for the customs land should be proud ... and must know

that their support in this matter will help build and strengthen Afghanistan.”

Once the businesses were moved, AED-South awarded a \$21 million construction contract that includes a customs police compound, administrative areas, dining facilities, warehouses, pump house, water treatment facility and entry control points. The contract also includes living facilities for the full-time police personnel stationed there – both male and female.

The new border control point will have about 10 times the footprint of the current border control point,” Porter said. “Before construction fully starts, the existing customs area will be relocated from the area where the new construction will take place.”

AED-South is working with the Border Management Task Force, who is mentoring the police force, to make sure the facilities meet the needs of the Afghan government.

“The new border facility is part of a broader program – called the borders package – to improve freedom of movement from the Pakistan border to Kandahar City,” Porter said. The package includes construction of roads in and around Spin Boldak and bypasses around the Arghistan and Tarnak bridges.

“The roads contract includes building a paved road from Spin Boldak to the Weesh border control point and widening the road to four lanes through Spin Boldak,” Porter said. “The improved roads will ease traffic from the border crossing which is currently a chokepoint, through Spin Boldak which is heavily populated. The bypasses are a redundant measure to keep traffic moving on Highway 4 if the bridges are damaged or attacked.”

The 525th, under ISAF RC South, provides security for Highway 4 (from the Pakistan border through Spin Boldak to Kandahar City) and the Weesh border crossing point. The brigade has been working with the government agencies to prepare and secure the site for the border facility. In addition to the businesses, the brigade rebuilt a school and moved students from the site.

“All these efforts together – the border control point, the roads through Spin Boldak and the bypasses – will help create the conditions for GIRoA to benefit from increased revenue to put back into government services,” Evans said. 🇦🇫



Photo by Senior Airman Jessica Lockoski, 525th BfSB Public Affairs

Remnants of a boy's school get ripped out on the grounds of the new custom depot expansion project site July 6.

USACE contributes to the counternarcotics mission

Story by Karla K. Marshall

Afghanistan's illegal narcotics industry undermines the country's lawful economic development, erodes government legitimacy and threatens the nation's stability and security.

One of the key components of the U.S. Government's counternarcotics strategy, outlined in March 2010, is helping the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan develop self-reliant and effective counternarcotics law enforcement entities.

That critical piece of U.S. strategy was facilitated recently



Photo by Rachel Cooke, U.S. Consulate Herat

From left to right, U.S. Ambassador Hans G. Klemm, Herat Provincial Governor Daud Saba and Counternarcotics Vice Minister Baz Mohammed Ahmadi.

with the construction of a regional counternarcotics law enforcement center by Afghanistan Engineer District-South's Herat Area Office in the western province of Herat.

The completed construction was celebrated July 23 with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by U.S. Ambassador Hans G. Klemm, coordinating director, Rule of Law and Law Enforcement; Herat Provincial Governor Daud Saba; Herat Provincial Deputy Governor Assilludin Jami; Chancellor Hosseini; U.S. Consul Brad Hanson; Counternarcotics Vice Minister Baz Mohammad Ahmadi; Counternarcotics Chief of Intelligence General Mirz; Counternarcotics Provincial Chief General Hoshimi; Counternarcotics General Director General Khoshman; AED-South Commander Col. Benjamin Wham; and numerous other U.S. and Afghan officials.

"This facility is a flagship, and it will fully support the Ministry of Interior and their specialized units in the fight against drugs and terrorism in Afghanistan," said Klemm. "But remember that this building, though beautiful, is merely bricks and mortar. The men and women of the Ministry of Interior and their partners are its heart."

AED-South's contractor, ECCI, began construction of the nearly \$11 million regional counternarcotics law enforcement center in January 2009 and completed it in March.

The end user is the Counternarcotics Police of Afghanistan, a special force under the control of Afghanistan's Ministry of Interior.

"This was a great cooperative venture," said Wham. "We designed and built this compound to be easy to maintain so Afghan law enforcement officers can focus on counternarcotics operations." The facilities include housing, dining, training and administration buildings.

"The facility can accommodate up to 150 Afghan forces plus 20 coalition mentors from various counternarcotic organizations," said Elliott Porter, AED-South project manager. "The law enforcement center hosts an international team of counternarcotics professionals, like the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, working with the Afghan National Police to develop a robust counternarcotics enforcement agency."

In the past, the main focus of U.S. counternarcotics strategy in Afghanistan was to fund and support large-scale eradication of poppy fields. In 2010, that strategy changed and became more closely linked to the existing counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy developed by the Department of Defense.

The U.S. Government's counternarcotics strategy now includes breaking the narcotics-insurgency-corruption nexus and helping connect the people of Afghanistan to their government.

"This project is part of a national strategy to train a domestic, self-sufficient counternarcotics agency in Afghanistan. The new counternarcotics police will combat trafficking throughout the region," said Porter.

Afghanistan produces approximately 90 percent of the world's opium, according to U.S. Government estimates. Law enforcement agents and mentors from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, U.S. Department of State International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, together with law enforcement agents from the Afghan National Interdiction Unit, Afghan Special Narcotics Forces and the Afghan Central Poppy Eradication Force will stage out of the new facilities.

"Our nation's goal is to increase Afghan capacity by helping build trust in Afghan institutions," said Wham. "By constructing facilities such as these, where Afghan police can be mentored, the government of Afghanistan strengthens and ultimately all Afghans benefit." ■

Wham becomes new commander of AED-South

Story by Joan F. Kibler,
photos by Brenda L. Beasley



In a time-honored military tradition for a relatively new USACE district, the colors and command transferred from Army Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser to Air Force Col. Benjamin Wham II. AED-South held its change of command ceremony July 8.

Wham took command of a district managing a design and construction program totaling more than \$2 billion that supports the NATO International Security Assistance Force in creating the conditions that lead to improved security, governance and commerce within Afghanistan.

In accepting command, Wham said he would continue the focus on serving the district's myriad customers, including the Afghan government agencies, battle space owners and coalition partners.

"This is the best opportunity I could hope for," Wham said. "When it showed up on my radar screen, I was delighted to have the opportunity to lead an engineer district." He expressed his appreciation to the district's people for their welcome.

Wham's previous assignment was as commander, 628th Mission Support Group, 628th Air Base Wing, Joint Base Charleston, S.C. In this position, he led more than 2,000 military and civilian personnel organized into six squadrons in support of the eight major mission partners and 53 different tenants and supported units at Joint Base Charleston.

He has served in a variety of command and staff assignments, including overseas duty at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar; Ali Air Base, Iraq; Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii; Osan Air Base, Korea; and Torrejon Air Base, Spain; and stateside assignments at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.; Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho; the Pentagon; Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.; and Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

In introducing Wham as the new district commander, Brig. Gen. Mark W. Yenter said that "he has all the credentials one would expect from a professional engineer. He has a wide variety of assignments around the world including multiple command and senior staff positions and a combat tour in Iraq."

Yenter, who presided over the change of command, is commander of Transatlantic Division-Forward, based in



Left: Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser (right) passes the colors to the senior tactical commander, Brig. Gen. Mark W. Yenter (left) to signify that the district is never without officer leadership. The passing of the district's colors represents the transfer of authority and responsibility from one commander to another. Above: More than 200 distinguished guests and AED-South team members render honors for the playing of the National Anthem.



The color guard for the AED-South change of command ceremony reflected the diversity of the district, with multiple services and the civilian component represented. The five-member color guard was comprised of Army Cpl. Robert J. Ryan, Army Staff Sgt. Marcus L. Mendiola, Army Staff Sgt. Andrew S. Hansen, Civilian Security Specialist John H. Wise, and Air Force Staff Sgt. Natazha D. Feliciano.

Kabul, the parent command of AED-South.

“Having an Air Force colonel in charge of a USACE district is not new. We’ve had Air Force colonels command districts in Iraq with magnificent results. This is a coveted combat command in USACE, and USACE has great confidence in your experience,” Yenter said to Wham.

“General George Washington said that every good engineer possesses two traits: they must have energy and they must execute their task with precision. I am certain that you possess these traits and will apply them every day as we continue to move forward and compel change on the enemy.” Yenter, who also served in Afghanistan in 2002, drew comparisons between the Corps of Engineers’ mission then and now.

“The Corps of Engineers arrived in Afghanistan in September 2002 to begin planning facilities for the Afghan National Army,” he said. “Then, we were repairing Soviet-era facilities for a company of ANA soldiers graduating about every six weeks. The approach wasn’t a viable way to provide facilities for the new army. The Corps worked with (Maj.) Gen. (Karl) Eikenberry (then serving as chief of the Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan) to make a case for building new facilities for an emerging ANA.”

From the first ANA bases built at Pol-e-Charki and Darulaman near Kabul and a few hundred million in funding, the Corps of Engineers program in Afghanistan has increased to about \$5 billion today, managed by two districts – AED-South and AED-North (in Kabul), he said.

“Our mission has expanded to meet the security infrastructure, stability and sustainment needs of ISAF and the government of Afghanistan,” Yenter said. “Today, we are providing infrastructure development including power, water and transportation as the Defense Department lead to support State Department efforts to develop Afghanistan. We will continue to construct permanent bases for Afghan security forces.

“A \$5 billion program is a large program, but it means little if you don’t deliver. For engineers, our credibility is not based on what we say but on what we do,” Yenter said. “AED-South is the organization that delivers.

“You are supporting the main effort in Afghanistan, which is the main effort of our nation. You are operating on our



Brig. Gen. Mark Yenter presents the Bronze Star Medal to Col. Anthony Funkhouser for his service as commander of the district.

FOBs (forward operating bases) and in our most remote sites in the mountains and along the border. You are overseeing the construction in Zabul, the toughest place to build anything in all of Afghanistan. You are completing military construction here at KAF, a major logistics hub of the effort. You provided power in Kandahar City, which had an immediate COIN (counterinsurgency) effect. If you want it done aggressively and done right, turn to the Corps of Engineers.”

Yenter thanked Funkhouser for his leadership and for reaching out to the supported commanders and helping them to “translate intent and vision into something tangible.

“You’ve been undaunted by the huge mission laid before you,” Yenter said to him. “Thank you for setting the example. Thank you for carrying out the campaign goals of protecting the Afghan people and setting the conditions for transition to Afghan-led security.”

In his remarks, Funkhouser focused on the team effort for accomplishing the work.

“This is an opportunity for me to thank my team and all our battle space owners for letting the district be part of your teams and for the support you have provided us to accomplish our mission in support of yours.

“The neat thing about this command is its diversity and unique mission that allows us to affect much of this country. Our joint team is eclectic with Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Civilians and contractors. We work for USFOR-A (U.S. Forces-Afghanistan) but supported construction efforts in Regional Commands South, Southwest and West and a few other interagency organizations. We worked with each of the countries of the coalition, all services, the mighty 10th Mountain Division and the I and II MEF (Marine Expeditionary Force).

“We coordinated and synchronized our work with ISAF, IJC (ISAF Joint Command), the GIRoA (Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan) ministries, the ANSF (Afghan National Security Forces), local Afghan businessmen, USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development), multiple NGOs (nongovernment organizations), contractors and so many others. We have done all we could to support the operational mission to clear, hold and build the infrastructure of this country in support of the battle space owners.

“I am really proud of our team and the support they provide. To my fellow commanders, thanks for your support in moving and securing our personnel and projects ... I consider myself lucky to have stood with some great commanders.

“I am certain Col. Wham will take this team to the next level. I wish you all Godspeed in your mission in the year to come.”

Funkhouser’s next assignment is division chief, Joint Capabilities Division, J8, Joint Staff, the Pentagon. 🇺🇸

Sealed bidding expedites contract awards

Story and photo by Joan F. Kibler

The Afghanistan Engineer District-South resurrected an infrequently used procurement method and a decades-old tool from the contracting toolkit to expediently award contracts for large Afghan National Army projects.

Sealed bidding employs competitive bids, public opening of bids, and a prompt contract award to the offeror with the lowest priced, responsive bid.

The process isn't a rubberstamp for awarding a contract to the lowest bidder. Contractors must meet all requirements in the government's invitation for bid, and government contracting officers must determine that the contractor is responsible and can perform the work.

AED-South hosted public bid openings June 18 and 22 at Forward Operating Base Lindsey near Kandahar Airfield for expansions of garrison facilities for the Afghan National Army 207th Corps at Camp Zafar in Herat province and 215th Corps at Delaram in Nimruz province.

Through the sealed bidding contracting method, the district awarded contracts to two firms that previously had not bid on these types of ANA projects in southern and western Afghanistan. The Herat contract went to Contract International Inc. for \$44.3 million, and the Delaram contract went to Lakeshore TolTest JV LLC for \$71.5 million.

Pilot projects

The two contracts were pilot projects to determine if sealed bidding was feasible for the district. The Transatlantic Division approved the trial.

An AED-South project team pursued use of this procurement method for two primary reasons: sealed bidding is faster than negotiated procurements, providing a mechanism to quickly award a half billion dollars in contracts this fiscal year, and its use allows the district to expand the pool of responsible contractors.

"Sealed bidding has worked well for many large military construction projects on bases in the United States," said Hank Iarrusso, district counsel. "Our ANA projects are comparable with base construction because of the standard types of facilities (e.g., barracks, dining halls and recreation facilities)."

"Additionally, these ANA projects are 90 to 95 percent designed and just need to be site adapted," said Steven Belmore,

ANA project manager. "The work is not complex, and many of the buildings will be constructed using rolled steel."

Once the pilot was approved, the district's next step was to establish its processes for awarding sealed bid contracts. "Fortunately, our contracting officer – Mark Jones – had prior experience with sealed bidding. Mark established the internal procedures for use here, and he guided the team," Belmore said.

As the project team explored using sealed bidding, it also reviewed the FAR requirement for bonding, which had previously been waived for USACE contracts in Afghanistan. Research determined that circumstances had changed, and contractors could get bid bonds for 30 percent of the contract value.

Bonds provide financial protection against potential losses or failure by the offeror. In obtaining bonds, companies undergo an underwriting process that further reduces risk to the government of awarding a contract to a financially weak or historically underperforming company, according to Iarrusso. Contractors must submit bonding documents with their bids.

Bid openings

Bid openings follow a specific schedule and format. Contract specialists begin the official bid opening at the prescribed time. Contractors must submit their bids before the bid opening or they will not be considered.

Contractors do not have to be present for bid openings. At a public bid opening, attendees sign in, are provided a bid worksheet for recording the bids as they are read, and are advised not to talk during the proceedings. At the end of the process, everyone present knows the apparent low bidder.

"Contractors are required to submit their bid schedule, the bid guarantee (bonding document) and a signed Standard Form 1442 (Solicitation, Offer and Award) with all amendments," said Jefferey Ball, contract specialist. "We then open each package to determine if the bidders included the required documents. If they do not, they are considered nonresponsive."

After the bids are opened and recorded, the contract specialist announces the government estimate and asks that a representative of the low bidder remain, if present.

For the garrison at Herat, AED-South received 13 bid proposals; representatives from seven firms attended the bid opening. For the garrison at Delaram, the district received five bids; representatives from three firms attended the bid opening.

Before awarding a contract, the contracting officer requests information from the contractors for the "responsibility determination." According to the FAR, contractors must have adequate financial resources, satisfactory past performance, and a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics. The contractor must also be able to meet the performance schedule; have the necessary organizational structure, controls and skills; have the necessary equipment and facilities; and be qualified and eligible to receive an award under applicable laws and regulations.

"We are pleased with the results of our pilot projects," Belmore said. "We learned that sealed bidding works in this environment and for certain types of projects; we can attract new contractors; and contractors can get bonded. The sealed bidding process helps to diversify our acquisition strategies, and we are now approved to use it for upcoming Afghan Army project awards." 



Nathan Taylor, Steven Belmore, Michael Rea, Jefferey Ball, and David Dyer attend the bid opening on June 22.

Operations and maintenance plan helps Afghans help themselves

Story by Karla K. Marshall

Optimizing a building's operation and maintenance is key to keeping expensive equipment and systems operating efficiently. Building owners and managers have long recognized that reducing the risk of early equipment failure and unscheduled downtime helps them manage high utility costs and improve worker productivity.

This O&M fundamental is the reason Afghanistan Engineer District-South, in coordination with NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan, CJ-Engineering Infrastructure, Training and Advisory Group, transferred 17 Afghan National Security Forces facilities on Camp Hero from USACE responsibility to the Afghan National Army.

In a ceremony July 7, hosted by the 205th Atal "Hero" Corps and attended by representatives from the ANA, NTM-A CJ-Engineering ITAG, AED-South and others, the facilities and their O&M officially became the responsibility of the ANA.

"This is a great opportunity for us to do what we set out to do," said Bob Baldwin, AED-South construction O&M chief. "Not only are we transferring O&M responsibilities to the Afghans, which is imperative as 2014 draws closer, we are also providing them with the training they need to maintain their facilities into the future."

This transfer is the first such transfer of stewardship responsibilities to occur in Afghanistan. "It is a very significant step forward for the ANA. From a practical standpoint, there needed to be enough training, tools, funding and resources for the Afghan facility engineering staff to maintain the structures," said Maj. Michael Malone, ITAG team leader. "Also, the ANSF staff has the confidence to undertake the responsibility, a symbolic first step and visible throughout the ANA."

Malone further stressed that the successful turnover of stewardship at these Camp Hero facilities is working to silence transition skeptics while concurrently helping the ANSF develop its O&M capacity.

Additionally, the 205th Atal "Hero" Corps headquarters building is among this first group of facilities turned over to the Afghans, so the 205th commander will see firsthand the value of a trained O&M staff as part of the garrison support unit.

"Developing a public works department at the kandak level engages the commanders and invests them into the success of the O&M mission," said Albert Soliz, AED-South project management O&M chief. "We chose the buildings at Camp Hero because they are close to Kandahar Airfield, where AED-South, ITAG and ITT are all located. That proximity gives us a good opportunity to check on the progress of the training."

USACE awarded a \$350 million O&M contract July 27, 2010, to ITT Corp. for ANSF facilities in southern Afghanistan. The contract has two main functions – to sustain facilities constructed by USACE and provide job training to Afghans for

O&M transition.

"Until now, this contract has been primarily about ITT conducting O&M. Now we are channeling our efforts to establish and stand up a totally functional and viable Afghan O&M capability for the ANSF," said Baldwin.

ITT did train Afghan civilians at Camp Hero in preparation for the turnover of these first 17 buildings, but improvements to the training program are underway. ANSF civilian personnel are learning various O&M procedures such as how to perform quality inspections, carry out safety requirements, process work orders, along with mechanical, electrical, carpentry, masonry, plumbing, painting and other tasks.

Job shadowing and on-the-job training are the most effective training methods, said Malone. ITT's role in the transition includes sharing its institutional knowledge gained from operating and maintaining the buildings at Camp Hero with the ANSF facility engineers and maintenance workers who have succeeded them.

"An emphasis must be placed on the training and establishment of a professional junior leadership core who will be future leaders in the Afghan facilities career field," said Soliz.

Overall, Soliz envisions a two-phased, eight-month training

period for most workers: four months for the basic training, then two months learning preventative maintenance at specific buildings and on specific equipment, and two months of contractor supervision at those buildings and remedial training, if necessary. After that, the expectation is that the new cadre of Afghan O&M workers will be self-sufficient.

Soliz added that, "This transition absolutely requires training. All of the training is with a specific end state in mind. Afghans are transitioning to more responsibility in all areas as 2014 draws near. Facility maintenance is the piece that AED-South is particularly invested in."

ITT, AED-South and ITT Corp. are working together to develop

a training and transition plan that is effective and falls within coalition goals for all facilities. "This is an important mission," said Malone. "The coalition expends a tremendous amount of money operating and maintaining permanent garrisons, such as Camp Hero. By transitioning O&M responsibility to the Afghans, the cost is reduced."

According to Malone, there are three key fringe benefits of transferring O&M responsibility. He explained that the transition of responsibility counters a culture of dependency created when well-intentioned coalition parties provide expensive turn-key solutions to the ANSF.

Also, the transition fosters a pride in ownership that will ultimately reduce tenant abuse of facilities and corresponding repair costs. Lastly, transition of O&M responsibilities empowers the Afghan chain of command to better support their operational force that is providing security for the country. ☐



Photo by Air Force Tech Sgt. Adrienne Brammer

An Afghan welder cuts metal in a workshop at Camp Hero on June 25. He is one of many civilian workers trained to maintain buildings on Camp Hero.

AES Team

Shindand Resident Office



Courtesy Photo

From left to right, Afghan Quality Assurance Representative Nasir Ahmad Fazljoo, Resident Officer-in-Charge Air Force Capt. Greg Ward, Project Engineer/Construction Representative Eric Valentine, and former Resident Engineer Kim Warner pose in front of the Gomaco paving machine as it lays a lane of the strategic apron taxiway.

Story by Air Force Capt. Greg Ward

Meet the Shindand Resident Office, a conglomeration of 22 military, civilians, contractors and Afghan citizens teamed together to build what is soon to be the premier training base for the Afghan Air Force and Afghan National Army. The Shindand Resident Office in Herat province prides itself in a diverse work force, leveraging the capabilities of its various members to execute a \$180 million construction program and to create what is now Afghanistan's second largest base in size. The success of this diversity is rooted in the Afghan training program that was started in Kabul in 2007

and now implemented as doctrine in the Herat Area Office.

The Herat Area Office has led the way for Afghanistan Engineer District-South in institutionalizing the Afghan training program that not only complements U.S. military and civilian engineers but builds a competency within Afghanistan — one that develops the people and the country. The program started by using local Afghans to provide quality assurance services at remote construction sites inaccessible on a regular basis to AED-South personnel. Through daily quality assurance reports and progress photos, the QA representatives act as the eyes and ears of the contracting officer's representative. Over the years

the skills tended in the QA program have borne forth the fruit of Afghan project engineers and deputy resident engineers who manage the QA program, review submittals and perform nearly every function of a regular USACE project engineer. The Shindand Resident Office operates with 10 Afghan partners, two project engineers, seven QA representatives, and one operations and maintenance engineer.

These Afghan engineers work side by side with six AED-South civilians. There are four project engineers and construction representatives who take the initiative in spearheading contracts and acting as the glue that holds everything together. Peter Debski oversees the new



Courtesy Photo

Project Engineer/Construction Representative Peter Debski looks on as members of TetraTech/Yuksel check a test stripe on the rotary wing apron.



Courtesy Photo

Larry Drane grills some steaks for a resident office dinner.

perimeter fence and guard towers project that is responsible for making Shindand the second largest base in Afghanistan

cargo terminals, fuels operations and maintenance and munitions storage. In addition, he is also responsible for the

new resident office compound project set for completion in October. Larry Drane manages the \$33 million regional military training center and associated small arms range, two contracts that will allow the Afghan National Army to stand up a 3,000-person training camp at Shindand for new recruits. The newest member is Philip German, who was thrown not only a waste water treatment plant and solid waste management complex, but also a \$36 million project to build an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance apron and compound and helicopter apron; with 28 aircraft shelters included it will prove to be a challenge.

Another AED-South civilian is Sloane Wieber who is a safety officer and construction representative, who works to ensure all construction practices are accomplished safely in accordance with regulations.

The final AED-South civilian is Robert Szemanski, the COR for the Shindand ANA operations and maintenance contract, who works endlessly to ensure the O&M contractor maintains the ANA facilities and infrastructure and thereby allowing the training mission to continue.

Rounding out the team there are three military members and three contractors. Air Force Capt. Greg Ward is the resident officer in charge and also serves as the resident engineer of the construction office. Army Staff Sgt. Paul Kelly is an O&M noncommissioned officer working with Szemanski to ensure compliance of the Afghan National Security Force O&M contractor and also the resident noncommissioned officer in charge, who helps to keep the entire office running smoothly. The third military member is Army Master Sgt. James Dixon who is a representative of the U.S. Air Force Central customer, living and working alongside the AED-South team to provide the right product to the end users. Contractor Han Pham is an information management technician who tirelessly works to keep all system networks and equipment running for the entire office. The final two contractors make up the security team escorting AED-South employees on site visits outside the wire; their training, dedication, and expertise ensures everyone makes it home safe.

The diversity of the Shindand Resident Office team is what makes it strong. From the successes of the Afghan training program to the AFCENT customer interface to the contractor partnership, every individual plays a role on the team, helping to build Afghanistan, both its people and its infrastructure. 🇦🇫

Shindand Air Base receives additional capability

Story and photos by Joan F. Kibler



This C-17 aircraft is the first to use the partially completed strategic airlift apron at Shindand Air Base.

The partial completion of a strategic airlift apron at Shindand Air Base gives the U.S. Air Force added capability as it supports Afghan Air Force and coalition efforts in western Afghanistan's Herat province.

Shindand Air Base provides air mobility support for coalition operations, with C-17 aircraft regularly landing on a single runway, and it serves as a training ground for the Afghan Air Force.

"We will start training Afghan pilots here in September," said Air Force Col. John Hokaj, commander of the U.S. Air Force's 838th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group based at Shindand.



183rd Maintenance Company members are ready to depart Shindand Air Base.

"As cargo arrives, we don't want to interrupt training by having to close down the runway," Hokaj said. "We asked the Corps of Engineers, A7 AFCENT (Installations,

U.S. Air Forces Central) and the 838th AEAG to develop a plan for completion of a portion of the strategic airlift apron. This taxiway helps us manage all our missions at

Shindand without impacting operations."

On July 27, representatives of the 838th AEAG and Afghanistan Engineer District-South ceremoniously

opened the first 400 feet of the airlift apron. Hokaj and Air Force Col. Benjamin Wham II, AED-South commander, cut the ribbon to mark the occasion.

Shortly thereafter, a C-17 aircraft parked on the taxiway

to load some 200 members of the 183rd Maintenance Company, who are redeploying. "These personnel are our first outbound passengers to use this new apron," Hokaj said.

Aircraft Commander Air

Force Capt. Caleb Rasmussen, Air Mobility Command, was enthusiastic about the new parking space. "This area allows us to move off the runway while loading and unloading passengers or cargo," he said. "If we have

maintenance problems, the crews can work on the aircraft where it's parked. All this keeps the runway open."

The strategic airlift apron has connecting taxiways and shoulders to accommodate the airlift aircraft, pavement markings, utilities and site improvements. The \$18.2 million contract also includes a passenger and cargo terminal. The contract is scheduled to be complete by November.

The strategic airlift apron is one of several U.S. military construction projects aimed at expanding and improving Shindand Air Base, according to Air Force Capt. Gregory J. Ward, officer in charge, AED-South Shindand Resident Office. "This base is on its way to becoming the premier training base for the Afghan Air Force and Afghan Army."

Shindand Air Base recently expanded to three times its original size, making it the second largest airfield in Afghanistan. 



From left, Air Force officers Col. Benjamin Wham, Col. John Hokaj and Capt. Gregory Ward.



Members of the 183rd Maintenance Company board the C-17 to redeploy.

Perimeter fence construction complete at Shindand Air Base

Story by Karla K. Marshall

The first phase of Shindand Air Base's "far east expansion" is now complete. AED-South recently finished the fence construction that will enable the air base to triple its size. In a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 8, representatives from the U.S. Air Force's 838th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group celebrated the completion, along with Capt. Gregory J. Ward, officer in charge, Shindand Resident Office, and many others.

"The overall purpose of this project was to design and construct nearly eight miles of perimeter fence, 52 guard towers, perimeter roads, lighting and seven other antiterrorism and force protection measures for approximately 2,900 acres," said Ward. "This ribbon cutting was for the first phase of the project."

The 838th AEAG will use the additional land to relocate some 3,000 coalition forces and add an Afghan Air Force training runway in the space those forces now inhabit.

With a perimeter fence in place to provide security, the site is ready for additional development to make the long-

anticipated move a reality this fall.

"Other facilities are needed to expand and improve this air base," said Ward. "All together, the far east expansion includes seven military construction contracts that total about \$116 million."

The MILCON contracts include ramps, aprons, cargo handling and storage facilities, and infrastructure such as water treatment and solid waste management facilities.

The Corps of Engineers' far east MILCON program is in addition to the 877th Expeditionary Prime Beef Squadron's minor military construction program that includes more than 80 small projects valued at approximately \$50 million, said Ward.

Shindand Air Base is in Afghanistan's western Herat province.

AED-South and the construction contractor, KAM Construction Company, overcame huge challenges in expanding the perimeter, said Ward. Those challenges included local villager protests over water supply disruptions and security-related delays that caused the contractors to vacate the site added

Aerial of perimeter fence expansion. (Photo by Air Force Capt. Greg Ward) **Right: Shindand security forces and base civil engineers inspect the new perimeter fence for turnover, entering the base through the expansion gate for the first time.** (Courtesy Photo)



Peter Debski, the project engineer and construction representative who's deployed from USACE's Nashville District.

"Although many Corps projects have challenges associated with them – like design or scope changes – the early stages of this project were particularly difficult," said Ward. "Through a combination of efforts centering on multiple meetings with local village elders, this project was able to press forward.

"The team of USACE military, civilians, contractors and Afghan citizens, together with 838th AEAG leadership, 877th EPBS engineers, and base security forces worked closely together to plan, coordinate and accomplish this mission.

It is one we can all be proud of."

The 838th at Shindand trains Afghan Air Force pilots. Upon completion of the MILCON coalition relocation in the fall, the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment will construct a 1.3-mile runway that, according to Col. Larry Bowers, former 838th AEAG commander, will allow for the addition of 18 new fixed and rotary wing aircraft and the further establishment of Afghan Air Force pilot training programs. 



Base security personnel change the locks on the gates at the new perimeter fencing at Shindand Air Base in the Herat province. (Courtesy Photo)

Ceremony marks the completion of an aviation apron extension

Story and photo by Karla K. Marshall

The first phase of a three-part upgrade to increase ramp space on Kandahar Airfield was completed recently and celebrated with a ribbon cutting ceremony on June 26.

Col. Anthony Funkhouser, prior commander of AED-South; Lt. Col. Treavor Bellandi, a command engineer; Lt. Col. Edward Phillips, construction management officer for southern Afghanistan, U.S. Air Forces Central; Contrack International, Inc. representatives and others celebrated the completion of the apron extension.

"This project included pouring more than 19,000 square meters (approximately 22,724 square yards) of concrete," said Brian Zickefoose, resident engineer at the Kandahar Airfield Resident Office. "The expanded apron can now accommodate additional rotary wing aircraft and will extend ISAF's (International Security Assistance Force) ability to conduct missions more frequently, safely and efficiently."

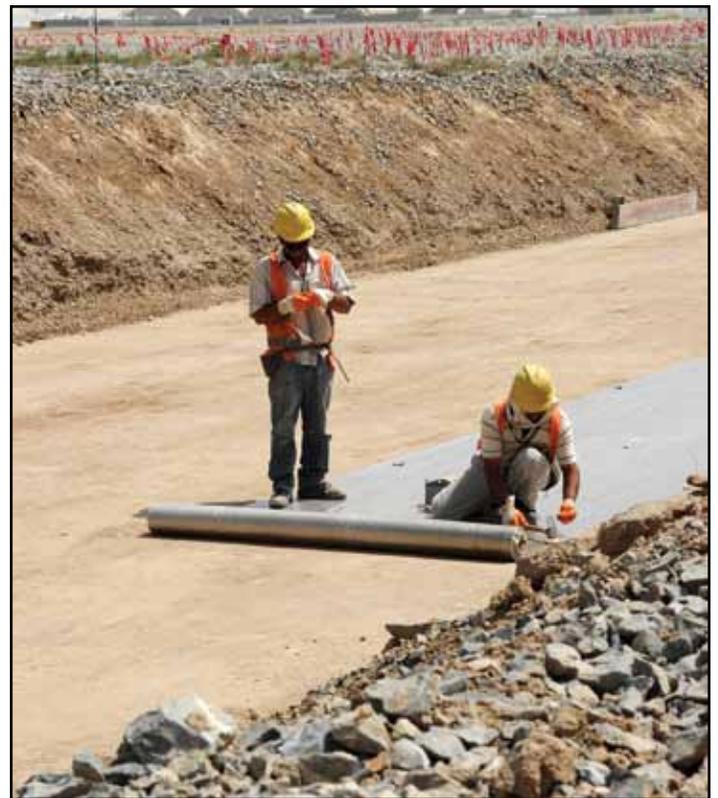
Bellandi agreed and added that, "by constructing this project, all of KAF benefits because we are able to alleviate some of the aircraft storage and maintenance requirements for them as well."

This project is just one of several airfield upgrades that AED-South has completed recently and signed over to U.S. Air Forces Central. Those projects included a runway and strategic apron at Tarin Kowt, a cargo yard at Forward Operating Base Shank, a close air support ramp, a taxiway and an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance apron at Kandahar Airfield.

"The Air Force fights from airfields, and the concrete placed in these projects represents a huge capacity to park aircraft," said Phillips.

"The dispersed locations of these airfield upgrades around Afghanistan allow aircraft to be closer to the fight; this equals fewer convoys and less time to reach troops in contact," said Phillips. Helicopters allow for the movement of troops and cargo to areas previously only accessible by road. "If we eliminate the dangers of traveling by ground and transport faster, we are more effective," Phillips said. "Speed is critical when moving food, ammunition or medical supplies."

At a construction cost of \$4.75 million, this latest apron extension is the first phase of a three-phased \$30.5 million construction plan that will provide additional platforms to support rotary, strategic and tactical airlift assets, such as the



Contractors line a culvert on Kandahar Airfield as part of phase two construction. The culvert will be used to divert rain water from existing and new ramp areas upon completion.

CH-47, C-5 and C-130, respectively.

Zickefoose said that it was important to move quickly on this phase to keep the construction pace swift. "The next two phases hinged on successful completion of the first, so we are tracking to finish the entire project by next spring."

The contract to construct the apron extension was awarded to Contrack International, Inc. in September 2010 and construction began in late November. 

It's time to move it! Move it!

Story and photos by Karla K. Marshall

Every January, Americans flock to their local gyms to start a new weight loss and exercise regimen. For some, vanity has reared its over-fed head, for others the realization has set in that healthy living is better living. Here at Kandahar Airfield, healthy living is no small matter. Afghanistan Engineer District-South employees work long days in a harsh environment so it is important to get in shape and stay in shape. Our health and job performance depend on it.

Anecdotally speaking, we feel better, have more energy and are happier when we exercise regularly. In fact, research confirms that the best way to blow off steam after a stressful day is to exercise. According to Jeremy Rickard, an AED-South employee and certified personal trainer, "exercise should be thought of as a daily 'medicine' as it has many proven physical, psychological, emotional and hormonal benefits."

From both research and his experience as an exercise physiologist and personal trainer, Rickard, a native of Kansas City, Mo., asserts that the lack of regular exercise is the strongest contributor to the onset of adverse medical conditions such as heart problems, cancer, obesity, diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol and many other preventable ailments.

"A fit body is better able to adapt to its surrounding environment such as high altitude, extreme heat or cold and has an enhanced immune system function, leading to less incidences of sickness," said Rickard. Exercise has also been shown to improve work productivity, decrease work time lost due to sickness and even improve the attitudes of employees at work.

Until mid-June, team members at AED-South headquarters had limited exercise options. Now, with the arrival of new gym equipment, more AED-South employees can fit exercise into their schedules.

"Exercise is critical to good health and attitude," said Lt. Col. Martha Kiene, the deputy commanding officer. She, Mike Scarano, the deputy for Programs and Project Management Division; John Adams, the former chief of Engineering and Construction Division; and members of the AED-South Employee Activity Committee worked with the J4 (Logistics) staff to identify appropriate equipment and a supplier.

"There are only a couple of gym equipment companies that ship to Afghanistan," said Josh Atkinson, J4 chief and a Department of Defense employee from Ft. Leavenworth, Kan. "It took us a while to identify a company that produced quality commercial-grade equipment that would meet the needs of our employees."

"In the military, we must maintain a fitness standard, and Soldiers generally do a good job of staying in shape, regardless of where they are," said Kiene. Civilians though have no such fitness requirement so the challenge to become and stay fit is much more personal. Nevertheless, the environment in Afghanistan is conducive to making a lifestyle change and many team



Thomas Snow (left), liaison officer, and Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Martha Kiene test the new gym equipment prior to the gym opening on June 13.

members start exercising and losing weight shortly after their arrival at KAF or one of the area or resident offices throughout southern Afghanistan.

“I have time after work and there aren’t many distractions,” said Laura Rowland, who is deployed from USACE’s Memphis District. “So, I am taking this opportunity to get my lifestyle in check and start exercising.”

Rickard stressed, “Beginners should start an exercise program by not over doing it.” Many people have the mistaken notion that they can exercise heavily from day one. They also don’t always use the equipment correctly. This can result in prolonged and unnecessary pain or even muscle injury, Rickard said.

Proper usage is important, and AED-South has a policy in place that requires all gym users to understand the gym rules and receive a short orientation, provided by J-4, if they don’t know how to use the equipment.

“The AED-South gym has plenty of equipment for all fitness levels,” said Atkinson. “When we were designing the gym, the committee placed an emphasis on quality equipment that would stand up to the conditions we have on KAF.” The equipment is easy to use and the variety should meet everyone’s needs.

The bulk of the gym equipment arrived in mid-June, and the J4 staff worked quickly to outfit the gym. “It was like Christmas morning because we weren’t sure what equipment had arrived,” said Atkinson. After a seven-month wait, there are now three treadmills, three elliptical machines, three bikes, and two stair steppers.

The resistance training equipment is mostly free weights, but we have some machines. “We have everything anyone needs to do a full body workout,” said Atkinson. The last pieces of equipment arrived in late July and included leg curl, leg extension, adductor and abductor machines. And, this benefit is not just confined to KAF. Equipment is also en route for team members assigned to the area and resident offices.

“The shipping process takes a long time, primarily because of customs requirements in Pakistan,” Atkinson said. However, even before the equipment was shipped, many pieces of a puzzle had to be assembled. “The equipment was made based on our order,” said Atkinson. “We had to provide the vendor with exact specifications like style, color and weight requirements; we also had to determine whether the equipment would fit in the space we had available.”

This project was a labor of love by many. The entire J4 staff, along with Contracting Division’s Deidrie “DeeDee” Hurd, Fortunado “Sonny” Sapida and Betty Jo Spiering, the command team and the members of the EAC all worked to make the gym a reality.

“The goal now is to keep the gym and equipment clean and in good condition,” said Atkinson. “We owe it to ourselves and each other to take care of the equipment so the equipment will take care of us.” 📷



A 40-foot shipping container loaded with gym equipment is eased through the gate at the AED-South compound on Kandahar Airfield June 11.



J4 (logistics) team members, left to right, Josh Keyser, Staff Sgt. Richard Polanco, Jeremy Rickard, and Josh Atkinson unload a piece of exercise equipment for the new gym June 11.



Team members celebrate completion of the new gym equipment. Left to right: former Commander Col. Anthony Funkhouser, Josh Atkinson,

Jeremy Rickard, Staff Sgt. Richard Polanco, Josh Keyser, Command Sgt. Maj. Lorne Quebodeaux, Sgt. 1st Class Claudia White, former Command Sgt. Maj. Rickie Virgil, and Staff Sgt. Jose Minaya.

Doors open for Afghan police district headquarters in Zerai

Story and photo by Karla K. Marshall

The Zerai district of Kandahar province has seen its share of clashes since the war against al-Qaida and the Taliban began in late 2001. As part of the counterinsurgency (COIN) efforts to improve security and stability, Afghan and U.S. leaders gathered in early June to open a new police headquarters compound that will help protect the citizens in Zerai.

Originally part of a seven-site contract awarded in 2007, which was later reduced to six sites, the Zerai uniform police district headquarters was the last to be finished with a cost of \$1,047,749. The other sites are at Spin Boldak and Takteh Pol in Kandahar province and Garmsier, Nad Ali and Nahi Sirraj in Helmand province.

Adjacent to Forward Operating Base Pasab, approximately 30 miles west of Kandahar City, the Zerai district headquarters will play a pivotal role in the security of the area because it lies strategically along Highway 1 and it is adjacent to a newly constructed shopping bazaar.

“The district has been a dangerous place for the residents until just last year,” said Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser, former commander, Afghanistan Engineer District-South. “A uniform police presence here will enable Afghan citizens to have safe access throughout the district and especially to the bazaar so they can buy and sell produce and other goods. Anytime we can improve the security situation and facilitate economic growth, we move the country closer to stability.”

Getting the project started was challenging because of security. “Construction was delayed because of a complex security situation due to insurgent activity and the police station’s proximity to the new bazaar,” said Jeffrey Usavage, program manager, Afghan National Security Forces program. “Even though the contract was awarded in May 2007, clearance to start construction did not come until October.”

Usavage said that because of increasing threats, the contractor, Basirat Construction, was then issued a stop-work letter in May 2008 that was not lifted until the following August. “Not only were our construction workers asked to stop working because of security, our own USACE employees couldn’t get to the site to oversee construction.”

To help expedite construction, the AED-South Helmand Area Office trained an Afghan quality assurance representative to step into a more challenging role at the Zerai site. He and other QARs received engineering, construction, safety and quality control refresher training.

“By training these Afghans to be more aware of U.S. and international construction standards, we increased their

knowledge, reporting proficiency and quality assurance skills,” said Usavage, a native of Wellsboro, Penn. “Because we couldn’t be on site, having QARs with the proper skills provided the construction oversight that the project required.”

The complex consists of a two-story district headquarters building with a dining facility, berthing areas, offices, holding cells and an armory. The building is surrounded by a reinforced perimeter wall, guard towers and entry control points. Site infrastructure, to include electrical, water and sewer, completes the construction.

“We are glad to move this project to our completed projects list,” stated Usavage. “The AED-South team worked really hard to get it completed, and Afghan residents need to see that the ANP is committed to providing security in their area.”

The ribbon-cutting event drew many Afghanistan government officials and local leaders. Further, a group of boys were present from the area to listen to the uniform police who will serve as role models for them. The district governor and the deputy district governor both spoke about the uniform police using this facility to train so they can serve and protect the people of Zerai.

The Zerai district’s police chief pledged to take care of the facility and to train his policemen.

Despite the many construction challenges, the project, like other USACE construction projects in Afghanistan, sees steady progress when supported by battle space owners.

The battle space owner in this instance, the 10th Mountain Division’s Task Force Spartan, provided security and stability to the Zerai district, as well as trained and mentored the Afghan Uniform Police.

“We work closely with battle space owners to ensure USACE personnel, contractors and building materials reach the project sites and are secure while there,” said Funkhouser. “The relationship that we have built with battle space owners is critical to the timely completion of our projects in Afghanistan.”

This project was among the group of six that were the subject of SIGAR Audit 11-3 issued in October 2010. All six of the district headquarters projects are now complete, and the ANP is using them for their intended purpose. ■



With the benefit of a translator and speaker system, Col. Anthony Funkhouser can understand the speeches given by the Zerai district officials.

Afghanistan Safety 101

We are not in America any more Toto by James Ediger, safety and occupational health specialist

We often hear the phrase “we are in a war zone and we can’t do that,” or “this is Afghanistan and they don’t understand or know how to do that.” While we are here to build and provide improved infrastructure to the Afghan people, we also are here to mentor those we work with on a daily basis. We must show them the proper way to do things. If we show them the way, and they understand the reasons behind it, perhaps they will do it the next time on their own. On USACE projects and worksites all across the southern provinces, it is incumbent on each of us to show and teach safety. This is really important for the basics, especially for the subject of fall protection.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, falls are the leading cause of worker fatalities in the construction industry. Each year, on average, between 150 and 200 workers are killed and more than 100,000 are injured as a result of falls at construction sites. These are staggering numbers considering in the United States we should know better and many of these statistics could have been prevented. It is even harder to get an accurate count on the number of accidents due to falls on our job sites here in Afghanistan. The most recent death on one of our projects here was due to a lack of fall protection and training on the worksite.

Safety personnel recognize that accidents involving falls are generally complex events frequently involving a variety of factors. Consequently the standard for fall protection deals with both the human and equipment-related issues in protecting workers from fall hazards. When work is performed on elevated surfaces such as scaffolding, concrete forms, aircraft hangers, T-wall placement or during other construction activities, protection against falls must be considered. Fall arresting systems, which include lifelines, body harnesses and other associated equipment, should be used when fall hazards cannot be controlled by railings, floors and other means. These systems are designed to stop the free fall of a worker to six feet while limiting the forces imposed on the wearer.

Unfortunately, at our worksites the concept of fall protection is not always to the proper standard required to protect the workers. Fall protection is required for most construction activities by OSHA, EM385-1-1 and the project contract whenever work is performed in an area that is six feet high above its surroundings or six feet below

ground level.

AED-South Safety Office also reviews all Accident Prevention Plans/Activity Hazard Analysis submitted by the contractor to ensure that they are factoring fall protection in their plans. Fall protection can generally be provided through the use of multiple types of fall protection systems. Where it can be clearly demonstrated that the use of these systems is infeasible or creates a greater hazard, a fall protection program that provides for alternative fall protection measures may be implemented. This must be addressed in the contractor’s hazard analysis for the particular activity.

Fall protection systems

Guardrails: Standard guardrails consist of a top rail located 42 inches above the floor and a mid rail that is erected halfway between the top rail and floor or work surface.

Toe boards: Shall be provided on all open sides/ends at locations where persons are required or permitted to pass or work under the elevated platform. This prevents material from falling from the elevated platform.

Personal fall arresting systems: Components include a body harness, lanyard, lifeline, connector and an anchorage point capable of supporting at least 5,000 pounds per worker attached or designed by a qualified person for fall protection for twice the maximum arrest force on the body.

Positioning device systems: This consists of a full body harness configured to allow a worker to be supported on an elevated vertical or inclined surface and perform work with both hands free from body support (e.g., working on rebar assembly, towers, poles or ladders). Remember, positioning systems are not primary fall protection systems. When workers are exposed to a fall hazard, they are required to use a separate system that provides backup protection from a fall.

Warning line systems: These systems are made up of lines or ropes installed around a work area on a roof. These act as a barrier to prevent those working on the roof from approaching the edges.

Covers: Covers are fastened over holes in working surfaces to prevent falls.

Workers should also be provided with protection from falling objects. Work surfaces should be kept clear of material and debris by removal at regular intervals. Toe

boards should be used to prevent objects from being inadvertently kicked to a lower level. This condition also highlights the need for the proper and constant wearing of the hard hat by all workers on the job site. Fall protection training is required for any worker who might be exposed to fall hazards from heights and using fall protection equipment. The workers should be trained by a qualified person for fall protection before they start the job and continuously as the job or equipment changes.

Training

- The nature of the fall hazards in the work area.
 - The correct procedures for erecting, using, dismantling, maintaining and storing the specific fall protection system used.
 - The application limits, free fall distance, total fall distance and clearance requirements of fall protection systems and equipment.
 - Rescue equipment and procedures.
- Training should also include a hands-on session and practical demonstrations where the employee can put on their body harnesses and become familiar with the connections, lanyards, etc.

A well-run fall protection program includes identifying individuals to be responsible for recognizing areas where fall protection is required.

They need to know how to obtain or develop fall protection systems to ensure workers are trained and understand how to use and inspect the fall protection equipment. The biggest message to deliver is to ensure workers USE the fall protection equipment given to them.

Fall protection equipment is required to protect workers from injury and possibly save your employees lives - make sure they know how to use it properly! Our working safely above the ground is important. Please be aware of the elevated work being performed in and around your workplace or assigned project and enforce a fall protection program if needed. Our employees and contract workers and their families will thank you. 





Moving in



Nicholas Ash



Michael Baxter



Andrew Beall



James Bleau



Bruce Brune



Gerald Carden



Maria Carroll



John Caudill



Glen Chinnery



Michael Conner



Deborah Duncan



Frederick Espy



William Fotter



Eric Fry



Phillip German



Carol Gorton



William Graney



Edward Harris



Caryl Hickel



CPT Adin Kern



Authur Maestas



Beth Nash



Daniel O'Connell



Javaughn Perkins



William Rackliff



Norman Rasmussen



Kimberly Robinson



Terry Rupe



Robert Szemanski



Robert Van Winkle



Joel Vaughn



Exelena Whitaker



David Williams



John Wise



Jeffery Yost



Adam Zepeda

Photos unavailable at press time: SSG Benjamin Allen, SSG Tony Bean, SFC Timothy Burd, SGT Marlon Cockerham, SPC Marcus Gross, Paul Hanneman, SGT Timothy Letson, Jeffrey Miller, SPC Benjamin Nickel, CPT Christopher Pramoulmeter, SPC Travis Richmond, SSG Sean Rogers, and William Watts.

Moving on

John Adams
George Afram
George Bittorf
Cecil Brock
Erwyn Calderon
1LT Travis Carter
Norma Dean
Stephanie Dupey
Christopher Eby
George Edgington
Annette Evans

Brett Frazier
COL Anthony Funkhouser
Greg Gerding
Orrin Israel
Gary Jarrett
Rodger Johns
James Jones
Donald Jordan
Maureen Jordan
Brian Kirchner
Kevin Kitchen

Sherry Lee
Kristen Long
Lydia Manning
Richard McCullough
Eric McInnes
Curtis Million
Amanda Raber
Betty Rogers
Kenneth Safe
Michael Scarano
Lovely Sibug

D'Lorah Small
Thomas Snow
CSM Rickie Virgil
Kimberly Warner
Breeanna Witt