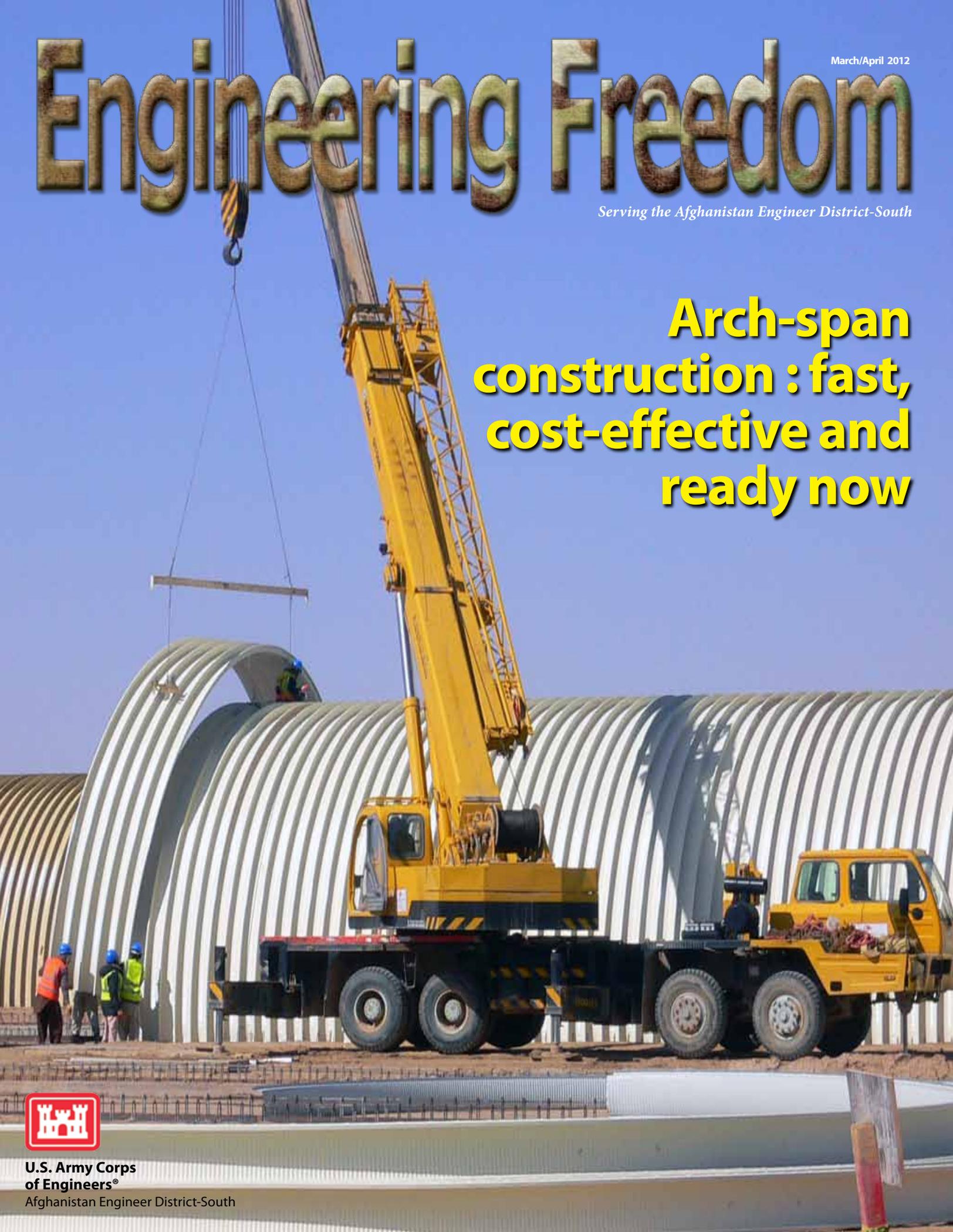


Engineering Freedom

March/April 2012

Serving the Afghanistan Engineer District-South

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Afghanistan Engineer District-South

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

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On the cover ...



Worker erect a section of arch-span steel on Camp Shorabak, Helmand province Feb. 25. See story on page 8. Photo by Michael Osborne, Helmand Area Office resident engineer

Commander's message...



Wow, what a great two months. As you can tell by leafing through the pages of this issue of *Engineering Freedom*, there are amazing things happening all across the district. We have turned over a number of ANA, ANP, infrastructure and MILCON projects. We continue to focus on completing numerous projects in support of both our coalition and Afghan teammates. We supported the business processes critical to putting our Afghan teammates in the lead. And, we celebrated and enjoyed those we serve with, including the promotion of Lt. Cmdr Hallock Mohler, our J1, to the rank of Commander and the recognition of Linda Murphy, Ulrike Krueger, DeeDee Fauser and Deborah Lamb for their contributions to our mission and nation at the 451 AEW/COMKAF/USACE International Women's Day Ceremony. Finally, the entire district celebrated Mardi Gras Kandahar-style, and cheered our Bulldog football team which took third place in the base-wide touch football tournament, just to name a few events.

We continue to prepare for the transition of operations from coalition forces to our Afghan teammates. Our Real Estate Division, lead by Terry Rupe and Rich Garcia, is working closely with staffs in Regional Command-South and Regional Command-Southwest to complete all the documents needed to close numerous installations around southern Afghanistan. To date the real estate section is working more than 400 closure actions and continues to support both the hand-over of existing infrastructure and the start of new work. In addition, they continue to work with multiple levels of the Ministry of Defense and Interior as we prepare for upcoming construction projects, ensuring we and our contractors have the complete access we require to our building sites.

The O&M Division, lead by Albert Soliz and Jim Bodron, continues to make strides in supporting the transition of USACE-constructed infrastructure and facilities to our Afghan

partners, including the transfer of 41 additional facilities from our O&M contractor to the ANA Department of Public Works at Camp Hero on 1 March. The O&M team is reviewing and sharpening its level of focus to ensure that our NTM-A and Afghan customers receive the right level of service. They partnered with the ITAG mentors to train 138 Afghan to support six ANA installations in southern Afghanistan.

We continue to work to increase the role of our Afghan Quality Assurance reps as we build the capacity of our Afghan partners through action.

Also, for the sixth month in a row we have met or exceeded our placement goals, a huge accomplishment recently recognized by both HQ USACE and Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations, Energy and Environment. This recognition is due to the amazing work across the entire district where we strive to partner with and mentor our contractors to get work done. This was evident when we cut the ribbon on the Ingil Uniform

Police District Headquarters. Our partner, Omran Construction was recently named Afghan Design/Build Contractor of the Year by the Afghan Builders Association and they truly proved their mettle in Ingil.

This project was the reacquisition of a previously failed effort. Omran seized this project and completed it a month early and to the highest level of quality I have seen of any project in the district. The facility supports police operations for a major district in Herat City. My hat is off to Scott Hughes (US project engineer), Wali Wasiq (Afghan project engineer) and Abdul Hadi Rahmani (Afghan quality assurance representative) for a job WELL DONE. That is getting work done, with style!

Finally, I'd like to take time to recognize a team that spends most of their time recognizing the district.

Our Public Affairs Office, led by Mark Ray, received numerous accolades from the HQ USACE's Herbert A. Kassner Journalism Competition. The district took home such awards as best news article "USACE facilitates medical mission in Daykundi province," by Karla Marshall and the first, second and third place photograph in the deployed photograph section (won by Joan Kibler, Brenda Beasley and Karla Marshall respectively). Karla Marshall also took third place in the USACE Civilian Journalist of the Year contest. The PAO Team's excellence reflects well on our entire district operation. Check out our [Facebook](#) site to keep track of the district at work and play, and take a look at our [Flickr](#) site for some great photographs of our operations. Well done PAO Team!

Enjoy the issue and we look forward to seeing good things continue to happen around the entire district. Go Bulldogs!!

Bulldog 6

Water for a thirsty city

Afghanistan District–South develops



The Dahla Dam reservoir offers the best long-term solution for water in Kandahar City. (USACE photo by Sue Fox)

Story by Mark Ray Water – its supply, treatment and distribution, as well as the collection and treatment of wastewater – is fundamental to a healthy and productive society. Kandahar City and its environs are desperately deficient in these fundamental requirements.

As a first step to remedy the deficiency, the South District developed a water and wastewater master plan for Kandahar City that will guide Afghan-led efforts to supply critically-needed safe drinking water and to safely dispose of wastewater in Afghanistan’s second largest city.

“The plan provides a comprehensive set of documents that describe the situation through 2030, along with a phased approach to improve water supply and distribution, as well as wastewater collection and treatment,” said Dr. Reniere “Ed” Majano, project manager for the master plan. Majano deployed to Afghanistan from and recently returned to Houston.

An important element of the plan is an analysis of the current population of Kandahar City and its expected growth through 2030, Majano explained. “You have to know the population you are trying to serve to determine how much water is

actually required.”

There has not been an accurate census of the Kandahar City population for many years, so the team assembled as much existing data as they could find and conducted a rigorous statistical analysis to come up with a reliable estimate of the population and its likely growth.

The team found that the city has slightly more than 675,000 residents now, and will grow to a population of over 1.1 million by 2030.

The team also assessed the current water supply and distribution system. What they found was sobering. The Afghan Urban Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation, a state-owned utility that is responsible for water supply and wastewater collection and treatment in Kandahar City, has 15 wells in the city, but only nine are operational. Most of the wells are tied directly into distribution systems.

“What that means is that system is only pressurized when the well pumps are working,” Majano explained. “If there is a fuel shortage or an electrical outage, the pumps stop working and the system loses pressure. This situation allows contaminants to infiltrate the system – a condition made worse by a dis-

water master plan for Kandahar City

tribution system in which an estimated 70 percent of the pipes leak, and the complete lack of a wastewater collection system, which almost guarantees sewage and other contaminants will get into an unpressurized potable water distribution network.”

Numerous private wells and septic tanks, many undocumented, further contribute to the risk of contamination. In addition, the distribution system only reaches a small part of the city’s current population. “In the best case, Kandahar City is only producing less than a third of the water needed to adequately supply its population, and the distribution system only reaches about 20 percent of the people,” Majano said. “Without relief, the problem will get much worse as the population continues to grow.”

Looking for solutions

To determine ways to improve the situation, the team conducted a comprehensive survey of possible sources of water. They developed a hydro-geological model to evaluate the groundwater available from aquifers in the region, according to Majano. “There are actually three aquifers at different depths from which most of the population draws water. The first, and uppermost, is unconfined, which means that it is not isolated by rock from the surface. This water is highly contaminated.”

The model also examines:

- A second mid aquifer, deeper than the first;
- The so-called “city aquifer,” which is still deeper and the source of the water for the existing municipal wells.

The model indicates a possible fourth aquifer, at an even greater depth, more than 500 meters. However, test drilling so far has not indicated that this aquifer will meet the city’s water needs.

“At best, groundwater can only provide the needs of about 40 percent of Kandahar’s current population,” Majano said. “Much of this water is contaminated. And pumping water out of the ground at multiple locations is an energy-intensive effort. The bottom line of our study is that ground water – water produced from wells – cannot adequately meet the needs of the city now, and certainly not in the future.”

Fortunately, surface water, flowing down the Arghandab River from the mountains to the north of Kandahar, is an alternate source. The quality of the surface water is much better than that of the available groundwater, Majano said. An analysis of historic flow rates over a 27-year period shows that the supply of surface water is more than adequate to meet Kandahar City’s needs – both for irrigation and for potable water – now and in the future.

Using this water would require a number

of major improvements to Dahla Dam, north of the city, and construction of treatment, storage and distribution infrastructure, but would provide a long-term solution, Majano said.

The way ahead for water

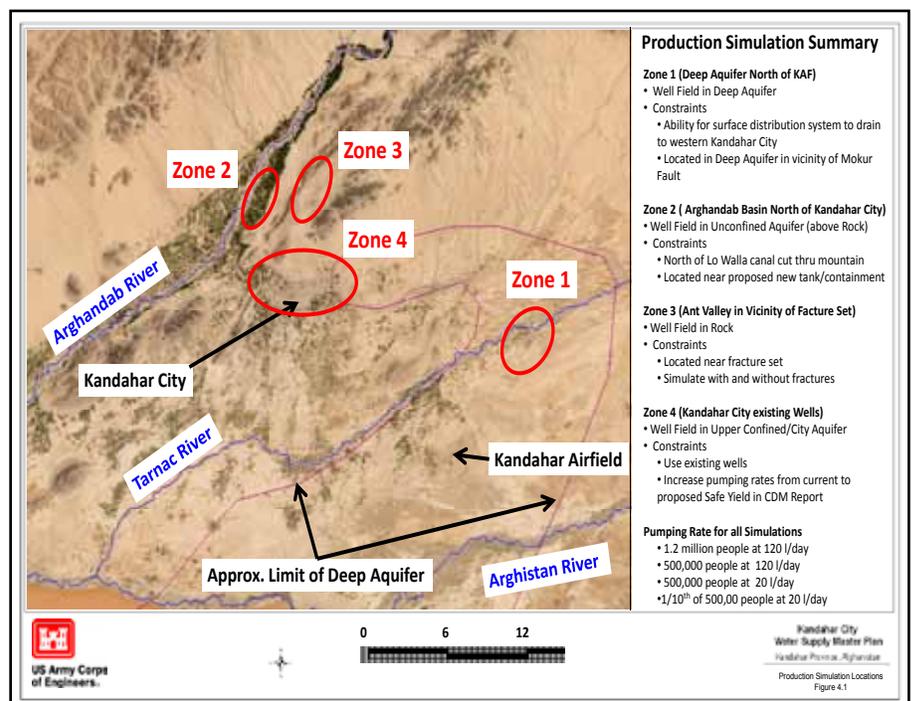
With the data and analysis in hand, the team developed a phased set of projects for the Afghan Government to pursue. The first priority is to upgrade the current system of wells to stabilize the current system. Refurbishing pumps, ensuring the pumps have an adequate and dependable supply of electricity and creating treatment infrastructure will ensure the water delivered is safe. “The current system also needs elevated storage tanks installed, so the system stays pressurized and free from contaminant infiltration,” Majano said.

The recommended mid- to long-term solution includes increasing the storage capacity of Dahla Dam reservoir so that it can hold adequate amounts of water for irrigation and potable water supply throughout the year, initially a pipeline from the dam to a centralized treatment facility, then building out a distribution system to provide the water to the city.

“The phased approach is critical,” Majano said. “I have seen cases where cities built distribution systems without first having the water available to distribute – that just creates expectations among the populace that cannot be met.”

Using surface water stored at Dahla Dam would also permit the use of a single large treatment facility, rather than multiple, smaller treatment systems that a groundwater solution

Continued on page 6



Possible locations for groundwater production around Kandahar City.

Water for a thirsty city, continued

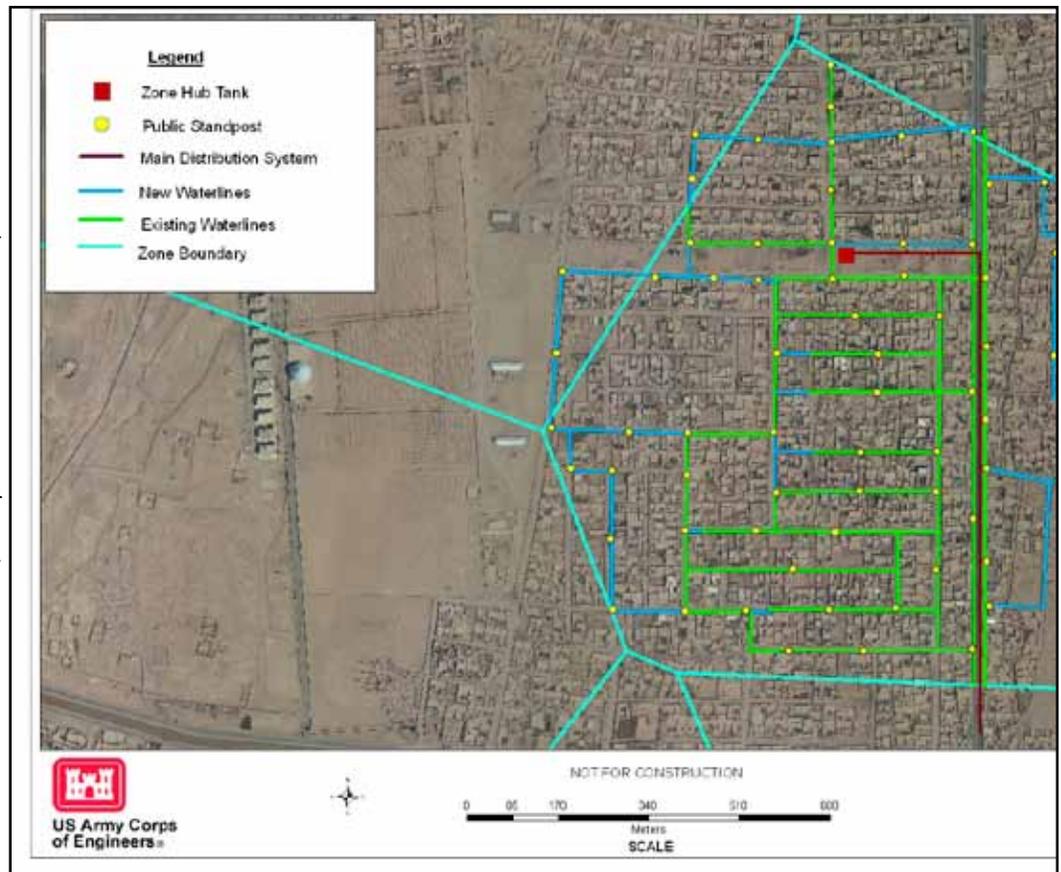
relying on wells would require. “It is easier to manage a single treatment facility than to manage many treatment facilities,” Majano said. “You only have to provide reliable power at the possible locations for groundwater production around Kandahar City. You can focus your personnel and other resources on operating and maintaining the single facility, rather than having to track and manage operations at multiple locations. Most importantly, the quality of the water can be controlled.”

The master plan examined distribution, calling first for a series of standpipes, or common distribution points, throughout Kandahar City where residents could obtain water. Initially, distribution would probably rely on water trucks to deliver water from the treatment plant to storage tanks connected to the standpipes. Later projects could install water mains from the treatment plant directly to the standpipes. Eventually, the plan provides the concept design for a system that distributes water to each house in the city. “Your ultimate goal is always to provide safe water into the house, which is the best way to ensure quality and supply, and to minimize the health concerns” Majano said. “However, that is a distant goal in Kandahar.”

Waste Water

The master plan also addresses the collection and treatment of wastewater in the city, critical to preventing contamination of the potable water system and outbreaks of waterborne disease. As with the potable water distribution system, the plan for the wastewater system breaks implementation into phases that would be manageable for the Afghan authorities and international donor community.

“Building a treatment facility is the first step in dealing with wastewater,” Majano said. “We are proposing a treatment that requires minimal energy and technology. The drawback is that it requires significant amounts of land, but we believe it is the best solution and first step for the austere environment of Afghanistan.”



A concept plan for a standpipe distribution network in Kandahar City.

Taking a phased approach

The phased approach breaks the overall effort up into a series of smaller projects that are more likely to appeal to donors and the Islamic Government of Afghanistan for funding, Majano said. The master plan includes conceptual designs for the various phases of the project, which Afghan government officials can use for their own planning and to request support for projects from donors.

“It will take many years and a great deal of money to completely modernize water supply and wastewater collection and treatment in Kandahar —

the master plan provides the way to ensure a holistic approach that keeps moving toward the goal, while not trying to solve the entire problem at once, which would be financially and logistically impossible,” Majano said.

The first step in executing the plan is to train Afghan engineers to use and maintain the hydro-geological and the distribution network computer models.

Continued on page 7

‘Water is life's mater and matrix, mother and medium. There is no life without water.’

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Hungarian biochemist, 1937 Nobel Prize for Medicine

Kohsan Uniform Police have new headquarters

Story and photo by Karla Marshall

The South District turned over a newly constructed Afghan Uniform Police District Headquarters compound in Kohsan to Gen. Sayeed Ahmad Sami, the Afghan National Police chief in Herat province Feb. 23.

The compound is similar to other uniform police compounds the district has turned over to the Afghan National Police. It has offices, barracks, a jail cell, indoor and outdoor kitchen facilities, dining area, bathrooms and storage areas.

The compound also has a well for potable water distribution, a wastewater disposal system, vehicle refueling station and electric power.

About 60 police officers can work out of the uniform police district headquarters, which was constructed by the Fazullah Construction and Engineering Company and the United Infrastructure Projects Joint Venture and overseen by the Corps of Engineers.

“We issued a notice to proceed in June 2010 and the project was completed February 15,” said Frances Hinkley, the district’s project manager responsible for the Kohsan project. “The cost to construct this building was \$1.2 million. The project started slowly, but the USACE team worked really hard with the contractors to get it finished.”

During his speech to the crowd, Lt. Col. Gordon “Mark” Bartley, the Herat Area officer in charge, said that the structure was built with a strong foundation of concrete, to assure it will last.

“This strong foundation is also assurance to the citizens of Kohsan and Herat province that they will have a strong security presence and peace for generations to come. This construction project was an ‘Afghan First’ initiative built by an Afghan general contractor, and is a fine example of the skill and craftsmanship of the Afghan people,” he continued.

After brief speeches to a crowd of more than 150, the ribbon



From the right, Col. Benjamin Wham, South District commander, cuts the ceremonial ribbon along with Haji Noor Ahmad Hafbala, Kohsan district governor; Engineer Rafi, Fazullah Construction and Engineering Company; Engineer Zama Hamim, Fazullah Construction and Engineering Company construction manager; Col. Ghulam Yahya, provincial Afghan National Police spokesman; and Ahmadullah Alamzi, Fazullah Construction and Engineering Company’s west region area manager, Feb. 23.

was cut, refreshments were served and a tour of the facilities commenced.

“The Afghanistan Engineer District-South has turned over several uniform police compounds to the ANP and each one is a step closer to long-term security and stability for Afghans,” said Col. Benjamin Wham, district commander during his tour of the facility. “This compound will enable the uniform police to provide the level of professionalism the citizens of Kohsan deserve.”

Water for a thirsty city, continued

“For the models to continue to be useful, they have to be maintained — updated every couple of years,” Majano said. “We developed a training program for and in conjunction with the Afghan government officials and the engineering faculty at Kandahar University, so we can transfer the models to them. From the outset, we recognized that the Afghans will execute this plan, so part of our effort has been to develop their capacity. The leadership at Kandahar University is very much behind this aspect—they want to be the center of excellence for water and wastewater engineering in Afghanistan.”

Developing the master plan drew on expertise from across the Corps of Engineers, Majano said.

“We developed the parts of the plan that deal with potable water using strictly in-house resources, and contracted for the wastewater sections. The Omaha, New England, Philadelphia

and Mobile Districts all played important roles, as did the Engineer Research and Development Center. The South District, working with the Omaha District, had responsibility for the overall document. And throughout the process, we have coordinated with the engineering faculty at Kandahar University and the Afghan Water Supply and Sewerage Corporation. In the end, it will be their plan to execute.

“The master plan for water and wastewater has the potential to have an enormous positive effect on the quality of life and economic prosperity of the Kandahar City region,” Majano said. “I came here specifically to work on this project. I leave with the hope that we have produced something that will make a difference in lives of the people of this region, and of Afghanistan as a whole.”



Clockwise: A recently poured foundation stands ready for the rolled steel structure. Workmen place a steel roll onto a trailer-mounted forming machine that bends the steel into semi-circular sections. The rolled steel is formed into a curved panel. Individual panels are crimped together forming a larger section. The sections are then raised and placed onto the foundation. The panels are welded onto the foundation and are crimped together. USACE photos.



Arch-span structure

There was cause for celebration on Camp Shorabak, Helmand province, where 34 arch-span buildings using U.S. government-furnished steel.

When completed, the camp will serve as the base for the Afghan National Army (ANA) and temporary facilities for other ANA battalion-sized formations, known as

The \$26-million project is scheduled to be completed in the summer. The buildings will include living quarters, mess halls, medical facilities, and officers' barracks, a headquarters building, electrical distribution room, wastewater collection, road networks, parking areas and a perimeter wall. The buildings will house 1,400 soldiers and the officers' quarters can house about 200.

"With the recent issuance of government-furnished steel, the contractor," said acting resident engineer Michael Osborne, Helmand Area Office, "expedites the project's completion by eliminating procurement and long lead times."

It is the steel and the arch-span buildings that will help keep the construction on schedule, Osborne said.

"The thing that I like best about arch-span structures is that the buildings that enlisted barracks buildings will take approximately 1.5 days to erect."

The buildings were engineered for austere Afghan environment and the steel and erection are standardized.

And the structures can be used for almost any purpose – offices, dining hall, maintenance center or for storage.

While the arch-span structures look very similar to the familiar Quonset buildings – especially in the way they are put together, Osborne said.

Both types of structures are sturdy, economical, and can be erected quickly.

"The 'old-school' Quonset huts are prefabricated, shipped to the site and erected. Arch-span buildings are fabricated and erected on site from steel sheets delivered to site. The steel is formed into the arch span and erected on site. Arch-span buildings are erected with a special crimping tool."

The steel arrives on site in rolls which are then put into a trailer-mounted forming machine that bends the steel into semi-circular sections. The process is similar to that used to create the rain gutters from

Once the steel semi-circles are placed and secured to their concrete foundation, and end caps are in place, the building's interior is sprayed with foam insulation. The structure then transforms the shell into a functioning building.

"Erection of an arch-span structure is less labor intensive, using skilled labor," he said. "A CMU (cinderblock) structure of the same size will increase construction costs." The steel used in the arch-span structures is stored in shipping containers at the Defense Logistics Agency and stored in 20-foot long shipping containers.

About 3,400 rolls of 1 mm and 1.5 mm thick steel totaling about \$10 million. The district's steel is stored in its original containers in a yard near





Arch panels speed construction

Story by Dave Melancon

Province, Feb. 25 as a contractor completed erection of the first of

National Army's 215th Combat Logistics Battalion and provide
as Kandaks.

over 2012. The project includes maintenance shops, enlisted
networks, communications system conduits, water distribution,
wall with guard towers. The enlisted barracks will house about

contractor's work progress has shown significant improvements,"
whose hometown is Jumping Branch, W. Va. "This potentially
ing lead time challenges faced by the contractor."
contractor on schedule and avoid delays in procurement and

buildings go up quick," Osborne said. "The contractor indicated
ect the shell without the end panels."

and construction practices, he said. Foundations, preparing the

training facilities, barracks, shower and toilet facilities, hospitals,

quonset hut, there is a big difference between the two types of

and quickly. But that is where the similarities end.

site, and assembled using unskilled labor," he explained. "Arch-
covered in coils transformed by a roll forming machine. The steel
are typically erected using a crane and arch panels are joined

mounted forming machine that bends the steel into semi-circular
from rolled aluminum found on many American homes.
the foundations, they are crimped together. Once all the sections
insulation. After the insulation solidifies, work on the interior

skilled labor, which inherently makes the construction go
require more materials, more labor and more time all of which
comes in rolls and was brought into Afghanistan by the U.S.
ers ready for delivery to the work site.

13 million were shipped and trucked Afghanistan last spring.
Camp Bastion. It stays in the containers until the contractor

Continued on page 10



Structures speed construction, continued

unloads it at the job site.

Prepositioning the government-furnished steel overcomes logistical challenges faced by contractors who previously had to haul their building materials via road convoys from Pakistan and other Asian routes. It could take up to six months to get the steel.

“The contractor’s procurement is expedited because the material is furnished by the government,” Osborne said.

Michael Vantzelfden, the resident engineer, prepared the contract modification for transfer of the steel and coor-

dated with the program management shop to get the transfer pushed through, he said.

For the Camp Shorabak project, the contractor furnished 30 rolls of steel for three of the enlisted soldiers’ barracks buildings and also successfully transported 42, 20-foot long shipping containers, holding 348 rolls of U.S. government-furnished arch-span steel, needed for the entire project, he said.

“The use of government-furnished material expedites the construction process,” Osborne said. “In most cases, the

government does not incur the delivery delays or other hazards or expenses caused by security issues which plague the contractors in a contingency environment.”

Camp Shorabak is one of several sites taking advantage of arch-span construction. The semi-circular buildings can be found on U.S., coalition forces and newly constructed ANA bases.

“Huge success at this site. We need to do this more around the country,” said Maj. Gen. Kendall Cox, Transatlantic Division commander. “Well done!”



Workmen erect an arch-span building on Kandahar Airfield. These structures can be found throughout Afghanistan. USACE photo.

South District trains arch-span quality assurance

Story by Mark Ray

Arch-span construction is a key element of the coalition strategy to provide the facilities that the Afghan security forces need to develop their forces and assume primary responsibility for security in the country. The technology allows contractors to rapidly build austere facilities that Afghan security forces will be able to operate and maintain after the coalition leaves Afghanistan.

However, arch-span methodology is often new to the engineers, construction representatives and quality assurance specialists of the district.

To ensure arch-span buildings meet the Corps of Engineers’ strict quality

standards, the district trained a cadre of personnel in arch-span quality assurance Feb. 25 on Kandahar Airfield. The cadre will spread their knowledge throughout the district.

Dave Clarke, an electrical engineer from the Middle East District in Winchester, came to Afghanistan and trained about nine people from the Kandahar Area and Airfield offices, Frank Scopa, chief of the district’s Quality Assurance Branch said.

The district is also using a new guide developed by the Middle Eastern District to augment the training and ensure the quality of arch-span construction.

“Arch-span buildings pose a number

of quality assurance concerns that are different from traditional buildings,” Scopa said

“The machine operator must be properly trained. The geometry and length of the panels must be correct. The panels must be joined correctly and the end panels have to be joined to the roof panels correctly, with appropriate gaskets to ensure the building is weather-tight.

“Between the training sessions and the quality assurance guide, the district will have trained personnel to oversee projects and ensure that they are finished to our standards and on time,” Scopa concluded.

Brigade complex ahead of schedule

Story by Dave Melancon

Construction work on an Afghan National Army brigade complex in Farah province is proceeding ahead of schedule, according to the project's chief engineer, Michael Fellenz. "The contractor is slightly ahead of schedule," said Fellenz, who is deployed from Buffalo, NY.

"Phases I and II of the building pad development are finished. We're also working a lot of building interiors now."

When complete, the \$63.3 million project will consist of housing, helicopter landing pads, motor pools, maintenance facilities, recreation centers and utilities infrastructure for seven kandaks (battalions) for the ANA 207th Brigade, he said.

Additionally work is progressing on the site's perimeter walls, guard towers, electrical distribution and sewer systems and a waste water treatment facility, he said.

The work on the project's design was completed this month and the contractor is now well into the construction phase.



Workmen walk by a recently erected arch-span building on Camp Sayer in Farah province. When complete in January 2013, the \$63.3 million project will consist of housing, helicopter landing pads, motor pools, maintenance facilities, recreation centers and utilities infrastructure for seven kandaks (battalions). Below: A block of Camp Sayer arch-span building shells near completion. (USACE Photos by Michael Fellenz)

"The contractor's on-site management team continues to show strong progress toward the project's completion," Fellenz said. Ninety of the project's 135 buildings will be "arch-span" structures, Fellenz said.

It takes about two days to erect a building, Fellenz said. Once the outer shell and end caps are in place, the interior is covered with spray-on insulation. The buildings take about one half the time to construct compared to tradition-

al brick and mortar structures.

They can be turned over to the Afghan Army faster and occupied as soon as they are completed instead of waiting for the entire project to be completed, he explained.

Camp Sayer's arch-span buildings will be used for barracks, administrative centers, dining facilities and other purposes.

The project is scheduled for completion in January 2013.



Supporting O&M at Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center

Story and photos by Mark Ray

If you were looking to illustrate “challenge,” operating and maintaining a large installation in Afghanistan could serve as a prime example. The South District meets that challenge every day, as they oversee the national O&M contract for the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center, near Kandahar Airfield.

The compound includes four separate areas within a single perimeter fence: with areas for the Afghan National Border Police Command; the Afghan National Uniform Police; the Afghan National Civil Order Police; and the Regional Logistics Center and Uniform Police Regional Headquarters. The Afghan Ministry of Interior also has a building on the compound used to provide administration for the region. Over 1,200 Afghan personnel are stationed on the compound.

The compounds are much more than office space, with junior and senior barracks, dining facilities, vehicle and other maintenance facilities, warehouses, training facilities, generators, wells and wastewater treatment facilities to support the needs of the Afghan personnel and their coalition mentors.

The responsibility for maintaining this critical infrastructure falls to the South District’s Operations and Maintenance Execution Division and their national O&M contractor for the site, ITT Excelis.

“The contractor provides a full range of operations and maintenance services,” said Penny Coulon, the compound contracting officer’s representative. “These include the traditional trades, such as carpentry, plumbing and electrical work, and more complex work, including operating and maintaining large generators, heating, ventilation and air-conditioning systems, wells and water treatment distribution systems, and wastewater collection and treatment.”

Current priorities at the compound, according to Coulon, are:

- Stabilizing operations and installing new generators at the installation power plant;
- Bringing the wastewater treatment plant up to standard;
- Repairing and maintaining both internal street lights and perimeter lights.

“We are making good progress on the generators,” she said. “We have received four new generators to replace failed/failing equipment and are currently installing and synchronizing them.



Penny Coulon, South District contracting officer’s representative, watches workmen install a generator system in the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center near Kandahar Airfield. (USACE photo by Mark Ray)

We cleaned out the four large fuel tanks that supply the power complex, and are preparing to line the tanks to extend their service life. Finally, because fuel quality has been an issue and probably will continue to be an issue, we are installing a fuel filter system between the truck discharge and storage tanks, which will also help to extend the life of the fuel tanks and ensure that the fuel getting to the generators is as good as we can make it.”

“The original generators on the site initially had electrical issues in their alternator assemblies, which actually generate the electricity,” said Dave Greenlief, South Regional Manager for ANSE, ITT Excelis. “These problems eventually became mechanical issues. We brought in a generator expert, who analyzed the issues and provided way ahead.

“While we were waiting for the new generators to arrive, we had to work hard to keep at least three generators working, which is the minimum required to power the complex,” Greenlief said.

“That was a difficult situation, since we could not take any of them off-line for major maintenance and overhauls. Issues with fuel quality made the situation even more difficult. Now that we have brought in the new generators, we will be able provide reliable power, and use three older generators as back-ups. We will be able to perform regular O&M and shouldn’t have problems in the future.”

At the wastewater treatment plant, the O&M team is waiting for delivery of replacement aerators and a new control panel. At the same time, they are cleaning out settlement ponds.

“As we perform O&M on the facilities, we look for op-

Continued on page 13

Supporting O&M, continued

portunities to replace original systems, which may not have been appropriate to Afghanistan, with simpler systems that are easier to operate and maintain,” Greenlief said. “The wastewater treatment plant is a good example. The aerators originally had a complex system of controls with multiple timers, relays, circuit breakers and overload protectors. We worked with the manufacturer to develop a system that will have a single, manual timer, one circuit breaker and one overload protector — so it doesn’t require a degree in electrical engineering to operate, and it can be maintained here.”

Fueling stations are another area where the O&M team is working to install equipment that is easier to maintain and operate.

“The fueling station on the Civil Order Police compound had electrical pumps that were difficult to get parts for, and required advanced skills to maintain,” Greenlief said. “We are replacing that system with a gravity-fed system that doesn’t require pumps and will be easy for the Afghans to maintain in the future. If it works, we’ll consider using it as a model for the other fueling stations on the compound.”

“O&M on the compound has been a team effort, with ITT Excelis working closely with the Corps of Engineers and the mentors to get things that were broken or not working correctly fixed, and in a manner that would allow systems to be operated and maintained after the Afghans take over O&M,” Greenlief said.

“Along with coordinating the mentors, we’ve also brought the Afghan leadership on the compound into the process,” Coulon said. “I have regular discussions with Afghan leaders that have forces stationed on the compound, to keep them informed of issues and what we are doing to correct them. The discussions help increase their sense of ownership of facilities, which is important as we move toward eventually turning over the responsibility for O&M of the complex.”

ITT Excelis is also looking toward the future by hiring as many local Afghan tradesmen as possible, Greenlief said. “This policy benefits us right now because it gives us the ability to procure many materials locally — our Afghan workers know what is available in Kandahar City, how much it should cost, and they can deal with the merchants in their own language.”

Employing Afghan workers and purchasing materials locally also supports the local economy, Coulon added.

“And when we transition O&M of the complex to the Afghan authorities, they will have the opportunity a pool of fully trained tradesmen, who know the site, to draw from if they want,” Greenlief concluded.

“The team that is maintaining the regional police compound has faced significant challenges,” said District Commander Air Force Col. Ben Wham.

“They have done an exceptional job keeping the complex running in the face of those challenges, and they are doing a great job preparing a workforce and installing systems that will allow the Afghan forces to assume responsibility for the site. Much of what they are doing is a model for O&M throughout Afghanistan.”



O&M workers install a new generator at the Joint Regional Afghan National Police Center, near Kandahar Airfield. The South District oversees O&M on the compound, which supports over 1,100 personnel from various Afghan police units. The district and our contractor have been working hard to ensure reliable power on the compound. (USACE Photo by Mark Ray)



Command Sgt. Maj. Lorne Quebodeaux raises the 69th Regiment Irish Brigade colors, kicking off St. Patrick’s Day festivities March 17. The 69th, once an all-Irish unit, can trace its history from its formation during the U.S. Civil War through Operation Iraqi Freedom. Celebrations continued in the evening with traditional and non-traditional Irish foods – green cupcakes included – a movie and Emerald Isle camaraderie. (USACE photo by Dave Melancon)

Army Corps signs over Uniform Police District Headquarters in Injil

Story and photo by Michael Beeman

The South District completed its oversight of construction and turned over a new Afghan Uniform Police District Headquarters in Injil, in Herat province, March 1.

The project included complete design and construction of a partially completed 2-story facility. The contract included management, planning, design, material, labor and equipment to site adapt and complete construction of all utilities, vehicle access, buildings, force protection measures and site security.

This \$1.6 million construction project consists of an administration building housing a barracks, a dining facility, conference areas, day lounges, armory, jail cells and laundry and latrine facilities. Additional facilities on the site include storage areas, a guard shack, gate house, water well, backup power generator and perimeter wall.

The project was awarded in February 2011 and a notice to proceed was issued March 17. The contractor for the project was Omran Holding Group.

Infrastructure improvements include a road network, septic system, entry control points, fuel storage, electrical connection to the municipality power distribution system and parking areas and sidewalks.

“It is not very often the Corps of Engineers oversees projects in Afghanistan that are completed on time,” said Col. Benjamin Wham, the district commander. “What makes this project special is that it was completed more than one month early and in less than one year from start to finish. This is a great testament to the quality of Omran’s work and the dedication that everyone on the team had to see the project through completion.”

The Herat Area Office, which employs a staff of 13 military and civilian employees as well as Afghan engineers, provided management oversight of the project.

“The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, together with the Injil Uniform Police, will be able to provide a professional level of security from this facility for the people of Injil and the surrounding area



South District commander Col. Benjamin Wham looks on as Mohammad Amin Hokomat and Ghulam Dastagir Rustamy, Afghan Police officials, sign for their new facility and receive a box of keys during a turn over ceremony for their new district headquarters March 1.

for generations to come,” said Lt. Col. Gordon “Mark” Bartley, Herat Area Office officer in charge. “This facility, which will house a force of 120, will be a great stabilizing influence in this area.” Bartley is from Rogers, Ark. and serves with the Missouri Army National Guard, 35th Engineer Brigade. 🇺🇸

Afghanistan Engineer District-South welcomes small visitor

Ron McDonald, district safety officer, had a unofficial visitor March 7.

Instead of arriving via aircraft like most people do here, McDonald’s visitor arrived in an envelope.

Flat Stanley measures about six inches tall and is paper thin. The crayon colored paper cutout boy has been traveling around the world since 1995 when he was introduced to third graders in Ontario, Canada as a way to boost their letter writing skills. He first began his adventures in 1965 as a children’s story written by Jeff Brown.

Stanley has been around the globe several times and included visits to service members serving in overseas locations.

Stanley dropped into the district via the Etna Elementary School, Etna, Calif., McDonald said.

“I loved receiving it,” he said. “I think it is a great thing for the kids because they can experience something they would not normally be involved with. Stanley gives them a window into our world.” 🇺🇸



Ron McDonald, Afghanistan Engineer District-South safety officer escorts his guest Flat Stanley around the headquarters offices March 7. (USACE photo)

South District bests construction placement goals for 6 straight months



Workers continue vertical construction at the 9th Commando Kandak project near Herat. USACE is building a base that will provide Afghan commandos with housing, dining, office and other facilities. (USACE Photo by Mark Ray)

By Karla Marshall

January: The South District continued to meet its contracting and construction goals set for fiscal year 2012 during January. The district exceeded first quarter goals and are on track to meet the second quarter goals as well.

“For the month of January, the district actually exceeded our projection of \$59.3 million,” said Bill Stout, deputy chief, engineering and construction division. “We ‘placed’ about \$61.8 million worth of construction, meaning we paid contractors that much money for the work they have completed.”

The total placed construction represents 100.3 percent (or \$249.8 million) of the projection for the first four months of fiscal year 2012, which is significant because meeting that target meant that district personnel worked diligently to close the gap between projections and actual placement Stout said.

“Over the next few months our Afghan National Army construction projects will be primarily vertical construction, which will equate to significantly more placement,” said Stout.

Much of that construction is arch-span construction, a

faster technique than traditional bricks and mortar. “Once the concrete foundations cure at the ANA base construction sites, the contractors can push rapidly to bend the steel that forms the remainder of the exterior structures. Throughout the spring and into the summer, we should see a huge surge in placement because of this technique,” Stout continued.

Each month and quarter, the district evaluates its construction placement statistics and looks for ways to continuously improve. “Even though we are meeting our goals, we have much more work that must be done,” said Stout. “To finish our construction projects on time, we must exceed our goals by significant margins. We will continue to refine our processes and work with our contractors to achieve maximum productivity and efficiency.”

Placing construction is just one of the metrics the district uses to evaluate its progress, but construction cannot begin until contracts are awarded. During the 1st quarter of FY12, the district awarded 36 contracts worth about \$46.7 million. In January, the district awarded 12 contracts totaling \$88.1 million.

“If current projections remain accurate, we will award 18 contracts in February,” said Bonnie Perry, the district’s chief of contracting. “Next quarter we expect that awards will remain high, with the largest number of contract awards occurring in May.”

“We’ve got a lot of work to do during the rest of FY12 and everyone must contribute a 100 percent effort for us to achieve our goals,” said Lt. Col. Corey Spencer, the district deputy commander. “We are pushing our contracting staff to get contracts awarded, contractors to develop aggressive schedules that get work done and we are pushing our engineering, construction and project management staff to make sure we keep our nearly \$2.5 billion program on track.”

The district’s goal is to place construction at the highest rate possible and complete its program before coalition forces end combat operations in 2014. “Aggressive schedule management and a high operations tempo will get us there,” said Spencer. “The district’s staff understands the urgency and is committed to timely execution.”

February: The district exceeded its contracting and construction goals for the sixth consecutive month in February.

“Contracting continues to set the bar of excellence,” said Bonnie Perry the district’s contracting chief. “For February, we made 17 awards totaling \$100,047,952.”

Of those contract awards, the district awarded 59 percent to Afghan companies.

“For February, the district exceeded our construction placement projection of \$60.4 million,” said Bill Stout, deputy chief, engineering and construction division. “We placed about \$69.15 million worth of construction. Our contractors completed that volume of work, submitted invoices and we paid them.”

The district placed 114 percent of its overall construction

goal which was quite an achievement, Stout said.

With access to building supplies limited by the closure of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, maintaining construction momentum remains a challenge.

“Our contractors have building materials stuck in Pakistan, so figuring out ways to continue building and finding alternative shipping methods has been a difficult experience for everyone on the project delivery teams. In several instances we figured out alternatives but continue to look for solutions,” Stout continued.

The district is poised to continue meeting its scheduled goals. March looks to be an even busier month about \$180 million in contract awards expected, Perry said.

US forces drawdown a full-time job for South District's real estate team

By Dave Melancon

When it comes time for U.S. forces to transfer land back to the Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan or return private leased property back to the Afghan people, the South District has a team of experts that can ease the process.

With the ongoing drawdown of U.S. Forces, the district's Real Estate Division assists regional and U.S. combat area commanders meet land requirements to either close out or turn over a site to the Afghan National Army or Police, said Terry Rupe, division chief, deployed from the Memphis District.

"Our office helps battle space owners to ensure that all necessary documentation, including a Real Estate Base Closure and Transfer Request Form, is complete," he said, adding that the document provides important information pertaining to the site ownership, its location, and closure or transfer date.

"We are very busy now because of the drawdown initiative. U.S. Forces acquired a lot of land during the surge and now we are returning it back to private landowners or to the Afghan government," said realty specialist Sarah Kang, of Winchester, Va.

"The real estate office has just completed working through a huge backlog of transfers and closures dating back to when the surge recovery started, Rupe said. "We currently have closed out the real estate files for over 200 bases to date."

Rupe said at this time there are more than 500 bases identified for closure or transfer in the district's area of responsibility.

"We work with regional military commanders, U.S. Forces Afghanistan, the International Security Assistance Force and the Afghan government," Rupe said. "In order to keep up with the surge recovery mission, our office regularly attends the regional commands'



Hugh Coleman, South District realty specialist, meets weekly on Kandahar Airfield with Afghan land and property owners to discuss claims and other property-related issues. (Courtesy photo)

base transfer and closure working group meetings. This helps us monitor and track each site that has been nominated to transfer or for closure."

The local commanders, in coordination with local Afghan officials, decide which properties to transfer or close, Rupe said. The nominated sites are reviewed by the commander's staff and submitted to the Real Estate office to verify if a realty instrument exists on the property.

U.S. forces coordinate with the real estate office so that its staff can provide subject matter expertise on real estate related matters, said senior team member Richard Gonzalez, from Dallas, Texas.

"We also help the regional commands determine ownership on occupied sites so they have as much information as possible to make an informed decision as to whether to closeout or transfer a particular location."

If there is a realty document in place, the office will "terminate a lease instrument if on private land or end the land use agreement if it is Afghan government property," he explained.

If property is privately owned, the office works with the military units to ensure the Afghan landowners are compensated for the time we occupied their land," Gonzalez said.

"As a general rule, ISAF Joint Command will not approve the transfer of private property to the Afghan Government unless the Afghan government has purchased or leased the property," he said.

If there are no real estate agreements, the office will ensure there are no legitimate claims of private ownership on the site and then archive the file for historical purposes.

As U.S. Forces continue to draw down, installation transfers and closures are being recorded into a centralized database known as the Base Transition Reporting System.

"The Base Closure and Transfer process is a moving target," Rupe said. "Requirements are consistently changing as the process continues to develop. Coordination with all the key players is essential to the success of the mission."



Top Left to Right: Daniel Steuber, Col. Ben Wham, South Distric commander, Joshua Adekanbi, Michael Baxter , Doug Hamilton, Patrick McCreery, Peter Gaither, Bottom Left to Right: Mike Fellenz, Command Sgt. Maj. Lorne Quebodeaux, Capt. Sean Burnett, Maj. Gen. Kendall P. Cox, Transatlantic Division commanding general and CJ Steeple.

In the sleepy little southwestern Afghan city of Farah, the Engineer Afghanistan District-South's resident office continues to promote Afghan security.

Forward Operating Base Farah, once a Soviet-era army outpost, sits on the southeastern outskirts of the city. Now, the FOB has been expanded to include an Italian army complex and dirt airfield.

With only nine office personnel, one project engineer and six Afghan quality assurance representatives scattered throughout the province, this small USACE contingent is currently overseeing all construction in the fourth largest province in Afghanistan and all the operations and maintenance contracts in Farah and Ghor provinces.

When all is said and done, the office is currently overseeing more than \$100 million in construction and O&M contracts, with more expected in the coming weeks.

Every office seems to have that one big project and Farah is no different.

Until recently, the district oversaw its largest contract: Camp Sayar, located in the open desert about five kilometers south of FOB Farah. Camp Sayar is an Afghan National Army base expansion project to increase the number of Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Brigade of the 207th Corps headquartered in Farah. Currently, the base houses 1,500 Soldiers, but when the expansion is complete, the camp will accommodate well over 5,500.

With about 120 new buildings, Camp Sayar is one of the first to use the arch-span building design to quickly and efficiently erect multiple steel buildings that will last in this austere environment.

This is not to say that Camp Sayar is the only project the office oversees. We are building Uniform Police District Headquarters throughout the province. Currently there are five DHQs under construction with one more contract expected to be awarded. We also recently finished a \$6.5 million border patrol headquarters in Chah-Sangar, a small

village on the Iranian border. Three more border police stations are being considered for possible construction.

Due to the sheer size of Farah province, approximately 18,000 square miles, or more than twice the size of Maryland, getting to project sites can be difficult.

That is where our Afghan quality assurance representatives come in. They are the eyes and ears of a resident office.

Assigned by the Herat Area Office, these Afghan engineers have the task of learning USACE ways of construction and engineer management and then employing those methods to ensure that Afghanistan is provided with the best possible facilities.

The work we do is not a sprint, but a measured distance that has to be sustained for the long haul. Everyone from the resident engineer to the officer in charge and the security team understands this and are always willing to do their part to support the mission and each other. 

USACE turns over milestone project

Story and photo by Dave Melancon

The South District officially turned over a milestone project that is already bolstering the safety and security of Shindand Air Base.

During a symbolic ribbon-cutting ceremony March 21, Col. Benjamin Wham, district commander announced that a \$18-million perimeter defense project surrounding the base was ready to be turned over the U.S. Air Force and ultimately, to the Afghan Air Force.

The project on the eight-square mile air base, located about 300 miles north west of Kandahar, consists of a 12.5-kilometer roadway, security fencing, a 12.5-kilometer anti-vehicle trench, 51 guard towers spaced 250 meters apart, 17 electric transformers and electrical system connecting the towers to the installation's main power plant. Work on the project began in October 2010, said Mathew Walden, resident engineer and contracting officer for the project.

"When you look at a segment of fence or one guard tower, it does not look like much," he said. "But there are 51 towers and more than 10 kilometers of fence. It was a big project. It took a lot effort, a lot of people and a lot of money."

"Our mission is to turn projects over and it is always a great thing to cut a ribbon on a facility with the quality products that were produced here," Wham told the audience gathered for the ceremony at one of the site's guard towers.

The project presented several challenges, Wham said. The most serious occurring when a contractor's water truck stuck an improvised explosive device, killing its driver and wounding two other workmen.

Wham then asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of those killed and injured.

The contract was modified four times with the largest change calling for an additional 19 guard towers.

The project's primary contractor, KAM Construction Management, "regrouped and brought in some senior people to oversee the progress and got the project completed" Wham said.

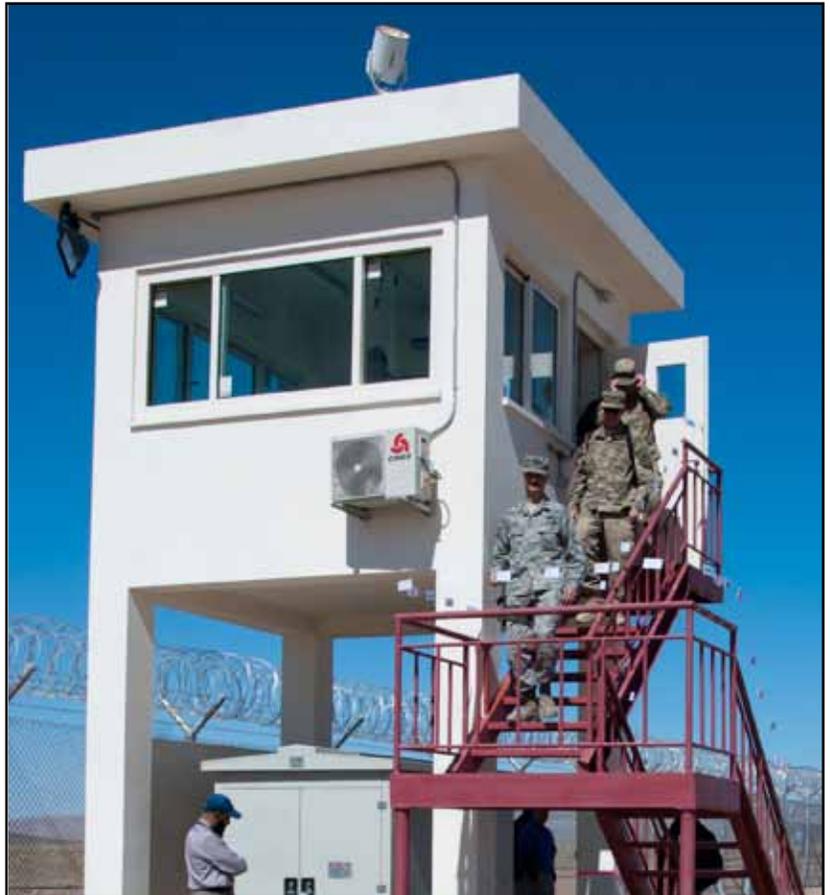
"It's huge and it's here to protect a very important asset: the Afghan Air Force on Shindand Air Base," he said. "This is a quality product and we at the Corps appreciate your hard work. We look forward to turning it over to our partners."

"This day has been a much awaited event for us," said KAM representative Melvin Arellano. "We encountered a lot of challenges along the way."

Arellano cited professionalism, open communications and the good working relationships as key ingredients for the project's ultimate success.

Disagreement with local villagers and the IED attack presented major obstacles to the project's progress, but these were overcome by working harder, he said.

"These challenges were a motivation – not to bring us down but to step forward and push harder to complete the security fence and these guard towers," Arellano said. "Our men and



Air Force Col. John Hokaj, Shindand Air Base and 838th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group commander and Air Force Col. Benjamin Wham, Afghanistan Engineer District-South commander, emerge from one of 52 new guard towers surrounding the airbase shortly after a ribbon cutting ceremony officially marking the completion a perimeter defense system surrounding the airbase March 21.

women responded to these challenges by working harder."

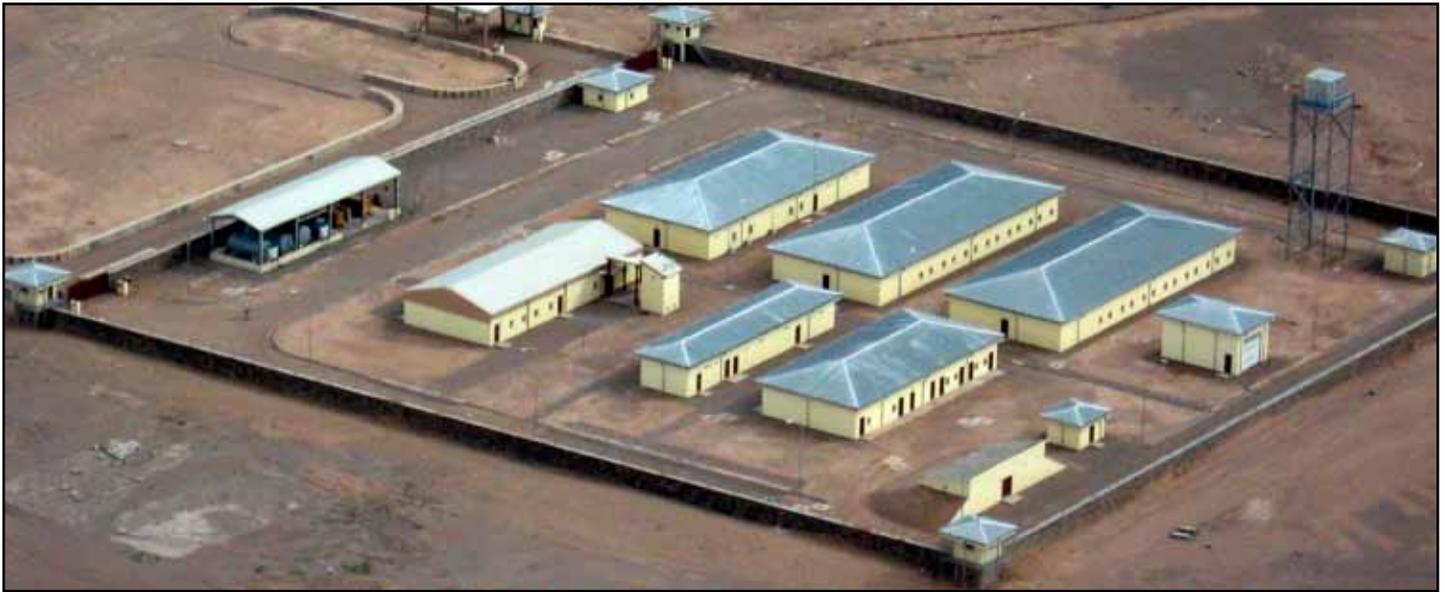
The work as completed without compromising quality, he said.

"I am proud of what we have accomplished. Not only because we have completed this contract but also to contribute to the history of this country."

"Less than a year ago, this was all pasture land. There were shepherds out here as the contractors were working to build this fence," said Air Force Col. John Hokaj, Shindand Air Base and 838th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group commander. "I do appreciate the work of the contractors from all of the nations that have come together in order to make this project a reality to bring safety and security to the people of Afghanistan."

Hokaj said Shindand is the largest single installation by area in Afghanistan with more than eight square miles inside the fence line.

The completed perimeter security system "was a long time in coming and it has not been without its challenges," he said. "But now we have the electricity turned on, the lights shining out and towers around this base. This brings a great capability for the safety and security of the people who work inside this base." ■



Construction of the Chah Sangar Border Police headquarters compound was overseen by the South District and turned over to the Afghan Border Police Feb. 16. (USACE Photo)

A new Border Police facility at Chah Sangar

By Karla Marshall

The South District oversaw the construction of and turned over a new Afghan Border Police headquarters compound in Farah province Feb. 16.

“This project was really unique,” said Michael Fellenz, the Farah Resident Office engineer and construction representative. “Because of the location and security situation, USACE’s American employees never stepped foot on the project site before we turned it over. Our Afghan project engineers and quality assurance representatives totally managed on-site activities.”

Like other similar facilities constructed for the Afghan Border Police, this \$6.6 million compound contains an administration building, barracks, a dining facility, laundry and latrine facilities, storage, a guard shack, gate house and perimeter wall.

“The project was awarded in June 2010 and a notice to proceed was issued July 22,” Fellenz said. “Construction was a little slow due to security and remoteness, but overall the Pro-Built Construction Firm delivered an acceptable facility.”

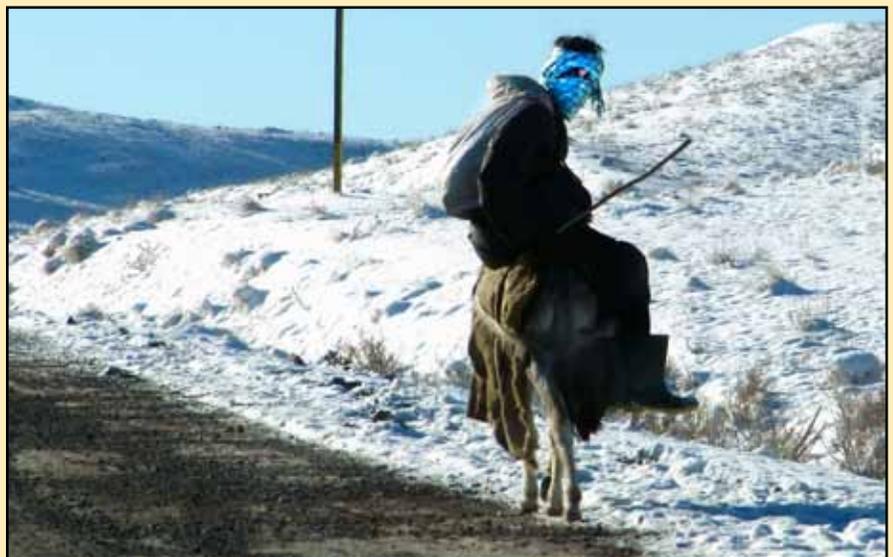
Infrastructure improvements include fuel storage, generators, vehicle refueling points, a potable water source, sewage and storm water collection and treatment, roads, parking areas and sidewalks.

“It is good to get another project off the books,” said Jeff Usavage the district’s former Afghan National Police program manager. “This project in particular is a success because our Afghan employees were able to do the hard work. They visited the site regularly, worked with the contractor and learned USACE building principles along the way.”

The district employs more than 40 Afghan engineers throughout southern Afghanistan. By giving them opportunities to work alongside their American counterparts, they have learned the skills necessary to be Afghanistan’s construction industry leaders, said Col. Benjamin Wham, the district commander.

“I am proud of the team who worked together to get this border police station finished,” Wham said. “The police have a quality facility that will serve them well into the future.”

Reader’s Photo:



Harrison Sutcliffe, the South District’s chief of engineering, captured this image through the window of his vehicle this winter. “It was a tough shooting environment with all the bright snow in the background to get his face properly exposed,” Sutcliffe said of the shot.

USACE, COMKAF celebrate women's contributions to Afghanistan mission



Linda Murphy, Water and Infrastructure Project Management Branch chief, goes over some program notes with Australian Air Force Sgt. Geoffrey Bell shortly before the Kandahar Airfield International Women's Day commemoration March 8.

Story and photos by Dave Melancon

Linda Murphy says she is proud to have traded in her high-heeled work shoes for a pair of “Beverly Hillbilly” styled steel-toed boots.

Murphy, the district's Water and Infrastructure Project Management Branch chief, was one of four keynote speakers taking part in the Kandahar Airfield International Women's Day commemoration March 9.

The ceremony recognized women from coalition forces and USACE serving on the airfield.

“Now that I have gotten my daughters off to college as fairly self-sufficient women, I decided to deploy to hopefully provide assistance to the women and men of the coalition forces and particularly to the women and men of Afghanistan,” she explained.

“I forfeited my designer suits and three-inch stiletto heels for these lovely sand-colored uniforms and these Beverly Hillbilly type of steel-toed boots.”

Murphy said that the district has 67

women serving in Afghanistan out of a work force of about 300 employees. Their duties include engineering, contracting, construction oversight, human resources intelligence, operations, logistics and supply, information technology, legal counsel, internal review, public affairs, resource management, safety and project management.

“We are all here for a common purpose, a common goal which emulates the Corps of Engineers motto – Essayons, which

means Let Us Try,” she told the audience of about 100. “We have an incredibly exciting mission here, and we are proud of the work we are doing for the International Security Assistance Force and for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Every woman contributes to the mission here just like every man.”

The district team strives to ensure that coalition forces have the Corps of Engineers technical support which enables them to perform their duties and to make Afghanistan a safer, healthier and more sustainable place for the Afghan people, she said.

“We are daughters, sisters, aunts, nieces, mothers, and even grandmothers – coming together here for one cause – to make a contribution for a better future not only for the women of Afghanistan but for everyone here,” Murphy said.

“And like our Corps motto states – We will try. We will try our hardest.”



U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Scott Dennis, 451st Air Wing and Kandahar Airfield commanding general, presents challenge coins to district employees (from left) Deborah Lamb, Linda Murphy and Diedrienne Fauser. Ulrike Krueger, a district civil engineer working in the Helmand province area office, was also recognized for her service but was unable to attend the event.

Ground broken for 28-bed hospital



Dr. Suraya Dalil, the acting Afghan Minister of Public Health addresses the audience at the Shindand Hospital ground breaking ceremony Jan. 28.

Story and photo by Karla Marshall

A groundbreaking ceremony marked the start of construction on a new 28-bed hospital in Shindand, Herat province Jan. 28. The South District designed the \$4.8 million hospital and is overseeing construction.

Representatives from the U.S. Agency for International Development, the International Security Assistance Force Regional Command-West, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, USACE, Herat province and Shindand district attended the event, along with more than 400 local citizens.

"This is a really important project for the people of Shindand and one that the U.S. government is committed to building," said Lt. Col. Gordon "Mark" Bartley, the officer in charge of the Herat Area Office. "We anticipate the hospital will be complete in October. The construction contractor, Helal Khosti Construction Company, plans to hire 120 local citizens to work on the project, so at this point, we feel good that the project will proceed at the scheduled pace."

In addition to the main hospital, the district will build two additional clinic facilities: one for males and one for females.

"Design of the hospital was a chal-

lenge because there are limited construction funds," said John Secleter, the district architect who modified an existing hospital design.

"The original plan was to modify the design of a hospital addition we used on Camp Zafar," said Secleter. "There, we connected new hospital construction to an existing Afghan National Army hospital that expanded the ANA's ability to care for troops. That design was the starting point for this hospital in Shindand."

Secleter said that the modifications to the existing hospital design were extensive because the Shindand hospital was a stand-alone building as opposed to an extension and the people it will serve are not soldiers.

"We needed to make room for an OB-GYN suite and have clinic facilities that were gender specific," said Secleter.

Robert Greco, the project manager, deployed from USACE's New York District, said the hospital will consist of a full service medical clinic with emergency care facilities that improve access to medical services for the region.

"There are about 800,000 to one million people in the Shindand area," said Greco. "Obviously this hospital will not

be sufficient for all of them, but it is a step in the right direction. GIRoA can take the hospital design and duplicate it throughout the country with minimal difficulty in the future."

In his remarks (speaking through an interpreter), Herat Provincial Governor Daud Shah Saba said that he welcomed the construction of the hospital and looked forward to the day it was complete so Shindand residents could have better access to health care.

Nabil Abouraily, the Herat Resident Office Engineer, said that the project was long awaited, adding that the district's resident office had voluntarily stepped up to the planning role and worked very closely with USAID, RC-West, and the Ministry of Health since January 2011 to develop a scope of work, design, and requirements that were acceptable to the Afghan officials who will operate and maintain the hospital.

"This was really a unique effort and experience that here in Herat we don't get to see much," said Abouraily.

"By the end of construction, the Herat Area Office would have touched every piece of this project from planning and real estate procurement to design, award, and construction. I look forward to keeping the construction on schedule and delivering a quality product that the people of Afghanistan can use for years to come." 📸

Reader's Photo:

Jeremy Wilson, resident engineer, Kandahar Airfield Area Office, sent in this photo of the Theater Vehicle Maintenance Complex project, affectionately calling it, "one of my projects from here in Deep South of KAF."



Help wanted: Inquire online

By Michael Beeman

Nearly every newspaper has a "Help Wanted" classified section. But there is another list of challenging jobs that you won't find in your newspaper.

While the downturn in the U. S. economy has had a major impact on people seeking employment, there is one organization, not commonly seen in local advertisements, that continues to have job openings: the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers in Afghanistan.

The Army Corps is continuously seeking out and hiring qualified and motivated people to fill critical positions supporting its mission.

The individuals that the Army Corps recruits come from all walks of life and many are employees from within the Army Corps, as well as and other federal agencies and organizations.

And, there are also many selected from outside of the government. The employees coming from outside of the federal government are classified as "Schedule A" employees.

"I headed into Iraq when I was first selected to as a Schedule A back a couple of years ago," said Fred T. Schelby, from Albuquerque, N.M. an Afghan National Police project manager in the district. "I applied a second time to come to Afghanistan because I enjoy the work and the opportunity to be part of an organization that is helping to build for the future of this country."

The district is headquartered on Kandahar Airfield and covers the southern and western portions of the country. It has about 320 positions

providing technical engineering support and construction management for war fighters and other organizations focused on building Afghanistan's infrastructure, security and medical facilities and water and electrical distribution systems.

One of the greatest challenges facing the USACE leadership in Afghanistan is recruiting qualified candidates to meet mission requirements.

Darnell Gay, from Gowen, Mich., had served as a contractor supporting an Army organization known as Prime Power before joining the Army Corps to become an engineering technician.

"I was a master electrician looking for a different opportunity with steady employment," Gay said. "I now spend about 50 percent of my time traveling across the southern half of Afghanistan conducting electrical inspections of Afghan National Police and

Afghan National Army facilities and complexes."

The Army Corps has the task of constructing facilities and complexes in Afghanistan, many for the Afghanistan National Security Forces. To accomplish the mission, there is a continuous need to recruit a large number of civil engineers, electrical engineers, mechanical engineers, contract specialists, program managers, general engineers and other professions for a variety of other support functions.

"We are in constant need of people in a variety of specialties who are adaptable, flexible, willing and capable to help execute our mission," said Col. Benjamin Wham, district commander. "Serving in Afghanistan offers an unique opportunity for professional and personal challenge, adventure and national service."

People who are selected for the positions have an opportunity to interact with a

different culture and service overseas means increased compensation.

Employees of the district could find themselves providing direct support from offices in Kandahar, Herat, Farah, Tarin Kowt, Qalat or Lashkar Gar.

"One of the greatest rewards is getting the opportunity to meet the people of Afghanistan," said Schelby. "I like to get outside the wire. I have the found Afghan people to be very hospitable, friendly and highly committed. If I didn't get to see the projects and meet Afghans I would find it much more difficult to focus on my role."

Persons interested in applying for positions with USACE in Afghanistan are encouraged to review the offerings posted on the [USAJobs web site](#), or for additional details visit the [USACE civilian deployment information](#) web page. 📧

First & last Red Horse Run

John Wise, South District security manager, shows off the T-shirt he earned during the U.S. Air Force Red Horse Squadron's "first and last Red Horse run for Wounded Warriors" March 10 on Kandahar Airfield. The district fielded an unofficial team of about 10 runners who completed the 8 kilometer fun run. (USACE photos by Dave Melancon)



Corps of Engineers completes major section of 'Route Bear' highway

Story by Mike Beeman

The South District recently completed construction of a major eight-mile section of a two-lane roadway between Kandahar City and Tarin Kwot. The \$11.4-million project is expected to increase commerce and significantly reduce travel time between the two cities.

The nearly 10-month project, which included installation of 25 culverts and a major low water crossing, was funded through the Regional Command South Commander's Emergency Response Program. The CERP is in place across Afghanistan and provides combatant commanders the ability to fund activities, such as infrastructure construction that aids local communities. Commanders are able to use the funds for infrastructure construction as a means to support counterinsurgency through economic growth.

The highway, known as Route Bear, had previously been an unimproved, dirt roadway consisting of hard uphill climbs, sharp turns and soft shoulders that caused frequent rollovers of large vehicles traveling the route.

"Completion of this construction project will provide a more expeditious means of moving between Kandahar, the sec-

ond largest city in Afghanistan, and the outlying town of Tarin Kot, in Uruzgan province," noted Robert Greco, a district project manager deployed from USACE New York District. "This should cut down travel time significantly between the two cities and facilitate a much-needed opportunity for expansion of commerce and business growth in both of these communities." ■



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles and security line a portion of Route Bear as USACE personnel inspect construction in December 2011. (USACE photo)

Engineers complete Arghistan bridge bypass

Story and photo by Karla Marshall

Afghans now have an alternative to driving over the Arghistan River bridge in Kandahar province. On Dec. 31, 2011, the South District reached substantial completion on the \$3.1-million bypass project which was awarded in September 2010.

"This bypass ensures that traffic from Weesh-Chaman [a border crossing point with Pakistan] has a viable route to Kandahar City and points west," said Robert Greco, the project manager. "The project was funded with Commander's Emergency Response Program dollars and began Mar. 15, 2011."

ECC/ASCC Joint Venture, the construction contractor, expected to complete the project sooner; however, abnormally heavy rains in September and November 2011 delayed completion. ■



Workers pour and form concrete for the Arghistan River bridge bypass in mid-November 2011. The completed bypass will make it possible for traffic to move from the border of Pakistan to Kandahar in the event the bridge is not passable.

USACE engineer makes a difference in Afghanistan



Ayesha Saeed (right) project engineer at the Herat Resident Office, discusses project specifications with the construction contractor responsible for some upgrades to the utilities on Camp Zafar Jan 30.

Story and photos by Karla Marshall

Geographically, it is not far from Islamabad, Pakistan to Kandahar, Afghanistan, but for Ayesha Saeed, a mechanical engineer assigned to the South District, making that trip took immigration to the United States when she was 14, naturalization as a U.S. citizen in 2000, a college education and a job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

“I was born in Pakistan but my family immigrated to the United States in 1993,” said Saeed, who works as a project engineer at the district’s Herat Resident Office. “I always liked math and science, so pursuing a degree in engineering seemed logical to me.”

Saeed is one of four children and the only one to be an engineer. A graduate of Temple University in Philadelphia, she deployed from the USACE Baltimore District and began her tour in Afghanistan in May, 2011.

“When I learned of the opportunity to work in Afghanistan with USACE, I discussed it with my husband and then I volunteered to deploy,” she said. Saeed’s husband Garth Weston, whom she met in college, is a civil engineer from Jamaica and works for the City of Baltimore.

“This is a unique opportunity for me,” she said. “Helping with Afghanistan’s reconstruction effort in building both mili-

tary and civil works projects, at an accelerated pace and under extreme conditions, has been challenging but really rewarding too.”

Currently, Saeed is working on three projects in Herat province. A utilities upgrade project and a combined support battalion installation project are both on Camp Zafar, an Afghan National Army base adjacent to Camp Stone, the NATO base where Saeed lives. The other project is a regional police training center south of Camp Stone.

“The utilities upgrade project will expand Camp Zafar’s existing utilities capacity to handle ongoing expansion projects. The 207th Corps, the CSB and the 9th Commando Kandak (all battalion-sized garrison complexes on Camp Zafar) will be serviced by the upgraded utilities, which should be finished by May 2012,” said Saeed.

The CSB, a \$27-million project that includes utilities, roads, offices, barracks, dining facilities and storage facilities should be finished in July 2012.

The regional police training center, another installation-sized project, located between Adraskan and Shindand Air Base, will provide training facilities for more than 3000 troops when complete. The training center is scheduled for completion in May 2013 and will cost about \$57 million.

During her first three months in Afghanistan, Saeed worked in the district headquarters at Kandahar Airfield as a design engineer. She reviewed design requirements for the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police and military construction projects that benefit coalition forces.

However, when the opportunity came to work in the field, she jumped at the chance. “My preference is to be a hands-on engineer,” said Saeed. “I want to be on the project sites, inspecting progress and working with the contractors.”

As a project engineer, Saeed is responsible for ensuring that contractors build according design specifications and that the USACE building requirements and processes are met.

“Ayesha has been a great addition to Herat Resident Office because she brings an exceptional design-build perspective,” said Nabil Abourialy, the Herat resident engineer. “She expedites in-house reviews on shop drawings and other project documentation, which helps us finish projects sooner. Ayesha also meets with large-scale project stakeholders – customers, contractors,

Continued on page 25

Two 'commanders' serving at the Afghanistan Engineer District-South?

Story and photo by Karla Marshall

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers districts do not have two commanders. An exception was made Feb. 11 at the Afghanistan Engineer District-South when Col. Benjamin Wham, the district commander promoted Navy Lt. Cmdr. Hallock Mohler to the rank of commander.

"It is always a pleasure to promote the folks who work for me; it is even better to promote them while we are deployed," said Wham. "As the chief of our human resources office, Commander Mohler has been instrumental to the success of the district's mission and I am happy to share the title of 'commander' with him - but just for a second," he added.

Mohler, who deployed from Norfolk, Va., has served in the U.S. Navy more than 30 years and said this is his last deployment.

"I promised my wife that when I come home this time, it will be for good. I just wish my wife and my daughter were here to share this milestone with me," he said.

All service members are eligible to deploy with the Afghanistan Engineer District-South. Since its inception in 2009, members from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines have deployed and served as engineers, contracting officers, area and resident office officers in charge, MRAP vehicle team members, and staff officers in the district's human resources, logistics, operations, and intelligence offices. 📷

Engineer makes a difference, continued

end users, administrators and clients to ensure that everyone knows the scope of a project, the role of each stakeholder and what USACE expects from each team member."

"I have learned so much in my time here," Saeed said. "The Afghan engineers and quality assurance representatives that I work with are extremely capable. Working side by side with them to deliver quality products is an awesome experience."

The Herat Area Office employs nine Afghan engineers, all graduates of Afghan universities. They learn USACE processes while assigned as quality assurance representatives and have the opportunity to become project engineers as their skills develop.

Saeed said she has not experienced any significant prejudice as a result of her Pakistani heritage, but overcoming the cultural biases against women in Afghanistan has been a challenge.

"Compared to many Afghan women, I have not had a lot of difficulty working here, but I believe improving educational opportunities for women in Afghanistan will close the gap. Every opportunity I get, I try to demonstrate that women engineers are as capable as men," Saeed continued. "My Afghan coworkers respect me and my work and that is really gratifying."

Saeed will return to the United States and her previous job at the USACE Baltimore District in May.

"I never imagined having an opportunity to come back to this part of the world and make it better," she said. "To contribute to the rebuilding of Afghanistan, in my small way, is a gift and memory I will always be proud of." 📷



Navy Cdr. Hallock Mohler (right) recites the oath of office as administered by Col. Benjamin Wham, Feb. 11 at the district's headquarters compound on Kandahar Airfield.



Ayesha Saeed, a district mechanical engineer listens to a construction contractor's explanation how his company plans to position water pipes in a building's foundation on Camp Zafar.

Afghanistan Safety 101

Inquiring minds want to know:

Sunglasses, safety glasses or ballistic eyewear?

By James Ediger, District Safety Office

Almost everyone wears some type of eyewear in Afghanistan. Some may think they are just wearing sunglasses. But, there is a big difference in eyewear, the type of protection provided and what is required while deployed.

Sunglasses protect your eyes from harmful ultraviolet rays, reduce eye strain in bright conditions and protect you from flying debris and other MINOR hazards. Sunglasses sold in the United States are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration and are required to conform to safety standards.

According to the standard ANSI Z80.3-2001 the lens should have a UVB and a UVA rating and should also include basic impact protection.

Safety eyewear under ANSI Z87.1-2003 standards – marked “Z87” on the eye wear – include basic impact and high impact classifications.

- **Basic:** Using the "drop ball" test, a one-inch diameter steel ball is dropped onto the lens from a height of 50 inches. To pass, the lens must not crack, chip or break. All glass safety lenses must undergo this basic test.
- **High Impact:** For the high impact classification, a high velocity test is performed by shooting a quarter-inch diameter steel ball at the lens at a speed of 150 feet per second. To pass, the lens must not crack; chip or break, and it must not become dislodged from the lens holder. To determine if a lens has passed the high velocity test described above, look for the "+" mark on the eyewear.

Ballistic-rated safety eyewear is becoming one of the fastest growing segments of the protective eyewear industry. However, there seems to be a considerable amount of confusion on what actually classifies eyewear as ballistic rated.

Ballistic glasses are designed to provide impact protection beyond typical industrial safety standards. Those serving in the U.S. Military may be subjected to projectiles that travel at speeds far greater than your typical industrial debris.

To help combat eye injuries in tactical environments the U.S. Military has implemented a series of rigorous ballistic tests for safety glasses, sunglasses and goggles worn by service members. These tests subject eyewear to projectile impacts over four times the velocity – 650 feet per second – of ANSI's 150 feet per second testing standards.

All ballistic eyewear are certified ANSI Z87.1-2003 for high impact, and also meet or exceed one or more of the following ballistic standards: MIL-PRF-31013, MIL-V-43511C, and CE EN166B.

Unfortunately, verifying your protective eyewear is ballistic certified is not always easy.

Unlike the ANSI standards, which requires all safety glasses

to be marked with a “Z87” indicator, the military ballistic standards do not have a marking requirement. However, most ballistic-rated eyewear will be marked with “Z87,” since they exceed that standard.

The Authorized Protective Eyewear List regulations require the word “APEL” to be marked on all approved eyewear frames. Some manufacturers such as Wiley-X have already started to mark of their certified eyewear.

Checkout the [U.S. Army's official APEL website](https://peosoldier.army.mil/pmseq/eyewear.asp) for a comprehensive listing of approved ballistic eyewear for combat operations. If you're serving in the U.S. Army, you can only wear the ballistic eyewear shown on the APEL list.

The eyewear issued at the Corps of Engineers' Deployment Center are the UVEX XC or Genesis. Both are on the current APEL list.

So, while you are out on any of our construction projects via ground or air movements, you already have the highest rated protection provided to you for free. 🇺🇸

Mardi Gras Afghanistan Engineer District-South style

Story by Karla Marshall

What happens when several people from Louisiana are deployed together in Afghanistan and Mardi Gras is just around the corner? At the South District, the Mystic Krewe de Kandahar was formed and then a parade, dinner of red beans and rice, king cakes and beignets plus a heavy dose of Cajun-style music and fun materialized Feb. 21.

Spearheaded by Command Sgt. Maj. Lorne Quebodeaux, a native of Iota, La., the krewe of eight, which is composed of district employees primarily from Louisiana, held their first meeting in mid-January to plan the district's first Mardi Gras event.

"Mardi Gras is a tradition that some of us were unwilling to forego during our deployment here," said Quebodeaux. I 'run' Mardi Gras with the LeJeune Cove Courir on the Saturday before Fat Tuesday. We have a traditional Cajun French chant we sing at every stop," he said.

Quebodeaux has participated in the Cajun traditional Mardi Gras run since 1982 and the only years he did not participate were when he was on active duty and unable to return home.

According to Quebodeaux, the LeJeune Cove Courir was originally founded around 1900 and involves costumed men visiting neighbors, begging for gumbo ingredients or coins and chasing a live chicken. The Courir went dormant in the 1950s and was revived in 2001 by Gus Gravot.

"We obviously couldn't recreate a 'run' here on KAF," said Quebodeaux, "but having a New Orleans-style parade was a great alternative."

Part of Quebodeaux's tradition includes helping the Iota Boy Scouts sell concessions at the Iota/Tee-Mamou Cajun Folklife Festival. "Our troop has one fund raiser a year to fund our activities and we work hard every Mardi Gras to raise the needed funds. So, yes, you could say that Mardi Gras is very important to me."

The district continued Quebodeaux's call for service by treating Kandahar Airfield's wounded warriors and nearby soldiers to the parade and treats.

"It was fun throwing beads to the airmen and soldiers of KAF," said Frances Hinkley, the first Mystic Krewe of Kanda-

har queen. "I'm from the Mobile (Alabama) area, and Mardi Gras is a significant event in my life each year. It's a time to gather with friends and family, enjoy the parties, parades and good food. This celebration brought Mobile to Kandahar."

As preparations for the day's events developed, the krewe scrambled to pull everything together. Sending home for costumes, masks, beads and other items to throw from the make-shift floats was the first order of business for the krewe as there was only one month to get everything organized.

"My wife sent Moon Pies, Mardi Gras potato chips and hundreds of strands of beads, stuffed toys and cups for us to throw to parade watchers," said Mike Hatchett, deployed from Metairie, La.

Hatchett decorated a float and was also a rider.

Tammy Washington, a Shreveport, La. native, was the krewe member responsible for organizing the floats and marchers.

She canvassed district employees for

parade participants, provided the parade music, taught the paraders the basics of marching and outfitted the dance troupes with a variety of costumes, masks, cardboard and colored markers.

"I couldn't be home for Mardi Gras, but that didn't mean I couldn't celebrate," Washington said. "Getting people together and organizing the parade was hard work but a lot of fun. We had three floats, two dance troupes, a few walkers and a walking float – they all looked great."

The district's employees were treated to an afternoon snack of freshly made beignets covered in powdered sugar and then a dinner of red beans and rice and four different kinds of king cake following the parade.

Cooking the food was a collective, team effort that began Monday morning. District employees, augmented by Transatlantic Division employees Gil Kim, a Cajun food fan, and Tracy Laventure, from New Iberia, La., shared recipes and swapped stories about past Mardi Gras celebrations.

"Everything tasted like home," said Penny Coulon, a construction representative, of Harahan, La. "The beignets were perfect and the red beans and rice were fabulous." 🍴



South District employee Donna Martin celebrates Mardi Gras on Kandahar Airfield Feb. 21 (USACE Photo by Shetab Muneer)

ON THE MOVE

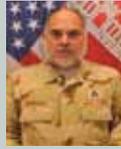
Moving in



James Aldrich



Bayani Apuya



Jeffrey Blackwell



Edward Boddie



Louie Brackett



Ingrid Burnette



Cornelius Cheatham



Kenneth Dean



Gary Desmaris



Clairice Dingle



Daniel Dykstra



Paul Farrell



Timoty Gevedon



Theodore Grimes



Anthony Hambrick



James Hamilton



Annette Hawkins



Alana Hoye



William Hsueh



Ngozi Ihediwa



Dan Johnson



Adam Justice



Nicholas Kaechler



Mark Kwon



Donna Martin



Partick McLaughlin



David Melancon



Brandon Mitchell



Balwant Multani



Verna Nelson



Niikorley Norlas



Lawrence Petrosino



Kenny Pham



Gerard Rabalais



Karen Rippey



Phillip Rogers



Timothy Runquist



Stephen Sabato



Leonard Sinfield



D'Lorah Small



Stephen Sullivan



Mark Summers



Sharon Thomas



Jackson Van Pelt



Bruce Walrad



Richard Weisenberger



Marcus West



Tricia Yates



Gary Yeatts



Farzin Zakeri

Moving on

• Otis Anderson, Johan Barrios,
• Michael Baxter, Brenda Beasley,
• Michael Beasley, Somnath
• Bhattacharyya, Cedric Bland,
• LTC Michael Brothers,
• Mamie Brouwer, LTC John
• Carpenter, LTC Dwight Carr,
• LTC Melody Charles, John Clark,
• Warren Colburn, Donny Davidson,

Juan Dominguez, Harry Dozier, Gerard Edelen, Brooke Forney, Michael French, Robert Garcia, James Gehle, Marco Goodman, Carol Gorton, Arnie Guillermo, CPT Jonathan Higgins, Sean Hoben, Paul Jacques, Brian Johnson, Ray Jones, James Killion, Terrance Knowlton, Erik Lombard, MAJ Reginald Maddox, Reniere Majano, Denise Mason, Robert Nebbio,

MAJ Thang Nguyen, Donald Nieman, Robin Parks, William Pioli, Gerald Piotrowski, April Pratt, Ronald Rodriguez, Sean Ruddy, Michael Scarano, Rickey Slezak, William Slezak, Mary Spencer, CPT Matthew Strickler, MSG Gary Szekely, Mathew Walden, Gary Weiler, Cherlion Whitfield, Charles Williams, Jeremy Wilson