



THE

**FREEDOM**

# BUILDER



SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

MAGAZINE



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
Afghanistan Engineer District

## Putting Local Nationals First

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**AED-N District Command Sergeant Major**  
Command Sgt. Maj. Harry D. Farris

**AED-S District Engineer and Commander**  
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The Freedom Builder is the field magazine of the Afghanistan Engineer District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and is an unofficial publication authorized by AR 360-1. It is produced monthly for electronic distribution by the Public Affairs Office, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District. It is produced in the Afghanistan theater of operations.

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

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

All photographs appearing herein are by the Afghanistan Engineer District Public Affairs Office unless otherwise accredited.

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

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ATTN: Qalaa House  
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COM: 540-678-2984, DSN: 312-265-2984

The Freedom Builder Magazine is available online at  
www.aed.usace.army.mil

## Cover Image:

left to right, Ahmad Shah Lali, Fazal Raheem, Ahmed Reshad Bahaduri, Eng and Yonus Amiri made the completion of the Res 6 project a success.. (Full story on pg. 12)



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## Postcards from Afghanistan

The Public Affairs Office is expanding AED's Internal Communications Program with "Postcards from Afghanistan."

The postcards will appear on AED's Internet Site in PDF format and a copy will be sent to your home District Public Affairs Office.

The postcards consist of a 3 to 4 paragraph write up along with 2 to 3 photos with a photo caption describing what is happening in each photo. The write-up is similar to a personal note from you to your family and friends, that focuses on a specific project or event, or that provides an overview of your total experience here in Afghanistan.

The Public Affairs Office will provide help needed to write these.

If you would like to be featured on one of these postcards, please contact the Public Affairs Office at 540-662-6578 or come visit us in the Azadi House, 1st floor, room 3, or e-mail joseph.marek@usace.army.mil.

Thanks in advance for helping AED's Internal Communications Program.



## From the Commander ...

First of all I would like to praise everyone for their persistent and undivided attention in closing out this fiscal year. Your competence and attention to detail will make a great impact in the year to come. And as we move forward, our purpose and concentration will be totally focused on achieving the mission while delivering products in a timely manner.

We will accomplish the delivery of on-time, quality work that's needed to support the integrated Afghan National Security and Coalition Forces counter-insurgency programs. And to amplify overall security, there's an increase of 29 ANA projects in FY09, to an estimated 50 in FY10, along with ANP projects increasing from 24 to 209. The establishment of this stable infrastructure and service are vital in defending against and defeating the Anti-Afghanistan Forces.

We will make sure there's stability by providing sustainable development projects directly to the Afghans giving them the skills needed to rebuild and maintain their country. This will provide added security against extremism. If you give someone purpose and pride in what they do for their country, and they make a living at it, they will protect it with their very life. This is one of the issues we are dedicated to doing, train and mentor the Afghans so they take control of their own future.

There are necessary initiatives we must take to achieve our mission. The implementation and use of flexible acquisition tools are an essential part in executing our

task. There is a need for standardized designs for the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF). The sooner we can get these projects built the sooner they can be occupied for increased area protection. We also need to streamline our MILCON program which totaled 58 projects AED North and South to an estimated 100 this upcoming year. We will take steps to standardize sandbook designs to accomplish this. The Integration with Coalition Force Battle-space owners to achieve the infrastructure to enable enhanced security and provide the freedom of movement is very important. It will ensure QA oversight and the delivery of quality projects on time. Let's not forget the role that the District's Sustainable Development program will provide with its water, HTRW, roads, bridges, electrical, and other essential service projects.

As we look forward to the upcoming year we will be a rewarded by our vision becoming a reality. Working as a team, we are setting Afghanistan up for success by increasing national security and giving them the skills to build and maintain their own country. We will work with a laser like focus to ensure the mission will not only get done but also support the coalition presence. It's an attainable goal that we will achieve.

Work hard, Build Strong!



**Col. Michael McCormick**

## From the Command Sergeant Major ...

It pretty well goes without saying that the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Afghanistan Engineer District operates in a lethal war environment with inherent security challenges and high risk to all of its members. Because of the environment we work in, safety cannot be over emphasized.

Safety of our personnel is tantamount. We work constantly to keep engaged with the latest information on the threat, ongoing Coalition and Afghan Security Force operations, and adjust our operations and static protective measures constantly to mitigate the efforts of the enemy to do us harm. This is all so we can continue to work and live in greater safety and travel to conduct mission critical face to face meetings and quality assurance checks that are the kingpin of our reconstruction success.

Despite all this collective effort, our safety depends entirely on you. Yes, every individual working for the Afghanistan Engineer District, no matter where he or she is located, is standing shoulder to shoulder in our collective defense to prevent the next accident. Wear your protective gear, buckle your seatbelt, and keep your head in the game, be prepared for whatever may come your way.

Accountability, preventive maintenance, required procedures and actions at check/access points, traffic laws, sanitation, General Order # 1, compliance to existing dress code and uniform and physical conditioning are some of the major areas that

require your compliance to well established rules and requirements. Remember that everything we do in life has some type of standard associated with the task. Upholding the standard is essential each and every day in order to maintain a safe and secure environment for all members of AED.

We must always remain situational aware and comply with the well-established force protection rules and requirements; failure to comply will definitely increase the potential for a catastrophic event to occur, which will not only affect you and your family, but the entire AED team.

*Stay safe and keep your situational awareness.*



**Command Sgt. Maj. Harry D. Farris**

# Serving His Country

Story by: Glenn Jeffries  
Public Affairs Officer  
Charleston District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



Colonel Lindsey Graham of the U.S. Air Force Reserves , also a member of the United States Senate, USACE AED Project Manager Jimmy Hadden, Nelson Mora (Resident Engineer from SAS), and Tim Michael (Project Engineer from NC) in front of one of the guard towers at the TIF.

Since Jimmy Hadden, a Project Manager for Civil Works didn't serve his country in his younger years he seized the opportunity to support our troops and protect the freedoms this country enjoys. In addition, the timing was right in his personal life so he volunteered to go to Afghanistan. "I had never been overseas or had the opportunity to work on such a large, challenging, and unique project" said Hadden. He was assigned the MILCON Bagram Theatre Internment Facility (TIF) project at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan.

The TIF is a \$60 million project that is the number one priority of Afghanistan Engineering District (AED) and Central Command (CENTCOM). One thousand soldiers will work in various shifts where more than 1000 detainees will be housed. The facility has 19 buildings including detainee housing units, medical and dental buildings, a medical housing unit, vocational bakery, laundry, and carpentry buildings just to name a few. Sixteen guard towers have also been constructed.

The facility sits on 40 acres and once com-



**COL (USAFR) Lindsey Graham and COL Garrity (user) inside a Detainee Housing Unit communal cell.**

pleted it will have been designed and constructed in approximately 400 days! There are more than 1000 workers on site every day, primarily from India and the Philippines, with a few workers from Sri Lanka. In addition, they have more than 200 local Afghan Nationals, contributing primarily as equipment operators. They have exceeded 2.5 million man hours without any major safety mishaps. In fact, they have already received the United States Army Corps of Engineer (USACE) safety award.

“I would have never had the opportunity to work on such a high profile project and gain the knowledge and experience that this position has allowed me to”, said Hadden. The project is 14 days away from completion (18 Sep construction completion date) so Hadden will be able to participate in the USACE/contractor opening ceremonies which will occur 18 or 19 Sep. With a rewarding experience behind him, Hadden will return to the Charleston District in late October with a new appreciation for all military and civilian personnel who have risked their life to better serve our country.



**A communal cell in a Detainee Housing Unit being constructed.**

**A panorama of the MILCON Bagram Theatre Internment Facility (TIF) project at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan.**





# SAFETY BITS

## October 4th through the 10th is Fire Prevention week.

by Theresa Duvall

Every year several thousand people lose their lives in residential fires in the United States. Most fire victims die from inhalation of smoke and toxic gases, not as a result of burns. Most deaths and injuries occur in fires that happen at night while the victims are asleep.

You can prevent tragedies simply by following a few basic strategies.

When not in use - turn it off. Especially transformers! Not only does this save energy but the potential damage resulting from an overheating transformer could be devastating in the close quarters we live in.

1. Minimize the use of extension cords and be sure not to run extension cords under rugs or twist around nails or hooks.
2. Never overload a socket. This often when power strips are plugged into each other. Power strips are designed to work individually. If you need more than one power strip, plug them into separate outlets.
3. Make sure electrical appliances are UL or EU approved before using.
4. Check for a smoke detector! The Fire Department and Safety Office conducted an audit of the alarm systems in Qalaa Compound and found many issues that being remedied by Facility Maintenance. However, the inspectors did not have access to each and every sleeping room. If your room does not have a smoke detector send an email to Facility Maintenance.
5. Check your smoke detector! All smoke alarms should be tested at least once a month. Replace bad batteries.
6. Make sure you have an escape plan and that your windows are not blocked. Many folks have their windows blocked to keep out the noise and light.

Remember, following these simple steps just takes a little bit of your time and a those few minutes will make a large impact keeping you and your neighbor's safe this upcoming winter.



# Kiai Road a Success Story

Story by: Ben Neely - Civil Engineer



Contractor, Afghan Builders Consortium and members from the Army Corps of Engineers at ribbon cutting ceremony to officially open Kiai road for local and Coalition traffic.

**Kabul, Afghanistan** - Kiai road was once a substandard road system located at Kabul's airport that rivaled any road system in any third world nation. Thankfully, in the last few years, building a transportation infrastructure has been an AED priority and with coalition dollars being spent to develop roads, Kiai road was one of Afghanistan's high priority improvements.

This reasonably short 2 Kilometer plus stretch of road is also a small representation of what Afghanistan has to offer with its local Bazaar. One side freshly butchered meat hangs from the ceiling in one shop while women have their hair done in another and right next to a tire repair station. During the rainy months all these businesses had to do their commerce on and around the mud that accumulates in front of their

shops, a typical winter occurrence on this road. The potholes and the poor condition



The poor condition Kiai road was in before construction.

of the existing asphalt made this road a hazard for any small car or animal that accidentally fell into it.

Kiai road is a small but important transportation artery located directly adjacent to the Kabul International Airport. One major condition the contractor had to face while building Kiai was that normal traffic flow was crucial during all phases of work. And due to ISAF Base and surrounding security compounds that are located near it, it's was essential. In addition to the use by coalition forces, it's also a major airline hub. Buses use it to shuttle passengers to and from the airport before every flight, and is frequented by cars, buses and mule carts, to goats and pedestrians and anything in-between.

Subsequently back in October 2008, the US Army Corps of Engineers decided to take on the challenge, and carefully build a typical roadway you would see in any American City. With its curbs, gutters, sidewalks and a proper drainage system, an important construction job was to be undertaken.

The Solicitation of a bid intended for the contractor was in reconstructing approximately 2.2 kilometer of roadway at 13 meter wide with two 3.5 meter wide traffic lanes. Also installed would be two 3.0 wide meter bicycle lanes, and 3.0 meter wide sidewalks on either side. Let's not forget a properly built storm sewer to carry away any accumulating rain water. And all this had to be built while traffic was unaffected. The contract was planned for 220 days total build time. Notice to Proceed was sent in November of 2008, and the successful bidder was the Local National firm, Afghan Builders Consortium, (ABC). They put together an aggressive plan to complete construction by mid December and present-



**During the rainy months all these businesses had to do their commerce on and around the mud that accumulates in front of their shops.**

ed their intensions in the Pre-construction meeting. Their plan included the removal of what little asphalt existed along the roadway and to also excavate to sub grade. This impressed AED project manager's with their assertive plans, and swift completion date projection, and would take make them months ahead of schedule. The only concern was winter was fast approaching. Typically construction takes longer than planned especially here in Afghanistan and definitely in winter. Things rarely go according to plan here but it was understood that this road was a high priority to ensure safe and swift transit to and from ISAF and any other coalition location.

Authorization to proceed at this time (late November) might embrace some weather related problems. Nevertheless, with this in mind AED decided to give the go-ahead to start excavation. ABC began by excavating one half side of the road leaving traffic to flow on the other side, giving the free flow of two way traffic. They properly prepared plans and submittals, and in general made an impressive beginning. One reasons for this strong showing was the December arrival of SSG Dave Phariss. Phariss's background, when not clearing roads in



**Down the length of the other side they excavated and base material and placed finishing touches just before paving.**

Iraq, is building roads in California. Back in the States he's the superintendent for Granit Construction, one of the oldest construction companies in California. His job here was to mentor the contractor through the placement and compaction of the sub-grade, and also train them in the placement and compaction of the sub-base/base material.

They were off to a good start and by mid December ABC patched all the potholes so traffic could continue to use the right-of-way. Down the length of the other side they excavated and base material and placed finishing touches just before paving. As the weather turned cold though, ABC made the recommendation to shut down for winter. The USACE representatives encouraged them to push on, so they agreed to pave the part of the road that was already prepared. Essentially they had to pave to protect the base material from the coming rains; luckily the rains held off. The weather remained dry December and January, but due to the cold temperature and the inherent dynamics of asphalt it was too cold to lay it. The contractor responded to this in a letter of concern and agreed to go back to work in mid march when temperatures were typically warmer. Unfortunately March and

April proved to be extremely rainy months but they knew the project had to be completed in a timely manner. Ultimately the contractor went back to work hiring a crew full time just to pump out the rain water and keep the road somewhat dry.

When the rain finally broke, the sub-grade had to be scarified and dried out properly. In June, warm and dry, ABC went to work in earnest. During this push to complete, Phariss taught them the art of multitasking, paving on one side of the road while compacting the other side. They built sidewalks the same time they laid asphalt. They also successfully built a new drainage system, connecting one side of the road to the other, "no mean feat". ABC planned and executed this project a skillful American Contractor would be proud of, and on July 28th, paving completed, and the road was finally opened to traffic. A letter of Substantial Completion was sent to ABC and only punch list items remained, those were quickly addressed.

Kiai Road today has two lanes for autos and buses with a bicycle lane on both sides going down the entire length. A 3meter wide sidewalk allows pedestrians and children to travel back and forth from work or school safely. Local businesses continue with their trade in an improved environment and a piece of Kabul's infrastructure was successfully completed. As the saying goes, a country without infrastructure is a country without the engine to drive the economy. Every road paved, every waste water treatment plant built, every bridge placed, helps improves the living condition for its people. Its one more piece of the economic puzzle improving Afghanistan's future and the US Army Corps of Engineers is proud to help contribute to this future here in Afghanistan. 🇦🇫



# 9-11 Tribute

*By: Linda Souza-Barney  
Administrative Officer*

On this 8th anniversary of 9/11, try to remember what you were doing at the exact moment on 11 September 2001 when you heard of the tragedy as it fell on our fellow countrymen, women and children.

Try to remember the feelings of horror, disbelief, chaos, helplessness and heartbreak that swooped down so rapidly upon us.

Try to remember how your eyes and ears stayed glued to the television for any signs of hope; for any updates on a situation which turned our country upside down; for other than word of mouth that is ALL you had, wishing there was something you could do, unsure of what to do or how to react

Try to remember how you responded to the emotional trauma we were all experiencing: is my family ok, what will happen next, or you might have even thought: did I know

someone on one of those flights, or perhaps even who may have worked in the World Trade Center or the Pentagon? How you worried about your co-workers who were traveling, not just for accountability, but simply because you cared that they might have been in harms way.

Try to remember how you felt when you realized the vast numbers of our fallen as they sank to depths we didn't want to face, whether they were Americans traveling to their chosen destination or others doing their duty performing rescue operations, or just going to work on a normal day as millions of Americans do.

Try to remember the feelings of hopelessness, awe, how could this happen in the United States and WHY? How shaken you felt, and tried to fathom what this would do to our country?

I remember looking out into the sky from my 7th floor office in Louisville, Kentucky as those flights that were airborne to various destinations were heading in to be grounded at the closest airport and thinking of an eagle, our very symbol of freedom coming home to rest because of the havoc created in the skies.

Two weeks after 9/11 I remember standing on the ground and looking at the Pentagon. Even though I was in the middle of the city, it was quiet and had sort of an eerie aura. I stood shaken by the destruction and thinking of the great Americans and people who had perished and the loved ones left behind. At the same time I had a huge sense of pride in seeing the US Army Corps of Engineers flag being flown at the site of destruction, and thinking how awesome it is that we can remember, respond and rebuild what others seek to tear down, of course, not without sacrifice.



That same day I remember standing on the curb outside but looking into the Ronald Reagan National Airport and how silent it seemed with no incoming or outgoing flights, or the usual bustle of people, taxis, and horns blowing, it seemed like an empty and abandoned shell from which our freedom had been stripped

Today, I remember our fallen comrades, and I remember why we are all here in the honorable service of our country, and to the people of Afghanistan. Lastly, I remember how very blessed we truly are as we head down the road of recovery.

Let us always remember that September 11, 2001 will live in the hearts of Americans forever, and together we will stand proud as we remember, respond, and recover.



# Local Nationals Receive Award

Story by: MAJ Jeffery K. Jensen

left to Right, Fazal Raheem, Ahmed Reshad Bahaduri, Eng and Yonus Amiri posing with Local National workers who made the completion of the Res 6 project a success.

**KABUL** - An award and ribbon cutting ceremony was held on 24 August at Qalaa House, Kabul, to honor 4 Afghan Citizens and 1 USACE employee for an accomplishment that no other local contractor has been able to match.

Engineer Mohammad Yonus Amiri and Ahmad Shah Lali of Mustafa Shadab Construction Company (MSCC) each received an award for completing a construction project 43 percent ahead of schedule. Even more important is that their renovation of storage complexes to living quarters came at a critical time for the Afghanistan Engineer District. In the past year the number of personnel assigned to AED has been increasing faster than living quarters can be constructed and it was expected that the latest surge beginning in June would bust

the capacity of Qalaa house and force newcomers to sleep on cots. By completing this



LTC Lefebvre congratulates Eng. Yonus Amiri, for his accomplishment

project Yonus increased the housing capacity enough to ensure that each newcomer had a comfortable place to sleep.

In a speech during the ceremony LtCol Stephen Lefebvre, Deputy Commander AED-N, said “Today is a good day for AED and a good day for Afghanistan.” LtCol Lefebvre also presented awards to Fazal Raheem, Ahmed Reshad Bahaduri, and Faron McFarland for their work as quality assurance representatives on the project. Fazal and Ahmed are local nationals that have been hired as QA representatives under a services contract and are part of a capacity development initiative. Mr. McFarland served as the lead QA and he constantly praised the contractor for his organization skills. “They had a mindset of what they wanted to do and they kept driving towards that, they overcame every challenge that was thrown at them,” he said.

According to AED reports approximately one-third of all projects in Afghanistan are more than 10 percent behind schedule and

only a few are ahead of schedule. In an interview following the ceremony LtCol Jason Williams, Kabul Area OIC, was asked how the contractor was able to complete this project ahead of schedule when so many contractors have been unable to. LtCol Williams said “MSCC has demonstrated a profound ability to perform to USACE standards and simultaneously deliver a quality product well ahead of schedule.” “A mark of excellence few contractors are able to claim given the existing construction environment” he continued.

Although it remains to be seen if this accomplishment can ever be duplicated it is clear that the leadership of the Afghanistan Engineer District are grateful for work being performed by the awardees. LtCol Williams summed it up by saying “We are proud of their accomplishment.”



From left to right, Fazal Raheem, LTC Lefebvre, Eng. Yonus Amiri, Ahmed Reshad Bahaduri, and Faron McFarland

# ON THE MOVE

## Moving in



Alexander Alvia



Ronald Ballard



Charles Bechtold



Christa Besing



Danielle Bolte



William Bolte



Mark Bridges



Roberta Cotton



CPT Gary Craig



Rigoberto Farias



SMG Timothy Freitag



Elvis Garay



MAJ Thomas Giannini



Jose Gonzalez



MSGT Paul Kim



MAJ Robert Kurtz



Robin Liffmann



SSG Annette Marietti



Denise Mason



Lay Tiffany Matthews



SMSGT Adrian McCracken



John Mclain



John Mitzel



LTC Rodger Moore



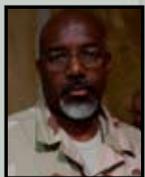
TSGT Anthony Mosher



Charley Qain



Domingo Ribilla



Leroy Smith



CPT Andrew Soine



William Stratton



Mark Summers



MSG Donald Turner



Thomas Urbaniak



Michael Weber



Thomas Westenburg



Christopher Wester

### Photo Not Available

SFG Herbert Graham  
James Purcell  
SGT Jason Robinson

SFC Seth Smith  
Tamara Watts

SSG Dominic Worthy  
SGT Angelo Pama

Kenneth Carleton  
SPC Tabatha Grant

Jack Frisell  
SFC Jesu Vazques-Matos

Douglas Jamison  
MSGT Luis Fred

## Moving out

Michael Doherty  
Thamapol Boonchan  
MAJ Mark Navo  
Brian Kamisato

Rocky Nelson  
Joel Giblin  
Billy Nichols  
John Michael

Jeffery DeFosse  
David Loi  
Bruce Huffman  
Kevin McLellan

Jeffrey Lester  
Sacro Glenn  
Jack Pagano  
Toni Agustin

James Greene  
Patricia Tannehill  
TSGT Jimmy Howard  
Mark Aldrich

Edward Argueta  
SFC Jesu Vazques-Matos  
SSGT Jennifer Hilley  
Miguel Cintron