



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Afghanistan Engineer District—South

November 3, 2010

For update, please see [AED release, Dec. 6, 2010](#)

Some Afghan National Police Facilities in Helmand and Kandahar Provinces are being used



The Afghan National Police opened its new Uniformed Police Headquarters in Spin Boldak District on Sept. 21. (USACE Photo)

(Kandahar, Afghanistan – Nov. 3, 2010) The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineer District-South (AES) has completed and turned over two Afghan National Police (ANP) headquarters facilities in the Spin Boldak and Nahri Saraj districts. The Uniformed Police district headquarters facilities are being used for their intended purposes and meeting the requirements of the ANP to help ensure stability in Afghanistan.

Recent publicity about ANP facilities constructed by the Corps of Engineers in the Helmand and Kandahar Provinces alleged that the facilities are so poorly constructed that they are not usable and are at a risk of collapse. The statements were made following the publication of SIGAR Audit 11-3, October 27, 2010.

The Corps of Engineers concurred with the majority of the recommendations in the SIGAR audit report but not with all of them.

"The security situation in the areas where many of these police headquarters facilities are located prevented the contractor and Corps of Engineers personnel from working at the site," said John Adams, chief, Engineering and Construction Division, AES. "We knew that we had construction problems and had already identified several issues at the time of the SIGAR inspection. We are committed to correcting the construction quality management problems cited in the report."

AES is supervising the construction of six ANP sites under a contract with Basirat Construction, an Afghan firm. The facility at Spin Boldak opened in a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sept. 21, with members of the Afghan Border Police Spin Boldak District in attendance, along with Corps of Engineers and coalition attendees. The facility at Nahri Saraj is in use as well.

The other four facilities are between 85-90 percent complete, Adams said. The contractor is actively working at Garm Ser and Nad Ali, and the contractor is required to submit a recovery plan for completing the work at Zeheli and Takhta Pul.

Each compound includes office space, a detention facility, dining facility, living quarters for the police officers, and support facilities such as security features and water and fuel storage areas.

As recommended by SIGAR, AES performed complete engineering evaluations of each of the six project sites by conducting final inspections for contract compliance. "We identified construction deficiencies and directed that repairs be made in accordance with the contract terms," Adams said.

The Corps of Engineers did not agree with SIGAR's conclusion that the buildings could collapse in an earthquake, but did agree to perform engineering assessments to evaluate structural integrity. These assessments were performed at Takha Pul and Garm Ser. "We found these buildings to be safe from seismic risk for those areas," Adams said. "We're confident that the facilities have the proper structural design."



ANP headquarters facilities enable Afghan police districts to take on greater responsibilities and increase the size of their police force. This ANP site is in Spin Boldak. (USACE Photo)



The ANP district headquarters police station at Nahri Saraj is complete and turned over for use. (USACE Photo)



Before the Corps of Engineers turns over facilities in Afghanistan, the facilities are inspected and deficiencies are corrected. These are final repairs being made to the Afghan National police headquarters at Spin Boldak. (USACE Photo)

“We’re working hard to address the problems outlined in the SIGAR audit report to improve our performance long term,” said Lt. Col. Martha Kiene, AES deputy commander. “We’ve identified four major areas that we’re focusing on.

“First, for future projects, we’re working with CSTC-A (Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan) to determine security in an area before construction contracts are awarded,” Kiene said. “It’s critical to have better freedom of movement for contractor and Corps of Engineers personnel.”

Second, AES is refining the role of its local national quality assurance representatives, who are hired to assist Corps of Engineers personnel in monitoring and inspecting construction projects.

Local national representatives provide the quality assurance oversight when conditions prevent AES construction representatives from getting to the construction site. They provide reports that identify both acceptable and deficient work and communicate with contracting officers daily or as frequently as conditions allow. In addition, AES has several tiers of training now available to local national quality assurance representatives to improve their performance in these functions.

The third focus area is operations and maintenance (O&M). The Corps of Engineers has awarded a single contract for O&M for all Afghan National Security Forces facilities serving the National Army and the National Police, with 330 sites identified for maintenance and another 150 that will be added this fiscal year, according to Victor Ross, O&M project manager, AES.

“This contract has two major components: first, operating and maintaining the sites; second, training Afghan personnel to manage the O&M process and to learn the trades and crafts required in performing maintenance,” Ross said.

The O&M training program, as well as the local hires who perform quality assurance, are part of the capacity development program that supports improved security, governance, and economic growth in Afghanistan.



The Afghan National Police facility at Zeheli, shown here, is approximately 90 percent complete. (USACE Photo)

Finally, the Corps of Engineers will no longer combine several projects in multiple locations into a single package for contract award, Kiene said. "Based on our experience, we are changing our contracting strategy, anticipating single awards at most project sites. ANP facilities are excellent candidates for the Afghan First initiative since many of the required facilities at these outposts cost less than \$3 million dollars each. This initiative also supports the capacity development program."

The Corps of Engineers submitted detailed comments to SIGAR Audit 11-3, which can be found in SIGAR's document.

For update, please see [AED release, Dec. 6, 2010](#)



Contractor Basirat Construction is making progress on the Afghan National Police facility at Garm Ser, which is now approximately 85 percent complete. (USACE Photo)