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Afghanistan Engineer District—South

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## District presents first Contractor of the Year Award



(USACE Photo)

“No matter where the Corps of Engineers has a project, anywhere in the world, safety is the number one priority,” said Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser, commander of the Afghanistan Engineer District – South (AES).

To demonstrate the emphasis it places on safety, AES presented its first Contractor of the Year award on Nov. 30 to Technologists Inc. for its work on the Ministry of Interior (MOI) regional administration building.

“This is a big event,” Funkhouser said. “Technologists Inc. has set high standards to promote a safe work environment. The company had more than 61,000 hours of safe operations on this project.”

The citation read, "the contractor's team consistently demonstrated outstanding safety performance in every facet of project delivery without any injuries, accidents, or unsafe incidents."

Sayed Arif Habibi, the contractor's project manager for the MOI building, accepted the award. "This is the first time we have received an award such as this," he said. "Safety is very important to us, and this is very good for our people."

"The Corps of Engineers has helped us," Habibi said. "We benefit from your experience as we learn about quality and safety."

Cedric Pelt, the previous Safety and Occupational Health Officer, said that the District established the safety award "to motivate contractors to have safe work practices."

"With this award, we are recognizing contractors who are proactive with their safety programs," Pelt said. "We look at several criteria, which include an accepted accident prevention plan, a prepared activity hazard analysis, and their new employee orientation. We also review how the contractor conducts their site safety reviews and how he documents and corrects safety deficiencies. Finally, we look at whether workers are using proper personal protection equipment and whether the contractor properly reports exposure hours and safety incidents."

Additional criteria require the contractor to have a tool box safety meeting weekly and to provide various types of safety training.

"The management group overseeing the project is composed solely of local nationals, and they are working very hard to showcase their work," said David Carte, Kandahar Area Engineer. "They have received high remarks for their quality control management and their safety practices."

Technologists Inc. holds the \$2.9 million contract to design and construct the regional administration building. This project will permit MOI to provide more effective administrative support and resources for Afghan National Police operations, Carte said.

Pelt encouraged all field office personnel to focus on jobsite safety, motivate their contractors to practice safe work habits, and keep their projects in mind for next year's award.