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Uniformed Police District Headquarters opens at Takteh Pol

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Afghan National Police forces lined up in formation to celebrate the opening of the Uniformed Police District Headquarters at Takteh Pol, a village on the main road between Kandahar City and the Pakistan border.

Kandahar Provincial Police Chief Khan Mohammed Mujahid saluted the policemen and then greeted residents of Takteh Pol village.

The ribbon-cutting ceremony held April 11 drew more than 200 people to celebrate the opening of this strategically-located police headquarters.

In addition to the provincial police chief, distinguished guests included Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Bannister, deputy commanding general for ISAF operations, 10th Mountain Division, and Col. James Edwards, commander of the Combined Task Force Lightning, Spin Boldak. Several dozen U.S. military and civilian members attended the ceremony.

“Completion of this police headquarters is integral to this region for improved security and governance,” said Col. Anthony C. Funkhouser, commander of the Afghanistan Engineer District South, which was responsible for construction.

Edwards reiterated the importance of the facility and its key geographic location to operations in the area.

Afghan and U.S. attendees participated in a shura, dined together and then toured the new compound.

The ANP was anxious to move into its new headquarters and expressed appreciation for the quality of the facility during the shura. The \$839,299 two-story district headquarters building includes a



Afghan police forces line up before the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Takteh Pol Uniformed Police District Headquarters grand opening.



Takteh Pol residents celebrate the opening of a new police district headquarters in their community.



Takteh Pol residents, distinguished guests, and U.S. military and civilian members enter the new district headquarters building for a shura.

dining facility, sleeping areas, offices, conference areas, armory and detention cells. The construction contract also included security features and utilities.

Basirat Construction, an Afghan firm, completed this ANP project, the third of six that the firm was contracted to build.

The UP district headquarters at Takteh Pol has been a long time coming.

The Corps of Engineers awarded a contract in May 2007 for the construction of seven uniformed police district headquarters located throughout the Kandahar and Helmand provinces. Subsequently, one location was removed from the contract requirement. The headquarters compounds originally had an 18-month construction period but have far exceeded the anticipated construction duration, mostly because of lack of security at the construction sites.

In addition to Takteh Pol, two other sites were completed and turned over to the ANP in fall 2010 – Spin Boldak in Kandahar province and Nahri Saraj in Helmand province. The remaining sites – Zhari, Nad Ali and Garmsier – are nearly finished.

The Afghan construction firm had many challenges learning Corps of Engineers processes and quality assurance standards, but over time they met the standards and produced quality and sound construction, Funkhouser said.

“We’ve had problems meeting the construction schedule because of the lack of security in many of these areas (which prevented oversight inspections), so we hired Afghan quality assurance representatives to assist in our oversight,” Funkhouser said. “This contributed to our ability to finish these projects, and Afghan police leadership is pleased to have these facilities to operate from. It has been a great morale boost for ANP forces.”

Lt. Col. Ronald Bahr, officer in charge, Helmand Area Office, said that the district will continue to visit the remaining project sites to complete the construction of these ANP facilities.

Previously, the Corps of Engineers had combined projects in multiple locations into a single package for contract award. To help improve opportunities for Afghan firms, AED-South changed its contracting strategy to make single awards at most project sites.

The Afghan Uniformed Police is a branch of the ANP and is assigned to police districts and to provincial and regional commands. Under a new model, the Afghan Ministry of Interior and the NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan require mandatory training for all police recruits.