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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Perimeter fence construction complete at Shindand Air Base

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineer District-South has completed the first part of the “far east expansion” construction program that will enable Shindand Air Base to triple its size. In a ribbon-cutting ceremony July 8, representatives from the U.S. Air Force’s 838th Air Expeditionary Advisory Group celebrated the completion, along with Capt. Gregory J. Ward, officer in charge, AED-South Shindand Resident Office, and many others.

“The overall purpose of this project was to design and construct nearly eight miles of perimeter fence, 52 guard towers, perimeter roads, lighting and 7 other antiterrorism and force protection measures for approximately 2,900 acres,” said Ward. “This ribbon cutting was for the first phase of the project.”

The 838th AEAG will use the additional land to relocate some 3,000 coalition forces and add an Afghan Air Force training runway in the space those forces now inhabit.

With a perimeter fence in place to provide security, the site is ready for additional development to make the long-anticipated move a reality this fall.

“Other facilities are needed to expand and improve this air base,” said Ward. “All together, the far east expansion includes seven military construction contracts that total about \$116 million.”

The MILCON contracts include ramps, aprons, cargo handling and storage facilities, and infrastructure such as water treatment and solid waste management facilities.

The Corps of Engineers’ far east MILCON program is in addition to the 877th Expeditionary Prime Beef Squadron’s minor military construction program that includes more than 80 small projects valued at approximately \$50 million, said Ward.

Shindand Air Base is in Afghanistan’s western Herat province.

AED-South and the construction contractor, KAM Construction Company, overcame huge challenges in expanding the perimeter, said Ward. Those challenges included local villager protests over water supply disruptions and security-related delays that caused the contractors to vacate the site.



Base security personnel change the locks on the gates at the new perimeter fencing at Shindand Air Base in the Herat province.

“Although many Corps projects have challenges associated with them – like design or scope changes – the early stages of this project were particularly difficult,” said Ward. “Through a combination of efforts centering on multiple meetings with local village elders, this project was able to press forward.

“The team of USACE military, civilians, contractors and Afghan citizens, together with 838th AEAG leadership, 877th EPBS engineers, and base security forces worked closely together to plan, coordinate and accomplish this mission. It is one we can all be proud of.”

The 838th at Shindand trains Afghan Air Force pilots. Upon completion of the MILCON coalition relocation in the fall, the Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment will construct a 1.3-mile runway that, according to Col. Larry Bowers, 838th AEAG commander, will allow for the addition of 18 new fixed and rotary wing aircraft and the further establishment of Afghan Air Force pilot training programs.

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