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Ammo storage point supports U.S. Air Force mission in southern Afghanistan

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – An ammunition supply point that opened Aug. 10 triples the munitions storage capacity for the U.S. Air Force on Kandahar Airfield.

“Having this additional storage capacity helps with the operational tempo for all Air Force assets at KAF and three other bases,” said 1st Lt. Jonathan Tolman, munitions flight commander, 451st Air Expeditionary Wing.

“We distribute from KAF to the air bases at Bastion (in Helmand province), Shindand (in Herat province) and Jalalabad (in Nangarhar province),” Tolman said. “Those air bases then distribute to other FOBs (forward operating bases) throughout the theater.”

The \$16 million facility was opened in a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by Lt. Col. Edward Phillips, construction management officer for southern Afghanistan, U.S. Air Forces Central; Col. Benjamin Wham, commander, Afghanistan Engineer District-South, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; representatives from the construction firm, Contrack International Inc.; and several Air Force and Army members.

Phillips accepted the facility from USACE by signing a DD Form 1354 – the document that records the property transfer to the Air Force.

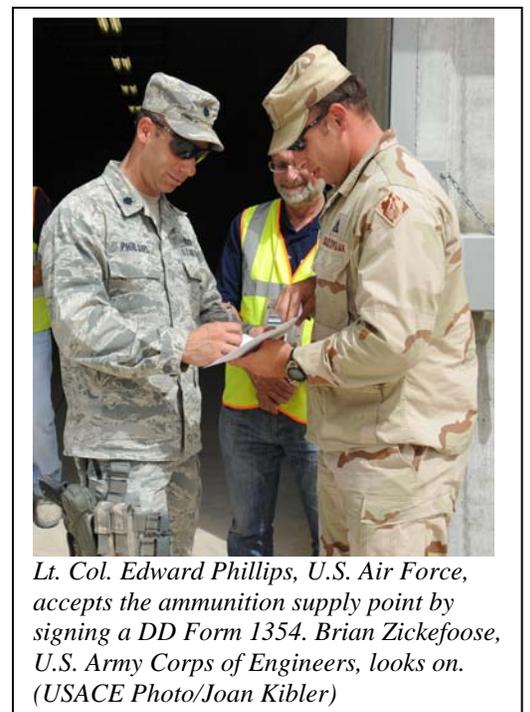
The 451st AEW now has nine new earth-covered magazines for storing munitions.

“These new ECMs provide us with increased storage space for munitions,” said Senior Master Sgt. Daniel Meyers, munitions flight chief, 451st AEW. “This means we no longer have to store them in open revetments, giving us better control and preventing loss.”

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Representatives from the U.S. Air Force, Army Corps of Engineers and Contrack International Inc. gather to open the ammunition supply point on Kandahar Airfield. (USACE Photo/Joan Kibler)



Lt. Col. Edward Phillips, U.S. Air Force, accepts the ammunition supply point by signing a DD Form 1354. Brian Zickefoose, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, looks on. (USACE Photo/Joan Kibler)

ECMs are constructed to have dual protection – from outside factors as well as to mitigate accidents that could occur in the storage areas, according to Glenn Matsuyama, chief of the Military Construction Branch, South District.

Technically, the new ECMs decrease the quantity and distant arcs if an explosion occurs, said Brian Zickefoose, resident engineer, KAF Airfield Resident Office, South District. “Because the arc is decreased, the net explosive weight can be increased. That simply means that the Air Force can increase the amount of munitions it stores.”

The requirements for the ECMs changed during the course of construction, necessitating a work suspension. Once the scope issues were resolved, construction progressed quickly.

“Contract International finished this project two months ahead of schedule,” Zickefoose said. “After the initial ECM was constructed to standard, the contractor repeated each structure quickly with good quality control throughout the project.”

The ammunition supply point was the last project to be completed in a contract awarded in April 2009 that had projects supporting both U.S. Air Force and U.S. Army operations on KAF.

“The work was completed in phases to meet operational needs,” said Greg Hegge, project manager, South District. “The first projects to be complete were the rotary wing apron and taxiway, followed by the close-air-support apron. Completion of the ammo supply point completes the \$43.3 million contract.”

The rotary wing apron and taxiway were turned over to the Army in October 2010; the close-air-support apron was turned over to the Air Force in January.

Military construction projects completed at KAF extend the International Security Assistance Force’s ability to conduct operations more frequently, safely and efficiently.

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USACE’s Afghanistan Engineer District-South provides design and construction services throughout southern Afghanistan to support the International Security Assistance Force and U.S. Forces-Afghanistan. The work is carried out in Regional Commands South, Southwest and West with the goal of achieving counterinsurgency effects and bolstering the Afghan Government’s services to its people.

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