



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:
Jan. 15, 2012

Contact:
Karla Marshall
karla.k.marshall@usace.army.mil

USACE turns over operations and maintenance responsibility to Afghan Air Force

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The Afghan Air Force, specifically the 205th Atal Corps' Kandahar Air Wing, became responsible for the operations and maintenance of five new buildings on Kandahar Airfield Jan. 14.

“This is a small step toward increasing the Afghan Air Force’s ability to maintain its own facilities on their base in Kandahar,” said U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Jim Crowe, a NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan Infrastructure, Training and Advisory Group team lead. The transition will occur in phases — this initial five buildings is a subset of the first phase.

At a ceremony held Jan. 14, Crowe, a native of St. Louis, Mo., said the transition represents an opportunity for the Afghan Ministry of Defense and Air Force to work out any kinks in their logistics and procurement processes before they become responsible for one quarter of their buildings in May. The remaining buildings are scheduled to be fully transitioned to Afghans by June 2013.

While this is the first O&M transition to the Afghan Air Force, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineer District-South transferred O&M responsibility for some of the facilities on the Afghan National Army’s Camp Hero near Kandahar in July 2011.

This O&M transition is similar in that it includes a USACE training plan, mentoring and initial funding support.

“We’ve learned some valuable lessons since we transitioned O&M responsibilities to the ANA at Camp Hero in July,” said Albert Soliz, the chief of operations and maintenance at the South District. “Together with ITAG, we will apply those lessons learned to improve this transition process.”

Training for the 18-man O&M staff began Jan. 7. “Thank you for your commitment to us,” said Afghan Air Force Col. Shah Mamood, the Public Works chief through a translator. “With the training we have received and your continued mentoring we will be able to maintain our facilities well into the future.”

The long-term goal is to transition O&M responsibility for all Afghan National Security Force facilities from USACE to the ANSF by June 2014, said Soliz. “This is just one component of the transition to full ANSF capability and by phasing responsibility for O&M in a responsible manner, we are doing all we can to ensure Afghan success.”



John Caudill, P.E. (right), a USACE operations and maintenance engineer, discusses the O&M transition with Afghan Air Force Col. Shah Mamood (center), with assistance from a translator Jan 14. (USACE Photo by Karla Marshall)

-30-

You can find more news and features about the district on our [homepage](#). You can also follow us on [Facebook](#) and find interesting photos about the district on our [Flickr page](#).