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USACE continued contracting and construction momentum in January

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Afghanistan Engineering District-South continued to meet its contracting and construction goals set for fiscal year 2012 during January. The South District exceeded first quarter goals and is on track to meet the second quarter goals as well.

“For the month of January, the South District actually exceeded our projection of \$59.3 million,” said Bill Stout, deputy chief, engineering and construction division. “We ‘placed’ about \$61.8 million worth of construction, meaning we paid contractors that much money for the work they have completed.”

The total placed construction represents 100.3 percent (or \$249.8 million) of the projection for the first four months of fiscal year 2012, which is significant because meeting that target meant that district personnel worked diligently to close the gap between projections and actual placement Stout said.

“Over the next few months our Afghan National Army construction projects will be primarily vertical construction, which will equate to significantly more placement,” said Stout.

Much of that construction is arch-span construction, a faster technique than traditional bricks and mortar. “Once the concrete foundations cure at the ANA base construction sites, the contractors can push rapidly to bend the steel that forms the remainder of the exterior structures. Throughout the spring and into the summer, we should see a huge surge in placement because of this technique,” Stout continued.

Each month and quarter, the South District evaluates its construction placement statistics and looks for ways to continuously improve. “Even though we are meeting our goals, we have much more work that must be done,” said Stout. “To finish our construction projects on time, we must exceed our goals by significant margins. We will continue to refine our processes and work with our contractors to achieve maximum productivity and efficiency.”

Placing construction is just one of the metrics the South District uses to evaluate its progress, but construction cannot begin until contracts are awarded.

During the 1st quarter of FY12, the district awarded 36 contracts worth about \$46.7 million. In January, the district awarded 12 contracts totaling \$88.1 million.



Workers continue vertical construction at the 9th Commando Kandak project near Herat, Afghanistan. USACE is building a base that will provide Afghan commandos with housing, dining, office and other facilities. (USACE Photo by Mark Ray)

“If current projections remain accurate, we will award 18 contracts in February,” said Bonnie Perry, the district’s chief of contracting. “Next quarter we expect that awards will remain high, with the largest number of contract awards occurring in May.”

“We’ve got a lot of work to do during the rest of FY12 and everyone must contribute a 100 percent effort for us to achieve our goals,” said Lt. Col. Corey Spencer, the South District deputy commander. “We are pushing our contracting staff to get contracts awarded, contractors to develop aggressive schedules that get work done and we are pushing our engineering, construction and project management staff to make sure we keep our nearly \$2.5 billion program on track.”

The South District’s goal is to place construction at the highest rate possible and complete its program before coalition forces end combat operations in 2014. “Aggressive schedule management and a high operations tempo will get us there,” said Spencer. “The district’s staff understands the urgency and is committed to timely execution.”

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