



# Postcard from Afghanistan

Richard Winegardner - Tulsa District



I arrived at Mazar-e-Sharif on April 28 for a one-year deployment that is now 13 months. This is my third deployment, second in Afghanistan.

I am one of two operations and maintenance site managers at MeS. I share the responsibility of managing 44 Afghanistan National Police, Uniform Police and Border Police sites and nine Afghan National Army bases located in five provinces throughout northern Afghanistan.

Since arriving, I have encountered three fellow Tulsa District employees, Jim McCoy, Mike Abate and Byron Floyd, here at MeS. The days of summer were long and hot - 110 to 130 degrees. I face many challenges such as getting to some of the job sites due to distance and security. On June 30 I attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for one of our new sites at Roy Do Ab. I was transported by a four hour, round trip Blackhawk flight; needless to say the site was in a very remote location.

I have seven local national quality assurance representatives who work with me. Their function is to be my eyes and ears at these sites. What I enjoy most is the different day-to-day challenges and working with the many different nationalities (i.e. I have worked with more than seven coalition nations). It is very rewarding to serve as an ambassador for the Corps and my country as I make new friends almost daily and learn the Afghan culture.

Providing one of my Afghan LNQAs can get a visitor's Visa, he will be joining me in Oklahoma while I am on R&R, to experience an American Thanksgiving. That is an example of some of the friendships I am making here. I wish you all well, "Shohna ba Shona- Shoulder to Shoulder."

