

ISAF MIRROR

November 2004



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essential

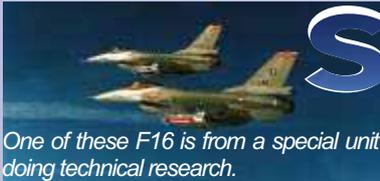
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One of these F16 is from a special unit doing technical research.

SKY MONSTERS

By Lt. Daan Storm van Leeuwen



Different missions, one success

On September 8, a contingent of around 65 men and women left their home bases in Volkel and Eindhoven, The Netherlands, to start preparing for the deployment of 6 Dutch F-16s over Afghanistan. The deployment location was not new for the Royal Netherlands Airforce. Manas AB in Kyrgystan is a well-known base for the Dutch, having been deployed there 2 years earlier to provide support for Operation Enduring Freedom.

Officially, the detachment is known as the 1ST Dutch Wing ISAF / Election Support Afghanistan, because that is our main task: Make sure that the elections are being held in an orderly fashion, and to provide support whenever necessary. To achieve this goal, we flew

in 180 men and women, 6 F-16 fighter/bombers, and one KDC-10 tanker aircraft. This effectively makes us an expeditionary wing. The F-16 is a very versatile aircraft and probably one of the biggest export successes since the Spitfire. The Dutch F-16s were built in the 1980 and since 2001, our aircraft has been heavily upgraded under the Midlife Update program, comparable to the US block 52 F-16s. The NL F-16s are, as is the main part of the detachment, from Volkel AB, The Netherlands. The KDC-10 is a former DC-10 civilian airliner, converted to a multi-purpose tanker/cargo aircraft. The KDC-10 is capable of air-to-air refueling F-16s and coalition aircraft using the boom system, transport cargo and transport personnel. The KDC-10 has its home base at Eindhoven Airbase, 334 Squadron.

Since operations began over Afghanistan on September 15, we have flown over 100 missions. The trips are various, sometimes providing escort, sometimes surveillance of an area and on occasion, showing we are there, a so-called "show of force". All these actions are in support of the PRT teams or ISAF HQ. The PRT teams deployed in North Afghanistan are the eyes and ears of ISAF and do the "good work", direct contact with the local population and regional authorities. The Dutch F-16s can provide, when necessary, a support, the

"muscles" so to speak. Another important aspect of our missions over Afghanistan is support to the DDR process. As you might know, the Afghan government is in the middle of a process of disarming powerful factions throughout the country.

The imagery from our F-16s can provide up to date information on the different weapon storage areas.



A KDC-10 of the Royal Netherlands Air Force refueling F16.

Photo: Sgt. Maj. Erik Vorstenbosch



A F16a from 315 Squadron.

Photo: Sgt. Maj. Erik Vorstenbosch

Share the essential

By Anne-Claude Gouy



If you try to find the orphanage in the Hazara area, it won't be easy because it's just an individual house. A little one, in a very narrow street, but if you push its little door, you will meet a precious treasure.

Eight months ago, the owner of the house where the orphanage educational program was located asked to have his building back. More than 400 children were living there, and the manager had to find a somewhere else to accommodate them. *"I have to support them. I don't have any family, I'm young and motivated, and I think that I definitely have to do something for them"*, said Ramzan Zaib, the Manager. *"The problem was that when the landlord asked us to leave, we had no place to go. And it was impossible for me to think about let these children live in the street,"* added Ramzan.

Almost education

In addition to the children, 15 women also live there to take care of them, and to learn how to write, and to speak English. Confronted with this problem of location, the manager did his best: he relocated around 300 children to their cousins, uncles, neighbours, and friends. But about 120 of them were still alone, so

Orphans with their benefactor, Lt. Thorsten Putger.



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

he just brought them in his own house. *"I don't have enough room, I don't have nothing for them, but they are not in the street,"* said Ramzan in front of the tent he put in his courtyard. Friba, a twenty years old girl, is the



Sitting on their new carpet, instead of stones.

Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

o f f i c e manager. *"I'm in charge of the program, but I also try to be like a mother for them. They are also taught all the day in a*

mixed classroom. As we can't really give them food and goods, we also try to give them education," she said.



Orphans and women were so happy to have something to eat.

Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

One for all

Quietly, Ramzan telephoned Lt. Thorsten Putger, liaison officer of German CIMIC team in Camp Warehouse and explained the situation. *"I don't even know where did he got my phone number from! Normally it's not a German CIMIC area but this is more than a question of area of*

responsibility. This is human support. I have a heart under my uniform," said Putger. It took him only eight days, to bring them few things: food (rice, beans, oil, wheat, grapefruits and apples), carpets, clothes, toys, medical basic treatments, and b l a n k e t s .

Everything was delivered by

German medical task force, CIMIC center at HQ ISAF, German CIMIC team, and...Lt. Putger himself who paid the food. *"When I asked the manager when did they eat for the last time, he was unable to answer me, and they are sleeping under a tent on the ground, on a platform made of stone."* As he told the Manager, they have to do a lot by themselves and not just wait for being helped. *"But the winter is coming. They don't have any gas for cooking and they don't have any heater. To give you an idea, the salary of the teacher is 25 Afghanis per month, per pupil. 25 Afghanis is 50 cents..."*

Democracy's Patrol



Photos: Capt. Christian Chramer



Fahim shows his voting card with a hole and an ink marked finger that shows that he has voted.

By Capt. Christian Chramer

At 3 am on 9th of October, the day of the Afghan presidential elections, 1st platoon from the Norwegian Recce Squadron prepared for their elections day mission. Their task was to establish contact with local security officials at 20 different election sites, check that everything was ok and stay in the area, ready to provide support to the Afghan National Army and Kabul City Police.

A map is spread out over the hood of a patrol vehicle. The men and women of 1st platoon put their heads together to see the details of the map that is illuminated by torchlight. *"Our mission is to show presence at the election-sites in PD 10,"* says the commanding officer to his men as he goes through details for the operation. *"Before orders to move out are given there is one important issue to remember: our job is to support the local security partners. ISAF personnel shall not be inside the voting station,"* says Lt. Robin before the patrol vehicles move out and head for the city centre. The roads are surprisingly quiet.

Historic patrol

At 4 am the platoon stops outside the first voting centre. Local police have been guarding the site for the last 24 hours and are up and ready to receive the first voters. At 7 am the first line of people is already standing outside the election



site. *"It is obvious that the people of Afghanistan do not only see it as a duty to cast their vote. It's also their right,"* says Pvt. Martin as he is greeted with polite salutes from the waiting locals.

Outside the Astuna Mosque in the suburb of Sharqala, the Norwegian soldier and his team comrades meet 21 years old Fahim. He comes smiling out after having voted for the candidate he sees best suited for the president's seat. *"Now I am excited and very happy,"* he says showing his voting card with a hole and his ink-marked finger. As the hours go by, ISAF patrols all over town report that things are quiet. In some places local cityfolks form small groups of dancing and singing people that celebrate the election. The Norwegian platoon stays in the



Lt. Robin (right) and Col. Per Rønning (center) in conversation with a local security officer at an election site in PD 10.

Photo: Capt. Christian Chramer

area for a few more hours and then returns to Camp Invictia. They are tired after 16 hours on patrol, happy that everything went well and full of memories of an historic day for Afghanistan.

Reading you 5/5

By Sgt. Maj. Jean-Pierre Herban

The communication skills of Afghanistan police officers have been enhanced thanks to help from ISAF. A telecommunication course took place at the police academy between 25 and 29 Sep 2004; the aim was to teach police Senior Officers from different provinces, about the future Afghan radio network.

This course was planned and organized in close co-operation with the Ministry of Interior, the Afghan Police Academy and the German Police Project; the teachers came from Germany, Hungary, France and Belgium. ISAF



Afghan Police Senior Officers during the Radio Spectrum Management course.

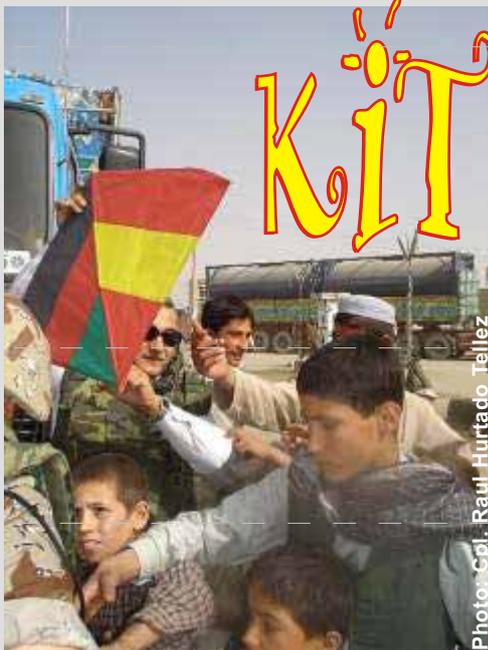
HQ was present with their frequency managers, WO Herban and WO Vandooren to give information about Radio Spectrum Management in Afghanistan. All 73 participants

Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

were very interested in this course and most of them had a good knowledge about radio technology. They asked for another, more detailed course, after the elections. Why not! At the end of the course a certification ceremony took place, chaired by the Commander of the Police Academy and

representatives from the MoI. Each participant received a certificate validated by all instructors.

KITES FOR KIDS



Photos: Cpl. Raul Hurtado Tellez

By Capt. Luis Ventas Juste

Last month,

Spanish forces in Kabul have been delivering kites to the children in Kabul. The initiative began on October 12, the Spanish national day. The decision was based on two main factors: kites are the most important toy for Kabooli children and the fact that talibans banned them. Kites represent a good proof of freedom, brought to Afghans with ISAF support as some kind of celebration for the successful elections. The distribution of kites with Afghan and Spanish



Afghan and Spanish colors filled the sky of Kabul to celebrate peaceful elections.

national colours has provided the opportunity to enjoy some touching moments while sharing the joy of Kabuli children. Spanish soldiers have been happy in contributing to improve the local population good feeling about ISAF forces.

Security provided in Northern

By Lt. Col. Tom Scheibe

On October 9, 2004, the Afghan people held the first free elections of their president. In the scope of the ISAF mandate, the German soldiers in the two Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) of Kunduz and Feyzabad fulfilled important missions in the preparation and the implementation of these elections.

On September 29, 2004 both Colonel Reinhard Barz, Commander of the German PRT-Group in the Northeast of Afghanistan, and the civilian Chief of the Kunduz PRT had invited all local authorities of the four provinces to the German Camp in Kunduz to meet

under the chairmanship of the United Nations Assistance Mission Afghanistan (UNAMA) and prepare a joint security concept in support of the elections. The important result of this conference and a precondition for successful elections, were the agreement to maintain close coordination between Afghan and UN organisations responsible for the execution of the elections, and, of course with the Chiefs of the Police forces and the young Afghan Army. Both in the Kunduz Regional Center, specially prepared for the purpose, and in the four provinces of Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar and Badakshan, the PRT deployed Liaison Officers, thus ensuring uninterrupted contacts between all organisations concerned and the security forces on election day.

Highest quota

Security for the elections was primarily ensured by Afghan police, who committed an approx. 2,250 strong force throughout the region solely for this purpose. In addition, about 550 soldiers of the Afghan Army and the PRT were also able to provide valuable security support. After all, the protection of approx. 750 polling stations in regions of

difficult access and the transport of the ballot documents was an important task. Prior to the elections, PRT Kunduz was reinforced by a Dutch company and PRT Feyzabad by a German company. The primary reason for military presence in the region was to convey a sense of safety to the population and to deter potential disruption. Another vital field of the



Collection of ballot boxes at Feyzabad airport.

Photo: Lt. Col. Tom Scheibe

PRT-mission in view of the elections was the activities of a group referred to as "Operational Information Group" (OpInfo). Since May of this year, they had been elaborating and implementing a campaign for their radio station "Stimme der Freiheit" ("Voice of Liberty") and a newspaper of the same name with

the purpose of providing the population with information in terms of voter registration and election procedures. The servicemen and women of OpInfo are rightfully proud of the fact that around 98% of the eligible voters in the German area of responsibility came to be registered, and that was the highest quota in all Afghanistan. All information was focused on the elections, a separate leaflet action with the slogan "Your vote counts" was conducted a few days prior to the election day.



Election campaign in Kunduz.

Photo: Lt. Col. Tom Scheibe

Afghanistan



Photo: Lt. Col. Tom Sheibe

the JEMB and two Afghan police officers at an altitude of approx. 4,000 m. After the emergency landing of a UN helicopter shortly after the end of the elections, the men had intended to transport the remaining ballot boxes to Feyzabad by land, but were unable to reach their destination. Completely exhausted and weakened by insipient frostbites they had to be rescued to survive. When the remaining ballot boxes from the Badakshan region finally arrived in the Kunduz Counting

Rescue operation in the mountains of Badakhshan (see article page 14).

From everywhere

A special highlight was the airborne evacuation of elections support personnel and the air transport of the last four ballot boxes from the Wakhan corridor on October 19. Two German CH-53 helicopters enabled the evacuation of four election assistants of

Center, that province's votes could also be counted. Together with their comrades from many nations the German soldiers in Kunduz and Feyzabad contributed their share, to help this country towards a brighter future after the devastations of 23 years of war and civil war.



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

KAIA cleaned up

The Cleaning Day at KAIA was arranged to make KAIA look better and all nations at KAIA participated. The camp is changed all the time so there were spots with forgotten construction material etc. Everybody was placing waste at the cleaning day spots Afterwards the engineers and some local workers transported the waste to a central spot where a recycling company picked up most of the waste.

nations at KAIA participated. The camp is changed all the time so there were spots with



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

The staff officers also had to use the broom...they did it with the smile.



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

The cleaning started inside the buildings where everybody was responsible for cleaning her/his own premises.



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

Along with the soldiers the local workers at Kabul International Airport also participated to this cleaning day.

FREE



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

By Anne-Claude Gouy

On Wednesday 27th October, members from Public Information Office (PIO) of ISAF Headquarters went on a mission East of Road Crimson in Kabul. On the way to their mission

they became victims of an improvised explosive device (IED) and were ambushed by armed terrorists.

Fortunately, it was just an exercise... The aim was to conduct a basic rescue mission in order to familiarise participating units with the process of performing rescue missions. Exercise 'Lilly' was designed to test the ISAF HQ Theatre Air Operations Center (TAOC) Combined Rescue Coordination Center (CRCC) and different key player's action.

Scenery

The scenario director, Maj. Tor Cavalli-Bjorkman, liaison officer TAOC CRCC, explained the exercise to the players. *"During a mission, travelling by car, you are stopped by an IED and attacked by armed terrorists. Two of you will be injured. You will give a distress call, with some approximate location but without any precise information about your state, and then we will respond to their reaction."* Before anything began, Cpl. Elisabeth Newton from the Canadian Army, joined the party. Her role was essential: *"I'm a nurse but one of my specialties is doing the make up"*. Within few minutes, she created a realistic gunshot wound in the leg of one person with make-up, and for the other person a head wound. *"You're confused, so you have to become delirious. You also*



Photo: Cpl. Jean-Pierre Denil

Capt. Van Dalen giving the distress call under the direction of Maj. Cavalli-Bjorkman.

have to scream when the rescue arrives. We have to give them the most realistic conditions," she added. It wasn't a problem for PIO officer Capt. Albert Van Dalen, who has an actor experience: *"I've supported "A bridge too far" in 1976, with James Caan and Ryan O'Neil!"*

First act

At 12:20, Van Dalen gave the alert by a distress call to Movecon, explaining what happened and



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

Cpl. Newton, a nurse who also knows to make some wounds...

specifying: *"After being attacked we cannot continue our way. Request recovery as soon as possible. At the moment, no Afghan people or other threat to be seen."* After that call, every actor took his place: The control staff put a vehicle a few hundred metres from the place of attack, with members of the ISAF PIO team on the ground. Cpl. Newton acted as the fourth member of the crew, the second non injured with the photographer, able to protect the others with her weapon, and to provide first aid. She also kept on giving to the injured information about the symptoms regarding their respective wounds.

Reminder:

"ISAF Personnel Recovery is the sum of all military, diplomatic and civil efforts to recover and reintegrate personnel who are missing while participating in an ISAF sponsored military activity or mission."



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

Arrival to rescue the PIO team, two injured and two non.

LILLY

During that time, Cavalli was in charge of staying in touch with every unit by phone and radio. "We want to test the rescue procedures for pick-up of non-trained isolated personnel. The PIO team is a perfect case," explained Cavalli. Movecon

contacted the ISAF HQ Joint Operations Center (JOC), who in turn informed TAOC CRCC in charge of preparing a "Go/No go" decision by the Commander of the Air Task Force. TAOC CRCC had also to alert KMNB JOC responsible for preparing and executing the rescue mission. "The only ones to be informed

were the liaison officers of the Dutch Apaches and Turkish Blackhawk, to be sure of their availability," explained Cavalli. "We're doing this exercise to maintain personnel recovery capability, so we have to act as if it was real," he added.

Main action

The Dutch Apaches were on station within 30 minutes. They secured the area. During that time, everybody was going on with his mission. It took some time, before the EOD team in charge of clearing the area touched ground on board of the first Blackhawk. "The two PIO members weren't that badly injured, but with the time passing and

the conditions of waiting, in the dust and without water, their wounds got worse and worse," commented



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

Estonian soldier protecting the landing of a Turkish Blackhawk.



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

Behavior of Capt. Van Dalen was more than realistic.



Photo: Cpl. A. Eisele

The Dutch Apaches secured the area.

Cavalli. Once the first member of the Estonian

EOD team arrived, everything moved quickly. Within 20 minutes, the area was cleared, the injured were given the first aid, and loaded on to the Blackhawk.

Happy end

As Cavalli remarked, "Personnel recovery is not only for air crew. Everyone in ISAF has to feel concerned." The first good point goes to Movecon who stayed in touch all along the exercise, asking



Photo: Cpl. Jean-Pierre Denil

Injured boarded on Turkish Blackhawk.

frequently for any new information, and giving the situation update. "They even try to encourage us," noticed Cavalli during the action. Then, the colour of the week procedures worked as initial authentication. The Dutch Apaches and Turkish Blackhawk made an impressive performance in objective area, and the Estonian EOD and Medical teams showed high ambition. A special



Photo: Cpl. Jean-Pierre Denil

German doctors neither understood nor accepted the presence of the photographer.

award to Capt. Van Dalen for his performance was granted unanimously. Last point: all our excuses to the German medical team in Camp Warehouse who saw the injured arriving on stretchers, even though the exercise was supposed to end when the helicopters landed in a safe place. To be continued...



On the road to the elections



By Master Sgt. Juan Flores Capilla

On the second half of August the first soldiers of the Spanish Quick Reaction Force Battalion (QRF BN) arrived at Mazar-e-Sharif (MeS). The aim of these people was to prepare for the deployment of the rest of the Battalion, which would arrive during the first days of September.

Late August the Spanish Battalion Group "Ortiz de Zárate" was deployed to MeS airfield as QRF BN under the command of ISAF HQ. The Spanish Battalion Group is based on the SP III Parachute Battalion "Ortiz de Zárate" from the Spanish Army Parachute Brigade. The Unit has broad experience in multinational operations, including Bosnia and Kosovo, working as a NATO unit. On the 9th of October started the main period of activities. The objective of the Spanish BN was to provide stability and security in order to support the first presidential elections in Afghanistan.

Deployment

The electoral day passed without any significant incident. The Tactical Group "Ortiz de Zárate" deployed three Coy's to the nearby cities of Balk, MeS, Dowlatabat, Shebergan and Aybak. They provided security on the main roads, in order to permit the people to proceed freely to the Polling Sites without any harassment. The rest of the Unit remains on alert inside the Base Camp. On the 11th of October started the next phase of the operation, the transportation of the ballot boxes from the provinces of Balkh, Jawzjan, Fayrab, Sari Pul and



The Spanish helicopters have supported the ground security provided by the Afghan army.

Photo: Cpl. Eduardo Caro Pastor

Samargan, to the main counting site, located at Balkh University in Mazar-e-Sharif.

Precious cargo

The transportation of the ballot boxes was organized in three convoys from the cities of Aybak and Shebergan. The Afghan Police escorted these convoys, while the Spanish BN provided security to the different routes used by the convoys. The Spanish Helicopter Battalion II (Bhelma II) provided surveillance over the routes,



Transportation of ballot boxes.

Photo: Cpl. Eduardo Caro Pastor

being a reaction force as well. The Spanish Forward Air Controllers were ready to provide Close Air Support to convoys. From the 14th of October and until the end of the counting process, patrols from "Ortiz de Zárate", with the support of the Spanish helicopters, maintained security near

the counting center in MeS, supplementing the close security provided by the Afghan National Army. One Spanish Coy remained on alert at the disposal of ISAF HQ, in order to deal with any problem throughout the Northern Region.

M.O.T. in action

By Sgt. Lee Pugsley



All tasks for all members

In British Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) of Mazar e Sharif and Maymana, most of the job is done by a very specific type of detachment, the Military Observation Team. Eleven of them are constantly patrolling the area of operations (AOO), which covers five provinces.

Achieving observation and liaison missions during patrols that may be up to 600 km and last 10 days, is a unique military tool for ISAF able to go deep into the Afghan heartland. To know what life is like within a MOT, the best is to leave the floor to one of them, Sgt. Lee Pugsley from MOT Bravo, 1st Battalion The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (1WFR).

“The villages we go to are mainly very poor villages with hardly anything. This poverty however does not reflect in the generosity of the locals. Wherever we have been, they always seem happy to see us and would give you their last bit of food and tea if you let them. Once at the village, the patrol commander meets the local elders or the police. Whilst he is meeting and greeting the locals, I then take over as force protection, as more often than not the patrol commander gets dragged off for tea and bread. These meetings are never a quick affair and the longest I’ve spent outside one of these meetings is five hours so far. Being outside doesn’t however mean that it gets boring. We always have a laugh and joke with the locals and our team as a whole have built a good rapport with the police at a few locations. Most of the time though football is the flavour of the day, especially with the local kids. After the meetings the patrol commander will give a short debrief to the whole team before we move off. We may go on either a presence patrol with the police or onto another tasking, trying to get to meet a few more of the villagers on our way.



Re-entrant crossing due to track disintegration.

Photo: Sgt. Lee Pugsley



Digging out to get a wheel on.

Photo: Sgt. Lee Pugsley

Once we are a few miles away from the meeting place, we stop for a full debrief involving the whole team, so everybody is in the picture. After this is done, and depending on time and what else we have to do we either carry on with the tasking or move to a Line Up Point (LUP) for the night. The LUP's we normally go to are in the middle of nowhere and in the mountains. Once we are happy with security

we can then move onto the routine side of things, which involves sleeping positions (which the interpreter is now a dab hand at) and cooking. Meal preparation is taken in turns by the whole team minus the patrol commander in the evenings, because he is always doing his patrol report. To be fair, the patrol commander always cooks breakfast. After the

mad rush getting all of that sorted, we then settle down to a normally quiet night. It can however be a bit of a shock when you get up for sentry duty and look through the night scope to see a few people watching you on top of a hill. After the night routine is finished and we are ready to go again, the patrols start all over again.”

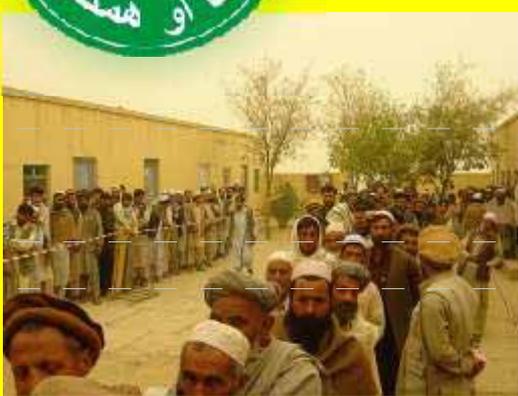


Night harbor S. Shulgareh.

Photo: Sgt. Lee Pugsley



ISAF



Waiting for voting.



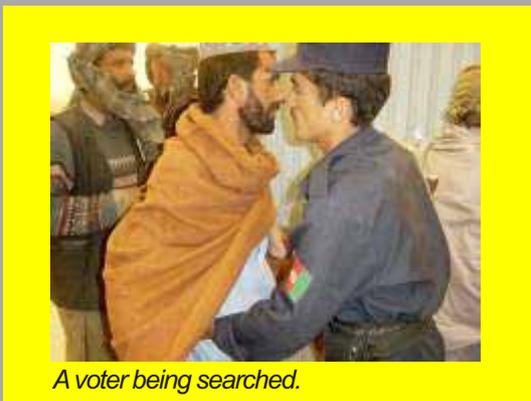
Cameras in media center.



Most of the women were wearing their burqha to go to vote.



Ballot boxes in the counting center of Kabul.



A voter being searched.



The governor of Deh Sabz voting.

in **ELECTIONS**



A women search point.



UNAMA polling station controller.



Elections notice.

Snapshots



In total, 1,200 journalists came and the media center welcomed 450 of them in one day.



Ballots boxes arriving from Pakistan in KAIA with Belgium C-130.



Elections gave to a lot of people a job opportunity, and made men and women working together.



Up: Ballots counting in the counting center of Kabul.



Left: UNAMA elections worker with a French soldier.

HAPPY END

By Flt. Lt. David Bennett

A daring helicopter rescue has been carried out at high altitude and in appalling conditions by ISAF German pilots. Four Joint Electoral Management Body (JEMB) workers and two Afghan Police officers who were stranded in freezing conditions in remote mountains were rescued by ISAF helicopters in a joint operation with Coalition forces.

The Afghan workers had been on their way to collect four ballot boxes from villages in Badakshan Province when a Russian Mi-8 helicopter due to collect them was forced to make an emergency landing on October 12. Walking in often blizzard-like conditions, the workers retrieved the ballot boxes, but it was impossible to reach them from outside for five days because of the weather. Although rescue equipment was dropped to them, they began to suffer from hypothermia and their satellite telephone battery ran out of power.

The night before the rescue, a special team from the US led Coalition was parachuted in, to arrange for the recovery. At daylight on October 19 two ISAF German CH-53 helicopters took off from Feyzabad, one carrying specialist medical equipment. At the same



The rescued JEMB workers and Afghan National Police arrive at Kunduz.

time an ISAF German C-160 aircraft left Kunduz, to provide an aerial communications relay back to base. The helicopters had located the party and set off for the return journey with the JEMB officials, ANP officers, the US rescuers and the four ballot boxes on board.

Dedication

On the return journey the six rescued received specialist medical attention on the Medevac helicopter for a variety of symptoms including hypothermia, dehydration and breathing difficulties. On their return to Kunduz at 11.40, the JEMB workers were transferred

to the PRT hospital for a check-up, but were soon released. All six were said to be 'extremely tired'. The US rescue team has returned to the Bagram air base. "I am very proud of everyone involved in this rescue, in remote and tough territory," says Lt. Gen. Jean-Louis Py, Commander of ISAF. "We worked closely with Coalition forces and the JEMB, and

through good team work, and the excellent skills of those involved, I am very pleased this story has a happy ending. I am particularly struck by the dedication of the JEMB officials who stuck by their ballot boxes, even when things must have looked pretty desperate."

Engineers on elections

The presidential elections have seen the French battalion deploy an imposing layout from the 8th to 10th of October, with 400 men on the ground, out of 500! Among them, the engineers were supporting the Quick Reaction Forces that had been set up at Mir Bacha Kot and on KAIA North gate. The platoon reconnoitered the routes Horseshoe and Bottle, which could have been targeted, as they were to be used by every convoy of ballots coming from the North and heading for the regional counting center in Kabul. A thorough reconnaissance was therefore necessary: holes in the roads, bridges and other road works were searched for evidence of a prepared attempt to place roadside bombs. Six



Engineers discovering Chinese 82mm mortar rounds South of Mir Bacha Kot.

hours after the reconnaissance had begun, they could report that everything was clear and that the convoys could pass!

Progress in DDR Process

By Capt. Georg Auer

DDR is an important element in the development of a safe and secure environment throughout Afghanistan. The program is planned and executed by UNAMA (United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan) under the Afghan New Beginnings Program (ANBP), but the responsibility lies ultimately with the President of Afghanistan and his Ministry of Defence.



Photo: Capt. Georg Auer

ISAF is supporting the DDR process in Kabul with second-row security, limited logistical support and a staff officer who facilitates the practicalities of disarmament. Part of the DDR-Process is the cantonment of heavy weapons all over the country. Three weeks before elections, the 6th (AMF) Div still had about 50 Heavy Weapons. Now, the 6. Division at Pol-e-Sayad is completely cantoned. The Kabul Multinational Brigade was supporting this Heavy Weapon Cantonment Process with logistic equipment and fuel. The heavy weapons are now stored at the HQ of the 2nd (AMF) Division at Jabulsaray. The following 45 heavy weapons were cantoned:

In that case, logistical mission is non negligible.

- 28 Main Battle Tanks
- 4 Armoured Fighting Vehicles
- 5 Anti-Aircraft Guns
- 5 Field Artillery Guns
- 1 Heavy Machinegun

It was a joint heavy weapon cantonment, so the United Nations also contributed with equipment and material to this cantonment by transporting the following 9 heavy weapons:

- 3 Main Battle Tanks
- 1 Armoured Fighting Vehicle
- 2 Anti-Aircraft Guns
- 1 Multiple Rocket Launcher
- 1 Heavy Machinegun

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Submissions can be e-mailed to mirror@isaf-hq.nato.int. Articles should be in Microsoft Word format and, whenever possible, no longer than 600 words. Photographs should be at least 7 X 4.5 centimeters and 300 dpi. The ISAF Mirror is published monthly and aims to be available by the first Friday of the month.

For more information please call the Editor on HQ ISAF (079 51) ext. 1230. The Editor reserves the right to edit submissions.

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**The deadline for
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Front page: photo by Cpl. Jean-Pierre Denil

Me-S Media

By Flt Lt David Bennett

One of the problems ISAF has is not just to talk about the benefits of a better security situation, but also to demonstrate the fact. No way is better than through the voices of Afghan people, and with that in mind, PIO organized a trip for 40 journalists to Mazar e Sharif (MeS).

As well as some local publications, the party included representatives of most of the major international media. Countries such as Japan, Canada, the UK, US and France were represented, and a comprehensive timetable was put together. We started at KAIA with a welcome from DCOM, and a demonstration of Air Power through the NL Apaches and the TU Blackhawk helicopters. The skies were filled with noise (and dust!) and the media were impressed with the ability of ISAF forces to react quickly and decisively against a threat.

In the field

We then flew to MeS on a Belgian C-130 and on arrival saw a demonstration of a Forward Air



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

DCOM Gen. Van Der Bom being interviewed by Canadian Broadcast Corporation.

Control position set up at the airport. From this point the conversation turned to more benign topics. Col. John Henderson, COM PRT, gave an excellent talk on the work of his unit and the success it is having reassuring, building confidence and contributing to the restoration of 'normal' society in the northern region. The media were fascinated being based mostly in Kabul they have little opportunity to see work in the provinces for themselves. From there a ride downtown (the airport is some half an hour outside the town) to see the local Counting Centre. Again, we were trying to demonstrate



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

In front of the Blue mosque in Mazar-e-Sharif.

that Kabul is only one aspect of life in Afghanistan, and the media did many interviews with Joint Electoral Management Body officials running the elections, and the local Afghan National Army commander who is charged with the Afghan National Police to provide security, supported by ISAF.

All over the world

Finally we traveled to the famous Blue Mosque. It is truly an amazing building, one of the holiest in Islam, covered by tiny blue tiles. The local people were very welcoming and encouraged the media inside the mosque (paying appropriate attention to respect such as removing shoes). This welcome again says much for the work of the British Provincial Reconstruction Team forces who engage with local people and make a point of adopting informal and friendly practices such as not wearing body armor, while maintaining Force Protection discreetly. The local people the media spoke to through interpreters were keen and enthusiastic about the election. They believe in a democratic and peaceful future for their country, and recognize the role ISAF and other organisations are playing. It was a good



Photo: Cpl. Achim Eisele

Showing to media the counting process at Mazar-e-Sharif.

reward for the ISAF effort to organise the trip, and of course produced large amounts of media coverage around the world.