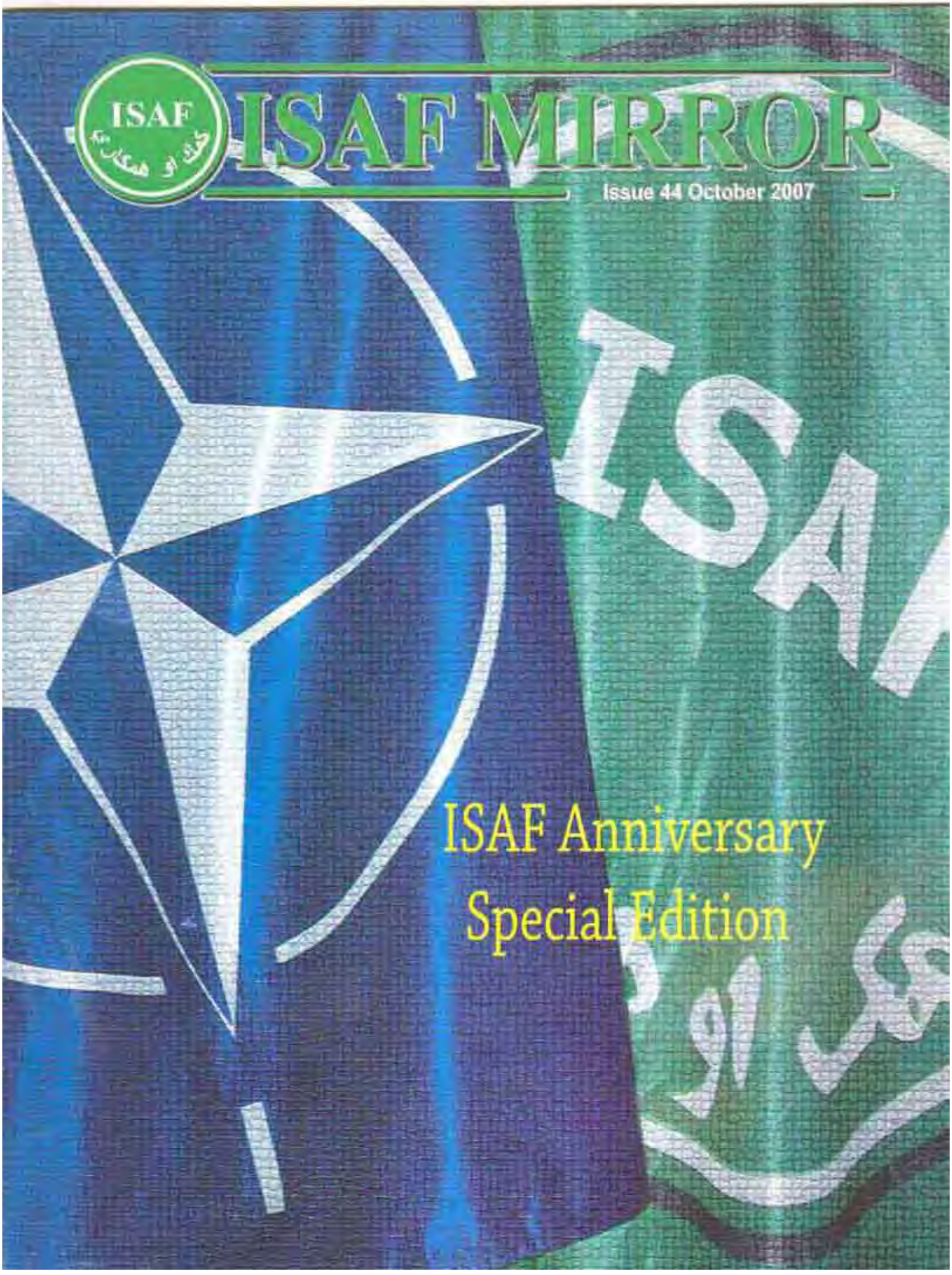

ISAF
ISAF MIRROR
Issue 44 October 2007
ISAF Anniversary
Special Edition

4-5 What Made the Press

- Skill courses center opens in Khak-e Jabbar
- New bridge opens in Musahi Valley
- Farah City orphans get new orphanage
- ISAF hosts Ramazan dinner with maleks
- French Mirages arrive at Kandahar Airfield

6 A message from COMISAF

7 A message from President Karzai

8 SCR-CSM

- A Message from the NATO Senior Civilian Representative
- A Message from the ISAF Command Sergeant Major

9-11 DCOM's

- DCOM Air message
- DCOM Stability message
- DCOM Security message

12-13 Photo of Afghanistan RC,PRTs

Photo illustration by Master Sgt. Russell Petcoff

Contents

14-16 DCOS

- DCOS Operations message
- DCOS Support message

17 Afghan Forces update

- Shaping the future of the ANSF

18 RC (C)

- When we look in the past

19 RC (N)

- Working with the ANP in Baghlan Province

20 RC (W)

- The Boghi Pul Bridge gets much needed repairs
- Italian Army train Afghans about Counter-IED activity

21 RC (S)

- Mine detection facility opens for business
- ISAF completes major health facilities in Tarin Kowt

22 RC (E)

- Bagram Airfield's new helicopter ramp completed

23 Flags of ISAF Nations for Afghanistan

ISAF MIRROR

ISAF Mirror (Disclaimer)

The ISAF Mirror is a HQ ISAF Public Information product. Articles, where possible, have been kept in their original form. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect NATO, JFC HQ Brunssum, or ISAF policy. Photo credits are attributed to the authors of the submission, unless otherwise stated. Submissions can be e-mailed to: pressoffice@isaf-hq.nato.int

Articles should be in MS Word format (Arial), photos should be at least 4.5cm and 300 dpi resolution. 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 at 0799 51 1230.

The electronic version of this magazine can be downloaded online at: www.nato.int/isaf

EDITORIAL STAFF

Lieutenant Colonel Claudia Foss
Chief, Public Information

Captain Jonathan Stock
Chief, Internal Information
Editor

Master Sgt. Russell Petcoff
Photographer

Staff Sgt. Ray Winstead
Photographer

Maiwand Rihan Ahmadzai
Layout Designer

Back Cover

In front of the headquarters Building at HQ ISAF the "Comrades in Arms" memorial sits in the circle of nations

Photo by: Master Sgt. Russell Petcoff

"What Made the Press"

Skill courses center opens in Khak-e Jabbar

KABUL, Afghanistan (Sept. 5) – Regional Command Capital's Turkish Battle Group and Civil-Military Cooperation opened three skills development centers recently.

"Our target for the centers is to give job skills to approximately 700 Afghan residents in Khak-e Jabbar and Bagrami to give Afghanistan a prosperous future," said Brig. Gen. Kasim Erdem, RC-Capital commander.

Also attending the ribbon-cutting ceremony were Seyit Mahmut Halik, chief of Public Education Department, and Dr. Hamide Huma Nuristani, Kabul education chief.

Cemile Galip is studying carpet-weaving. "I began this course two months ago and now I can weave a bit," Galip said. "Carpet-weaving is lucrative."

Samiullah Zizi is studying to be a blacksmith and has learned how to make pipes and tea kettles.

Abdurrahman is attending a computer course and hopes to be a computer engineer.

"This is the first time I have ever written my name on a computer screen," Abdurrahman said.

Students can sell products they make at the center. They can keep half of the profits and the other half goes to improve the centers.

Overall, RC-Capital has opened 12 centers to teach sewing and embroidery, carpet weaving, computer, Turkish language, and blacksmithing in Bagrami, Khak-e Jabbar and PD-9 Khud Hill. The centers employ 21 instructors and have 435 students.

Courtesy Photo

Female students take part in the weaving class

New bridge opens in Musahi Valley

Kabul, Afghanistan (Sept. 6) – The Musahi Valley bridge opening ceremony was held in Ahengharan recently. The bridge, which is about 40 meters long and 4 meters wide, is located in the Musahi District.

The construction of the bridge and the extension of the linked roads was provided by a donation from the Italian government. The road system was improved in hopes of continuing social and economic development in Afghanistan.

The local district representatives thanked the Italian Contingent, working in the framework of the ISAF mission, for their help in the construction of wells, roads, buildings, schools and bridges. These projects have contributed to the repopulation and development of the area. The Italians also work in collaboration with the local representatives and Afghan police to ensure security in the area.

ISAF Regional Command Capital's Italian Force XVI Commander, Colonel De Fonzo, stated that the aim is to improve the daily life for the Afghan people by prioritizing projects that will benefit the local community.

Farah City orphans get new orphanage

Farah City, Afghanistan (Sept. 19) - Soldiers from ISAF Province Reconstruction Team Farah helped the city's 200 orphans move into their new $130,000 USD orphanage recently. Working side by side, the orphans and soldiers loaded beds, bedding, desks and kitchen utensils into a five ton truck.

Previously the orphans lived in the dining facility at the Education Department, with two rooms allocated for administrative offices. There was no running water, so hygiene consisted of sponge baths from a bucket near the local well.

The new orphanage features both boys and girls dormitories, a dining facility and administration offices. There will also be a septic tank with a leach field, and a generator for power.

"The new orphanage is nicer, cleaner and more secure than the old facility, but the big advantage is that they also have running water," said Lieutenant John Genta.

Shir Pir Construction employed 20 men for a 10 month period in the construction of the orphanage, which has the capacity to comfortably house 300 orphans.

"Before there was no one to help the orphans, but now the PRT has given them a new home," said Nasrullah Amini, Director of Social Affairs for Farah province.

Courtesy Photo

A soldier from ISAF Province Reconstruction Team Farah helps the orphans move into their new home.

ISAF hosts Ramazan dinner with maleks

KABUL, Afghanistan (Sept. 25) - ISAF's Regional Command Capital officials hosted a dinner as a part of Ramazan in Camp Dogan recently for the maleks—tribal chieftans—and shura members who live in Khud Hill.

The commander of RC-Capital said the dinner was a good opportunity for local and international communities to get together.

"We should take advantage of every opportunity to come together and discuss our problems to make a better aid effort for Afghanistan," said Brig. Gen. Kasım Erdem, RC-C commander.

Besides Ramazan, the participants discussed security and its coordination between ISAF and officials from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

The participants said they were pleased with the Turkish Task Force Command and thanked them for all the Civil-Military Cooperation projects.

French Mirages arrive at Kandahar Airfield

KABUL, Afghanistan (Sept. 28) – The first of six Mirage aircraft from 2/3 Champagne Squadron, French Expeditionary Air Group, landed at Kandahar Airfield recently.

The squadron, which is relocating from its former detachment base at Dushanbe Airport, Tajikistan, will now have greater capability to support ISAF and Coalition operations in southern Afghanistan. Operating from Dushanbe, the fighters' flying time to the south was approximately 50 minutes; now stationed at Kandahar Airfield, the Mirages can now be on station in 10 minutes.

Squadron personnel are excited about the challenges ahead and are pleased they will have more efficient and flexible response times to participate in operations.

"We are looking forward to joining forces here at Kandahar and Regional Command South," said Lt. Col. Gilles Juventin, the French detachment commander. "It's a great opportunity to operate in a different tactical environment and it will allow us much better integration with our allies."

When the relocation is complete the French Air Wing will have 150 personnel, including a Special Forces combat group of 20 and 100 personnel from the Air Expeditionary group.

The Mirage 2000D is an air-to-ground fighter which has been operational with the French Air Force since 1992; it has seen active service in operations over Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan.

Courtesy Photo

A French Mirage 2000D lands at Kandahar Airfield on Sept. 28 after moving operations from Dushanbe Airport, Tajikistan to be more capable during theater operations.

A Message from COMISAF

Commentary by General Dan K. McNeill, International Security Assistance Force Commander

Fellow Service members – Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines – and Civilians of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), this first anniversary of NATO's expansion across all of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is worthy of recognition and further reflection on where we've been and where we're going. This anniversary edition of the Mirror acknowledges the continued sacrifice and contributions made by our ISAF Service members every day in disparate villages and district centers throughout the country.

Since its arrival in December 2001, ISAF has steadily grown to meet every challenge and to help the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to build capacity across its growing institutions. We've worked hard this last year across each of our lines of operation (security, reconstruction and enabling governance) and we've seen steady progress in each one. We've strengthened our partnership with Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and they remain on path to build a strong and capable indigenous security force able to create and maintain a secure environment for the Afghan people. Security is the harbinger to more and effective reconstruction and it facilitates conditions for more effective governance. Although our challenges remain, ISAF's commitment to these lines of operation is unwavering.

Throughout our operations, I'm mindful of our unique operating environment. Our International Forces are the guests of Afghan People and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. The will of the Afghan people remains essential to our success and their confidence and trust in our Force is directly related to their support of our efforts. We will continue to partner with the Afghan people and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to meet every challenge and to support the sovereignty of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

We must remain vigilant and build upon the successes of this past year. My hats off to Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines for the burden they continue to shoulder. Your sacrifice is appreciated by the international community and by the Afghan people. Stay the course and continue to do your nation proud.

A Message from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Courtesy Photo

Statement by President Hamid Karzai, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

I am very pleased to have been invited to contribute to this special edition of the ISAF magazine. As Afghans around the country prepare themselves for the winter months ahead, now is a good moment for me to reflect on the year so far and the support that ISAF forces have been giving to the people of Afghanistan. One should never anticipate too much, but I hope that the year in front of us brings more security and prosperity for my country. So I will use this opportunity to also look ahead a little and describe the help I hope ISAF can provide to fellow countrymen.

The arrival of the international community after the atrocities of 9/11 began what I like to describe as cooperation of civilisation. By this I mean a partnership that covers the enhancement of our security, the role that ISAF is undertaking, through to the development of our economy, our health and our education and helping the Afghan security forces tackle the scourge of illegal narcotics . But everything begins with security. Without it, we will never achieve as much as we need and want. With it, we have a chance.

Of course I understand that the provision of security is not only about fighting the scourge of terrorism. There are many other confidence-building measures that need to be carried out by security forces be they international or Afghan. I and every Afghan know how dedicated you all are in fulfilling your tasks in these areas. We know that you all work to the maximum of your ability. In addition, you are also part of the effort to build up the capabilities of our own Afghan security forces so that eventually – and not too far in the future I hope - they can do the job themselves.

But in the meantime, there is sadly fighting still to be done and we must acknowledge that. Unfortunately, there will always be times when the ultimate sacrifice is made. If the greatness of life is measured in deeds done for others, then the soldiers, marines, airmen and sailors of ISAF who have made the ultimate sacrifice in Afghanistan will be remembered as some of the greatest of their generation. More than many others around the world, we Afghans understand the pain felt by loved ones for those who have made this ultimate sacrifice but we, like you, believe that the cause of peace is one that is worth fighting for.

Afghans have paid a heavy price in fighting and resisting terrorism well before September 11, 2001. The global war on terrorism will have to continue until this common threat to humanity is fully and finally defeated. Afghanistan stands firm against Taliban and Al-Qaida terrorist networks and is pleased to see the international community, particularly, NATO/ISAF troop contributing countries, resolutely standing behind it.

And the year ahead? Less fighting I hope and more building, more economic growth, more education. I hope that we will see a rapid expansion of the number of poppy-free Provinces and more cooperation between ISAF forces and our Afghan security forces as they battle the drug smugglers and processors. Perhaps we will also begin walking more quickly down the path of political reconciliation – that way lies salvation for Afghanistan I am sure. We already have some of the foundations for a peaceful future including the most progressive constitution in this region. Importantly we know that we also have ISAF working with and for us. On behalf of the people of Afghanistan, I thank you all for your efforts of the past and I wish you well for the future.

A message from the NATO Senior Civilian Representative

Commentary by Ambassador Daan Everts.

After a year in Kabul as NATO's Senior Civilian Representative, I welcome this chance to reflect on NATO's achievements and on the partnerships we have forged with Afghans and international stakeholders. Of course, nothing is ever exactly as we would like it and there never seems to be enough time to achieve all we would want.

But here in Afghanistan I am driven each day by the certainty that our mission is in a genuinely noble cause. Perhaps this phrase has been overused in the past. That's unfortunate because I believe that NATO-ISAF's mission, along with the rest of the international community, is one that will be viewed in years to come as 'the worthy fight'. Why do I think that?

In my long career as a diplomat working in many sad and distressed places around the world it seems to me that Afghanistan is the country that has been more misused and abused by 'outsiders' than any other. Since 1979 more than a million Afghans have lost their lives to violence; another million have been permanently disabled. More than a quarter of the population was forced in to exile and many of these Afghans have yet to, and may never, return.

I think that nearly thirty years is long enough for a nation to be subjected to these sorts of horrors. But we as the latest of the outsiders in Afghanistan, and the first to have been invited by the United Nations, have a chance to right the wrongs of those who went before us. And I think we are beginning to make the most of that opportunity.

Since the international community entered Afghanistan after 9/11 the country has made enormous strides to reject the chaos of the past and begin building for the future. ISAF troops are now able to work alongside Afghans across the whole country and our efforts are making a difference.

Where it can, NATO-ISAF is enhancing nascent security by helping the civil authorities expand their influence. Schools are open in many thousands of communities they were not a few years ago; hospitals and medical centres offer life-saving and life changing treatment where for decades, very often for ever, there has been none. Relatively few Afghans now live beyond the reach of at least some form of healthcare.

The economy is growing faster than any in the region – not always as honestly as we would like for sure. But there are more positive signs in the legitimate economy than before and once growth gathers momentum it can be hard to stop.

Where there is less security ISAF troops are increasingly supporting the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police in their fight against the terrorists and extremists. There's a long way to go still, particularly with the police, but two years ago some of the operations that are being mounted today by the ANA would have been simply unthinkable. This is a genuine measure of progress and one that all NATO nations, as well as those of the additional eleven nations contributing troops to ISAF, should all be proud of.

Most importantly though is the fact that our presence here remains supported by the vast majority of Afghans. It doesn't mean they want us here for ever. Far from it. But while we continue to help the Afghan nation become strong enough to help itself, we will be welcomed. In a country that has not historically welcomed foreigners this is quite something and I am proud to have served alongside the people who have made this possible.

A message from the ISAF Command Sergeant Major

Commentary by Sergeant Major Bernhard Badstieber.

It has been one year since ISAF has taken the responsibility of all of Afghanistan to ensure security and provide assistance to rebuild this country. We have made a great deal of progress since taking on this huge task.

As you already know from your current surroundings we are not alone in this fight. I am speaking about everyone in our international community that consists of 37 different nations of ISAF, as well as the governmental and nongovernmental

organizations that contribute to the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan. We are all doing our part to increase the security, governance and reconstruction of this nation.

We are not here for ourselves. Instead, we are here for the benefit of not only Afghanistan, but also for our own countries, and for our own families and friends back home. You will find motivation when you look at a picture of your family and think about their future. When you think about them having to deal with the fear of terrorism you will see exactly why you are here. We will not avert from our task.

We must all be aware that we are here to support the Afghan government to create a secure and stable environment for the people of Afghanistan. This will ensure that this country will not revert back to its former hostile conditions. It was these conditions that gave terrorists the freedom and opportunity to plan and execute attacks against New York, Madrid, London, and many other parts of the free world.

You are a part of a big engine and every engine is only as good as its weakest part. If any one part should break down the engine will not run at its full capacity. Each of us is a part of that engine. We need to take care of our fellow comrades as well as ourselves to give our best effort to the mission to keep our engine running at top speed. This engine will take us toward our goal to help Afghanistan build a strong and independent government for its people.

Once Afghanistan is self sustained as a free and peaceful nation we can ensure that terrorism will not be an imminent threat to our grandchildren in the future as it still is today for us. This will not happen over night and it is not an easy task but if we continue to work hard and reach our goal we can be sure that we will be closer to eliminating terrorism from the world once our goal here in Afghanistan is met.

Providing air support and reconstruction throughout Afghanistan

Commentary by Maj. Gen. F. H. Meulman, Deputy Commander for Air

The Air Organization at Headquarters International Security Assistance Force (HQ ISAF) is one of the most diverse airpower organizations in the world. From providing Close Air Support to troops in contact, to moving new Afghan National Army soldiers and ISAF personnel and helping the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) improve their infrastructure, the Air Organization plays an extremely vital role.

Courtesy photo

An AH-64 Apache helicopter flies across the Afghan landscape.

The ISAF charter lays out the overall strategy in the GIRoA and is mirrored in the statement of COMISAF X's Intent. We are charged, as is the whole of ISAF, with "demonstrating NATO's commitment to the security, reconstruction, and development of Afghanistan".

The security aspect of this is managed by the Air Operations Coordination Cell (AOCC). Every day, ISAF troops and/or Afghan National Army troops are engaged by insurgents throughout the various Regional Commands. Dozens of sorties per day are launched solely with the intent of assisting these troops and providing an asymmetric advantage over the enemy that they encounter.

Most of the air assets in theater are US (F-15s, A-10s, B-1Bs, and EA-6Bs), but very effective contributions are made by Dutch F-16s, French Mirages 2000 and F1, as well as Rafales, United Kingdom GR7/9 Harriers and German Tornados.

Rotary Wing aviation also plays a large role in providing air support, and although the assets are "owned" by the Regional Commanders, the Headquarters Staff provides support to them at every level. This multitude of aircraft provides 24/7 coverage for the troops on the ground, and

organizations that contribute to the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan. We are all doing our part to increase the security, governance and reconstruction of this nation.

We are not here for ourselves. Instead, we are here for the benefit of not only Afghanistan, but also for our own countries, and for our own families and friends back home. You will find motivation when you look at a picture of your family and think about their future. When you think about them having to deal with the fear of terrorism you will see exactly why you are here. We will not avert from our task.

We must all be aware that we are here to support the Afghan government to create a secure and stable environment for the people of Afghanistan. This will ensure that this country will not revert back to its former hostile conditions. It was these conditions that gave terrorists the freedom and opportunity to plan and execute attacks against New York, Madrid, London, and many other parts of the free world.

You are a part of a big engine and every engine is only as good as its weakest part. If any one part should break down the engine will not run at its full capacity. Each of us is a part of that engine. We need to take care of our fellow comrades as well as ourselves to give our best effort to the mission to keep our engine running at top speed. This engine will take us toward our goal to help Afghanistan build a strong and independent government for its people.

Once Afghanistan is self sustained as a free and peaceful nation we can ensure that terrorism will not be an imminent threat to our grandchildren in the future as it still is today for us. This will not happen over night and it is not an easy task but if we continue to work hard and reach our goal we can be sure that we will be closer to eliminating terrorism from the world once our goal here in Afghanistan is met.

Providing air support and reconstruction throughout Afghanistan

Commentary by Maj. Gen. F. H. Meulman, Deputy Commander for Air

The Air Organization at Headquarters International Security Assistance Force (HQ ISAF) is one of the most diverse airpower organizations in the world. From providing Close Air Support to troops in contact, to moving new Afghan National Army soldiers and ISAF personnel and helping the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) improve their infrastructure, the Air Organization plays an extremely vital role.

Courtesy photo

An AH-64 Apache helicopter flies across the Afghan landscape.

The ISAF charter lays out the overall strategy in the GIRoA and is mirrored in the statement of COMISAF X's Intent. We are charged, as is the whole of ISAF, with "demonstrating NATO's commitment to the security, reconstruction, and development of Afghanistan".

The security aspect of this is managed by the Air Operations Coordination Cell (AOCC). Every day, ISAF troops and/or Afghan National Army troops are engaged by insurgents throughout the various Regional Commands. Dozens of sorties per day are launched solely with the intent of assisting these troops and providing an asymmetric advantage over the enemy that they encounter.

Most of the air assets in theater are US (F-15s, A-10s, B-1Bs, and EA-6Bs), but very effective contributions are made by Dutch F-16s, French Mirages 2000 and F1, as well as Rafales, United Kingdom GR7/9 Harriers and German Tornados.

Rotary Wing aviation also plays a large role in providing air support, and although the assets are "owned" by the Regional Commanders, the Headquarters Staff provides support to them at every level. This multitude of aircraft provides 24/7 coverage for the troops on the ground, and

The Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are central to this process and are the facilitators for the majority of the ISAF R&D effort. In terms of producing effect, R&D is essential to the future success of the ISAF strategy; wherever the insurgents oppose ISAF and threaten the lives and livelihoods of the local population, we have a duty to try and fight back through the provision of reconstruction, development and stability in order to enhance the lives of the Afghan people.

ISAF's assistance in creating the conditions for national and international donors to provide assistance to Afghanistan's development efforts have been impressive.

In addition to the continuing work on the security line of operation, in the last 12 months 2536 projects have been completed across the country, including 199 schools, 59 clinics and hospitals, 31 road construction projects and 284 power and water projects, to name but a few. Significant progress continues despite the back-drop of violence in certain areas of the country.

Notwithstanding the upsurge in terrorist attacks there is evidence that ordinary Afghan citizens support the reconstruction and development projects and appreciate the on-going work of ISAF. This was illustrated recently when local villagers defended a group of International Community employees from being kidnapped by the Taliban on the Ring Road in Farah.

Although the rate of progress across the country is not uniform, advances have been made on a broad front, particularly in the challenging environment of southern Afghanistan.

A significant and highly visible reconstruction project involving ISAF is the support being given to the USAID funded Kajaki Dam Project in Helmand Province where ISAF is setting security conditions that will enable contractors to operate freely.

This project, authorized and directed by the Ministry of Energy & Water through the Provincial Governor, is the major development effort in Regional Command South and is a fundamental component of long term development for southern Afghanistan.

The aim of the project is to rehabilitate an existing hydropower plant and add a new power generation unit, increasing total power output to 51.5 MW. A new transmission line will also improve the power distribution from Kajaki Dam into Kandahar and Lashkar Gah. When complete the Kajaki hydropower plant will provide electricity to 1.7 million people in southern Afghanistan.

In summary, ISAF's military operations against the insurgents must be supported by the delivery of long-term sustained development in Afghanistan if the military successes are to be truly long-lasting. ISAF continues to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in providing support, mentorship and leadership where they are required, in the full knowledge that in addition to security and governance, stability plays an equally critical part in the future of Afghanistan, without which the others cannot function.

Courtesy Photo

An aerial photo of the Kajaki Dam project in Helmand Province.

Essential elements in counterinsurgency operations – lasting relationships, managing expectations, and preventing exclusive domain

Commentary by Maj. Gen. Bernard Champoux, Deputy Commander for Security

The International Security Assistance Force and Afghan National Security Forces continue to execute counter-insurgency operations in support of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, in partnership with other International

(Commentary Con't. on page 14)

AFGHANISTAN
REGIONAL COMMANDS
AND PRTS
RC WEST
RC SOUT
JOWZJAN
FARYAB
BALKH
SAR-E POL
BADGHIS
BAMIAN
HERAT
GHOWR
DAYKONDI
ORUZGAN
FARAH
ZABOL
NIMRUZ
HELMAND
KANDAHAR
Meymaneh
Sar-e Pol
Chaghcharan
Tarin Kowt
Lashkar Gah
Kandahar
Zaranj
Bastion
Khan Kalay
Qalat
Tirin Kot
Ajrestan South
Shindand
Tagab
Farah
Bost
Sheberghan
Andkoi
Mazar-e Sharif
Dehrawod
Ghorghistan
Lal
Nayak
Sisbar Tho
Tiwughim
Qal'eh-ye Now
Herat
Chakhansur
Qalat
Zaranj
Khash
Rhino Hill
ISAF MIRROR
Page-12

NORTH
BADAKHSHAN
Darwaz
Shaghnan
Tangi qala
Khvej Char
Feyzabad
Khvej Char North
Taloqan
KONDOZ
Kondoz
TAKHAR
Razor
Pol-e Khomri
BAGHLAN
PANJSHIR
Porona
Kamdish
NURESTAN
Bazarak
Charikar
Mahmud-e Raqi
Kala Gush
KONAR
Bagram
KAPISA
LAGHMAN
Asadabad
PARVAN
Ramian
Kabol
Mehtar Lam
Jalalabad
Meydan Shahr
NANGARHAR
Kohi Khel
LOWGAR
Pol-e Alam
Gardiz Old
PAKTIA
Gardiz
Ghazni
Khowst
Salerno
Sarhawdza
KHOWST
Sharan
Urgun
RC EAST
PAKTIKA
Marnah Ghar
LEGEND
AIRFIELD
ISAF
کمک او همکاری

Courtesy photo

An ISAF soldier provides security along a Kabul city street.

(DCOM Security commentary con't. from page 11)

Community organizations. All stakeholders, such as the ANSF, Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan (CSTC-A), United Nations Military Assistance in Afghanistan (UNAMA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Department for International Development (DFID), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and many other international and non-governmental organizations are critical in our efforts to achieve security and stability for the people Afghanistan.

The significant number of stakeholders, dramatically highlights the need to establish unity of effort between all organizations, and it is essential in enabling us to achieve the endstate of defeating the insurgency and supporting a capable and self-sustaining government.

Building relationships and trust with the Afghan people and our international community partners is vital. Tribal Afghan culture places a substantial premium on personal relationships and has perpetuated over many years under the code of Pashtunwali.

Tribes and elders trust people with whom they have personal relations and demonstrate strength and authority by providing protection, resolving conflicts, and addressing basic human needs. The insurgent clearly understands the importance of relations and seeks to impose his values and beliefs on the population and in an attempt to separate the Afghan people from the GIRoA.

We must therefore invest significant energy in building trust with the people of Afghanistan if we are to have any hope of overcoming the insurgents' influence. One very effective way the international community supports the GIRoA is by establishing relations among organizations and integrating all efforts to optimize our effectiveness. Developing and maintaining mutually benefiting relationships between all stakeholders and the Afghan people will increase the Alliance/Coalition influence and work to further divide the population from the insurgency.

ISAF's efforts in Afghanistan are not solely security focused, but more broadly on Afghan expectations – what they believe the GIRoA is obliged to provide. ISAF and our partners in Afghanistan must develop methods to effectively manage the expectations of the Afghan people and the international community, which will ultimately decrease vulnerabilities for the GIRoA and limit insurgent exploitation opportunities.

ISAF and our many partners will continue to support progress in Afghanistan. By developing lasting relationships, managing expectations, and avoiding the belief that the individual area we operate in is our exclusive domain, we can enhance these collective efforts. The resulting and extremely positive unity of effort will allow us to optimize the wealth of available effects. Most importantly, operating with a collaborative approach will ultimately allow us to defeat the insurgency and enable the GIRoA and Afghan people to achieve the prosperity we are all working towards.

Helping shape a new Afghanistan through operations

Commentary by Maj. Gen. Herman van der Til, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations

Last year it was for the first time that I visited Afghanistan. In Baghlan Province the Netherlands had established a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Pol-e Khomri. What impressed me was the size of the country, the mountains and the emptiness of the terrain. The curiosity and the ingenuity of the people

surprised me, but what struck me most was the poverty of the Afghan people and the way they lived.

At the end of my visit I was convinced that ISAF's mission is the right one: assist the Afghan government in order to get this country and its people back on track.

As DCOS OPS, I have visited various Regional Commands and Task Forces. It became evident to me that each region has its own challenges and different approaches. Again I found the terrain very challenging. It swallows you and it ranges from empty deserts to green mountain ranges.

I visited a lot of places where I met friendly people who made the best of it with ISAF in support. I did not know that there is a lot of water in Afghanistan and that you can harvest several times a year. People are working in the fields and they feel safe because the mines have been cleared. Fruit is exported to neighboring countries.

The projects done by the Provincial Reconstruction Teams vary from a dam in a small river in order to divert water for irrigation to new bridges across rivers connecting communities.

They support a lot of local initiatives and you see the villages and towns flourish with economic activities. I visited a school where young boys learn how to construct their own toolbox to become a carpenter and entrepreneur in their village. It surprised me that young children have no idea how to put a simple puzzle together.

Throughout the operational theatre we face opposition. However, most of the incidents are a result of "our" military operations.

We are bringing the fight to them and where we apply military force the enemy fades, sometimes they use the local population as human shields.

The insurgents use Improvised Explosive Devises to hurt us, but they hurt the non-combatants the most. The Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police are with us in the fight and they are brave soldiers defending their country.

In the next months we will continue our operations. The aim of Operation PAMIR ("highest mountain") is to keep the opposing force off balance and to set the conditions for successful operations in the spring of 2008.

While conducting military operations in the autumn and winter time, the Afghan authorities, the international community and ISAF will surge their reconstruction and development initiatives. The people of Afghanistan will see that we are committed to them and that they can shape their own future. They can count on our support.

A journey through the ISAF Support Division

Commentary by Navy Lieutenant Ben Kavanagh, Executive Officer for Deputy Chief of Staff of Support

Have you ever wondered who is responsible for getting you all the beans, bullets, bandages, heads and beds you need to do your job to the best of your ability? Well, look no further than your HQ ISAF Support Division. So, let's take a look at those unsung soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines that are so often overlooked and yet continue to tirelessly do their jobs in the background to ensure that the all of you are able to do your job to the best of your ability.

Our first stop on this journey, which for many of you is your first and last stop in theatre, is CJ1, otherwise known as the Personnel Branch. Under the leadership of Col (AUS) Alison Creagh, CJ1 works closely with the NATO staff at Joint Forces Command Brunssum, as well as SHAPE, to keep the Headquarters Crisis Establishment, or CE, billets manned with the most qualified service members from the 37 different supporting nations.

With a core staff of six military personnel, CJ1 tracks the comings and goings of over 1200 HQ ISAF CE personnel, not an easy task in a camp with over 1700. In addition to monitoring HQ ISAF personnel, CJ1 is also responsible for watching over the almost 40,000 ISAF personnel of KAF, KAIA, and the four Regional Commands. If that isn't enough, in 2007 alone, CJ1 oversaw the awarding of over 50,000 NATO medals, 70 COMISAF Commendation Awards, and several NATO Meritorious Service Medals.

In conjunction with CJ1, there is the ever important CJ1 Civilian Personnel Office. Under the skillful leadership of Mr. Ron

Neervoort, his team of five diligently work to provide the highest quality civilian contract employee to fill the hundreds of civilian jobs here at HQ ISAF.

Our final stop with-in the CJ1 office is with the Linguistics Department, whose 28 translators under the direction of Mr. Shah Esfahani, provide vital support to every branch, as there are admittedly few military personnel here that have the ability to translate Dari or Pashtun.

The next stop on our journey through the Support Branches is with CJ4, otherwise known as the Logistics Branch. Under the leadership of Col (CZE) Vladimir Halenka, CJ4 is responsible for the transportation, provision and maintenance of all supplies and equipment in ISAF Area of Operation (AOO). Let's take a quick look at what that means.

ISAF personnel consume in excess of 210,000 liters of water during the summer months, 160,000 liters in the winter, and food consumption is over 44 tons a day.

In order to sustain this level of consumption, CJ4 works to maintain minimum stock levels of over 4.2 million liters of water, and 890 tons of food. Now that is a lot of food and water. Food and water isn't the only concern for CJ4 either. They are also responsible for maintaining fuel stores, which is no small task considering ISAF consumes nearly 2 million liters of fuel a day.

Our third destination on the journey through the Support Branches signals for a stop at CJ6, otherwise known as the Communications and Information Systems Division.

The 125 strong team of CJ6, comprised of 12 different supporting nations, can be found at any given time working on a variety of projects. Whether maintaining the myriad of unclassified and classified networks at HQ ISAF or moving throughout the theatre implementing a variety of voice, data, and imagery services, CJ6 is poised to provide communications support anytime anywhere.

CJ8, otherwise known as the Financial Control Branch, is responsible for ensuring that everyone here at ISAF conducts themselves in a fiscally responsible manner. I can attest to you, that the job is by no means easy.

To put it in simple terms, in 2007 alone CJ8 has overseen the execution of several thousand contracts covering in excess of €400 million.

Are you feeling a little sick? Those Support guys sure do a lot. Well, we aren't done yet. The last stop on this journey is just what the doctor ordered. CJMed, the Medical Department here at HQ ISAF is here to fix you up when you are not at your best.

In 2007 alone the Medical Teams throughout Afghanistan have conducted nearly 1500 MedEvac missions providing care to over 2,500 patients. These guys are busy keeping us in the fight and putting us back together when things go wrong, and they are very good at their jobs

Thank you for taking the journey through the ISAF Support Division. As you are well aware now, these guys are working hard for you. Whether it is finding the right people for the job, maintaining the behind the scenes logistic and communications network up and running, paying the contracts, or providing you the much needed medical attention you deserve if the situation arises, the support team is always there for you.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Ray Winstead

Medical support provided by KAIA hospital surgical team.

Shaping the future of the ANSF

Story by Lt. Col. Barak J. Carlson
CSTC-A LNO to ISAF

General McNeill's recent visit to NATO headquarters provided COMISAF with an opportunity to draw attention to the progress that has been made this year in the development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). ISAF has worked closely with the US-led Combined Security Transition Force – Afghanistan (CSTC-A) throughout 2007 to improve both the quantity and quality of forces available to the ANSF.

The Afghan government had 93,000 soldiers and police in the field in January 2007, with the goal expanding the ANSF to an eventual strength of 152,000 personnel.

The number of police assigned to the Ministry of Interior (MOI) exceeded the number of available soldiers by nearly two to one, leaving the Afghan National Army (ANA) manned at less than one-half of its total authorizations.

The combined efforts of the international community and the Afghan government have resulted in the number of available ANSF forces exceeding the 100,000 mark in early 2007, and continuing to grow to more than 117,000 by the end of September.

ISAF has made an important contribution to the development of the ANSF by fielding Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) with ANA units in order to allow CSTC-A personnel assigned to Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) to assume mentoring duties with the ANP.

OMLTs are national assets that begin their training at their home stations several months prior to deploying to Afghanistan on six-month rotations.

Twenty-two OMLTs are operating alongside ANA corps, brigade and kandak units, relieving CSTC-A trainers of their training and mentoring responsibilities while continuing to improve the ability of ANA units to operate in conjunction with coalition forces. Several NATO member states are currently contributing OMLTs, including Italy, United Kingdom, Canada, Netherlands, Poland, France, Germany, Croatia, and Montenegro. An additional twelve OMLTs from France, Poland, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Latvia will be fielded over the next few months.

In addition to increasing the size of the ANSF, there has been significant progress in the effectiveness of the forces fielded by both the Afghan government. The HQ ISAF and CSTC-A staffs commonly assess unit effectiveness using a four-tier scale, with a series of Capability Milestones (CM) marking the progress of individual units.

Courtesy photo

Afghan National Army soldiers learn basic security maneuvers during an exercise.

ISAF and CSTC-A are addressing all components of justice system reform to include infrastructure investment, recruiting, and training programs for Afghan citizens working in country's criminal justice and prison systems. Dozens of courthouses and justice facilities have been built in eighteen provinces, bringing Afghanistan closer to the vision of establishing an integrated justice system that accommodates formal and informal justice traditions while adhering to the principles of the Rule of Law.

The retraining and reform of ANP has gained momentum throughout 2007, although progress is being made at a slower rate that with the ANA. Shortfalls in manning, equipping and training of the ANP resulted in all but a few ANP units to be assessed at CM4 at the beginning of 2007.

Initial efforts to improve both the training and leadership of the ANP has resulted in more than half of the fielded ANP units improving their CM rating in recent months.

The intensity of training has increased for ANP units beginning with an expanded Basic Police Training program that includes additional marksmanship and field training at the Regional Training Centers (RTCs). This past year marked the introduction of Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), a collection of quick reaction forces to complement the activities of the other ANP service branches. The government of Afghanistan is well on its way to establishing an ANCOP force of nearly 5,000 personnel by the end of next year.

This CONOPS will further define the role international forces will play in improving the effectiveness of both the ANA and the ANP while increasing the Afghan public's confidence in the government of Afghanistan. These efforts remain essential to fulfilling the COMISAF's mandate and ensuring a stable and prosperous future for the people of Afghanistan.

Shaping the future of the ANSF

Story by Lt. Col. Barak J. Carlson
CSTC-A LNO to ISAF

General McNeill's recent visit to NATO headquarters provided COMISAF with an opportunity to draw attention to the progress that has been made this year in the development of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). ISAF has worked closely with the US-led Combined Security Transition Force - Afghanistan (CSTC-A) throughout 2007 to improve both the quantity and quality of forces available to the ANSF.

The Afghan government had 93,000 soldiers and police in the field in January 2007, with the goal expanding the ANSF to an eventual strength of 152,000 personnel.

The number of police assigned to the Ministry of Interior (MOI) exceeded the number of available soldiers by nearly two to one, leaving the Afghan National Army (ANA) manned at less than one-half of its total authorizations.

The combined efforts of the international community and the Afghan government have resulted in the number of available ANSF forces exceeding the 100,000 mark in early 2007, and continuing to grow to more than 117,000 by the end of September.

ISAF has made an important contribution to the development of the ANSF by fielding Operational Mentoring and Liaison Teams (OMLTs) with ANA units in order to allow CSTC-A personnel assigned to Embedded Training Teams (ETTs) to assume mentoring duties with the ANP.

OMLTs are national assets that begin their training at their home stations several months prior to deploying to Afghanistan on six-month rotations.

Twenty-two OMLTs are operating alongside ANA corps, brigade and kandak units, relieving CSTC-A trainers of their training and mentoring responsibilities while continuing to improve the ability of ANA units to operate in conjunction with coalition forces. Several NATO member states are currently contributing OMLTs, including Italy, United Kingdom, Canada, Netherlands, Poland, France, Germany, Croatia, and Montenegro. An additional twelve OMLTs from France, Poland, Belgium, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and Latvia will be fielded over the next few months.

In addition to increasing the size of the ANSF, there has been significant progress in the effectiveness of the forces fielded by both the Afghan government. The HQ ISAF and CSTC-A staffs commonly assess unit effectiveness using a four-tier scale, with a series of Capability Milestones (CM) marking the progress of individual units.

Courtesy photo

Afghan National Army soldiers learn basic security maneuvers during an exercise.

ISAF and CSTC-A are addressing all components of justice system reform to include infrastructure investment, recruiting, and training programs for Afghan citizens working in country's criminal justice and prison systems. Dozens of courthouses and justice facilities have been built in eighteen provinces, bringing Afghanistan closer to the vision of establishing an integrated justice system that accommodates formal and informal justice traditions while adhering to the principles of the Rule of Law.

The retraining and reform of ANP has gained momentum throughout 2007, although progress is being made at a slower rate that with the ANA. Shortfalls in manning, equipping and training of the ANP resulted in all but a few ANP units to be assessed at CM4 at the beginning of 2007.

Initial efforts to improve both the training and leadership of the ANP has resulted in more than half of the fielded ANP units improving their CM rating in recent months.

The intensity of training has increased for ANP units beginning with an expanded Basic Police Training program that includes additional marksmanship and field training at the Regional Training Centers (RTCs). This past year marked the introduction of Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), a collection of quick reaction forces to complement the activities of the other ANP service branches. The government of Afghanistan is well on its way to establishing an ANCOP force of nearly 5,000 personnel by the end of next year.

This CONOPS will further define the role international forces will play in improving the effectiveness of both the ANA and the ANP while increasing the Afghan public's confidence in the government of Afghanistan. These efforts remain essential to fulfilling the COMISAF's mandate and ensuring a stable and prosperous future for the people of Afghanistan.

When we look in the past...

Commentary by 1st Lieutenant Serdar Eyiler
RC-Capital Public Affairs Office

When looking back throughout a year in RC-C, many events can be remembered that were good moments in history and even bad ones, however, a chance at reflection indicates just what the Turkish Army has accomplished throughout the year.

On Aug. 6, 2006, command of the Kabul Multinational Brigade was transferred from Brig. Gen. Nenko Nenov (BU-A) to Brig. Gen. Frank Le Bot (FR-A). On that same day, the Kabul Multinational Brigade (KMNB) was renamed Regional Command Capital and assumed command of ISAF's Kabul area of responsibility.

The name change brought the Kabul area into line with the International Security Assistance Force structure. The old KMNB name reflected the fact that originally, ISAF was only responsible for the Kabul area. This new structure based on regional commands is more appropriate to ISAF's vastly expanded mission in Afghanistan, which now covers almost the entire country.

One particular operation that began during the year to help with relations was Operation Sabr.

Sabr may be a simple word, but it carried a deeper message at the time of the operation meaning patience.

In Afghanistan, the return of peace, security, reconstruction efforts and respect may be a long process after decades of conflict. It will take a long-term commitment. However, it will not just be ISAF, but the Afghan community that must continue striving towards controlling their own fate.

The concept of the operation was based on a simple word: Sabr, which means be patient in both Dari and Pashto, as well as symbolizing an acronym. Each one of these letters defines the first letter of a key word linked to Sabr:

S= Sulha (peace)
A= Amniyat (security)
B= Bazsazi (reconstruction)
R= Rehayat (respect)

On Dec. 1,2007, Task Force Pantera of the Italian Navy, commanded by Capt. Nicola Milillo, took over from Task Force Seagull. TF Pantera continued the Italian mission in the skies of Kabul where the AB 212 helicopters of the Air Force and Navy contributed to the ISAF for more than one year.

TF Seagull carried out 258 missions, 577 flights and almost 500 hours of flying. The task force was involved in numerous missions, including training activities with multi-national personnel of different nations, to reinforce the synergy between
the military contingents. Also. the TF was on hand to assist the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan through carrying out routine taskings to improve security.

In Camp Dogan, home to the Turkish battle group, another kind of joint training program was performed for 25 policemen in a three-day period.

The purpose of this course was to facilitate joint patrols and checkpoint activities, to ensure unity and improve mutual cooperation, coordination and confidence between nationalities.

In order to reach these goals, TU BG Gendarmerie Special Operations Company performed the three-day training program for 25 Kabul City policemen to receive training on how to search individuals, vehicles, buildings, set up of vehicle checkpoints, crime scene investigation, crowd control and how to defend against attack.

Another asset to ISAF was a Role 2 French field hospital that opened at Camp Warehouse. It has a small, but well-equipped structure with three surgeons (general, orthopedic and ophthalmologic), an anesthetist, an internist, one emergency doctor and a dentist.

Three German doctors integrated into the medical staff and worked in perfect collaboration. The hospital can take any life-threatening emergencies and if necessary can organize aero medical evacuation in Kabul. This hospital has proved time and again that it is a necessary part of the RC-C's plan to create a safe environment to operate in with proper medical facilities if trouble exist.

With Turkey deploying 400 more people, the number of Turkish troops reached 1,150. The overall number of troops in RC-C, primary comprised of forces from Turkey, Italy and France, rose to 3000. There are currently 14 countries participating in the region to maintain security around the Capitol.

In the not to far distant future, the people of Afghanistan will have the security they are looking for, as well as the reconstruction of a once war-torn country to live in peace. Until then, ISAF soldiers will maintain ground and continue to fight on until that peace is secured.

Afghan National Police practice shooting targets during a live-fire exercise.

Working with the Afghan National Police in Baghlan province

Story and photos by Camilla Algarheim

In an effort to bolster the security in Baghlan province, the Hungarian led PRT have pulled all resources together to strengthen the capacity of the ANP.

"We are trying to show continued security presence here, but in some areas we are somewhat limited. We can't for instance make any arrests or body searches. So we need them as much as they need us," said Capt. Peter Varga. "We are conducting day and night patrols with the ANP to show people in the province that we are here to provide a safe environment."

The Hungarian collaboration with the ANP in Baghlan province is mainly three folded; joint patrols, training (practice and theory) and donations. Deputy Commander László Fekete explained that the Hungarian assistance is based on weaknesses that they identified through observing ANP officers on the job during joint patrols.

"Through joint operations we saw that there were no effective field training officer programs and that many of the recruits were illiterate," said Commander Fekete. "Generally this is a problem in the whole province, especially in the remote districts. There are also many structural problems within the Afghan police and some units are plagued with corruption and the wages are to low, so our training should run simultaneously with any restructuring efforts by the Ministry of Interior to produce any real results."

The Hungarian assistance is initially focused on basic training, field based training in different policing procedures and weapon handling and mentoring, crucial to the success of any police training. Recently the PRT conducted six days of consecutive training; theory and practice before organizing a live firing exercise for 57 police officers from different units attached to the police HQ in the province.

"In our contingent we have some excellent NCO weapon specialists who have been conducting training with both male and female police officers," said Commander Fekete. "I believe it has been a major challenge for our soldiers, but they have risen to the occasion."

Theoretical training is always followed by field training and has so far proved successful. They had positive feedback from the police officers themselves and the collaboration has improved relations between the PRT and the ANP in this province, according to the deputy commander.

"Most Afghans are eager to learn and understand that the ANP needs to support the rule of law," said Tibor Debreceni, a Hungarian weapons specialist.

Furthermore Baghlan province is only the second province in the country to have a female police training unit and 14 new recruits followed the same program as their male colleagues on a separate occasion. For some it was their first weapons handling lesson, followed by an opportunity to put theory into practice on the shooting range.

"I don't have a problem being trained by male soldiers from a different country," said Razia, an Afghan female officer. "Admittedly, I was a bit apprehensive to begin with, but they are really professional and I don't think it is any different to work with them than with my Afghan male colleagues."

The PRT has also been reinforced with three Hungarian civilian police officers who will provide training and much needed field based monitoring for a year for 240 police officers. The main focus of the training will be on operational policing skills, crime investigation and human rights.

Lacking both individual equipment and unit equipment the Hungarian PRT has made numerous donations to the Police HQ in Pul-E Khumri and also to district police stations in most areas of Baghlan province. They have donated bunk beds for the stand by police who spend six out of seven days on duty, ammunition holsters and winter clothes among other things.

The Boghi Pul Bridge gets much needed repairs

Story and Photos by Gina Gillespie
Forward Media Team, PRT Farah

The American-built Boghi Pul Bridge has spanned the Farah River since the early '60s. It is the main east-west artery leaving Farah City, and ties the provincial centre to the western districts.

Last year cracks appeared in the two headwalls of the bridge, and the metal sheet pile began pushing away from the wall, causing the pile cap to break. There was a danger that winter floods would knock down the bridge. The 150 meter structure needed emergency repairs to keep commerce flowing through the region.

When advised of the bridge's deteriorating condition, the PRT moved quickly to obtain $190,000 USD in funding for emergency bridge repairs. They built a temporary river crossing for cars and dug a channel to divert the water flow away from the construction. The headwalls and pile cap were replaced, and big rocks were placed 50 meters down from each side of the headwall.

The bridge is now good for another 50 years. When the repairs were completed, the water was returned to its original course.

"The PRT identified that as a very important project, and constructed a bridge abutment repair which allowed the road to span that one small portion of the bridge abutment that got washed out," said Navy Lieutenant John Genta, an Engineer at PRT Farah. "This has allowed the commerce from the western districts, Pusht-I Koh, Shib Koh and Lash-e Jowain to more easily flow into Farah City."

Completion of the Boghi Pul Bridge occurred in the year 2007 and repairs will last another 50 years

Italian Army train Afghans about Counter-IED activity

Commentary by 1st Lieutenant Serdar Eyiler
RC-Capital Public Affairs Office

What most undermines the public's sense of law, safety and security in the Gozara district, as in the entire country, is the enhancement of a particular attack being used by insurgent forces. It is the use of improvised explosive devices (IED.) against Afghan National Security Forces and the International Security Assistance Force troops.

Like many others criminal acts, this one is particularly subtle and represents the most dangerous and unexpected form of attack used by the opponents.

Gen. Fausto Macor, the RC-West Commander, stated that this kind of activity is going to have no place in the future Afghanistan and criminals should be persecuted to reinforce the sense of law between the citizens. In order to move first steps in this direction, ANSF have to acquire the capability to manage these weapons with an appropriate know-how.

Joe Madia, a U.S. contractor responsible for the Afghanistan Justice Sector Support Program (JSSP), was asked by the Counter-IED Cell of the RC-W to hold a post-blast Criminal Investigation Course for prosecutors and policemen of the Herat province.

"We undertook this enterprise in order to develop the capacity and to increase the effectiveness of the ANSF and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to counter IED impact," said Maj. Bruno Pisciotta, RC-W C-IED program director. "Also it will establish a forensic capability for the GIRoA".

The course had the goal to give attendees basic training to provide supervision of activities and evidence collection. Also, to learn how evidence is collected from the scene as an important step to decide if evidence should be used in trials against criminals.
The course was attended by 31 prosecutors and policemen of the Herat province. Included in the group were two women who were inserted into a six-months training project.

"This has been the first opportunity we had to work with the Afghan authorities on this field," said Maj Pisciotta. "Now they have a sufficient know-how to start the activity, but they also know what ISAF can do to contrast this crime and which kind of support ISAF can give them. In the meanwhile, they have the time to build up their own self-government and in case of an incident we can share information between us."

Mine detection facility opens for business

Story by MCpl Ken Fenner

A new landmine detection facility, designed to help troops detect lethal landmines, has been opened in the southern Afghan province of Kandahar Aug. 16.

The facility is managed by a team of specialist defense scientists from the United Kingdom's Land Warfare Center who are looking at new and improved ways of helping detect hidden mines.

Afghanistan, which has suffered from war for much of the last three decades, is the world's most mined country with the Taliban extremists and former occupying armies laying several million mines – often in unmarked minefields – across the country.

"Not only are there millions of legacy mines strewn across the country which pose considerable hazard to local people, mines relaid by insurgents are causing casualties to the International Security and Assurance Force," said Dr. Chris Owen, science and technology adviser to the commander of UK forces in Afghanistan.

"Visually mines are very hard to see with the naked eye so we use technology to help us detect them. We already have a wide range of technologies and procedures designed to minimise the threat they pose but we are always looking at new and better ways of detecting the mines before they can cause any damage."

"There is no 'silver bullet' that will remove the mine threat completely but the results from the work going on here is designed to help us find more effective ways of minimising the risks," said Dr. Owen. "In particular, we are looking forward to working with our Canadian and US coalition partners at ways to exploit multi-spectral techniques, making use of images gathered from optimum wavelengths in the electromagnetic spectrum."

Walled-off by protective barriers, the center consists of a series of man made environments designed to mimic the conditions faced by troops out on operations – with roads, a man made wadi, rough terrain, ditches and dirt tracks.

The facility will be shared with mine detection experts from across coalition forces to help spread the best practice across the scientific communities and make Afghanistan a safer place.

ISAF completes major health facilities in Tarin Kowt

RC-South Staff Reports

The Australian Reconstruction Task Force (RTF), part of the Dutch-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Regional Command South, has completed two of its major construction projects on Sept. 17.

Governor Monib and Captain Dan Keep cut the ribbon to officially open the Tarin Kowt Hospital.

The redevelopment of the Tarin Kowt Hospital and construction of the Yaklengah Comprehensive Health Clinic are landmark projects in the international community's quest to deliver improved health care for the people of southern Afghanistan.

"The International Security Assistance Force is determined to assist your government to steadily improve your lives" Lieutenant Colonel Jarvie said to the assembled crowd gathered for the hospital opening.

"We see high quality health and education facilities as the foundation of a prosperous community and this is why we are working so hard to deliver improved health infrastructure in and around Tarin Kowt" he added.

"Prior to commencing the works, the hospital was in a poor state of repair. It was ill-equipped and poorly staffed, struggling to perform the role of the major health facility in the Province," said Captain Dan Keep, Project Manager.

In a little under one year, the hospital has become one of the more developed medical centres in Southern Afghanistan.

The second project to be completed this week was the Yaklengah Comprehensive Health Clinic, located about ten kilometers South West of Tarin Kowt. The works conducted at this facility have included an extension and renovation to the main clinic building, construction of staff accommodation, expansion to the compound wall and an upgrade to the water supply.

These two projects have been the RTF's most significant undertaking to date. The works were all planned, funded and managed by Australian Army engineers and built mostly by local contractors. This process ensures a high degree of local ownership of the projects, employment and vital income for their developing economy. RTF tradesmen have also contributed to both projects when local expertise was not available.

Bagram Airfield's new helicopter ramp completed

Story By Kevin Cullen,
Project Manager, NAMSA

Bagram Airfield (BAF) ushered in NATO air power at the ribbon cutting ceremonies for the newly constructed ISAF ramps on Sept. 27.

A fixed wing tactic ramp and a rotary wing helicopter apron were each constructed simultaneously in support of NATO missions throughout Afghanistan. Construction of the two facilities began in April and their rapid completion couldn't have come at a more opportune time. The US has already negotiated with NATO for beneficial occupancy of the fixed wing ramp in support of operational requirements.

The scope of the construction effort was in no small feat. Two aprons and taxiways constructed of concrete and asphalt support NATO fixed wing fighters and attack helicopters. Over 12,600 cubic meters of concrete was poured, 22,000 steel dowels were inserted into the concrete for strength, and over 32 kilometers of expansion joints were saw-cut into the 40,000 square meters of ramp and taxiway.

The developer of the ISAF air operating surfaces project was spearheaded by the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA), who hired Yuksel Construction Company to serve as the contractor.

Yuksel is Turkey's second largest general construction firm; they've built dams, hydroelectric plants, railroad stations and most recently they made a large contribution towards the expansion of the US Air Base at Balad, Iraq.

Force Protection at the home of the US Combined Joint Task Force headquarters for Afghanistan is one of the most challenging requirements for an outside contractor.

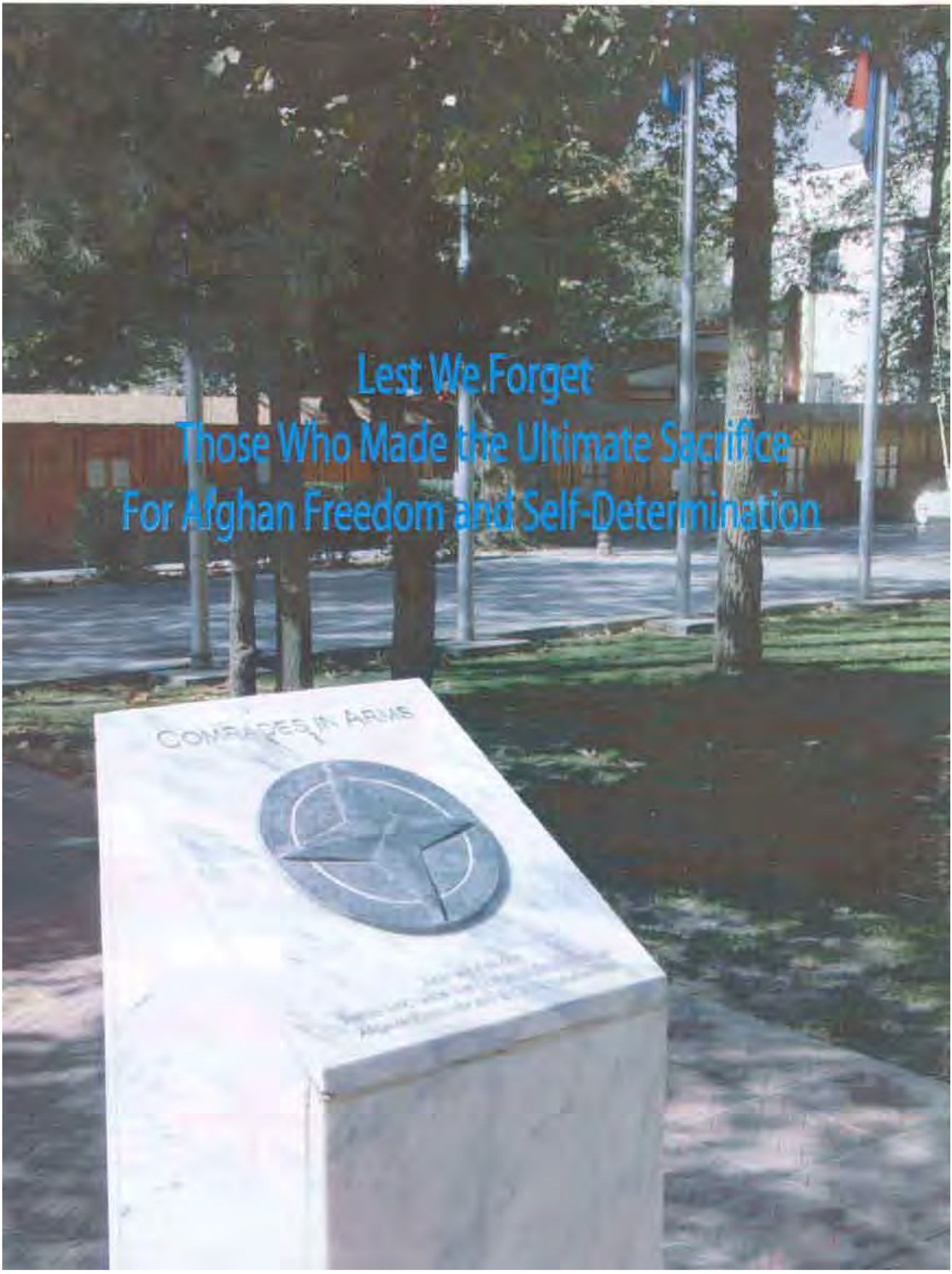
Getting into the base requires a lengthy process that insures base security at the highest level possible. For the contractor that can mean the loss of precious time on the jobsite.

NAMSA's project was three months behind schedule before it even broke ground; a typical scenario that results from a backlog of personnel needing security badges from BAF's inundated screening center. By doubling their shifts and receiving support from the base, the project was able to regain ground quickly. After only six months of construction the $9 million project was complete.

This marked the first time in recent BAF history that an off-base developer and contractor would complete their works both on-time, and under budget.

New ramp opens as two helicopters land for first time Sept. 27

Photo by: Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Hesler


Lest We Forget
Those Who Made the Ultimate Sacrifice
For Afghan Freedom and Self-Determination
COMRADES IN ARMS