

International Security Assistance Force

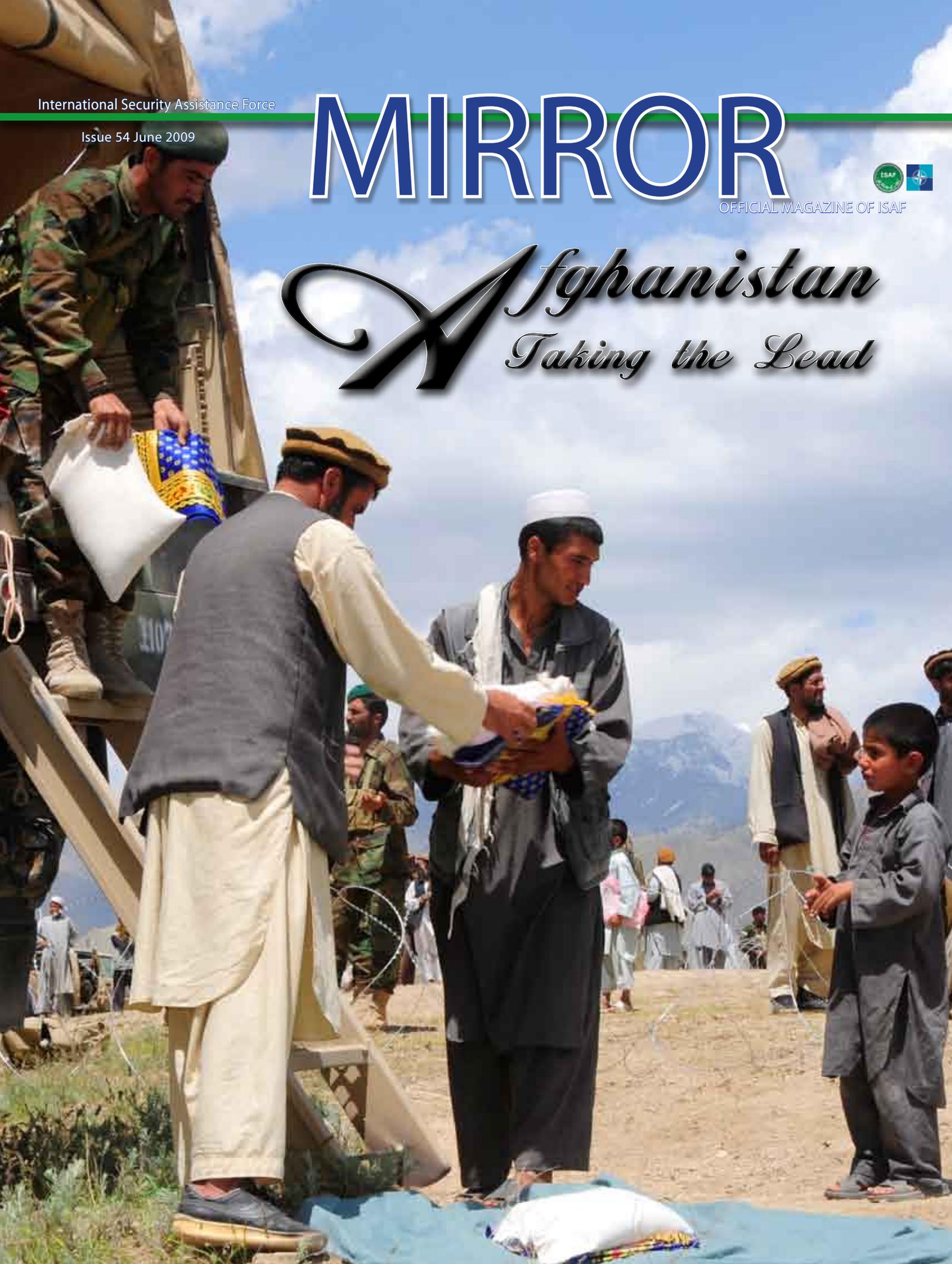
Issue 54 June 2009

MIRROR

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF ISAF



Afghanistan *Taking the Lead*



COMISAF Intent

In full partnership with the growing institutions of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and within the means allocated by NATO and the many nations supporting the mission, ISAF demonstrates NATO's commitment to the **security, reconstruction** and the extension of **governance** in Afghanistan. Further, ISAF demonstrates both the will and capacity to apply irresistible force by, through, and in support of Afghan National Security Forces

against the insurgents' strategy and others who forcibly oppose the progress of this campaign. We will assist in demonstrating the growing capacity of ANSF to meet the GIROA's security challenges, and will operate in such a way as to demonstrate respect for the Afghan people and their culture in order to effect their direct support of our endeavor.



ISAF Mission



Conduct military operations in the assigned area of operations to assist the government of Afghanistan in the establishment and maintenance of a safe and secure environment with full engagement of Afghan National Security Forces, in order to extend government authority and influence, thereby facilitating Afghanistan's reconstruction and contributing to regional stability.

General Stanley McChrystal
Commander, ISAF

Force Strength by Nation

	Albania	140		Finland	110		Lithuania	200		Spain	780
	Australia	1090		France	2780		Lukemburg	9		Sweden	290
	Austria	2		Georgia	1		Netherlands	1770		The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	170
	Azerbaijan	90		Germany	3465		New Zealand	150		Turkey	660
	Blegium	450		Greece	140		Norway	490		Ukraine	10
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2		Hungary	370		Poland	1590		United Arab Emerates	25
	Bulgaria	820		Iceland	8		Portugal	30		United Kingdom	8300
	Canada	2830		Ireland	7		Romania	860		United States	26215
	Croatia	280		Italy	2350		Singapore	20			
	Czech Republic	580		Jordan	7		Slovakia	230			
	Denmark	700		Latvia	160		Slovenia	70			
	Estonia	140									
										Total (Rounded)	58390

Editorial Staff:

Royal Navy Captain
Mark Durkin
Chief, Public Affairs

US Navy Lieutenant Comander
Mark Walton
Editor-in-Chief

U.S. Navy Lieutenant
Dave Hecht
Executive Editor

US Air Force Senior Master Sergeant
Brian Hawthorne
Senior Managing Editor

US Air Force Master Sergeant
Chris Haylett
Managing Editor; Layout and Design

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Curtis L. Campbell
Editor, Design and Production

MIRROR

CONTENTS

Pages 4-5

Regional Command Capital



Pages 6-7

Regional Command South



Pages 10-11 COVER STORY

Afghanistan Taking the Lead



Pages 12-13

Afghanistan Photo Collage



Pages 14-15

Regional Command North



Pages 16-19

Regional Command West



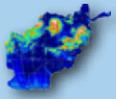
Page 19

Poppy Eradication

Page 22

From the Eyes of the Troops

The ISAF Mirror is a Headquarters International Security Assistance Force Public Affairs product intended for the information and entertainment of ISAF and associated personnel. Though articles have been edited, opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the policies of NATO, Joint Forces Command Headquarters, Brunssum or ISAF. The Mirror is published every quarter and distributed among the regional commands. View it on-line at www.nato.int/isaf. Submissions to ISAF Mirror should be related to ISAF operations; however, other articles may be run based on their appeal to an international military audience. Articles should be sent in Microsoft Word format and photos should be at least 4.5 cm at 300 dpi resolution. Include identifying information of authors and/or photographers. E-mail submissions to curtis.campbell@hq.isaf.nato.int. The deadline for submissions is the 25th day of the month prior to publication. To contact the editor, call DSN 318 686 2466 or e-mail the PA in box at pressoffice@hq.isaf.nato.int



REGIONAL COMMAND CAPITAL/HEADQUARTERS

Afghan Boy Receives Hospital's First Adjustable Crutches

The first adjustable crutches are now in use at International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) Camp Holland medical facility in Tarin Kowt.

ISAF military staff from the Australian Trade and Training School (ATTS) presented the crutches to the hospital Feb. 27. As a result of these new crutches, physiotherapist Captain Egon, was able to help a young Afghan patient with his first steps that same day.

"We are very happy with these new crutches because the old ones were often cause for frustration," said Captain Egon. "The old crutches didn't fit well and sometimes we had to cut them to make them useable."

The new crutches features screws for easy adjustment. "Now we can make them fit immediately so the rehabilitation can



start faster. Sometimes, patients had to wait a day in the hospital because we didn't have suitable crutches. As a result of these new ones, that problem is solved," Egon continued.

The ATTS, staffed by Australian military

instructors, offered their help to the Camp Holland hospital upon hearing about the problem relating to the non-adjustable crutches. The ATTS offers 8-week training courses for Afghans in carpentry, plumbing, as well as metal and steel work. A design for adjustable crutches was prepared by an ATTS instructor and presented as a project to a carpentry class. The student producing the best product would offer his creation to the hospital. The winner of the project presented Captain Egon with twelve pairs of crutches sized for children and twelve for adults.

The Role 2 medical facility has contracted the ATTS to deliver additional crutches over the next six months. In the future, the project may be able to offer crutches to the Tarin Kowt Hospital as well as area aid stations.

NATO Secretary General Holds Media Roundtable at ISAF Headquarters

*U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant Brenda Nipper
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

NATO will support the forthcoming Afghanistan presidential elections. That was one of the messages conveyed in a media roundtable session by NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer in the main conference room at ISAF Headquarters.

Taking questions from members of the local Afghan media as well as the Associated Press, Scheffer offered that Afghanistan's presidential elections will be "free, clear and credible with ISAF and NATO forces standing by to support Afghan forces in the security of the election."

Scheffer also noted that the expansion of troops will play vital role in ISAF's mission of supporting the country's presidential election.

The Secretary General also reaffirmed

what he had said earlier in the day at a joint press conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai in that NATO takes great concern over the loss of life for innocent Afghans who are caught in the crossfire of insurgent attacks.

"One civilian casualty is one too many," he explained. "We will be as prudent and careful as we can to prevent civilian casualties, but we cannot forget that a majority of those who are killed are caused by enemy forces. Any case where NATO forces are at fault will be investigated thoroughly."

Scheffer is currently concluding an assessment tour of NATO operations around Afghanistan. He and visiting ambassadors of the North Atlantic Council visited various Forward Operating Bases throughout the country to assess that status of forces.

"Overall, the delegation felt it was a good visit," he said. "I cannot agree with the conclusion that the Taliban is winning in Afghanistan. We have made significant progress over the last eight years and while there are still challenges, particularly in the south, we cannot assess that we are losing."

According to Scheffer, success in Afghanistan will require the continued co-



operation of NATO and Afghan military forces as well as promoting the relationship the country has at the borders with Pakistan.

Securing the Vote

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Terry Matlock
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

There are many things on the plates of those coordinating and running the Afghanistan security effort at the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Headquarters in Kabul Afghanistan, but the Afghanistan presidential election is one that continually ranks higher and higher as time moves forward.

For one person in particular, election security is the only plate that exists.

Australian General Damian Cantwell is chief of the Election Task Force at ISAF Headquarters and is in charge of coordinating all security activities between ISAF and the various organization that will provide security for the upcoming elections.

Much of General Cantwell's attention is on ensuring that ISAF will be able to support the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF) in the coming elections. "We need to remember that this is an Afghan led activity and it is important to understand that this is a process which is being conducted by the Afghan people, for the people," Cantwell added. "What we are seeking to do is to facili-

tate and support the arrangements that need to be in place to allow that to occur".

As with many events in Afghanistan, there are many challenges that have to be dealt with to ensure that the people of Afghanistan can move freely to cast their votes in a safe society.

"The ongoing concerns with active, and very worrisome with some respects, insurgency needs to be at the forefront of our security considerations when we work to plan our support in their election activities," said Cantwell. "Of course some other areas are that we have a changing democratic process for the government and the people of Afghanistan to work through, but I am sure we will be able to provide support where it is appropriate to allow that to occur."

"I would categorize the risk as many and varied" Cantwell replied when asked about threats associated with election activities. "Some of the insurgency groups pose a security threat not just to the process of the elections but to the safety and security of the people at large," said the task force commander. "There are things that clearly need to be addressed as far as security, and to help facilitate a sense of confidence and well being amongst the community. So as to allow them to be encouraged to take part in this democratic process."

Kabul, Afghanistan -- Brigadier General Damian Cantwell answers questions from U.S. Navy Lieutenant Dave Hecht during a taped interview for inclusion into the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) weekly "ASK ISAF" feature. General Cantwell is currently serving as ISAF's Election Task force chief who is responsible for coordinating all security requirements that the Afghanistan Government may need in the upcoming Presidential Election. ISAF photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer Terry Matlock.



The Election Task Force is working in a supporting role but officials want it to be noted that their counterparts in the Afghanistan government are doing their part as well.

"It is important to realize that when viewed over all, the organizations that are responsible for the security, in the first instance are the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). The Afghanistan National Army (ANA) the Afghan National Police (ANP), are working very hard to insure that the best possible security arrangements are in place to allow the elections to occur," says Cantwell, "of course ISAF is in a position to provide support to those indigenous and integral ANSF and other organizations."

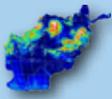
There are many moving parts when one takes into account all the troops involved in a support operation this big. It could be a daunting task but Cantwell stated that the Election Task Force has it all in their capable hands.

"There are a number of actions yet to be undertaken and completed, there are some force flow issues for instance, placement of troops and allocation of troops where appropriate across the ISAF plain, supporting the local organizations. We are confident we are going to have these measures in place for the elections."

General Cantwell then expanded on force strength and the possibilities of obtaining more troops. "There are a number of additional countries providing additional troops and those troops are very welcome. There are a number of formal and informal offers that continue to be negotiated and acted on. We are looking to build strength of about 90,000 ISAF troops across the country."

Once one takes into account all the pieces of this giant puzzle, planning then becomes a very important step in reaching the desired goal. Organizing on a scale this large can be difficult when considering all the assets and resources that are available over several organizations each having to be coordinated and their needs addressed.

"One part of this process will be to conduct a series of rehearsals at different levels to ensure that those organizations of ANA, ANP and NDS, are working together and where we can provide additional support when requested to allow that interaction and integration to occur. We will ensure all those sorts of actions that are requested from ISAF, as we approach election day, and during and beyond that time, are able to be provided in a timely and appropriate fashion".



REGIONAL COMMAND SOUTH

29 Royal Artillery Regiment Prepares to Head Home.

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Aramis X. Ramirez
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

Few people can imagine what they would accomplish by the age of 26.

But for British Captain Adrian Ford, Officer in Charge of Delta Troop, 8 ALMA Battery Commando 29 Royal Artillery Regiment (RAR) at Forward Operating Base Edinburgh in southern Afghanistan, one accomplishment he can add is a leadership position for his second Middle Eastern deployment in his two-and-a-half year military career.

"It's a huge responsibility," he said. "Our operations are triple checked and if we're slightly off, it can result in a casualty and that could bring a massive blow to our efforts, especially here in Afghanistan where the battle first is to win hearts and minds of the people."

Ford said the last six months in Afghanistan have been grueling, but spirits remain high as the 29 RAR heads for home. They'll soon see their replacements from the 40 RAR arrive where they will begin the turnover process before returning to Portsmouth, United Kingdom.

"I'd say the only challenge we've had with this particular assignment is that we were a bit disjointed from what was going on outside of the FOB," Ford explained. "The gunnery operations that occur here are operations from a static position. Only when we rotate out to places like the local Roshan Tower, do the guys see and interact with the local people. That's very important because soldiers have to know why they're here."

Gunner Ryan Donahue, a world kickboxing champion and Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) fighter, said he knew why he chose to temporarily put aside professional matches to serve his country in Afghanistan.

"It's not easy being in the military, but it's important," he explained. "After six months, we can go home and say we were part of something bigger. It hasn't been easy by any means, but the rewards in the end are what matters and that's contributing to the peace process."

In all, the 29 RAR is composed of four troops each deployed to a different FOB or patrol base in the southern regions of the country.



MUSA QAL'EH, Afghanistan--Members of Delta Troop 8 ALMA Battery Commando 29 Royal Artillery Regiment (RAR) stand for a group photo at Forward Operating Base Edinburgh on March 10, 2009. The 29 RAR, composed of British and Australian gunners, recently completed its six month tour and headed back in May. ISAF photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Aramis X. Ramirez.

Delta and Charlie troops at FOB Edinburgh and Patrol Base Silab, respectively, had specially integrated Australian gunners from the 4th Field Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery out of Townsville, Australia. Ford attributed their integration as a key aspect to the string of successful missions over the last six months including operations SOND

CHARA in Nad-e Ali and HERRICK in Musa Qal-eh.

"They brought a lot of enthusiasm to the troop," Ford said. "The international relationships between nations are an example we can give to Afghan military forces to show that cooperation is key to winning any kind of conflict."

ISAF Soldiers' Spinning Raises Funds for Afghan Children

Troops from several nations braved hot conditions at Kandahar Air Field on April 18 to conduct a spinning marathon to raise money for the charity, War Child International. War Child International proceeds are used for the promotion of children's rights through physical education and traditional Afghan games and music.

The marathon ran from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with people committing to complete different durations of time in the high endurance stationary cycling event.

"I feel broken," said Dutch Marine Captain Didier Buddelmeijer, a certified spinning instructor who also served as one of two coordinators for the event. "I am hurting a little," Buddelmeijer laughed, "but in the end it was really worth it."

Over 40 spinners enrolled in the event and they all supported each other as curious onlookers made donations to the cause.

"I was impressed with the enthusiasm that everyone showed here today," stated Buddelmeijer. "It seems everyone got involved and had a great time. This event was far better than I could have ever expected."

One spinner, Dutch Army Captain Ellen De Jonge, worked for the entire day for what she believed was a great cause. "I feel really good right now," said De Jonge. "I have been here since October of last year and I have done a couple of marathons, but this one is the best. I leave here in about 10 days and I am proud to say that this is my departing gift to the children of Afghanistan."



Another coordinator for the event, Rene Derksen, a Warrant Officer in the Dutch Air Force, was

proud of the participation and the amount of money the event raised for the children of Afghanistan.

"When we first looked into this event, everyone thought it would be a good idea," said Derksen. "It took us a total of two hours to get the whole event organized. It seems everyone was willing to donate time, equipment and personnel to the event."

"We raised more than 9,700 dollars today," stated a pleased Derksen. "It's an eye opening more money than we ever expected. The best part is, for every 20 dollars we get, War Child can support a child for a whole year."



SPIN BULDAK, Afghanistan--U.S. Army Colonel William Hix, Commander, Afghan Regional Security Integration Command (ARSIC) South reviews the graduates of the Afghan Border Patrol Focused Border Development Program with Major General Siafullah Hakim, Chief of the ABP, 3rd Zone, at a ceremony held outside the ABP Border Center at Spin Buldak on April 2. ISAF photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Aramis X. Ramirez.

200 Afghan Border Police Officers Graduate from Development Program

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Aramis X. Ramirez
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

A graduation ceremony was held on April 2 for 200 members of the Afghan Border Police (ABP), 3rd Zone, who completed a seven-week Focused Border Development Training Program at the ABP Border Center in Spin Buldak, Afghanistan.

The program is a joint training venture between International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Regional Command South and the Afghan Regional Security Integration Command (ARSIC) South. It was developed to further train Afghans who have elected to serve in the Border Police Force by providing extended instruction on infantry patrol, vehicle maintenance and other military-like operations such as, road blocks and entry control point procedures.

“We developed this program to better train Border Police Officers because we saw their initial training was either lacking or non-existent,” said U.S. Army Colonel William Hix, Commander, ARSIC-South, during a meet-and-greet with 3rd Zone Border Police Chief, Major General Siafullah Hakim.

Hix also explained that the development of this program was just the first in several steps in rebuilding Afghan forces

at the borders. Currently, the 3rd Zone of the ABP covers the borders with Iran and Pakistan.

“We are happy to inform that we are currently planning construction projects to build or refurbish currently established Border Police forts and centers all along the south,” he said.

Hix said he hopes to see the construction projects completed before the end of the year.

Hakim joined Hix in handing out certificates alongside instructors of the course to the graduates and commended his officers on their “great courage in accepting further training to make them a stronger force that will aid in keeping control if not ridding [Afghanistan] of insurgents.”

“I am confident this police force will provide the security needed to establish ourselves once again,” Hakim continued. “The people will see us and depend on us, and that will be our greatest accomplishment.”

As this is the first group from the ABP 3rd Zone to complete this specially developed training program, RC-South and ARSIC-South leaders hope to see at least six graduations a year over the next four years.

Afghan Security Forces, Supported by ISAF, Discover Weapons in Sangin.

The Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), supported by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), recently conducted the latest in the Operation GHARTSE PALANG series, targeting known facilitators of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), disrupting the flow of enemy weapons and funding in Helmand province’s Sangin area.

One hundred and twenty ANA troops were joined by approximately 120 ISAF and 20 ANP members in the two-day operation. Afghan security forces led all searches as ISAF provided support and assistance from specialized search teams.

The operation resulted in the discovery of a number of small arms and rocket-propelled grenade warheads, as well as raw opium and home-made explosives, demonstrating the link between the narcotics trade and the insurgency. All items were destroyed in a controlled explosion.

“The operation combined the capabilities of ISAF forces with the skills of both the ANA and the ANP, leading to the successful capture of a known Taliban sympathiser and financial supporter,” said Major Jonny Kitson, Commanding Officer of the British mentoring team.

Re-Commissioned 25th Naval Construction Battalion Deploys to Southern Afghanistan

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Aramis X. Ramirez
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

Preparations are currently underway at Kandahar Air Field (KAF) to accommodate the increase in the number of personnel being deployed to the International Security Assistance

Force (ISAF) Regional Command-South (RC-S) area of operation as part of the expansion of U.S. troops that was signed into action by President Barack Obama.

The 25th Naval Construction Regiment (NCR), which was re-commissioned last year, deployed from Gulfport, Mississippi, to Afghanistan in February, relieving the outgoing 1st NCR.

The last time the 25th NCR was stood up was for a brief six-month period immediately after the Invasion of Normandy during WWII.

“It’s quite a historical regiment to work for,” said Capt. Jeffrey Borowy, 25th NCR Commodore. “We’ve been preparing for this deployment for over a year now, and



everyone here is quite enthusiastic to be here and do a good job.”

The 25th NCR consists of two battalions each in charge of different projects in and around RC-South. Those include leveling projects at KAF for helo operations as well as expansion projects for troop accommodations around Camp Bastion.

Borowy, an engineering officer of 23 years, explained that the 25th NCR will work in conjunction with various U.S. Army engineer battalions as well as civilian contractors to support the expansion of troops expected to arrive before the end of the spring.

“The Army will do most of the planning for our projects and we’ll get out there and build,” he said. “The only challenge we see is getting the materials in a timely manner because we tend to work fast and furious.”

According to Borowy, the regiment will also coordinate contracts with the local Afghan community in construction projects.

“It’s just one thing we can do while we’re here,” Borowy explained. “Offering the means to bolster the local economy by offering job opportunities is just as important as the fight against insurgency.”

European International Relations and Military Affairs Experts Visit Afghanistan

*Story by
ISAF Public Affairs*

At the invitation of the Commander International Security and Assistance Force (COMISAF) General David McKiernan, four key European international relations and military affairs experts visited Afghanistan on a familiarization program from April 2-5.

The program provided an overview of current ISAF operations and the sched-

ule also allowed an opportunity to exchange views with local officials and ISAF commanders.

The party consisted of Roberta Bonazzi, a European Union public affairs expert, Professor Michael Clarke, Director of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies, Etienne de Durand, Director of the Ifri’s Security Studies Centre, and Professor Rob de Wijk, Director of HCSS. They visited several

ISAF regional commands during their tour. Meeting with troops and local Afghan people in the south, at Tarin Kowt, and also in the western provinces.

As experts in international relations, the touring party also conducted round tables with COMISAF, Afghan Parliamentarians, and various Non-Government Organisations. The visit also included several meetings at different embassies.



Romanian Brigadier Visarion Neagoe receives a salute during a Transfer of Authority ceremony between the incoming and outgoing Romanian Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams on March 11. (ISAF photo)

Romanian Mentors Transfer Authority in Zabul

Story by
ISAF Public Affairs

A transfer of authority ceremony between the incoming and outgoing Romanian Operational Mentor and Liaison Teams (OMLT) took place on March 11 in Zabul province's Qalat district.

Participants of the ceremony included Brigadier

Visarion Neagoe, Commander of the Romanian Joint Operational Command, and General Jamaludin, Commander of the Afghan National Army (ANA) Second Brigade, along with other Afghan military representatives.

Addressing the outgoing OMLT, Brigadier Neagoe remarked: "I want to thank you for everything you accomplished during this mission and I commend your efforts towards reconstruction in Afghanistan and helping the Afghan people."

The 14-member OMLT mentors the ANA in a variety of areas from developing training plans and organising instructional courses to carrying out joint patrols in Qalat district.

"I wish to express my gratitude for what you are doing for our army and also for our people," General Jamaludin said "You are brave soldiers and you teach us many things which we are using in our missions."

RC South, ARSIC-South Open IED Trainer for ANSF

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Aramis X. Ramirez
ISAF HQ Public Affairs

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held marking the opening of Afghanistan's first Explosive Hazard Awareness Training (EHAT) lane at Forward Operating Base Walton in the Kandahar province on March 10.

Troops deployed to ISAF Regional Command-South (RC-S) worked in conjunction with personnel from Afghanistan Regional Security Integration Command (ARSIC) South to plan and construct the training that will be conducted for Afghan

military forces in an effort to increase detection of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) while simultaneously reducing the number of casualties caused by such devices.

The trainer itself consists of a kilometre-long road in an open field that extends beyond the borders of FOB Walton with various stations that will test and teach Afghan military forces about the various types of IEDs currently being found by coalition forces operating in Afghanistan.

Construction on the training lane was completed March 3. Colonel Stanley E. Toy, Chief, Counter-IED Branch at RC South, spearheaded the development of the EHAT trainer.

"This lane will definitely save lives," he said at the opening ceremony. "The Afghan people need freedom of movement

and therefore they need training and equipment, and of course, the combination of both. The training should be simple, feasible, obtainable and realistic."

Toy explained that the plan for training will include a "Train the Trainer" course to be offered to Afghan National Army and Police (ANP) Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO). The goal is to maintain self-sustained training that will extend to local Afghans, which in turn will progressively lead to the ANA and ANP taking control of the training completely with both ISAF and ARSIC standing by for support.

"The end state we'll see will be the ANP and ANA will be more aware of the IED threats that they are likely to encounter, further enhancing their situational awareness which will ultimately contribute to their survivability," Toy said.

Local Man's Vigilance Prevents Carnage in Lashkar Gah

Story by
ISAF Public Affairs

The quick-thinking of a local man helped the Afghan National Police (ANP), supported by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops, prevent an insurgent bomb planted in a busy area of Lashkar Gah from detonating on March 9.

At around 11 a.m., a local man spotted a bicycle carrying a suspicious package that had been left near the old police headquarters, now used to train local ANP, in

central Lashkar Gah. He reported it to the ANP who, suspecting the package to be a possible Improvised Explosive Device (IED), quickly notified the ISAF Police Mentoring Team.

The suspicions were confirmed when an IED was discovered. The ANP rapidly cordoned-off the area, clearing people away to a safe distance whilst an ISAF Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team safely destroyed the IED in a controlled explosion.

The device is believed to have contained around 5kg of home-made explosives. It had been deliberately placed in an area frequented by both local civilians and ANP where its detonation could have caused numerous casualties.

"This is typical of the tactics being used by the insurgents – an IED was deliber-

ately placed in an area near local shops, the police training centre and a busy street where there was a very high risk of innocent civilians being killed or injured," said Captain Tom Bennett, 11 EOD Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, who heads up the 10-man team which dealt with the device.

"What is very encouraging is that this was a result of a local person being aware, and reporting his suspicions quickly to the local authorities – in my eyes, he is the real hero as his actions almost certainly prevented deaths and injuries," added Captain Bennett. "This is another sign of how the Afghan National Security Forces are increasingly able to provide security and keep the people of Lashkar Gah safe from those who seek to undermine peace and stability."

Afghanistan

Taking the Lead

A collection of stories that highlight the work that the Afghan National Army and the Afghan National Police are providing throughout the country.

Shouz ANP Deliver Aid to Mazen Ahmadi Village

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

Afghan National Police (ANP) from Shouz in Herat province provided humanitarian assistance to Mazen Ahmadi village, April 18.

“We have had good security in our village for about two years now,” said village elder Fhaz Mohammad. “The ANP have checkpoints near here and we never have to have any contact with Taliban.”

Mohammad also spoke of village needs and a great winter.

“Our biggest need is for more water pumps. We share one water pump between the villages in this area,” said Mohammed, pointing to the other villages. “We have a small school, but no chairs for the kids. We need a teacher for them, too.”

“But the winter was nice,” said Mohammed, continuing. “We had lots of rain and that is good because it means there is grass for our sheep. It also helps us with farming.”

The village of about 300 people primarily grows wheat, as farmers are switching from poppy to wheat due to efforts in the region. Though Mohammed declined they grew latter, small poppy fields in and around his village said otherwise.

Delivered to the village by the ANP were 12 bun-

dles of plastic tarps, 10 bundles of blankets, 177 bags of rice, 152 bags of flour, 57 bags of coal, 38 bags of beans, 27 cases of cooking oil, 9 bundles of sugar, and 2 large boxes of tea. Shoes for men, women and children were also given to the villagers, along with 300 soccer balls.

“We have seven checkpoints from Azizabad to Haki Safed,” Due to vehicle checkpoints in this area the surrounding villages are becoming more secure.

The humanitarian aid delivery was the second time Osman had been to Mazen Ahmadi.

“The first time was like seven months ago. There was a man on the street taking money from the people, so we came to the villages and told them to feed us information so we could provide security for them,” said Osman. “That is what we are here for – to establish security and help the people.”



Osman was optimistic about the future of the Afghan National Security Forces. “Right now we have better security than we used to have. I hope the ANA and the ANP can grow stronger and cooperate to improve the situation even further.”

ANP were assisted with security for the aid delivery by ARSIC-W and ISAF forces.



ANA, ISAF Provide Support to Earthquake Victims

Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in conjunction with International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) soldiers provided aid to earthquake victims in Sherzad District, Nangarhar province, Afghanistan.

The earthquake, which was reported at 5.5 on the Richter magnitude scale, occurred at approximately at 4 a.m. Local officials report that 19 people died, 51 were injured and more than 290 families, estimated at 3,000 people, were effected across a total of seven villages. The most damage was reported in Sherzad District.

ISAF's Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) sent a

five-ton truck with relief supplies such as blankets, tents, food and water to the village. The team had difficulty reaching the site because of the remote location of the

most seriously affected area.

Afghan officials were already on scene and had already begun the evacuation of the injured.

Upon the PRT's arrival, ISAF troops began to provide medical assistance to some of the victims, while local officials, elders and Afghan National Army (ANA) troops distributed the supplies.

ISAF's support is part of a coordinated Government Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) and United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) response to the disaster.

ISAF is prepared to provide additional support if requested by the GIROA.



MEDCAP at Ahmadi Village Helps 1100

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

A Medical Civil Affairs Program (MEDCAP) involving nine Afghan National Army hospital medical personnel, (ANA) ISAF Italian doctors, ISAF Slovenian doctors and Afghan Regional Security Intergration Command-West (ARSIC-W) U.S. doctors treated over 1100 men, women and children at Ahmadi village, about 25 kilometers west of Herat, Mar. 30. Security and an ambulance were also provided by the ANA for the event.

"They have never had medical services here before," said Soraya, assistant chief nurse and a mid-wife at the ANA hospital in Herat who volunteered her time at the MEDCAP. "The closest clinic to them is an hours walk away. The next clinic takes at least two hours to reach by foot."

Long lines formed on two sides of Ahmadi's schoolhouse – one for the men and another for women and children.

"We have both been sick," said Hamida, a mother holding her limp son, Miled. "I had headaches and stomach problems. My baby has been nauseous and lethargic since he was eight months old; he is now three. I was so very happy when I heard the doctors



were coming here to help us. Thank you so much for helping Miled."

During the MEDCAP, ANA soldiers handed out rice, beans, flour, blankets, clothing and shoes. They also brought with them the ANA 207th Corps Commander Major General Jalandar Shah Behnam, who later visited with one of the elders in his home.

"Most of the people's homes have been damaged," said Lieutenant Colonel Gohlam Sakhi Kahn, lead of ANA's Civil Military Cooperation and Humanitarian Assistance. The village of former Mujahedeen fighters had approached the ANA and asked for assistance, citing their efforts in the past to help the government and the lack of reciprocation thus far. "Commander Behnam came to show them he cares about them. He met with the elders to tell them that as much as we can help them, we will."

"We are very happy," said village elder Abdul Rahim who received medicine for his headaches. "This is the first time we have had a clinic in our area. A lot of people are getting help here today that they have needed for a long time."



HERAT, Afghanistan--Afghan National Army (ANA) surgeons look for infection inside a patient's abdominal area during a second surgery at Camp Zafar on 8 April, 2009. The patient's first surgery was performed at a civilian hospital, after which he was rapidly deteriorating. Joint Medical Operation Cell doctors work with ISAF doctors to mentor ANA doctors at Camp Zafar's Hospital outside Herat. ISAF photo by U. S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica R. Nelson



TUDANAK, Afghanistan--Tudanak village elders greet Afghan National Police of Bala Baluk district during the distribution of humanitarian aid to the village on 16 April, 2009. The assistance drop required a 5-ton truck to be loaded and off-loaded twice and incorporated the truck beds of seven ANP Rangers. Additional security for the drop was provided by ARSIC-W. ISAF photo by U. S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica R. Nelson



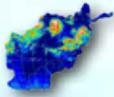
KANDAHAR, Afghanistan--Afghan National Army (ANA) 205 Hero Corps Commander, Brigadier General Shir Mohammad Zazai and Region Command South Commander, General Mart De Kruif signed a joint operational order, 20 April, 2009 marking the beginning of a comprehensive operations agreement that will breed deeper cooperation and more effective operations on the ground. ISAF photo by U. S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Terry Matlock



AHADI Afghanistan - Afghan National Army 207th Corps Commanding Officer Major General Jalandar Shah Behnam greets the village elders at Ahmadi Village west of Herat (ANA) on March 30. ANA doctors assisted ISAF and U.S. doctors with a medical civil affairs program that benefitted over 1100 people in a village that doesn't have a clinic. The ANA also provided humanitarian assistance to the village. ISAF Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica R. Nelson



A member of the Afghan National Police (ANP) watches over a graduation of the first Afghan Police Protection Force Program on Mar 26. ISAF photo by U.S. Navy Lieutenant Dave Hecht



Afghan Police, CJSOTF-A Troops Deliver Humanitarian Items to Bagram Villagers

*Story by
ISAF Public Affairs*

An Afghan National Police (ANP) officer hands a bottle of vegetable oil to a villager during a humanitarian aid distribution in the Bagram district, Parwan province, April 15. The ANP held the joint distribution with troops from the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force – Afghanistan. (CJSOTF-A photo by U.S. Army Capt. Jamey L. Trigg)

Despite the gloomy weather on April 15, a ray of hope came upon a small village in the Bagram district, Parwan province, as the Afghan National Police (ANP) assisted by members of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A) passed out humanitarian goods to local villagers.

More than 200 men, women and children lined up while the ANP separated and positioned the food and clothing. The children were the first to receive items, including backpacks, shoes and an assortment of clothing. The women followed to gather up bags of cooking goods, including rice, flour, sugar, salt, tea and vegeta-

ble oil.

After the women and children received their things, disabled villagers were given the opportunity to pick up goods from the ANP.

“I like the things that I received,” said Zinullahbeen, a disabled man in the village. “It is nice to see good deeds performed.”

In addition to food and school supplies, the Afghan police handed out desperately-needed socks, shoes, jackets, dental supplies, hygiene kits, radios and soccer balls to the villagers.

“I feel really good knowing that my police officers were able to do this for the villagers, especially the women and children who have so little,” said Mirwais, Bagram district deputy police chief.



Feyzabad PRT Trains Local Fire Fighters

*Story by
ISAF Public Affairs*

As a misty smoke reaches his nostrils, he doesn't lose his concentration. The flames hiss, it is awfully hot, and then all of a sudden it is all over. The fire is extinguished and the only reminder of the vehicle set ablaze a few moments ago is the thick smoke. Once again his team has succeeded in extinguishing a burning vehicle.

Over the past three weeks the Feyzabad Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) has been training the Fire Brigade of Feyzabad City at the Military Fire Brigade's training site.

The training covers the care of burn injuries, rescue procedures, operation of fire-fighting equipment, extinguishing of burning vehicles and confined space procedures.

Feyzabad founded its fire station several weeks ago with a cross-country emergency control vehicle and a fire truck with a tank capacity of 9,100 litres. Although equipped with modern vehicles, the fire station lacked basic equipment like protective clothing



Two firemen of the newly established Fire Brigade Feyzabad perform a rapid attack on a burning vehicle. (ISAF photo)

and additional pumps.

For the Chief of the Military Fire Brigade, Master Sergeant Marco M., it was essential to design the training in a way that enables the "trainees" to apply what they have learned in the event of a fire.

"It does not make sense to equip the firemen with high-tech systems during their training when they do not have them available in case of emergency," said Marco.

On the training site of the Military Fire Brigade Feyzabad the Afghan firemen, who are also members of the Afghan National Police (ANP), have to master various training scenarios from small fires to complex

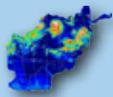
situations. On the PRT training site they are only faced with training scenarios, but the firemen know that they will face a real challenge in the event of a fire in Feyzabad.

"Here we are learning quite a lot every day, and we are happy that the PRT is training us," said an Afghan fireman.

The firemen are making great progress towards being able to control complex fires. However, the training must continue and the equipment of the fire station has to be improved considerably so that the fire fighters of Feyzabad can protect their city.

Four firemen with the newly established Fire Brigade Feyzabad use a fire extinguisher during training with the Feyzabad PRT. (ISAF photo)





REGIONAL COMMAND WEST

RC-W Soccer Tournament Strengthens Relationships

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

An eight-week soccer tournament involving Afghan National Army (ANA) 207th Corps, Afghan National Army 207th Brigade, Afghan National Police, Italians and Spanish from International Security Assistance Force, (ISAF) American and Coalition Forces began at ANA Camp Zafar in Herat on March 26.

ISAF's Operational Mentoring and Liai



Sergeant Major Stefano Sibi organized the tournament and facilitated the donation of soccer balls and uniforms for all teams from the Italian Football Federation.

"We feel it is important to strengthen our relationships, both in terms of com-

munication and collaboration, with the ANA and ANP," said Italian Lieutenant Colonel Alberto Vizzole, also a member of the OMLT. "It will benefit both the mentors and mentees. We work with them during the week and would like to spend the holy day playing with them, too."

The first game of the season matched up ANA 207th Corps against Coalition Forces – mostly ARSIC-W Air Force and Navy, with additional members from Great Britain, New Zealand, and Slovenia.

"It is very competitive out on the field, but lots of fun," said New Zealand Army Sergeant David Jon Spence. "There is good sportsmanship out there. People are getting knocked down but still keeping their cool. It is accomplishing what it was meant to. Unlike a war environment, any sport, regardless what it is provides a common ground for people to compete equally."

ANA 207th Corps Commander Major General Jalandar Shah Behnam hopes to see tournaments in other sports once the soccer tournament season has ended.

"Sports are good for the morale and physical fitness of the troops," said Behnam. "Playing games benefits the unity and cooperation felt between the people of different nationalities."

Walizada and ARSIC-W Commander U.S. Army Colonel John Bessler watched the game from the sidelines.

"I am all about 'yak team wahed,'" said Bessler. "It means 'one team together.' This is a manifestation of exactly that. Every day we are doing the business of growing the ANA, of Army mentoring Army. It is nice to be doing the business of 'yak team wahed' in a different way. Plus, the ANA get a huge kick out of the fact that they can kick our butts out here."

The ANA 207th Corps beat the ARSIC-W/Coalition team 8-0.





FARAH, Afghanistan - Owner and Chief Engineer of Fazullah Construction Company, Zabi Mohammad, shows U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Staff Sergeant Michael Tomlinson the dining facility for the new ANA Garrison, Mar. 9. Tomlinson provided construction oversight and administered progress payments. ISAF Photo by U.S. Navy Mass Communications Specialist Petty Officer 1st Class Monica R. Nelson

New Compound Designed for ANA Troop Increases

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

The new Afghan National Army (ANA) compound, ANA Garrison Farah, will likely move its first kandak into their brand-new facility by April, said Staff Sergeant Michael Tomlinson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, after a visit to the compound in Farah Province, Mar. 9.

Able to house 2,000 troops, the garrison was built to house a second kandak in keeping with anticipated ANA troop increases over the next couple years.

In addition, an area of the camp is enclosed separately from the rest for the ANA Embedded Training Team where the Spanish Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) will stay.

“The average soldier here is assigned to

this post. He is not free to wander about as he wants,” said Tomlinson, explaining the need for housing. “Afghans are very local-type people, but the troops coming here are from all over Afghanistan. Keeping them here locally in barracks was the way the ANA decided to work their soldier housing.”

Each kandak has its own laundry facility, Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) center, bathrooms and showers and arms storage facilities.

“Zabi Mohammad is a highly talented engineer,” said Tomlinson of the owner and chief engineer of Fazullah Construction Company. “He does day-to-day management and overseeing all on his own. It’s his company. They do excellent work.”

A second construction phase is already underway at the compound which will consist of a clinic, fire station and training areas when complete. Also on the proper-

ty is land for a third construction phase, which can be started when the compound is full and more space is needed to house troops.

“This is the biggest project done by our company and the best display of our capabilities,” said Zabi Mohammad. “I think they are very happy with what we have done here.”

Funding for the garrison came from Combined Security Transition Command – Afghanistan’s (CSTC-A) military construction fund at a cost of \$75 million dollars. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided construction oversight, handled any problems with design and made progress checks and payments. Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Farah provided security for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. ANA provided security for the compound’s construction phase.

Germans Conduct Recovery Task Force Training Exercise

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) soldiers with the German Logistics Support Battalion (LSB) 172 undertook a recovery task force training exercise outside Camp Marmal on February 27.

The training exercise was conducted to show the Afghan leaders the duties LSB-172 perform on a regular basis, according to German 1st Lt. Sebastian G., 2nd Platoon leader, LSB-172.

The Germans demonstrated how a disabled Fox Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) could be recovered by a Vehicle Crane Medium (VCM) and taken back to base on a trailer.

“If we have a task, it is very important for us to respond very fast,” said Sebastian, a native of Berlin, Germany. “We have no time to lose, it is very important to be fast, because you don’t know the plans of the enemy.”

The exercise was also important to keep the battalion’s recovery skills current as

they have to be ready to recover a vehicle 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. In the past four months the battalion has completed 21 recovery missions.

“It was successful,” said Sebastian. “I think our new comrades have a picture of what we do here and it showed them how heavy it can be lifting up a vehicle.”

The Germans are helping ISAF in assisting the Afghan government in extending and exercising its authority and influence across the country, creating the conditions for stabilization and reconstruction.



Mass. regarding the donation of the ambulance to the people of Afghanistan. “People are people, no matter where you go. Kids are kids. Plus, this is also a message to our kids back home that anyone can do something to help.”

After handing over the keys for the ambulance to Dr. Jabar, Zbikowski made an announcement that a second ambulance had been identified in the United States to be donated by the city of Fitchburg, Mass.

“Emergency care depends on rapid transport and emergency medical care,” explained Zbikowski.

Stateside Hospital Donates Ambulance to Transport Those Injured by Insurgent Abuse

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

In a ceremony held at Farah Hospital, an ambulance was donated to the hospital by the U.S. Fire Chiefs Association from Ashburnham, Massachusetts, U.S. on March 11. Also present at the ceremony were Dr. Habib Urahman, Kabul Health representative and the director of the Provincial Liaison Office, Dr. Abdul Jabar, director of Farah Provincial Hospital, numerous doctors, civilians, and members of Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) – Farah.

“This ambulance will help us provide emergency care in Farah City for those who are injured by

insurgents, who have combat trauma wounds, who have been in traffic accidents and any other critical medical needs,” said Dr. Abdul Jabar, director of Farah Provincial Hospital.

Inside the ambulance were backboards, collars, bandaging material, splinting supplies, oxygen equipment, and brakes, shocks and wiper blades donated for the vehicle by Mass. citizens and businesses. The PRT also donated more than \$12,000 worth of medical books.

“We wanted to show we care about them,” said Paul Zbikowski, forest warden and emergency management director of Ashburnham,

Farah Hospital recently started keeping records of Afghan people injured by insurgents.

Emergency medical training and advanced cardiac life support training classes are also being held for the hospital staff, taught by PRT doctors.

“The PRT has really helped us in this regard,” said Jabar.

Security for the ambulance donation was provided by Afghan National Police officers, Afghan National Army soldiers, and the PRT – Farah.





Farmers watch their poppy fields from a distance during poppy eradication by Afghan National Security Forces in Bala Baluk district on April 15. Tractors plow up poppy fields to prevent farmers from harvesting their opium crop. ISAF photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica R. Nelson



Opium fields ready for harvesting are the target of poppy eradication by Afghan National Security Forces in Bala Baluk district on April 15. Tractors plow up poppy fields to prevent farmers from harvesting their opium crop. ISAF Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Monica R. Nelson

Farmers Speak Out During Poppy Eradication Season

*U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class
Monica Nelson
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

Afghanistan poppy farmers have hit a rough patch as the nation moves forward with its counter narcotics program. Afghan National Security Forces in the Bala Baluk district started to oversee the destruction of the newest opium crop, April 14.

Nacer Kareme (substituted name for security reasons) has 17 children; his working-aged ones are girls. Before the Taliban came to Afghanistan, Kareme fought the Russians as a Mujahedeen. During the Taliban regime he became a farmer.

“This year I grew 20 kilos of opium and 15 kilos of wheat,” said Kareme. “I don’t like opium, and I don’t like growing it. But I have family – many children – and I must make food for them.”

When asked why he didn’t like opium, Kareme responded, “All of our young people are becoming addicted to drugs. Near my home are two police checkpoints. All soldiers from both the checkpoints take heroin.”

Amanaullah Whid Akbary (also substituted name for security reasons) from Kanesk village claims to be in a similar situation.

“I have to make opium because we don’t have water and I have a big family. I have to find a way to feed my family,” said Akbary.

“We promise all people that if the Af-

ghan National Army (ANA) and Afghan National Police (ANP) provide security and provide us water pumps to help us farm, we won’t grow any more opium,” said Akbary speaking for the farmers from his village. “If we have security, we will make wheat and we can distribute it for all the people. It’s also better for us because we can send it to other cities to sell. It is much easier, too, because then we don’t have to hide it.”

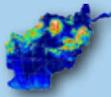
Kareme’s promises to quit growing opium also hinged on water.

“If my President makes a dam to help us keep the water that comes in the wintertime to our country from going out to other countries, when we need it for the summertime, then I won’t make opium anymore,” said Kareme. “But we have to spend our money in the summer to buy water from water pumps, like 250 Afghani to use the pump for one hour. It is very expensive.”

When asked how the poppy is sold and who pays for it, Akbary answered, “I don’t know who pays for the poppy. But some people come into the village from Iran and also Pakistan, and they pay for the opium and send it to the black market.”

When asked if the Taliban come to his village, he said, “Sometimes they do come, after we make our opium. When it is ready, they come to provide security for the people who want to buy it.”

According to Akbary, he gets 4000 Afghani for each kilo of poppy.



REGIONAL COMMAND EAST

Rural Village Sees Brighter Future with New School

*By U.S. Air Force Capt. Dustin Hart
Nangarhar, 3rd BCT, 1st ID, PAO*

The Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) joined provincial government officials and the people of a rural village in Dara-Noor District to celebrate the completion of a boys and girls school here, May 12.

Local officials expressed their happiness with the completion of the school because of the benefits it will offer the people of Safer Kala village.

“This is a proud moment for everyone here because even in this remote area, where no school existed before, the government, through the help of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) was able to provide a school building for the children to be educated,” said Mohammad Ibrahim, Nangarhar province deputy director of education.

The school, which cost \$178,000, took less than a year to complete and includes two school buildings, two restrooms, and two wells.

A new boys and girls school recently opened in the Dara-Noor District in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan, on May 12. The school, costing \$178,000, was funded by the Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team, and was built in less than a year. (Photo by Army Spc. Nathaniel Allen)



Village elders from Safer Kala village in Dara-Noor District gather to celebrate the opening of a school, May 12. The Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction Team funded the \$178,000 school, which includes two buildings, two wells and two restrooms. (Photo by U.S. Army Spc. Nathaniel Allen)

Elders from the area ensured the government and PRT that the school would be protected from any outside threats.

“We have requested the support from all the people here to take care and protect this school,” an elder said during the ceremony. “This school will bring light to the people here and the teachers are giving a bright future to the students. This is making a better life for this village.

“If the insurgents can see the Muslims in this area that are working hard for a better future for their children, they could see what true Islam is about,” the elder added.

In addition to the school, the PRT is also funding a flood wall project. The \$50,000 project will protect the school and village from flooding by a nearby river. The contractor also provided a wall separating the school from a passing road to protect students from road hazards.

The PRT also recently received approval to construct a footbridge over the river to help more students access the school.

Due to the rural, mountainous location of Safer Kala village and a nearby river that is prone to flooding, the construction of the school experienced some difficulties.

“Anyone involved with construction knows all projects will have some problems,” Army 2nd Lt. Steve Klenke, a PRT engineer from Detroit, said during the ceremony. “This project was no different. We are able to stand in front of this completed school thanks to the diligence and patience of the people of this village, district officials and the provincial government. I am happy to be a part of that team and play a small role in helping bring education to your children.”

Education remains a top priority for the Nangarhar PRT. The school in Safer Kala village was one of 21 schools currently being constructed by the PRT. The PRT has recently completed five schools in five districts and has proposed an additional 39 projects. Overall, the PRT is teamed with the Nangarhar provincial government in working more than 52 active projects worth more than \$70 million.





ISAF troops pose with kids from Aschiana School at SOZO International in Kabul, Afghanistan. ISAF personnel delivered donated materials to Sozo. The troops handed out school supplies and gifts to the children. ISAF Photo by Master Sergeant Chris Haylett.

ISAF Headquarters makes Visit to Sozo International

*U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant Chris Haylett
ISAF HQ Public Affairs*

Members from “International Security Assistance Force” Headquarters took time to go on a special mission to Sozo International on April 17, 2009. The soldiers delivered

school supplies, goodies and toys to kids that go to Sozo Aschiana school in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Aschiana is a school that has been set up to help kids whose lives have been interrupted by the war. According to Abdul Wakil, Sozo International National Director, There are about 100 kids that attend the school, some of these kids are orphans, they do not have a mother or father and we are trying to educate them.

The ISAF members not only delivered supplies, but took time to play with the kids

. It was hard to tell who was having more fun, the volunteers or the kids.

“Such an encouragement for me and for the Afghan kids and I just want to thank each one of them that were here today, for their help and support and for their care for the Afghan people,” said Abdul Wakil.

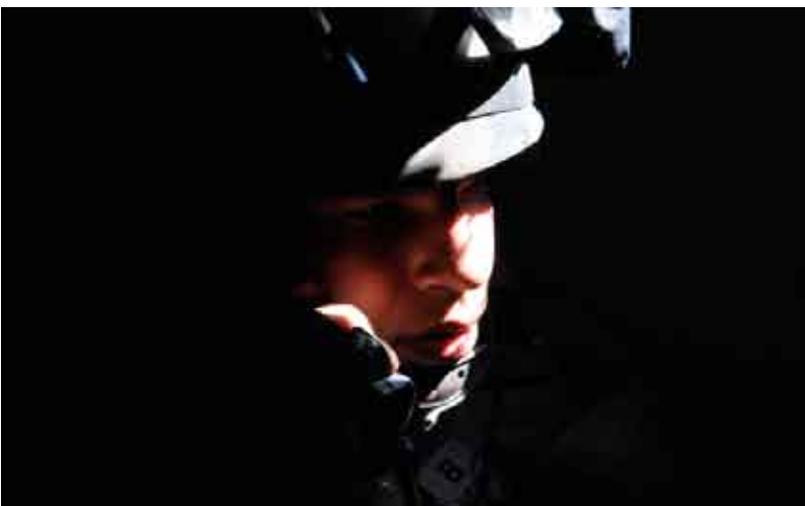
“Hopefully the children here will have a positive memory of the experience, they will grow up and they will remember that we came to try to do the right thing in this country,” said US. Colonel Peter Zwach, a member of ISAF HQ.





Submit your photos for possible inclusion in the next update of your ISAF Mirror. Please send in any high resolution pics that you have taken along with all available information, and we will try to include it in our next update. Please submit your photos to isafmedia@ymail.com





Be Population Focused



Support the
Afghan People

