



KBC INSIDER



VOL. 1 - ISSUE 3

NEWSLETTER OF THE KABUL BASE CLUSTER INSTALLATION COMMAND

OCTOBER 2010



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Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs Office
196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

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JTF-435 adds combined, interagency partners to become CJIATF-435



Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff U.S. Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, center, walks with Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 Commander U.S. Navy Vice Adm. Robert S. Harward, left, and CJIATF 435 Senior Enlisted Advisor U.S. Navy Special Operations Master Chief Robert Edwards, right, during a visit to Kabul International Airport, Afghanistan, Sept. 3, 2010. The chairman visited members of the task force to mark the transition from a joint task force to a CJIATF and creation of a new Rule of Law Field Force-Afghanistan to execute projects and programs to increase Rule of Law capacity in Afghanistan.

(Defense Department photo by U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Adam M. Stump)

By CJIATF-435 Public Affairs

KABUL INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT – With the addition of combined and interagency partners, Joint Task Force 435 officially became Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 Sept. 1.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff U.S. Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, U.S. Ambassador for Rule of Law and Law Enforcement Hans Klemm, and a few members of the newly-minted Combined Joint Interagency Task Force 435 attended two ceremonies Sept. 3 at Kabul International Airport.

The ceremonies marked the CJIATF-435 command redesignation plus the command establishment of Rule of Law Field Forces-Afghanistan, a subordinate command within CJIATF-435. Along with the name change, the CJIATF-435 assumes new missions and responsibilities in support of Rule of Law efforts as it partners with the office of the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan for Rule of Law and Law Enforcement. Additionally, the task force created the new Rule of Law Field Force-Afghanistan, or ROLFF-A, to execute projects and programs to increase Rule of Law capacity in Afghanistan.

Rule of law means all entities in society are accountable to laws,

but to be effective, it must be: of the people; legally enforced by police and security forces; and interpreted and applied by evenhanded and independent courts.

“The increase in mission sets and responsibilities mark a major shift in how the command conducts operations,” said U.S. Navy Vice Adm. Robert S. Harward, CJIATF-435 commander.

CJIATF-435, in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and U.S. interagency and international partners, conducts operations in detention, corrections, the judicial sector and biometrics. Ultimately, the CJIATF will transition detention operations to Afghan control while promoting Rule of Law practices.

“The increase in mission sets and responsibilities mark a major shift in how the command conducts operations.”

**— U.S. Navy Vice Adm. Robert S. Harward
CJIATF-435 commander**

“We will continue to transition detention operations to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and provide support for the ongoing development of an effective Afghan system capable of delivering credible and accountable justice that promotes legitimate, responsive and accountable governance,” Harward said. “We will work with our Afghan partners to increase capacity for justice in a manner that supports counterinsurgency objectives.”

“Ultimately, this change in command structure and composition allows us to work more effectively with our Afghan partners as they forge a sustainable way ahead for their country,” said Harward. “The end result will be an Afghan solution involving multiple ministries and providing increased security for the people of Afghanistan.”

CJIATF-435 will partner with numerous Afghan ministries and is comprised of the following agencies: U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Department of Justice, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, International Security Assistance Force Joint Command, the U.S. Marshals Service and the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan.

Bulgarian forces change command in Kabul

CAMP PHOENIX – A change of command ceremony was held for a new contingent of Bulgarian forces Sept. 1 at Camp Phoenix as they transferred authority with forces serving in Kabul, Afghanistan. More than 230 Soldiers from a ground defense area company assumed the role of providing security and force protection for several different bases throughout the Kabul Base Cluster in the capital city. Bulgaria continues to be a leading NATO force contributor to the International Security Assistance Force mission in Afghanistan providing more than 600 troops.



The outgoing Bulgarian leadership hands off the flag to the incoming leadership in a change of command ceremony Sept. 1, 2010, in Patriot Square at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. The Bulgarian Soldiers are part of a ground defense area company that will help provide force protection for several different bases throughout the Kabul Base Cluster.

(U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Rebecca Linder)



A new Persistent Surveillance System (PSS) begins its ascent above Camp Julien Sept. 14, 2010, to provide the Afghan National Security Forces and International Security Assistance Force officials with an extra level of surveillance capability for security operations around Kabul, Afghanistan. The PSS, a floating aerostat (or blimp), has high-tech camera equipment able to provide 360 degree views of the city. (U.S. Army photo by Master Sgt. Travis Vallery)

New aerostat takes flight in Kabul

By Capt. Anthony Deiss
Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

CAMP JULIEN – While the world was watching Afghanistan’s parliamentary elections on Sept. 18, Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) officials were keeping an eye on the capital with the help of a new security measure; the Persistent Surveillance System (PSS), which took flight days before the election at Camp Julien in Kabul.

The PSS, a floating aerostat (or blimp), has high-tech camera equipment which provided an extra level of surveillance capability for security operations around the city.

“The system has the ability to provide instant situational awareness for security forces throughout Kabul,” said Maj. Todd Bartunek, director of Plans, Training and Mobilization for Task Force Rushmore, Kabul Base Cluster Installation Command. “A lot of time and effort has gone into ensuring that polling centers and voters were safe.”

The new PSS is one of two aerostats now in operation in Kabul. Its cameras are able to rotate 360-degrees to survey and closely monitor activity throughout the city, and when used with surveillance data from other security systems, also helps security officials better

anticipate threats.

“The key is information and what is happening on the ground,” said Bartunek, a member of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard. “Kabul is a large, crowded city, and these surveillance systems at Camp Bala Hissar and Camp Julien are a force multiplier to help Afghan security forces detect threats.”

Suspended by a helium-filled balloon tethered hundreds of feet in the air, the aerostat provides high-resolution imagery and video and can detect possible enemy activities using its high-definition, infrared and thermal imaging technology.

Bartunek said the ability to have instant eyes on an incident or developing situation in the city provides the ANSF and ISAF with the ability to respond quickly.

“The quality of the video, along with the zoom capability, provides a great tool that allows ISAF the ability to see the whole city and communicate with the ANSF on potential hotspots should they arise,” he said. “This kind of real-time video is priceless and can be used in numerous ways to provide security.”

Maj. Edward Michels, 1st Battalion, 178th Field Artillery, South Carolina Army National Guard, gives two boys a handful of toys during a humanitarian aid drop Aug. 31, 2010, at Maihan Orphanage in Kabul, Afghanistan. Michels and several other servicemembers stationed at Camp Phoenix participated in the drop delivering toys, blankets, shoes and clothing.



Soldiers partner for orphanage benefit

Story and photos by Sgt. Rebecca Linder
Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

KABUL – “Healing hearts and minds” of the Afghan people is the motto of the Operation Outreach-Afghanistan (OOA) program achieved once again by U.S. Soldiers here, in partnership with Afghan National Army Soldiers, Aug. 31 as they participated in a humanitarian aid drop to a local orphanage in Kabul.

Six containers filled with toys, blankets, shoes, clothes and school supplies were delivered to the Afghan children who live at the Maihan Orphanage.

“I was so surprised to see them here delivering the gifts,” said Angela Nibler, Maihan Orphanage volunteer and Idaho native. “We saw the army vehicles and I was scared for a second, but once we realized what was going on we were so excited and grateful. The children are so happy.”

About 245 boys and girls who live at five different buildings throughout the orphanage are without a home due to loss of parents from the war, insufficient living conditions or simply because their parents cannot support them.

“Being part of Operation Outreach and going on the mission to the orphanage was the most fulfilling event of my tour so far,” said Capt. Michael Webb, company commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard. “Working with Soldiers from other units, the ANA, and the Afghan locals in coordinating this



U.S. and Afghan Army Soldiers pose with children from the Maihan Orphanage.

event and coming together as a team for a common goal is really what it’s all about.”

Soldiers here volunteer their time throughout the week to ensure the program runs smoothly and the Afghan citizens receive the donations that American families send over here.

“That’s a big part of following the counterinsurgency strategy; assisting the Afghan population and helping to take care of their needs, especially the children,” said Webb, of Tea, S.D. “The children’s faces said it all and is something I will never forget.”

HELPING THE NEEDY

Humanitarian aid provided to some of Kabul's poorest



Story and photos by Capt. Anthony Deiss

Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

KABUL – Afghan National Police (ANP) and U.S. Army Soldiers provided humanitarian aid to children of the Shohadayi Salehin village Sept. 6, delivering needed school supplies and clothing to one of Kabul's poorest neighborhoods.

In the impoverished community where cemetery graves line the streets, school children here have only meager belongings to help them forge an education. However, with the delivery of the new school supplies, these children have a little more to help give them a future that is not as grim as the surroundings they live in.

"I am happy for the assistance," said Ali Shah, Shohadayi Salehin village elder. "These kids don't have the money to buy books, pens and pencils, but with the police and American's help – day by day – it's getting better."

"I hope the humanitarian aid in this place, in the eyes of these Afghan people, shows them that the American and ISAF (International Security Assistance Force) forces are our friends," said

Staff Sgt. Joshua Smith, squad leader for Police Mentor Team 7, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment, Vermont Army National Guard, grabs a bundle of clothing for a child from the Shohadayi Salehin village on Sept. 6, 2010, in Kabul, Afghanistan, during a humanitarian aid drop for needy school kids in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. The VARNG unit partnered with Afghan National Police to help hand out school supplies and demonstrate a goodwill initiative for the people they are helping to protect.

Lt. Col. Sayed Noor Mohammad Mangal, Criminal Investigation Department chief, Police District 1. "My hope for them is a future of peace and security – not only for Kabul people, but for all Afghanistan."

The ANP from Police District 1 recommended the humanitarian aid be delivered to the school with the assistance of their mentors and trainers from Police Mentor Team 7, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment (1-101st), Vermont Army National Guard.

"It's very important for these people to see the goodwill from the police – so the people can trust the ANP more – and they can go

to them with their issues,” said Staff Sgt. Joshua Smith, squad leader for PMT 7. “By offering their support, which is what the humanitarian aid drop is all about, the police are gaining the support of the people.”

While the ANP provided the coordination, security and distribution of the aid drop, the 1-101st gathered the school supplies from donations back in the U.S. Many of the donations come from local charities, religious organizations and Soldiers’ loved ones.

“A lot of the donations come from families and friends back home wanting to help the people over here,” said Smith, of Burlington, Vt. “They’re doing a good service and their donations are being put to good use to people who can really use them.”

“The humanitarian aid from ISAF and the American Army is very good for the kids going to the school,” said Mangal. “It is useful and we want to hand it out to the people. The humanitarian aid is going to give an energy to the local people and show them Americans are coming here to help us.”

“The humanitarian and medical aid drops are by far two of the best mission we do and are the ones we get the most exposure from,” said Smith, who has participated in four humanitarian aid drops. “You feel really good afterward because you feel like you made a difference in Afghanistan, which is what we are here to do.”

“We don’t want war anymore. We are all humans. Humans need to help other humans,” said Shah, as he points toward the cemetery. “We ask that the U.S. Army will continue to help our government and make it straight and strong, and we appreciate all that the local police and the U.S. are doing for our people.”



An Afghan National Police (ANP) officer grabs a package of school supplies for a child from the Shohadaye Salehin village on Sept. 6, 2010, in Kabul, Afghanistan, during a humanitarian aid drop for needy school kids in one of the city’s poorest neighborhoods. The ANP partnered with Soldiers from the Police Mentor Team 7, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment, Vermont Army National Guard, to help hand out supplies, as well as provide coordination and security for the aid drop.



About 150 children from the Shohadaye Salehin village wait to receive school supplies and clothing during a humanitarian aid drop on Sept. 6, 2010, in Kabul, Afghanistan. The village is one of city’s poorest neighborhoods the Afghan National Police and Soldiers of the Police Mentor Team 7, Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment, Vermont Army National Guard, partnered together on to help hand out supplies to.

COIN BEFORE COIN

U.S. law plays important role in Afghanistan war strategy



By Capt. Anthony Deiss
Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

CAMP PHOENIX – When it comes to winning the hearts and minds of the people of Afghanistan, the U.S. military’s counterinsurgency strategy, or COIN, is not just about demonstrating security for the Afghans, it’s also about demonstrating the role of U.S. law in protecting them.

To help establish credibility and legitimacy among the Afghans, U.S. law and military lawyers are playing an important role in illustrating the significance of following law and its fair application in matters where military operations and the civilian

world collide. Master Sgt. Steven Weiler, left, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, pays Allah Jan, a local Afghan, for a claim Sept. 9, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan, while Lt. Col. Donald McCarty, center left, deputy staff judge advocate for the 196th, and his interpreter watch. McCarty, a foreign claims commissioner, reviews the claims of local Afghan citizens to determine if the U.S. military is responsible for accidents and whether they should be paid or denied. (U.S. Army photo by Rebecca Linder)

world collide.

For Kabul resident Allah Jan, whose vehicle was struck by a passing U.S. military convoy, U.S. Army lawyers here are maintaining credibility among the people by upholding the Foreign Claims Act (FCA) – a United States federal law enacted in 1942 – that provides compensation to inhabitants of foreign countries for physical injury, death or property damage caused by noncombat activities of U.S. military personnel overseas.

“In Afghanistan, officers from the Judge Advocate Generals Corp and their support staff review and resolve legal claims filed by civilians pursuant to the FCA,” said Lt. Col. Donald McCarty, deputy staff judge advocate, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard. “It’s the right thing to do, and maintaining our relationship with the Afghans is consistent with COIN operations.”

McCarty, who settled Jan’s claim, is a certified military

foreign claims commissioner (FCC) for the Task Force Rushmore legal office at Camp Phoenix. Task Force Rushmore provides operational guidance and oversight for 11 military bases in Kabul and supports nearly 9,000 servicemembers in the capital region. With this many troops working in Afghanistan’s largest city, accidents are likely to happen.

“When the military is operating in such close proximity with the local people, which is what COIN



A U.S. military interpreter, center, describes an accident for Kabul resident Nageb to Lt. Col. Donald McCarty, deputy staff judge advocate, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, during a claims visit Sept. 9, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. Nageb filed a claim for personal injury and McCarty, a foreign claims commissioner, reviews the evidence to ensure the claim is legitimate. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Rebecca Linder)

is all about, you are going to have situations where people or property are inadvertently injured or damaged,” said McCarty, of Brookings, S.D. “The U.S. military does everything it can to prevent and mitigate personal injuries and damage to property, however, accidents happen. For this reason, we have laws in place to assist the local population.”

Whether it’s a claim based on a physical injury or damage to personal property such as a home, business, motor vehicle or crops, this system of protection for civilians is nothing new to the military.

“This law was in place long before COIN was a popular word – it was an example of COIN before there was COIN,” said McCarty. “It’s particularly important here with this type of conflict – despite the fact that we might be here in a military context – we try to reach the right outcome when accidents happen.”

To reach this outcome, the military has a system in place to ascertain the facts of an incident. Both U.S. servicemembers and Afghan civilians play a part in establishing the proper evidence to ensure the claim being made is legitimate.

U.S. servicemembers are instructed to stop when involved in an accident. They are trained to render aid, if necessary, leave a claims form, and take pictures if possible. The claims form identifies the servicemember, their unit, and the date and location of the accident. It also instructs the claimant on what to do and who to contact.

Several conditions must be met for a claim to be considered: the incident must be caused by U.S. military personnel, it cannot be combat related, the claimant is a local national and the claimant is not unfriendly to the U.S., meaning they have no recorded offenses.

The claimant then comes to the nearest claims office

where they meet with a FCC representative. With the assistance of an interpreter, the military attorney meets with the claimant, identifies them and discusses what led to the filing of their claim.

Although the U.S. military makes every effort to fairly determine the claims, McCarty said they also need to protect the government from those who seek to abuse the system. On average, about 40 percent of the claims are denied entirely due to insufficient evidence or cause.

“We are constantly trying to improve the claims process, and are now briefing all drivers on this process and explain to them why it’s an important part of this COIN mission,” said McCarty. “We have also created a central repository for incident reports involving U.S. personnel, which may have resulted in physical injury or property damage to a local national.”

It’s this repository that

McCarty said improves their accuracy. He said he expects U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A) will ultimately order all subordinate units in theater to submit incident reports and witness statements to the database in any circumstances where servicemembers are unable to stop because of safety or mission requirements. In the end, all FCCs in theater will have access to the database to determine whether claims submitted without a claims form are valid or fraudulent, based in part by the files in the database.

“Without having a reliable process in place, we were arbitrarily paying or denying claims based primarily on our judgment of their credibility,” said McCarty. “That’s not what we want to do.”

Although the military is constantly trying to improve the process, some claims are extremely difficult to adjudicate given the combat environment.

“Many times we will have civilians who make claims, but they have no documentation for the incident in question – no eyewitnesses, no claims form or they have very few medical records to confirm the extent of their injuries,” said McCarty.

“Oftentimes the claimants are illiterate and extremely poor,” he continued. “Under these circumstances it’s nearly impossible for me to individually determine the validity of the claim or the extent of their damages or injuries, and we can’t legally process the file without evidence to confirm their claim.”

Therefore, the FCCs rely heavily on their ability to speak with the troops involved in an incident along with any other military personnel who can help determine the series of events which led to the claim.

“When we are able to speak with the troops involved, we

get a pretty good feeling about what took place,” said McCarty.

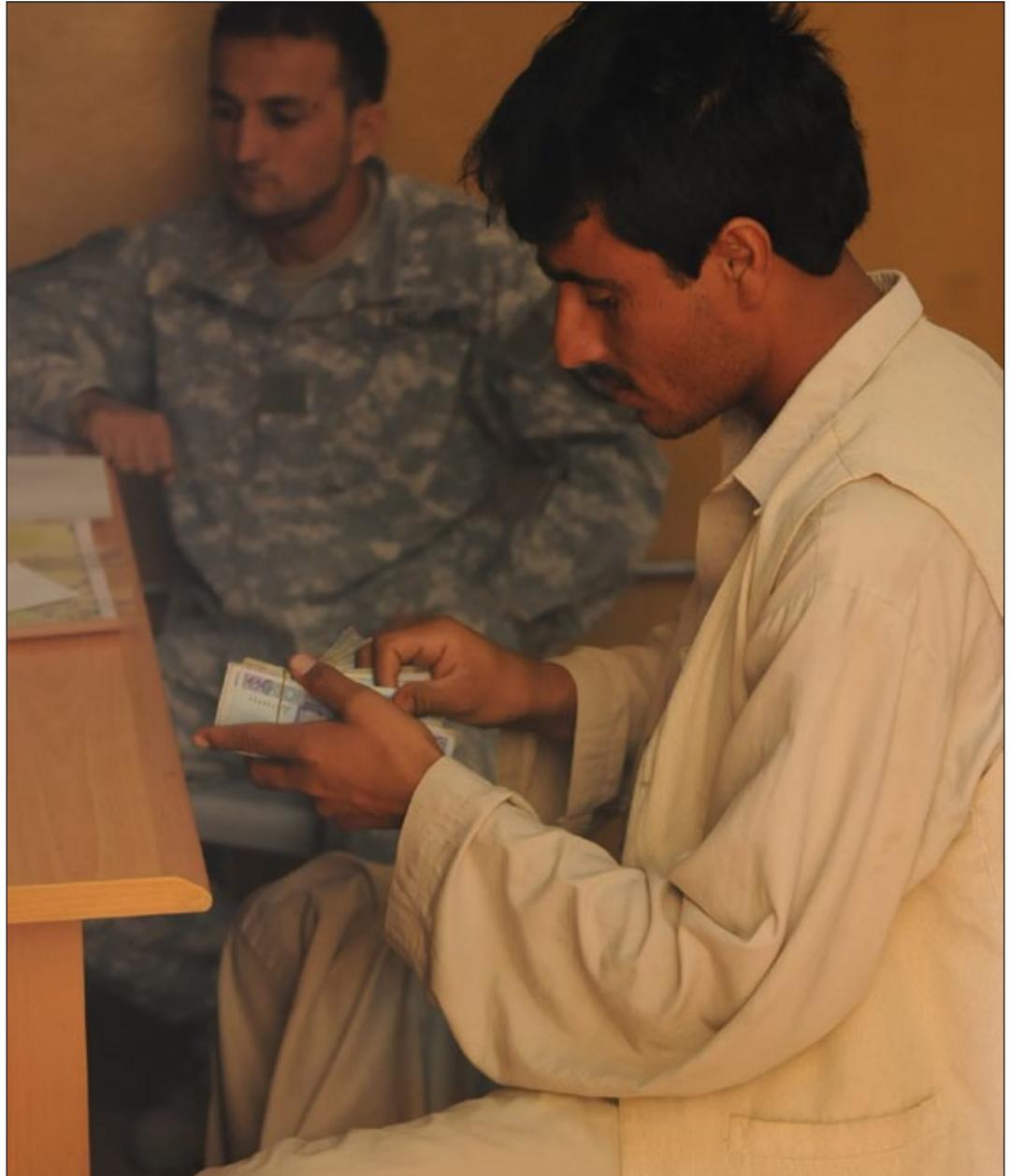
As members of the National Guard, the Task Force Rushmore legal office has a diverse staff with a wide variety of civilian skills that contribute to the COIN mission. Master Sgt. Steven Weiler works as an insurance adjuster back in Sioux Falls, S.D., and as the pay agent for claims, he provides the legal office with a unique ability to reasonably determine compensation amounts.

“Although every case is different, between the two of us, we can access things pretty quickly,” said McCarty, who has practiced civil law for 14 years as an attorney back in South Dakota.

Additionally, in situations where there may be questions about the extent of injury or amount of damage, McCarty will attempt to locate a subject matter expert within the military to help.

In a recent case, a claim was submitted by an Afghan who was struck by a vehicle driven by U.S. forces. The man complained of headaches and exhibited some odd symptoms when the FCC met with him. Since there was no question that the accident happened and the symptoms observed by McCarty and his staff gave them concern, they had a team of medical personnel examine the claimant. Based on their examination, they were able to determine the true extent of the man’s injuries and refer him to a local medical expert in Kabul.

“It would have been simple for us to pay the man for the damage caused and send him on his way, however, that’s not what the U.S. military does,” said McCarty. “We got him the additional medical help he needed, and hopefully the man, along with his family and friends, see how we are helping the people.”



Allah Jan, a local Afghan citizen, who filed a claim against the U.S. military, counts his money after receiving it Sept. 9, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. Allah Jan and other Kabul residents come to Camp Phoenix to file claims for personal injury or property damage such as vehicle accidents. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Rebecca Linder)

Conversely, in the same week, the legal office denied a claim filed by a local national who happened to be a member of President Karzi’s personal security team.

“We denied the claim because the accident was his fault and he was not happy,” said McCarty.

McCarty emphasizes that the most important aspect of this process is not the money, but to set an example that the

U.S. military follows the law to demonstrate that decisions are not arbitrarily made or based on whom you know.

“While this process is not perfect, I hope it gives us legitimacy in the eyes of the local population,” he added.

While no amount of money will completely atone for the hardships caused to a civilian involved in an accident, the U.S. military is doing what it can to compensate the Afghan

people and demonstrate they are here to help protect them by the just application of law – a COIN strategy that appears to be providing results.

“It’s clear to me this process makes a difference to the Afghans we see,” said McCarty. “They understand that we have established a law for their benefit and we intend to apply it fairly...and in the long run, I think that does have a positive impact.”

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LIVE-FIRE TRAINING

Mongolians help Afghan National Army refine weapon skills



An Afghan National Army Soldier and a Mongolian Mobile Training Team (MTT) member emplace an 82 mm mortar system prior to a live-fire weapons demonstration on Sept. 2, 2010, at the Camp Scenic weapons range near the Darulaman Infantry School in Kabul, Afghanistan. The MTT specialize in 82 mm mortars and are instructors at the infantry school.

Story and photos by Capt. Anthony Deiss

Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

CAMP SCENIC – Members of the Mongolian Expeditionary Task Force (METF) trained Afghan National Army Soldiers (ANA) on several different weapons systems during a live-fire weapons demonstration Sept. 2 at the new Darulaman Infantry School to better prepare the Soldiers for security operations.

The ANA Soldiers fired 82 mm mortars and SPG-9 recoilless rifles, and honed their targeting skills along with other ANA infantry elements at Darulaman's Camp Scenic weapons range, south of Kabul.

"The Afghans just received new and refurbished weapons for their indirect-fire teams and are demonstrating the knowledge and use of these weapon systems with their Mongolian trainers," said Maj. Mark Binggeli, staff advisor for the METF and Task Force Rushmore, Alaska Army National Guard.

The training event demonstrated the necessary coordination between different ANA elements to repel complex attacks. While infantry riflemen and humvees mounted with .50 caliber machine guns laid suppressive fire on targets down range, the mortar and rocket teams dropped in the artillery.

"These weapons provide the infantry with a mortar and rocket capability, which is important for an effective force," said Binggeli. "The Mongolians unique understanding of the mortar and rocket systems is providing key support to the ANA school. The demonstration by the ANA with the weapons was impressive."

The METF provides Mobile Training Team (MTT) instructors at the infantry school. The school, which was officially opened Aug. 1, teaches infantry tactics and employment of different weapon systems. The Mongolians are well suited for the mentorship and training of



these direct and indirect-fire weapons.

“They require trainers for the Russian 82 mm mortars and SPG-9 recoilless rifles at the school,” said Binggeli. “It’s a unique skill set that the Mongolian Field Artillery Soldiers possess.”

The MTTs not only provide instruction at Darulaman, but are also providing mentor/trainers at the Kabul Military Training Center (KMTC). The Mongolian MTT is 23 strong with 10 trainers at KMTC, and 13 at Darulaman.

“This is the first month the school has been in operation and the school is looking to put out large numbers of Soldiers,” said Binggeli. “So far, all the reports have been good and the Mongolian support to the school is vital.”

According to an ISAF press release, the first class of 211 students began training July 30. If courses run at full capacity, the new school will be able to accommodate up to 2,000 students at one time, according to British Lt. Col. Jeremy Pughe-Morgan, lead mentor for the infantry school. He said each year they will be able to produce 14,000 infantrymen, helping to build a more resilient army that is better able to defeat insurgents.

“The Mongolians are a key contributor to the NATO and ISAF mission,” said Binggeli. “They bring relevant knowledge to the mission. The training of the ANA is going well and it’s good to see the ANA being provided with new weapons and equipment, and enhancing their capacity to secure their country.”

A Mongolian Mobile Training Team (MTT) member reviews some of the features of the SPG-9 recoilless rifle, an anti-tank rocket system, with Afghan National Army Soldiers prior to a live-fire weapons demonstration on Sept. 2, 2010, at the Camp Scenic weapons range near the Darulaman Infantry School in Kabul, Afghanistan. The MTT specialize in SPG-9 recoilless rifle systems and train ANA Soldiers at the infantry school.



Afghan National Army Soldiers fire SPG-9 recoilless rifles and 82 mm mortars during a weapons demonstration on Sept. 2, 2010, at the Camp Scenic weapons range to coordinate infantry elements and provide direct and indirect fire support during a simulated complex attack.

NEW KABUL COMPOUND

Base support group does just that; supports



Master Sgt. Terry Helget, center, New Kabul Compound (NKC) noncommissioned officer in charge, looks at a project in the new housing building Sept. 3, 2010, at NKC in Kabul, Afghanistan. The building is part of new construction on the base and when completed will make NKC a state of the art military facility ideal for Afghan forces.

Story and photos by Sgt. Rebecca Linder

Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

NEW KABUL COMPOUND – Ensuring a military base runs smoothly is a complex task for most, but for 16 Soldiers of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard (SDARNG), serving others comes easy and rewarding.

As the Kabul Base Cluster Installation Command, the 196th provides sustainment support for nearly 9,000 U.S. and coalition forces stationed throughout 11 military bases in the city of Kabul.

About 1,000 of these personnel are stationed at New Kabul Compound (NKC). As the Base Support Group (BSG) of NKC, the Soldiers of the 196th provide oversight on everything from security and base defense operations, service and construction contracts, to billeting and supplying fuel and water for the tenants.

“We make sure the camp is always running smoothly,” said Master Sgt. Terry Helget, NKC noncommissioned officer in charge. “Everyone chips in and we do a lot of cross training to make sure servicemembers and other tenants living and working here are taken care of.”

“When a Soldier needs something done, whether it is fixing showerheads or repairing generators, we do what needs to be done

to ensure Soldiers have peace of mind knowing their living quarters are safe and secure,” added Helget of Tea, S.D. “If the contracting company (Fluor) can’t do it right away, then someone from the BSG is always willing to help out and go fix whatever it is; no matter what the rank is, we all pitch in.”

One unit the BSG continues to support here is the headquarters of United States Forces-Afghanistan (USFOR-A), an important command and control element for U.S. forces fighting the war throughout Afghanistan.

With many senior-level leaders stationed on the camp, maintaining a positive and professional relationship with the command is key to a successful working atmosphere, said Helget.

“USFOR-A continues to give us compliments about how we do business and supports us on how we are running the camp,” said Helget.

“I am pleased with the relationship we have established with USFOR-A,” said Maj. Thomas Krull, deputy mayor of NKC. “The chief of staff and the command sergeant major of USFOR-A said they are very pleased with the progress we are making here and

Sgt. Clyde Linker, right, billeting noncommissioned officer in charge, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, helps a customer with room arrangements Sept. 3, 2010, at New Kabul Compound (NKC) in Kabul, Afghanistan. Linker and several other Soldiers from the 196th stationed at NKC provide sustainment and support to about 1,000 tenants who live and work at NKC.



they have made comments about the SDARNG being among the best that they have worked with.”

The BSG also supports other units on camp and helps improve the base to make it a better place than when the group arrived. Base improvements so far include graveling the camp, improving force protection measures, setting up an arms room and ensuring new construction projects are on track.

“It’s been great working with both Fluor on the civilian side and USFOR-A in trying to make this camp a better place,” said Krull of Sioux Falls, S.D.

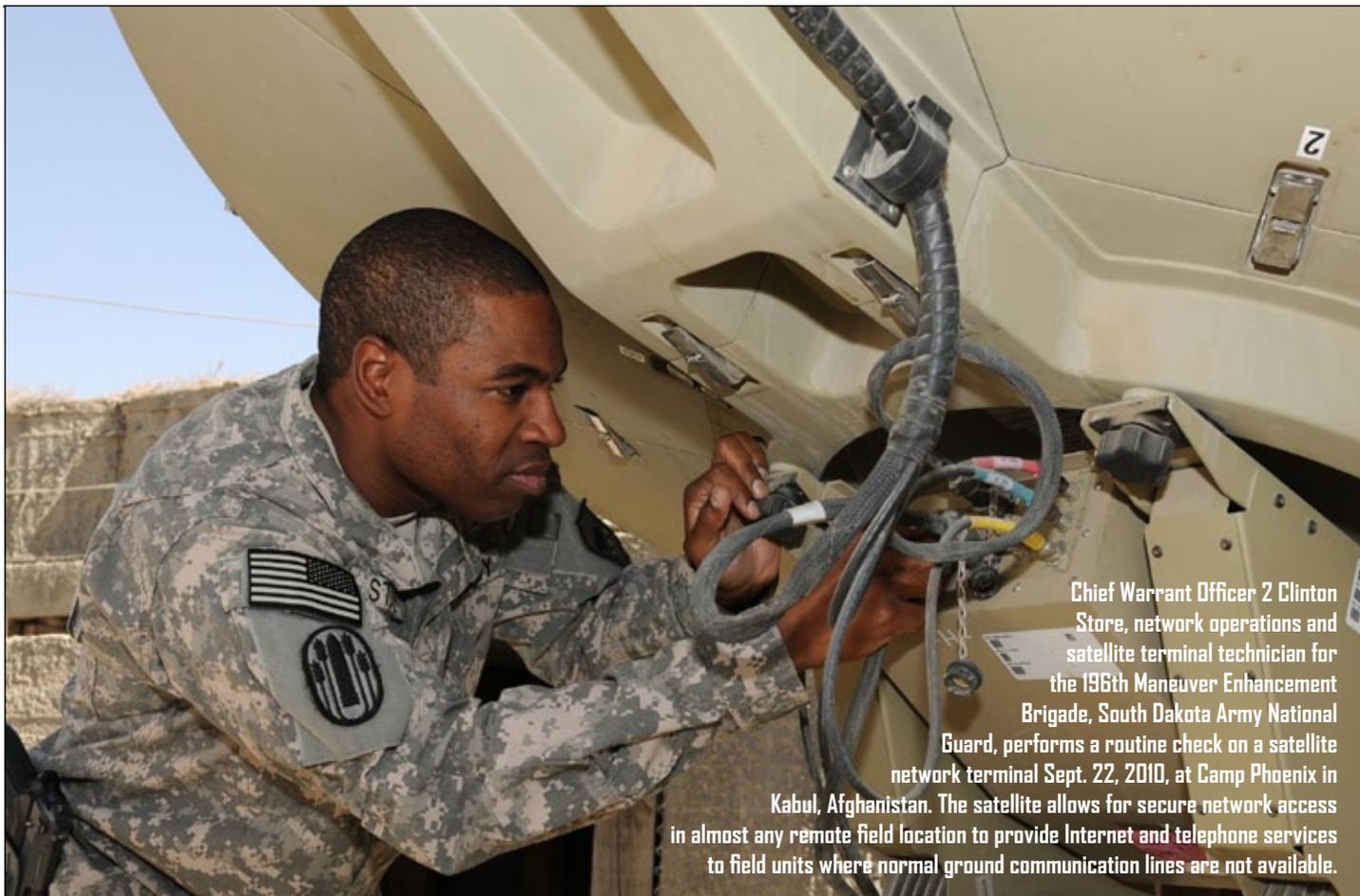
After the completion of the new administrative and housing buildings, NKC will be a state of the art camp in Kabul. The improvements and the willingness to help tenants when they need it are everyday occurrences for this group.

“We work very well as a team,” said Helget. “We are the one-stop shop for things that happen here on camp. ‘Khostan Tawanestan,’ a popular motto in the Dari language used by USFOR-A, which means ‘we can, we will,’ fits the BSG well, because we can provide support to NKC and we will provide the best support we can.”

“I’m glad to have the crew that we have with us,” said Krull. “We operate very well together and we are doing great things for the camp.”



Sgt. 1st Class Russel Thompson, right, operations noncommissioned officer of New Kabul Compound (NKC) and Master Sgt. Jeffrey Green, installation operations center noncommissioned officer in charge at Camp Phoenix, both Soldiers of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, talk about the unit urinalysis testing Sept. 3, 2010, at NKC in Kabul, Afghanistan. Thompson and several other members of the 196th stationed at NKC provide sustainment and support to servicemembers at the camp.



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Clinton Store, network operations and satellite terminal technician for the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, performs a routine check on a satellite network terminal Sept. 22, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. The satellite allows for secure network access in almost any remote field location to provide Internet and telephone services to field units where normal ground communication lines are not available.

STAYING CONNECTED

Task Force Rushmore DOIM keeps Kabul Base Cluster informed

Story and photos by Sgt. Rebecca Linder

Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

CAMP PHOENIX – Whether it is simply fixing communication wires or ensuring personnel stationed in the Kabul Base Cluster (KBC) have internet to communicate with friends and family back home, Soldiers of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, are continuing to provide information technology support to nearly 9,000 U.S. and coalition forces stationed at 11 bases throughout the KBC.

Several Soldiers of the 196th, or Task Force Rushmore's Directorate of Information Management (DOIM), pitch in to provide a range of support services to improve the much-needed technology to servicemembers serving in the capital region.

"Seventy to 80 percent of the work we do is initiated by help-desk tickets, and the rest are behind-the-scene projects we have started since being here," said Capt. Lew Weber, deputy director of the DOIM. "Whether it is setting up e-mail for someone or troubleshooting printers, we are always willing to help out. Whatever we can do to make things easier for someone, we will do it."

A recent project the group is working on for the KBC is installing the new Combined Enterprise Regional Information Exchange

System (CENTRIX), which is a multi-national, information-sharing network for all coalition forces to use, including the Afghan military.

"We are working together with some of the other camps to get these computers out and updated with the new program," said Sgt. 1st Class David Smith, Task Force Rushmore help-desk manager. "When the camps are turned over to the Afghan military they can't get access to our network because it is a No Foreign National (NOFORN) network, but CENTRIX will allow the coalition forces to share a network."

Keeping a common ground is important, but safety is even more vital to everyone here and the Soldiers of the DOIM are helping to maintain that tactically and proficiently.

These Soldiers are improving video teleconferencing programs throughout the KBC, such as ADOBE connect and eliminating the need to travel from base to base, said Weber.

"We also have two members of the DOIM who work on the tactical side; ensuring several vehicles' communication devices are properly maintained," said Weber. "Spc. Launie Stokes and Spc. Leonard Paulson help to conduct radio communication checks

and fills.”

“In the commo (communication) world, the signal mission statement is ‘install, operate and maintain,’ but I always say what about improving,” said Weber. “I have always challenged our office to think that way. We are always thinking about what we can do next to improve this camp and other camps in the KBC.”

The DOIM not only provides services at the KBC level, but at an individual Soldier level as well. Keeping the personnel on Camp Phoenix satisfied with the Internet and cable services provided may not be an easy task, but these technology-savvy personnel have tackled the mission to help Soldiers be able to Skype, check e-mail, Facebook and overall keep morale high by keeping in touch with loved ones back home.

“It may not be mission essential, but when personnel get to watch the news or catch a Sunday football game, it helps them keep in touch with what’s going on back home,” said Weber. “The cable system here has not been touched in more than four years; it is weathered and outdated, but it is another mission we have taken on so our Soldiers can do these things during their downtime.”

“We are very fortunate to have some very competent, intelligent, robust people in the DOIM,” added Weber. “My team is always willing to help fix other Soldiers computers, so they can do these things, even though it may not be a government furnished piece of equipment.”

With the experience, knowledge and kindness combined of these individuals, the DOIM has made life a little easier, more convenient and safer for the personnel stationed here.

“The DOIM has definitely become a key player in the big game to get the information they need at the right time and when they need it,” said Weber. “We have helped to maintain technology in a country where there isn’t so much and it has made an impact on this war.”



Spc. Jory Rogers, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, looks at a piece from a computer tower Sept. 21, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. Rogers, the SharePoint manager, and other members of the Directorate of Information Management office, provide information technology support for nearly 9,000 U.S. and coalition forces throughout the Kabul Base Cluster.



Capt. Lew Weber, left, 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, helps set up a new wireless Internet antenna Sept. 21, 2010, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. Weber, deputy director of the Directorate of Information Management, helps to ensure that the wireless Internet throughout the Kabul Base Cluster is working properly so servicemembers can communicate with friends and family back home.



FLOOD AID

ANP and U.S. Soldiers partner to provide humanitarian relief

Story and photos by Capt. Anthony Deiss

Task Force Rushmore Public Affairs

KABUL – Afghan National Police (ANP) and U.S. Army Soldiers provided humanitarian aid to 150 families of the Dasht Barchi village in Kabul Sept. 23, whose homes suffered extensive water damage during a flood last month.

Afghan National Police of Police District 6 and Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment (1-101st FA), Massachusetts Army National Guard, partnered to procure and deliver shelters and food items to the needy families.

“We are here to help the Afghan people who have been affected by this flood and are here to ensure they get needed shelter and food supplies such as flour, sugar, beans, rice and cooking oil,” said Staff Sgt. Laura Berry of Golf Company, 186th Brigade Support Battalion, Vermont Army National Guard, attached to the 1-101st.

The aid is provided in response to fast moving rain water, which swept through a local creek in August and damaged canal walls – causing debris and garbage to back up water and flood nearby homes.

Afghan National Police (ANP) from Police District 6 assist a family with humanitarian aid Sept. 23, 2010, in the Dasht Barchi village of Kabul, Afghanistan, whose home suffered extensive water damage during a flood last month. The ANP partnered with Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment, Massachusetts Army National Guard, to procure and deliver shelters and food items to 150 needy families in the affected village.

“This humanitarian aid is so important for the people because they don’t have any building to live inside of or any food to eat or feed their children,” said Muhammed Naim Qazway, chief of Police District 6.

Sgt. 1st Class Chris Scherer, team leader for Police Mentor Team 3, Alpha Battery, 1-101st, helped to organize the relief efforts along with Berry. Both Scherer’s and Berry’s teams coordinated the support with the ANP, and together they are seeing the importance of this kind of aid in winning the support of the people.

“These humanitarian missions are very important – one reason is it gets the people the supplies they desperately need to survive, and reason two it demonstrates the ANP are here to help the people and to build those relationships to earn the respect of the people,” said Scherer. “Once they have that, it will be a lot easier for them to do their job in this area.”

Berry, of Brockton, Mass., expressed a similar sentiment.

“It puts our face along with the ANP’s face to show we are here to help and try and establish trust with us more,” she said. “We need the people to realize that the ANP are around and will be here to help them after we leave.”

Units of the 1-101st work with ANP districts in the city to help provide training and mentorship to keep their communities safe and secure. When disaster strikes, the 1-101st partners with their ANP



Soldiers of Golf Company, 186th Brigade Support Battalion, Vermont Army National Guard, assist a family with tents and food supplies during the delivery of humanitarian aid Sept. 23, 2010, in the Dasht Barchi village of Kabul, Afghanistan. The Soldiers partnered with Afghan National Police to deliver shelters and food items to 150 needy families whose home suffered extensive water damage during a flood in the village last month.

counterparts to help the Afghans on another level; a level that is making a difference in the eyes of the people, said Qazway.

“It is good for the ANP to be working with the U.S. Army and the people like it – they are trusting us and appreciate our efforts to help them,” he said. “The families whose homes were destroyed in the flood – they have nobody else to turn to – and they love us for that.”

Scherer said the 1-101st is also working on procuring rebuilding materials for the village to repair and strengthen the canal walls to help keep the creek from flooding in the future. The humanitarian aid, along with the reconstruction project, is showing these 1-101st Soldiers they are making a difference here.

“I feel very good about being a part of missions like this,” said Scherer, of Colebrook, N.H. “My whole team is some of the best people I’ve ever worked with and we are out here doing it every day, trying to make a difference and I believe it’s working.”



One-hundred fifty families of the Dasht Barchi village receive shelters and food supplies during a humanitarian aid drop Sept. 23, 2010, in Kabul, Afghanistan, from Afghan National Police and Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery Regiment, Massachusetts Army National Guard. The ANP partnered with the Soldiers to procure and deliver the relief aid to the needy families whose home suffered extensive water damage during a flood in the village last month.



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