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## ***Corps builds Afghan National Civil Order Police compound in Lashkar Gah***

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The Afghan National Civil Order Police compound in Lashkar Gah has workspace and barracks for 325 ANCOP personnel, and additional office capacity for the Afghan Border and Provincial Police [USACE Photo]

**Helmand Province--** In May 2008, the Corps of Engineers finished construction, and turned over a shiny new Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP) compound in Lashkar Gah, the capital of the Helmand Province. Lashkar Gah, which means “place of soldiers”, is situated in southern Afghanistan between the Helmand and Arghandab rivers and was originally settled about a thousand years ago as a riverside barracks town for Ghaznavid Soldiers accompanying nobility to their winter capitol in nearby Bost. Since 2002, illegal opiate production has more than tripled in this Afghan province, because the Taliban who once banned poppy cultivation, are now protecting drug smugglers and using illegal profits to fund the insurgency. “The new ANCOP compound in Lashkar Gah and presence of Afghan quick-reaction forces there will help bring governance and stability to the region,” said Colonel Miroslav P. Kurka, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commander in Afghanistan.

The new compound is self-sustaining, has a stone perimeter wall with eight guard towers, and is comprised of about 30 structures; including administrative buildings, two-story barracks for 325 personnel, warehouses, vehicle and building maintenance facilities, septic, well and water treatment systems, a power plant, hardstand parking and a dining facility that can feed up to 500 people. According to Mr. Lanier P. Drake, Corps of Engineers Resident Engineer on the project, an Afghan company named FCEC-UI Projects, built the sprawling compound in 15 months for \$14 million. "We got a lot built for the money," said Drake, "and the craftsmanship was superb". Most buildings in Afghanistan are built of masonry and aren't insulated very well, exclaimed Drake, but the buildings here were constructed of 3D walls which have a poly-styrene core with a wire mesh that gets sprayed with a thick layer of Shot-Crete on both sides. "The buildings are strong, well insulated, and went up amazingly fast," he said.



Afghan workers place concrete for the curb and drainage system that will run throughout the ANCOP compound in Lashkar Gah. [USACE Photo]



Afghan workers put the finishing touches on a two-story barracks at the ANCOP compound. [USACE Photo]

According to Drake, FCEC employed about 900 local Afghan workers on the job during peak construction, which is great for the local economy. FCEC has also been awarded an additional \$2 million contract to build a Comprehensive Health Care Plus facility inside the ANCOP compound. "We are creating good-paying jobs that keep workers out of the poppy fields, and when the work is finished, the community will have a state-of-the-art mini hospital with four operating rooms, emergency medical capabilities and an intensive care unit," said Drake. "In fact, some of the folks here will be getting health care for the very first time".

The facility in Lashkar Gah is just one of about 300 Afghan National Police (ANP) projects that the Corps of Engineers is building in Afghanistan during FY08. "When the Afghans are able to provide and maintain their own security, they will experience economic growth and will have more opportunities for a better life," said Kurka. "It's amazing how much we've accomplished working together with our Coalition partners, donor agencies, and the Afghan people," said Kurka. "The facility in Lashkar Gah is a showcase and a great success".



A large vehicle maintenance facility which is equipped with underground maintenance bays is painted before contractors install the large overhead doors. [USACE Photo]

For more information, please contact the Afghanistan Engineer District Public Affairs Office at: (540) 678-2984 or Afghan cell at 0798-03-7016.