

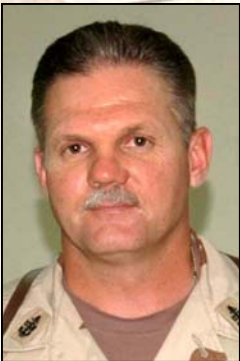
Postcards from Iraq

Serving in Iraq

By **BMCS (SW) William Martin, NCOIC**
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Al Asad Office

Last August while sitting in my comfortable office at Port Operations Little Creek, I got an email stating that our main office in Norfolk had been tasked to provide a volunteer to go to Iraq. I called my boss and said I was interested.

Once everyone found out I had volunteered they said “man are you crazy, it’s dangerous over there,” and one of my personal favorites, “what are you going to do, there’s no ships in the desert.”. Now that I have completed my six-month tour here in Iraq I have to admit there were a few times when things got a little exciting, but for the most part it was a very rewarding life experience.



I served as Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) at Al Asad Air Base located in Al Anbar Province (known by many as the Wild West). I worked in an office with some great people — one other military, eight civilians and two local Iraqis. It’s definitely been the adventure of a lifetime. I’ve learned a lot about Iraq. I’ve met some very hardworking Iraqi people who just want to provide for their families like everyone else. I’m

glad I signed up for this opportunity. The one disappointment I’ve had while serving here is the negative press that we see on the news every day. They only show the worst, the horrific, the most shocking events that unfortunately are taking place here. But you never see any of the positive news such as new schools opening, water

treatment plants being completed, new health clinics and fire stations under construction, or the local people who put their lives on the line every day building those projects. That kind of stuff just isn’t aired.. USACE has made great strides in Iraq’s reconstruction effort and there’s still lots of work to be done.

BMCS William Martin
Little Creek, VA



Senior Chief Martin at Al Asad Air Base.



Al Asad USACE staff.