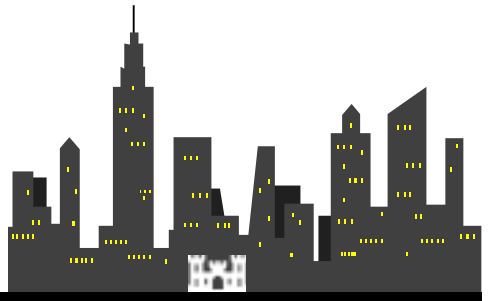


The New York District Times



Nov./Dec. 2004, Vol. 29, No. 5

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District

Commander's message: think and act as a region

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Atlantic Division is transforming itself.

Under USACE 2012, the Division and its Districts operate together as one cohesive unit, the North Atlantic Regional Business Center —one of nine regional centers working with our Washington, D.C., headquarters to align the Corps for success in its future missions, workload and capabilities. The North Atlantic Regional Business Center, using Project Management Business Processes, integrates the capability of six unique Districts, which collaborate to efficiently and effectively deliver projects, and serves customers by leveraging the resources of the Region and the Corps.

Nothing in the USACE 2012 concept changes the fundamental requirement for Districts to execute and deliver products and services to our varied cus-

tomers. Integrating our capabilities means leveraging resources across district boundaries to get the job done, pooling expertise within the Region to meet technical challenges, and removing communication barriers to streamline customer service. Since all of you are members of or provide support to one or more teams, everyone in the Region, by extension, supports and is affected by our RBC.

“In this regard we’re finding opportunities to deliver quality work faster and to reduce costs on a regional basis. To make that happen, the Corps is shifting its focus from regional cooperation to regional business operations in order to support and facilitate better District delivery to our customers,” says Brig. Gen. Bo Temple, Regional Commander. “As a result, we all need to think and act regionally.”



Brig. Gen. Bo Temple

The North Atlantic Regional Business Center chartered in 1998, made tremendous progress in regional cooperation, and it has moved to its USACE 2012 “Initial Operating Capability” Oct. 1. The RBC — the Region — is one team of some 3,500 Corps of Engineers professionals located in six districts under one regional office.

“Every one of the Corps’ activities enhances the U.S. economy, supports our natural environment, and enhances our national security,” said Temple. “As a Region of the Corps, we will be a better steward of public trust by developing regional efficiencies and capabilities. We will maintain and leverage regional capabilities where it is not cost-effective to maintain expertise at every one of our districts so that we can deliver more cost-effective, high-quality, safe products and services to our customers.”



Regionalization is fundamentally about enhancing our teamwork in a way that best meets our customers’ needs.

Continued on page 3



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**
New York District

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9-11-01

Lest we forget

Chief's Holiday Message

During this holiday season, I'm reminded of the saying, "People are not honored for what they receive; they are honored for what they give."

Every day during 2004, the wonderful men and women of the Corps gave their talent, time, and energy to accomplish meaningful work for the nation. I am deeply gratified and very impressed with all that you accomplished this year. You did some tremendous work while managing many changes, such as implementing USACE 2012, standing up the Gulf Region Division and the Afghanistan Engineer District, and going through a change in leadership. We also formalized our great working relationship with the 412th and 416th Engineer Commands.



Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock
Chief of Engineers

It's clearly evident that our great organization is filled with public servants who possess great substance and spirit. Being a public servant means standing up for others, which was continually evident this year. Many employees deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan to support the global war on terrorism. Not only did they provide their technical talents, many went above and beyond the call of duty and spearheaded efforts to help orphans in Afghanistan, or provide school supplies to Iraq. There are many stories of generosity, of reaching out to help others. It seems that your spirit of giving knows no bounds.

And most recently at home, more than one thousand of you rushed to help the Federal Emergency Management Agency provide much-needed support to devastated communities after hurricanes hit the Southeast. One of the privileges of being commander is seeing your work first-hand. It's inspiring to see your efforts and to hear the gratitude from citizens who are thankful there is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Corps has provided assistance to others at home and abroad because so many employees willingly put their lives on hold and deployed. However, it took the entire Corps team to accomplish everything we have done. Every Corps employee has contributed in some way.

Those who remained at home absorbed additional work, provided moral support, and contributed technical reach-back assistance to those deployed. And thanks to those who remained at home, we have been able to effectively focus on the vitally important regular missions that are entrusted to us.

This year you continued to support the armed forces with quality design and construction, environmental remediation, and engineering capability. You improved the quality of life in this nation through work on our inland waterways, ports, and harbors. You helped to restore the environment and provide much-needed recreation at hundreds of locations around the country. You continued to provide world-class research and development. You also continued to reduce the vulnerability of our infrastructure to attack, and maintained the capabilities needed to respond to future natural disasters or terrorist attacks.

You are a diverse, dedicated, and talented team, and I look forward to the opportunities that await us in 2005. We will continue the efforts of this past year. We will also continue to support the Army's transformation as we continue with our own transformation. I look forward to refining our strategic direction, fully activating communities of practice, and most of all, seeing the wonderful work I know you will accomplish.

This season, take time to reflect on the qualities you possess and the contributions you made this past year. I also ask that you remember your co-workers and other Americans who are away from home and in harm's way.

Julie and I wish you and your loved ones a happy and safe holiday season and New Year.

Essayons!

Commander's message (continued from page 1)

Regional cooperation has helped ensure the success of a wide variety of projects completed in fiscal 2004, especially on a district-to-district basis:

The New York District, constrained for in-house resources, engaged the Europe District to prepare the design package for an \$8 million Explosive R&D Loading Facility at Picatinny Arsenal (N.J.). Europe then tapped the Norfolk District for civil, electrical and geotechnical expertise. The customer, the U.S. Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center, was pleased enough with the result to request the same team for a similar project.

Another New York product, the Dam Safety Assurance Report for the Waterbury Vt. Dam, represented a collaborative effort with the New England and Baltimore Districts that received an honorable mention for the USACE Virtual Team of the Year Award.

In its successful award (on extremely short suspense) of a \$500 million contract for construction and rehab of buildings, schools, and health facilities in Iraq, the Philadelphia District drew upon New England and the North Atlantic Division Office for contracting support.

To oversee demolition of the Tacony Warehouse, a former Army facility in northeast Philadelphia, the Baltimore District found the help it needed right down the street, bringing in the Philadelphia District for construction management and quality assurance.

Baltimore and Norfolk are sharing resources and preparing a programmatic environmental impact statement for the proposed introduction of a new oyster species into the tidal waters of Maryland and Virginia.

Initially Europe District, then ultimately all Districts have provided support to GWOT by deploying over 186 regional employees in direct support, with nearly all in general support to this vital wartime effort. Furthermore, the region deployed over 176 employees to support South Atlantic Division in post-hurricane recovery efforts in devastated areas of our country's Southeast in 2004. Our support to these contingency missions, and those who remained at the home station and shouldered additional responsibilities, is a true testament to the flexibility, spirit, and professionalism of every NAD team member.

In terms of actualizing the RBC concept, the region has within the past year embarked on a num-

ber of initiatives designed to better integrate our capabilities:

The Regional Technical Specialist ("Tech-13") Program applies the Region's best technical expertise in specific disciplines to improve civil works planning while enhancing career paths for non-supervisory technical specialists. There are currently 18 GS-13 Regional Technical Specialists, each designated part-time for such tasks as project technical review.

Through Virtual Design Teaming ("V Team"), physical location no longer restricts the composition of a project's design team. This "tele-engineering" approach, using video teleconferencing and electronic data transfer, has enabled the districts, especially Europe, to work together on projects without regard to the usual travel constraints (see example of Picatinny Arsenal above).

The need for consistency across district boundaries in dealing with non-federal partners helped bring about creation of the Regional Sediment Management Team. Dredging and placement of sediment from federal channels falls under the Corps' navigation mission, but its applications include hurricane and storm damage reduction and ecosystem restoration, and affects cross-district regulatory issues. The RSM Team will engage appropriate stakeholders at all levels on these sometimes competing demands and a range of other issues in order to develop better regional solutions and support to affected customers.

Contracting, Resource Management, Logistics, Information Management and Public Affairs, all formerly independent functions, are now single-team Regional Support Functions that also continue to support the districts where they are located. Each of these teams has already developed a series of initiatives that will provide better support regionally and will make more efficient use of existing resources.

Three NAD-based District Support Teams, each dedicated to two districts (Europe/New England, New York/Philadelphia and Baltimore/Norfolk), supply the region-to-district link in the Corps' vertical integration team approach. The DST's complete the



(continued on page 4)

Commander's message (continued from page 3)

vertical link by communicating with the Regional Integration Team in the Washington HQ. This RIT provides dedicated national support to the North Atlantic Regional Business Center. There is one RIT per RBC. These teams, together with the Districts, are operationalizing the Corps' "One Headquarters" concept.

In the future, plans are being made for continued progress in fiscal 2005, building on last year's accomplishments, and laying the foundation for further regionalization in FY 06 and beyond:

Workload management will be fine-tuned based on customer needs and on regional resources and capacities.

P2, the automated system being used for project management, will continue to be a major focus area to better support all activities.

The RBC will continue to define the Region's core competencies and to make effective use of the Tech-13 program and other technical capabilities, region-wide.

Regionalization of support functions under USACE 2012 will continue as Communities of Practice take shape within each function.

The Regional Program Budget Advisory Committee will study and prepare for implementation of

cost control measures and regional rates in fiscal year 2006.

Better integration of teams (District PDTs, DSTs, RITs, CoPs, etc.) and greater delegation of authorities will likely occur by FY 06 as well. So if you are a member of, or provide support to, one or more of these teams, you will be directly affected by our regionalization efforts.

Regionalization also will drive the TAPES performance objectives for all members of the Regional Management Board, GS-15s throughout the Region, and others rated by regional leadership.

"We will think as a Region and act as a Region, delivering quality projects through our Districts, on time at the lowest cost, safely," said Temple. "We have done and are doing great work in the service of the Army and the Nation. But working together we can always improve, and as a Region, I know that we will. I am extremely proud and grateful for all that you do daily to support our Region, our Regiment, and our Nation.

"ESSAYONS!"



Corps volunteer involved in humanitarian mission



Rich Bulvid of New York District takes a moment of his busy work schedule to interact with children in Afghanistan. Bulvid stated he had the opportunity to accompany the agency CARE when they distributed water to refugees.



Emergency shoreline project gets underway

By Vince Elias

New York District has launched an ambitious emergency shoreline protection project along Northport Harbor in the Village of Northport, Long Island.

The project's construction began in December with a ceremonial groundbreaking attended by elected officials and Corps representatives.

The slope along the harbor shoreline supports Woodbine Avenue, a major thoroughfare in the Village of Northport.

According to Donald Cresitello, project manager, the slope is in danger of collapsing due to a combination of groundwater infiltration and erosion from wave attack from Northport Harbor. Besides local traffic, the avenue is traversed by emergency, police and fire department vehicles and is a crucial route for ambulances to reach the local hospital.

The project is a Section 14 Emergency Shoreline Protection project. The project area stretches along a 120-foot section of shoreline at the bottom of the slope sitting approximately 40 feet high. Woodbine Avenue runs along the top of the slope.

The project cost is approximately \$1 million shared by Federal, State, and Village funds.

According to Cresitello, the work is scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2005, with some planting work being completed in May 2005.

"The Corps' plan is to stabilize the slope to ensure that the road doesn't fail," said Cresitello. "In order to stabilize the slope and preserve Woodbine Avenue, the District will construct a vinyl sheet pile wall at the bottom of the slope," said Cresitello.

At the toe of the sheet pile, stone will be placed to reduce wave reflection and protect against scour. Two rows of screw anchor tiebacks will be installed to reinforce the sheet pile wall.

A majority of the existing vegetation will be removed as required and the slope will be refilled and regraded.



Photo: Donald E. Cresitello

(l-r) Mayor Peter Panarites, Rep. Steve Israel, and NY State Sen. Carl Marcellino observe the project area along Woodbine Avenue in Northport, Long Island.

A geocell-type cellular confinement system structure will be installed to reinforce the slope. An underground drainage system will also be installed to allow groundwater to flow from beneath the slope into the harbor.

"Once the slope is stabilized, shrubs and herbaceous groundcover will be planted to preserve the aesthetic and environmental characteristics that prevail in the area," he concluded.



Photo: Tom Pfeifer

A groundbreaking ceremony attended by elected officials and Corps representatives signified the project's beginning. (l-r) Donald Braun, construction manager, N.Y. District; Rich Tuers, NYSDEC, Albany; Donald E. Cresitello, project manager, N.Y. District; Peter Scully, regional director, NYSDEC Region 1; Andrew Raia, NY state assemblyman; Carl Marcellino, NY state senator; Rep. Steve Israel; Michael White, Northport Village attorney; Peter Panarites, Mayor, Northport, and Eugene Brickman, deputy chief, Planning Division

Volunteer's efforts make for a safer and better Afghanistan

By Carolyn Vadino

Milton Ricks likes to walk during his inspections at Darulaman Garrison, an Afghanistan National Army base located outside the bustling city of Kabul. Wearing his camouflage bandana under his white and red Corps of Engineers hardhat complimenting his neatly pressed Army desert camouflage uniform, his face has become so familiar to a group whose faces are hard to discern. He cannot drive the base without workers stopping "Mr. Ricks" to say hello or to ask questions.

As a project engineer, he is stern and meticulous during inspections. As a person, he exudes friendship and an openness that has allowed him to forge personal and professional relationships.

"I understand how they want to be approached. I must shake hands 100 times a day," he said sitting on a wood bench outside his office, a temporary trailer. "I notice sometimes the contractors try to get in my proximity so they can shake my hand. I am very receptive, so they feel comfortable to approach me with issues and I think that is why they do. They don't feel intimidated."

At a glance, Ricks appears intimidating, standing more than 6 feet tall, an athletic build, with a booming voice that has a hint of the Liberian accent developed during his youth. He has almost come full circle in circumstance. Born in Liberia, he left Africa to escape the violence of civil war and tribal fighting and moved to the United States to become an engineer. He came to Afghanistan hoping to help rebuild a war-torn nation and put a human face to the word American.

After graduating from college, and serving six years in the U.S. Marine Corps, Ricks settled in Texas. He eventually made his way up to the New York metropolitan area and accepted a position with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

"I see a correlation between what happened in New York and what has hap-

pened in Afghanistan," Ricks said. "They have been hijacked and used as a springboard to launch terrorism against America. If we fall to terrorism, if we are not here, I am not here, we are vulnerable to terrorism. We are a defense to our great country."



Milton Ricks

Ricks, an Edison, N.J. resident, is part of a group of volunteers serving in Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom. His projects are helping to stabilize Afghanistan by providing comfortable training facilities for the Afghanistan National Army.

"I was working on flood control projects in New Jersey when Sept. 11 happened," said Ricks. "I saw the airline [hit the tower] on television, and I learned the whole story and years later decided to come to Afghanistan where it all started to help

(continued on page 7)



Milton Ricks, project engineer (center) and SFC John Patrick, quality assurance representative review form work for construction in Afghanistan.

Photos: Carolyn Vadino

Corps volunteer (continued from page 6)

promote democracy and to show them [Afghans] that Americans are not what terrorists say we are.”

Ricks believes walking around the base inspecting and talking to the workers about deficiencies helps to set construction standards. He points out that many are new to the industry and have no formal training. From an engineer’s perspective, he monitors the work at the base to ensure it is accurate and in line with safety and construction standards. He believes he has seen a shift in their understanding of safety and construction standards.

“They know what will and will not pass inspection and have said to me, that this will not pass the test,” he said, referring to some of the facilities such as the barracks, water and sewer systems, communications and electrical ducts that he routinely checks.

“This has exposed me to many cultures, working at the same site, from Pakistan to Indian and Afghanistan.” All, he said, have different reasons for working here, ranging from expatriates providing a wealth of experience and helping their families back home, to the uneducated with nationalistic pride wanting to rebuild their country and learn a skill.

“Some are uneducated,” Ricks said of the Afghan workers, “but they are very eager to earn a living.”

Ricks sometimes feels conflicted with regard to his personnel safety. However, he feels since he started work at the base, he wants to see it finished. He also believes his expertise is needed, adding that

this is a chance to help this country “fight terrorism with science and engineering.”

“It is an honor to have the American flag on my shoulder and be serving here,” he said. “Sometimes it is scary and dangerous and after 25 years of fighting they are slightly between a rock and hard place, but I am honored to be a part of the whole change.”

Ricks has made the most out of his experiences to try and learn from the different cultures, he said, going outside of his parameters of comfort. He has had lunch with local nationals, the Afghan General in charge of the ANA base where he works, and local contractors. He also makes it a point to have tea, a common custom here in Afghanistan, with the people he works with.

Ricks will return to the United States in December to spend the holidays with his family. Although he misses them, he feels strongly about the work the Corps is doing in Afghanistan.

“I was motivated and realized the world is a small place, for us too,” he said. “We have a lot at stake in America, and we could possibly lose our way of life if we don’t pay attention to the threat of terror.”



Photo: Carolyn Vadino

(Above) Joe Haugen (center), Dawn Pisarski and Lt. Col. Paul Casazza of the Corps discuss on-site contract issues.

(left) Ricks was reunited with his District colleagues in Kabul, and Col. John O’Dowd, who served as New York District Engineer, and is now commander of the Afghanistan District. (r-l) Milton Ricks, Col. O’Dowd, Rich Bulvid, Maj. David Freedman, and Carolyn Vadino. Most of the Corps people serving in Afghanistan are involved in rebuilding structures and facilities.

White House award bestowed on Corps coastal team

New York District's Big Egg Salt Marsh restoration team received the Coastal America Partnership Award for 2004.

The Coastal America Partnership was established to protect, preserve and restore coastal watersheds by integrating federal actions with state and local government and non-governmental efforts. The partnership enables national policy issues to be identified and resolved, regional plans and strategies to be developed, and local projects to be implemented.

Awardees:

Melissa Alvarez, PL
 Steven Couch, PL
 Kerry Anne Donohue, EN
 Len Houston, PL
 Jodi McDonald, PL
 Craig Spitz, OP
 Brian Williams, EN
 Steve Yandrich, PL

MOU signed with Native American engineering society

A large crowd turned out at the annual American Indian Science and Engineering Society's conference held in Anchorage this fall. Marty Goff, the EEO representative for Native American programs for New York District, attended the event.

Goff is a member of the society and worked at the Corps' corporate career booth with 15 other Corps representatives from around the country at the conference. "The Corps has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the Society to become a corporate sponsor at the event," said Goff. "I was able to obtain the resumes of three candidates for possible jobs at New York District."



Photo: Marty Goff

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