



# Deputy Chief of Engineers visits Afghanistan

By Bruce J. Huffman

In late October, Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley, U.S. Army Deputy Chief of Engineers, spent three days in Afghanistan with members of the Afghanistan Engineer District visiting projects, engaging other commanders and engineer units, and meeting with various stakeholders in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Afghanistan's reconstruction.

During the trip, Riley visited an Afghan National Army facility under construction near Kabul. This project is one of 52 ANA facilities being built by AED throughout the country. According to Maj. Leigh Ford, Officer in Charge of the Kabul Area Office, most of AED's projects are for the Afghan National Security Forces, which includes the ANA and the Afghan National Police. AED is currently building four garrisons and five kandaks/battalions for the ANA and also has 324 ANP projects under construction throughout Afghanistan. "These projects provide the



facilities necessary for the Afghan National Security Forces to establish a secure and stable environment," said Ford.

According to Maj. Gen. Riley, the quality at the site was extremely good and came as a bit of a surprise. "This project had been delayed, because of problems with the contractor and I expected to see a lot of problems, said Riley, but Tony Beene, the AED Construction



**Top left: Construction Representative Tony Beene briefs Deputy Chief of Engineers Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley on work taking place at the Afghanistan National Army Commando Battalion complex near Kabul. From left to right: Col. William Haight, Maj. Gen. Riley, Tony Beene, Maj. Leigh Ford, and Zsolt Haverland.**

**Left: An ANA training classroom under construction at Camp Commando.**

**Above: Deputy Chief of Engineers Maj. Gen. Don T. Riley (left) tours an ANA project with AED Construction Representative Tony Beene (right).**

Representative on site, is working awful hard to make sure things go right.” Riley pointed out how amazing it was for one USACE Civilian to manage a \$20 or \$30 million project. “He’s not just doing the work of a Con

Rep., he’s a coach, a teacher and a mentor,” said Riley.

“The whole intent of the mission here is to provide a stable environment for the Afghans to govern their country; and there are two aspects to this mission,” said Riley. “First, we are providing stability and the facilities they need to do their jobs and provide security for the nation. The other aspect is a civil works program,” he said.

Riley and AED key leaders had dinner with Engineer Shouaudin Ziaie, Afghanistan’s Deputy Minister of Electricity and Water, and discussed how the Corps can help. “He was very interested in the Corps of Engineers’ assistance in helping establish water management, because Afghanistan is experiencing a severe draught,” said Riley. According to Ziaie, Afghanistan has problems with electricity, and doesn’t have the money to provide oil to run their power plants. “They need hydro power, water management, and they need food,” said Riley. According to Ziaie, prior to the war with the Russians Afghanistan produced

32 million hectares of food per year, and right now they are only producing about 18 million hectares. “In that time, the population has also doubled, said Riley, so they have about half the amount of food for twice the population.” “A very difficult situation, and we can help,” said Riley.

“I am enormously proud of AED and all the people, said Riley. Everyone I meet seems to love the work that they do, and enjoy the Afghan people.” “We are right in the center of what is going on in the world. Our work here and in Iraq is instrumental toward providing stability in the Middle East, and stability in the Middle East is probably one of the most important aspects of world progress and world stability. 🇺🇸