

*Georgians Troops Train Up for
Going North*

Coalition Bulletin


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 **Editor's Note**

By the generous permission of our NATO partners, the *Coalition Bulletin* is pleased to bring you stories covering the activities of the International Security Assistance Force. As ISAF and the Coalition are separate entities, ISAF stories will be denoted by the NATO logo at the top of each page when they appear.

Cover photo: U.S. Army Spc. Hospedales gives candy to an Iraqi girl during a patrol in Muqdadiyah, Iraq.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"In Iraq, the terrorists and extremists are fighting to deny a proud people their liberty, and fighting to establish safe havens for attacks across the world. One year ago, our enemies were succeeding in their efforts to plunge Iraq into chaos. So we reviewed our strategy and changed course. We gave our troops a new mission: Work with the Iraqi forces to protect the Iraqi people, pursue the enemy in its strongholds, and deny the terrorists sanctuary anywhere in the country."

**George W. Bush,
President of the USA**

Editorial

Coalition Bulletin - marks the end of another successful month in the ongoing war. Slowly but surely the situation in the AOR is approaching towards some semblance of improvement. However, one important point that should not go amiss is that military is only one of the components in the overall



strategy of nation building and any sustainable resolution would actually call for means other than kinetic. The window of opportunity provided by the military should be fully exploited by increased focus on social and economic developments. There is a definite improvement in the overall situation in Iraq. With suitable reinforcements to the security apparatus and shift towards capacity building, the situation is expected to improve to a level where Iraqi Government will assume greater responsibilities. A sustained long term approach is fundamental in achieving enduring progress, as any indication of becoming weary of the ongoing conflict will bring disastrous results to Iraq. It is, therefore, important that along with the military operations, simultaneously commensurate efforts are also undertaken to achieve political harmony between the major ethnic groups, for lasting peace. Events in Afghanistan are also encouraging with NATO/ISAF offensives achieving appreciable success in troubled areas. Having suffered major setbacks militarily and with the loss of numerous mid level leaders during the last few months, Taliban clearly appear to be on the defensive. It is fundamental that a major development effort should be undertaken in the cleared areas with participation of the locals to erode the support base of the insurgents. There is also a need to work now on the issue of narcotics eradication so as to choke the financial support base of the miscreants in Afghanistan.

Like the previous Bulletins, this issue is reflective of numerous security operations, reconstruction efforts and capacity building initiatives being done in the AOR. In an era, when the media often attempts to gain audience by portraying a bleak image of the war on terror, the Coalition Bulletin continues to document the contributions of the world's largest military partnership as it brings stability around the globe.

Before I end, it will be apt to congratulate Lt Gen Martine Dempsey on his well deserved promotion to a full general. We assure him of our whole hearted coalition support and wish him all the best in future assignments.

Changez Dil Khan

Brigadier-General, Pakistan SNR to U.S. CENTCOM

Coalition News in Brief

KABUL – ISAF soldiers provided food and supplies to Surobi District locals during a humanitarian aid recent mission.

During their visit to provide blankets, food and charcoal to the area, Regional Command Capital's (RC-Capital) Italian soldiers received reports about two separate locations containing weapons.

Italian troops discovered and subsequently disposed of 23 mortar bombs as well as a number of other bombs, seven rockets and a mass of small arms ammunition from the two locations.

KABUL – The Qala-e-Naw Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) opened a clinic in Quipcak Village, Ab Kamari District.

A ceremony to inaugurate the clinic's opening was chaired by the PRT deputy commander, Lt. Col. Jesús Lanza Mollá, and Mohammed Ashraf Nasser, Badghis Provincial governor.



WASHINGTON - On 26th of February King of Jordan Abdullah II met with David Petraeus, Commander of Multi-National Forces in Iraq. During the meeting with Petraeus, the commander briefed the King on the security situation in Iraq.

WASHINGTON — As the security situation has improved in the southern belts of Baghdad, coalition officials find themselves more involved with building local governance capacity and creating jobs.

Army Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, commander of Multinational Division Center, said that when his unit arrived in March, there were 25 attacks a day on coalition and Iraqi troops. Now that number has dropped to an average of three a day. This has allowed him to spend more time working with local tribal and city leaders in building their governance capabilities.

KABUL – Reconstruction and development projects in Afghanistan are now managed in one database.

Information is gathered on all reconstruction and development projects in the country by Afghanistan Country Stability Picture (ACSP), a database developed and managed by ISAF soldiers at headquarters ISAF.



Georgians Troops Train Up for Going North



**Story and photos by Master Sgt. Michele R. Hammonds
1st Sustainment Command (Theater) PAO**

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait –More than 2,000 Georgian troops traveled from their homeland of the Republic of Georgia to Camp Buehring, Kuwait, to receive final military training before going north into Iraq to assume a security mission.



Georgians man an entry controlled point. And discuss security procedures during security training at Camp Buehring, Kuwait.

Soldiers of the 1st Sustainment Command (Theater) Task Force Gator are working with MPRI Incorporated instructors who train the Georgian troops on the most up- to-date Soldier tactical skills for the battlefield. MPRI is a civilian company located in northern Virginia.

The Georgians, who have been trained by the Soviets, are used to training; and MPRI instructors have been tasked to oversee and facilitate training for them, other coalition members and U.S. forces.

Out on the range, Georgians of the 1st Infantry Brigade received instructions from MPRI staff before taking turns handling their weapons. They could see nothing but desert as they looked out toward their targets before taking turns firing their weapons.

“This training will make us ready to go up north,” said Georgian Staff Sgt. George Durqzali, of the 1st Infantry Brigade, who had just finished firing his weapon at the range.

As soon as the last Georgian Soldier finished up at the firing range, MPRI instructors moved to the next block of instruction – entry control points, which included using the most recent techniques on searching vehicles.

Using the latest vehicle search tactics, MPRI instructors ensure the Georgians receive hands-on training in preparation for them to help stop terrorism in Iraq. The Georgians do not have a desert environment

in their country to train, but with the help of MPRI instructors, they took full advantage of their surroundings (a makeshift entry control point/gate) while conducting vehicle searches on the training ranges.

“We provide the final opportunity in training, and we focus on those things they may not have done,” said Simon Matthews, operations manager for MPRI. “Our role is important in that we facilitate those Soldiers being used elsewhere for the greater good of the Army.”

The MPRI instructors demonstrated how to search victims and vehicles with the help of interpreters and then the Georgians took turns searching victims and vehicles for explosives, bombs, and improvised explosive devices. The Georgians also learned gate- guarding procedures.

Whether they are in the classroom receiving medical training, or out on the ranges at Camp Buehring firing live rounds, MPRI instructors are there making sure the Georgians receive the necessary training before they head for their mission in Iraq. The Georgians will have a two-fold mission. They will participate in a United Nations mission in Iraq, and they will assist U.S. forces by helping to provide security around Baghdad. Many of them will be at Forward Operating Base Al Kut in Iraq.

For now, the Georgians are focused on the tasks ahead, including an 11-day training package in which they engage in live-fire, entry control points, searching personnel for weapons and improvised explosive devices, checking identification cards, vehicle and person searches, live-fire and Humvee Egress Assistant Training.



A Georgian Soldier does a security access search on a local woman who requested admittance onto a (makeshift) military compound at a training range at Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The Georgians, of 1st Infantry Brigade, took part in the entry control point training as part of a train-up on security procedures before going north to Iraq to assume a security mission.



ISAF Assistance Enables Arghandab River Causeway



*Story and photos by
HQ ISAF Public information Office*

KABUL, Afghanistan – A causeway across the Arghandab River, built with ISAF support, was opened recently.

ISAF engineers oversaw the construction of the causeway, built to enable a crossing that will ensure year-round access

that will provide social and economical benefits to the people in the Arghandab area and beyond.

The Arghandab River runs along the border between the Zharey and the Panjwayi Districts in Kandahar Province where the Afghan National Army and ISAF forces conduct security and development operations.

While the river can usually be forded, this becomes impossible when water levels rise, particularly after heavy rainfall or in the spring when melted snow causes the river to swell. Although the water levels tend not to be very deep in the vicinity of the causeway, the Arghandab River separates into three channels and the water flow can extend to 500 meters in width when the water rises. For these reasons, it was decided that a

causeway was essential for the people of this region.

”A series of concrete culverts that stretch across each channel were used to build the causeway which, even during a major flood, allows water to simply overflow and enables the causeway to remain passable,” explained Maj. Eric Fortin, the ISAF engineering officer responsible for overseeing the project.



The Commander of Joint Task Force Afghanistan, Brig. Gen. Guy Laroche, cuts a ribbon representing the inauguration of the Arghandab Causeway in company of the Governor of Kandahar Province, Assad Ullah Khalid and Zarghuna Kakar, Provincial Council member.



A crowd makes its way to the middle of the Arghandab Causeway to cut a traditional ribbon in an inauguration ceremony held recently.

Local leaders, including the Kandahar Provincial Governor as well as the District Governor of Zharey and Panjwayi, were intimately involved from the start in the planning phase of the causeway, explained Major Fortin.

”Local contractors were also involved with the project and civilians from the Zharey and Panjwayi Districts, under the supervision of a small crew of ISAF military engineers, were employed during the construction phase,” said Major Fortin. “As well, throughout the construction of the causeway, soldiers from the 1st Brigade of the 205th Afghan National Army Corps were responsible for providing security to the site.”

”The construction of the causeway over the Arghandab River was a major project undertaken jointly by the Afghans and the military engineers within ISAF and is an excellent example of Afghan and ISAF authorities working together to improve conditions in an area that greatly required it,” said Wing Commander Antony McCord, Regional Command South spokesperson. “The causeway will provide a year round means of crossing the river that will be of considerable benefit and help change the lives of the people in the Arghandab area for the better.”



New Solid Build Field Hospital at Bastion



Story and photos courtesy of UK Ministry of Defense

A new solid build field hospital at Camp Bastion which will increase the capabilities of the British military medical team in Helmand has been opened by Armed Forces Minister Bob Ainsworth today.

The Medical Treatment Facility (MTF), which is housed in one of the few solid buildings at Bastion, replaces the tented field hospital that has been used since 2003. The temperature-controlled building allows the medics to better avoid the heat, cold or dust that come with the Helmand territory.

With a fully equipped operating theatre supporting two operating tables, the MTF also supports up to six beds for the most critically injured in an Intensive Treatment Unit (ITU). Two general wards handle patients with recovery needs and there are an additional two separate, private rooms, supplying a total capacity of 37 beds, with room for expansion.

Mr. Ainsworth, who opened the new hospital while on a tour of Helmand, said:

“I have always had the highest regard for the medical treatment received by our servicemen and women, but this new hospital is simply outstanding. I have seen for myself the quality of the building and equipment and I have met the

the field, through their immediate treatment and any subsequent rehabilitation. This new facility and the staff who perform under such difficult conditions are helping to save lives and they should be extremely proud of the work they do and the contribution they are making to help bring stability to this country.”

The new facility has state-of-the-art medical technology. The Radiography Department has a CT scanner, allowing high-quality imaging of complex injuries, ensuring swift and accurate clinical decision-making.

Two mobile digital DRAGON X-Ray machines, worth £150,000 each, have also been installed in the MTF which allow imaging within five seconds and, being portable, remove



The Clinical Director of the 243 (Wessex) Field Hospital (Volunteers), Pediatric Consultant Colonel Mike Maquire, and TA Nursing Officer Major Sarah Price tend to a young patient at Camp Bastion’s new field hospital

the need to move a patient from the ward, speeding the diagnostic process. The digital scans can be enhanced as well as being instantly shareable with medical staff back in the UK.

The pathology lab can conduct blood and sample testing as well as having the capacity to supply blood products for transfusion. Equipment normally only found in the National Blood Service, used to gather the blood platelets much needed in trauma recovery, is currently on trial.

Mr. Ainsworth was also shown the primary healthcare facilities which provide a general practice surgery, two dental surgeries, a welfare department, a mental healthcare team and a dedicated Hospital Chaplain. There are plans to develop the site further to include physiotherapy treatment and recovery rooms.

Staffed by around 100 personnel, the temperature-controlled building is capable of dealing with the most serious trauma injuries. Patients injured in mine-strikes, with blast, fragmentation or gunshot wounds, benefit from a team of on-site clinicians and consultants who can perform the immediate surgery which will save limbs and lives, before swift repatriation to continue care back in the UK.



Radiographer Corporal Catherine Lee uses Camp Bastion’s CT scanning equipment

staff, who are consummate professionals dedicated to treating everyone who comes through the doors to the highest standard.

“Our Armed Forces are engaged in a dangerous mission here and we owe it to them to provide them with the confidence that if they are injured, they will receive the very best of care from the moment they are picked up in



Azerbaijan's Efforts in Iraq



Story and photos courtesy of Azerbaijan Ministry of Defense



Haditha Dam, the second largest hydroelectric contributor to the power system in Iraq, was built with help from Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan deployed its first peacekeeping company to contribute to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.

Since OIF started, Azerbaijan's PCC used to serve in several regions of Al-Anbar province within Marine Corps. The last AOR of PCC is Haditha Dam which is considered as the largest hydroelectric facility in Iraq. Haditha Dam is a dam north of Haditha, Iraq. It is the second largest hydroelectric contributor to the power system in Iraq. It was built with help from Azerbaijan. Construction began in 1978 and was completed in 1986.

Haditha Dam has six turbine hydropower plants which at their peak produce 660 MW. The largest producer of hydroelectric power in Iraq is the Mosul Dam, formerly called the Saddam Dam, which produces 1,050 MW at its peak. The dam retains water from Lake Qadisiya (Buhayrat al Qadisiyyah). The dam is currently the headquarters for a U.S. Marine Corps charged with securing the Haditha area.

The Azerbaijan Company is responsible for internal and external security at Haditha Dam and all search and escort duties of the Iraqi workers in the Dam. The Azerbaijan Company is providing security for Haditha Dam in order to allow the Marines to conduct forward operations and to allow the Iraqi dam workers to run the dam without interfering in MNF operations.

The Azerbaijan Company is doing its best to make the dam more safe and well protected. For dedicated service in contribution of OIF, our soldiers and officer are being awarded by high commanders. Company commander Capt Nasimi Javadov is the one of those who were awarded the "NAVY and MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL".

In conjunction with above mentioned activities the Azerbaijan Ccompany is ready and waiting for visitors. We would like to express deep appreciation to the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Mr. D.C. Winter and Maj. Gen.



Company commander Capt Nasimi Javadov is the one of those who were awarded by "NAVY and MARINE CORPS ACHIEVEMENT MEDAL".

Walter E.Gaskin, Sr., the commander of the 2nd Marine Division, for their contribution and support.





Be Vigilant, Get Solutions



*Story and photos courtesy of Belgian Defense (DGIPR)
Translated by Col Van Roten, SNR to U.S. CENTCOM*

An enormous Iliouchine 76 takes off from the runway with its four jet engines at full power, and heads to the mountains



4 ISAF military control the aircraft movements in the control tower.

that surround Kabul. He scarcely leaves the runway when a Canadian C-130 starts its final approach to land. Not far from there, two Italian UH-1 helicopters remain stationary, awaiting clearance to take off. Another C-130, American this time, is waiting to fly the four-star general that commands International Security Assistance Force, to Kandahar in the south. Keeping all this under control : Belgian soldiers.

“*Be Vigilant, get solutions,*” is the message printed on the coffee mugs of the Belgian staff personal of the ‘KAIA lead nation’. It is also the leitmotiv of the commander, Col. Rudi Geirnaert who explains “be vigilant”: never forget our objective and to identify the obstacles up front, “get solutions” : find, in due time, one or more solutions to each of the problems.

It’s a passionate job, Col. Geirnaert says, but also very demanding because we are in charge of everything at the



Kabul International Airport, always aircraft in motion to manage.

airport : the movement of the aircraft of course, but also the care for military and civilians from ISAF in transit.

About 1,000 people live and work in a very limited space on KAIA and about 400 to 600 military personnel transit through each day.

The control tower

Serenity reigns in the control tower. Four traffic controllers have full responsibility for the large number of aircraft who have continuous contact with them. They manage an average of 250 movements during daylight hours. At night, only military aircraft are allowed. The variety of aircraft is surprising : from civil aircraft like the enormous Antonov 225 to helicopters and military combat aircraft like the Mirage F1 or the F-15. The four controllers on duty are in constant communication with the aircraft and with each other.

The team of air traffic controllers is an international mix hailing from Belgium (6), Italy (2), Czech Republic (1), Bulgaria (2), Austria (1) and Denmark (1). This international composition causes no problems at all : they

are all professional military controllers and the selection



75 % of the fire fighters are Afghan professionals. Here they practice their skills on a Airbus A-300.

criteria are very severe. Two Afghan controllers are pursuing a training course in the US.

Parking Management

The “Air Ops Room” is also manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week by international teams. They work in close cooperation with the control tower to manage all aircraft activities on the ground : maneuvers, parking, unloading and supplying of aircraft. They have a very challenging job, especially since space is limited.

Force Protection

The situation in Afghanistan is very tense. Kabul International Airport is a high value target for the insurgents.

This is understood well by the 224 members of the Belgian Force Protection. As the threat has changed to SVBIED (suicide vehicle born improvised explosive ordnance) and remote controlled IED's rather than rockets, the force protection unit has been equipped with brand new armored vehicles that offer better protection against this type of attacks.

The future?

Belgium will be the lead nation at Kabul International Airport until Oct. 1, 2008, when Hungary will take over. NATO wants to gradually transfer responsibility for the management of the airport to the Afghans. It will be a challenge for these future managers : they must be trained and certified in accordance with international standards. But things are in motion: the fire fighters of the airport for example, consist of 70 percent Afghan people, trained in the Sultanat of Oman and certified in the Netherlands.

By managing Kabul international airport, and by involving the Afghan people until they gradually take over responsibility,



The Air Ops room takes control of the aircraft as soon as they leave the runway, which is not easy on a sometimes overcrowded airfield.

the international community contributes to the reconstruction of a country that has known violence for more then a quarter of a century.



U.S. CENTCOM CHOD Conference



Photo by: MC1 Alisha Fredrick



Adm. William Fallon, CENTCOM commander, meets leaders from the CENTCOM area of operation. Admiral William J. Fallon, Commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and his wife, Mary (center) stand with attendees and other CENTCOM leaders at the inaugural CENTCOM Chief of Defense Conference in the Tampa Bay area. Representatives from nations in the Gulf, Horn of Africa, and Levant regions attended the two days of CENTCOM hosted meetings in mid-January 2008 for discussions on a wide range of topics. The first U.S. Central Command Chiefs of Defense Conference was held from Jan 14 to 16 Jan. at the Don CeSar Hotel. The theme of the conference was "Strengthening Regional Partnership through Multilateral Cooperation," bringing together chiefs of Defense from CENTCOM's area of responsibility.



Ukraine Helps to Fight Terror



Story and photos courtesy of Ukrainian Ministry of Defense

Ukrainian military personnel in 2007 continued their performance as a reliable Coalition partner within the AOR of U.S. Central Command.

In Iraq:

Ukraine continues to contribute military personnel to Iraq. After the withdrawal of a Ukrainian brigade in 2005, there are currently 2 PTT's (each 11 men strong), supporting staff elements and three member of NTM in Iraq totaling 30 officers and warrant-officers (Camp ECHO, Camp Victory

Assistance Force. In October 2007, one more Ukrainian officer arrived in Kabul to perform a staff position within the ISAF CIMIC structure. During November 2007, the first rotation of the medical officer has been made and another Ukrainian military doctor (surgeon) been added (with 10 total authorized).

In September 2007, the Ukrainian Cargo Airways state company owned by MoD of Ukraine provided air lift for Hungarian military contingent (about 450 soldiers).

The same month, the president of Ukraine announced the decision to provide humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan.



Ukrainian officers with their international colleagues in Iraq and IZ) with 50 authorized. During the rotation in January – February 2008 this number was increased up to 40 (including 3 personnel in NTM-I).

Because of U.S. support, Ukrainian soldiers on the ground have received heavy-protected HMMWVs and special counter-IED equipment needed to accomplish their mission with minimum risks and are in the process of receiving HARRIS radios.

In Afghanistan:

Ukraine has continued to provide air corridors for NATO military cargo aircraft. Starting in May 2007, a Ukrainian medical specialist fulfilled his mission as member of Lithuanian PRT subordinated to the International Security

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine confirmed the decision in October 2007 allocating total 1,743 mln UHr (worth \$350 000) for this purpose.

Other countries of the CENTCOM AoR:

In November 2007, the president of Ukraine had announced the decision to provide humanitarian assistance to Kyrgyzstan after the country suffered from an earthquake.

Combating terrorism in the other areas:

2007 was also marked by the first participation of Ukrainian combat ships in the NATO-led Mediterranean counterterrorist operation “Active Endeavor” – corvette “Ternopil” from May to July 2007 and corvette “Luts’k” from November to December 2007.



Largest cargo plane in the world, Ukrainian An-225



Mongolian “King of Battles” in Afghanistan



*Story by MAJ Shambaljamts Amarbayasgalan
Photos by: Mongolian Infantry Company in Iraq*

Under the Development of Afghan National Army Program and also in the framework of the Coalition effort to assist the Afghan National Army, the Armed Forces of Mongolia deployed its eight rotation of Mobile Training Team to Kabul on November 01, 2007. The Mobile Training Team consisted of 21 trainers, whose responsibility is to train Afghan National Army artillery specialists. Once the trainers were on the ground in Kabul, they initiated their training program immediately.

The Mobile Training Team members deployed to western Herat provincial capital, which is a home of ANA 207 Corp which is known in Afghani language as a Kandak. ANA personnel, those who trained were officers, battery NCOs, specialists of Artillery Battery, 1st Brigade, the 207th Corps. Trainers, who call themselves “Kings of Battle” completed the training successfully and all of them know their next stop will be in the eastern Afghanistan.

Whole training periods should be under supervision of MTT trainers, however they want ANA artillery personnel to be trained as good as a professional soldiers. Finally it can be achieved in combination of the trainers’ good will and soldiers’ eager learned to be artillery men. In the end of training, the live fire exercise was conducted. Trained battery personnel completed its fire mission was marked as “**outstanding**”.

After the graduation ceremony of artillery batteries, British Brigadier General Tim Allen and U.S. Army colonel Barry Jenkins held a meeting with all the trainers of MTT and U.S. Army embedded officers and NCOs to discuss the achievement of the training programs as well as difficulties the trainers face during while conducting the training. Adjusting and synchronizing differences of fire direction and adjustment onto the targets between NATO and Russian artillery system also being discussed and shared.

Khowst province is one of the thirty-four provinces in Afghanistan and borders Pakistan on the east. ANA 203 Kandak is located in provincial capital territory. Conclusion of their two tours in western but also eastern Afghanistan, there were more than 25 officers, 70 NCOs, 200 artillery specialists trained be as a battery commander, battery executive officer, forward observation officer, fire direction



officer, reconnaissance and survey officer, gun commander, gunner, fuse-man, and ammunition NCO’s.

One of the important parts of the Mobile team is maintenance group. Skilled howitzer maintenance personnel maintained 22 howitzers for fire mission and handed them over to ANA Corps.

Recently, the MTT trainers concluded their third tour to Kandahar province. There are a total of 11 officers, 3 battery NCOs, 110 soldiers trained on howitzer, mortar specialists and maintenance personnel.



ANA soldiers with their trainers at the graduation ceremony.



Former SNR Chairman Completes Tour with CENTCOM



*Story by Maj. Constantin Spinu, Romanian Air Force
Photo by Capt Manuel Matos, Dominican Republic*

TAMPA, Fla. – Brig. Gen. Mark Wheeler was honoured by his Coalition colleagues in a farewell ceremony on Jan. 16 after serving two years as New Zealand’s Senior National Representative at U.S. Central Command in Tampa.

“The hospitality, professionalism, comradeship and generosity of the many American Coalition Coordination Centre staff over the years, be it the engagements officers, the logisticians, the command team, our desk officers, the communications and computer people or the admin/support staff has been, quite simply, outstanding.”



Brig. Gen. Wheeler addresses the Senior National Representatives on the occasion of his Farewell Ceremony, at the Coalition Main Conference Room here.

Wheeler was also the Coalition SNR chairman between June 2006 and June 2007.

“On behalf of all the SNRs and Coalition personnel serving here, I would like to thank Brig. Gen. Wheeler for his outstanding performance as chairman for the Coalition, but also for being such a great friend,” said Brig. Gen. Arne Skjaerpe of the Norwegian Army. Skjaerpe is the current SNR Chairman.

Thirty-eight New Zealand staff officers have served in Tampa since the formation of the Coalition after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. They have performed a multitude of duties in support of New Zealand’s contribution in CENTCOM area of operations.

“In the subsequent years since 2001, the New Zealanders have been very well served by our American hosts,” Wheeler said.

Wheeler presented personal commendations to two U.S. officers, Lt. Col. Roger M. Harrison and Maj. Wayne M. Price, on behalf of Lt. Gen. Mateparae, the chief of New Zealand’s Defence Force.

“Since the inception of Coalition, among the other Coalition Coordination Centre personnel who performed their job superbly, these two officers, Lt. Col. Harrison, the “Governor,” and Maj Price, have provided outstanding support to successive rotations of New Zealand officers, and in doing so have bridged the way for the success that NZDF operations have enjoyed,” added Wheeler.

Wheeler now serves as the J1 chief with the New Zealand Armed Forces.



On behalf of the Coalition representatives at U.S. CENTCOM SNR Chairman Brig. Gen. Arne Skjaerpe presents a picture to Brig. Gen. Mark Wheeler.



Afghan, Coalition Forces Evaluate Villagers' Needs



Story and photos courtesy of American Forces Press Service

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan - Soldiers from the Afghan national army's 201st Kandak, assisted by coalition forces, visited elders in the village of Tangay, in the Tarin Kowt district of Afghanistan's Oruzgan province.

The soldiers conducted a security patrol through the Tiri Rud River Valley when they stopped to meet with the village elders and determine the needs of the village residents.

Even before the soldiers entered the village, children greeted them with smiles, waves and laughter as they approached. After a few minutes of chatting with the children, Afghan national army soldiers met with the elders, who welcomed the group into their village.

The elders were eager to talk about security in the fertile valley area near the Tangay Pass in central Afghanistan. The elders said the area is fairly secure, thanks to frequent Afghan national police patrols, but evidence points to insurgent activity in nearby mountains.

"The security in general is the priority," said a village elder. "Afghanistan has been at war for 30 years. All we want is peace."

Villagers also pointed out that while the Afghan government has directly aided Tangay residents with food and other supplies, more help is needed.

"Getting water is a particular challenge for this area, especially during the summer months," an elder said.

The elder explained that melting snow causes the nearby Tiri Rud to flood in the spring. Months of drought throughout the summer follow the floods. Elders said the flood and drought cycle wreaks havoc on their crops.

Security and economic development are important, not only to the elders, but also to all residents in the area. Tangay Pass is home to more than 200 families and also houses the Tangay Pass boys school, with more than 300 students. Increased Afghan police and army patrols have allowed the area to rebuild after years of war and civil strife.



Village elders from Tangay, Tarin Kowt District, Oruzgan province, Afghanistan, talk with soldiers from the Afghan national army's 201st Kandak and coalition forces during a visit.

"Increased security is making a difference in Oruzgan," said Army Capt. Vanessa R. Bowman, a coalition spokeswoman. "The government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is committed to increasing security throughout the country and meeting the needs of its citizens. With ANA and ANP maintaining security, villagers feel safe and can live in relative peace."



Afghan national army soldiers from the 201st Kandak stand with children of Tangay, Tarin Kowt District, Oruzgan Province, Afghanistan

Australian National Day Celebration



Soccer Champions - Coalition Team



Mongolia Country Presentation at Eckerd College



Ladies Morning Tea



Japanese National Day Celebration



Operation Helping Hand





Mongolian soldiers at checkpoint at Camp Echo in Diwanīyah, Iraq.