



Engineer detachment deploys to Afghanistan

By Curt Biberdorf
Public Affairs Office

After a year of preparation and training, the 62nd Engineer Detachment is headed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"This team stands ready to tackle the toughest problems that can be thrown at them," said Capt. Corey Warren, detachment commander, during the unit's deployment



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Capt. Corey Warren, 62nd Engineer Detachment commander (left), and Col. Christopher Lestochi, Alaska District commander, case the colors of the 62nd Engineer Detachment (Forward Engineer Support Team-Advance) during a deployment ceremony at district headquarters Sept. 26.

ceremony Sept. 26 at district headquarters.

The unit is one of eight active-duty Army engineering teams that deploy quickly to augment the engineering staff of other organizations.

As a Forward Engineer Support Team-Advance, each detachment has a military commander and noncommissioned officer-in-charge along with six Army civilian employees specializing in civil, electrical, environmental, mechanical and engineering, as well as geographic information systems and contracting.

Teams are sent to locations around the world to assess critical infrastructure and assist with technical engineering and design. Using limited contracting support, the units work with military and civil agencies during the range of operations that Army forces conduct in war and military operations other than war.

Although a small group, the team can communicate with the rest of the Corps of Engineers' 34,000 employees to solve combatant commanders' most complex engineering challenges.

The unit's lineage traces back to 1943. It has participated in 11 campaigns spanning World War II, Vietnam, and after its most recent activation Oct. 17, 2007, Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn from April 2010 to April 2011.

Since Warren took command last August, he witnessed a team returning from Iraq dissolve and form into a new one. During the past year, part of the unit deployed to assist the Republic of Palau after fire disrupted that nation's power grid. Then the entire detachment traveled to the Philippines to support the Balikatan joint military operations training exercise.

Finally, after a rotation at the National Training Center
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Renovation modernizes fuel testing laboratory

By Curt Biberdorf
Public Affairs Office

Ensuring that only the highest-quality fuels are delivered to its customers will be easier for the Defense Logistics Agency Energy Alaska with its renovated petroleum laboratory opened Sept. 12 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson.

Managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Alaska District and built by White Mountain Construction, the nearly \$2 million project replaced everything except for the 3,000-square-foot laboratory's exterior and interior walls, partitions and structural frame.

Originally built in the 1950s, modifications and repairs sustained it through the years, but the facility wore out with age and use as well as becoming obsolete in laboratory functions, building codes and energy requirements, said Tom May, project manager.

"It was in a very poor state of repair. It was functional but barely," said Navy Capt. Kevin Henderson, DLA Energy Pacific commander, during his remarks at a ceremony to celebrate the opening.

DLA Energy's mission is to provide the right fuel in the proper amount to where warfighters need it. Last year,

DLA sold almost \$17 billion worth of fuel to the Department of Defense. In the Pacific alone, sales totaled \$1.5 billion. More than a building, the lab ensures aircraft, vehicles and ships receive fuel that meets or exceeds military specifications, Henderson said.

"When you think about that, nobody wants a billion dollar airplane to fall out of the sky because it has dirty fuel," he said. "So that's the criticality of this mission here."

Besides weighing fuels to measure particulates that could clog injectors, other fuel tests measure flashpoint,

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Detachment

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at Fort Irwin, Calif., the team achieved certification to deploy to Afghanistan.

Between deployments, unit members prepared for Afghanistan by attending resident courses and completing hundreds of hours of online training. Each step along the way developed and sharpened the team's skills and unity of purpose. The ceremony marked the completion of the unit's preparation, Warren said.

"You are ready to execute the mission, and the mission is hugely

important," said Col. Christopher Lestochi, district commander. "You are contributing directly to the effort by our country and your Army to further freedom and liberty in a struggling nation in a troubled part of the world."

The unit may be called to support a range of tasks from constructing the infrastructure needed to support U.S. forces to building facilities that will enable the Afghanistan National Security Forces to assume the mission from NATO to establishing

infrastructure that will contribute to the Afghan people's capacity to develop as a nation, Lestochi said.

"It will be hard, but recognize that it is also a rare and limited opportunity for you to make a difference," he said.

For current team members, Afghanistan will be their second or third deployment. Two members have been with the unit since it was activated.

"I know this team is ready, and I know they will not disappoint," Warren said.

Harbor celebration

Former state representative Carl E. Moses delivers remarks during a dedication ceremony for the new small boat harbor named in his honor Sept. 8 at Unalaska in the Aleutian Islands.

The project was completed through a cost-share agreement with the city and partially funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

In July 2008, the Alaska District awarded a \$7.5 million contract to the Dutra Dredging Co. of San Rafael, Calif., to dredge more than 26,000 cubic yards of material as well as construct a 642-foot rock breakwater, boat launch ramp and 30 artificial reefs for environmental mitigation. In September 2010, the Alaska District awarded a \$12.5 million contract to Pacific Pile and Marine of Seattle, Wash., for the construction of two barge-type floating breakwaters to protect the harbor.

The harbor has 54 slips for vessels up to 150 feet long, three floats offering more than 5,800 feet of moorage, a boat launch ramp, boarding float and drive-down float.

Other features are a light cargo crane rated to 2,500 pounds, fire suppression system, waste oil and refuse removal, shore electrical power access, shoreside restrooms with showers and potable water.



Courtesy photo

GOLD NUGGETS

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Renovation

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Photo by Curt Biberdorf

From left: Air Force Maj. Kerry Colburn, Defense Logistics Agency Energy Alaska commander; Navy Capt. Kevin Henderson, Defense Logistics Agency Energy Pacific commander; and Col. Christopher Lestochi, Alaska District commander, officially open the renovated DLA Energy Alaska Petroleum Laboratory during a ceremony at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Sept. 12. The district managed the renovation of the 1950s-era lab, which tests fuels for military and other federal customers to ensure they meet or exceed military specifications.

specific gravity, viscosity, boiling point, sulfur, oxidation and lubricity.

To help continue to do this, the project reconfigured the main laboratory, flash room, balance room, hazardous material storage room, restroom and offices. It created a new break room with kitchenette, mechanical room and janitor's closet, and replaced almost all architectural and engineering systems.

New wall and roof insulation, triple glaze windows, high-efficiency gas-fired hydronic boiler and arctic entry are expected to reduce energy consumption by 41 percent, according to an energy compliance analysis.

The lab retained much of the existing test equipment but replaced some of it. A new local area network and telephone system allows the office to continue operations for the main office on JBER-Elmendorf during an emergency or disaster, said Randy Banez, DLA Energy Alaska deputy director.

Other features are explosion-proof lighting and electrical outlets, easier and safer disposal of tested fuel into an above-ground 500-gallon tank beside the building, and a new ventilation system with alarm that automatically adjusts air pressure. It meets all new federal environmental and safety standards.

"Everything is the way it should be and then some," said Steve Kelly, lab manager. "The contractors and team did an outstanding job."

"It is truly a state-of-the-art lab and will serve the warfighters here for years to come," Henderson said.



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Explosion-proof electrical outlets (front left) and lighting along with a new ventilation system with an alarm that automatically adjusts air pressure in the renovated Defense Logistics Agency Energy Alaska Petroleum Laboratory contribute to the lab meeting all new federal environmental and safety standards.

He travels to fuel infrastructure locations across the Pacific and is pleased with the quality of the district's work.

"The support we get from the Alaska Corps of Engineers is the best we get of any of the execution agents anywhere in the Pacific," he said.

The Alaska District has partnered with DLA on more than 60 projects, said Col. Christopher Lestochi, district commander, and he looks forward to continuing that relationship with future projects.

DLA has bulk aircraft fuel contracts with refineries in North Pole and Valdez, but procures fuel from West Coast refineries when it is more economical. Gasoline and diesel for ground vehicles are purchased from suppliers at various locations, said Banez.

Quality assurance representatives check fuels at the refinery before accepting shipment, but when fuel is coming from government storage tanks and it tests off-specification, technicians will try to determine the problem and how to correct it, he added.

The agency's diverse customer base consists of the Air Force, Army, National Guard and Coast Guard in addition to the Federal Aviation Administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs, which incorporates several Alaska Native villages, and other federal agencies in the state.

Air travel ticketing needs prompt attention

Any travel authorization that includes air travel must be approved and ticketed at least 72 hours in advance of the scheduled flight departure to avoid airline reservations from being canceled.

This change is due to a new policy being instituted by the airlines under the FY2013 General Services Administration city pair contract.

Under this policy, if an authorizing official disapproves an authorization within 72 hours of departure, the airline reservation will be canceled and the traveler will arrive at the airport without a ticket or a reservation in the airline's system.

This applies to all city pair and noncontract government flights that are either booked through the Defense

Travel System or through a commercial travel office.

Employees planning travel within 72 hours of departure must have their authorization approved and tickets issued within 24 hours of creation to avoid cancellation. If making plans within 24 hours of departure, authorizations must be approved and ticketed at least six hours before flight departure time to avoid cancellation.

If airline reservations are canceled, travelers will be notified via email or phone by their commercial travel office.

Arriving at the airport without a ticket can impact mission, travel funds and create unnecessary employee stress. If this occurs, travelers are advised to not rebook at the airline counter. Often

times, counter agents are not familiar with GSA's city pair program and may book the traveler on a full-priced fare at a much higher cost.

To rebook a flight, travelers should follow their normal ticketing process. They should take their travel itinerary with them to the airport. If your reservation has been canceled, the itinerary will provide commercial travel office contact information, as well as reservation details to help you rebook.

In the current tight fiscal environment, monitoring the status of travel documents and ensuring travel authorizations are approved is the best way to avoid extra costs and stress associated with rebooking travel.

Defense Travel Management Office



Courtesy photo

Moose down

With Moose Creek Dam in the background, Kevin Fouts of Eagle River displays a young bull that he harvested from a blind at the edge of the floodway Sept. 2 during the annual Alaska District Wheelchair Veterans Moose Hunt at the Chena River Lakes Flood Control Project in North Pole. This year's event included sightings of a large male grizzly bear roaming the area and a report that the bear charged local hunters near a blueberry patch.

Across the district

Employees of quarter, year recognized

The outstanding employees and team of the FY2012 Fourth Quarter are:

Engineer/Scientist GS-05-12—Linda Waugaman

Support GS-02-10—Edward Luteran

Support GS-11-15—Mark Viotto

Managerial/Supervisory/Team Leader—Dave Casey

Internal Team, Buckner Physical Fitness Facility Bid

Protest Team: Michelle Mandel, Deb McGinnis, Mike Schroeder, Kim Tripp

The outstanding employees and teams of FY2012 are:

Engineer/Scientist GS-05-12—Tuan Lai and Katie McCafferty

Support GS-02-10—Edward Luteran

Support GS-11-15—Michael Volsky

Managerial/Supervisory/Team Leader—Michael Salyer

External Team, Northeast Cape FUDS project delivery team: Kenneth Andraschko, Ronald Broyles, Carey Cossaboom, Jeremy Craner, Kelly Davis, Chris Floyd, Lisa Geist, Aldone Graham, Teresa Lee, Olen Northern, Nancy Patterson, Mike Schroeder, Amanda Shearer, Aaron Shewman

Internal Team, Elmendorf C-17 and F-22 aircraft beddowns project engineers and quality assurance representatives: Mike Banovetz, Ted Champine, Deven Dalcher, Mark Estes, Anthony Garigliano, Tina McMaster-Goering, Keith Howard, Dan Kornblum, Lans Liburd, Nathan Machacek, Phillip Mack, Steve Mandt, Earnie Mendenhall, Jaydee Moncur, Jim Nguyen, Dave Scott, Andy Sorum, Randy Souhrada, Joel Spano

Upcoming events

Oct. 1-31 National Disability Awareness Month

Oct. 30 Town Hall Meeting at Base Theater

Nov. 1 Year-End Party at Northern Area Office

Nov. 5-9 POD Command Assistance Visit

Inclement weather guidelines

To mitigate safety and health hazards associated with wind, snow, ice, extremely cold temperatures and other adverse conditions, Alaska District employees will follow the latest guidance of the base commander at their assigned duty station.

Personnel in the Anchorage area may obtain official reporting status updates by visiting the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson Facebook or Twitter pages, or viewing the Web site at www.jber.af.mil.

Another option is calling the following numbers for these locations: Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson 552-INFO (4636), Fort Wainwright 353-7109, Eielson Air Force Base 377-6127 and Fort Greely 869-3480.

Road conditions on military installations are graded from best to worst as green, yellow, red and black. In most cases, recorded messages are updated between 5-6 a.m. However, employees should not rely on the hotlines as their sole source for information.

Sources providing reliable reports about the status of the weather, roads and military installations include: Alaska Department of Transportation by calling 511 or visiting www.511.alaska.gov, National Weather Service information line at 1-800-472-0391 and the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson operator at 552-1110.

Furthermore, several radio and television stations provide regular updates in the Anchorage area. Updates are available at Alaska's Total Traffic Network by dialing #847 or by listening to radio reports broadcast weekdays from 6-9 a.m. and 4-6 p.m. on the following stations: KENI 650 AM, KTZN 550 AM, KYMG 98.9 FM, KBFX 100.5 FM, KGOT 101.3 FM and KASH 107.5 FM.

Each member of the work force is responsible for monitoring media newscasts and determining whether it is safe to report for duty. Those unsure if they have to report should contact their supervisor.

Since weather and road conditions may vary significantly between an employee's home and workplace, people should always assess their personal situation before driving. If you think that it is unsafe to drive, don't take any unnecessary risks. Instead, contact your supervisor to gain guidance on taking leave.

District issues permit for rail extension

The district issued an Army permit Sept. 10 to the Alaska Railroad Corporation to construct the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project. The proposed project will provide rail service to Port MacKenzie and connect it with the existing railroad main line, providing port customers with an alternative means of transportation between Port MacKenzie

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Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Well done

Lt. Col. Bobby Stone, deputy district commander, presents the Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service to Denise Koopman at district headquarters Sept. 18. Koopman provided exceptional meritorious services within the Alaska District as a paralegal specialist in the Office of Counsel from May 2009 to August 2012.

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and Interior Alaska, according to the ARRC. The new rail line will carry bulk commodities.

The permit, issued under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, authorizes the railroad to permanently fill 95.8 acres of wetlands to construct a new 36-mile rail line. The new rail line will connect into the existing main rail line just south of Houston and end at Port MacKenzie. The existing main line runs from Seward through Anchorage to Fairbanks.

The permit requires compensatory mitigation for direct, indirect and secondary impacts to waters and wetlands. As mitigation, the railroad will purchase credits in the Su-Knik and Pioneer Reserve mitigation banks in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

The permit includes special conditions to avoid and minimize potential adverse impacts and to compensate for unavoidable adverse impacts to the aquatic ecosystem and to ensure that the project would not be contrary to the public interest.

Travel by car 'more advantageous'

For temporary duty travel fewer than 800 miles roundtrip from the traveler's permanent duty station, use of a privately-owned vehicle is now more advantageous to the government.

This change to the Joint Travel Regulations was approved Sept. 26 and eliminates the requirement to provide a cost comparison using commercial air transportation in the travel order or on the travel voucher after the fact.

Official mileage to and from the temporary duty location is determined using the Defense Table of Official Distances, not a vehicle odometer reading, and supervisor approval is required.

Still, employees are encouraged to use a government-owned or leased vehicle if one is available. If a GSA vehicle is available, but the employees elect to use their personal vehicles, then a lesser mileage rate of 23 cents per mile will be paid.

If a GSA vehicle is available and will be used for the trip, but the employees elect to drive their personal vehicles, then no mileage reimbursement is authorized.

Contracts awarded

Erosion Protection—The district awarded a construction contract Sept. 18 to West Construction Company Inc. for \$7,125,555 to install 450 linear feet of rock revetment along the oceanside of Unalakleet. This will complete the ocean side protection. Unalakleet eventually will install 350 linear feet of sheetpile wall to protect the remaining riverside.

Foreign Military Sales—The district awarded the Phase 1 contract to the Boeing Co. Sept. 14 for \$21.68 million for the design and construction of C-17 aircraft beddown infrastructure facilities for the Indian Air Force. This first contract of the \$150 million foreign military sales program is for the east and west taxiways.

Deployments

Afghanistan—Linda Arrington, Juliet Brown, Michael Doty, Roger Green, Brad Leavitt, David Purdy, Jessica Skinner, Sharon Thomas

Returned—Heather Moncrief



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Farewell

Col. Christopher Lestochi, district commander, presents the Army Commendation Medal to Staff Sgt. Paul Routhier, prime power production specialist, at the headquarters building Sept. 14 for his support of the Environmental and Special Projects Branch from August 2009-August 2012. His contributions were pivotal to the success of the Missile Defense Agency's High Altitude Electromagnetic Pulse-shielded Future Power Plant at Fort Greely. Routhier's next assignment is at Fort Bliss, Texas.



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Retired

Col. Christopher Lestochi, district commander, presents a certificate of retirement to Ron Pflum, Environmental and Special Projects Branch project manager, during a ceremony at the headquarters building Sept. 24.

Pflum also received the Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service for managing hazardous, toxic and radiological waste projects for the Formerly Used Defense Sites and Native American Lands Environmental Mitigation programs from April 1995 to September 2012. He retired with 40 years of federal service.

Retirements



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Col. Christopher Lestochi, district commander, presents a certificate of retirement to Jim Pekar, Geotechnical Services Section chief, during a ceremony at district headquarters Sept. 28. Pekar also received the Army Superior Service Award for successfully leading teams in executing numerous and diverse geotechnical, environmental, industrial safety and materials-related projects. He received the Army Engineer Association Bronze Order of the de Fleury Medal for his superior service to the Engineer Regiment. Pekar retired with 38 years of federal service.



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Lt. Col. Bobby Stone, deputy district commander, presents a certificate of retirement to Ed Ambrose, mechanical design engineer in the Electrical Section, at district headquarters Sept. 28. Ambrose also received the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service for providing outstanding mechanical design solutions and construction support on a wide variety of military facilities. He served the federal government for 38 years.



Photo by Curt Biberdorf

Lt. Col. Bobby Stone, deputy district commander, presents Valarie Smith, Cost Engineering Branch engineer technician, with a certificate of retirement during a ceremony at district headquarters Sept. 28. Smith also received the Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service for her exemplary performance in the Cost Engineering Branch and many years serving as the district's Black Employment Program Manager. She retired with 33 years of federal service.



Photo by John Budnik

Lt. Col. Bobby Stone, deputy district commander, presents Victor Ross, Regulatory Division project manager and team leader, with a certificate of retirement during a ceremony at the district headquarters Sept. 28. Ross also received the Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service for his guidance, oversight, leadership and direction on mining projects throughout Alaska. Ross retired with 33 years of federal service.