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# New program teaches ANAAC English

by Air Force Staff Sgt. Robert Wollenberg  
CSTC-A Public Affairs

**KABUL, Afghanistan** — The Afghan National Army Air Corps, in conjunction with Combined Security and Transition Command - Afghanistan, recently opened a new school to teach English to Afghan pilots and other Afghan military professionals.

Fifty students are currently enrolled in classes designed for beginners without English skills to advanced students who just need to improve their proficiency.

Each student is given an American Language Course Placement Test to determine where they should be placed in the curriculum. To be a pilot, a student must test above 80. The international aviation language is English, and is a requirement of all international pilots.

"They have to score an 80, and that's very difficult, even in San Antonio," said Penni Shanahan, English Language Training team lead.

A student's day runs from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. daily, with an hour for lunch. Thursdays are a make-up day in case a day was missed through the week, or can be used as an extra day for additional study time.

"If we can, we take one or two students with us (to lunch), so they can hear Americans speaking English," said Shanahan.

The students have workbooks to accomplish, and get homework every night. They also use audio tapes, and are required to speak English when in the school house.

"We're having great, great results," said Shanahan. "The students who are pilots are in the top class and they are scoring 60s and 70s, so we're almost there. And



photo by Petty Officer 1st Class David M. Votroubek

**KABUL, Afghanistan** — Lt. Col. Anwar Odin (left front) and Maj. Sulaiman (left back) study English with Paul West at the language training facility on Kabul Air Base.

we're not even half way done. We're not even half way through the books, so that's encouraging."

To help encourage the students, the faculty has ordered English dictionaries that will be loaned to each new student upon acceptance into the course. Computers are also being ordered to assist the Afghans with their studies.

The faculty works for International Logistics Solutions, a subcontractor for Lockheed Martin. Each teacher holds a masters degree in teaching English as a second language and has lived overseas.

There are currently five teachers and two more are on their way.

"I was approached and asked if I'd be willing to come to Afghanistan and teach a group of pilots English so they could communicate with the tower," Shanahan said. "And I've worked for American Airlines before doing that, so I said sure.

"It's so much fun, it's a blast," she added. "These guys are so motivated and so excited about what's happening in Afghanistan, how things are getting better, and they want things better. They want a future for their children."

# Afghan agencies meet to develop disaster response plan

by Petty Officer First Class David Votroubek  
CSTC-A Public Affairs

**KABUL, Afghanistan** — If history is any guide, another disaster will come to Afghanistan. According to the Afghan Ministry of Public Health, 118 large-scale disasters have happened in this country since 1954. The next one is not a matter of “if” but when.

To prepare for a disaster, the MoPH and other government ministries met in Kabul Jan. 8-10 to coordinate a response and begin planning. Combined Security Transition Command - Afghanistan's Command Surgeon Office sponsored the three-day conference for Afghan governmental health organizations, NGOs and coalition health representatives to discuss the National Disaster Response Plan and promote interoperability among health professionals.

Many of the participants had met before. A similar meeting was held last January, but many Afghan health providers only recognized the need for coordination after an illness killed seven people at a Kuchi camp near Kabul.

“The purpose of this conference is to cooperate and coordinate,” said Col. Naweed, who works on planning and management for the Afghan National Army's surgeon general.

Health care is only one of 12 “pillars” of disaster response, according to CSTC-A Command Surgeon, Air Force Col. John Mitchell. Other needs such as transportation, shelter and security must be dealt with by other ministries and organizations. The



photo by Petty Officer 1st Class David M. Votroubek

**KABUL, Afghanistan — Afghan National Army Brig. Gen. Dr. Shir Shah Ahmadi and other representatives listen to a speaker during the Afghanistan National Health Sector Disaster Preparedness Conference.**

purpose of this conference was to inform health professionals how they can organize their often limited resources to save lives.

The guest speaker for the conference was 2nd Vice President Karim Khalil of the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, followed by speakers from the MoPH, the Afghan National Disaster Management Agency and Red Crescent Society. International health representatives from the Medical College of Georgia and the United Nations Assistance

Mission in Afghanistan reiterated the need for emergency response that is both professional and politically neutral.

“The best way to deliver humanitarian relief is to follow humanitarian principles,” James Brown of UNAMA told the audience.

This is a tall order in a country with limited resources and an ongoing insurgency. The Afghans may have no choice about having a disaster, but by making plans now, they can be ready when it happens.



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## Mission Statement

The mission of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, in partnership with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the international community, is to plan, program and implement structural, organizational, institutional and management reforms of the Afghanistan National Security Forces in order to develop a stable Afghanistan, strengthen the rule of law and deter and defeat terrorism within its borders.