

CSTC-A NEWS

Vol. 2 Issue 17

Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan

May 03, 2008

KACTC graduates first Air Corps orientation class

by Petty Officer 1st Class Douglas Mappin
CSTC-A Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Afghan National Army Air Corps graduated 20 Air Corps soldiers on April 30 from the first ever Kabul Air Corps Training Center.

The new program is the foundation for the incoming Air Corps soldiers as they began their careers in the ANAAC.

"This is an exciting new age," said U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Jay Lindell, Commander, Combined Air Power Transition Force. "I congratulate you as you build, and rebuild, the Afghan Air Corps."

During the four-week inaugural course, KACTC instructors taught 20 students airfield safety, computer instruction, the history of the Air Corps, logistics and equipment maintenance.

The ANAAC is rebuilding after nearly two decades of neglect. Now, with the help of advisors and instructors from the U.S. Air Force, private contractors and former Air

Corps members, the ANAAC is taking wing once again.

"Many of the instructors are former members of the Afghan Air Corps," said Lindell. "They have returned, wanting to give back to their country."

Students of the orientation course received technical training in ground support and other services crucial to the maintenance of military aircraft and helicopters.

"We are just in the beginning stages," said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. James Langford, KACTC education director. "This class did very well. If you had been here when they arrived four weeks ago, you would have seen students like any of our typical (U.S.) airmen recruits."

In addition to the regular coursework, the students received instruction on sexual harassment, military values and participated in a physical conditioning program. Langford said by October more advanced classes will be taught.

"During the course, they also learned to stand guard at installation entry points, conduct vehicle searches and stand watches at public buildings and airports," said Langford. "After graduation, they are all going to join Afghan National Security Forces. Initially they will be stationed here in Kabul, but later they will move on to other locations around the country."

The next class will increase in size to 30 students. According to Temor Shah, director of the KACTC, the program is a welcome addition to his country's defense.

"Our students did very well. The instructors have taught them many things," Shah said. "Later this year, more American advisors will arrive for a year-long deployment, instructing the next round of students."

According to Langford, the curriculum will expand to include classes in fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft maintenance and logistics.

2/7 Marine Shock Trauma Platoon saves lives



photo by Seaman Dan K. Marker

by Cpl. Ray Lewis

2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, combat correspondent

QALAT, Afghanistan — An increase in violence in the southern part of Afghanistan between insurgents and the Afghanistan National Police has led to a higher volume of patients requiring advanced trauma treatment.

Many critically wounded patients are transported to Qalat for treatment by the U.S. Army's 2nd Forward Surgical Team. As the number of patients continued to grow in this isolated area, so did the danger of medical staff becoming inundated beyond its capabilities.

Shock Trauma Platoon, page 2

Members of the Shock Trauma Platoon carry a young boy to receive emergency medical attention from doctors of the Army's 2nd Forward Surgical Team at Qalat, Afghanistan.

Shock Trauma Platoon continued from page 1

This concern provided the opportunity for the Shock Trauma Platoon of 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, to do what it does best – save lives.

“We’ve been here a week, and we’re already making a difference,” said Navy Cmdr. James L. Hancock, who was selected by the Bureau of Medicine to lead the elite group of medical professionals.

Hancock was pulled from his duties as the emergency medicine department head at the naval hospital at Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, N.C., to incorporate the shock trauma unit at the battalion level for distributive operations in a combat environment – something that had never been done before.

Upon arrival in Afghanistan, Hancock immediately employed his STP to meet the emerging requirement in Qalat while 2/7 was in transition to start operations.

The STP is comprised of two medical doctors, two nurses, a physician’s assistant and 14 corpsmen chosen from various military units around the world.

The platoon worked side-by-side with U.S. Army and Romanian doctors, treating critically wounded casualties. One patient, a 12-year-old boy, was caught in a firefight between the police and Taliban forces.

The boy was wounded by a bullet that went through one arm, his stomach, liver, and then exited his body through his other arm. His chances of surviving the injury if not treated immediately were remote.

The STP’s forward location allowed almost immediate life-saving procedures to keep the boy from going into shock or

bleeding to death. The surgeons of FST-2 performed surgery and the boy was transferred to an Afghanistan Provincial Hospital with a full recovery expected.

“This is all new, uncharted territory for us. It’s the first time we’ve augmented an STP to a battalion,” said Hospital Corpsman Chief Petty Officer Kelly E. Richardson, of Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton, Calif. “We’re bringing more medical assets to the frontlines, allowing the Marines and sailors the support and confidence necessary to do their jobs.”

Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Rick Hall was completely in favor of deploying the STP.

“Our focus is on the people,” he explained. “We are trying to connect with as many of the people as we can in a limited amount of time and are following through on a number of civil military operations projects to demonstrate our commitment to improving their quality of life.”

The battalion’s mission is to mentor and train the ANP to extend the Afghan government’s authority and influence during security, stability and regional development – an assignment the commander doesn’t take lightly.

The STP is equipped with a dual tent-based, field expedient emergency room with airway managing, hemorrhage control and minor surgery capabilities that can be constructed in a moment’s notice. It is equipped with advanced cardiac life support equipment, portable ultrasound machines, ventilators, defibrulators and a blood bank.

“We can keep more seriously injured patients alive for longer. This is especially important in the event our (casualty evacuation) takes longer to get to us in such a remote and austere environment such as Afghanistan,” said Cmdr. John G. Crabill, a physician specializing in family medicine. “If the Marines can make it to the STP, they have a great chance of survival.”



photo by Seaman Dan K. Marker
Doctors of the Army's 2nd Forward Surgical Team administer care to a 12-year-old boy wounded by gunfire following a firefight between the Afghanistan National Police and insurgents near Qalat, Afghanistan.



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CSTC-A News is a publication of the Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan and Department of Defense. CSTC-A News is published weekly by the CSTC-A Public Affairs Office, Camp Eggers, Kabul, Afghanistan.

In accordance with DoD Instruction 5120.4, this DoD newsletter is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

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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.