

Birth of the Transatlantic Programs Center

Since Nov. 3, 1995

By Julie K. Shoemaker

During an October 1995 town hall meeting, Transatlantic Division employees were told that their organization would remain open but would likely be renamed the 'Transatlantic Programs Center.' That scenario became reality just nine days later, Nov. 3.

"This action is a name change only for our organization, which will continue reporting directly to HQUSACE," said Col. Anthony Nida, then Transatlantic's commander. "The decision is consistent with the Corps' intent to preserve our unique capabilities and not impact mission or responsibilities."

All references to the organization were changed to reflect the new name, but structure and mission remained unchanged. It occurred when the Corps of Engineers was restructuring its total number of divisions, reducing from 11 to 8. At that time, Huntsville Division became a center, and New England Division became a district under the North Atlantic Division.

From 1995 through 1997, the organization thrived with plenty of reasons to celebrate Transatlantic Programs Center accomplishments. "Our customers are becoming more satisfied with the products and services we're providing... Our scores are well above the Corps' average... As a result of our lower costs and increased attention to customer satisfaction, business is up... We've taken giant

steps toward improving our internal processes with several streamlining initiatives," said Nida.

Major organizational accomplishments included completion of the chrome plating facility in Egypt; converting potato fields to apartments in Ukraine for former Soviet military members; working with the multi-organizational team on the nuclear storage project in Russia; activating the LOGCAP [Logistics Civil Augmentation Program] contract to support troops in Hungary and Bosnia, including erection and operation of base camps; wrapping up pier and ship support facilities work at the navy base in Alexandria, Egypt; completing major work at Gianaklis air base as part of Peace Vector IV; and starting work for the Army and Air Force in Qatar to speed prepositioning of military equipment, supplies and materials.

From 1998 to 1999, a series of organizational actions began that affected every team member, directly or indirectly – including the elimination of 20 support positions (during which 11 team members retired under the Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay programs), restructuring of TAC to a project delivery team organization, and transferring Europe District to the North Atlantic Division.

"Reorganizing in and of itself is not a panacea for a lack of work or

Commanders

Col. Robert L. Suthard Jr., June 26, 2006 to the present
Col. Frederick L. Clapp Jr., July 2004 to June 2006
Col. Robert R. Derrick, Nov. 2002 to July 2004
Col. Merdith W.B. Temple, Aug. 2001 to Nov. 2002
Col. Donald T. Wynn, July 1997 to June 2001
Col. Anthony V. Nida, April 1994 to January 1997

inefficiency," said Col. Tim Wynn, commander from July 1997 to June 2001.

"Organizational structures are more effective and efficient if they parallel the major business processes of that organization. In other words, the structure should be laid out along the lines of how things really get done... So our new organization

is not going to be optimal unless we operate based on the project team concept."

Major accomplishments during this time frame encompassed various services for many customers. A bridge in Cameroon was completed and dedicated; the Saudi Navy training facility was dedicated; and six



TAC photo

Following the 1998 terrorist bombing of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, TAC was involved with the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bomb Response Unit, which included designing and reconstructing the Cooperative Bank House in Nairobi.

health clinics in Lesotho were refurbished as part of the Africa Civic Action program. In Kuwait, the first Job Order Contract was awarded to meet the Army's changing facility requirements at Camp Doha and Camp Arifjan began rising from the sand. TAC assisted Baltimore District with D.C. schools renovations and supported USAID projects in Kenya. And the Ordnance Program Division formally closed its doors after 34 years of assistance to Saudi Arabia.

Since 2001, TAC has been involved in supporting the Corps of Engineers' efforts with the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Global War on Terrorism and increased contingency support. An early TAC team established Corps of Engineers' engineering assistance efforts for the Afghan National Army, and TAC has been providing

reachback services to forward-Corps elements in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, TAC opened and manages the Corps' deployment center where all deploying Corps employees are provided appropriate equipment and trained to carry out engineering assignments.

Col. Robert L. Suthard Jr., commander since June 26, said that he will continue to focus the Transatlantic Programs Center team on providing stateside support for Iraq and Afghanistan and being part of their teams. "Corps of Engineers services in the U.S. Central Command area of operations have never been more vital."

In the more traditional mission areas, significant projects were completed in the Peace Vector program and Fayid air base ceremoniously opened. A high tech command center



TAC photo

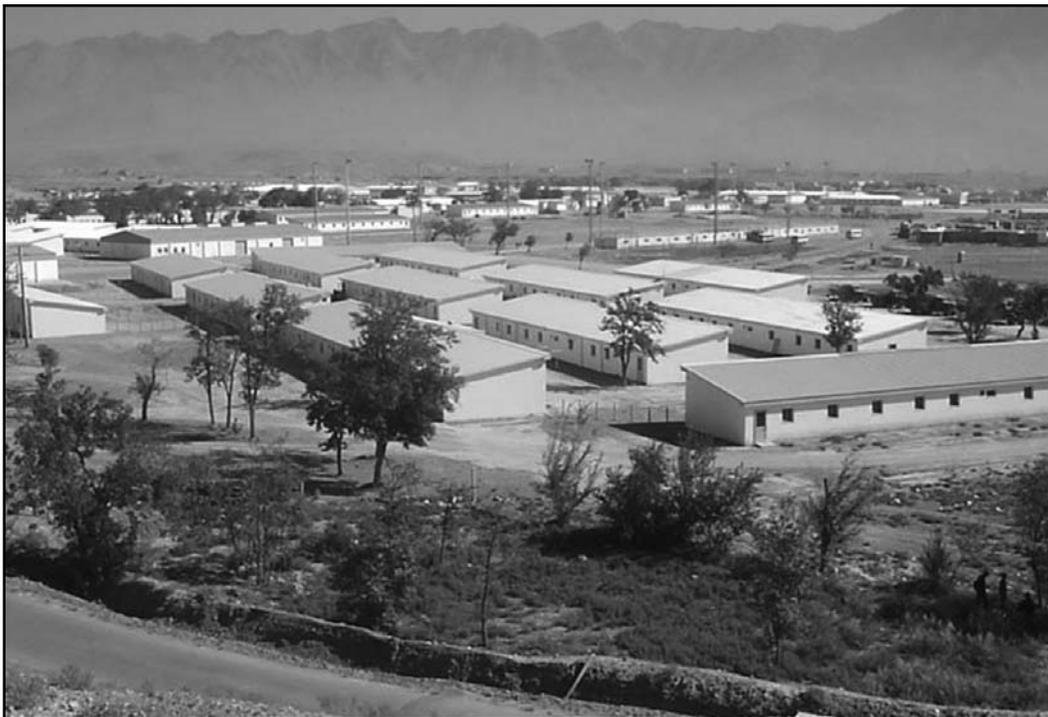
TAC was part of a multi-national team that built this facility to store materials recovered from dismantled nuclear weapons in Russia. The work was done under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Act.

was completed at Camp Arifjan, and the Udairi Airfield was finished ahead of schedule. The Construction Management Office opened in Qatar, composed of both Air Force and Corps of Engineers personnel, to manage the

engineering requirements for the U.S. Air Force in the region. In its continuing role to support deployed forces, TAC completed operational and support facilities in Kuwait; a headquarters complex and the new Installation Service Support Center and Freedom Souq for the Navy in Bahrain; and completed other projects to support U.S. interests throughout the U.S. Central Command area of operations.

Other assistance has included completion of counter-narcotics projects in Uzbekistan and USAID projects in Africa. More recent customers include Millennium Challenge Corporation, which performs economic development in Third World countries, and the Jordanian armed forces for a special operations training facility.

The Transatlantic Programs Center, by any name, continues to provide quality, responsive engineering, construction, and related advice and services to customers within its assigned area of responsibility.



TAC photo

Barracks for the Afghan National Army were one of TAC's major undertakings since the war on terror began.