



Engineering

IN EUROPE

All-star
engineering
line up

USACE Reserve units
team up to deliver
engineering support

Volunteering for
deployment

District employees fill
key roles in Kosovo



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Europe District
Vol. 1 Winter 2007

From the Commander



Volunteering to deploy helps the joint force and increases our skills

During the past six years our Army team has faced significant regional challenges. From deployments to rebuild war-torn Afghanistan and Iraq, to lengthy temporary duty away from our families to restore stability in Mississippi and Louisiana, these challenges have tested our mettle, commitment, and technical abilities.

The Soldiers and civilians of our Army team – volunteers all – rose to these challenges and made lasting improvements to the lives of millions. Today, many vitally important missions require our continued assistance. We must remain steadfast in our commitment to go beyond the bounds of our “normal” business to support these contingency operations.

One of these is Kosovo. The continuing operation to maintain a peaceful environment in Kosovo remains the responsibility of U.S. Army Europe. USAREUR depends on the Corps to support them with employees to man the Director of Public Works cell as well as the USAREUR Support Contract Administrative Contracting Office at Camp Bondsteel.

Many of you from the engineer community have volunteered to serve in Kosovo and can speak directly about the mission and its importance to the Balkans. Please do so. It is a vital mission for everyone to hear about, not only because our support lends stability to the region, but also because it says to the world that solving these difficult issues is, in fact, possible. Less than eight years ago, the Balkans were a war-torn region, but today, after continued presence from the international community, people are working, shopping, and living lives free of violence and fear.

I ask you to give thoughtful consideration to providing your services to this region. Now, more than ever, we need quality volunteers like you to fill these key positions. I know the Corps family has the right people – those who want to gain experience, develop skills, and make a difference.

And to supervisors: I know the urgencies of your daily work make it difficult to encourage your people to volunteer for contingency service, but I assure you it is worth the inconvenience. Most assuredly, you will get back a better employee than the one you sent. This is truly an investment, not only in our engineering family but also in our nation’s future. Your willingness do without key players for a few months, and the willingness of their teammates to pick up their duties, is a form of service just as important as deployment. I urge you to consider the bigger perspective along with me and help us identify the right employees for the jobs in Kosovo.

Please consider supporting our critical mission in Kosovo and contact the Europe District Human Resources office at 49 (0)-611-816-2744.

(For more information about the District’s mission in Kosovo, please turn to page 16).


MARGARET W. BURCHAM
COL, EN
Commanding

Engineering in Europe

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On the Cover

Michael Dennis (left), Wiesbaden project office quality assurance representative, updates Dave Stanton, District safety and health manager, on the demolition of several military family housing units in Wiesbaden's Hainerberg housing area during a routine safety inspection Feb. 23. This site is being cleared to make way for the construction of the upcoming Wiesbaden lodge.

Cover photo by Marisa Richards

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Peggy McBride, Europe District quality assurance program manager, deployed to Iraq for 18 days in March to teach quality assurance techniques to U.S. and Iraqi construction personnel. Her students were instructed to continue to preach the message of quality across the country she said.

Assuring Quality

Europe District teaches QA in Iraq

Story by Justin Ward

*Photos by Lana Aziz,
Gulf Region Division
public affairs specialist*

Peggy McBride has traveled far and wide throughout the Western world, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East preaching the Corps of Engineers' quality assurance mantra. For this Baltimore native, her 16 years of travels to indoctrinate remote pockets of U.S. and Coalition forces is something she wears as a badge of honor.

So when Jonathan Carr, resident engineer in Dahuk, Iraq, asked if she could help him

teach some quality assurance classes to the joint forces and Iraqis, McBride knew she couldn't pass up the opportunity. And she didn't.

For 18 days, McBride and Carr taught six classes throughout Iraq, from Dahuk to Falujah to Baghdad. The message they exhorted was simple: by building quality facilities safely, on time, and within budget, contractors will get a satisfied customer.

We touched a whole bunch of different agencies and showed them our value," said McBride, Europe District's quality assurance program manager, "from the Navy to the Department of Transportation to ... California National Guard folks who were deployed there."

When it comes to the understanding of the Corps' quality control system, McBride said Iraq is no different than the other countries where she has taught. "They have the same construction problems that occur everywhere else."

The classes, she said, were designed to teach the Corps' construction quality management requirements as well as contractor quality controls to students ranging from high-ranking officers to contracting personnel. Some students, McBride said, walked upward of 15 miles to attend the training. In the end, all students would understand the ins and outs of managing contracts and be certified as contractor quality control personnel.

Many of their students were Iraqi citizens – locally hired contractors who were doing construction work for the Corps there. McBride said her goal with these students was not only to teach them the basics of quality assurance, but also to give them the tools that would allow them to become teachers themselves.

The intent was to start an extensive word-of-mouth campaign, McBride said of the quality assurance teachings.

To help these students in their quests to spread the message, McBride said she handed out standards and tools that can be applied throughout Iraq. These tools included student workbooks and CD-ROM modules that taught the value of quality control and will enable Iraqi contractors and engineers to develop professionally.

"We all want the same thing," she said. "Contractor quality control managers and

superintendents must meet the contract specifications and the Corps' folks must ensure the contractor's quality control program is effective and productive."

An understanding of that partnership between the contractor and the government is essential to understanding quality control programs, McBride said. "It's that simple. Quality assurance succeeds through a partnership. If a contractor fails, we fail right along with them. And we can't have that."

The training was divided into four phases – introduction, lecture, video clips, and site visits. The site visit was the most productive part, McBride said, as it allowed class members to identify actual problems and work with the contractor for solutions on site.

"Going to the sites was a big plus," she said. "It allowed them to use the information they were learning."

One satisfied student was Renas Shwany, an architect-engineer who was a member of the Ninawa Province Reconstruction Team, a group composed of government officials from Iraq, the United States,

and Coalition partners to assist provincial governments promote transparency, security, and political and economic development. "Everything we learned from this class will be applied to our projects," he said.

The course was compact but complete, Shwany said of the 32-hour course, and in the end it will help his company deliver better quality to the customer.

Masuoood Muhammed, an Iraqi civil engineer employed in the Corps' Duhok Area Office, completed the CQM course taught by McBride. "The training improved our engineering experiences and helped develop our technical skills so we can handle engineering difficulties and fix contracting violations in accordance with the project engineers," he said. "All contractors should take such classes so they know the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' system.

Of the experience, McBride said it couldn't have been better.

"It was a great experience," McBride said. "I now understand how hard it is to build anything in a war zone. But it's important that we get our message of quality across."

(Editor's note: Lana Aziz, Gulf Region Division public affairs specialist, contributed to this article.)



Jonathan Carr, resident engineer in Dahuk, Iraq, teaches U.S. and Iraqi students in Dahuk about the technical side of quality assurance.

Refusing to settle Hohenfels HMCC reduces risk, saves money

*Story and photos
by Justin Ward*



Don't expect any sympathy from the environmental guys in Hohenfels. If they find a can of spray paint or any other EPA-designated dangerous substance container chucked in the woods, they'll find you.

"There's a barcode on each item," said Jochen Dörr, who supports the Hazardous Material Control Center (HMCC) there. "We can find exactly who did it."

In operation since March 2001, the HMCC is one of only a handful of hazardous material management units throughout the Army.

Officially, they are tasked with tracking and reporting environmentally harmful

materials to comply with both German regulations and the U.S. Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act.

Unofficially, they reduce hazardous material and hazardous waste risk, improve unit environmental compliance, and save about \$135,000 per year.

"I've been in the Army for 17 years and this is the best hazardous containment center I've seen," said Chief Warrant Officer Anthony Coleman, operations group motor officer for the Blacksheep Observer-Controller unit there. "These guys really do simplify things for us."

Similar programs have been implemented in various forms throughout many Army installations, including Grafenwöhr, Vilseck, and the Kaiserslautern Military Community, said Europe District's Sharon Lehn, project manager. But it's a rare occasion to find such a comprehensive and consolidated program, especially at such a small

installation, she said.

The District's role in the project is to administer the contract between the garrison and the contractor – in this case, The Environmental Company (TEC), said Lehn. "We just want to make sure that they [TEC] are keeping the customer happy and doing the work by keeping any new units up to speed on what's going on," she said.

The concept behind the HMCC is simple: instead of having each unit on Hohenfels exert manpower, time, and money to acquire, use, store, and dispose of hazardous materials, the District helped the garrison create a unit to centralize the process. By doing so, the HMCC staff both frees up local units' resources as well as tracks all hazardous materials.

Tracking the materials is important, said Reinhold Fröhlich, the Hohenfels Directorate of Public Works Environmental Office manager. "If we see the whole system, then we can have control



Boxes and cans of everyday hazardous substances like cleaning powder and detergent line the aisles of Hohenfels's Hazardous Material Control Center "Hazmart." Much of this material is surplus waiting to be redistributed among the units stationed on post.

cradle-to-grave," he said. That means, not only does the HMCC order and house materials to support each unit's maintenance mission, but they also manage each unit's supply, thereby safeguarding against unused surplus, he said.

This supply is stored in a small corrugated trailer on Hohenfels called the "Hazmart," which contains a 30-day supply of all the hazardous material each customer needs, such as antifreeze, adhesives, and oil. Once a week, an HMCC employee goes to each of the customer's sites and restocks them with a seven-day supply.

"The HMCC works with each customer to determine what they need," said Dörr. "And then they work with those customers to actually get those materials."

If there is surplus, the HMCC also serves as a turn-in point for serviceable hazardous materials that can be re-used. This has a two-fold benefit, Dörr claims. It avoids the costly disposal of a hazardous material and it also enables the HMCC to redistribute any excess that would otherwise be thrown away – free of charge.

Coleman asserted that his unit takes advantage of the HMCC's redistributed materials as often as they can, offering up that he recently received a redistributed



batch of antifreeze. "It saves money from our Class 3 budget and it's good to know that this stuff is not being wasted."

Customer satisfaction with the HMCC has been consistently high, said Lehn. "They're always looking for ways to improve the system," she said, including providing courtesy inspections, frequent awareness training workshops, and "weekly waste runs" where they take accumulated hazardous waste to the local storage facility. "We encourage this improvement, as long as it keeps the customer happy."

"The service is great," Coleman said. "It really makes it easier on us to have one central person and one central location for hazardous material. And when it's easier on us, they will always get a high rating."



ALL-STAR ENGINEERING LINE UP

USACE Field Force Engineering Reserve units fill in the engineering gap in Europe

Story and photos by Justin Ward



It's the bottom of the ninth and the score is tied. There's a man on third and probably a dozen strategies the home team can use to bring him home. But the team manager knows choosing the right strategy is crucial.

He solicits advice from the third base coach, who suggests calling on a special

pinch hitter – a pinch hitter with specific expertise as a bunter. The manager gives the go-ahead and the third base coach signals for the pinch hitter. He then gestures a squeeze play, knowing that this is a dependable way to win the game.

The pitch comes. The bunt is fair. A runner touches home and scores the winning run.

This exchange is analogous to the interaction between two U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-sponsored Reserve units that were tasked to support a larger team during a recent exercise at the Joint Multinational Command Training Command in Grafenwöhr, Germany.

One unit, the Corps' Washington, D.C.-based Contingency Response Unit (CRU), is a team of specialized engineers who provide Field-Force Engineering support to deployed commanders. They are the pinch hitters who can be called upon to use their specialty – engineering.

Another unit, the Vicksburg, Miss.-based 412th Engineering Command, serves as the CRU's command and control element when deployed. They are the third base coaches, who must

quickly strategize how best to support the team when an incoming engineering request manifests.

The home team, in this case,

“They were awesome ... It was like the sun came out and shined and I got answers.”

**-Maj. David Klingman,
Southern European Task Force
resident engineer**

is the Vicenza-based Southern European Task Force (SETAF). This airborne unit was being tested and certified during the exercise and relied on the cohesive USACE assets to support them when engineering

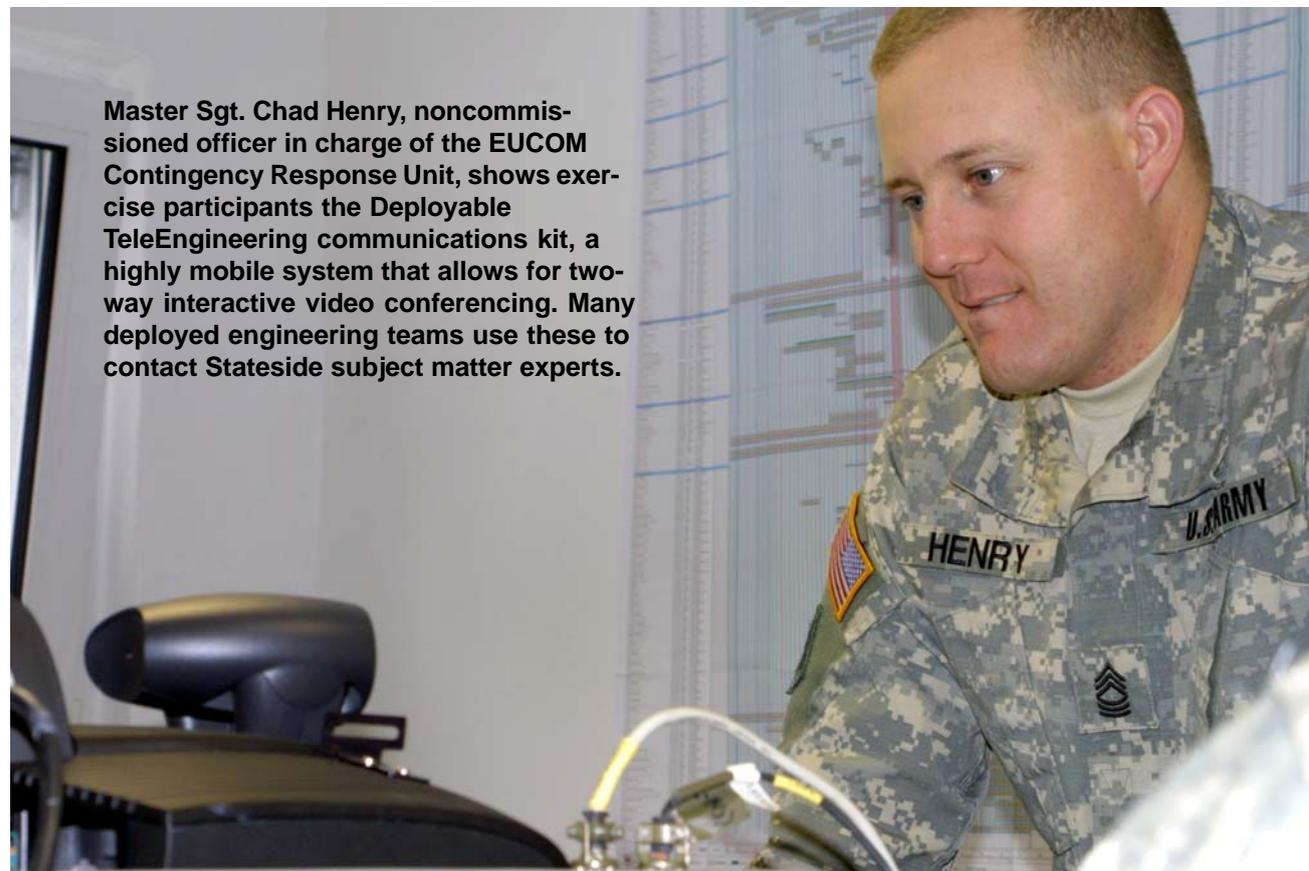
issues arose.

Of the ability of the combined CRU and 412th engineering force, Maj. David Klingman, resident engineer for SETAF, said, “They were awesome. They really allowed us to be successful.”

Klingman served as the sole SETAF engineer during the mission, he said. When the USACE team came, he added: “It was like the sun came out and shined and I got answers.”

During the computer-based exercise, the combined USACE team quickly and effectively “responded” to many emergencies, said Lt. Col.

Arthur Langdale, Europe District Emergency Operations Center chief who served as a trainer during the exercise. They were able to fix a broken water main, assess an oil field for pumping station capability, and



Master Sgt. Chad Henry, noncommissioned officer in charge of the EUCOM Contingency Response Unit, shows exercise participants the Deployable TeleEngineering communications kit, a highly mobile system that allows for two-way interactive video conferencing. Many deployed engineering teams use these to contact Stateside subject matter experts.

SUPPORTING THE JOINT FORCE

design a base camp design for displaced personnel.

"[USACE] presented [itself] as another tool in the engineering tool box that they had at their disposal. Many people aren't aware of that tool, but once you know it's there and you know how to use it, you start finding all sorts of outlets for it."

For Langdale, while filling in the engineering gap for SETAF was a central part of the mission, it wasn't the only progress the USACE units made during the exercise. For him – as well as to the members of the CRU and the 412th – the more fundamental accomplishment took place off the ball field.

"To work with the [412th]

and USACE and merge the two together in a joint training activity so we could learn about one another ... was my primary

"The last thing we want is to meet each other for the first time on the tarmac in the middle of the night ."

**-Master Sgt. Chat Henry,
Contingency Response Unit
NCOIC**

goal," said Langdale.

This interaction has happened in the past, he said, with representatives from both of these USACE-sponsored units

deploying together to support operations and exercises around the world. But it had never happened with the personnel assigned to the European Command's area of operations.

Members of both the CRU and the 412th admitted they spent some time figuring out each other's roles while developing this new-found relationship.

"They knew very little about us," said Lt. Col. Jeffrey Kwiecinski, the chief of the deployed CRU's European

Command team. "And so

I think it was very valuable that we were able to sit down and discuss what each of us would bring during the fight. What our roles are. What our

At a glance: USACE Reserve elements in the engineering tool box



Contingency Response Unit



Home: Washington, D.C.

Mission: To provide USACE commanders with engineer battle staff capability in contingency operations. Plan and execute USACE Field Force Engineering missions in combatant command operations.

What they do: Perform theater analysis for USACE and augment the USACE Division Commander in a Theater of Operations during wartime or during contingencies with primary staff capabilities.

Link to USACE: USACE Reserve element (divisional)

412th Engineering Command



Home: Vicksburg, Miss.

Mission: To conduct theater-level engineer operations for U.S. Army Europe and U.S. Army Pacific. Be prepared to participate in joint, combined regional contingency operations.

What they do: Provide guidance and technical assistance to units engaged in construction projects.

Link to USACE: Sponsored by the Mississippi River Commission, Vicksburg District, and the Engineer Research and Development Center.

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Master Sgt. Chad Henry, noncommissioned officer in charge of the EUCOM Contingency Response Unit, displays for Maj. Frank Hopkins, the assistant deputy chief of staff (forward) for the 412th Engineering Command the Automated Route Reconnaissance Kit, chiefly used for bridge and route reconnaissance. This kit was developed by the Vicksburg, Miss.-based Engineer Research and Development Center, one of the main sponsors for the 412th.

responsibilities are.”

Maj. Frank Hopkins, the assistant deputy chief of staff (forward) for the 412th, agreed that it was difficult at first to figure out how their teams could best fit together when their normal missions are so similar.

Normally, the CRU is the lead unit on all engineering issues, Hopkins said, providing USACE commanders with engineer battle staff capability and Field Force Engineering prowess. However, in a time of war – what this two-week exercise was portraying, for instance – the 412th leads the charge, providing command and control for theater engineering operations, including overseeing the CRU.

This distinction is important, said Master Sgt. Chad Henry, noncommissioned officer in charge of the deployed CRU. “It’s one thing to take a correspondence course and go over lessons and another thing to actually do it and make those pieces work,” he said. “As we discussed with the 412th, there were gaps in some of the real-world missions they’re trying to perform. ... But after this mission, the CRU had a design for how to fill those gaps.”

Langdale said the connections made during this exercise will pay dividends down the road.

“We love these guys,” Hopkins said of the CRU team. “[The exercise] gave us the opportunity to role play and learn from each other. You start to build good relationships when you’re working 12- 14-hour shifts together.”

After the exercise, both parties admitted they learned a great deal, not only about each other’s differences, but also about the importance of working together. This understanding will not only be valuable in future exercises, but also for when the units deploy together for real missions.

“The last thing we want is to meet each other for the first time on the tarmac in the middle of the night,” said Henry.

In the future, the District plans to fill engineering slots in training missions like these with individual mobilized augmentees from Europe District or the division headquarters.

The 412th and CRU will continue to interact, using this training as a knowledge base from which to project “game-winning” engineering force if called upon.



Host-nation moderator and deputy head of the Georgian Emergency Situations Management Center, Pridon Sadunishvili, speaks to media representatives during a response to a mock terrorist attack in Batumi, Georgia.

Preparing for disaster

IN A TIME OF INTERNATIONAL CRISIS, COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Story and photos by Justin Ward

Those good at cultural geography will know that the seven nations surrounding the Black Sea could not be more dissimilar. From differences in languages, to differences in political systems, to differences in religion, these nations – Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine – don't share much.

But what they do share is a desire to protect their citizens from growing global security threats. And with the involvement from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, they are building that

capacity through a program called CMEP.

CMEP, the U.S. Department of Defense's Civil-Military Emergency Preparedness program, assists governments in preparing for regional disasters. According to participants like the director of the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior's Project Management Unit, Aurel "Col. Bill" Bilanici, it's often not what resources any individual country has at its fingertips – it's the relationships that are built within the region – and therefore international resources – that make the difference.

"During civil emergencies, relationships are



very, very, very important," Bilanici said during the computer-based exercise, held in the Black Sea port city of Batumi, Georgia, in February. "One of the reasons we promote this program is to develop relationships so, if we need something, we know who to call."

In the exercise, named "Albatross 2007," participating nations, were tested on their interactions within their own agencies, with international nongovernmental organizations like the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and with their neighbors under the pretense of a deliberate release of hazardous materials in the Black Sea.

This particular CMEP gathering was part of what's called the Black Sea Initiative (BSI), which was set up in 2004 to assist the littoral nations of



Above, from left, a Georgian-Russian translator helps Ukrainian representative Vaseliy Slevetskiy with Ukraine's crisis response plan during the latest CMEP exercise in Batumi, Georgia.

Left, Aurel "Col. Bill" Bilanici, director of the Romanian Ministry of Administration and Interior's Project Management Unit, attends a press conference held after the CMEP exercise.

the Black Sea to improve collaborative planning and preparing processes when responding to threats to their populations.

According to David MacPherson, Europe District's CMEP program manager, the

end result of the BSI is not just better response plans. These table-top exercises also allow NATO Partnership for Peace nations – such as Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova – to raise their crisis and communications management standards to

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Georgian news crews and participating representatives gathered to watch Georgian emergency responders react to a mock terrorist attack in Batumi, Georgia, following the CMEP exercise.



NATO's benchmark.

"By emphasizing the use of NATO's standard operating procedures for communicating during a time of a disaster," MacPherson said, "these nations enhance their likelihood of NATO admission."

However, for representatives from NATO countries, the more valuable outcome is the ability to cut the red tape.

Civil emergencies are the best domain for cooperation because they override political protocols, Bilanici said. "All you have is communication and helping one another. So, what is important ... is to raise confidence in communicating so we can better help one another."

He told of a situation in spring 2006 – just months after Romania hosted the first BSI table-top exercise, named Tomis International 2005 – when the Romanian emergency situations office received an urgent call for help from its Bulgarian counterpart about an emergency on the Danube.

After the call, Bilanici said a Romanian representative phoned directly to an emergency response colleague in the affected Bulgarian region who he met at the Tomis exercise and said, "Hey, what do you need? How

much? When? Where?"

In less than 24 hours, Bilanici said, Romanian emergency responders were on the ground in Bulgaria with the materials needed.

A 2005 World Disaster Report from the International Foundation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies bolstered the significance of information during a disaster, identifying it as a vital form of aid in itself. According to the report, disaster-affected people need information as much as water, food, medicine, or shelter.

"Information in a disaster is critically important," said Andy Bruzewicz, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Management program manager.

According to Bruzewicz, one of the biggest benefits of CMEP is that it allows civil and military emergency responders to meet under non-disaster conditions and "develop the relationships and the trust that are so important in an effective response."

Each CMEP exercise is a culmination of months of planning, coordination, and regional meetings held with the District and participating nations.

Because of those meetings, the group was able to realize the importance in

Black Sea In enlisted na

Bulgaria



Georgia



Moldova



Romania

Russia



Turkey



Ukraine

Black Sea Initiative and nations

A full participant in the most recent Black Sea Initiative event, Bulgaria's ties with CMEP date back to 1998. The nation has also hosted a BSI event in the port city of Varna in 2004.

The host of the most recent BSI event in the commercial seaport town of Batumi, Georgia has fully participated in the BSI since its inception in 2004.

A full participant in the most recent BSI event, Moldova has fully participated in the BSI since its inception in 2004. Moldova is also looking to host the next BSI event.

Like Bulgaria, Romania was a full participant in the most recent BSI event and has ties to CMEP dating back to 1998. The country also hosted a BSI event in the port city of Constanta in 2005.

Although not present in the most recent BSI event, Russia has been a full participant in other BSI events and will continue to play a role in future events.

An observer nation in the most recent BSI event, Turkey has been a full participant in CMEP since the South Eastern Europe workshop in 1998. The country has been involved in BSI since 2005.

A full participant in the most recent BSI event, Ukraine has fully participated in the Black Sea Initiative since its inception in 2004.

assembling the "action" people who would be called upon in a real disaster, such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) experts.

Getting those action people in the emergency ministries together allows for good training, said MacPherson.

The technology used during a CMEP exercise, therefore, is also important to making it realistic and beneficial.

In "Albatross 2007," the participants focused on developing a common base of understanding for GIS technology and mapping capabilities, which have been known to help

emergency planners more easily calculate emergency response times.

Bruzewicz, who used to lead the Corps' GIS planning and response team, said the technology has been a formal part of U.S. emergency response since Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

"With each disaster we've found that the way each responder can take advantage of this particular way of providing information has grown," said Bruzewicz, "and we're very happy we can bring subject matter experts to CMEP and BSI activities to work with Partnership for Peace partners and

share lessons we have learned as well as discuss new ways in which this technology can benefit disaster response."

The CMEP program, managed by the District's International Engineering Center since 1999, has helped participating nations in Europe and Central Asia save lives by transcending borders.

Further down the road, CMEP may be involved with helping the nations of Africa come together to deal with natural and manmade disasters, such as chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, and high-yield explosive disasters.



A Georgian emergency responder dressed in a hazardous material suit directs his team during a response to a mock terrorist attack in Batumi, Georgia, following the three-day CMEP exercise held there.



K O S O V O

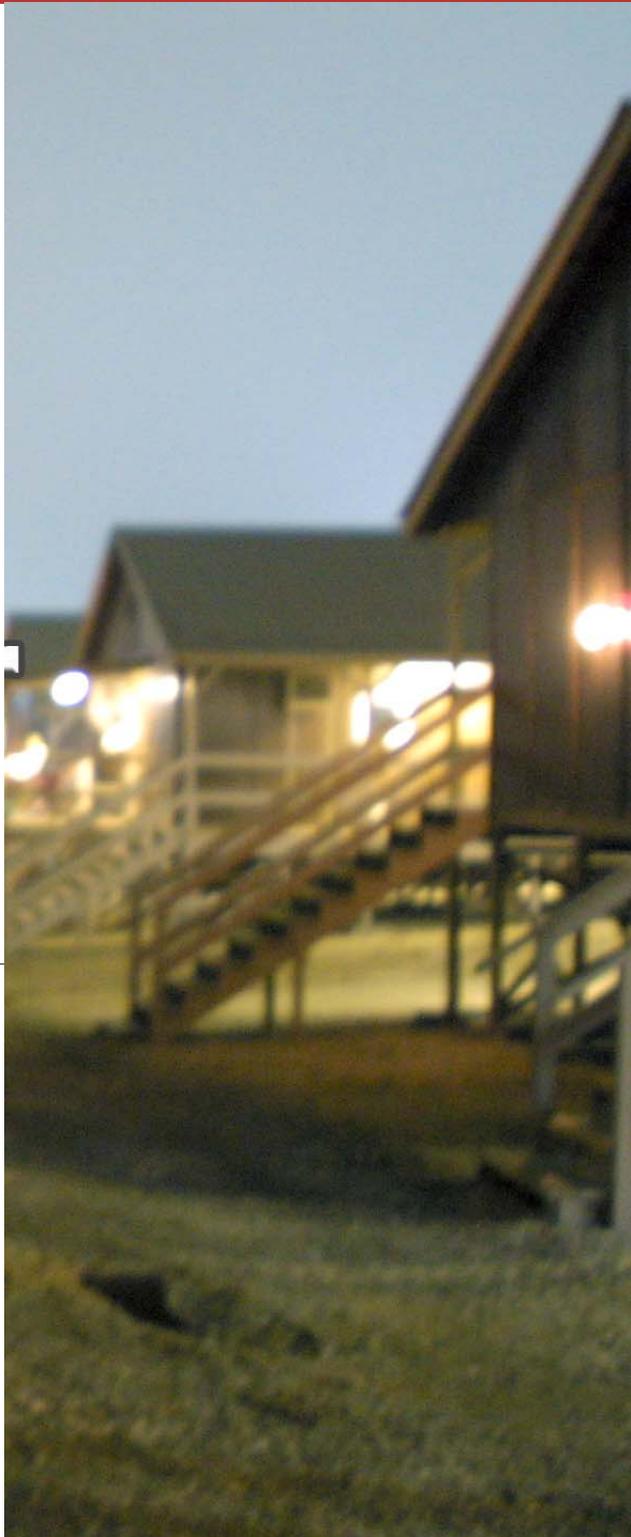
Volunteering for deployment

Dressed in Army ACUs and combat boots, John Wutzer, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian, said he was prepared for just about anything. It was late September and Wutzer had just accepted a temporary position in Kosovo, filling in as the director of the Department of Public Works (DPW) there from October to January.

"I knew it was a little poorer down there,"

he said. "And I knew a little about its history, but that's about it."

What he got from that experience was more than he could have imagined, he said. "It was the highlight of my career," he said. "Very positive in the end, challenging in the beginning, but certainly no regrets. I'd be glad to share this experience personally with anyone."



Wutzer, a mechanical engineer, is one of many District employees who have volunteered to lend their expertise to the deployed joint forces in a combat zone. He spent his busy days as DPW director working to maintain the 900-acre Camp Bondsteel,



Photo by John Wutzer

The former rule of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans encouraged Albanian Muslims to settle where Orthodox Serbians had been. Today, ethnic Albanian Muslims make up about 90 percent of Kosovo's 2 million people.

the largest of four NATO headquarters in Kosovo.

Bondsteel, the U.S. Army's main base under the NATO-led Kosovo Force, is located in the rolling farmland in the eastern part of Kosovo, a small province of Serbia about the size and climate of Connecticut. Kosovo has been under UN administration since 1999 when an international military response force arrived to halt the "ethnic-cleansing" occurring there.

"I was interested in taking on something new – a new challenge," he said of his motive for volunteering. "I wanted to get management experience, which, being put in the director's position, I would directly get. And, on day one, I got that, full bore."

As the DPW director, Wutzer focused his time between two monumental tasks – deconstructing Camp Monteith, the smaller of two U.S.-led base camps, and implementing the replacement for the Balkan Support Contract, known as the U.S.

Army-Europe Support Contract (USC).

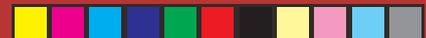
Monteith, a former Yugoslav army artillery barracks, was initially taken by the Marines during the NATO campaign of early 1999. Recently, this smaller outpost located about 20 miles east of Bondsteel has been delicately taken apart so its structures can be shipped to upcoming military posts around Europe and the land returned to the local land owners.

"We had meetings every Saturday," said Wutzer of the Monteith deconstruction project. "There were towers to take down, buildings to be deconstructed, a water plant that had to be packed up and moved away ... a lot of decision making."

His second large task, implementing the USC, took up a great deal of his time there, he said.

Officially, the USC was activated on Oct. 1, 2006, just days before Wutzer arrived and was put in charge of executing it. His main USC





The protected six-mile perimeter of the 900-acre Camp Bondsteel can clearly be seen amid the rolling farmland between the towns of Urosovac/Ferizaj and Gnjilane/Gjilan.

ensure it provided all the necessary services for the deployed task force.

It was a challenge, he admitted, because the contract was so different from the the Balkans Support Contract.

At the time of his departure, the USC was in the final stages of being reconciled, he said. "Overall, I couldn't have asked for anything better professionally," he said.

Wutzer said one of the key assets a person needs to deploy to a place like Kosovo is flexibility. "Meetings got changed, visits got canceled – you'd prepare for something for a week and then it would all get changed at the last minute. And you just had to be open to that."

Amy Baker, an environmental protection specialist with the District who has volunteered to deploy to Kosovo twice since 2005, said in addition to flexibility, a good candidate needs to be adventurous and be a self-starter. "Things move fast

function, he said, was streamlining it to ensure all regularly scheduled work that should be included was, and that all work that shouldn't be included wasn't.

"That was the biggest part of our job," he said. "Anything that was unscheduled work was now coming through us.

... New buildings, upgrades, utility infrastructure, modifications, it all had to be approved or disapproved."

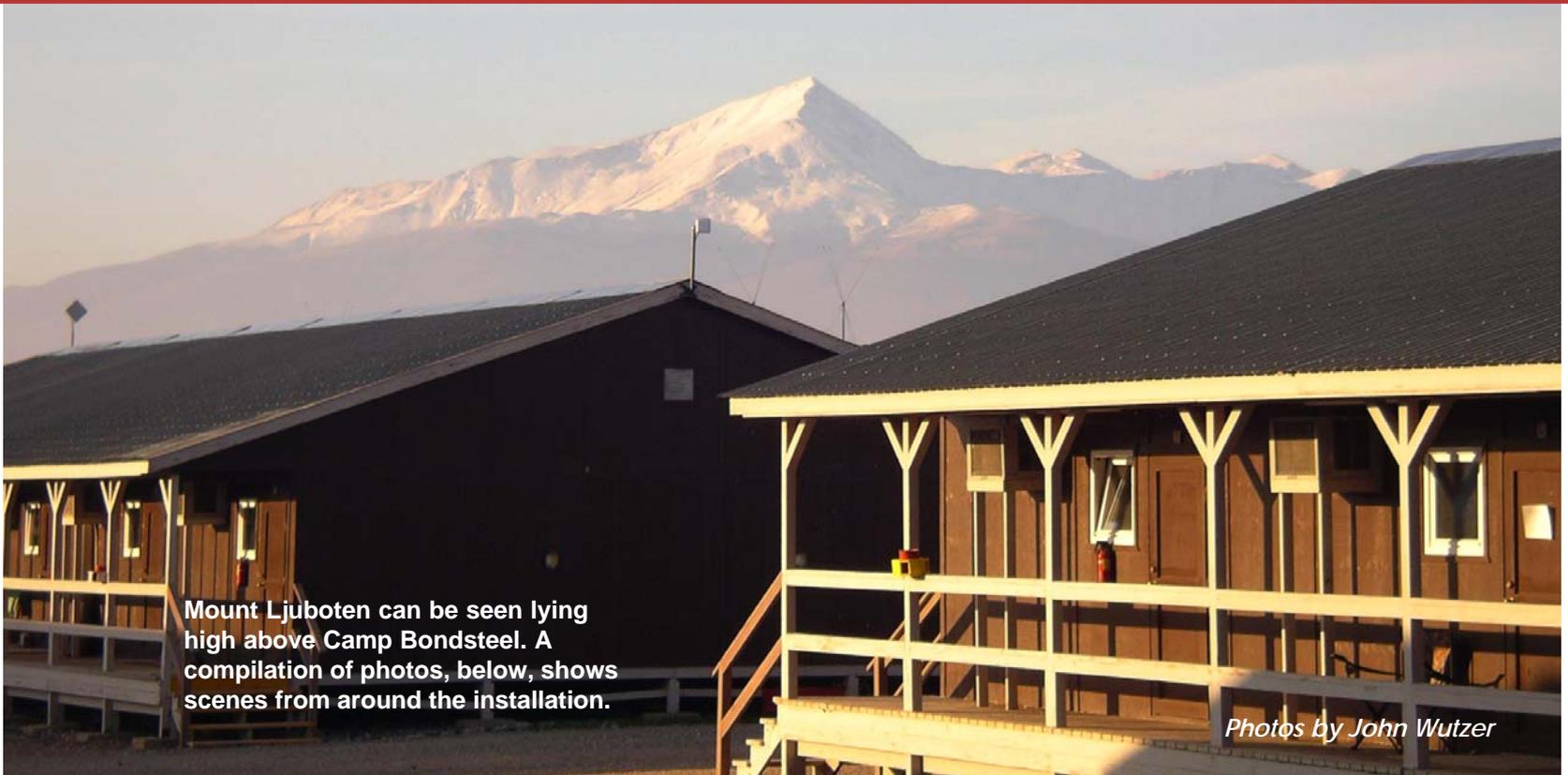
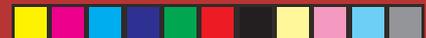
Wutzer said the USC brings with it a major change in the way the government and contractors do business. His job, he said, was to help implement the contract and



An Army UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter flies from Camp Bondsteel to Saltina Airfield, in Kosovo, near the Dinaric Alps, the name for the mountain range that looms over the province.

Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. D. Myles Cullen





Mount Ljuboten can be seen lying high above Camp Bondsteel. A compilation of photos, below, shows scenes from around the installation.

Photos by John Wutzer



there," she said. "You have to make lots of decisions and you have to make them quickly."

Civilians stationed on base have the same privileges as Soldiers, including free Internet access, DSN phones, mail, laundry, gym usage, and movies at the AAFES movie theater. They also have access to dining facility, 24-hour snack room, game rooms, library, chapel, and medical facilities on Bondsteel.

Also like Soldiers, civilians stationed there will have access to Bondsteel's other amenities such as barber shops, beauty salons, an Army education center, a post exchange, souvenir shops, a car wash, a gas station, and a park.

Unlike Soldiers, however, civilians stationed at Bondsteel may have freedom to leave the facility and explore, if the command allows it. For longer trips from Bondsteel, a four-hour bus ride could take visitors to several surrounding cities, such as Sofia, Bulgaria; Thessaloniki, Greece; or Belgrade, Serbia.

"I tried to take advantage of the opportunities," Wutzer said. "I went down

there expecting to see things I hadn't seen before. And I did."

Although the Pentagon still classifies Kosovo a combat zone because of sporadically violent protests and confrontations with drug smugglers, volunteers who go say they feel secure.

"My safety was never, ever a problem," said Baker. "I felt safer there than I did when I went to Washington, D.C."

Both Wutzer and Baker said their time in Kosovo helped them gain valuable leadership and management skills as well as experience in a truly international work environment.

"You had so many opportunities to learn so many different things and meet so many different people," he said. "You'd be sitting in the dining hall and have Soldiers from Germany, France, Finland, Turkey, Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland, Greece, Poland, and the Ukraine all sitting around each other – I would look around at all these BDUs and ... [think] about all the wars that these people have fought, saying to myself, 'Wow, why can't it always be like this?'"





Outside Kosovo

While deployed to Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo as Department of Public Works chief, District mechanical engineer John Wutzer was able to explore the local area during the weekends, finding many peaceful areas like this, just outside Skopje, Macedonia.

