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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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For Immediate Release:
Feb. 1, 2011

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Task Force Power exceeds inspection expectations

HUNTSVILLE, Ala—Inspectors checking the safety of electrical connectivity at coalition forces facilities throughout Afghanistan are turning their inspections at a brisk pace, enabling quicker repair of systems requiring attention.

Two Corps of Engineers project managers are on-site there providing oversight for more than 100 Teng and Associates, Inc., electrical inspection contractors of Task Force Protecting Our Warfighters and Electrical Resources.

The contractors recently inspected more than 5,000 facilities, finding 596 facilities free of electrical issues.

Unfortunately – or fortunately depending on how one views the process – inspectors also placed 2,867 inspection findings in a “priority” status and tagged 1,530 facilities as “flash,” a term used to report a life-safety issue.

However, according to a TF POWER project manager, the good news is when inspectors note deficiencies, it means the inspectors are doing their jobs well.

“When you are dealing with a life-health-safety issue, one incident prevented is worthy (of categorizing as “priority” or “flash”),” said Bob Britton, TF POWER project manager at Huntsville Center.

Britton said currently TF POWER deals with several hundred inspections monthly, and when inspectors use “flash” as the term to report a serious deficiency, it prioritizes the necessary fixes needed to ensure the problem is solved immediately.

A “priority” notation means a facility is operational, but requires attention as soon as possible.

Britton said what constitutes a “flash” deficiency is defined by the U.S. Forces-Afghanistan Electrical Working Group Board.

The board of subject matter experts meets monthly to discuss the status of the program, update progress and resolve any issues.

“I believe an electrical deficiency is an accident waiting to happen. It’s an unacceptable accident that can be prevented, and that is what TF POWER is all about,” he said.

Britton said he’s amazed at the sheer volume of inspections conducted over time.

“In the beginning we were told to inspect 100 sites. This quickly grew to over 300 sites, and thousands of facilities,” Britton said.

“The numbers speak for themselves and are 100 percent defensible. It’s impressive to know we are making such an impact on preventing accidents and improving the safety of our facilities.”

The inspections with noted deficiencies are now coming at such a rate, making repairs is often challenging due to the volume of deficiencies noted, said Capt. Joel Rivera, TF POWER deputy U.S. Forces-Afghanistan.

“There are many facilities with deficiencies, but no one designated to repair (them),” Rivera said. “Therefore TF POWER is responding with another inspect/repair contract through Philadelphia District,” he said.

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