Command Assistance Visit
Pacific Ocean Division reviews the Far East District

Story begins on page 6
Col. Donald E. Degidio, Jr.

To the Great Team of the Far East District and our entire Team of Teams,

The Pacific Ocean Division Regional Management Board visited us in early May. During their three day visit they discussed operational matters and promoted cross-talk between the Districts. The Far East District has already been sharing responsibility and decision-making with the Pacific Ocean Division due to our impressive Korea Relocation Program.

One of our greatest successes this month was the validation of our Noncombatant Evacuation Operation readiness as we completed participation in the U.S Forces Korea Courageous Channel exercise. The District stood up its Emergency Operations Center to receive NEO status reports as our Family members and noncombatants processed through the Evacuation Control Centers.

We also turned over some excellent projects this month. The Camp Carroll community welcomed a new Multipurpose Training Facility and at K-16 Airfield a new commissary opened its doors. These two quality of life projects continue to showcase the District’s commitment to excellence.

While strengthening our great Alliance, we co-hosted the Local Construction Materials Conference with our partners from the Korean Ministry of National Defense to increase the use of local materials in our projects. We have made great strides in using these conferences to enhance transformation and relocation efforts. The Far East District is committed to working with local manufacturers and suppliers to make this program even more successful.

Lastly, we observed Memorial Day, one of our Nation’s most solemn and revered holidays. No matter how you celebrated this solemn day, it is important to understand the history and significance of it. Whether it is the doughboys of World War I, our Greatest Generation in World War II, our Warriors who served in Korea and Vietnam, the liberators of Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan, or countless others who served and sacrificed in smaller actions around the world, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to the men and women who took up arms against the enemies, laying down their lives to ensure a brighter future for the loved ones they left behind.

Thanks for all you do each and every day!

To our great Alliance – Katchi Kapsida!
To our great Corps – Essayons!
One Team Building Strong® in Korea!

Read more Commander’s Information on Page 26-27
Construction Division: where “Building Strong in Korea” comes to life

By Mike Kopp, David Talbot, Yi Yong-Ho
FED Construction Division

T he Construction Division of the Far East District is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ representative at job sites, inspecting the quality of workmanship and materials, verifying that the progress of construction meets schedule, and checking for conformance to all other technical and administrative contractual requirements. In performing these duties, we also support our colleagues in the Engineering, Contracting, and Program and Project Management Divisions by regularly reporting our findings and recommendations to them.

In order to accomplish all of this, the Construction Division is generally organized into these main components:

RESIDENT OFFICES

There are seven Resident Offices, one Area Office, and FED headquarters, located throughout Korea. Their purpose is to enable frequent and quick access to construction sites in order to perform the Construction Division’s work. And they are opened and staffed depending on the workload, with a focus on projects within their geographic area. The largest (and growing) office is the Humphrey Area Office (HAO) and its associated resident offices, which were established to support the design and construction of billions of dollars’ worth of facilities over the next several years at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys, mainly due to the planned relocation of facilities from USAG Yongsan.

An example of one of the resident offices at Camp Humphreys is the Family Housing Resident Office. It was established three years ago in the middle of the greatly expanded area that now comprises USAG Humphreys. The sounds of truck sirens, clanging metal, and pile-drivers are now constantly heard through the windows. Because it is in an undeveloped area, the infrastructure of utilities and roads are being built from scratch. This means that access to the office requires a drive across an often muddy dirt construction road, or up a steep gravel hill covered with potholes. Water used by the office has to be trucked in every few weeks.

The staff of each resident office is well trained in construction trades and contract administration and they inspect all of the construction sites on a daily basis. This means that they perform quality assurance, check site safety, and strive to avoid delays in the contractor’s schedule. On military construction funded projects, they also perform construction services by processing monthly progress payments, negotiating contract modifications, and handling the closeout paperwork. Their workload involves constant coordination with contractors, other FED construction offices, project management, and local garrison offices.

Each resident office also works with their counterparts in the Korean government, which funds many of the design and construction projects at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys. The roles of the Construction Division—including each resident office—is expanded in that another level of complexity is added. The construction-funded projects, they also perform construction services by processing monthly progress payments, negotiating contract modifications, and handling the closeout paperwork. Their workload involves constant coordination with contractors, other FED construction offices, project management, and local garrison offices.

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Command Assistance Visit reviews Far East District

By Patrick Bray
FED Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Pacific Ocean Division’s Command Assistance Visit to the Far East District took place May 22-25. The CAV is an on-site review that provided an assessment of the state of the District.

Division leaders from POD visited FED division and branch offices to evaluate some of the processes used daily to conduct the business of the District. This allowed FED to share some of its best practices with POD.

One of the greatest learning opportunities for FED has been the multi-billion dollar expansion project at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys. The CAV has a great interest in this project because it not only belongs to FED but to POD.

To see the scope of the project, the CAV visited USAG Humphreys May 25 to see construction progress and learn about future projects. Greg H. Reiff, Area Engineer of Humphreys Area Office, guided the tour which included site visits on the existing and future garrison.

For many CAV members it was their first visit to USAG Humphreys. Others who have visited had not seen the expansion project in a couple of years. What they remembered as being a huge landfill site is now dotted with vertical construction projects.
Large tasks, such as the Korea Relocation Program, can pose numerous challenges for engineers but can also create opportunities to develop solutions and share ideas throughout the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Within the Pacific Ocean Division, one of those opportunities is through the POD Regional Management Board (RMB).

The RMB focus is on ways to help make the POD Regional Business Center be a more effective and efficient organization.

Recently, the RMB met in Korea May 2-4 with a strategic focus to improve efficiency, enhance delivery of products and services, share ideas, and develop solutions to mitigate future problems.

For example, to support the Korea Relocation Program mission, the RMB has looked at ways the RBC can provide regional support. That support could be through technical assistance using the Regional Technical/Design Centers at the Hawaii District, recruiting via regional recruitments, detailing workers from engineers to interns from other districts, improving hiring practices, and providing other means of reach back through our partners at Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) and other organizations.

The Board usually meets three times a year and rotates meeting locations throughout the POD districts as well as POD Headquarters in Hawaii. This allows the members to see and visit pertinent regions or projects and get the local perspective. Also due to this rhythm, the RMB usually visits FED at least every two years.

The members are comprised of senior civilian program managers and technical leaders within POD Headquarters, the districts, and USACE Headquarters Regional Integration Team. Since over half the members are from the districts, being a participant requires each member to wear his or her “regional hat” and maintain a regional perspective.

From intern to SES

Jim Bersson, Director of Regional Business Directorate and also a Regional Management Board member, met with Department of the Army interns assigned to the Far East District May 4 at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys.

Bersson, who is a part of the Senior Executive Service, told them that he started out as an intern and provided them with words of encouragement and leadership as they make their way through the program.

The interns used this opportunity to discuss with Bersson some of their career goals and what kind of training they should pursue.

Jim Bersson, Director of Regional Business Directorate at Pacific Ocean Division, talks with Department of the Army Interns assigned to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District about the intern program May 4. (Photo by Patrick Bray)
Since July 27, 1953 when the Cease Fire was signed and ended the fighting on the Korean Peninsula the U.S. and Republic of Korea forces have maintained a high state of readiness to deter and defend any further aggression from the north. Nearly 60 years have passed and the situation remains much today as it was in July 1953.

Obviously, nobody has a crystal ball or can predict the future so we must always, as Gen. James D. Thurman, the U.S. Forces Korea Commander, says, “Be ready to fight tonight.” So what does it take to be ready to fight tonight? For those of us who wear the U.S. Army uniform readiness is a constant duty. We relentlessly train, study and prepare for the challenges, real or envisioned, that we are likely to face in our chosen fields.

The Far East District, is the forward most deployed U.S. Army Corps of Engineers asset in the Pacific theater and being assigned here requires that we are trained, equipped and prepared to carry out our mission supporting the Eighth U.S. Army during Armistice, Crisis, or Contingency and do it tonight—not in a few days, weeks or months—now!

Recently many of our District personnel and their family members participated in the Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) exercise Courageous Channel and the results were exceptional. The success of the exercise was due in part to good planning, training, and personal and family readiness. The dedication and attention to detail of everyone involved from Robert Lamoureux, Operations and Training Specialist, NEO Wardens, and each family was essential to ensuring that the exercise was ready to execute the mission. Just because the exercise is over does not mean that we can put away the NEO books until next time. Readiness is continuous and requires changes and updates to information and records.

Before we know it Ulchi Freedom Guardian will be ready to start; this year, as in the past, our Mission Essential and Emergency Essential Civilian employees will be participating in the exercise. To ensure that you are ready to conduct your mission, it is important that you take an inventory of your personal equipment, ensure that everything is in good condition; take the time to inspect and clean your protective mask. If you have any unserviceable equipment, do not wait until the last minute to turn it in. Leaders, be proactive and make sure that personnel in your section are up to date on individual training; physical exams and immunizations are current.

One other part of readiness that is sometimes overlooked is the readiness in our personal life. Some things to consider for instance, an estate plan, will, insurance policies, bank accounts and investments. If you have need of legal advice visit the Judge Advocate General on or near your installation or seek legal advice from an attorney in the private sector. Some things in life we just should not put off for another day to do. None of us have that crystal ball or knows what tomorrow will bring. It is all a part of being ready. I am ready, are you?

By Sgt. Maj. David Breitbach
FED Security, Plans, and Operations

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District successfully completed the Courageous Channel Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) exercise May 17-19. The District accounted for 100 percent of all its personnel.

The District’s NEO stewards worked hard for eight weeks prior to the exercise to ensure that every family’s battle books were up to date and assembled and verified according to the checklist prescribed by U.S. Forces Korea. As a result the battle books that were inspected at the exercise were found to be in order.

The District stood up its Emergency Operations Center to receive NEO status reports periodically throughout the exercise.

Noncombatant Evacuees (NCE) process through the evacuation center at U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan May 18. (Photo by Patrick Bray)
Far East District completes Multipurpose Training Facility

By Patrick Bray
FED Public Affairs

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District completed and turned over a new Multipurpose Training Facility to U.S. Army Garrison Daegu on Camp Carroll May 17.

The Republic of Korea funded construction project was provided by the ROK Ministry of National Defense-Defense Installation Agency.

“I’m duly aware that this facility will play a vital role for the combat capability of U.S. Forces Korea during peacetime and contingency period and I’m very pleased about handing over this facility to the user after successful completion,” said Col. Kim Ki-Wan, Chief of USFK Construction Planning Branch MND-DIA.

FED and MND-DIA worked together with Shinsaegye Construction Co., Ltd. and the Army-Air Force Exchange Service to complete the project which will provide space to host a number of different types of training.

The theater style seating, large screen and surround-sound system will also enable the facility show movies during off-duty hours.

Col. Kathleen Gavle, Commander of USAG Daegu, encouraged the U.S. Army units stationed at Camp Daegu to take advantage of all the resources that the new facility has to offer.

“You will only be limited by your own creativity,” said Gavle.

The Multipurpose Training Facility is a two-story concrete and steel structure conveniently located within walking distance of other notable quality of life projects by FED which includes the lodge, gym, community activity center, new library, and a new dining facility.

The Multipurpose Training Facility at Camp Carroll opened May 17 after a brief ribbon cutting ceremony. (Photo by Patrick Bray)

See more photos of the Multipurpose Training Facility at www.flickr.com/photos/fedpao/sets
Far East District completes commissary at K-16

By Patrick Bray
FED Public Affairs

K-16 Airfield, which sits right outside of the Seoul city limit, has been in use by U.S. Forces Korea for decades but has always been without a commissary.

Soldiers had to commute to U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan for their commissary needs, but this is no longer the situation. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District, delivered a new commissary to the airfield May 17.

“This will be the Defense Commissary Agency’s 248th store and although it is one of DeCA’s smaller stores, our mission here is just as important,” said Keith C. Hagenbuch, Executive Director for Store Operations Group, Defense Commissary Agency. “Operating commissaries for military service members and their families overseas is a vital part of the DeCA mission.”

The construction of a commissary is on line with U.S. Forces Korea’s command priorities; one of which is to improve quality of life for the USFK community. Funds were made available through the Republic of Korea Funded Construction program to build this $3.5 million facility.

At first, the K-16 community had hoped that an older building could be renovated into a commissary. FED gave them even more than what they hoped for by constructing a new facility from the ground up.

“We realize that what you cherish most about having a commissary at K-16 Airfield may be the convenience of being able to purchase the brands you enjoyed in the U.S. here in Korea,” said Hagenbuch. “That’s why we’ve customized the stock assortment in this store to provide you with the products our research says you want most.”

The facility is about 8,100 square feet and has all of the amenities found in any other commissary throughout Korea including cold and freezer storage, electronic checkout area, parking, sidewalks, and canopy. The Defense Commissary Agency also intends to keep it stocked with the same products that would be available at all of the other commissaries.

FED and Ministry of National Defense host Local Construction Materials Conference

By Patrick Bray
and Yi Yong-Un
FED Public Affairs

The Sixth Local Construction Materials Conference was held at the War Memorial of Korea May 17. The conference was co-hosted by the Korea Ministry of National Defense and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District.

MND wants more local manufacturers to participate in the Yongsan Relocation and Land Partnership Plans. The Local Construction Materials Conference provides a platform to help manufacturers to understand and meet the standards for local materials usage.

“We believe it is in everyone’s best interest to maximize the use of local materials since it reduces procurement time as well as provide cost savings and results in greater ease of repair and maintenance of our facilities,” said Col. Donald E. Degidio, Jr., FED Commander.

When first assessed in 2006, less than half of materials used were manufactured locally. Today, that figure is up to 75 percent. Previous Local Construction Materials Conferences have been helpful in increasing that figure and resulted in the localization of over 80 items including elevators, ceiling tiles, boilers, and electrical panel boards.

Use of local material is also essential in having a building Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified, something that FED strives for in every project. LEED calls for materials to be manufactured no further than 500 miles from the building site.

Manufacturers who improve their products to fit federal standards will not only be able to provide better products for YRP and LPP but will also become more competitive globally with higher standard construction materials.

Attendees listen to speakers at the Local Construction Materials Conference hosted by the Far East District and the Korea Ministry of National Defense May 17. (Photo by Yi Yong-Un)
Col. Degidio receives a Korean name:  
Jeon Taek-Hee

By Patrick Bray
FED Public Affairs

Col. Donald E. Degidio, Jr., Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District, was conferred with a Korean name May 10 during a ceremony at the Korea Ministry of National Defense.

Suh Jin-Sup, Chairman of the ROK-U.S. Alliance Friendship Association, conferred Degidio with the name Jeon Taek-hee. The family name Jeon rhymes with Degidio’s shortened first name, Don. Taek-Hee translates as “Shining House.”

“As we move forward with the Yongsan and Korea Relocations Plans, I give you my personal assurance that all of our projects will be “Shining Houses” that will stand strong just as our great Alliance has stood strong for over 60 years,” said Degidio.

The name is significant as the FED Commander has oversight of the relocation construction at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys which will be the new home for most of U.S. Forces Korea.

“Today, a Korean name is given to Col. Degidio with hopes of his support and contribution to the success of USFK relocation,” said Suh. “I have no doubt that all of the attendees of this ceremony will take the lead on strengthening the Alliance between the Republic of Korea and the U.S.”

Suh then presented Degidio with a scroll with “Jeon Taek-Hee” written in Hanja, traditional Korean characters similar to Chinese.

Col. Donald E. Degidio, Jr., Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District, and Suh Jin-Sup, Chairman of the Republic of Korea-U.S. Alliance Friendship Society hold a scroll with Degidio’s new Korean name May 10. (Photo by Patrick Bray)
Smoke began to billow out from behind building P-1 which sits in the back corner of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Far East District compound in Seoul May 22. Within minutes the fire alarm sounded.

The building is home to architecture and engineering contractors and a few FED branch offices. Employees made their way to the exits and to a rally point across the compound.

Also, in less than 10 minutes the Seoul City Fire Department arrived on the scene and the situation was contained.

This was just a drill but a very successful one in that all FED employees and contractors evacuated swiftly and safely and that the fire department arrived and got to work without delay.

Due to the proximity that the FED compound lies from U.S. Army Garrison Yongsan, there is an agreement between the USAG Yongsan Fire Department and the Seoul City Fire Department for handling emergencies on the FED compound.

The USAG Fire Department used smoke machines to simulate the flames behind the building.
Forest bathing describes breathing fresh, clean air while walking through the woods. People who have taken walks in thick forests often feel refreshed, and this could be attributed to phytoncides, a substance emitted by trees which is beneficial to your body. About 50 years ago, Dr. Boris P. Tokin, a Russian chemist from St. Petersburg, discovered that plants give off phytoncides which fight off bacteria. Although deadly to microorganisms, it is helpful to the human body. Forest bathing is becoming very popular in Europe, because it is believed to cure colds at its earlier stages and helps overcome tiredness. For better benefits, forest bathing is best in early summer to late fall. During this period, its healing effect is five to ten times more than other periods. The plants also give off most of their phytoncides during these months.

This is also an enjoyable treatment. People can breathe the crisp air as well as enjoy the beautiful view while they walk through a low or high altitude forest. This is known as climatotherapy. This is an enjoyable treatment called Green Shower in Japan and Taiwan. In the 1980s it was introduced to Korea as Forest Aromatic Bath, which has become a trend since then.
Dawn Harrison  
Construction Division

**My Plan**

I help the Corps Build Strong in Korea by...

- Working towards continuous training and professional certifications to increase my technical competence
- Completing my Individual Development Plan (IDP) on time so my chain of command can budget training for the next fiscal year
- Delivering high-quality construction projects that complete on time and within budget
- Participating in the Drilling Individual Augmentee Program

**My Face**

I am a key person in the Corps by...

- Loving the Lord with all my heart
- Traveling to see the world and experience other cultures
- Staying in touch with family and friends back home
- Making new friends from all over the world

Yi Chang-Hun  
Construction Division

**My Plan**

I help the Corps Build Strong in Korea by...

- Fulfilling the job requirements of my QAR position
- Developing engineering knowledge and skills through training
- Accumulating technical experience and professional skills
- Maintaining open communication with others

**My Face**

I am a key person in the Corps by...

- Traveling to foreign countries with my family
- Loving my wife, Hee-Kyung, and our only son, Seung-Jun, 11 years old
- Watching baseball games (Big fan of Lotte Giants)
Construction Division: where “Building Strong in Korea” comes to life

Continued from page 4

must be addressed. Not only do such projects need to meet U.S. standards and expectations, they must also accomplish this within the framework of U.S. and Republic of Korea agreements, ROK funding constraints, and ROK practices.

Regardless of a project’s funding source, work is fast-paced and intense. Every issue that comes up has a direct impact on contractors, with delays and/or rework having the potential to cost millions of dollars and lengthen schedules, thereby also affecting many people outside of FED. However, a resident office can also be a very rewarding place to work; because it is possible to see the collaboration of everybody’s carefully laid plans become a reality every time you step out the front door.

QUALITY ASSURANCE BRANCH (QAB)
The Quality Assurance Branch is located at FED headquarters in Seoul. Its inspection activities focus on workmanship, materials, and conformance to construction documents—similar to the quality assurance activities performed by the resident offices, but with some significant differences. Because resident offices are staffed for local short-term needs (even though that can last for years), it is not feasible to have all of the technical expertise required on-site fulltime. Even in the case of the Humphreys Area Office where the workload over the next several years has justified the establishment of a local QAB, the QAB in Seoul can complement a resident office as needed because its staff has a wide range and depth of technical knowledge and experience on projects of all types throughout Korea for decades. This makes them experts on many technical matters, and has earned them the reputation of being trusted “go-to” advisers to all of the resident offices, other FED Divisions, contractors, and architecture/engineering consultants. In this way, the QAB also complements resident offices by focusing on technical issues related to construction, while resident offices focus on project coordination and contract administration.

With increasingly rigorous standards for environmentally sustainable projects through USACE, QAB has also become a center of knowledge in Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) as it pertains to those aspects carried out during construction. In addition, it often performs many aspects of the building commissioning process, whether it is part of LEED, or is simply part of facility start-up.

QAB is also responsible for periodic reviews of the work of the resident offices, including checking for conformance to prescribed quality assurance standards and documentation.

CONSTRUCTION SERVICES BRANCH (CSB)
Like QAB, Construction Services Branch is located at FED headquarters in Seoul. Its major role is to perform various construction contract administration activities and, like QAB, the depth of experience at CSB complements the resident offices.

CSB’s activities include preparing contract modifications and evaluating bid proposals for U.S.-funded projects. It performs the close collaboration required with the Program and Project Management Divisions, Contracting Division, Office of Counsel, Engineering Division, and provides reach-back support to resident and project offices throughout Korea. Its other role is to perform budget/accounting and administrative activities for the entire Construction Division on behalf of its Director. Also, CSB supports the Contracting Division in various contract acquisition activities. Currently, the CSB is staffed by ten highly experienced team members.

Working together, the Construction Division’s components do their part to assure that the facilities built (and repaired) in Korea allow the Department of Defense to fulfill its overall missions in Korea.

The staff of the Family Housing Resident Office, one of seven resident offices in the Far East District's Construction Division, stand in front of their great project: the Family Housing Towers at U.S. Army Garrison Humphreys. (FED File Photo)
사령관 코너

최고의 극동 공병단 팀과 모든 팀들에게,

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매일 애쓰시는 여러분께 감사드립니다!

우리의 최고의 동맹에게 - 같이 갑시다!
우리의 최고의 공병단에게 – 에세이온!
한반도에 강한 건설을 수행하는 하나의 팀!
Take 5
for Barbecue and Food Safety

- Never leave a hot grill unattended.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and first aid kit handy.
- Wash your hands, utensils and preparation surfaces often.
- Keep raw foods separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- Cook food to the recommended temperature.
- Refrigerate or freeze leftover food promptly.

Take 5 ... then take action.