

# DDKS provides critical humanitarian aid to Tajikistan

By, *Crimson Jessup, DDKS Chief of Operations*

When many think of the Defense Distribution Center and its 25 distribution depots, the immediate thought is support to the Warfighter, which is its main objective and number one mission. However, an equally critical DDC contribution is its role in assisting with humanitarian aid. Over the past 18 months the Defense Distribution Depot Kuwait, Southwest Asia, has worked in conjunction with Central Command to provide humanitarian assistance throughout the Middle East region.

“DDKS stocks several key items identified as crucial for survivors of natural disasters. Upon CENTCOMs directive to release the materials, DDKS prepares cargo for shipment and works in coordination with CENTCOM and the Transportation Command to maneuver materials to the impacted areas,” said DDKS deputy commander Jerry Brown.

Such a mission arose in the area of Tajikistan, which suffered major flooding May 7 and was declared

a natural disaster area on May 12. On May 14, DDKS was placed on stand-by and was told to anticipate an urgent request for materials stocked at the distribution center. As anticipated, the requisition dropped the following day for 92 tents. The mission had a suspense of only eight hours due to TRANSCOM’s already scheduled C-17 and its flight plan. With a short lead time and several obstacles to overcome, DDKS rose to the mission, and with their always present can-do vigor picked, packed, and prepared for shipment a total 16 air pallets for the air lift.

Due to the urgency which often accompanies a natural disaster, many of the common practices associated with the distribution functions were not practical and the DDKS team raced the clock with the flight window quickly approaching and several distribution/transportation requirements still unknown. Due to the lack of the physical Materiel Release Orders and the lack of the actual shipping location within a Department of Defense transportation system, multi-agency coordination was critical. Thinking out of the

box, coordination between DLA, DLA Support Team-Kuwait, DDC, DDKS, TRANSCOM, and CENTCOM was initiated to circumvent a mission shortfall and curtail several requirements until after mission completion. DDKS and DST-K were able to make contact with DLA-HQ, DDC, TRANSCOM, and CENTCOM to provide workarounds which allowed material release and movement.

The materiel departed DDKS and met the C-17 in ample time for departure. The tents arrived early the next morning in Tajikistan to be forwarded and disbursed to those who had suffered the disaster and were in need of shelter. Another mission successfully tackled by DDKS and its dedicated staff.



**Floods and mud flows have displaced over 15,000 people in Tajikistan.**



find us on **facebook**  
at [www.facebook.com/dla.mil](http://www.facebook.com/dla.mil)