



Good afternoon, Chairman McCaskill, Senator Bennett, members of the subcommittee.

My name is Bill Van Dyke and I am President of the Federal Services Division of Black & Veatch and Secretary of the Louis Berger Group/Black & Veatch Joint Venture. I would like to thank the committee for this opportunity to discuss my company's efforts in support of USAID's mission in Afghanistan.

Black & Veatch has worked on projects in support of the U.S. Government for more than 60 years. Our partner role in the Louis Berger Group/Black & Veatch Joint Venture is to assist our client USAID in developing needed energy infrastructure that helps improve the economy and quality of life for the people of Afghanistan. Black & Veatch's work for USAID has resulted in the successful delivery of electricity to more than 500,000 people in the country.

As we examine the challenges of working in Afghanistan, it is important to view our work in the broader context of the overall USAID energy-related mission and initiatives underway to deliver energy to Afghanistan's people. These include imported power and locally generated thermal power to supplement hydro power sources in country, as well as transmission and distribution systems, and building of Afghan capacity to sustain these energy sources.

Our work on the construction of the Tarakhil Power Plant northeast of Kabul has resulted in the plant's full 105-megawatts of capacity being available to deliver electricity to the Kabul region. The plant is now delivering reliable power needed to serve schools, hospitals, homes and businesses. Tarakhil also will directly create 100 full-time, permanent jobs for employees of the national Afghan utility.

Our efforts at the Tarakhil Plant are now focused on two objectives: training Afghan staff to operate and maintain the plant, and completing support facilities.

On the imported power front, Black & Veatch, as part of the joint venture, provided advice to the Afghan government in the successful negotiation of a power import agreement with Uzbekistan that now provides energy to the country.

To deliver energy from this agreement, Black & Veatch engineers determined how to transmit this purchased power from Uzbekistan to Kabul through a complex set of substations and transmission lines provided by various donors through the years. None of these substations or transmission lines had ever been successfully used previously.

The utility operator implemented the Black & Veatch solution, and successfully delivered 40 megawatts of power in January 2009 over the mountains, just 35 days after the Afghan Government requested USAID help. This was successfully increased to 70 megawatts this past May.

In addition, Black & Veatch supports power generation at six sites in southern Afghanistan delivering 26 megawatts in the Kandahar area. Black & Veatch has trained Afghans not just to operate, but to overhaul these engines that formerly were shipped out for overhaul — a success in capacity building.

Black & Veatch has provided support to the Interministerial Commission on Energy and has turned over the Afghan Energy Information Center to Afghan Ministry management, both recognized as assets to Afghanistan by the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction.

Black & Veatch and our people have worked hard with USAID to address a number of challenges, including safety and security, customs issues, and finding highly specialized contractors willing to work in Afghanistan. In the past, the limited number of in-country USAID personnel available for a large and complex mission and the short length of assignments have been challenging for USAID, but the agency has positive initiatives underway to address these.

In closing, Black & Veatch is fully committed to delivering high-quality and sustainable projects for USAID that will benefit the people of Afghanistan for many years to come.

Thank you and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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