

Greetings Task Force Lighthorse families and friends from Forward Operating Base (FOB) Fenty, Jalalabad, Afghanistan.

As we start to settle into a daily rhythm here in Afghanistan, I wanted to take this opportunity to tell the families and friends back home how we are doing. First, I want to thank all the families and



friends that showed up to see our Task Force depart Hunter Army Airfield. Having personally waved goodbye to my wife and three boys, I can tell you that saying goodbye is always a difficult and emotional event. However, much like your daily support of your Soldier, your presence at that event was a true testament of the love and support you all have shown during my tenure as the Commander of Task Force Lighthorse. Secondly, I want to tell you that Task Force Palehorse, the unit we are currently replacing on the 7th of

December, has done a fantastic job in passing on a wealth of knowledge and has coached, mentored, and assisted us in the transition to take over this challenging mission. Although they are ready to leave after a long tough year, they have taken good care of us and have gone the extra mile to make us successful.

Every day I am impressed with the enthusiasm and commitment that Lighthorse Troopers show in doing their job and anything extra required for us to accomplish our mission. We have quickly begun flying missions and have already made significant contributions to the overall effort here in Afghanistan. Our first days here were busy with Soldiers learning from their Palehorse counterpart, inventorying equipment, going to outlying FOBs to man Forward Arming and Refueling Points, and flying missions in support of the ground maneuver units we support here in Regional Command-East. Just about everyone has settled in to their final sleeping areas and have integrated themselves into the high tempo of our 24 hour a day battle rhythm. I have been out on a few missions and can honestly tell you that Afghanistan is still a dangerous place but, we as part of the NATO mission here, are truly making a difference in the lives of many Afghans.



The Thanksgiving Day meal was wonderful as the Dining Facility served everything that a Thanksgiving Day feast back home has plus shrimp, lobster, and every desert you could imagine. We all had to run some extra PT the next day to work off the extra calories. As the Christmas Holiday season is just around the corner, time spent away from families becomes much more difficult. So I ask that you keep in touch with your Soldier as email and phone calls are much easier than previous deployments. I firmly believe that your support and contact with them during our stay here is a key factor in our ability to accomplish our mission. I am working with the Rear Detachment in establishing a time over the Holidays to conduct Video Teleconferencing with families in the rear. Please keep in touch with your unit Family Readiness Group representatives as the coordination of timelines will be sent through them. This will be a great opportunity for you to see your Soldier and for the Soldiers to see their families during the holiday season.

Each day I am reminded in some way how humbling it is to command such a great organization. Every day I see Soldiers at work, serving their Nation and each other in a truly professional manner in everything they do. No matter how hard the task or how difficult the conditions, they do it right and do it well. I want you let you know that you should be proud of your service, because you too are American heroes and are an indirect part of how America represents itself to the people of Afghanistan.

“Out Front”
LTC Tom von Eschenbach
Commander, TF Lighthouse

