

# Postcards from Iraq

## Developing A Great Sense of Self-Worth...

I am deployed to the Gulf Region Division in Baghdad, Iraq and I am assigned to the Resource Management office. I decided to extend my deployment in Iraq because I feel the mission in Directorate of Resource Management is critical to the successful completion of the USACE mission in Iraq and I feel that I am contributing to that cause.

There are challenges here in Iraq. I work in a war zone with small arms fire, improvised explosive devices, mortars, rockets, vehicle borne improvised explosive devices or car bombs, exploding, and very restricted movements. Also, I work with a lot of people who are not familiar with Corps of Engineers procedures and business models.

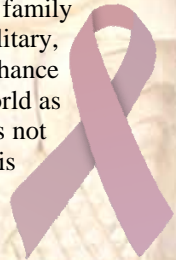
This can make for a very challenging work environment for those that have a good work ethics and stick-to-it attitudes carry the workload for them. The constant rotation of staff, civilian, and military is challenging. Most people rotate at about four or six months, a few stay longer nine months or a year. You get to know how someone works and what level of work they do and then it is time for a rotation.

But the job satisfaction outweighs the challenges. The most satisfying part of my deployed job is working with our Iraqi Associates and helping them to gain a better understanding of how to help their country. Also, knowing that I have helped in a small way in the rebuilding of a country is great, too. I did

help with clearing one of the sidewalks here in the International Zone and some of the locals also came out to help. I think that this kind of support from us helps them have a better appreciation for their own neighborhoods.

I would recommend a deployment for all employees. When we are deployed, not only do we get to know other USACE family members, we also get to know our Iraqi Associates, Military, and Contractor friends that we would not have had a chance to meet. We also gain a better understanding of the world as a whole. Yes, there is an element of danger here that is not at home, but I have gained a great respect for the Iraqis that work for us. They put their lives and the lives of their families on the line to come work for us. They have to make that hard choice every day.

Working with a very diverse group of people has given me a better understanding of myself and my capabilities. I have gained a greater sense of self worth and confidence.



Linda Tompkins wears her individual body armor and inputs data into a computer in the Resource Management Office during a heightened period of security in the compound. Linda and her co-workers sit together in their office area during duty hours and never stray far from their protective gear.



*Linda Tompkins*  
*Gulf Region Division*  
*Baghdad, Iraq*



Members of the DRM pose for a photo to celebrate the hard work that helped eliminate the aged list of payables which was causing us to pay interest to contractors and vendors.