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## Iraq experience of a lifetime

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**BASRAH, Iraq** –“I feel proud that I was given the opportunity to come to Iraq and help with the reconstruction of this country,” said Master Sgt. Martin Kueffler, whose job includes direct coordination of everything done by the Basrah Area Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

As Noncommissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC) of Operations, Kueffler’s daily activities with the Basrah Area Office involve coordinating movements of USACE engineers to project sites as well as bringing Iraqi Associates in for meetings with USACE engineers.

“The experience that I got here in Iraq has provided me with the knowledge of how different cultures live and the struggles they have in everyday life compared to my life in the States,” he said. “I have also been able to see first-hand the difficulties that the Iraqi people have had to endure for many years.”

Kueffler, who has been as a Soldier for more than 18 years, was training Soldiers to be engineers in combat and perform vertical and horizontal construction tasks prior to joining USACE in Iraq. “The reconstruction efforts in the Basrah province are extensive and very much needed by the people ... [for] basic needs and from a security standpoint,” he said.

Kueffler, whose aim is to make a difference to this war-torn country, said, “My mission here in southern Iraq is one for the people of Iraq, to help bring them and their children, as well as all generations after them, a better way of life and happiness.

“My sacrifice away from family during the one year tour in Iraq is well worth it because I believe we are doing a great job here in Iraq for the people of Iraq,” said Kueffler, who is married and has two children at home in North Dakota.

“There are over 60 construction projects being overseen by our Basrah Area Office alone,” he said. “All of these projects will directly benefit the people of Iraq. It’s a good feeling I have knowing I was a part of supplying basic needs like water, electricity and education to the people of Iraq.”



Master Sgt. Martin Kueffler at his workspace in the Basrah Area Office. (USACE photo by A. Al Bahrani)

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