



Highlights of [GAO-07-1195](#), a report to Congressional Committees

Why GAO Did This Study

Public Law 110-28 requires GAO to report to Congress by September 1, 2007, on whether or not the government of Iraq has met 18 benchmarks contained in the Act, and the status of the achievement of these benchmarks. The benchmarks stem from commitments first articulated by the Iraqi government in June 2006.

In comparison, the Act requires the administration to report in July and September 2007 on whether satisfactory progress is being made toward meeting the benchmarks, not whether the benchmarks have been met.

To complete our work, we reviewed government documents and interviewed officials from U.S. agencies; the UN; and the government of Iraq. We also made multiple visits to Iraq during 2006 and 2007. Our analyses were enhanced by approximately 100 Iraq-related audits we have completed since May 2003.

What GAO Recommends

In future reports to Congress on the benchmarks, we recommend that the Secretaries of State and Defense: (1) specify clearly what step in the Iraqi legislative process each draft law has reached; (2) identify trends in sectarian violence together with broader measures of population security; and (3) better identify the operational readiness of Iraqi security forces.

State and DOD concurred with our recommendations but disagreed with our assessment of certain benchmarks.

To view the full product, including the scope and methodology, click on [GAO-07-1195](#). For more information, contact Joseph A. Christoff at (202) 512-8979 or christoffj@gao.gov.

SECURING, STABILIZING, AND REBUILDING IRAQ

Iraqi Government Has Not Met Most Legislative, Security, and Economic Benchmarks

What GAO Found

The January 2007 U.S. strategy seeks to provide the Iraqi government with the time and space needed to help Iraqi society reconcile. Our analysis of the 18 legislative, security and economic benchmarks shows that as of August 30, 2007, the Iraqi government met 3, partially met 4, and did not meet 11 of its 18 benchmarks. (See next page). Overall, key legislation has not been passed, violence remains high, and it is unclear whether the Iraqi government will spend \$10 billion in reconstruction funds. These results do not diminish the courageous efforts of coalition forces.

The Iraqi government has met one of eight legislative benchmarks: the rights of minority political parties in Iraq's legislature are protected. The government also partially met one other benchmark to enact and implement legislation on the formation of regions; this law was enacted in October 2006 but will not be implemented until April 2008. Six other legislative benchmarks have not been met. Specifically, a review committee has not completed work on important revisions to Iraq's constitution. Further, the government has not enacted legislation on de-Ba'athification, oil revenue sharing, provincial elections, amnesty, or militia disarmament. The Administration's July 2007 report cited progress in achieving some of these benchmarks but provided little information on what step in the legislative process each benchmark had reached.

Two of nine security benchmarks have been met. Specifically, Iraq's government has established various committees in support of the Baghdad security plan and established almost all of the planned Joint Security Stations in Baghdad. The government has partially met the benchmarks of providing three trained and ready brigades for Baghdad operations and eliminating safe havens for outlawed groups. Five other benchmarks have not been met. The government has not eliminated militia control of local security, eliminated political intervention in military operations, ensured even-handed enforcement of the law, increased army units capable of independent operations, or ensured that political authorities made no false accusations against security forces. It is unclear whether sectarian violence in Iraq has decreased—a key security benchmark—since it is difficult to measure the perpetrator's intent and other measures of population security show differing trends.

Finally, the Iraqi government has partially met the economic benchmark of allocating and spending \$10 billion on reconstruction. Preliminary data indicates that about \$1.5 billion of central ministry funds had been spent, as of July 15, 2007. As the Congress considers the way forward in Iraq, it must balance the achievement of the 18 Iraqi benchmarks with the military progress, homeland security, foreign policy, and other goals of the United States. Future administration reporting to assist the Congress would be enhanced with adoption of the recommendations we make in this report.

Benchmark	GAO assessment	Status
1. Forming a Constitutional Review Committee and completing the constitutional review.	<input type="radio"/>	Committee formed but amendments not approved by the Iraqi legislature and no referendum scheduled.
2. Enacting and implementing legislation on de-Ba'athification.	<input type="radio"/>	Laws drafted.
3. Enacting and implementing legislation to ensure the equitable distribution of hydrocarbon resources of the people of Iraq without regard to the sect or ethnicity of recipients, and enacting and implementing legislation to ensure that the energy resources of Iraq benefit Sunni Arabs, Shia Arabs, Kurds, and other Iraqi citizens in an equitable manner.	<input type="radio"/>	3 of 4 components drafted; none being considered by parliament.
4. Enacting and implementing legislation on procedures to form semi-autonomous regions.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Law enacted; implementation scheduled for 2008.
5. Enacting and implementing legislation establishing an Independent High Electoral Commission, provincial elections law, provincial council authorities, and a date for provincial elections.	<input type="radio"/>	Commission law enacted and implemented; however, supporting laws not enacted.
6. Enacting and implementing legislation addressing amnesty.	<input type="radio"/>	No law drafted.
7. Enacting and implementing legislation establishing a strong militia disarmament program to ensure that such security forces are accountable only to the central government and loyal to the Constitution of Iraq.	<input type="radio"/>	No law drafted.
8. Establishing supporting political, media, economic, and services committees in support of the Baghdad security plan.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Committees established.
9. Providing three trained and ready brigades to support Baghdad operations.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Forces provided; some of limited effectiveness.
10. Providing Iraqi commanders with all authorities to execute this plan and to make tactical and operational decisions, in consultation with U.S. commanders, without political intervention, to include the authority to pursue all extremists, including Sunni insurgents and Shiite militias.	<input type="radio"/>	Political intervention continues.
11. Ensuring that Iraqi security forces are providing even-handed enforcement of the law.	<input type="radio"/>	Iraqi security forces engaged in sectarian-based abuses.
12. Ensuring that, according to President Bush, Prime Minister Maliki said "the Baghdad security plan will not provide a safe haven for any outlaws, regardless of [their] sectarian or political affiliation."	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Militia infiltration of some security forces enables some safe havens.
13. Reducing the level of sectarian violence in Iraq and eliminating militia control of local security.	<input type="radio"/>	Militias control some local security; unclear whether sectarian violence has decreased.
14. Establishing all of the planned joint security stations in neighborhoods across Baghdad.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	32 of 34 stations established.
15. Increasing the number of Iraqi security forces units capable of operating independently.	<input type="radio"/>	Number of independent units declined between March and July 2007.
16. Ensuring that the rights of minority political parties in the Iraqi legislature are protected.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Legislators' rights protected; minority citizens' rights unprotected.
17. Allocating and spending \$10 billion in Iraqi revenues for reconstruction projects, including delivery of essential services, on an equitable basis.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Funds allocated but unlikely to be fully spent.
18. Ensuring that Iraq's political authorities are not undermining or making false accusations against members of the Iraqi security forces.	<input type="radio"/>	Unsubstantiated accusations continue to be made.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Met	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Partially met	<input type="radio"/> Not met

Source: GAO analysis of UN, U.S., and Iraqi data.