



For Immediate Release  
 September 25, 2008  
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## Ongoing Projects Increase security in Ninewa Province

By LuAnne Fantasia  
 Gulf Region North District

"A project of this magnitude in the middle of Mosul is unique," said Mike Miller, construction representative in the Mosul Resident Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division.

The Baghdad Police College (North) will house 1,000 Iraqi police cadets and 100 cadres when occupied, and increase training capability of Iraqi Police forces in and around the city of Mosul and Ninewa Province.

"It's a massive project but we see progress every week," Miller said. "As well as being safety-conscious, this contractor does quality work that is immediately obvious."

The scope of work includes construction of both a parade and soccer field; cadet and cadre barracks; a dining facility; classrooms; laundry and shower/latrine facilities; a multipurpose facility; offices and an armory. Approximately 275 workers are employed at the site daily; up to 350 when pouring form work. The project is due to complete next month.

"This contractor is a cut above expectations," said Mike Fellenz, project engineer in the MRO. "No long delays...he stays on track...exceptional quality work...much of the management and work force stays in the man camp on site, so they don't have the usual security problems. And, until



Mike Miller (left) talks with his Iraqi contractor at the job site of the Baghdad Police Academy (North) in Mosul. Miller said although the project is massive, the contractor makes progress every week; he is safety-conscious; and his quality work is immediately obvious. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

they placed two wells on the site, the contractor bought water for placing and curing concrete from the local community, so these guys co-exist with the local communities."

Fellenz thinks it's possible that an

American presence in this Iraqi company's leadership is especially value-added. "His program manager is an American who most likely has mentored and taught them smart business processes...and that's good, because part of our mission here is capacity development; to train engineers. This contractor has learned to be selective about the projects he bids on and his contract submittals are not repeatedly returned."

The \$17.9 million for the project comes through Iraq Security Forces Funds and is a star project of the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq, according to Fellenz.

"A fair estimate would be about 200 - 250 daily employees when this training facility is occupied," he added.

### **Quality assurance is not quality control**

The Ninewa Operations Command on Forward Operating Base Diamondback is the base operations, headquarters, and the tactical operations nerve center for all Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces joint operations in the Ninewa Province. Phase I was officially turned over in August, and included refurbishing the headquarters building, a small barracks, and the tactical operations center; all of which are fully operational. When Phase II is finished in mid-November, General Riyadh and his command and staff will have a new kitchen and dining areas, as well as an additional barracks for enlisted Soldiers.

But the project has been and continues to be a quality control challenge, according to MRO's Project Engineer Alda Ottley.

"The Iraqis still have a hard time understanding the necessity of quality control; that it's not the same as quality assurance, which is what the Corps does. The contractor has to verify that the project is being done according to contract specs, not me," Ottley said. "I just check



Phase I of the Ninewa Operation Center was officially turned over in August, and included refurbishing the headquarters building, a small barracks, and the tactical operations center, all of which are fully operational today. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

that they are doing their quality control."

She explained that the quality control, or QC, engineer needs a wide range of experience; someone who can identify problems with electricity, masonry and plumbing. "He might be a civil engineer with significant field construction experience, but he can't just be the contractor's cousin."

Ottley's home district with the Corps is St. Paul, Minn., and she has been deployed with the Gulf Region Division in Iraq since 2005. In the Mosul Resident Office since 2006, she has managed and completed 31 reconstruction projects.

The QC engineer must be able to report job deficiencies directly to the contractor project manager and the Corps of Engineers, she explained, without fear of retribution or losing his job. On this particular

project, the Mosul Resident Engineer was forced to mandate the contractor to hire a new QC, as the current one was not providing the required inspections and documentation according to the QC plan.

Ottley asked the new QC, "Are you sure you want this job because I need the work done right the first time. I don't want to tear anything out and start over...but I will."

She feels it's late in the game to still be mentoring Iraqi contractors but it is still a critical part of why we are here and needs to be done. "Very few see the mistakes right away and correct them on the spot. When they start doing that, along with planning via three-phase inspections to avoid potential mistakes, that is construction quality control and I'll be very proud of them when they get to that point."



Electrical conduits are installed and Iraqi workers are ready to place the concrete roof on the new enlisted Soldiers' barracks of the Ninewa Operations Center. When Phase II is finished in mid-November, General Riyadh and his command and staff will have a new kitchen and dining areas, as well. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

### Training the trainer

Thirty minutes south of the city, the Mosul Resident Office manages reconstruction of the Iraqi Army's Hamman Al Alil Division Training Center.

The existing campus was once an Agriculture College known throughout Iraq for its cross-bred development of a special tomato, according to Maj. David Eshenour. "The Ag College moved into Mosul around 2003 and the name 'Hamman' means 'healing of the water', due to a natural hot springs very close to here. This area was once a vacation spot for the Iraqi people."



Master Sgt. Aneal Jones is NCOIC for Coalition Forces at the Hamman Al Alil Division Training Center, where the Mosul Resident Office is developing target ranges, shoot houses and an obstacle course for Iraqi Army Soldiers' basic combat training. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

Here for his second tour in Iraq, Eshenour works directly for the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq, as both senior advisor to his Iraqi counterpart on site, and as commander of the Coalition Army Advisory Transition Team; a team that includes five retired American military (contractors) and five Coalition Forces Soldiers (active duty), all of whom train Iraqi sergeants to become noncommissioned officers who in turn, train their





The Hamman Al Alil training center project includes a 100-meter target range, as well as a 50-meter foxhole range. [USACE Photo by LuAnne Fantasia]

subordinates.

"The team monitors the Iraqi NCOs as they instruct younger Iraqi Soldiers in basic combat training, NCO courses and military occupational courses," Eshenour said.

Courses include basic combat; squad leader, platoon sergeant and corporal courses; administration; maintenance; armor; supply; basic medic course and basic medic refresher course.

The \$17.9 million reconstruction project includes two firing ranges; an obstacle course; and a shoot house to practice clearing buildings. The project is due to complete by the end of October 2008.

Staff Sgt. Mario Pitts' military occupational specialty is a 68W which is a health-care specialist. The combat medic from Jacksonville, Fla., is one of two medical sergeants on Eshenour's team.

"We have from 200 to 1,500 Iraqi Army Soldiers training here at any given time, depending on the [2nd Iraqi Army Division's] current budget," Pitts said. "The other medic and I observe and mentor the Iraqi medics' training, but we don't intervene unless life, limb or eyesight is threatened...or unless we just see them heading down the wrong road."

Pitts said another duty is inspecting the Iraqi kitchen and dining facility daily. "They used to throw everything down on the floor, including boxes of frozen chicken, but they've stopped doing that. We use American standards and try to hold the Iraqis to those standards. In the three short months I've been here, I see significant improvement."

Eshenour is cautiously optimistic. "The 2nd Division is taking great steps forward...and my Iraqi counterpart here has an open mind; willing to take on a challenge. But, a lot of what happens here happens only because we're here," he said. "I'm not sure they'll continue when we're gone."

"In the meantime, I know we have produced some very good Soldiers."

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