

ESSAYONS *Forward*

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Gulf Region Division (Provisional), Iraq - Volume 4, Issue 4

April 2007



**New Sewer System
Takes Shape in
Fallujah**



April 2007
Volume 4, Issue 4



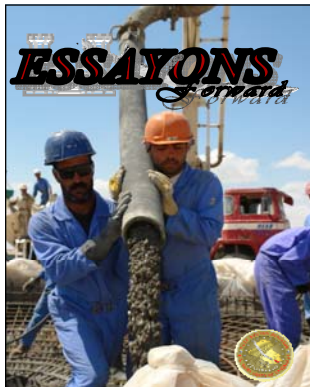
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USACE photo by B.J. Weiner

A group of Shi'ia Muslims, known as the Marsh Arabs, make their living off of the land by fishing and hunting. The marshlands extend through Dhi Qar, Muthanna, Basrah and Maysan in Southern Iraq.



USACE photo by Travis Edwards

(Cover) Workers at the Fallujah Waste Water Treatment Plant project place concrete to create a clarifier tank.

ESSAYONS FORWARD
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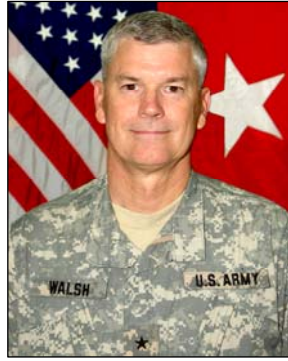
KEEP IT LOCKED ON...

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Baghdad	107.7 FM	Taji	107.3 FM
Balad	107.3 FM	Tal Afar	107.3 FM
Fallujah	105.1 FM	Taqquadum	107.3 FM
Kirkuk	107.3 FM	Tikrit	100.1 FM

Freedom Radio

Commander's Two Bits

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division provides quality, sustainable, responsive, full spectrum engineering and logistical services in support of civil and military construction in Iraq. We are committed to assisting the Iraq Government to assume full responsibility for national infrastructure. This is our mission and everything we do should directly or indirectly support it.



Quality assurance is both a tool of the trade and a symbol of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It is a reputation that precedes us wherever we go – and it must be delivered.

Notice that quality is the first provision of our mission statement. It is our ability to provide quality assurance to the rebuilding of Iraq that makes us such competent managers of the \$13 billion being spent on reconstruction by the United States. The Congress and the American people expect their tax dollars to be responsibly spent for long lasting quality projects that directly affect the people of Iraq in a positive manner. Notice that quality and long lasting go together.

- Quality work ensures the project will be capable of being used as intended.
- Quality construction and methods promote safety in the workplace.
- Quality work impacts the aesthetics of a building.
- Quality work saves costs over time.

We, the Gulf Region Division, and the Iraqi Associates working with us are examples to the Iraqi people when they look at how to properly implement quality assurance programs.

The Iraqi people will weigh the value of the different manners in which the outside world does business in their country and together decide on how they will conduct their own. We can only offer examples which they may or may not follow.

Recently, I spoke with an Iraqi engineer in Babil working closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South resident office who explained a phenomenon of quality assurance and quality control spreading among the contractors who do business with the GRS.

“With the Corps castle comes the understanding of quality,” he said referring to our symbolic castle logo.

They understand the three phases of control used by quality assurance and quality control professionals – the preparatory, initial, and final phases. Quality assurance is also closely related to trust. Without good quality there is little trust in one’s final product.

Tough hands-on quality assurance is more than just another tool – it’s our reputation!

ESSAYONS!

Brig. Gen. Michael J. Walsh
Gulf Region Division
Commander

Cmd. Sgt. Major's Message



This month was a month of transition as we found ourselves saying farewell to some of our seasoned veterans who were preparing for their long journey home after their year long deployment serving in this command.

Our many thanks go out to all the Soldiers of the 412th Engineer Command, U.S. Army Reserve, Vicksburg, Mississippi and the 40th Engineer Brigade, Miss. Army National Guard, Sacramento, Cali. for their honorable, selfless and dedicated service in answering the “Call to Duty” to serve the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Multi National Force–Iraq.

These two organizations represented our great Nation while assisting the People of Iraq with their historic reconstruction effort. Our words can not even begin to actually describe our appreciation for their untiring efforts and the extreme personal sacrifices made by all who serve and have served in Iraq.

Let not one of us ever forget that every person serving here in harm’s way has a Family. Our gratitude and personal heartfelt thanks go out to the veterans and their Families for enduring the many months of separation. We often call the Army a big family, but rather today, I am referring to the families whether immediate (spouse and children), extended (mother, father, brother, sister, aunt & uncle) or their community (neighbors, civic, religious and social organizations) they have all equally sacrificed at what must have seemed like an eternity. Thanks are due to everyone for their continued thoughts, prayers and loyal support to these fine Soldiers and all of us.

As we have all learned in this environment the yesterdays are forgotten very quickly for we can not afford to dwell on the past but rather look forward to the future. So our new day starts with the rise of the morning sun.

As we start our new day our routine and battle rhythm is sound, our roster is now filled, and we welcome our newest team members from the 416th Engineer Command, U.S. Army Reserves, Darien, Illinois and the 34th Engineer Brigade, North Dakota Army National Guard, Bismarck, North Dakota, to the Gulf Region Division as we continue our mission in the Iraq Reconstruction effort.

The duty is tough, our business is demanding and we have new members on the team who are in great health, physically fit and mentally tough who are prepared for the “Call to Duty.” We have reinforced the policies, conducted the necessary training and are absolutely ready to continue on in the reconstruction mission.

The American people understand in the game of life those who step onto the field of battle and challenge themselves to even greater heights and performance will always be winners. We know our efforts are significant and we all feel a sense of pride in our volunteerism to this effort and our patriotism we display everyday.

Proud to Serve.....ESSAYONS!

THE DUST DON'T SETTLE HERE

Command Sgt. Maj. Bill McDaniel
Gulf Region Division

One Ring to Unite Them All...

by **Command Sgt. Maj. Bill McDaniel**
Gulf Region Division

During the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division Senior Leaders and Engineering conference held at Al Faw palace near Baghdad, Iraq, a special ceremony was conducted to keep one tradition alive and start a new one.

This ceremony was held in remembrance of the long heritage of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers serving in combat and specifically of one former Soldier who served during World War II.

Sergeant Robert Thomas Dutton was deployed to the western Pacific in New Guinea with the 499th Engineer Company. While serving there he made a Corps of Engineers ring. The ring displayed the Corps name and symbolic "castle." After redeploying from the war he drilled with the Army Reserves and was once again called to active duty. This time during the Berlin Airlift, and again he took the ring with him. He returned home

safely and eventually retired as a master sergeant.

In 1989 Dutton passed away and his wife put his personal belongings in the attic. After her death a decade later the Dutton's daughters found the box of their father's personal things from his Army days. One of the mementoes they found was this Corps of Engineers ring.

Dutton's daughter, Dixie Dutton Emerson, along with her own daughter and her close friend Rev. Beth Causey, a chaplain at the Memphis Veterans Administration Hospital, contacted the Gulf Region Division in hope of returning the ring to the Corps of Engineers.

More precisely they were looking for a Soldier, preferably a sergeant, who would wear the ring in combat and then pass it on from one noncommissioned officer to the next.

Upon hearing this I discussed the ring and its history with the Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, commanding general of the Gulf Region Division, one day in his office.

The commander told me about when he was serving as the Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He explained that, then Lt. Gen. Robert Flowers, the 50th Chief of Engineers, spoke of a ring that was passed on from the serving Chief of Engineers to the Chief's successor. He also noted it was passed on to Lt.

Gen. Carl Strock, the 51st Chief of Engineers, at a change of command ceremony three years ago. With this tradition in mind, Brig. Gen. Walsh

decided that he would present the World War II Corps of Engineer's ring to me during the ceremony. He felt that, since I was the senior most engineer noncommissioned officer serving in Iraq, I should wear the ring and then pass it on to another – just as the Dutton family had requested.

The commander knew I was returning home to my Family at the end of my combat tour in June and that I was taking my wife and youngest daughter to attend a friend's Change of Command and Retirement Ceremony in Memphis, Tenn.

It will be there in Memphis that the Corps of Engineers will be able to publicly thank the Dutton family and Rev. Causey. I will personally be able to thank the Dutton family for their father's service to our great country and their dedication to keeping their father's tradition and memory alive.

To do this, the Corps of Engineers will hold a special ceremony to pass the ring from me to the current U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Winzenried. This ceremony will start a tradition of passing this historic ring along from each senior noncommissioned officer of the Corps to the next – just as Sgt. Dutton would have wanted.

It has been an honor for me to be a part of this very historic event and to represent so many patriots serving in combat and throughout the world. I thank Brig. Gen. Walsh for understanding the value of traditions and the importance of remembering our history.

Editor's note: Command Sgt. Maj. Bill McDaniel is the command sergeant major of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division (Provisional) in Baghdad, Iraq and has served in the U.S. Army on active-duty for 32 years.



USACE photo by Norris Jones

Left to right: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, poses for a picture with the World War II Corps of Engineers ring with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. Bill McDaniel.

Fallujah Project Creates New Sewer System

by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central

FALLUJAH, Iraq – Involving hundreds of Iraqis in its work force, a new sewer system is taking shape in Fallujah.

It is the biggest construction project the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversees in Al Anbar Province of Iraq.

Fallujah's new facility will provide new pump stations trunk mains and a treatment plant to serve as the backbone for a city-wide system. This is the initial phase that will eventually connect every home in the city.

"That community has been relying on septic tanks and the raw sewage is making its way onto the streets and into the storm sewers going directly to the Euphrates River," explains Michael Jakubiak, part of a team of USACE engineers involved with the project. "So you have residents downstream that are taking their drinking water from that contaminated source. This project will improve that situation."

Jakubiak says his office meets with the various construction firms for some 13 separate contracts, city and Iraqi ministry officials on a regular basis to ensure issues are resolved and the project moves forward.

"It's those city and ministry officials who will eventually take over operation and maintenance of the new sewer system and we want to make sure it meets their standards. They're fully engaged and eager to see this project completed," he said.

Regarding the contractors, he pointed out, "we're doing a lot of work to mentor them especially in the areas of quality control and safety. Those are two key factors we continue to emphasize."

With the new system, two large pump stations will each have the capacity to handle 150,000 cubic meters daily. Fallujah's sewage will



USACE photo by Travis Edwards

Iraqi workers place concrete for a small clarifier tank for a waster water treatment plant as part of a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project to rebuild the Fallujah sewer system.

be sent to inlet tanks at the waste water treatment facility, then aerated grit and oil removal tanks, onto 65-meter-wide aeration tanks, then settling tanks, and lastly into a chlorination contact chamber before being released to the Euphrates River.

"There's no question the health of Fallujah's residents will be benefited by this project," said Jakubiak.

"Our mission is to help the Iraqi people get back on their feet and I'm proud to be part of this effort," he said.

He had been involved with sewer-related projects in Cary, North Carolina, prior to volunteering for a year's duty in Iraq.

"This is a great assignment. We're helping a community with real needs," he said.

"The local jobs created are a boon to Fallujah's economy," said Jakubiak. "Those workers know they're making a difference."

(Below) Form work holds the clarifier tanks in place before concrete is placed over the rebar at the Fallujah waster water treatment plant.



Mission to Rebuild Iraq

Project Contracting Office - Washington Inactivates

by Travis Edwards
Gulf Region Division

BAGHDAD, Iraq - After almost three and half years of support to the Iraq Project and Contracting Office and the Gulf Region Division, the Project and Contracting Office, Washington organization officially inactivates May 10.

“Since the inactivation of the PCO in Iraq in October 2006 and subsequent transfer of authority and responsibilities to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers GRD commander, the PCO-W organization has continued to operate as an Army policy organization,” said Dean Popps, Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology, and also the Army’s Director of Iraq Reconstruction and Program Manager for Iraq.

The PCO-W provided information, administrative and technical support, liaison with Congress, DoD and other agencies, and assisted in the formulation of policy guidance. It also served as the communications link to the Department of the Army and headquarters staff, Gulf Region Division commander, previous PCO directors, and also to other agencies and entities.

As Coalition forces entered Iraq in March 2003, the United States Government had envisioned and organized a limited and temporary economic recovery and humanitarian aid organization entitled the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) under retired Army Lt. Gen. Jay Garner.

By the end of conventional hostilities with Iraq in early April 2003, OHRA staff members were in the theater of operations preparing to assist the Iraq government, overseeing reconstruction projects and providing humanitarian aid, said PCO historian Sherman Fleek.

Once in Iraq, the United States-led coalition determined that Iraq required a larger, more sustained effort to become a democracy and to rebuild its infrastructure and economy after decades of neglect and abuse by the Saddam Hussein regime. This realization was later reinforced by independent studies, especially by the United Nations and World Bank with estimates of \$55 billion and higher to repair Iraq’s dilapidated infrastructure.

Consequently, the Coalition established the Coalition

Provisional Authority (CPA) on May 9, 2003. OHRA served as the nucleus for CPA and continued to function until June 16, 2003 when the OHRA was officially terminated.

From June through September 2003, much of the reconstruction planning and contracting activities continued to take place, but without a defined organization and structure. A temporary planning cell in Baghdad entitled the Iraq Infrastructure Reconstruction Office maintained the mission until November 2003 when the CPA established the Program Management Office (PMO) after Congress funded an \$18.4 billion appropriation, the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, or known more commonly as IRRF, for reconstruction and non-reconstruction needs. The PMO was tasked to establish a structure, a program management plan, acquire and deploy a staff, and commence with reconstruction program management.

During this time other reconstruction activities and projects occurred by military tactical units and other government entities in their specific functional or geographic area. The Department of Defense then delegated responsibility of the reconstruction mission, funding, and management to the Secretary of the Army.

“It was January 2004 when the Washington office was established to help coordinate, facilitate and support the PMO in Iraq,” said James Crum, Director of the PCO-Washington.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers performed many of these projects and established its own organization, the Gulf Region Division (GRD) in January 2004. (The Corps was heavily involved in other reconstruction measures such as Restore Iraqi Oil and Restore Iraqi Electricity in the summer of 2003.) At the same time, PMO developed a program list of several thousands individual projects and

by March 2004 the contracting process was well under way.

The U.S. government decided to end the CPA in June 2004. Thus, PMO would be re-designated as PCO, the Project and Contracting Office, which happened by executive

order signed May 11, 2004, but did not take effect until June 28, 2004 when CPA ended.

This was the same day that CPA disbanded and the Iraqi Interim Government assumed power in Iraq. The same staff and functions that were PMO became PCO by executive order. By the same executive order that created PCO, the State Department established the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) to manage and coordinate all reconstruction efforts in Iraq. PMO and later PCO established regional and sector offices

“It was January 2004 when the Washington office was established to help coordinate, facilitate and support the PMO in Iraq.”

— Mr. Dean Popps

Principal Deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology

Continues

including a logistics directorate to move non-construction equipment and material throughout Iraq, a reconstruction centralized operations center and regional operation centers.

“Army officials decided to merge the two large reconstruction organizations in Iraq, PCO and the Army Corps of Engineers GRD,” said Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, GRD Commander. “Plans and schedules were quickly developed and implemented with plans showing a December 2005 completion date for the merger.” In early 2005, Assistant Secretary of the Army Claude M. Bolton, determined that the most effective was to conduct business was to merge or consolidate PCO and GRD directed the crafting of a business plan to facilitate the merge. On Dec. 4, 2005, PCO and GRD in Iraq consolidated. The GRD commander became both the Commanding General and also the director of PCO due to the consolidation in December 2005. PCO-Washington remained a separate office under direction of Mr. Popps.

The GRD had provided construction management oversight in nearly all the projects in Iraq. By combining PCO’s project and financial management functions, this would enhance operations.

GRD’s Commanding Generals had previously served as Deputy Directors for reconstruction in both PMO and PCO; so now the liaison and leadership function increased.

Even after the consolidation, plans were under way to terminate PCO and transfer all its authority and functions to GRD. In the late summer 2006, with the projected change of command of Maj. Gen. William McCoy and Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, the Army decided this was the best time to inactivate PCO at the same time as the change of command.

The two organizations officially merge Oct. , 2006. The change of command occurred on Oct. 14, 2006, as PCO in Iraq ended and all of its authorities and responsibilities transferred to GRD.

However, PCO-Washington continued as the HQDA policy and support organization under ASA (ALT) through May 10, 2007, which is the official expiration of the founding executive order.

(Right) These graphics represent a partial lineage to the mission to rebuild Iraq. The Iraq Program Management Office, or PMO, was created in Nov. 2003 by the Coalition Provisional Authority, or CPA. The PMO was renamed the Project Contracting Office, or PCO, when the CPA ended in June 2004 carrying on the mission of rebuilding Iraq. This mission was passed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division, or GRD, in October 2006 and became fully integrated as the inactivation of the Project Contracting Office-Washington, or PCO-W completes on May 10, 2007.



Progress Continues in Diyala Province

by LuAnne Fantasia
Gulf Region North

TIKRIT, Iraq - In the Diyala Province, the Iraq Reconstruction Program includes over 170 infrastructure projects. To date, 133 are finished with 28 currently active and 13 planned to start. Many of these projects are in remote locations and not readily visible to Iraqi citizens. Some of these projects are high-capacity electrical distribution projects and large treatment facilities for water and sewage.

The following is a snapshot of projects, by sector, in the Diyala Province, with supplementary information on several focus projects.

Building, health and education projects - There are 45 of the 52 approved building, health and education projects completed in Diyala. One project still in developmental stages is the Baqubah General Hospital. This construction addition will update the current facility with a new surgical building that provides an additional 75 beds, a surgical and trauma operating suite, and an intensive care unit. The \$7 million upgrade will increase medical care and capabilities for roughly 320,000 people in the Baqubah area.

This summer, Diyala citizens will start to reap the benefits of seven new primary healthcare centers that are currently active. One clinic is scheduled to finish in April; two in May, one in June, one in July and two in August. Medical equipment for the April and May completed clinics is on its way now so that all three clinics are ready to receive and treat more than 100 patients a day.

Electrical - Of the 36 electrical projects budgeted for the Diyala Province, 25 are complete and two are still in developmental stages. One of the nine electrical projects currently in progress will improve the capacity of the electrical distribution system for the city of Buhriz providing more reliable power for about 7,000 residents. This \$3.5 million project is scheduled to be completed in October.

Security and Justice - There are 52 budgeted projects in this sector. Forty-eight of those projects are complete; one is still in developmental stages and one is through the contractual stage and has a planned start date. Of the two current ongoing sites, one is a \$42 million prison upgrade



USACE photo

All of the new primary healthcare centers in the Diyala Province house six doctors' offices with adjoining examination rooms; an x-ray room; two dental exam rooms; a pharmacy and laboratory; two treatment rooms; and a classroom. Some of the PHCs will have an additional classroom and digital x-ray machine.

project that will add buildings to the existing facility, and increase inmate capacity to 1,600 beds. Upon completion this project will be an employment plus for the region.

Public works and water - Of the 25 water and/or sewage treatment projects financed, seven are still in developmental stages, and 10 are completed. One of the eight currently active

To date, 133 projects in the Diyala province are complete with 28 more active and 13 planned to start. Upon completion there will be 170 projects.

— Gulf Region North Public Affairs

water projects will ultimately provide 6.3 million gallons of clean drinking water daily to 72,000 Iraqi families in Balad Rooz. This project is scheduled to finish in October. Another ongoing water project, one worth \$5.5 million, is due to finish in December and will ensure adequate water flow is available for land irrigation, as well provide as flood control.

Transportation and communication - There are eight such projects budgeted across the Diyala Province; two are completed; one has a planned start, and two are currently active. Both active projects increase economic activity and emergency response through improved transportation routes and easier access benefiting an untold number of citizens of Diyala.

This is only a synopsis of progress in the Diyala Province. Nationwide, and since the time of sovereignty in 2004, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has completed over 3,000 of the original 3,786 projects in the Iraq Reconstruction Program.



Baghdad International Airport Iraq's Gateway to the World

by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Baghdad International Airport currently has between 18 and 24 flights transporting more than 1,000 passengers daily to destinations inside and outside the country. The environment there feels like any other airport in the world with its duty free shops, restaurant and other stores that sell books and clothes.

Allan Nelson, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, says about 1,200 Iraqis are employed there and he is proud of the numerous improvements that have been completed over the past two years.

“We installed 2,600 new runway lights and 350 kilometers of cable,” Nelson

noted. “It was a tremendous undertaking and a very satisfying moment when we turned those on and the airport was lit up for the first time in years.”

He says when he started in November 2004 none of the air conditioning units worked, the sewer lines were blocked, and water was pouring from the bathrooms out into the corridor.

He oversaw the installation of 6,000 new florescent lights in the terminal and the renovation of more than 250 bathrooms.

“We re-polished the marble floors, painted the walls, replaced about 500 broken panes of glass, put in a new potable water filtration system, new street lights for the

section of highway leading to the airport, and cleaned the carpets,” he continued.

“We put in two new 2400-ton chillers and rebuilt the two existing 1700-ton chillers. Today there’s plenty of air conditioning capacity,” he said.

Currently, he is working on a project where 80,000 meters of new 33kV feeder lines will provide a more stable source of power to the area, assisted by three electric substations that have been rebuilt.

“The new terminals were opened in the early 1980s and little was invested in routine maintenance over the past few years. Much of the infrastructure there was nonfunctional when I arrived,” said Nelson.

He singled out the Iraqi airport manager’s staff for special praise saying, “They’re doing their job for the same reason we’re doing our job – to make it better.”

Nelson is concluding two and half years in Iraq and returning to his job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District. The 54-year-old has three daughters and is heading home to see the arrival of his third grandchild.

He resides in Hager City, Wis., and plans to retire next year and find time to do a little fishing as he lives on a 40-acre farm near a trout stream.

“I appreciate this opportunity to serve in Baghdad and help with the airport project,” he said. “It’s been a pleasure working here and to walk away and see what you’ve done has made a difference and will benefit this country for years to come.”

Allan Nelson and Lt. Col. Culen Robinson, both members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, visit the Baghdad International Airport.



USACE photo by Norris Jones



USACE Installs New 32kV Power Lines in the South

*Story and photos by Mohammed Alivi
Gulf Region South*

DHI QAR, Iraq - To meet the goal of reducing electrical outages and modernizing electrical distribution before the summer heat increases air conditioning demands, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is working on a new power transmission project in An Nasiriyah.

According to Lew Tyler, Gulf Region South project manager, the base and supporting structure for a 132 kilovolt overhead power line will be built in the vicinity of an existing line between the Nasiriyah Power Plant and the Ash Shatra substation. "The new electrical line will ease the overloaded condition on the existing power line and will supply power to the Nasiriyah Water Treatment Plant and several local neighborhoods," he said.

Michael Fellenz, GRS project engineer, said that the transmission line project will provide relief to an existing overloaded distribution system in a more efficient and safe manner. "Since electrical service has been improving in Iraq," he said. "Projects of this kind will lower the

incidence of power outages and help modernize the electrical power system."

"The main reason for the lack of electricity production in Iraq is that the older equipment that has been destroyed over time and by sabotage," he said. "This project will lower the load rates on the old overload feeders and will effectively modernize the electricity transmission and increase local area jobs. It will provide the Ash Shatra district with the appropriate conveyance feeders of the power needed to help keep the power stable."

Tyler added that engineering services, which will be provided throughout the contract duration, will include all design, supply, construction and commissioning activities for the project. "Design functions will include the preparation and submission for review by the (Iraqi) government of all design calculations, construction drawings, test programs and methodologies, and blueprints," he said.

Fellenz said that the construction functions include activities such as preparation and submission for review by the government of vendor data, vendor profiles, catalogs, and production of all

equipment including all required type and routine tests, factory acceptance tests, as well as supplying all equipment to site to enable completion of the line as defined in the scope of work.

"The contractor's responsibility is to ensure that the equipment and system warranties are valid during the construction and commissioning stages of the projects, and are transferred to the Iraqi Minister of Electricity (ME) on project completion," said Tyler. "The contractor will have sole responsibility to liaise with the ME in pursuance of any additional information and permits."

He added that the project will help alleviate increased demands for electricity with the hot summer months ahead.

(Opposite page) An Iraqi laborer prepares to set power transmission tower foundation on an electrical project near An Nasiriyah, Iraq.

(Watermark) Iraqi laborers erect a steel power transmission tower to hold 132kV overhead power lines for a U.S. Army Corps of Engineer project near Al Nasiriyah, Iraq.



Kurdish Children Resettle Into New Schools

by LuAnne Fantasia
Gulf Region North

KIRKUK PROVINCE, Iraq - More than 600 school children in this Kurdish enclave moved out of resettlement tents last week, and are settling into two newly constructed schools - complete with windows, hard floors and classroom furniture.

Abdul Rahman Mustafa, governor of Kirkuk, attended an event at one site to recognize the cooperation and the unity it took to make the new schools possible for Kurdish school children.

As the Kurdish people return to Iraq after years of fleeing to the mountains, students have attended classes in weather-torn, time-worn tents. The two new schools were funded by the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry's Commander's Emergency Response Program.

According to Project Engineer Joe Domingo, the contract for a third school will be awarded this month.

"Each school has 11 classrooms and



USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia

The governor of Kirkuk, Abdul Rahman Mustafa, center, cuts the ribbon to officially open the Panja Ali School in Kirkuk in April, with assistance from Col. Patrick Stackpole, left, commander, 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry's. The school project, furniture and supplies were funded through the brigade's Commander's Emergency Response Program, or CERP.

each classroom can accommodate about 25 students," Domingo said. He added that each facility has a computer room, administration building, toilets and a back-up generator.

Domingo is a project engineer in the Kirkuk Resident Office of the United States Army Corps of Engineers' Gulf Region North. The Corps has quality assurance oversight on reconstruction projects throughout Iraq.

Due in part to the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, more than 800 schools have been refurbished or

constructed since Iraq's sovereignty in 2004 - providing a positive learning environment for some 325,000 Iraqi students nationwide.



USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia

The newly-constructed Panja Ali school in Kirkuk has 11 classrooms and a computer room. It accommodates about 25 students per classroom.



USACE photo



USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia

Before the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Program made the construction of this school possible, Kurdish children attended classes in weather-torn tents in a resettlement area of Kirkuk. The Panja Ali school in Kirkuk now has buildings, furniture and school supplies thanks to the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry's Commander's Emergency Response Program.

BAGHDAD SCHOOL NEARS COMPLETION



by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Youngsters in north Baghdad will soon be able to attend school right in their own community.

Local Iraqi leaders identified the need for a school and the U.S. military unit there funded it. Construction on the 1250-square-meter two-story facility was started last year and should be completed mid-May. Currently, it's 95 percent finished.

Andy May, project engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Gulf Region Central District, has been overseeing a variety of essential service projects in Baghdad Province over the past four years.

"I've been involved with many things, but the school is right at the top of the

list," said May. "We're making a difference in people's lives. You can see it in the pride the Iraqi workers have continued to display throughout the construction of that facility. It's their children, nephews and nieces, and other kids residing in that neighborhood who will be going to school there.

"They know how important that structure is and what it will mean to their community for decades to come," he said. "For many families the nearest school was simply too far for their children to go. Now, a whole new chapter of opportunities is opening for them."

Lt. j.g. Robert McCharen, who is the USACE officer in charge of the area, says the 23-classroom facility will be capable of handling up to 900 students, both boys and girls ages 6 through 12 years old. It also contains a 90-square-meter four-room guardhouse.

He noted his office is currently managing 19 projects in north Baghdad Province including new water compact units providing drinking water to local villages, electrical networks, and the new Husseiniya

primary healthcare center that is open and providing medical care to families there.

"The contractor at the new elementary school has gone the extra mile. You can see the quality workmanship in the tile floors, the professional masonry touch in each room, down to the plumbing in the restrooms. The community should be very pleased," he said.

McCharen leads a team of five Americans and seven Iraqi engineers. "I couldn't ask for a finer group. One of our goals each day is learning a new Arabic word. It helps us not only communicate but better understand the culture here. When I go out to the projects, it's fun to speak a little Arabic with them, it helps break the ice."

When construction on the school is completed, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion plans to enhance the project through the Commanders Emergency Response Fund by purchasing blackboards, chalk, desks and school supplies for the students.

Capt. Holly Hanson, a 414th detachment team leader, said "local residents continue to tell me how important this school is to their families."

Gulf Region Division has constructed or renovated over 960 schools throughout Iraq – providing quality learning environments for more than 500,000 students.



USACE photos by Norris Jones

(Left) Area children will now have a school within walking distance. (Above) Lt. j.g. Robert McCharen praises one of local Iraqi workers for the quality workmanship used in building the new primary school in the north Baghdad Province. (Watermark) A new primary school in north Baghdad Province nears completion as part of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Iraqi Reconstruction Program in Iraq.

Congressional Visit to GRD



Photo by Travis Edwards

U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Gulf Region directors, Jack Holly, Directorate of Logistics, left, and Dr. Les Dixon, Directorate of Programs, wearing the desert combat uniform in the center, sit and eat with members of Congress during a Congressional Delegation visit to the Gulf Region Division. The congressmen received a briefing on the overall reconstruction program from the GRD commanding general, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh.

Az Zubair Primary Health Center To Provide Modern Medical Services

by *A. Al Bahrani*
Gulf Region South

BASRAH, Iraq – With the goal of developing basic medical services and boosting the health care infrastructure, which was badly neglected during the former regime, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is building a modern primary healthcare center (PHC) in the Az Zubair district of Basrah.

“The \$417,912 facility is being built by local contracting companies with quality assurance being managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,” said Ruth Richmond, USACE contracting officer with Gulf Region South. “The goal is to provide routine and initial emergency care to the region.”

According to Richmond, in addition to providing comprehensive medical care services, the PHC will support the local economy by using available local materials in its construction. Being built by local contractors, the facility will meet current

Iraqi building standards and employs local Iraqis at all levels of the project.

“This facility includes a water purification system, mechanical systems (both air conditioning and heating), exam rooms, dental rooms, an X-ray facility, laboratories, class rooms, a pharmacy and a café,” said Stan Dowdy, a GRS resident engineer.

He noted that USACE also supervised the connection of new 500kv and 35kv generators to a massive transformer for emergency power. “The Corps is trying to help the Iraqi people, particularly those in the area who are poor and suffered from the lack of health services for a long time,” he said. “Once this clinic is completed, more than 250,000 people will receive modern medical care close to home.”

Providing these new and additional medical services will help reduce the infant mortality rate of the area, according to Ihsan Ali, project engineer with GRS.

“The new construction will enhance the capacity and capabilities of the healthcare services,” he said. “Doctors and nurses there will use new modern equipment for the first time in 20 years to help meet the primary care and urgent care needs of the Az Zubair district.”

He added that the contract includes providing furniture and equipment for the facility.

“It’s a great job when you make prompt medical treatment available to those who need it,” said Dowdy. “That’s what keeps us going.”

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South, Basrah Area Office oversees 300-plus projects, including the construction of 15 PHCs, rehabilitating water treatment plants, building power plants, sewer networks, paving roads, renovating schools, refurbishing oil facilities and rebuilding Iraq’s security through its Army and police force.

Rebuilding Fallujah's Electric Distribution Network

by Norris Jones
Gulf Region Central

FALLUJAH, Iraq – Fallujah is rebuilding its electrical distribution network. So far over 45,000 utility poles, 2,200 transformers and 2,400 kilometers of cable have been purchased.

Fallujah city officials and Ministry of Electricity personnel are working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) on the \$57 million project.

“One of the city’s two existing 33kV substations is being rebuilt and two brand new 33kV substations added to ensure Fallujah has a reliable, stable system,” explains Chip Nieman, the Deputy Resident Engineer for USACE’s Fallujah office. The work also includes rehabilitating a 132kV substation replacing two of the three transformers.

Neighborhood distribution networks – many with broken poles, snapped lines, damaged transformers — are being replaced one area at a time by Ministry of Electricity personnel. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is also hiring additional crews to help.

“The city’s old dilapidated system just didn’t have the capacity to meet the community’s needs,” Nieman explained. “It’s great to see real progress

taking shape.”

In addition to the network improvements, Fallujah’s Electrical Department is getting a new \$2.8 million maintenance facility that will include two warehouses, a workshop, and an administrative office.

“We’re interacting with Fallujah officials on a daily basis. Their head of the electricity has been great to work with. He appreciates our efforts,” said Nieman.

In all, Neiman’s office is overseeing 87 projects in Fallujah and the surrounding area including health care clinics, sewage lines and pump stations, street lighting, and potable water treatment facilities.

“Fallujah is a great place to work. It’s a fast-paced, challenging environment and also rewarding – you get to see how your efforts are helping people,” said Nieman who is nearing the conclusion of a one-year assignment in Iraq.

“I believe in what we’re doing or I wouldn’t be here,” he said.

Nieman points out that hiring local residents is a priority. Fallujah, a city of 200,000 residents, has about 40,000 homes and businesses. “It’s a tremendous benefit to Fallujah’s economy,” he said.



An Iraqi worker tests one of two new 33kV substations recently built in Fallujah to upgrade the city's electrical distribution network.

USACE photo by Norris Jones

Southern PHCs Overcoming Construction, Security Challenges

by B.J. Weiner
Gulf Region South

NASIRIYAH, Iraq – Designed to be the first step in diagnosing medical illnesses and conditions for people in areas where hospital facilities are unavailable, many of the 58 primary health centers (PHCs) being built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in southern Iraq will be completed this summer and open to patient traffic.

“These PHCs will operate as first step for patients, and then doctors will transfer the more serious patients to hospitals,” said Iraqi engineer, Mohmoud. “And that will reduce the crowd of patients on the main hospitals and only the seriously ill patients will go to the hospitals. Also, these PHCs will provide services for the people whose situation is not serious.”

The PHCs are being built using one of three designs, according to Robin Parks, a Buildings, Health and Education project manager for the Corps’ southern district. Type A and B facilities are smaller and are built in and around cities with larger populations. Type C facilities house two staff physicians, emergency and maternity centers and are designed for more rural areas. All three clinics have dental facilities, x-ray departments and instructional units, with one physician in residence.

“One problem we have with the PHCs is that there are multiple contracts involved with each project,” said Parks. “For example, separate electrical contracts, medical consumables like stethoscopes and related things. The problems occur when you try to coordinate all these things.”

Mohmoud agreed with Parks and added that coordinating all of the contracts presented special challenges for him, as the Corps’ quality assurance representative on the ground, because “every company or side who is involved in this job wants to do his part A-S-A-P and be gone.” He said that connecting PHCs to main power and water lines can take some months, but that he is seeing improvements in the speed with which these tasks are being accomplished.

Parks added that training people to work in the facilities has also been a



USACE photos B.J. Weiner



(Top left) Iraqi workers continue building many of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Primary Healthcare Centers despite security and logistic challenges in the Gulf Region South district.

(Left) Iraqi laborers mix cement to be used as the foundation for building sidewalks at a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Primary Healthcare Center project in southern Iraq.



USACE photo B.J. Weiner

(Above) Iraqi workers continue building many of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer Primary Healthcare Centers despite security and logistic challenges in the Gulf Region South district.

challenge because of the specific needs of the health care industry. “With PHCs you can’t just hire anyone off the streets. You need people with experience in the health care industry.”

Parks anticipates that roughly 50 of the clinics will open this summer.

Currently, one clinic is open in the Wasit Province, with medical supplies and equipment being the biggest obstacle to overcome. “There are a couple PHCs that may not open because of security challenges and other problems,” she said. “So we may be looking at a total of 56 clinics. But, we are still working those issues.”

According to Parks, most of the contracts were awarded in July 2006. Work has been slow because of the special requirements for the clinics, but Parks is confident that things will move along quickly now.

“Mohmoud has been doing a great job for us,” she said. “He has been our eyes and ears on the ground, going to places we can’t get to. He has been able to teach the contractors things like the requirements for x-ray room walls are different than those for regular wall. They need a glass sheet and lead between the wall and the insulation. He has been able to correct these things on the ground helping us meet the mission.”

(Left) An Iraqi laborer works on the air ducts of a Primary Healthcare Center in Nasiriyah, Iraq.



USACE photo B.J. Weiner

Combat Cousins

at Contingency Operating Base Speicher

by LuAnne Fantasia
Gulf Region North

TIKRIT, Iraq - With COB Speicher being one of the coalition's largest contingency operation bases in-theater, the chances of running into your cousin at the Post Exchange are slim. But, that is how these two cousins finally found each other last December.

"I got a couple of e-mails from another cousin and an aunt asking if I've seen her yet," said Spc. Jeremie NeSmith, a cable installer and systems maintenance specialist with Charlie Company, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne on his second tour in Iraq. He arrived in theater in August 2006.

"Nikki and I had talked to each other but couldn't seem to figure out where the other one was located on Speicher. Then, one day I was in the PX, I did a double-take, and there she was," NeSmith said.

Kele "Nikki" Owens is a Department of Army civilian with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Savannah District, Savannah, Ga.

She is on a six-month tour with the Gulf Region North District, where she is a command administrative assistant. Owens arrived in October, four months behind her cousin.

"We knew we were both on Speicher but we didn't know we were right next door to each other," Owens said. In an environment where everything is behind 10-foot, concrete T-walls, there is no clear view of other organizations - and very few signs announcing who's behind those T-walls. "It's operational security, you have to already know where you're going."

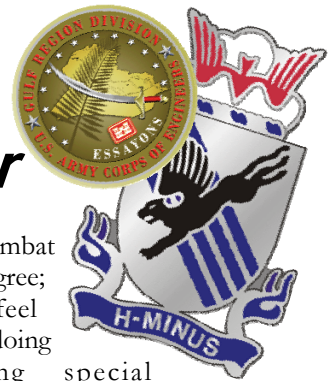
NeSmith and Owens' hometowns are Jacksonville, Fla., and Pooler, Ga.,

respectively. Their grandmothers are sisters; the late Rosemary NeSmith of Jacksonville, who passed in 1992; and Ethel L. Mumford, currently a resident of Pooler, Ga.

"I left home the day after Thanksgiving," Owens said. "It was hard for me. I had never been away from my family...and certainly had never been out of the country before this tour. And it's been wonderful being here with Jeremie because he's family.

The combat cousins agree; they feel they're doing something special together.

"We [troops] have been given a mission and we'll complete it," NeSmith said. "The Iraqi people need us and we need the American people's support...or our country will be divided."



USACE photo by LuAnne Fantasia

Combat cousins Spc. Jeremie NeSmith, Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers civilian Kele "Nikki" Owens, Gulf Region North district, spent several months together at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in Iraq.

We spent Christmas and New Year's together. And, we're learning a lot about each other."

NeSmith explained that his dad was a coach and his family was heavily involved in sports when he was growing up in Jacksonville. "So, we didn't travel a lot. Nikki and I didn't really know each other too well because we didn't see each other very often."

Owens added, "I'm older than Jeremie, so I can tell him things about the family that he doesn't know. We've learned a lot about each other...and we've learned a lot together from being here and focusing on the same goal - building relationships."

He added that he feels the Iraqi people want the same freedom and democracy Americans enjoy.

Owens echoed that sentiment, "This has made me appreciate choices...our freedom to make choices. We focus on material things. But to the Iraqi people, water and electricity are precious...and food."

They both agreed that the Coalition's mission here is about building relationships - countries becoming friends, thereby enabling the Iraqi people to rebuild and grow after almost 40 years of neglect and oppression; to become self-sufficient and to develop the capacity to sustain their new

independence for generations to come.

"This experience is bringing our families closer together, too," Owens added. She has ten sisters, a son and daughter. NeSmith has two sisters and a deceased brother.

"If my son wasn't graduating from high school next month," Owens said, "I would probably request an extension. This was truly a good experience for me. I've learned so much about myself...you grow over here."

"Yes," NeSmith added. "You grow mentally and spiritually. God sent me here a second time to learn something. I hope I've learned it."

13 Water Wells Completed in Northern Iraqi Villages



USACE photos by LuAnne Fantasia

(Above) An Iraqi child, flanked by his friends, plays with a water hose. Thirteen northern Iraqi villages now have a new water well system constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as part of the Iraqi Reconstruction Program in Iraq. (Watermark) This Iraqi village in the Erbil Province of northern Iraq now has a new source of water - a system of wells provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

by Lana Aziz

Gulf Region North

ERBIL PROVINCE, Iraq - More than 26,000 residents in 13 villages receive potable water now due to 13 water well projects recently completed as part of the Iraq Reconstruction Program.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began the well project initiative last year and completed it last month. These 13 villages in Northern Iraq did not have flowing water. Now, another source of water has been found and tapped in this area.

Each one of these 13 projects consisted of construction of deep water wells; supply of generators and submersible pumps; constructing a concrete and steel water tank; supplying and installing the water pipe line; construction of water taps; and expansion of the distribution system.

“Kurdistan is suffering from a shortage of clean water and lack of water sources and water pipe,” said Younis Talib, an Iraqi electrical engineer employed in the USACE Gulf Region North’s Erbil Resident Office. Talib was responsible for quality assurance and quality control on the project. “This project is one of many that are essential to solve water problems in the Erbil Province; designed to stabilize the water source in 13 villages.”

The people in some of these villages did not have enough water, and some were depending on spring sources for water. Others relied on water delivery by trucks, or personally carrying water containers in their cars for many miles, according to Talib.

Nawzad Hadi, the governor of Erbil, said, “The water that U.S. Army Corps of Engineers [made possible] to Bnberzi Gchka has allowed many village people to move back to their village. I am grateful for all other projects which are done and which are under construction by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that positively impacted the Kurdish people.”

Maj. Jennifer Munro, deputy area engineer in the Gulf Region North district Mosul Area office, added, “This is an exciting program that has provided water to 26,000 people. It revitalized communities that had stagnated when families were forced to leave their homes during Saddam's era. [Now] these villages are growing and thriving.”

Years of a neglected infrastructure, violence, and sabotage created a shortage of potable water in Iraq—a country of some 30 million citizens. But, since the time of sovereignty in 2004, the Iraq Reconstruction Program has effected improvements that bring 120 million gallons of treated water daily to an estimated 2.4 million Iraqi citizens.

Estimates show that, nationwide, some 8.4 million Iraqis will benefit from 300 million gallons of treated water daily when all of the original funded water projects are completed.





Hail and Farewell

Hailing:

2nd Lt. George Norton, GRC
 Billy Sellin, GRS
 Capt. Angel Carey
 Capt. Brian Storch, GRS
 Capt. Roque Perez-Velez, GRD
 Capt. William Delucci, GRS
 Chris Tew, GRD
 Cmdr. Steven Stancy, GRD
 Command Sgt. Maj. Orrille Wang, GRC
 Dan Cearley, GRC
 Danny Huffman, GRD
 David Bond, GRN
 Deiya Smith, GRC
 Diann Thompson, GRD
 Earnie Mendenhall, GRC
 Evelyn Williams, GRN
 Felipe Ramos, GRS
 Grant Sattler, GRD
 James Seaton, GRC
 James Worthington, GRC
 Jeffrey Jones, GRC
 Jeffrey Sedgwick, GRN
 Jimmy Crumpton, GRS
 Jodelle Ferguson, GRN
 John Byrnes, GRN
 Kenneth Wertz, GRS
 Kimberly Adams Bowlin, GRD
 Lt. Cmdr. Eric Williams, GRD
 Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Yates, GRD
 Lt. Col. Brendan Conway, GRN
 Lt. Col. Dan Jacobsen, GRC
 Lt. Col. David Painter, GRN
 Lt. Col. David Tapscott, GRD
 Lt. Col. Doran Warner, GRS
 Lt. Col. Gregory Johnson, GRD
 Lt. Col. Michelle Sparrow, GRD
 Lt. Dan Grimsbo, GRD
 LuAnne Fantasia, GRN
 Lynda Graham, GRS
 Maj. Antonio Jimenez, GRN
 Maj. Benje Jackson, GRC
 Maj. Bob Schwartz, GRN
 Maj. Clark Johnson, GRC
 Maj. Edward Liu, GRC
 Maj. Kenneth Gudgel, GRC
 Maj. Kent Lightner, GRD
 Maj. Rick Kostecki, GRD
 Maj. Tracy Coleman, GRS
 Malcolm "Mac" Wimbish, GRN
 Mark Emelio, GRS
 Master Sgt. Johnathan Hedgecock, GRD
 Master Sgt. Mark Juel, GRD
 Master Sgt. Michael Crawford, GRN
 Master Sgt. Russell Kosier, GRD
 Master Sgt. Scott Hill, GRN
 Master Sgt. Sherwin Wanner, GRC
 Matt Johnson, GRC
 Michael Jakubiak, GRC
 Milton Murphy, GRC
 Navy Chief William Harrell, GRC
 Rebecca Wingfield, GRS
 Russell Truex, GRS
 Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Manning, GRC
 Sgt. 1st Class Harold Stewart, GRC
 Sgt. 1st Class Kim Swanson, GRC
 Sgt. Maj. Timothy Freitag, GRS
 Sgt. Mark Burrell, GRD
 Shafqat Malik, GRN
 Staff Sgt. Mario Contreras, GRD
 Staff Sgt. Matthew Curcio, GRN
 Staff Sgt. Tyle Schmoker, GRC
 Tech Sgt. LouAnna Campbell, GRD
 Tia Chandler, GRS
 Tom Kerrigan, GRN
 Troy Swofford, GRC
 Van Lee, GRN
 William Core, GRS

Farewelling:



Rodney Boyd
GRN



Polli Keller
GRN



Army Lt. Colonel William Thomas
GRN



Oscar Moberg
GRN



Julie Meyer
GRN



Army Major Victor Walton
GRS



Army Lieutenant Dawn Harrison
GRC



Army Major Hattie Davis
GRN



B.J. Hobbes
GRN



Merle Jones
GRN



Tosca Patchus
GRS



Army Lt. Colonel Gustavus Washington
GRS



Thomas Williams
GRS



Army Staff Sgt. Jessica Howard
GRS



Army Sergeant Major Benny Hubbard
GRS



Allan Nelson
GRS



Rudolpho Posis
GRN



Jeanette Newlen
GRC



Navy Lt. j.g. Robert McCharen
GRC



Joe Rath
GRC



David Schmidt
GRC



Army Major Robert Nash
GRC



Army Lt. Colonel Dale Johnson
GRS



Army Master Sgt. Charles Miller
GRS



Army Master Sgt. Robin Caldwell
GRS

Get more information on the reconstruction progress in Iraq on the Gulf Region Division Web Site. Updated print, photo and video content is added regularly. Get the news you are not otherwise hearing about the real progress on the ground by the men and women of our U.S. and Coalition effort in Iraq. You can also sign up for automatic e-mail alerts to notify you when new information is added. Help get the word out on the ground truth in Iraq.

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