

ESSAYONS

forward

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Division, Iraq - Volume 5, Issue 6

June 2008

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**Substation stabilizes
electricity grid**

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On the cover:



Overhead view from the tank catwalks of ongoing pipe welding work at Victory Base Complex's waste water treatment plant, see page 9

USACE photo by Kendal Smith

Benchpress contest



USACE photo by H. Al-Taie

Sgt. 1st Class Curnes Williams, 86th CSH, presses 275 lbs.—152 percent of his body weight—to tie for 2nd in the men's category. Gulf Region Division held the contest May 24, 2008, in the International Zone, Baghdad, Iraq.

Deputy Commander's Commentary



Transition: A time for moving forward

July is quickly upon us and marks the time of transition within our three districts. Times of transition affect people in different ways—some find it hard to adjust and others seize the opportunity for change and a new start. Change

is inevitable; people come and go and, more significantly, our environment constantly changes. We must embrace times of transition and create an environment where change makes a positive impact.

Brig. Gen. Jeffery J. Dorko, Commanding General, Gulf Region Division, has often said after a meeting or azimuth check for us to "...move out and draw fire." He knows that our work in Iraq is challenging, and his encouragement is to keep moving forward. He has a trust in us, one that originates from a shared set of values, that we have the ability to make a positive impact.

Each of us should find the time to thank our three district commanders for their leadership and legacy as professional engineers and American Soldiers. We wish them Godspeed in their new endeavors. As our new commanders "take the flag" they will build on GRD's four years of proud history and will

move us forward. We will continue to train, equip and support the citizens of Iraq, to transfer responsibilities to them, and to assist them as they request our help to secure their freedom and prosperity.

As transition continues, we will continue to see changes in our programs, our missions and even our personnel as we welcome the new and bid farewell to old friends. What does remain constant are our values, our commitment to mission accomplishment and our ever-present ability to exceed all expectations. As a GRD team member, each of you is playing a significant role on the world's stage by making a difference every day and by having a unique, positive impact on our Nation and the sovereign nation of Iraq.

As we seize the opportunity that this transition offers and as we sense the time for moving forward, we will gain momentum. Others will follow and we will lead the way.

ESSAYONS!

*Col. Vincent Saroni
Gulf Region Division
Deputy Commander*

Command Sgt. Maj. Message



Water intake avoids problems

Temperatures continue to rise here in the land of the two rivers as we move deeper into the summer months. Just as water is life-giving to the people along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, those of us serving in the Gulf Region Division mission to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure also need to ensure we watch

our intake of water. The seemingly simple matter of personal hydration will help ensure we are able to perform optimally.

We all were taught in grade school that the human body is close to 70 percent water and that water is vital for every process from cellular function to regulating body temperature. But knowing basic human physiology and developing personal habits that ensure our best health are two different things.

With the high temperatures outdoors and increased perspiration coupled with the dry, air-conditioned environment indoors, keeping on top of proper hydration takes effort. Thirst is an obvious sign of dehydration, but in fact you need water long before you feel thirsty.

Symptoms of mild dehydration include pains in joints and muscles, lower back pain, headaches and constipation. Watch the color of your urine for an indication.

Drink water throughout the day and avoid trying to catch up all at once. If you are outside more than normal or wearing Individual Body Armor and Kevlar, increase your water intake. Drink before and as you exercise. Re-hydrate afterwards. This is especially important if you engage in lots of heavy exercise.

In triple-digit temperatures dehydration can quickly move from discomfort to a medical emergency. That is why it is important that we all look out for our battle buddies to ensure they are drinking enough. It is also important that we are aware of the signs of heat stress, heat cramps and heat stroke and the first aid measures to take for each.

It may be difficult to drink enough water on a busy day, but if you have developed the personal habit of keeping a bottle of water with you when you are working, traveling or exercising you are less likely to get behind on your intake. If you get bored with plain water, add a bit of lemon or lime for a touch of flavor or a flavor packet from the dining facility. Avoid too much caffeine.

Do what you can to stay healthy to continue the great work you are doing as we continue to make significant progress in rebuilding Iraq.

ESSAYONS! Army Strong!
*Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar
Gulf Region Division*



Turning out up to 80 metric tons of asphalt per hour, the Amarah asphalt plant is improving Maysan's roads.

Asphalt plant rehab paving way for Maysan improvement

STORY & PHOTOS BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Road crews in Maysan province in southern Iraq once again have an operational asphalt plant for their construction needs.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently oversaw the renovation of the 26-year-old plant, located in al-Adlah al-Qarbia area about five kilometers north of Amarah city. "Electrical and mechanical equipment were upgraded and a new administration office constructed," said Barry Stuard, resident engineer in the

Gulf Region Division's Maysan Resident Office. "That plant now has the capacity to produce up to 80 metric tons of asphalt per hour."

The plant was out of commission due to a lack of replacement parts when the repairs began in April 2008. The \$247,050 project, completed May 28, provided the repair and replacement of burners, bearings, heaters, mixer blades, piping, valves, electric motors, pumps and control panels.

Engineer Yaser Hadeed, the Iraqi manager who runs the asphalt plant, is pleased with the improvements. He points out that of the three government-owned

asphalt plants in Maysan the newly renovated facility is the only one functioning, "...so there's definitely a demand for our product." Currently 30 Iraqi government employees and about 20 Iraqi local residents work there.

"We're providing asphalt for the Abu al-Tayib street pavement project, linking Amarah with al-Maqalea area. That new smooth road will make local transport of such raw building materials as limestone, basalt, gravel and sand much easier," continued Hadeed, who has seven year's experience at the site. "Good roads benefit the entire economy," he added.



Before: The administration and site office facility prior to recently completed renovations.



After: Plant management now oversees operations from the rehabilitated facility.

Qadisiyah opens clinic

BY JOHN CONNOR

GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A new Primary Healthcare Center just opened its doors in Qadisiyah province, the first new clinic opened in the southern Iraq province in many years.

Construction of the facility was managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division's Gulf Region South district.

A recent ribbon-cutting ceremony at the center, located in the province's capital of Diwaniyah City, was presided over by Qadisiyah's lieutenant governor and the deputy commander of the Polish army unit stationed in the area.

The clinic is one of seven new Primary Healthcare Centers being constructed in Qadisiyah province by GRS district, according to Su-Chen Chen, resident engineer in the Qadisiyah Resident Office. GRS provides reconstruction services in the nine southern provinces of Iraq.

Chen said the new PHC has a staff of 47 and provides health-care services to a patient population of about 20,000 Iraqis. The facility was built at a cost of nearly \$1.5 million with money from the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

"For some patients, it is the first time they have experienced dental care and preventive medical services," as well as certain high-tech services such as electro-cardiograms, she said.

Chen thanked the government of Iraq for its cooperation and assistance in completing the project.

Qadisiyah Lt. Gov. Dhyaa Abid Alkareem Shabir in turn thanked the Gulf Region



USACE photos

Iraqi community members enjoy the opening of the Qadisiyah Primary Healthcare Center, the first new clinic in the province in decades.

Division for providing such a beautiful clinic, calling the project a true demonstration of a successful partnership.

The Iraqi official said his government and GRS are working toward the same goal—improving the lives of Iraqi citizens by providing them with much-needed medical services—and voiced his hope and expectation for more successful projects in the future.

The lieutenant governor and Polish Brig. Gen. Stanislaw Butlak performed the ribbon-cutting following a traditional animal sacrifice and toured the facility with the clinic's administrator, Dr. Abid Alameer Lielo.

Lielo expressed delight at the grand opening of the clinic and said he is receiving an adequate supply of medicine and consumable items to meet the PHC's needs. He gave a special thanks to Coalition Forces and the United States for a gift his people desperately needed.



Families came out in numbers to witness the opening of the Qadisiyah Primary Healthcare Center staffed by the Ministry of Health.



Su-Chen Chen gives out soft toys during the grand opening.

Telecommunications exchange project connecting Baghdad neighbors, world



Construction is nearing the halfway point for al-Mamoon Telecommunications Center and Exchange office building in Baghdad. The modern facility will connect thousands of city residents for the first time.

STORY & PHOTOS BY KENDAL SMITH
GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

“The Center will allow Iraq to connect to the world,” summed up an Iraqi engineer overseeing construction at al-Mamoon Exchange and Telecommunications Center in Baghdad.

“This will become the heart of Baghdad’s telecom system and enable the government to provide the citizens of Iraq with reliable service,” explained U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Resident Engineer Ricard Wade. To further accent the Center’s importance to Iraq, Wade said, “It is a symbolic project, capturing the architectural aesthetics of the surrounding community and emphasizing the openness of the new government buildings, as the focal point of the city.”

Currently, the project is 48 percent complete and is scheduled to open at the end of this year. The new facility features an eight-story structure that will house communication switch gear and telecommunication offices. It includes a 1,300 square meter post office, a loading dock for delivery trucks, a 250-car covered garage, and a cafeteria seating 150 people.

More than 100 Iraqi construction workers and 23 other workers are presently preparing the first floor slab rebar and sleeves for the main office building and the post office building, casting the second floor columns and finishing the car park drainage. The contractor has his own concrete plant capable of producing 90

cubic meters of concrete per hour in order to meet the demand.

The old al-Mamoon tower is a landmark known throughout Iraq, but is incapable of meeting the growing communications needs in the city. Mohammad Abdula, a lifelong resident of Baghdad, said phone service in Baghdad is available locally allowing residents to call those in their immediate neighborhood. “But unless you use a cell phone, you can’t call friends and family on the other side of the Tigris River or to other cities in Iraq. This facility is the first step in restoring and improving phone service here.” He looks forward to the day when Iraqis can make international calls using their home phones, as well as connecting to the Internet.

In addition to connectivity, there are other reasons to consider this project as a milestone in Iraq reconstruction.

USACE Officer in Charge, Navy Lt. Cmdr. Chuck Smith, International Zone Resident Office, said that al-Mamoon Center is a significantly more complex project than what is typically seen in Iraq. “The Center is being built with advanced construction techniques, such as concrete post-tensioning that are rarely used here,” he said. “For this reason, it’s been a challenge to provide the right level of quality assurance and oversight.

“Perhaps the most important part of the construction is that al-Mamoon Center buildings...might be seen in any large city in the world,” Smith said. “It expresses a confidence that conflict will end and things will improve.”



اعادة اعمار مركز اتصالات يربط العراق بالعالم

بقلم كندال سمث

قسم الوسط في فرقة منطقة الخليج

بدول العالم بهواتفهم الأرضية، وعدا ميزات الاتصال، هناك اسباب اخرى لاعتبار هذا المشروع معلما بارزا في اعادة اعمار العراق. يقول الرائد تشاك سميث من المكتب المقيم في المنطقة الخضراء واحد ضباط فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي المسؤول عن المشروع ان مركز المأمون هو مشروع اكثر تعقيدا مما ينظر اليه لأول وهلة، "يبني المركز بتقنيات متقدمة كاسمنت ما بعد التوتر، ويعد نادر الاستعمال هنا"، ويضيف "لهذا السبب، كان الوصول الى المستوى الصحيح من ضمان الجودة والرقابة تحديا ... لبرج يعد واحدا من أبراج كبريات مدن العالم".

ويدير مكتب منطقة بغداد التابع لفيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي حاليا اكثر من ١٢٠ مشروعا تبلغ تكاليفها نحو ٧٧٠ مليون دولار، ضمنها خطوط مياه نقية وشبكات صرف صحي وشبكات توزيع الكهرباء وتعبيد الطرق وترميم المستشفيات والمدارس.

بغداد، العراق – أوجز مهندس عراقي يشرف على اعمال البناء في مركز اتصالات وبدالة المأمون في بغداد نتائج المشروع بقوله "سوف يسمح المركز للعراق بالاتصال بالعالم"، في حين قال المهندس المقيم الذي يعمل لدى فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي ويد ريكارد "سيكون هذا (المركز) محور نظام اتصالات بغداد وسوف يعطي الحكومة (العراقية) القدرة على تقديم خدمات جيدة لمواطنيها".

واضاف مؤكدا أهمية المشروع "انه مشروع له رموز، فهو يكمل جمالية المكان المحيط به ويؤكد على انفتاح المباني الحكومية الجديدة، ويسقطب اهتمام السكان".

وتم انجاز ٤٨ بالمائة من المشروع، ومن المقرر افتتاح مركز الاتصالات المكون من ثمانية طوابق اواخر ٢٠٠٨ وسيضم معدات الاتصال ومكاتبها فضلا عن مركز بريد تبلغ مساحته ١٣٠٠ متر مربعا ومنصة تحميل الشاحنات ومرآبا مسقفا يسع ٢٥٠ سيارة وكافتيريا بامكانها احتضان ١٥٠ شخصا.

ويعمل في المشروع أكثر من ١٢٠ عامل بناء يحضرون حاليا حديد تسليح أرضية الطابق الأول لمبنى المكتب الرئيسي ومكتب مركز البريد ويصبون اعمدة الطابق الثاني ويضعون اللمسات الأخيرة على المجاري في مرآب السيارات. المتعاقد نفسه لديه معمل اسمنت ينتج ٩٠ مترا مكعبا في الساعة ويسد حاجة المشروع.

ويعد برج المأمون صرحا بارزا معروفا في جميع ارجاء العراق، لكنه غير قادر على تلبية الاحتياجات المتزايدة للاتصالات في المدينة.

وقال محمد، احد سكان بغداد، ان خدمات الهاتف في العاصمة تسمح للسكان بالاتصال ضمن الحي نفسه فحسب، "لكن ما لم تستعمل هاتفنا نقالا، فلن تستطيع الاتصال بالجانب الآخر من نهر دجلة او مدن اخرى في العراق، هذه البدالة هي الخطوة الاولى لاستعادة وتحسين الخدمة الهاتفية هنا".

ويتطلع محمد الى اليوم الذي يستطيع فيه العراقيون الاتصال



Ninewa ops center turnover

BY LUANNE FANTASIA
GULF REGION NORTH DISTRICT

The Ninewa Operations Center, a 4,000 square foot, refurbished operations center for Iraqi Security Forces, has been completed and turned over to the Ministry of Defense and is now occupied and fully operational.

The operations center is part of Phase I of the overall Ninewa Operations Command, or NOC, project, funded through the Iraqi Security Force Fund. The \$1.8 million reconstruction project is vital to the ISF's successful interdiction of insurgent activity in the Ninewa province.

"The building is a former [Kellogg, Brown and Root] training site that was only a shell of a building," said Alda Ottley, the project engineer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Mosul Resident Office. "We used that shell, constructing the office facilities..." The core of the operations center is its amphitheater-style operations room with multiple computer stations.

"This Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq project is enabling the Iraqi army and Iraqi police forces to assume more responsibility for the security of northern Iraq," said Col. Mike Pfenning, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Gulf Region North district. "In order to assume that responsibility, the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police need training, equipment and the facilities to be successful."



USACE PHOTO

Phase I includes this computer equipped operations room.

Refurbishment of a second building adjacent to the operations center, the NOC headquarters, is scheduled to be finished in July. "We're completing life-support work on the two-story headquarters building where General Rhiad and his staff will live and work," Ottley said.

Lt. Gen. Rhiad Galal Tawfek is the Iraqi Army commanding general of the Ninewa Operations Command. Until the headquarters building is completed, he and his staff officers are living at an Iraqi Army battalion facility in Mosul; another project Ottley completed and turned over to the Iraqi Army last year.

"The NOC headquarters building renovation will include basic force-protection, structural and life-support enhancements," Ottley said. "We're upgrading the electrical, water supply, waste water

and climate control systems; renovating bathrooms and installing equipment for a small kitchen; as well as completing basic interior and exterior cosmetic repairs," she added. "The Iraqis prefer to live where they work, so we'll also install small partitions in their offices to give them some sleeping privacy."

Phase II of the NOC project is still in the planning stages, which will include separate billeting and dining facilities, according to Ottley.

Pfenning explained the phased approach to this and other reconstruction projects in Iraq. "We work with the customer to determine what can be done within the time and available funding, identifying features that could be completed in subsequent phases," he said. "It's another phase, but often within the same contract."

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — Gulf Region Division

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**US Army Corps
of Engineers.**

Victory Base waste water effluent benefits farmers



Workers weld a pipe joint for use at the Victory Base waste water treatment plant under construction in Baghdad.

STORY & PHOTOS BY KENDAL SMITH
GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction of the Victory Waste Water Treatment Plant will have advantages all around.

“It’s a great win-win for the Coalition Forces and Baghdad residents,” said Capt. Kristina Selstrom, Victory Base Complex (VBC) Garrison Command project manager. “And not only for the Victory Base Complex water supply, but consider that the plant will return a higher quality water for Iraqi irrigation purposes on the western border.”

By consuming less water on Victory and the subsequent recycling of higher quality water back to the Tigris, there are definite benefits for the Iraqis who depend on this water for day-to-day sustenance. The significance to the overall supply for the Baghdad area’s water needs is complemented by a substantial cost savings.

More than \$13.2 million will be saved in the initial operational year of VBC’s first-ever waste water treatment plant (WWTP). The estimated savings comes from a systems’ analysis of a combination of factors, including reduction in required operators and overall maintenance. The largest savings portion of more than \$8

million will be the result of a change from the current method of truck transport for raw sewage to the off-base Baghdad municipal waste water system.

Victory’s five-train WWTP will provide water filtration and cleaning for approximately 2 million gallons daily. The term “train” describes a complete beginning-to-end treatment system which usually exists in parallel and complementary sets with other trains. Having several trains enables a treatment facility to handle emergencies and to provide for future expansion. In addition to the processing plant, new chemical storage shelters are being built on site to bring facilities in line with Department of Defense standards.

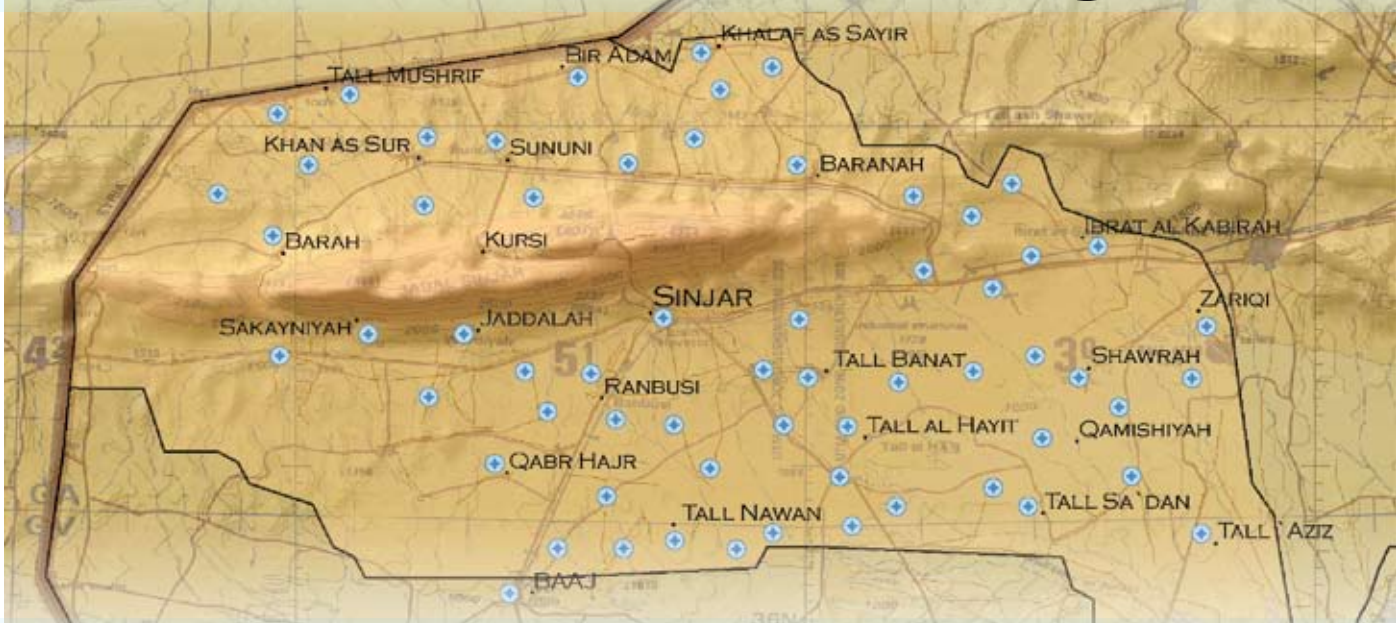
The \$2.95 million project is 23 percent complete with a projected on-line date of October 2008. Currently, some 35 workers are welding influent pipelines and completing electrical work for the control systems.

“Outlying communities and villages require water to make their standard of living more tolerable,” said Maj. David Noble, officer in charge of USACE’s Victory Public Works Resident Office. “Our common goals at USACE to support the various needs of the people of Iraq include bringing more water to farmers so they can feed their families and make a decent living.”

Treatment basins in the five train system will process 400,000 gallons per day per train for a facility total of 2 million gallons of waste water. Each of the system’s 30 tanks holds 75,000 gallons.



Sinjar wells project brings water to remote villages



BY LUANNE FANTASIA
GULF REGION NORTH DISTRICT

More than 200,000 Iraqis in the Sinjar Mountain region of northern Iraq have clean drinking water for the first time.

In April, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Gulf Region Division turned the Sinjar Wells project over to the provincial government in this mountainous region west of Mosul, near the Syrian border.

“If not for the Coalition Forces and the Corps of Engineers, these people might have been years or decades away from clean drinking water,” said Michael Miller, project engineer in the Mosul Resident Office. “Today, they enjoy a luxury they’ve never known. Imagine the health benefits of drinking water from a reliable, safe well system, rather than a possibly contaminated source.”

The project spans 56 villages in 13 zones, with each zone connecting specific villages to both the water pipeline network and electrical cables to power the pumps. Generators at each site provide backup power. More than 116 kilometers of water distribution lines were installed; 48 new wells were drilled and another 57 refurbished; 84 new pumps were installed; and 60 water storage tanks of varying sizes were constructed. The \$17 million project was funded through the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund.

Gary Lowe, the project manager for the Chamchamal and Fort Suse Prison project in the Sulaymaniyah Province, was project manager for the Sinjar Wells project when it started in December 2006. “Before the contract was awarded, a consulting firm tested the soil for availability of ground water and its suitability for drinking, and marked the locations where the new wells would be drilled,” he said. “The contractor followed these studies because the flow of water to the villages was also specified in the contract, as well as the capacity of pumps and sizes of pipes in the networks that serve the villages.”

The contract required each pump to provide 25 to 110 cubic meters of water per hour and for the depth of each well, old or

new, to range from 100 to 150 meters. Well output is based on five hours of operation daily.

“There were serious challenges for the Sinjar Wells project from the beginning,” Lowe said. “The villages were scattered over a vast area... Since there was no skilled workforce the contractor had to hire skilled labor from other areas and at the same time try to satisfy locals by providing them with other work opportunities.”

Lowe said that most of the engineers and technical staff for the project came from Mosul and daily transportation to the work sites was extremely difficult, as well as moving machinery and equipment. “The Mosul-Sinjar road passes through the town of Tal Afar, which has been a center of insurgent activity from the start of work until almost the last days before the project was completed,” he added.

The contractor overcame the commute problem by providing a temporary man camp in Sinjar where the engineers spent most of their weekday nights, allowing them to visit the different zones daily to ensure the work was properly performed.

Miller said he has not been able to meet and talk with the local citizens since the project was completed, “...but, the contract engineers and quality assurance representatives have relayed to us the appreciation expressed by the people. Villagers from areas bordering our construction zones have come to the workers and told them how wonderful the job is.”

Although the contractor trained water department personnel to operate pumps and generators as construction was completed in each zone, Miller said the remaining challenge to the Sinjar Wells project will be the Iraqi government’s maintenance of the water network.

“Each generator needs fuel and the poor security situation and politics sometimes makes this difficult. They need operators and guards at each of the well sites...and the local government is currently meeting that requirement,” Miller said. “But, the future security and economic situation in this region is precarious. It would be a shame to see their water supply suffer because of neglect.”

فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي يوصل الماء الى جبال شمالي العراق

بقلم لوان فانتيزا

القسم الشمالي في فرقة منطقة الخليج

تل عفر، التي كان ينشط فيها المسلحون، وكان هذا الخط (لنقل العمالة الماهرة) منذ بداية العمل حتى الأيام الاخيرة تقريبا للمشروع".

وأخيرا، تغلب المقاول على مشكلة النقل هذه بتوفير مخيم مؤقت في سنجار يقضي فيه المهندسون معظم ليالي أيام العمل، ما يسمح لهم بمتابعة مناطق مختلفة يوميا بغية انجاز العمل بنحو صحيح. وقال ميلر انه لم يكن قادرا على لقاء السكان المحليين والتحدث معهم منذ اكمال المشروع، "لكن، مهندسي المشروع وممثلي ضمان الجودة نقلوا الينا استحسان الناس. وجاء القرويون من المناطق المتاخمة لمواقع البناء الى العمال واعربوا عن اعجابهم بالعمل".

وعلى الرغم من ان المقاول درب موظفي دائرة الماء لتشغيل المضخات والمولدات بينما كان العمل في مراحلها الأخيرة في كل منطقة، الا أن ميلر أوضح ان التحديات الباقية للمشروع هي اعمال الصيانة لشبكة الماء الملقاة على عاتق الحكومة العراقية.

وقال "تحتاج كل مولدة الى وقود لكن الاوضاع الأمنية المتردية والسياسة احيانا تجعل هذا صعبا. يحتاجون الى مشغلين وحراس في كل مواقع الآبار ... والادارة المحلية تقوم حاليا بتوفير ذلك".

واضاف "لكن، الأمن المستقبلي والاضاع الاقتصادية في المنطقة غير مضمونة، من المخجل رؤية امدادات الماء تعاني بسبب الاهمال".

ومنذ ٢٠٠٤، أنجز القسم الشمالي من فرقة منطقة الخليج التابعة لفيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي ٢٧٠ مشروعا عاما ضمنها مشروعات مائة في سبع محافظات كانت حصة نينوى منها ١١٥ مشروعا.



نينوى، العراق – يتمتع الآن أكثر من ٢٠٠ ألف عراقي يسكنون في جبال سنجار (١١٥ كم غرب الموصل) بالماء الصالح للشرب للمرة الاولى بعد أن سلم فيلق مهندسي الجيش الأميركي مشروع آبار سنجار في نيسان/أبريل الى الادارة المحلية في هذه المنطقة قرب الحدود السورية ضمن محافظة نينوى.

وقال مهندس المشروع مايكل ميلر في المكتب المقيم بالموصل "لولا قوات التحالف وفيلق المهندسين ل بقي هؤلاء الناس بعيدين عن مياه الشرب النظيفة ... اليوم يتمتعون بنحو لم يعهدوه، تخيل الفوائد الصحية لشرب الماء من نظام آبار آمنة يمكن الاعتماد عليها بدلا من مصدر يحتمل ان يكون ملوثا".

ويشمل المشروع ٥٦ قرية في ١٣ منطقة كل واحدة تربط قرى محددة بشبكة أنابيب الماء وتمتد المضخات بالكهرباء.

وهناك مولدات كهرباء احتياطية في كل موقع. ومدت أنابيب توزيع المياه بطول ١١٦ كيلومترا، وتم حفر ٤٨ بئرا جديدة وتم تجديد ٥٧ بئرا اخرى، ونصبت ٨٤ مضخة جديدة وتم انشاء ٦٠ صهريجاً لخزن الماء بأحجام مختلفة. وتحمل صندوق اغاثة واعادة اعمار العراق تكاليف المشروع البالغة ١٧ مليون دولار.

وقال المدير السابق لمشروع آبار سنجار كاري لو "قبل منح العقد اجرت شركة استشارية اختبارا على التربة لمعرفة ما اذا كانت هناك مياه جوفية ومدى صلاحيتها للشرب ووضعت علامات على أماكن الآبار الجديدة التي تقرر حفرها".

واضاف لو "اتبع المقاول هذه الدراسات لان خطوط جريان الماء الى القرى كان محددا في العقد، كما حددت فيه ساعات المضخات وأحجام أنابيب الشبكات".

ويلزم العقد ان تكون قدرة كل مضخة ماء من ٢٥ الى ١١٠ متر مكعب في الساعة، ويحدد عمق كل بئر، سواء كانت جديدة او قديمة، بين مائة و ١٥٠ مترا، ويقاس انتاج البئر على أساس خمس ساعات من التشغيل في اليوم.

وقال كاري لو "كانت هناك تحديات جدية لمشروع آبار سنجار منذ البداية ... كانت القرى منتشرة في منطقة واسعة ... وبسبب غياب القوة العاملة الماهرة اضطر المقاول الى استئجار عمالة ماهرة من المناطق الاخرى وحاول في الوقت نفسه ارضاء أهالي المنطقة بتوفير أعمال اخرى لهم".

وأضاف كاري لو ان "معظم المهندسين والموظفين التقنيين في المشروع جاؤوا من الموصل وكان وصولهم الى مواقع العمل صعبا جدا كما هو الحال مع نقل المعدات والآلات".

وأردف كاري لو بالقول "يمر طريق الموصل – سنجار خلال



Gulf Region Division, al Rasheed substation personnel and the Siemens commissioning engineer talk about bringing the substation online in the 400kV Gas Insulated Switchgear building.

Al Rasheed substation energized

BY GRANT SATTLER
GULF REGION DIVISION

Businesses and residences of southwest Baghdad are benefiting from the recent completion of electricity transmission lines and the commissioning of a major substation.

The al-Rasheed 400 kV substation was energized May 28, 2008, on the 400 kV electrical grid only a few days after the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity completed the hook up of a new 11 kilometer 400 kV transmission line to the station.

“While this is not a generation station, it will, however, increase reliability of power for all people in southwest Baghdad,” said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Johnson, Gulf Region Division government lead for electricity transmission and distribution projects in Iraq. “It will connect them directly to the 400 kV grid and it is a much more reliable, much more stable source of power than what they are used to having.”



USACE photos by Grant Sattler

The 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear is housed indoors and connects the 400 kV transmission lines from the Baghdad ring with 132 kV distribution lines.

Johnson said the energizing of the substation is a tremendous example of partnership.

“I think that it’s awesome,” he said. “It’s a success story of interaction between the Government of Iraq’s Ministry of Electricity and the Army Corps of Engineers where the two sides work together and come to a common point at the point in time when they are supposed to. I think it is one of the success stories of the reconstruction of Iraq.”

Johnson explained that a substation converts electricity from one voltage level to another. In the case of al Rasheed 400 kV substation, modern Gas Insulated Switchgear in the facility protects the new transmission lines while new transformers “step down” the 400 kV power from the transmission lines to 132 kV for distribution to southwest Baghdad. In those neighborhoods, power is stepped down further by transformers to the consumer level of 220 volts, 50 amperes.

Johnson said reliability, from the perspective of the consumer, is having power when you expect to have power, but that service in Iraq will remain well below the western standard of 24 hours of power a day for several more years. Only lines feeding essential services such as hospitals, police stations and water and sewage facilities, are energized around the clock due to limited generation capacity.

“While we are not able to bridge the difference in [generation] capacity and demand...we can at least guarantee them that 40-50 percent of their day they will have power, rather than the 10 or 20 percent that they are having now,” he said.

Across Iraq, the construction of new, dependable electricity transmission and distribution lines, substations and transformers goes hand in hand with increasing electricity generation in gradually improving the extremely underfunded, antiquated electric grid.

“This is a brand new substation with brand new transmission

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Power grid stability up

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lines coming out of it...this will be an increase in capacity for transmission of power to their homes, and on a day to day basis they will see more electricity for longer periods," Johnson said.

Maj. Timothy Reed, Civil Affairs Officer for the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division operating in southwest Baghdad, said Soldiers on the street do see an impact after completion of reconstruction projects. "The big thing is people are more satisfied when things get done, when they have more electricity they are more welcoming. You'll see more people come out and greet you," Reed said. "It's always a great time to go out and meet the people and shake the hands. Because you know you are doing the right thing, they know you are doing the right thing. They are more open to you. They are more willing to give you more tips when you show that you provide for them, they will provide for you."

Work on the almost \$38 million Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund project began April 15, 2006. Although a new substation,

the project was actually a rebuild of a previous effort.

Construction of the substation originally known as Baghdad Central 400 kV substation began under the Oil for Food program in 2001, but was abandoned in 2003 when approximately 80 percent complete.

In the aftermath of the downfall of Saddam Hussein's regime, the substation suffered heavy looting and all moveable and readily re-usable equipment was stolen. The buildings also suffered extensive damage and most low voltage and control cables were stripped. All protection and 400 kV and 132 kV control cubicle panels were damaged beyond repair, according to reports.

Starting essentially from scratch, the project installed the 400 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear and 400 kV Air Insulated Switchgear for four overhead line bays and four 250 MVA transformer bays that are configured as a dozen - 400/132 kV 83MVA single phase auto transformers and an additional spare.

Also included in the project was the 132 kV Gas Insulated Switchgear rehabilitation, replacement of the 11 kV switchgear, low voltage switchgear, low voltage cables and control cables; and refurbishment of all buildings and building services for the facility.



USACE photo by Grant Sattler



USACE photo by Grant Sattler

Operators control the substation from state of the art control panels in the modernized control room.



USACE photo by Erich Langer

Workers install components of the switchgear in this photo taken in March 2007.

Where rubber meets road

BY ERICH LANGER
GULF REGION DIVISION

Basrah Area Office Engineer Dan Foltz had some bitter sweet moments recently as he met with his Iraqi associates for likely the last time. Foltz, completing his second tour in Iraq, was packing, tying up loose ends and administratively “closing the loop” on his portfolio of 140-plus projects with BAO staff...all as he prepared to redeploy.

The cavalry and fresh horses were reported on their way, but reinforcements would not be posted to Basrah before Foltz left theater.

With no replacement expected for three weeks or longer, Foltz busied himself helping set up everyone for success; but, he was especially cognizant of his relationship with his Iraqi project engineers, who would not miss a beat on managing their portfolio of important reconstruction projects in Basrah and Maysan governorates.

The rubber meets the road with the Iraqi engineers – the foot soldiers of the Gulf Region Division.

GRD’s eyes and ears on reconstruction sites belong to select members of the Iraqi engineer team. The security situation in Iraq and sheer number of projects assigned to GRD staff further define the integral role of Gulf Region South (GRS) district’s Iraqi engineers.

“Throughout my time here, I’ve had the opportunity to work with great individuals – good people helping with the future of Iraq,” said Foltz, as he addressed 20 of his Iraqi engineers. “I’ll redeploy very soon. Unfortunate for me; but, this is an opportunity for you to take what I have done for you and to share with my replacement and an opportunity for him to learn from you.”

Although Foltz and his Iraqi Deputy Resident Engineer, identified as Al for security reasons, have worked hard to mentor and teach the Iraqi engineer team about GRD engineering techniques, standards and procedures, the effort is a continuing process. BAO project engineers interact with contractors,

end users and others as they incorporate GRD construction standards, schedules and the all important “scope of work” into projects.

“Since we began work for GRS in 2004, our team has done a great job in many sectors: electricity, water, health, education, security and justice,” said Engineer Al as he proudly reflected on megawatts of power, cubic meters of potable water, miles of roads, numbers of police stations, border forts and health clinics constructed with the help of his fellow Iraqi engineers. “Our projects are completed to the high standards set by GRS, thanks to all of our quality assurance engineers who are on projects every day.”

Foltz and Engineer Al headed the combined team of several Iraqi engineer staffs previously posted to other BAO resident offices. The security situation and other administrative requirements necessitated the Iraqi engineering staff coming together at BAO.

“Within a short period of time we had our Iraqi engineers reporting to BAO,” Foltz said. He said that it was a difficult time as the team adjusted to expectations and the new personal relationships that had to be forged.

Understanding the importance of work relationships, Foltz decided to act quickly to stabilize the situation. “In this culture, trust is essential; it sometimes takes a long time to earn, but can quickly deteriorate,” he said. “Also, individuals senior in age command more respect because they are perceived to have more knowledge and experience.” This may or may not be the case, but it is a truism in Iraq.

He decided to conduct elections. The Iraqi engineering team sorted out leadership issues among themselves resulting in a work environment that benefited the engineers and BAO’s mission.

Foltz used monthly “all hands” Iraqi engineer gatherings as opportunities to interact with staff and to encourage them to mentor and educate Iraqi contractors and other engineers.

“You can help continue making better projects for a better long-term Iraq. I want you to use your experiences,” said Foltz. “USACE has a different set of expectations on project completion and safety than historically accepted here. And, although it is possible for construction to last 2,000 or 3,000 years in Iraq, USACE doesn’t ask for that level!”

“But, I want to visit Iraq in the future and see the projects you have built. These projects—your projects and those you will impact—if constructed properly can last 25, 50 or 100 years.”

Iraqi Engineer Profile...Engineer Al

In Iraq, “scope of work” is a foreign concept within the construction and engineering community. GRD, as project executor for more than 4,000

...great individuals—
good people helping with
the future of Iraq.

Dan Foltz
Basrah Area Office Engineer
Gulf Region South district



USACE photo by Erich Langer

Dan Foltz visits a roll on/roll off dock at Port Umm Qasr near Basrah.

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Iraqi engineers

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USACE photo by Erich Langer



reconstruction projects across the country, is working hard to indoctrinate the concept into the construction culture.

Equated to a signed agreement or contract, a project's scope of work can not be adjusted or changed on the job site without modifications agreed to by the executor (GRD) and the contractor.

"Not unlike a U.S. contractor building you a new house, if the contract

stipulates a three-car garage you can't simply tell the contractor to build you a pool and forget about one of those garages," said Donn Booker, director Business Management for the Gulf Region Division. "Our districts are charged with constructing the projects as outlined within the project's scope of work."

Deputy Resident Engineer Al has taken the concept to heart, and mentors and instructs fellow Iraqi engineers working for him to follow the scope of work as a "road map" to proper project execution. Engineer Al, who has worked on GRS infrastructure projects since 2004, understands that the information contained in the scope of work provides the guidelines and outcomes expected for each project.

"We are constantly striving to teach all of our Iraqi engineers about the importance of the scope of work within our contracts," he said. "It helps with quality control, safety and other items. Contractors and project owners sometimes want to make adjustments, changes including additions or deletions."

Changes can be made with contract modifications, but contract adjustments without modifications are not allowed on GRD projects and Engineer Al is working hard to convey this standardized principle within the construction community.

"Engineer Al is very dedicated engineer," said Foltz. "His assistance and insight has been invaluable and he has gained the respect of his fellow engineers. Thanks to Engineer Al's efforts, we have been able to create a very good work environment among all of our Iraqi engineers." Foltz believes that Engineer Al's efforts are helping train the next generation of Iraqi engineers.

Iraqi Engineer Profile...Engineer Firas

His fellow engineers joke with him because his excellent English language skills have a hint of a Scottish brogue. Although he hasn't traveled to the Scottish Highlands to apply his craft, Project Engineer Firas is an accomplished engineer with lots of

construction experience.

"In 2004, I was one of the first Iraqi engineers to join GRS," said Firas. "We have learned so much about the GRS mission as we work to construct projects in Iraq."

Foltz's constant drumbeat on following project scope of work has resonated with Firas.

USACE photo by A. Al Bahrani



"We never knew about scope of work before and how important it is in constructing projects," he said. "Also, I have learned more about technical matters in using computers and GPS...all, thanks to GRS."

What about those language skills? "I have developed my English language skills as I work with our engineers and all the employees from the Basrah office," said Firas. "It has been a great opportunity to work for GRS."

Iraqi Engineer Profile...Engineer Ihsan

Project engineer and team lead, Engineer Ihsan has worked for GRS since November 2004. During his time with GRD, he has especially enjoyed working on several of the Basrah Area Office's larger projects.

He smiles as he reflects on several of the important projects that he has played an important role in constructing.

"My favorite project was the Khor Al- Zubair Health Clinic. With this project, GRS is helping many people," he said. "I have visited the clinic after we finished the work—it has medical



equipment and professional health employees helping Iraqis. I have seen with my own eyes the people benefiting from this project."

Ihsan

also worked on other health sector projects, as well as some of Basrah's larger sewage projects. Perhaps GRS' most important transportation sector initiative, Aspen Road, also is in his portfolio.

"Helping Iraq by developing projects in my field of expertise is very rewarding," he said. "And, I thank Mr. Dan Foltz and all people with GRS for helping me help Iraq."

Iraqi Engineer Profile...Safety Engineer Adnan

"Most GRS projects in Basrah have been done very good. These projects are offering a better future for Iraq," said Safety Engineer Adnan.

GRD has incorporated the importance of safety into all GRS reconstruction contracts. Safety is an area Iraqis are still learning about, too.

"I like to think that safety is the most important thing. Before GRS, we knew nothing about safety and no safety measures were followed on the project sites," said Adnan.

The young engineer is passionate about his safety mission and strongly believes safety is a higher priority because the importance Dan Foltz has placed on this area of construction.

"Beautiful things all because of Dan and safety," he said. "All GRS contracts have rules about safety," said Adnan. "It is the contractor's job to focus on safety. I used to go on project sites and I would not see any sign of safety – no PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) like hard hats, safety glasses or shoes. No secure scaffolding and important safety plans."

Thanks to enthusiastic engineers like Adnan and other young engineers working with GRD who have learned under Foltz, Iraqi construction sites are safer today. "Before GRS, Iraqis never heard of safety and the importance of safety. Now, I go to job sites and safety is everywhere. This is very good," Adnan said.



An Iraqi worker prepares to weld plate for a steel intake structure in the Shatt Al-Arab.

USACE photo by Erich Langer

Qurmat Ali brings Basrah water

BY A. AL BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in southern Iraq is investing \$9.5 million to develop one of the most strategic water projects in Al-Garma, north of Basrah province.

The project aims to increase the Qurmat Ali pumping unit's capacity from 4,000 to 16,000 cubic meters per hour to provide uninterrupted flow of water for the people of Basrah and develop the infrastructure to improve the quality of life for all the people, said Ferdinand Guese, the project engineer in the Gulf Region Division's Basrah Area Office.

Guese said the project includes installation of a two-part steel intake structure with all mechanical, electrical and civil related works; a low lift pump station to include five 2,000 cubic meter per hour pumps; and a high lift pump station with six pumps ranging in size from 1,500 to 2,000 cubic meters per hour.

"A new chlorine building will be installed to include the chlorination system and chlorine, in addition to the construction of two water compact units at 400 cubic meters per hour each," Guese said.

The project is one of many GRD is overseeing to rebuild and develop Basrah province. The projects were requested by Basrah Governorate and the Basrah Director General (DG), according to Army Maj. Stephen Dale, executive officer and

operations officer of the Basrah Area Office of the Gulf Region South district.

"Despite construction challenges in Iraq, Army engineers contribute to a higher level of quality construction than usually seen in the region," Dale said.

GRS awarded this contract to Al Dayer United Company for General Construction in January 2008. The project is about 20 percent finished and is to be completed by the end of this year, Guese said

Executive manager of Al Dayer said, "All the construction work we are doing here is under the supervision of the GRS. This project is one of the highly needed projects by the people of Basrah due to the high salinity in the water and the lack of water treatment systems in the province.

"In fact, I got more than one job opportunity in some other countries just like United Arab States and Lebanon, but I prefer staying here and get the honor of rebuilding my country and seeing those local people getting more jobs and more chances in life," the executive manager said. "We are employing, on an average, 70 Iraqi local workers a day and I'm very happy to see these locals getting job opportunities so they can support their families and better their way of life," he added.

GRD will build a diesel generator building, install two, 2 megavolt generators, a 2,500 gallon diesel fuel tank, transformers and all connections to provide a full time operating system to the Qurmat Ali

pumping units.

Al, the GRD Iraqi deputy resident engineer overseeing the work at Qurmat Ali pumping units said, "Shatt Al-Arab is the source of raw water to supply this project and the construction work for this facility includes 11 new large intake pumps in addition to the renovation of the four existing ones."

"The new facility will include a 3,000 cubic meter ground storage tank and will have the capacity to produce 16,000 cubic meters an hour of treated water, which will significantly supplement the existing water supply and will provide clean water supply for the 2.5 million residents in Basrah province," said Al.

The Basrah Area Office will provide about 80 hours of training for 15 electrical engineers and technicians for the operation and maintenance of the new water system and all the associated equipment and components.

An Iraqi citizen who lives in Al Qarma said, "We are anxiously awaiting the completion of this project. Currently due to the hot weather in summer and the lack of a sufficient water system in the Basrah province, we suffer low or no water pressure. This project definitely will improve the water system in the area."

The upgrade of the water system will bring many benefits to the people of Basrah. By increasing the efficiency of water management, Guese said, Basrah residents will enjoy more clean water.

Contractor training guides bidders



USACE photo illustration by H. Al-Tate

BY M. AMEER
GULF REGION DIVISION

Gulf Region Division and Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan held a Contracting Training session May 10, 2008, with the aim of guiding Iraqi contractors through bidding procedures. Also at the session, new services being offered by three Iraqi Banks were laid out.

The hosts, Azza Humadi, program manager of the Women's Program at GRD, and Ali al-Hathaf, senior business adviser at JCC-I/A, gave registration information to companies interested in bidding. They also encouraged and showed the audience how to search for solicitations on the Internet.

The session, in the Green Zone in central Baghdad, was attended by Navy Capt. Mark Ohl, the deputy commander of the JCC-I/A; military officers; two representatives of the Iraqi defense and interior ministries; 18 business women; and about 40 vendors and contractors.

"Despite the challenges and obstacles, the Iraqi First Program (IFP) proved its success by showing its ability to build credibility and help Iraqi contractors to bid on contracts," said Humadi in her opening remarks.

Gen. George Casey launched the IFP initiative in June 2006 in a bid to award as many contracts as possible to Iraqi contractors and vendors in order to create more job opportunities.

Humadi requested in her speech that more immediate support be provided to Iraqi women. "In spite of the difficult situation, she [Iraqi business woman] is building and competing with her male counterparts...unfortunately, the overall percentage of contracts awarded to them is

still very small," she said.

There have been considerable strides in giving more contracts to Iraqi contractors in the last couple of years, according to Ohl. "In the last two years, through our very successful Iraqi First Program, we've awarded over \$4.8 billion in contracts to Iraqi vendors. We have increased the number of local businesses we work with directly to over 3,500 in that time as well.

"That is a tremendous amount of economic impact," Ohl added.

There are 15 business advisers in JCC-I/A across Iraq, who act as a bridge to connect contract offices with the Iraqi contractors in order to help them.

...through our very successful Iraqi First Program, we've awarded over \$4.8 billion...

Navy Capt. Mark Ohl
JCC-I/A Deputy Commander

Ohl touched on adopting the new Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) approach, considering "it will give support to Iraqi banking."

On his part, Brig. Johnny Torrens-Spence, the deputy commanding general at the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq told the audience that the financial allocations for the Iraqi defense and interior ministries have increased significantly in the last year.

"I am keen that these funds will be spent all over Iraq," said Torrens-Spence. "I know that this task is not easy and is accompanied by some slowness, but we

are trying to find solutions."

Iraqi defense and interior ministries were allocated \$7 billion in Iraq's 2008 budget and will be increased to \$9 billion for 2009.

Al-Hathaf delineated how the contracts must be submitted and also the conditions that must be met in order to register the Iraqi firms correctly. He pointed out that a committee will verify the credibility of submitted information and will check the companies' bank balances.

Al-Hathaf underlined the importance of insurance. Every contractor must apply for insurance for his or her workers through recognized companies.

An Iraqi business woman in attendance said that she found the training session useful for asking questions directly to contracting organization representatives. "I try not to miss any meeting arranged by Ms. Azza [Humadi]." The 32-year-old woman who handles various contracts, including a \$1 million vehicle supply contract spoke on condition of anonymity.

Asked about the difficulties that contractors face, she said, "Every project has its particular difficulties, including the delay at customs or in delivery, but still the paramount one is the security."

Representatives from three Iraqi banks talked about their banks' new services for the Iraqi contractors, including the EFT and the possibility of getting the contract payments directly from the banks, instead of waiting for periods up to 42 days to receive their payment from the U.S. side.

Bank representatives expressed their optimism about the banking sector, especially while the Iraqi government is buying the components of rations from Iraqi merchants who are dealing with banks that give them the required letters of credit of up to \$2 million.

Port logistics supplies reconstruction

STORY & PHOTO BY ERICH LANGER

GULF REGION DIVISION

At Iraq's busy Port Umm Qasr, the pace borders on frantic. A constant buzz along the docks...workers, trucks, cranes and other sights and sounds associated with shipping food, raw materials, equipment and just about anything under the sun into a country that not long ago wasn't supporting much consumerism.

Iraq's economy continues to expand and so does demand for products.

North Port and adjacent South Port are Iraq's only outlets to the sea and all the bounty she holds. Like most world ports, port Umm Qasr has the distinctive sights and smells associated with the shipping trade. Yes, that gritty feel persists here; as more and more goods are shipped into country the port will only get busier.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Gulf Region Division (GRD) has been very busy at the port since beginning Iraq reconstruction efforts in 2004. Numerous projects are interwoven into the successful port operation.

New cranes dot the landscape while older ones were refurbished and repaired. And, the essential electrical infrastructure to power them and other important port operations now helps keep everything humming along.

Shipping channel dredging and wreck removal, too, was carried out. Much more work in this area is needed as more than 200 maritime wrecks of various dimension lie in these waters and regular dredging is necessary to keep shipping channels clear.

Miles of security fencing was constructed along with a new security operations center. And, last year's completion of the new roll on/roll off platform doubled the capacity for shippers to quickly load and unload wheel stock. If managed correctly, it only takes a few hours to unload a huge cargo ship filled with a couple thousand vehicles.

U.S. Navy Captain Jerome Davis is in his element at the port.

Called to active duty nearly eight months ago, Davis received his orders to deploy to Iraq in support of USACE's GRD Logistics mission. In civilian life, Davis works maritime operations for the U.S. Department of Transportation's U.S. Maritime Administration in Washington, D.C. – so he is no fish out of water at Umm Qasr.

"I received orders to deploy and complied without hesitation," said the 29-year Navy man. "I really had no idea what my Iraq mission would be – it didn't really matter; I was ready to do what ever was needed." Fortunately for GRD, they had the right man at the right time for this important job.

Actually, Davis and his uniformed military/DoD civilian/contractor team are not involved in port operations or construction. Nope, his fiefdom is near the docks but inconspicuously nestled away behind fortified gates and fencing that is home to two large warehouses and an expansive sand covered parking lot.

GRD Logistics' port operation centers on receiving shipped non construction cargo supporting the Government of Iraq (GoI). Davis' efforts support all ministries. Items run the gambit from fire trucks to police vehicles and medical equipment for primary healthcare centers and hospitals. You name it and it probably has or will be seen at the center.

"A vast majority of cargo we receive is bought and paid for by the U.S. taxpayer as a gift to the people of Iraq," said Davis as



Navy Capt. Jerome Davis speaks to Iraqi press about GRD Logistics operations at Port Umm Qasr.

he referenced the \$18.44 billion Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund appropriated by Congress to help "jump start" Iraq's infrastructure construction and non-construction efforts.

Cargo has been coming into GRD's port hub since 2004.

Once received, items are checked for damage, accepted and catalogued into the system for ultimate shipment via convoy to GoI ministries or GRD Logistics' Abu Ghraib warehouse located in western Baghdad. Cargo shipped to Abu Ghraib will be picked up by ministry officials or delivered by GRD Logistics' contract shippers.

Davis gazed upon the sea of vehicles in his charge. All are parked "dress right, dress" military fashion in long straight lines filling up a good portion of the huge lot. Today, Ford F-250 pick up trucks take up most of the parking area but fire trucks, a couple varieties of ambulances and even some trailers are on hand, too.

"We have about 1,150 Ford pick up trucks here destined for the Ministry of Interior," said Davis. "We had many more a couple weeks ago but we've been pushing them out."

To illustrate his point, he gestured toward another section of the expansive parking area where scores of tractor trailers are rigged with vehicle carriers loaded with pick ups. All staged for a quick departure.

"You see all those Fords loaded and ready for convoy departure? They're in the final prep stage for moving out to our Abu warehouse up at Baghdad," he said with the authority of a logistician satisfied with accomplishing his mission of moving cargo thru the system. "I am sure we'll be getting more cargo to fill up the space being vacated – it is a never ending operation of receiving and shipping."

Davis has completed his months at the helm of the Umm Qasr Logistics mission and shipped out for home. "I'll be closing out my military career later this year," he said as the date of his departure approached. "...But right now all my attention is focused on GRD's Logistics mission and pushing cargo."

Soccer ball donation scores

BY JOHN CONNOR

GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Many new soccer balls are being booted around the playing fields of southern Iraq, thanks to the J. Frank Hillyard Middle School in Broadway, Va.

Broadway, a town of about 3,200 nestled in the historic Shenandoah Valley, is a far piece from Iraq. But the students and faculty at the JFH Middle School there helped bridge the gap by sending 125 spanking new soccer balls to be enjoyed by Iraqi children and to support the Iraq reconstruction mission of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The initiative was conceived and spearheaded by JFH Middle School Math Teacher Denise Hill, whose brother, Col. Stephen Hill, is the commanding officer of USACE's Gulf Region South district in Iraq.

Members of the GRS team, as well as USACE personnel elsewhere in Iraq, have grown accustomed to doing more than just overseeing the construction of billions of dollars of facilities for the Iraqi people. They over the past several years have collected and donated to Iraqis such things as shoes, clothing, classroom supplies and sports equipment, with the emphasis on helping children.

"Delivery of these items in concert with our project visits seems to have a real positive impact," said the colonel. USACE personnel regularly visit project sites to assure the quality of the work, most of which is being done by Iraqi contractors.

Maj. Edward Wright, the S-3 operations officer at GRS and a 28-year veteran of the teacher/coaching profession in Mississippi, said, "When I was a kid, if someone gave me a new ball, they had a friend for life.

"I don't suppose these guys are much different," added Wright, who is known as "Coach." Right you are, Coach.

An Iraqi serving as an interpreter with Coalition forces recalled the role of soccer balls in his childhood: "Each neighborhood had a lucky kid or two who owned a ball. They'd have it with them at all times. Kids would show up before school to get in a quick game. Lunch was eaten



USACE photo

An Iraqi boy stops dribbling his soccer ball long enough for a photo.

in about fifteen seconds so the rest of the break could be spent playing. Instead of rushing home from school, the boys would hang around an extra hour or two to play the day's last game.

"When a ball wasn't available--more often than not because the kid who owned it got in trouble for not doing his chores--anything found would suffice," he continued. "One great game, I'll never forget, with the intensity of a World Cup match,

was played with an empty orange juice container."

Denise Hill asked her brother, the colonel, some months ago what he could use and he said "soccer balls."

Doug Alderfer, the principal at the middle school, quickly got behind the idea and the students and teachers set the goal of raising enough money to buy and ship 50 soccer balls.

They easily surpassed that goal, coming up with 125 balls, with a welcome assist in the way of reduced prices from Billy Kingsley, owner of Upper 90 Soccer in nearby Harrisonburg, Va.

Alderfer said Kingsley provided the balls at the wholesale price of \$15 a ball, down from the retail price of \$45. He said the students and faculty raised almost \$2,000 to purchase and ship the balls.

"It is clear from my ten months in Iraq that the effort of the students of JFH Middle School directly contributed to our mission here in three ways," said Col. Hill. "It showed the children of Iraq that we care about them, made the project sites safer as parents saw the soccer balls given to their children, and provided a chance for the JFH Middle School children to make a very valuable contribution.

"What a great effort of kindness and support," said Col. Hill, who extended his thanks to Principal Alderfer, his sister Denise, Upper 90 Soccer owner Kingsley, and to "the super students" of JFH Middle School for "contributing to the Army Corps of Engineers reconstruction effort in Iraq."

...the students of JFH Middle School directly contributed to our mission...

Col. Stephen Hill
Gulf Region South Commander

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Gulf Region Division



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Hailing:



William Wilkinson
GRN



Tony Soliz
GRN



Dennis McKinley
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Gerry Saunders
GRN



Lott Hughes
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Army Specialist
David Jones
GRN



James Jackson
GRN



Alex Herrera
GRN



Donald Wilson
GRN



Noel Acevero
GRN



Lt. Cmdr.
Keith Barkey
GRN



Izak "Sakki" Marais
GRN



Sr. Chief
Doug Maytorena
GRN



Tiffany Matthews-Lay
GRN



Ismail Musa
GRN



Bryton Johnson
GRN



Craig Chuha
GRN



Beckie Lambson
GRN



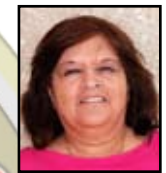
Lt. Col.
John Burgess
GRS



Loyd McClinton
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Norris Jones
GRS



Fanny Quesada
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Ray Gonzales
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Cleon Turner
GRC



Thomas Swigunski
GRC



2nd Lt.
Shane Deckert
GRC



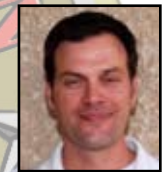
George Baffoe
GRC



Steven Paul
GRC



Carol Seaton
GRC



George Norton
GRC



Army Capt.
David "Leon" Hall
GRC



Mahlon "Mel" Good
GRC



Sara Delmonico
GRC



Terry White
GRC



Paul Ijames
GRC



Moni Grewal
GR C



Navy Chief
Guy Holtz
GRC



Julie McLeod
GRC



Ron Barkley
GRD



Anthony Casella
GRD



Master Sgt.
Terry New
GRD



Maj.
Robert Petty
GRD



Susan Platt
GRD



Lawrence Harrison
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Polli Keller
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Cmdr.
Jerome Zinni
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Col.
Michael Coughlan
GRD