

**TALKING POINTS FOR MEETING WITH  
EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE**

January 8, 2004

**JANUARY GOALS:**

Aviation:

- **Hajj Situation:** MoT staff continues to assess and prepare for Hajj flights, particularly for pilgrims departing from BIAP.
- **Training the staff of General Establishment for Civil Aviation (GECA).** To prepare for handover of authority, MoT staff are training staff of GECA's agencies (comprising the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority and Airport Authority) in the following operational management areas:
  - **Certification of aircraft worthiness and carrier background.**
  - **Provision of ground services handling.**
  - **Handling of communications and data linkage between air traffic control tower and aircrafts.**
  - **Basic meteorological observation and forecasting (late January).**
- **Installation of Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT).** MoT is supervising the training of Iraqi technicians and examining their ability to install VSAT at Ar Rutbah, in late January. Assisted by the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the VSAT at Ar Rutbah will enable air traffic controllers to deliver voice and data communications with aircraft in western Iraq.
- **Meteorological Services:** On January 18, 2004, the Italian Government is expected to deliver \$1.2 million in basic meteorological equipment for BIAP's commercial aviation operations.

Maritime:

- **Port Task Force** – Yesterday, MoT's Port Task Force held its inaugural meeting, to include Transportation Minister Behnam, Ministry of Interior staff, PMO staff, USAID, and Iraqi Port Authority (IPA). The targeted goals of this task force are effective management of the supplemental funds totaling \$40 million, efficient port operations, a clear reconstruction plan, and a smooth transition in turning over the port of Umm Qasr to the Iraq Port Authority.
- **Iraqi River Patrol Service** – The Iraq River Patrol Service will become operational at Umm Qasr in mid-January, and will conduct 24/7 operations by the end of February, thereby improving port and waterborne security. Patrols will be conducted from Umm Qasr to the liquefied petroleum gas terminal at Khawr Az Zubayr.

Railway:

- **Continued Operation of Railway, despite Security Threats** – All routes are open for freight, except the Bayji-Kirkuk line in the north due to bridge damage. Also, passenger trains operate once weekly between Mosul and Aleppo, Syria, and daily between Baghdad and three cities (Basrah, Haseiba, and Mosul).