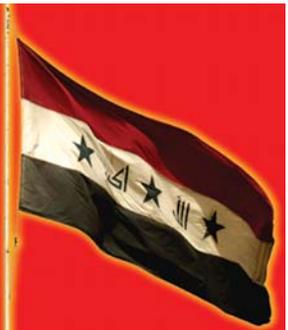




THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



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U.S. Army photo by Spc. Ferdinand Thomas

Adel Al Lamim, a member of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, signs Iraq's constitution yesterday in the Convention Center in Baghdad after the referendum vote was announced with 78 percent of voters approving the new constitution.

Iraqis vote to ratify their new constitution

By Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin
214th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD — “I have the final results of the concession of the constitutional referendum ... the first to be held in Iraq in a long time,” Dr. Fareed Ayar said, representing the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq.

The outcome of the vote is not only successful in the fact that over 78 percent voted yes to ratify the new Iraqi Constitution, but it expressed a civilized step — “Iraqis using mind and reason

instead of violence and weapons,” he said.

Twelve of the 18 provinces — mainly Kurdish or Shia — weighed in at 94 percent or greater with a yes vote, and only two provinces — mainly Sunni — showed a lopsided no vote at 81 percent and 97 percent.

All of the provinces were monitored by United Nations watchdog groups, said Hamdiyah Al-Hussainy, another commissioner who stood beside Ayar. The high turnout for this type of national vote met with international standards adding confidence to the results, she said. Further, the

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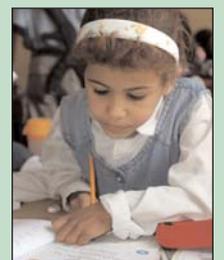
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Results of hard work showing in Iraq

By Gen. George W. Casey Jr.
Multi-National Force - Iraq Commanding General

As I have said repeatedly, the Coalition and its Iraqi partners make progress little steps at a time, and after a while these little steps add up to a big moment. The constitutional referendum was such a moment. The Independent Electoral Commission for Iraq reported that 9,852,291 Iraqis cast their vote in the constitutional referendum with 78.59 percent voting for the constitution and 21.41 percent voting against. By almost a four-to-one margin the people have voted for a constitution that will help guide the way ahead for this new country. What is remarkable about the approved constitution is the fact that Sunni, Shi'a and Kurds took part in the process. Almost 10 million people voted with no major incidents. This historic vote was possible because a secure environment was created by the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) who led the way in securing the polling sites for the constitutional referendum with Coalition forces support. By any measure, everyone did a superb job.



Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

So, what does the future look like for the Coalition? Same little steps, same unrelenting determination toward our goal. The next step on the path toward democracy is the December elections. Over the next two months an even more capable ISF will exist than before, more Iraqi Army will control more battle space and more Iraqi police will control the streets. Security is the driving force around the country allowing for political and economic improvement. An improved security environment allows critical infrastructure upgrades necessary for the future of Iraq to take place around the country. Right now billions of dollars are being spent on Iraqi infrastructure and on thousands of quality of life improvements all across the country such as: a new gas turbine rehabilitation in Ninewa; construction in Basrah to provide water for 134,000 people; and a 12-classroom school renovation project in Diyala is under way that will create a better learning environment for 770 students. These are just some of the examples of what better security can bring.

More sacrifice and little steps will have to be taken in the coming months—but watch as they add up to another big leap toward sovereignty in December.



Courtesy photo

Work on Fort Suse, in the mountains of Sulaymaniyah near the Iranian border, built in 1977 for the Iraqi military, provided the most cost-effective way to create new detention space.

Team turns old fort into detention facility

By Elaine Eliah
Special to American Forces Press Service

SULAYMANIYAH — Take a design engineer, a project manager and a construction company. Drop them into Iraq's mountainous north and hand them a "mission, impossible": Turn a relic of an old military fort into an internment facility ready to receive 1,000 detainees within eight weeks.

That's the task the Air Force Center for Environmental Excellence and contractor ECC International faced.

"We and our contract partner were up to the challenge," said Tom Russell, AFCEE's director of worldwide installation support.

The team got the order to

proceed in August, but the challenge began months earlier, when the U.S. military sought to expand the capacity of Iraq's detention facilities. In northern Iraq, several rectangular forts with turrets rounding each corner dot the landscape around Kirkuk, Erbil, and in the mountains of Sulaymaniyah, near the Iranian border. Officials selected Fort Suse, built in 1977 for the Iraqi military, as the most cost-effective way to create new detention space without spending a great deal of money.

In the spring, Army Maj. Frank McCormick, an engineer assigned to the staff of the commander of American detainee operations in Iraq,

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Iraqi referendum seen as a security success

By Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — With insurgent attacks down and voter participation up on Oct. 15, Iraq's constitutional referendum is being viewed as a security and participation success, a senior military official said in a news conference in Iraq on Sunday.

"[In] January there were 89 attacks against polling sites, while there were only 19 during the referendum," said Air Force Brig. Gen. Donald Alston, a spokesman for Multi-National Force - Iraq. "The safe and secure environment resulted in higher voter turnout, estimated at over 60 percent — about 10 million people. [Iraqi Forces] had the lead for security for the referendum and they excelled."

Iraqi Security Forces led security operations for the referendum, including security at the polling centers and a cordon out-

side those centers. Coalition Forces provided support with outer perimeter security, he said.

Three days after the referendum, Iraqi Security Forces independently conducted 10 of 35 offensive operations throughout the country. In the future, this will more frequently be the case, Alston said.

"What you will see in the next coming months [is] more and more portions of Iraq turned over to Iraqi security forces," he said. He added that though some limited areas of Iraq are patrolled solely by Iraqi Security Forces, none are ready for a complete handover of security to Iraqi Security Forces.

There are now more than 206,000 trained and equipped Iraqi Security Forces. That number is expected to close in on 300,000 in about a year, Alston said.

Turning attention to the insurgency, the general said 18 foreign fighters had been captured this month, part of the 311 captured since April. He also noted that 60 percent of the 376 foreign fighters cap-

tured in 2005 were from Egypt, Syria, Sudan and Saudi Arabia.

The Iraqi border is long and difficult to defend, Alston said, though measures are being taken to reinforce security there.

"We have been, throughout these last two years, ... building border forts to improve the infrastructure along the borders," he said. "The plan is to increasingly deploy ready Iraqi Security Forces out to the border areas. Now ... there are more Iraqi Security Forces who are better able to step up to that mission to man those borders."

Another important step to a new Iraq came Oct. 19 with the beginning of Saddam Hussein's trial for a July 1982 attack on the village of Dujail, Iraq, Alston said. That attack resulted in the arrest and torture of men, women and children.

"As you saw [on] television, the Iraqi special tribunal proceedings clearly demonstrated that the trial will be open and transparent, fair and just, and most importantly, led by Iraqis themselves," he said.



U. S. Army photo by Spc. Ferdinand Thomas

Members of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq announce the results of the constitutional referendum yesterday.

Referendum — from page 1

UN verified 97 to 98 percent of the vote.

Despite the fact most Sunnis voted no, they participated with freedom of expression. "It is the exercise of democracy to vote. And the Sunnis have exercised their right to vote," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said.

"The news is good ... the constitution is not a holy book; it will be subject to change," said an Iraqi interpreter of a Shia background.

Before this national vote took place, the Shia and Kurdish majorities agreed to concessions for the Sunnis to later debate certain elements of the constitution concerning federalism.

At the next vote in December for electing a new parliament, officials expect they "will have full Sunni participation because Sunnis are now really involved in the process," Rice said.

(Editor's note: Gerry J. Gilmore, American Forces Press Service, contributed to this article.)

Iraqi Army helicopter pad opens in Tikrit

TIKRIT — The Iraqi Army in Salah Ad Din Province christened a new helicopter pad with the landing of a Coalition Forces aircraft Oct. 10.

The landing marked the end of a three-monthlong project to build the helicopter pad on the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade compound in Tikrit.

The landing was also a special occasion for the pilot of that first helicopter, Maj. Kelly Donna, the operations officer for 4th Battalion, 3rd Air Assault Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division.

Donna, formerly the Military Training Team (MiTT) chief for 1st Brigade

Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, was the officer who started the project.

"I was very excited to be the first guy to land there," Donna said. "It was closure on a project that I had started three months earlier."

Donna cited the hard work of 1BCT MiTT Soldiers and contract liaisons for bringing this project to closure.

Because of Donna's efforts, Brig. Gen. Abdul Jabbar, commander of the 1st IA Bde., honored him by naming the helicopter pad Donna Pad.

"It makes you feel good knowing that [the Iraqi Army] recognize you and your guys for your efforts," Donna said.

450 Iraqi children will receive a better education in a newly refurbished 2,500 square-meter school building in Dhi Qar Province.

Iraqi, American Soldiers help clean up neighborhood



Courtesy photo

The 2nd Iraqi Army Brigade S-5 coordinates an MCA neighborhood cleanup project with Soldiers from TF 1/148 Field Artillery MiTT, and the 2nd and 4th Iraqi Army battalions.

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR — Soldiers of the 116th Brigade Combat Team helped the Iraqi Army to improve its image by helping organize a neighborhood cleanup in the Kirkuk area Oct. 8.

Since the regime of Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi Army has suffered from a bad public image. However, this image is undergoing a rejuvenation with the help of Military Transition Team (MiTT) Soldiers from Task Force (TF) 1/148 Field Artillery.

Iraqi Army Soldiers of the 2nd and 4th IA Battalions, 2nd Iraqi Army Bde., in coordination with the MiTT team of TF 1-148 Field Artillery, began its first Military-

Civil Action (MCA) project, to clean up the neighborhood of Hay Al Kahdr.

The project incorporated assets from the Iraqi Police and Kirkuk Sanitation Department, who both requested to participate in future Iraqi Army MCA projects as a result of the success of the program.

“The local Imam, who had been strongly anti-Coalition, thanked everyone for helping the people of Kirkuk,” said Maj. Barry Flye, a Coalition civil affairs officer who helped organize the cleanup. “Many of the people promised to cooperate with the Iraqi Army and provide information on terrorist activities.”

Iraqi Army MCA projects directly enhance security, facilitate city infrastructure improvements and also improve the image of the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi government.

Iraqi children hold first pinewood derby

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE WARRIOR — A co-ed International Scouting group formed this summer in Hasar held its first-ever pinewood derby Oct. 6 thanks to leaders’ efforts and cars donated by families of 116th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers.

This local scouting group, known as Kashafa in Iraq, began July 7 when soldiers of the 116th BCT’s Task Force 1/148 Field Artillery and leaders from the community of Hasar celebrated a ribbon cutting and inauguration of the program.

Since that time regular meetings have been held, but last week’s meeting was the first time the Scouts enjoyed a pinewood derby.

“The scout leaders with help from the

Soldiers, built a track and helped the youth build their cars and hold their first competition,” said Capt. Matthew Godfrey, a Task Force 1/148 Field Artillery operations officer.

The Hasar Kashafa consists of

three co-ed scouting groups: Tigers, comprises boys and girls 8 to 11 year-olds, Lightning, made up of 12 to 14 year-old boys and girls and Eagles, children 15 to 18 years old.

The groups meet weekly and between them have over 100 regular participants.

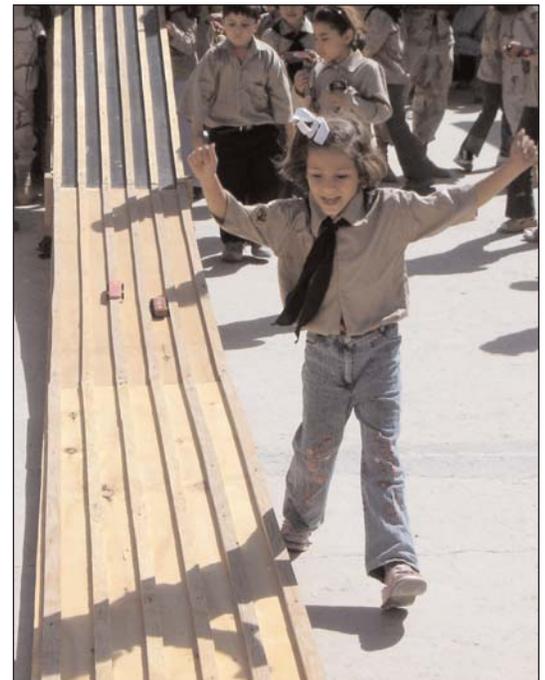
“Enabling Iraqi children to laugh and have fun and

instill some friendly competition was a key goal to the formation of the scouting organization,” Godfrey said.

Working with local leaders to establish community-building programs in the province of Kirkuk is part of the 116th Brigade Combat Team’s mission while deployed in north central Iraq.



Scouts from the co-ed International Scouting Program (Kashafa) in Hasar, show off their newly made pinewood derby cars at their meeting.



Photos courtesy of Task Force 1/148 Field Artillery

A girl from the Tiger group of the co-ed International Scouting Program (Kashafa) in Hasar, expresses joy as her pinewood derby car finishes a race.

The unit’s mission also includes assisting Iraq’s new government, supporting economic development, facilitating communications and improving security and stability in the region.



Heroes of the Week

Soldier feels pride helping sick, wounded

Story and photo by
Sgt. Mitch Armbruster
207th Mobile Public Affairs

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA,

BALAD — Staff Sgt. Robert Fuentes, assistant shop supervisor with the 4th-159th Aviation Maintenance Company (AVM), found the sense of pride he needed to feel by volunteering to sit with injured Soldiers, and other hospital occupants, on Sundays at the hospital here.

Fuentes was shopping at the post exchange on the west side of post one day when he decided to visit the sick and wounded on post.

“I just needed to do it,” said Fuentes. “I felt compelled to visit [the patients].”



Staff Sgt. Robert Fuentes (center), discusses redeployment with fellow Soldiers.

“Staff Sgt. Fuentes is great and would do anything to help out,” said Sgt. Amy Louise Brown, a fellow Soldier from the 4th/159th AVM Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment.

Fuentes and Soldiers of the 4th/159th AVM are redeploying to the states, however Fuentes took the time to visit Soldiers and Iraqi civilians undergoing treatment at the

hospital.

Fuentes isn’t a stranger to helping others. He has spent the last 10 years working as a civilian in the volunteer office at Michigan State University.

His job is to help them find volunteer opportunities with the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps and other volunteer organizations.

“I wanted to help inspire people to make a difference,” Fuentes said.

Fuentes recalled a moment that will remind him of his deployment to Iraq. He walked by a room where a man was feeding a young girl.

“I asked the gentleman if I could take over bottle-feeding the 7-month-old.

She was an improvised explosive device casualty,” Fuentes said.

He added that being able to help made him feel great. The opportunity was an enormous one.

Not only has he connected to Soldiers and civilians, Fuentes had the opportunity to sit with members of the Iraqi Security Forces.

“They are hungry to talk to someone. I used that moment to build camaraderie with our partners,” Fuentes said.

“The Soldiers going outside the wire are my heroes because they go out every day. I’ve got it all, so I need to give back,” Fuentes said.



Heroes of the Week

Iraqi Soldier serves with hope for country’s future

By Sgt. Jason Mikeworth
207th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA

ANACONDA, BALAD — Helping to provide security here is one way Iraqi Army Sgt. Abdul Al Rida is assisting in rebuilding Iraq.

Rida works with U.S. troops as a personnel searcher at an entry control point at LSA Anaconda. He searches local nationals as well as third country nationals for prohibited items before they are allowed to enter the camp. Being one of the first Soldiers local Iraqis meets on a trip to LSA Anaconda, Rida helps show how the Iraqi Army is taking control of its country.

Rida said that he feels good about the

two years he has served in the new Iraqi Army.

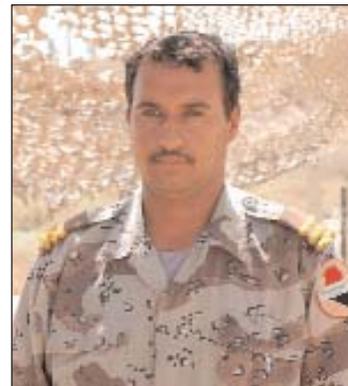
“It’s not always a good time,” he said, “but I never feel bad.”

He joined the Iraqi Army out of a sense of duty and pride for his country.

“I want to make Iraqi freedom and make Iraq organized,” Rida said. “More insurgents come to Iraq. We want control,” he added.

Working alongside American Soldiers has been a good experience, said Rida. They have taught the Iraqis about security operations and made the Iraqi Army stronger.

“I feel normal [working with U.S.



Iraqi Army Sgt. Abdul Al Rida

troops]. They are good to us,” he said. “... I do not see anything bad from them.”

Rida said he feels he is working to make Iraq better for the children. Though insurgents continue to attack his countrymen, Rida has bright hopes for the future.

“I want a good time for Iraq,” he said. “We want control of the situation in

Iraq.”

The Iraqi Soldier also hopes the upcoming elections will signal a new era of peace for his country.

“We want to give the peace to Iraqi people,” Rida said. “We want to give freedom.”



Coalition Partners



Medical troops visit local citizens for 'White Day'

Story by Lt. Cmdr. Bartosz Zajda
Multi-National Division Central-South Public Information

AD DIWANIYAH — Curing sick and injured Soldiers is the military doctor's primary function, but they also provide Iraqi citizens with medical assistance.

Multi-National Division-Central South and Iraqi Army doctors recently helped 250 Iraqi patients.

On Oct. 8 in a small village southeast of Ad-Diwaniyah, these doctors organized "White Day" a medical outreach to examine and treat local citizens.

At the spot MND-CS and Iraqi Army doctors were welcomed by village authorities, where medical teams set up five offices at an old school and one drugstore office.

Among these doctors some cardiologists, surgeons, radiologists, anesthetists, general practitioners, nurses and other medical personnel worked altogether. There were so many local people eagerly waiting to be examined by the doctors.

The doctors started their work at 9 a.m., working without any break to examine 250 patients who came to see them. The youngest patient was less than a year old, and the oldest approximately 80.

"White Day" was organized by 1st Brigade Combat Team (MND-CS) and MND-CS doctors from Poland, Bulgaria, Ukraine and the Iraqi Army's 8th Division personnel.

Since the beginning of mission in Iraq MND-CS doctors have helped more than 10,000 Iraqis.

They treated many different illnesses



Courtesy photo

A Polish doctor examines a child near Ad Diwaniyah during a recent "White Day" medical outreach.

and sophisticated injuries, where about 70 percent out of all patients were Iraqi children.

"We help in many different cases, and our everyday mission is to help people," said MND-CS doctors.

'Kodiaks' dig for days, find thousands of munitions

Story and photos by
Sgt. Matthew Wester
3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division

TAJI — Soldiers of 70th Engineer Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division found a weapons cache in a remote area northwest of Baghdad and worked to uncover the munitions for several days.

Since the battalion, nicknamed "Kodiaks," started digging they have unearthed more than 700 mortar rounds, 700 rocket-propelled grenades, hundreds of rockets and 51,000 rounds of anti-aircraft ammunition.

The Kodiaks, assisted by troops from 977th Military Police Company, also found several mortar tubes, various explosives, small-arms weapons, homemade rocket launchers, wires and timing devices.

"Any time we find a cache this size, we take a lot of pride in it. It's a big win for us," said Capt. Jesse Curry, commander of 70th Eng. Bn.'s Company C.

The catalyst for the cache discovery was a routine patrol conducted by C Co. miles away from the site.



Spec. Jeremy Poly, 977th MP Co., carries a rocket tube out of a weapons cache site.



Mortars are stacked and organized at a cache site northwest of Baghdad.

"We found the cache based on a 'snap' traffic stop and that led us out to this site," said Kodiaks Command Sgt. Maj. Anthony M. Cady, command sergeant major. "It's kind of like a piece of string frayed on a sweater. We just pulled on it and instead of the piece of string ending, we ended up with a whole sweater."

Soldiers from C Co. patrol pulled over a truck and found fuses inside. They

detained the two men in the truck, questioned them, and got information that led them to the area of the weapons site.

"We started off with picks and shovels," Curry said. "You identify where you think there is a cache, and you call your buddies over with the picks and shovels and start digging."

"Initially, it's all done by hand with shovels," said the Kodiaks' commander, Lt. Col. Anthony Wright. As the troops dug they realized they needed heavier equipment to get to all the buried explosives.

"Our ability to get a small-emplacement excavator out here saved our Soldiers from a lot of back-breaking work," Cady said. "Then, they ended up yanking [munitions] out of the hole and carrying them somewhere to set down so the explosive ordnance disposal team could get rid of it for us."

Getting rid of those weapons was the purpose behind the whole operation, Cady said. "It's one of the key missions we do."

Engineer school promotes pride along with skills

Story and photo by
Sgt. Lorie Jewell
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

TAJI — When it comes to instilling pride in Soldiers, Coalition mentors and Iraqi commanders at the Iraqi Army's Engineer School are seizing any opportunity that comes their way to pump up the troops.

From little things like picking up trash to larger issues like promotion ceremonies and building the non-commissioned officer ranks, esprit de corps has a prominent place in training, leaders said.

"The push is to make them want to be the best Soldier, the best NCO, the best engineer they can be," said Maj. Carey Page, senior adviser to the school. "It's working."

At a school administrative building, a trio of Soldiers spent a recent day painting the engineer symbol on the front wall next to the entrance. In another area, an Iraqi sergeant major helped Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Battisfore, a school adviser, cut wood for a large physical training stand.



An Iraqi Soldier paints the engineer symbol on a wall of an administrative building at the Iraqi Army's Engineer School.

Once the stand is finished, the engineer symbol will cover the surface.

Strides have been made in infusing pride into the physical training program, Page said. Iraqi NCOs lead tight formations for the run, turning the entire group around to pick up anyone who may fall out and then continuing on.

"Before, you would see soldiers running all strung out along the road," Page

said. "Now there is cohesion and discipline. It's a beautiful thing, with the Iraqis driving the train, not us."

Building pride goes beyond aesthetics and tight PT formations, though. The biggest emphasis is on the NCO corps, leaders said. Over 800 students have passed through the engineer school since it started, with eight companies formed.

Fifty percent of the advisers' mission is developing the NCO corps, Page said.

"The Iraqi commander bought into the idea of having NCOs do what NCOs do," which is carrying out directives from officers, Page said. "When we look at what we came here to do, we're well on our way, and it's because of the officers and NCOs."

Iraqi Capt. Ahmed, acting commander of the school, spent 14 years in the old Iraqi Army. NCOs had no more of a leadership role then as new recruits, he said.

"In the new Iraqi Army, they are leaders," Ahmed said through a translator. "They have more missions, more jobs. They work alone without officers, taking orders from the officers to the Soldiers. The NCO now is like a belt on our uniforms. We need them."

That sense of being needed keeps Iraqi Sgt. Maj. Seif convinced he made the right choice in rejoining the Army as an NCO. He was a year away from graduating as an officer from the military academy in the old Army when he was thrown in jail for the alleged crime of a relative who was ultimately executed. He joined the new Army nine months ago.

"I decided I didn't need to be an officer," Seif said. "The NCO in the new Iraqi Army has more responsibility, more than the officers. I work all the time with the Soldiers, and that's good for me."

Fort

from page 2

made three preliminary surveillance visits to Fort Suse.

"The goal was to hold the maximum number of detainees, with the maximum prisoner-to-guard ratio, but with the minimum risk to prison guards," he said.

"It only makes sense to bring the end user in early," added Louis Perez Jr., ECCI's project manager at Fort Suse, "especially when you're building this on the fly."

The facility was built in conjunction with Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq, which is responsible for

training Iraqi military, police and security personnel.

Designed as a self-contained unit with no exterior buildings, it eventually will transition from being an internment center to become an Iraqi prison.

The team had expected to get five weeks' notice, which would have allowed ordering items with long lead time. But a delay in finalizing the contract award meant that the first detainees would arrive before the permanent power generation plant, a matter remedied with a generator provided by the U.S. military.

Other than that, only the visitation rooms and the medical facility were not complete

by Oct. 1. Officials expect that work, along with detention space for 800 more detainees, to be finished by Dec. 1.

"My colleagues here said nobody can do the prison in eight weeks," said Hoshair Kamal, an Iraqi subcontractor who started working construction with his father in 1970 and — except for brief employment as a banker and tax collector, and a two-year imprisonment under Saddam Hussein — has built up one of the area's leading construction companies.

During construction his firm employed 250 laborers and managed another 150 men subcontracted to plaster and paint. "We pay them well and

provide three meals a day," said Sardar Faiq, lead engineer for ECCI's subcontractor. He said their biggest challenge on the project was lifting the 2-ton iron cell gratings into place.

Perez and McCormick said the flexibility AFCEE gave contractors and end users was the key element in keeping the project on schedule, but both acknowledged that without teamwork, Fort Suse couldn't have been done this quickly.

Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne Division and Justice Department personnel will mentor 450 Iraqi guards, 150 at a time. The Iraqis eventually will take over operations at Fort Suse.



Coalition, Iraqi Security Forces

Operations Review



By Staff Sgt. Julie Nicolov
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Public Affairs

While members of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq count millions of ballots that were cast on Oct. 15, Coalition Forces and Iraqi Security Forces continue to inhibit the insurgents' firepower.

For months, CF and ISF conducted several operations throughout the county to drive the insurgents out of the cities to pave the way for a safe referendum. Fewer than 100 attacks were reported on Oct. 15. ISF provide the majority of security.

"From what I saw of the Iraqi Security Forces, they did a pretty good job of keeping the elections secure," said Spc. Brandon Castleberry, Troop F, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Despite the referendum's success, Soldiers must not let down their guard.

"There are still those out there who want to kill innocent Iraqi citizens, destroy the economy, attack our forces and generally disrupt the democratic gains made with the referendum," said Maj.



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Kyle Davis

Iraqi police set up checkpoints and road blocks to ensure security during the constitutional referendum in Baghdad Oct. 15.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Chief Warrant Officer Craig J. Shell

Soldiers from the 7th Division, Iraqi Army, conduct marksmanship training with the AK-47 at Camp Fallujah. The training was provided by the Military Transition Team (MiTT) Marines from Multi-National Forces - West.

Gen. William Webster, commander, Task Force Baghdad.

Their diligence is paying off. Three days after the referendum, Soldiers from the 4th Iraqi Army Division captured the son of Saddam Hussein's half-brother in Tikrit.

Acting on a tip, ISF and CF conducted a raid and captured Yasser Sabawi Ibrahim Al-Hasan Al-Tikriti. He allegedly finances foreign fighters who conduct terrorist attacks in Iraq.

In Ramadi, 70 insurgents were killed in a series of CF precision air strikes.

While conducting a

combat air patrol, crewmembers from an F-15 observed 20 men placing an improvised explosive device (IED) at a spot where an IED had killed five U.S. and two Iraqi Soldiers Oct. 15. The F-15 attacked with a precision-guided bomb, killing all 20 terrorists.

Fifty other terrorists were killed in several precision air strikes conducted on a suspected terrorist safe house north of Ramadi.

A UH-1N Huey and AH-1W Cobra helicopter team noticed a group of military-aged males gathering near the house. The men opened fire on the helicopters which returned fire, killing 10.

Later that day, the team noticed approximately 40 men loading weapons into vehicles from the same safe house. All terrorists were killed in the ensuing attack.

CF in Tall Afar responded to small arms fire and conducted a hasty cordon and search that uncovered a locked box that contained 200 referendum ballots. The origin of the box is unknown, and ballots have been turned over to IECI officials.

Combined operations in the Hawijah and Tikrit areas captured a known IED bomber, an anti-Iraqi forces facilitator and four other targeted insurgents.

A cache of 85 anti-tank mines, a type of mine which has been used in IEDs in the past, was also discovered northeast of Mansuriyah.

In the Central South area of Iraq, Iraqi police captured 10 suspected insurgent criminals wanted for robbery and attacks against Coalition Forces in Diwanayah.

In Baghdad, ISF and CF captured 15 suspected terrorists in a series of pre-dawn combat operations conducted on Oct. 18.

See *OPERATIONS*, next page

Peterson takes reigns of CPATT from Fil

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Paul Tuttle
Multi-National Security Transition
Command - Iraq Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — The reins that guided the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) of the Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq (MNSTC-I) were passed on to a new leader Oct. 17.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Joseph Peterson took charge of CPATT from U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Joseph Fil in a ceremony at the Adnan Palace in the International Zone.

A number of high-ranking Iraqi officials, Coalition military officers and civilian police officers attended the event.

Peterson arrived for his new post from



**Maj. Gen.
Joseph Peterson**

at Fort Hood, Texas.

A sudden sandstorm hit Baghdad an hour before the ceremony was to begin, but did not hinder the change of command.

“These are winds of change,” said U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey, MNSTC-I commander, referring not only to the new commander but to the recent constitutional

referendum in Iraq. Washington D.C., where he was the J-3 vice director for operations on the Joint Staff.

He is also a former commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division

referendum in Iraq.

Fil described his year in Iraq as an exciting and decisive time for Iraq and world history.

“Witnessing the events and growth that took Iraq from the viciousness of the insurgents’ attacks last fall to the triumph of January’s elections, the development and strengthening of police and border forces, the equipping and training of the special police fielding of the Special Police Transition Teams and most recently, endeavoring in deep partnership with Iraqi leadership to further develop Iraqi leadership...to the point that the Iraqi people might demonstrate their freedom and express their will through the crowning event of Saturday’s National Referendum – it has been almost breath-taking,” Fil said.

Fil’s next assignment is at Fort Hood.

Operations

from previous page

One of the detained suspects is believed to be a weapons dealer and terrorist cell financier.

Iraqi Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division conducted the largest of those missions.

ISF continues to add to their ranks every week. Fifty-three trainees graduated from the Iraqi Army Basic Combat Team training in Qayyarah Oct. 17.

“It is an honor to soldier side by side with each of you as the sovereign government of Iraq forges a new tomor-



row,” said Sgt. Maj. Murrell, the Commandant of the Noncommissioned Officer Academy, praising the new graduates for their accomplishments.

The ISF is a crucial element in Iraq’s future.

“The thing that helps [the Iraqis] most of all is seeing their own Iraqi Security Forces out there,” said Lt. Col. David

Funk, commander, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. “They want ISF securing them. That’s what we want, too.”

Since the Iraqi Ground Forces Headquarters was dedicated in May, ISF and CF troops have forged a strong working relationship designed to put the ISF at the helm of

Iraq’s secure future. The referendum was just the first step.

“The partnership you have already formed, and will continue to shape with the Iraqi Security Forces, is key in giving stability to Iraq,” said Gen. John P. Abizaid, commander, U.S. Central Command. “More will be asked of you in the months ahead. You are changing history.”

Multi-National Force - Iraq Operational Summary Oct. 15 - 21

Combined operations: 256
IEDs found and cleared: 152
Anti-Iraqi Forces detained: 446
Foreign fighters captured or killed: 16
Weapons caches found and cleared: 41

Construction starts on the \$635,000 Al Khairat Telephone Building and Exchange in Al Khairat, Karbala Province. This project renovates the communications and telephone exchange building, constructs a guardroom, cable room, diesel room, warehouse, fence and telephone exchange. It provides a telephone exchange with upgraded phone service for 3,000 subscribers for 15,000 citizens in the village of Al Khairat. It will enhance the reliability and connectivity of the phone system both within and outside the province. This is a CERP (Commander’s Emergency Response Program) project.

Iraqi mothers and babies will receive better health care with the completed construction of a new 260-bed maternity hospital in Mosul.

New road opens, improves life in east Baghdad district

By Maj. Russ Goemaere

2nd Brigade Combat Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — Residents in one east Baghdad community believe a newly opened road will have a positive impact on their local economy.

“This road will make it much easier for the people of Al Shuuda south and Al Oubaidy to move between both communities,” said a smiling Sharker Rheiee Sudan, a long-time resident and owner of a propane shop along the road.

“Business will improve,” he continued. “Heavy trucks will have an easier time getting to my shop for deliveries and pickups.”

The 700-meter asphalt road will impact more than 60,000 Iraqis. At a cost of about \$100,000, it officially opened Oct. 19.

The project was started after members of the community approached local leaders with their request.

“The people came to me and told me they needed a road,” said Chalub Lazim, district chairman of the community.

“During the rainy season, it was very hard to move between the neighborhoods.”

Lt. Col. Kevin Farrell, commander of Coalition Forces in the Tissa Nissan district, said, “The district and neighborhood councils have the interests of the people at heart with projects like this.”

This project shows how a good dialogue can result in a benefit.

“I am convinced this road will improve the economy and security situation here,” Farrell said. “People will come here and build their homes, and these homeowners



U.S. Army photos

Alla, a resident of Al Shuuda, works on his community's \$2.2 million sewer and water project.

will bring businesses and money into the local economy, and they will want a secure environment to raise their families.

“The plan is for the Iraqi government to provide more roads that will branch out from this one to build an even bigger and better community,” he added.

Sudan has noticed many changes since the fall of the previous regime.

“Now is better than the past,” he said. “Everyone can see the progress happening every day. There is progress in security and services.”

New multi-million-dollar sewer and water projects are ongoing in Al Shuuda and Al Oubaidy as well.

The Al Shuuda sewer project will run about \$2.2 million, while the massive Al Oubaidy sewer and water project costs about \$14.5 million. While the small road that just opened benefits only a small number of the population, the sewer and water projects are expected to posi-

tively impact the lives of more than 260,000 people.

Both projects are expected to be completed in early summer 2006.

Members of the sewer work crew in Al Shuuda feel very good about what they are doing for their community.

“The people are very happy,” said about 10 workers in unison, as they took a short break to talk to BBC reporter Hugh Sykes who was visiting the area Oct. 20.

“We only had gutters and channels to take the sewage out into the street. This project will change everything,” said Mr. Alla, a resident and worker who has lived there since 1997.

“It has taken 30 years for projects like these to come to the people in these areas,” said Lt. Col. Jamie Gayton, commander of 2/3 Brigade Troops Battalion. Gayton is also the primary essential serv-

ice project manager in east Baghdad. “[Coalition Forces] are here to support the Iraqi government as it gets stronger and can coordinate and execute these projects on its own.”

The Al Shuuda project is being completed by Iraqi engineers using local neighborhood labor following designs created and approved by Iraqis at the Baghdad Sewer Authority. The projects have collectively employed more than 120 Iraqi laborers.

Gayton held an informal discussion with the

Iraqi workers and some of the residents in Al Shuuda to gauge how the projects are benefiting the community and to remind them that they need to talk to their local government leaders about what additional projects are needed in the future.

All projects go through the Iraqi Amanant municipal management offices for development, he said.

“When we see progress and the Iraqi workers doing such a good job, we are all encouraged,” said Abdel Karim, a government employee and resident of Al Shuuda.



The Al Shuuda sewer project will run about \$2.2 million, while the massive Al Oubaidy sewer and water project will cost about \$14.5 million. The projects are expected to positively affect more than 260,000 people.



A mother and daughter move propane tanks down the new road between Al Oubaidy and Al Shuuda in the Tissa Nissan area of Baghdad.

Soldiers help children's future with new school

Story and photo by
Spc. Spencer Case

207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

NUMANIYAH — Until recently, going to elementary school in Numaniyah meant trying to learn on broken desks in buildings that lacked electricity and running water.

However, thanks to a small group of U.S. military advisors, about 200 children will attend a new school with amenities such as bathrooms and ceiling fans.

Though their jobs do not require humanitarian work, the Soldiers of the Military Training Team (MiTT) for the Iraqi 2nd Motorized Transportation Regiment took it upon themselves when they witnessed the conditions of the schools in their area.

"One of our interpreters suggested we come out and visit one of the schools," said Maj. David Motes, the senior military advisor for the team.

"So we came out here, saw the schools, [and] decided there was something we could do about it."

In April, Motes contacted members of the Army Corps of Engineers in Numaniyah who provided a floor plan for a new school.

He obtained funding to build the school from the Commander's Emergency Response Program, money the Army has set aside to help with the host nation infrastructure.

Construction began July 31 on publicly owned land 500 meters away from the old school. The school will be functional in a matter of days, Motes said.



Staff Sgt. Jerry Reosener, an advisor to the Iraqi 2nd MTR, hands a backpack to an Iraqi girl in Numaniyah.

The Soldiers who participated said they feel good about what the project has accomplished.

"Having children in school and being educated is probably the best thing they could do for their future," said Ulshafer.

"These kids are going to think back and remember the

day when the Americans showed up and gave them a backpack full of goods. I think it will have a long lasting effect on them."

"It's been very rewarding," said Motes, "We feel like we're making a good move for the Iraqi people and that we're helping to win the hearts and minds of the people. I wish that more Soldiers could actually get out and do this kind of project."

20,000 Iraqis receive improved electrical service

By Jenna Bisenius

Project and Contracting Office,
Electricity Sector Public Affairs

BAGHDAD — A new \$4.9 million electrical substation enhanced essential life services for approximately 20,000 Iraqis in the southwestern portion of Babil by increasing their power reliability.

The substation, completed in early October, replaces an existing facility.

Local Iraqis performed the labor that included design and construction of a 33/11 kilovolt switch-gear building, a guard house, and installation of two transformers and new switch gear equipment.

The local Iraqi economy was positively impacted for the past 10 months as 80 to 140 Iraqis worked at the site each week since construction began in January 2005.

The project was funded with Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Funds, with oversight by the Project & Contracting Office's



Photo courtesy of Project and Contracting Office

The new \$4.9 million electrical substation in the southwest portion of Babil will provide power for 20,000 Iraqis.

(PCO) Electricity Sector, and quality control provided by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region South. The Electricity Sector is one of four PCO sectors managing reconstruction projects throughout Iraq.

The other sectors are Oil, Public Works and Water, and Facilities and Transportation.

In total, the PCO Electrical Sector is responsible for 434 projects valued at approximately \$3.2 billion.

This figure includes about \$140 million of non-construction funds allocated for equipment and training.

To date, the Electricity Sector has completed approximately 82 projects totaling an estimated \$660 million.

Currently, an estimated \$1,300 million is being used on projects that are now in progress.

This leaves \$1,250 million for remaining projects.

The majority of 352 remaining Electricity Sector projects are scheduled for completion by December 2006.

Construction started on the \$758,000 Tarmiya Substation Feeder project, Baghdad District, Baghdad governorate. This 33kv project is one of five feeder projects in a complete electrical grid system that brings power from the larger 132kv substations to smaller 33/11kv substations, providing low voltage for distribution to homes and businesses. Approximately 35,000 residents of the Tarmiya section of Baghdad will benefit from this project.



Iraqis taking the lead

U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. James L. Harper Jr.

A member of the Iraqi Army mans a machine gun during a patrol in Mosul, Oct. 20.



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Michael J. O'Brien

Local school girls wait in class after receiving new backpacks from Iraqi Soldiers and policemen at the Tibuk Primary girls' school, south of Haswa Firm Base, Oct. 20.



U.S. Marine Corps photograph by Lance Cpl. Michael J. O'Brien

A little girl continues her classroom assignment during a visit by Iraqi Soldiers and policemen passing out new backpacks at Tibuk Primary girls' school, south of Haswa Firm Base, Oct. 20.

Dr. Fareed Ayar, representing the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, announces the approval of Iraq's new constitution yesterday in Baghdad's Convention Center.

U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. W. Watson Martin

