

The Advisor



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Standing ready

The Iraqi Air Force begins its first ever warrant officer course in Taji

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The faces of Iraqi soldiers and police have been altered to protect their identities.

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>> FROM THE COVER

An Iraqi warrant officer candidate waits for orders from an instructor at the Iraqi Warrant Officer Course at Taji Air Base, Iraq.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Frost

>> IRAQI POLICE: FAST BOATS ON THE TIGRIS



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

Iraqi Police of the Baghdad River Patrol demonstrate small boat maneuvering in the Tigris River. Fifteen Iraqi Police graduated from the first Small Boat Operation Course taught at the Baghdad River Patrol site Dec. 12.

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Commanders in Iraq assess situation before changing force levels

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The first of five brigade combat teams to redeploy without being replaced has now departed Iraq, and most of the soldiers are home in Fort Hood, Texas, a senior Joint Staff official said Dec. 7. With the departure of 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, commanders in Iraq have adjusted the force posture and will continue to make assessments before the next redeployments, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Carter F. Ham, the Joint Staff director for operations, said in a Pentagon news briefing.

Ham and U.S. Marine Lt. Gen. John F. Sattler, the Joint Staff director for strategic plans and policy, said the Army could possibly reduce tour lengths to 12 months in the late summer of 2008. “There are no decisions yet,” Ham said. “We want to get all Army units to 12-month tours as soon as possible. That might mean the policy is phased in. There might be some units that deploy for less than 15, but not 12 over time.”

Sattler said improvement in capabilities and capacities of Iraqi Security Forces is helping bring about the change in Coalition strategy. Three years ago, the Iraqi government had to go countrywide to find seven Iraqi battalions that were qualified and capable to fight alongside Coalition forces in the battle for Fallujah, he said. “Today, there are 108 Iraqi battalions that are in the lead or on independent operations,” he said. “That is a dramatic change over a three-year period.”

The “clear, hold, build” strategy was once largely a Coalition effort. “Now the Iraqis have the capacity and capability to be an integral part of that strategy and in some cases lead in the ‘hold’ (portion of the) strategy,” Sattler said.

The strategy is changing from U.S. and Coalition troops being in the lead, to Iraqis providing security. “We are, over time, shifting our emphasis from being the security force to being the force that enables the Iraqis to provide that security,” Sattler said. “There is a shift on getting more Coalition forces involved in training and development of Iraqi Security Forces, and we’re seeing that pay off.”

Intelligence reports indicate that al-Qaida in Iraq is being throttled in Anbar province and in and around Baghdad, Ham said, noting that terrorists are attempting to regroup in northern Iraq, especially around Mosul.

“Conditions in that area have changed considerably since al-Qaida was last influential there,” he said. “Al-Qaida is confronted by increasingly capable Iraqi security forces: Army and police. Al-Qaida is finding the forces much tougher than in the past.”

So far, Iraqi Security Forces are handling the mission very well, Ham said, but it’s too early to know if they can carry early successes forward. Commanders in Iraq constantly are assessing situations and moving forces as needed, and if commanders need more Iraqi or Coalition forces in the north, they will get them. “It’s a very mobile force, and so, if more forces are needed in one place, they will make that adjustment,” Ham said.

He said more Coalition trainers than combat forces may be needed in Iraq in the near future. But commanders have not yet requested such

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what key leaders are saying

>> **U.S. ARMY MAJ. GEN. KEVIN BERGNER,**
Multi-National Force – Iraq Strategic Effects director



“Al-Qaida continues to seek spectacular attacks, which were so damaging and which continue to be so damaging, inciting sectarian tensions... we still have a tough fight ahead of us amidst the progress.”

>> **IRAQI ARMY BRIG. GEN. MICHAEL NEVIN,**
177th Military Police Brigade commander

“Terrorists will continue to prey on juveniles unless these kids are given messages that outweigh the messages of the insurgents. We make sure that everyone comes away with an understanding that killing innocent people is not something condoned by the Koran, that women and children are deserving of protection, and that violence is not an authorized technique by the Koran.”

>> **U.S. ARMY BRIG. GEN. JOSEPH ANDERSON,**
Multi-National Division – North commander

“It’s clear that, in working with our Iraqi Security Forces partners, that we’ve created a window of opportunity for the Iraqi people to achieve their goals of security.”



Police team commander outlines challenges for Iraq's Interior Ministry

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Though the rapid growth of Iraq's Interior Ministry has posed challenges, the Iraqis are forging ahead with the process, the commander of the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team in Iraq said Dec. 5.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Michael Jones spoke to Web journalists and bloggers via telephone from his headquarters in Baghdad.

The Interior Ministry has grown 450 percent since 2003, he said. "As I thought about it, I tried to imagine if this was the U.S. Army," he said. If the Army grew at the same rate, there would be an active force of more than 2 million people, he said.

Any organization growing at that rate would have challenges, the general said. "It seemed to me we'd have a huge problem with facilities, equipment, training, the processes that we use, shortage of leaders and a whole bunch of other things," he said. "But in addition to that, there are some other challenges."

These include the wholesale replacing of midlevel management in the ministry because of the de-Baathification process. "You also have a multiparty system where political appointees aren't from all the same political party, but they actually are from several different ones," he said. "What that means is that there are going to be some frictions that occur just because they are not



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

Iraqi National Police demonstrate how to prepare for excessive attacks from rioters by providing a protective shield over each other until the rioters calm down. The students are training with Italian Carabinieri members skilled in policing areas ranging from counterinsurgency to riot control.

people who help each other work together. And then we also have kind of a change in what the expectation of the ministry is."

Before 2003, the Interior Ministry and the police were not really in charge of Iraq's internal security, he said. Under deposed dictator Saddam Hussein, the military, the Republican Guard, special troops and paramilitary forces were really in control of internal security. "The police were kind of fourth and fifth fiddle to the others," Jones said. "And now they are getting the responsibility to move into the first-fiddle role."

Add to this an insurgency that thrived on intimidation and violence, and there is no doubt that the Interior Ministry personnel have had a challenging time, he noted.

But even with the challenges, there has been progress, he said. Police recruiting remains strong, he said. The Iraqis continue to generate and equip police forces. "They are beginning themselves to contract for equipment, and take on some institutional

An Iraqi policeman watches over a group of more than 4,000 prospective Iraqi Police applicants for 1,300 positions at the Kirkuk Police Academy, Dec. 6.



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Margaret C. Nelson

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Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

The security of the Tigris River depends greatly on the continuous monitoring by the Iraqi Police with small boat maneuvering training. The policemen monitor the river from their 10 checkpoints along the river banks and by boat teams traveling up and down the 100 kilometer section of their jurisdiction.

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functions that up to now they've been completely dependent on the coalition for," he said. "And they are incrementally assuming responsibility for training and life support, things that we have been doing for them."

And the Iraqis are beginning to make progress from a ministerial standpoint as well, Jones said. The Iraqis have reorganized

the ministry to be more functional, and they have created an internal affairs organization to investigate corruption and allegations of sectarianism.

"They have a functioning pay system where they pay all of their folks -- we are not involved in that any more," he said. "And they have made a tremendous effort at national police reform that we're seeing have significant effects."

But change is slow, he said. Building

an institution like the Interior Ministry is a work of years, not months. "And quite frankly, there are enemies who don't want this to be successful, and are working pretty hard to make it fail," he said.

Building the ministry will take hard, tough work, the general said. "But I'm fairly impressed with the willingness and the effort that the ministry is making to tackle the problems and to bring them to a resolution," he said.

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forces, because Coalition units are now using their own Soldiers or Marines to make up ad hoc training teams to work with Iraqi forces. "Increasingly, the commanders deployed are providing their own teams to assist the development of the Iraqi Security Forces, and that's been a very, very powerful partnership," Ham said.

"As the Iraqi Security Forces are increasingly able to perform the security functions, you can have U.S. and other

Coalition forces who had been performing those functions transition more to a train-and-assist (concept) for the Iraqis," Ham said.

Sattler said battalions see moving combat personnel into training Iraqi forces as a good trade. "So give up 11 tough warriors and gain 500 is the way we viewed it," he said. "As the shifting of the role to take the fight on is coming somewhat off the back of the Coalition forces, now I can afford to put more of those teams (to work training Iraqis), because I'm not involved in full-fledged combat.

Sattler also spoke of progress Iraqis are

making at the local and provincial levels and the need for more progress at the national level.

"I believe what's happening at the provincial level, it's a grassroots movement that is moving up towards the central government -- such things as de-Baathification and amnesty," he said. "Right now, there's about 70,000 concerned local citizens, where we had none in existence ... six, seven, eight, nine months ago. So all that positive movement to get away from al-Qaida, away from the insurgency, and become part of (progress), at least at the provincial level, that's a very positive step."



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

Iraqi Army Warrant Officer Hassan, Taji National Depot supply chief; Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Ali, Taji National Depot commander; and Iraqi Army Capt. Medhi, Taji National Depot executive officer, prepare to inspect a box of weapons on Dec. 4. The weapons are part of the recent Foreign Military Sale for Taji National Depot before assigning them to regional support units.

Purchasing power of Foreign Military Sales

By U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

MNSTC-I Public Affairs



TAJI, Iraq – The arrival of more than 21,000 weapon systems purchased via the Foreign Military Sales program marks a major milestone in Iraqi military history. The purchase reinforces the Iraqis' confidence in being self-sufficient and being in control of their military needs.

Iraqi Army Col. Alaa, Taji Depot Class V officer-in-charge, assisted in the opening of one of the crates holding M-4 carbine weapon systems. Each crate holds 50 boxes of weapons along with ammunition magazine cartridges.

The Foreign Military Sales program manages government-to-government purchases of weapons and other defense articles, defense services, and military training. A military buying weapons through

the Foreign Military Sales program does not deal directly with the company that makes them. The U.S. Defense Department serves as an intermediary, usually handling procurement, logistics and delivery, and often providing product support and training.

“Hundreds of countries purchase supplies and equipment from the United States,” said U.S. Army Col. Michael S. Skardon, Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq, Security Assistance Office commander. “Iraq is the newest customer and is using their own money to purchase their needs.”

Foreign Military Sales is a different program from the Direct Commercial Sales program, which oversees sales between foreign governments and private U.S. companies, and the Foreign Military Financing program, which provides grants and loans for Foreign Military Sales and Direct Commercial Sales purchases.

Security assistance organizations, which consists of military

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Photos by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

Iraqi Army Warrant Officer Hassan, Taji National Depot supply chief; Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Ali, Taji National Depot commander; and Iraqi Army Capt. Medhi, Taji National Depot executive officer, inspect a box of weapons on Dec. 4, against the purchase order for weapon accountability before assigning them to regional support units.

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personnel stationed at U.S. embassies, promote the sale of U.S.-produced defense items and carry out most tasks associated with managing Foreign Military Sales cases, or agreements to make a sale. Security assistance organizations advise foreign defense ministries on potential military purchases, often by coordinating security assistance surveys to assess perceived needs and occasionally by aiding the development of procurement plans.

“The Iraqi government is interested in arming and strengthening the Iraqi Army to defeat terrorism,” said Iraqi Army Lt. Col. Ali, Taji National Depot commander.

A possible Foreign Military Sales case begins when a foreign government requests price and availability data on the U.S.-produced items it is interested in purchasing. The Security assistance organizations in the embassy cannot provide this data unless the State Department, through its Bureau of Political and Military Affairs, issues its approval. Without this approval, a Foreign Military Sales transaction will not proceed any further.

If the State Department approves, data is provided to the purchasing government, which then decides whether to buy the items through the Foreign Military Sales program or another source, such as the Direct Commercial Sales program or another country. An implementing agency within the Pentagon such as the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, or Defense Logistics Agency, depending on the type of item being considered, negotiates the terms of the sale. If agreement is reached, both parties sign a letter of offer and acceptance, the contract that sets the Foreign Military Sale in motion.

Once a letter of offer and acceptance has been signed, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency, a Defense Department agency that oversees security assistance programs, buys the item or items from U.S. manufacturers. This purchase normally goes through Defense Department procurement channels, and may not happen quickly; the time lag between a letter of offer and acceptance and a delivery can



An M-4 carbine is displayed to show the newest weapons received in a recent Foreign Military Sales shipment. This FMS purchase is a major milestone for the Iraqi military in their self-sustainment process.



An Iraqi soldier inspects a box containing a M-4 carbine weapon system received as a Foreign Military Sale shipment at Taji National Depot Dec. 4.

take a year or more, particularly for complex weapons systems. The price quoted in the letter of offer and acceptance may not match the cost of the items upon delivery, though in fact most final prices fall below the original estimate.

“There are a lot of procedures to follow just to get the weapons to the soldiers,” said Ali. “We are sure to secure them in a safe area to make sure the soldiers on the streets have weapons.”



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

Iraqi National Police line up in formation to confront the “riot” head-on for a recent antiriot demonstration held at Camp Dublin, Iraq. The students are receiving training by Italian Carabinieri members skilled in policing areas ranging from counterinsurgency to riot control.

Building a better national security force

By U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

MNSTC-I Public Affairs



BAGHDAD – More than 450 Iraqi National Police have learned basic military policing skills training by Italian Carabinieri. An anti-riot course is the latest skill for the police to add to their resume.

Clusters of uniformed, Iraqi National Police gathered in formation, demonstrating the proper way to defend themselves from rioters. Blocks, sticks and other debris were thrown at the

students by trainers to assist them in choosing the proper defense technique.

Riot control refers to the measures to control a riot or break up a demonstration. Iraqi National Police will utilize special weapons and tactics that intentionally minimize harm and prevent additional violence.

For personal protection, officers performing riot control will often wear protective riot squad helmets and carry riot shields. These are designed to protect them from the smaller threats posed by rioters, such as thrown objects, though some are bulletresistant. If tear gas or other riot control agents are used, gas masks are donned within 10 seconds.

The traditional material for batons for most purposes is wood; however, rubber batons are common. The baton is about 1.5 inches in diameter and slightly over 2 feet long. They may use force and intimidation to subdue rioters and subsequently allow less heavily armored, more mobile officers to arrest people.

Usually, when front-facing a riot, officers slowly walk in a line parallel to the riot’s front, extending to both its ends, as they noisily and simultaneously march and beat their shields with their batons to cause fear and psychological effects on the crowd.

“The training we are receiving is helping us be better at what we

are supposed to do,” said Iraqi Police Col. Adel, Camp Dublin Base Support Operations executive officer.

Adel explained how the training helps the Iraqi National Police grow stronger as a force due to the multiple ingredients for training. Experience from different armies, more techniques learned and the basic human rights training make for a better policing unit.

An element of good policing is to have a trust relationship with the population. One of the goals of the training team is to transform the old way of policing into one that will function in a new nation.

Adel states the old police environment lent itself to corruption, which did nothing for the people of Iraq. “We have Shias, Kurds and Sunnis working side by side. This would not have happened under the old rule,” he said.

The broad range of topics enables training that is suitable for civil and military members involved in the security sector of Iraq.

The Carabinieri training technique combines both police and military disciplines. The dual skill set allows for a better-trained police. The majority of the students are police from different provinces; others are prior military members, which makes for a better training environment according to Adel.

“I was in the Iraqi Army for 20 years before becoming an Iraqi national policeman,” said Adel. “We are here to protect people. These are our people. It is our job.”

Basic police procedure is the core of the training. The main job of the police is to serve and protect the people. Students learn about penal codes and how to gather information regarding a violation of the codes. Police operations are primarily based upon information gathering.

Adel said the Iraqi National Police is following new constitutions passed based upon the actions of the national police.

Col. Fabrizio Parrulli, Carabinieri training department commander states, “The aim of this training is to create specialized units inside the national police, enabling them to face security issues across the country.”

“We are setting the standard for others to follow,” said Adel.



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

Fifteen new Iraqi Police small boat operators from the Baghdad River Patrol graduated from the eight-week Small Boat Operators Course at the Baghdad River Patrol training site Dec. 12. The course was taught by Iraqi Police Lt. Laith, who trained with the U.S. Navy at Stennis Space Center, Miss., in the Riverine course earlier this year.

First in their class - Iraqi Police Small Boat Operations Course

By U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Erica R. Gardner

MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Maj. Gen. Ali, chief of Patrol Police, Baghdad, and U.S. Army Brig. Gen. David Phillips, Civilian Police Assistance Training Team deputy commander, commended 15 Iraqi Police on their graduation from the first Small Boat Operation Course Dec. 12.

“This is a proud day for the Iraqi Police,” said Ali. “This is a great day for the people of Iraq and its citizens.”

In an emotional ceremony, 15 students who are paving the way for future Iraqi Police

to train on the Tigris River received their certificate of completion at the Baghdad River Patrol training site. A partnership with the Coalition Police Assistance Training Team and the Iraqi Police allowed the students the opportunity to train on small watercraft.

The policemen belong to the Baghdad River Patrol Station, located along the eastern banks of the Tigris River. From there, police conduct surveillance and establish a presence on fast patrol boats, said Iraqi Police Col. Alaa, the station’s commander.

“I am proud of my students,” said Iraqi Police Lt. Laith, Baghdad River Patrol instructor. “They worked hard and did well in their training.”

Laith is one of 18 Iraqi Police trained at the U.S. Navy Small Craft Instruction and Technical Training School located at Stennis Space Center in Gulfport, Miss. The school trains navies and coast guards from other countries in methods of countering international terrorism, narcotics trafficking and smuggling. Courses offered range from patrol boat navigation and tactics to small craft mechanics.

The first eight-week training course for the Iraqi Police started Oct. 21. The police range from junior to senior level. The training covered a wide range of policing areas from small boat tactics during the day and night, boat handling, and riverine patrol operations.

The future of the newly graduated police will vary, said Alaa. Some

police will remain at the Baghdad River Patrol while others accept assignments for other police stations within Baghdad.

“I enjoyed the training,” said Iraqi Policeman Sa’laa. “It was a good experience, and I can do more for my country to stop insurgents.”

Sa’laa has been an Iraqi policeman for two years. The training was very different for him, because he was not searching for insurgents to arrest. His focus is now on securing the banks of the Tigris River, ensuring insurgents do not use the river as a means of escape.

“Our primary mission is of a humanitarian nature,” Alaa said.

To combat the transport of weapons and illegal contraband, the policemen take certain measures in their daily patrols. One critical tactic used by the river police to deter crime on the river is to secure and protect boat docks from infiltration by insurgents and criminals. Just as boat docks play a critical function for the police, they have also benefited criminal elements. Insurgents and criminals have used the docks as staging areas to commit crimes and then use them as escape routes to evade capture by the authorities after the crime, Alaa said.

“We have seen evidence of terrorists that have used the boat docks to launch mortar and rocket attacks. We have found many spent casings,” Alaa said.

The docks have also benefited the Iraqi Army during joint operations with the Iraqi Police. Alaa noted one example in which the army cordoned and searched a Baghdad area during a search for insurgents.

During the mission, the army secured an area to the east of the river and searched the river. The Iraqi River Patrol provided security of the docks and denied access to the river, Alaa stated. He also said the docks have been used to unload soldiers for joint exercises between the army and the police.

Alaa explains that the security of the Tigris depends greatly on the continuous monitoring that his trained and experienced men provide. The policemen monitor the river from their 10 checkpoints along the river banks and by boat teams traveling up and down the 100 kilometer section of their jurisdiction.

“We give our word and promises to the Ministry of Interior to defend our country,” said Ali.



IRAQ'S FUTURE

Iraqi Air Force begins training warrant officers

By U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Frost

MNSTC-I Public Affairs



TAJI, Iraq – Clad in civilian attire, the newest Iraqi Air Force trainees arrive and anxiously form their first military formation. While they're doing this, American military training instructors bark out commands that

are unknown to the trainees.

Next to the training instructor, another voice rushes into the air in a more familiar language – Arabic.

The Iraqi warrant officer candidates have arrived at the first day of their new job.

The Iraqi Air Force Warrant Officer Course, which is taught at Taji Air Base, Iraq, teaches warrant officer candidates leadership skills to help fill the gap between lower ranking Iraqi airmen and Iraqi officers.

Although this class went directly into the hands of the training instructors, future Iraqi warrant officer candidates will attend basic training in Taji first.

“We wondered, ‘Is it too complex? Are we too deep? How’s this going to work through translation?’”

U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Ray Hotaling
Iraqi Air Force basic military training superintendent

“When we got here in July, I was given the task to develop a new course,” said U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Ray Hotaling, Iraqi Air Force basic military training superintendent. “The things we got from the Iraqi leadership said that they wanted history, culture, leadership and land navigation.”

The 60-day course that came from the guidance of the Ministry of Defence and the curriculum of basic training is a hybrid course that mixes both basic training and professional military education.

“We wondered, ‘Is it too complex? Are we too deep? How’s this going to work through translation?’” said Hotaling, who is attached to the Coalition Air Force Transition Team. “The best part is at the end of the day when you see that you put the information out there, and they got it.”

Their understanding is evident as the instructors teach the candidates land navigation with the stereotypical bulky military compasses. Before long, students begin to stand up and help their peers find headings while pointing to distant objects on the flat Iraqi terrain.

“I like the training, and I feel it has gone very well up to now,” said Warrant Officer Candidate Ali, dorm chief for his class.

Ali has been picked out by his instructors since his air force career

Iraqi Air Force warrant officer candidates practice combat skills during a course held in Taji, Iraq, Dec. 11.





Warrant officer candidates attending the Iraqi Air Force Warrant Officer Course await further instruction with their AK-47 rifles during a class held at Taji Air Base, Iraq. The warrant officer course is the first the Iraqi Air Force has held.



Iraqi Air Force warrant officer candidates stand ready in a class held at Taji Air Base, Iraq.

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began on Sept. 12.

His achievements include being ranked as the best soldier among 950 in his basic training class and being given a leadership position among his peers in the warrant officer course.

“When they chose me to be a leader it was because I was disciplined, and because I like this job,” said Ali.

Although Ali was singled out, his thoughts are apparent in the actions of his classmates, said Hotaling.

Despite problems with their pay, electricity in their dormitories and other problems, the candidates continued coming back. Only three have quit since the class began.

“That in itself speaks volumes,” said Hotaling.

Lessons within the course include professional military education lessons that include being a good follower, leadership, problem-solving skills and counseling skills. Other basic training lessons that have been included in the course are culture, land navigation and history.

In order to find the history of Iraq, the American instructors used every resource possible to help the Iraqis understand the history of their military, including the Internet and slideshows from other courses.

Throughout the Warrant Officer Course, the candidates are held to a high standard, which means open ranks every morning, physical training sessions at the end of every class day and occasional dormitory inspections.

After this course is complete, these warrant officers will be moving into the maintenance career field. They will have further training at Taji before being moved to a base somewhere in Iraq to perform their duties.

More candidates are scheduled to go into future courses being held at Taji, and Iraqi instructors are expected to begin training with their American counterparts sometime in the near future.



An Iraqi warrant officer candidate attending the Iraqi warrant officer course helps another student with compass headings during a land navigation class.



Iraqi warrant officer candidates march to their dormitory after a day of training in the Iraqi warrant officer course, which is held at Taji Air Base, Iraq.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Frost

IRAQ'S NEWEST LIEUTENANTS

BAGHDAD – The Iraqi Air Force Academy in Taji, Iraq, graduated 28 newly commissioned Iraqi Air Force 2nd lieutenants in the academy's second graduation. The officers will be heading into leadership positions in sensor operation, maintenance and nine have been identified as pilot candidates. The academy teaches a six-month course, which is scheduled to be extended to nine months to include English language training. During the course, the cadets are taught followership, leadership, weapons familiarization, and drill and ceremony among other courses.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian Ferguson



Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Christopher Frost

Critical Facilities Protection: Protecting Iraq's critical infrastructure

By **U.S. Navy Petty Officer
1st Class Anthony J. Koch**

MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Protecting Iraq's critical infrastructure is essential for the government of Iraq to be able to effectively stand on its own. The Ministry of Interior's Facilities Protection Service, officially called the General Directorate of Critical Facilities Protection, is currently the organization tasked with this responsibility.

"There are more than 8,300 different sites throughout Iraq, so you can see the importance of having a professional critical facilities protection force," said Iraqi Police Staff Maj. Gen. Abass Kadhum Raheem, Critical Facilities Protection general director.

Critical infrastructure consists of, but is not limited to transportation, water works and dams, financial assets, defense industrial base, hospitals and public health systems, government offices, and national symbols and monuments.

The protection of Iraq's critical infrastructure has always been around in some shape or form, but it was the Coalition Provisional Authority who created Order 27 stating that each ministry had the authority to hire its own guards and be called the Facilities Protection Service.



Photo by Iraqi Police Lt. Col. Najim

Critical Facilities Protection guardsmen stand post at an entry gate leading to one of Iraq's many critical facilities.

"Consolidation of the 120,000 personnel from 28 ministries and 14 provinces bringing them under the unified leadership of the Critical Facilities Protection will facilitate the stability and restoration of vital services in Iraq," said Abass.

Currently the Critical Facilities Protection consists of two entities. The Iraqi Ministry of Interior currently has "special guards" who are personnel who have received basic Iraqi Police training, which includes weapons training, non-lethal hand-to-hand defense tactics and Facilities Protection Service personnel who are contracted outside of the Ministry of Interior, most of which have yet to receive such training. Both the Iraqi and Coalition leadership understand the need to consolidate the Critical Facilities Protection into one whole entity, enabling the Ministry of Interior to standardize training and supervise the personnel guarding critical infrastructure throughout Iraq.

"Consolidating the Facilities Protection Service into one entity under the Ministry of Interior will improve pay and provide benefits not currently received by contractors at the other ministries," said Abass.

The Ministry of Interior is currently attempting to build its current force of 20,000 special guard members under the ministry, to at least 120,000 members by transferring the contracted Facilities Protection Service members to the Ministry of Interior. The contractors would go through the same standard eligibility and hiring process the Ministry of Interior requires of the Iraqi Police to include their age, criminal background, records check and their physical condition.

In the United States, about 85 percent of the critical infrastructure is privately owned. This helps reduce the cost to the federal government, because these privately owned companies are responsible for protecting their own property. In Iraq, however, almost the entire critical infrastructure is owned and operated by the government and is therefore protected by the government.

"If Iraq is to become strong enough to protect itself, we need a strong, trained, committed element," said Abass. "The success of this program can only be accomplished with the commitment and guidance from the top of the Ministry of Interior and the Critical Facilities Protection leadership all the way down to its general directorate's members."

MAN ON THE STREET

What have you done for the Iraqi Security Forces that you're most proud of?

U.S. AIR FORCE MAJ. PATRICK PENLAND,

Coalition Air Force Transition Team / Safety

"I advise Iraqi flight and ground safety programs, and I'm most proud of helping them become a paper-based air force and improving their flight safety."



U.S. NAVY LT. J.G. SHARON K. DOERSOM,

MNSTC-I / Health Affairs

"I am responsible for getting the Ministry of Interior's medical clinics the supplies necessary to get them up and running and equipping them so they are capable of sustaining medical readiness."



U.S. AIR FORCE STAFF SGT. DEVIN P. HARLEY,

Joint Contracting Command – Iraq

"I help support the Iraqi economy by awarding contracts to local vendors to outfit military dorms with beds and furniture and dining facilities with all the appliances they require to support the Iraqi Security Forces."



Iraqi Security Forces, Coalition forces detain 27 suspected al-Qaida

BABIL – A joint raid Dec. 7 resulted in the detention of 27 suspected al-Qaida terrorists in a building in Babil that was suspected to be an al-Qaida safe house where members planned attacks against local citizens, Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition forces.

The raid was conducted by Iraqi soldiers and U.S. soldiers.

Intelligence indicated that the al-Qaida members operating out of the building included high-value individuals.

The raid was conducted by an air assault. As the soldiers moved from the helicopter, they received direct small-arms fire from the direction of the building.

Coalition forces returned fire and captured the suspects, including one suspect who attempted to flee and hide in a ditch before being captured. That individual turned out to be one of the high-value targets.

– *Multi-National Division – Center Public Affairs*

Iraqi soldiers detain 15 suspected extremists in Hawr Rajab

HAWR RAJAB – Iraqi soldiers with the 5th Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, detained 15 suspected extremists in two separate incidents in Hawr Rajab, Iraq, Dec. 9.

During the first incident, soldiers investigating an IED were attacked by small-arms fire. The extremists broke contact and were pursued by the soldiers. While in pursuit, the Iraqi Army discovered a second IED consisting of a 122 mm mortar with a cell phone initiator.

The IA detained four local residents they believed were involved in the shooting.

Both IEDs were cleared by the IA and the suspects were taken in for questioning at Forward Operating Base Falcon.

Eleven other suspects were detained by another group of soldiers with the IA. The soldiers, who were conducting a patrol with U.S. soldiers, detained the residents after discovering a cache consisting of two sniper rifles and a scope.

The detainees were taken in for questioning at FOB Kalsu.

– *Multi-National Division – Center Public Affairs*

Iraqi forces take on growing role in the fight against IEDs

BAYJI – Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police forces are taking on more responsibility and clearing many of the IEDs found throughout Multi-National Division – North without any assistance from Coalition forces.

West of Bayji, Iraq, an Iraqi soldier noticed a dump truck driver acting suspiciously Dec. 9. Acting on intuition, the IA soldier prevented the truck from detonating near innocent civilians. His quick thinking and reaction time saved lives.

In another incident in Diyala Province, Iraqi soldiers found a prepared IED positioned on the side of a road. The soldiers followed the command wire to a nearby house and detained the triggerman before he was able to detonate the device Dec. 9.

The Iraqi forces learn about many IEDs and VBIEDs through tips from local residents as well as through Concerned Local Citizen groups. The Iraqi EOD teams are then sent to reduce the explosive device if possible.

In a recent one-week period, Iraqi forces were able to defuse more

than 26 IEDs without assistance from Coalition forces.

– *Multi-National Division – North Public Affairs*

Iraqi Forces, U.S. Special Forces detain suspected al-Qaida leader

KARMAH – Iraqi forces, advised by U.S. Special Forces, detained a suspected al-Qaida in Iraq terrorist cell leader who is believed to command more than 300 terrorists during a raid near Karmah Dec. 11.

The suspected terrorist leader is reported to be responsible for numerous IED and mortar attacks that have killed and wounded several Iraqi and Coalition soldiers. The suspect is also believed to be responsible for the kidnapping and killing of three Iraqi National Guard soldiers.

During the course of the operation, a space heater was knocked over, causing a fire on the second floor of one of the target buildings, which was immediately put out.

Additionally, during the course of the operation, an Iraqi male received a minor gunshot wound when he exited his house to observe Iraqi forces operating in the vicinity. The man was treated by medical personnel and was not detained.

– *Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs*

CLCs, Iraqi Army turn in large weapons cache to U.S. forces

BAGHDAD – A large cache of mortar and artillery rounds, as well as 80 pounds of homemade explosives, were turned in by Concerned Local Citizens to U.S. forces Dec. 6.

This was the third occurrence in as many days of local residents handing explosives over to the Iraqi Army who in turn gave them to American soldiers for disposal.

The find included 36 RPGs, 45 cannon rounds, 16 sticks of dynamite, a trigger mechanism and pressure plate, and additional homemade bomb-making materials. The stash was turned in to American soldiers.

Two smaller caches were collected Dec. 3 in separate incidents.

In one instance, CLCs approached American Soldiers with two RPG launchers and several mortar rounds.

In the second incident, the Iraqi Army turned over a variety of mortar and artillery rounds to American Soldiers after CLCs turned the ammunition in to the Iraqi Army.

– *Multi-National Division – Center Public Affairs*

Iraqi Army, Coalition patrol discover weapons cache in Adwaniyah

ADWANIYAH – A combined Iraqi Army and Coalition patrol discovered a weapons cache in Adwaniyah Dec. 6.

The Iraqi soldiers of Company C, 5th Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division worked with American Soldiers.

The cache consisted of two 100-kilogram bomb shells, five boxes of 14.4 mm rounds, five boxes of 12.7 mm rounds, 350 14.5 mm rounds, one improvised RPG launcher, two improvised rocket launchers, one 152 mm high explosive round, one 130 mm illumination round and other munitions.

An EOD team conducted a controlled detonation to destroy the cache.

– *Multi-National Division – Center Public Affairs*