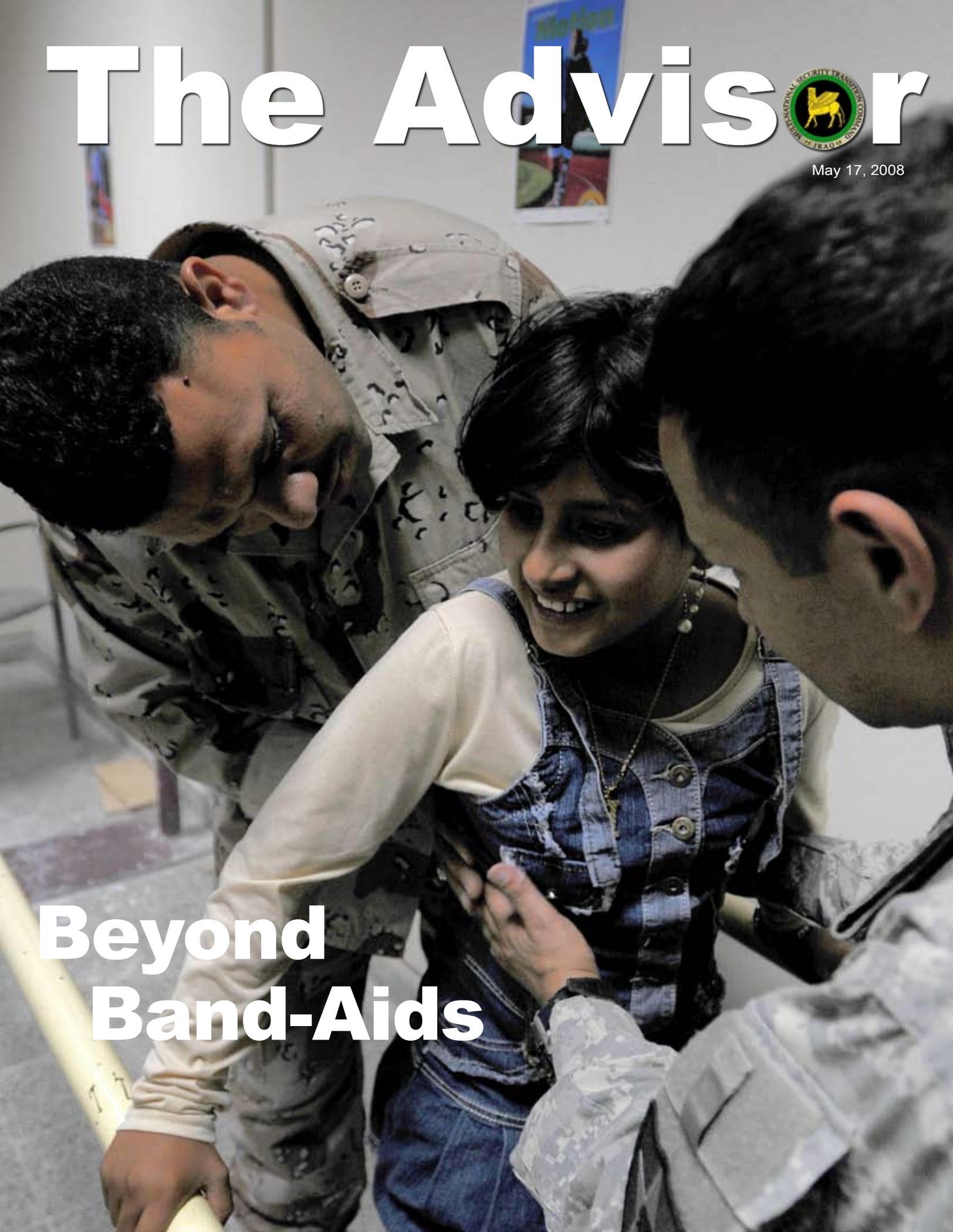


The Advisor



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**Beyond
Band-Aids**

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>> FROM THE COVER

Shiad Abas Aziz, excitedly walks into the arms of U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Luis Falcon, as she gives her new prosthetics an initial test.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

This edition of The Advisor will introduce our efforts to focus on specific aspects of the mission of MNSTC-I and the growth in capability of our Iraqi partners. This issue focuses on the growth in size and capability of the medical aspects of the Iraqi Armed Forces. This key enabling effort to stand up a modern Iraqi national defense has seen remarkable progress and continues to make huge gains. Inside we start with a story from U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis that shows how some of these new medical skills and assets helped give a young girl her dream with new legs from the Ministry of Defence Prosthetics Clinic. Airman Davis contributes another story on the training of Iraqi Army trauma medics who recently graduated from the ninth class at the Iraqi Army Trauma Training Center in Baghdad. U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Bryanne Moore writes about the Foreign Military Sales program which is bringing quality ambulances to the nation with the recent arrival of the first shipment of 33 urban ambulances of an order of 88 purchased by the Iraqi government. Our U.S. Air Force partners at the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing contribute a piece on the first actual medevac flight performed by the Iraqi Air Force from Balad to Baghdad. Finally, we close this in depth series telling the fascinating history of the MoD Prosthetics Clinic which started with a pizza oven and is now a world class facility equal to any in the U.S. and staffed by Iraqi personnel. We hope you enjoy this issue and always welcome your comments and feedback.

LTC Frederick P. Wellman

Chief of Public Affairs

Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq

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Joint Patrol Yields Multiple Caches

By U.S. Army Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Inf. Div., Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE KALSU — A joint route reconnaissance mission in Maderiyah, Iraq, led to the discovery of six separate weapons caches May 13, to include 300 anti-personnel grenades.

The first cache contained one 120 mm mortar, one 100 mm anti-aircraft round, 12 RPG warheads, eight 73 mm rockets and a mortar tripod. All weapons were serviceable and the rockets were still in their plastic containers.

The second cache recovered consisted of 300 anti-personnel grenades, 100 meters of detonation cord, 100 rounds of PKC machine-gun ammunition and five sticks of TNT.

"Most of the 300 anti-personnel grenades were serviceable. Because they were found with det cord, these most likely would have been used to booby trap homes or areas where al-Qaeda expected U.S. or IA Soldiers to search," said U.S. Army Capt. Richard Aaron, commander of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Acting on intelligence provided by area residents, Soldiers from Battery B, and Iraqi Army Soldiers from Company C, 5th Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th IA Division, conducted the mission to investigate the reported cache sites. Local Sons of Iraq were on hand during the mission as well.

Unity between the IA and U.S. Soldiers has increased the community's confidence, prompting citizens to step up and provide more information on insurgent activities, said Aaron, a native of Middleboro, Mass.

"These caches and every other cache are living proof of how important it is for units to build relations with the local population. Every mission that we conduct, my platoon's goal is to reach out to the local population, talk with them and build the trust between us," said U.S. Army 1st Lt. Greg Highstrom, platoon leader with Battery B. "In return, Iraqis are more willing to help."

A third cache was discovered during site exploitation consisting of 10 155 mm illumination canisters. Although empty, Aaron said they could possibly have been used to construct improvised explosive devices.

The final three caches were discovered in close proximity to each other. These consisted of one 23 mm AA gun with a tripod, 200 23 mm rounds, an SS-30 M3 127 mm rocket and three 120 mm mortars, all of which were serviceable.

Many of the munitions were in new condition, indicating they were recently placed in the area, and done so with care. Weapons found in the water were well-protected from the water, Aaron said.

Besides reducing insurgents' ability to conduct operations and attacks in the area, the mission's success will continue to drive al-Qaeda leaders from the area. As arrests and finds continue to be made, Aaron said, insurgents are leaving and ditching their weapons in an attempt to avoid being detained. ■

what key leaders are saying

>> **NURI AL MALIKI,**
Iraqi Prime Minister

"We came to restore the dignity of the law and the state in the city. We should destroy all the barriers and walls that have risen between us on sectarian lines."



>> **TOM CASEY,**
United States State Department spokesman

The fact remains, though, that the Iranian government continues, despite their public statements of support for the Iraqi government, to play this negative role, to provide this kind of assistance to militant groups and to militia groups. It's something we want to see stopped, and it's something the Iraqis want to see stopped.

>> **ROBERT GATES,**
United States Secretary of Defense

"Every day, my signature on a piece of paper sends our brave men and women in harm's way. At the end of the day, I must be able to look them in the eye -- be they in Kandahar or Ramadi or Walter Reed -- and tell them truthfully that this wealthy and generous country has done everything possible for them."

A bond, a dream, a new pair of legs

By U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq Public Affairs



BAGHDAD - It was just another foot patrol in the Diyala Province for U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Luis Falcon, one he had done numerous times before. As Falcon was remounting his Stryker to move to another part of the province he noticed a little girl in an old, oversized wheelchair with blood crusted at the end of her knees where the rest of her legs should have been.

Getting a radio call to leave the area, Falcon had to move on but vowed to himself to come back and see the girl whose facial agony spoke to him.

Falcon a member of 4th Platoon, B Company, 1-38 Infantry,



Photos by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

Shiad's mother Wahida, looks on as her daughter, assisted by Staff Sgt. Luis Falcon, 4th Platoon, B Company, 1-38 Infantry, 4-2 Infantry Division squad leader, and Iraqi Army Capt. Osama help her put on one of her new legs for a test fit.

4-2 Infantry Division, came back the next day, the day after that, and nearly everyday for the next six months; bringing her toys, medical supplies for her legs, a new wheelchair, food for her family and even a Playstation 2. He tried everything he could to brighten up her day.

Soon Falcon's bond with the girl he came to know as Shiad

grew from friendship into a deep love that no interpreter had to translate for the two.

"There was not a day she was not outside her door in her wheelchair waiting for me to come by and give her a kiss goodnight and talk," said Falcon. "No matter how long my patrol was she would wait for me at her gate entrance. My day was just not complete without seeing her."

Learning Shiad's story solidified their bond even more as Falcon was amazed at the will power and courage the little girl showed. About six months ago, Shiad was walking home from school with her brother Ali, when an improvised explosive device meant for coalition forces detonated and severely injured both of them.

"Unfortunately her brother perished as a result of his injuries of the blast, but Shiad overcame the odds and made a full recovery with little pain in her legs according to Iraqi doctors who treated her after the explosion," said Falcon.

While Falcon has no children of his own, he came to consider Shiad his own, bringing her everything he could think of and constantly asked her what she wanted. One day when Falcon asked Shiad replied, "All I want is legs so I can walk to school again." It was then their journey took a new turn, and the quest to fulfill her dream began.

Instantly, Falcon's goal became to get his little girl new legs, whatever it took.

Pleading with his chain of command, he asked anyone he could to help get Shiad legs. Frustrated after months of searching for a solution, he finally got in touch with Jeffrey Gardner, a public health officer with the American Provincial Reconstruction Team in Diyala. Gardner then brought Shiad's case to the Iraqi Army's surgeon general, Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Samir Abdullah Hassan.

Hassan eventually gave permission to allow Shiad to be treated at the Ministry of Defence Prosthetics Clinic located in the International Zone.

The clinic, financed by Iraqi Security Forces funds in 2005, is no charge to patients and run by Chris Cummings, a contractor who trains Iraqi Army officers in prosthetics.

On May 9, Shiad, accompanied by her mother Wahida and a smiling Falcon, came into the clinic to have her dream realized.

"This is a great day for me, I never thought this day would



Iraqi Army Capt. Osama marks lines on a stocking over Shiad's leg that will be used as a template for her new prosthetic.

See SHIAD, Page 5



Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

Iraqi Army Capt. Osama, prosthetics technician, measures Shiad's legs with a laser tool that is directly connected with his computer. The computer makes a 3-D model of Shiad's legs, which will be utilized to create her new prosthetics.

From SHIAD, Page 4

come but here it is," said Falcon. "I'm probably more excited for it than her."

Due to Shiad's special circumstances she received her new prosthetics on the same day, when it normally takes several visits to the clinic for fitting and molding.

"Shiad's family lives significantly further away from the clinic than most of our patients so we had everyone come in on a Friday so it would just be her and we could knock it out in one visit," said Cummings.

Starting early in the morning, Iraqi Army Capt. Osama started by measuring her legs with a special laser connected to a computer to get the exact contour of her legs to start a mold.

Working with thermoplastics, advanced computer aided design and computer manufactured design program called Biosculptor, the team of Iraqi Army soldiers worked diligently to have Shiad standing within a few hours.

Taking her first tentative steps slowly and methodically towards Falcon a grin came over her face that turned into a full blown smile as she got closer to Falcon.

With his own smile, Falcon encouraged Shiad holding out his arms and saying, "Sasha come on, you can do it give me a hug."

With a look of accomplishment on her face she made it into the comfort of Falcon's arms, both of them beaming proudly.

Falcon's unit is scheduled to leave in just three weeks. He expressed his relief that he could get her to the clinic safely and make sure they didn't experience any trouble.

"We got her a helicopter to bring her here and I was with her all the way here from her home," said Falcon reminiscing. "If I could, I would stay in the red zone with her."

With a look of concern, Falcon said his goodbyes to Shiad and handed over all the important paper work over to Shiad's mother. Before leaving her, Falcon gently kissed her on the forehead and told her he loved her and promised to stay in touch.

After leaving Shiad, he diligently confirmed her next appointment with the doctor and checked all the specifics to make sure she can get back inside the highly fortified International Zone for her physical therapy.

With only a laminated picture of Shiad in his pocket and his memories of their time spent together he departed the clinic with hope that one day they could reunite.

Six months ago Shiad was just one of the thousands of Iraqis that were injured by improvised explosive devices waiting for life to return to normal. Now, thanks to the love and care of one U.S. Army soldier, she can finally realize her dream of walking to school again. ■

Iraqi trauma medics providing vital support on and off the battlefield

By U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq Public Affairs



BAGHDAD - When a soldier goes down on the battlefield, seconds count to get them medical attention before the threat of losing a limb or bleeding out occurs. Iraqi Army Trauma medics the U.S. Army's version of combat medics, are there on the battlefield and in field hospitals to provide trauma support to wounded soldiers.

The Iraqi Army Trauma Training Center has been training Iraqi Army medics for the last year and a half, the ninth class graduated May 13. The graduation signified the first class to graduate after the Ministry of Defence took over.

During the 10 week course, students are subjected to a gauntlet of tasks and challenges to prepare them for the rigors of battlefield care.

"During the course students not only have in class pre-hospital training but have a hands on in hospital training portion," said Dr. Ali, Trauma Training Center director. "During the hands on portion they intermingled with doctors and nurses of the 86th Combat Support Hospital, gaining knowledge and information regarding various medical and nursing procedures."

To perform their duties in the field the soldiers' classroom instruction is just as an important as the hands on to learn the necessary skills.

"They learn about a variety of common and not so common trauma and wounds, burns, airway control amputations, intravenous fluid and electrolyte replacement to name a few," said Ali. "All the classes were taught either by myself Dr. Ghassen, Mrs. Istrabek and two interpreters with physician backgrounds."

When asked about the future of the course Dr. Ali had a



Courtesy Photos

(Above) Iraqi Army soldiers from the ninth Trauma Medics Course prepare patients to be litter carried during a hands-on exercise. The exercise, one of many during the 10-week course, teaches students how to react to real world scenarios they may encounter on the battlefield. (Below) Students practice the proper procedure for bandaging a bleeding wound and taking vital signs.



promising vision for the future of the course.

"Since I took over at the middle of this course, the course curriculum needs some reorganization to fit the level of the students since we have medical doctors, nurses and medics of variable standards intermingling in the course. I am planning to introduce other courses and workshops that bring benefit to the Iraqi's to refresh and update their knowledge and practice," noted Ali.

The ninth class of graduates will go on to work in various medical units of the Ministry of Defence providing the future of battlefield medicine for the Iraqi Army. ■



A student practices the proper procedure for checking a bullet exit wound. The exercise was a hands-on exercise designed to simulate combat zone situations.



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Bryanne Moore

A line of ambulances obtained through the Foreign Military Sales program awaits delivery to an Iraqi Army unit at Old al Muthana Vehicle Warehouse May 8. The ambulances will be distributed throughout Iraq by the Iraqi Ministry of Defence.

Combat ready ambulances arrive in Iraq

By U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Bryanne Moore

Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq Public Affairs



BAGHDAD - Thirty-three brand new, custom-built ambulances were delivered to the Iraqi Army at Old al Muthana May 7 and May 8, courtesy of the Foreign Military Sales program. While these are not the first ambulances in Iraq, they are the first set purchased with Government of Iraq funds since the war began.

"These ambulances provide the Iraqi Security Forces an en-route care capability that they did not have before our assistance," said U.S. Navy Lt. Brett H. Hicks, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq medical logistics officer.

MNSTC-I provided both medical training and purchase advisement prior to the 88-unit purchase order opened in March 2007. These ambulances are the first delivery from the purchase order, which was overseen by the MNSTC-I Security Assistance Office.

The SAO function is to help the Iraqi government build its defense capability through the purchase of defense equipment and services. SAO advises on FMS, a program where the U.S. assists the Government of Iraq purchase defense equipment and supplies with Iraqi funds.

Two 18-wheel tractor trailer truck caravans from Um Qasr delivered the 33 Chevrolet 3500 Diesel Urban Ambulances to Old al Muthana over a two-day period. Each ambulance was then unloaded from the back of the 18-wheelers and driven down the ramp and into a storage line.

Now that the ambulances are on-ground, the Iraqi Ministry

of Defence will determine their placement. Before they are put in service they must be fully stocked with medical equipment.

It is standard practice for ambulances to come stocked only with a stretcher, it allows for further customization by the organization.

The stretcher that came with the Chevy ambulances is the Stryker MX-PRO R3, a high-end, rugged option that is used by several lead American ambulance agencies.

"Ambulances provide rapid medical care to citizens during life-threatening events. The decision to purchase this model was a prudent one, said Hicks. This model cost \$85 thousand per ambulance as compared to some models that can cost upwards of \$240 thousand."

This type II ambulance is known for its maneuverability as well as its practical price tag. Because of their size and design, the ambulances will have little issue maneuvering the crowded city streets of Baghdad and other similar locations in Iraq.

Ambulances are a key component of a country's infrastructure for dealing with emergencies. Their arrival in Iraq is a sign of the growth of the medical field as a key enabler for ISF success.

"The ambulances will allow ISF to transport their casualties in a more timely and effective manner," said Hicks.

Medics can provide life-saving treatment while en-route to hospitals in these ambulances.

This will greatly increase ISF ability to respond to medical emergencies in the community, which in turn will help save countless civilian and military populace over the lifespan of the vehicles.

We have given the Iraqi people the resources and capabilities to succeed in the emergency medical field and now they are prepared to take the lead, said Hicks. ■

Iraqi Air Force performs first medevac mission

By U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Mareshah Haynes

332nd Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs



BALAD, Iraq - Since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom the people of Iraq have celebrated many firsts on their way to re-establishing and maintaining their government and military forces. May 14 marked another significant event when the Iraqi Air Force led its first flown medical evacuation mission.

The crew consisted of an Iraqi pilot, flight medic and aerial gunner, each with a U.S. military counterpart. The crew transported their first patient, an Iraqi man, from the Air Force Theater Hospital at Balad Air Base to the U.S. Army's 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad.

"This is the first [medevac] mission in the history of the Iraqi Air Force," said Iraqi Air Force Lt. Amar, an Iraqi flight medic instructor. "I hope to succeed in this mission to serve my country. This is good training."

Before flying the medevac mission, the crew, flying an Iraqi Air Force Huey II helicopter, trained with Coalition Airmen from the AFTH's Contingency Aeromedical Staging Facility and Soldiers from the 86th CSH on how to on and off load patients.

Currently, U.S. service members transport all Iraqi patients via U.S. aircraft arriving and departing from the hospital, said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Stroude, a 332nd Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron helicopter pad boss, deployed from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, but changes are ahead.

"Eventually [the Iraqis will] be able to move their patients anywhere in the theater since there are more Iraqi hospitals than [U.S. military] hospitals," Stroude said.

Additionally the Iraqis will be able to transport patients quickly to facilities that are closer to where they were injured, Stroude said.

The patient who was moved during the medevac mission was Ali Hamad, a 27-year-old married farmer from Baghdad, suffered severe injuries to his face and eyes from an improvised explosive device detonation and had underwent several surgeries at the AFTH.

Hamad said, via a translator, this was his fourth visit to the AFTH for treatment and he would require at least one more surgery. His latest surgery was to insert a fat pad, grafted from his side, in his eye socket to lift the eyeball up as the first step for prepare for the emplacement of a prosthetic eye.

Once Hamad returns home, he said he will be able to do light farming duties.

The mission to move Hamad back to Baghdad allowed the Iraqi medics and crew to practice their skills with patients.

"We have two graduates now implemented in the medevac system and this is an exercise in the process of patient movement," said U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class James Reid, a flight medic by trade, assigned to Coalition Air Forces Transition Team-Air Force Training School as an instructor/coordinator. "They'll move the patients from here to Ibn Sina [an Iraqi



Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Julianne Showalter

An Iraqi Air Force aerial gunner dons his body armor before flying on the first Iraqi air force medical evacuation mission. The mission transported patients from the Air Force Theater Hospital to the U.S. Army's 86th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad.

hospital in the Green Zone, primarily manned by rotating U.S. Army combat support hospital units] and in the future they'll move patients from here to Medical City [Iraqi civilian hospitals] in Baghdad."

The patient loading training before the medevac mission also served as a lesson to help Airmen assigned to the CASF in helping their Iraqi counterparts be successful in their future missions.

"The Air Force medics are mediators to move the patient for the ambulance crew," Reid said. "We want make sure they're confident and oriented to move around the aircraft because it's not like a Blackhawk [the aircraft flown by U.S. Army medics.]"

"We're used to working on Air Force or Army helicopters," Stroude said. "Their [the Iraqis'] set-up is a little bit different and getting the patients on and off the aircraft is a little bit different. We're getting tips from them as well as sharing information we have from the hospital as far as on-loading and off-loading patients."

The U.S. Airmen and Soldiers take pride in the accomplishments of their Coalition brethren.

"This is big for me," Reid said. "I'm not flying combat missions, so this is the next best thing -- to have an impact on the medical health services of Iraq. It's just one facet of them becoming self-sufficient as country."

"I think it's fantastic," Stroude said. "The more they're able to do on their own to take care of their own people and take them from wherever they are to the nearest hospital as fast as possible, it's ultimately going to save the patient's life."

As a member of the Awakening group, a group of Iraqi citizens who help the Iraqi Army and police patrol the neighborhoods, Hamad is happy and proud to see the progress the Iraqi Air Force is making toward becoming self-sufficient in their medevac missions.

"It's natural to feel happy that my country is taking over the job now," Hamad said. "I feel happy because they [Iraqis] will be able to understand me when I talk to them and I can talk to them directly without a translator. I am very happy to be the first to fly on an Iraqi [medevac] helicopter." ■

Pizza oven prosthetics no more: A working history of the MoD Prosthetics Clinic

By MNSTC-I Public Affairs

MNSTC-I Public Affairs



BAGHDAD - The prosthetics field has one of the highest evolution rates in the medical field. Imagine trying to keep up while working out of a basement, using a pizza oven. Chris Cummings did it.

Four short years ago, the Ministry of Defence Prosthetics Clinic was a two-man shop- Chris Cummings and his interpreter. "That's when [Iraqi Army] General Samir came and rescued me out of the basement," Cummings said.

The clinic has called several locations home since its humble beginning in the Udday Hussein palace basement, including a barber shop, a convention center, the current lab, and later this summer its final destination at the new field hospital at Old al Muthana.

Chris Cummings was a civil affairs sergeant when he first came to Baghdad in 2004. A prosthetics technician at his civilian job, when the Reservist saw a need here, he decided to fill it. It was then that he began pushing for a prosthetics clinic.

Working in his spare time out of the basement of the Uday Hussein palace, where a part of the 1st Calvary Division



An Iraqi Army soldier physical therapist, shows a patient ways to strengthen his legs. After patients are fitted for their prosthetics they come back for several physical therapy appointments.

was stationed, Cummings, along with U.S. Army Capt. Steven Lindsey, made do with what was available to them at the time—namely a pizza oven.

"The building was partially bombed out but the basement was intact," said Cummings. "Down there was an old pizza oven that I put to use right away making polypropylene sockets."

"I tried everything to get this clinic going, I even had to compete with my company commander for funds from higher up," he said with a smirk. "I lost out to his Ferris wheel or whatever it was, but I kept at it."

Now, just four years later, Cummings is here as a civilian contractor, running his team eight Iraqi Army physical therapists and prosthetics technicians in a state-of-the-art facility.

Cummings is instructing his team, whom each has a minimum of a two-year vocational school, on how to run the latest technology in prosthetics.

To effectively treat incoming patients, Cummings is teaching the soldiers to work with thermoplastics and the Biosculptor CAD/CAM system. The CAD/CAM system, which means computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing respectively, uses computer modeling to perfect the prosthetics process.

"It is a much quicker system than they were trained to use," said Cummings. "The system employs a number of computers to first measure, then cut the mold to specs requiring the trainees making only slight modifications to the mold to ensure a proper fit." The technical system the Iraqi technicians are using is more intricate than some in the United States even.

As for patients, there are some referrals from the combat support hospital here in the International Zone, and the military has its own referral system but civilians are "mostly word of mouth right now," said Cummings.

"The clinic is currently funded by MOD with MNSTC-I sharing the cost," said Cummings. "They help make it totally free of charge to patients."

Cummings will be heading back to the United States this summer, but this clinic



Photos by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

An Iraqi Army soldier carefully cuts a plastic piece that will be attached to the hip of a patient. The polypropylene plastic is made by an advanced CAD/CAM process.

is here for the duration. When asked about the outlook of the future for the clinic Cummings had only positive things to say.

"Later this summer the clinic is moving to Old al Muthana where it will be located directly behind the new field hospital that has been built there," said Cummings. "The new location is the last thing I will oversee before I go home."

Cummings says he can go home to the U.S. confident the Iraqis will continue to provide much needed quality prosthetic services to the Iraqi people. ■



Iraqi Army soldiers take heated plastic and place it over a CAD designed mold. The mold is a direct replica of the patient's leg.

Iraqi Army Soldiers fresh out of basic training march during a graduation ceremony in Tallil.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis



Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

The Iraqi Tomb of the Unknown Soldier located in the International Zone during sunset.



Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

Members of the Iraqi Army band, take a much needed break to relax between sets during Iraqi Air Force Day in Baghdad.



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Jason Robertson

Iraqi children watch from the doorway of their house as an Iraqi Army soldier provides security during a recent joint patrol with U.S. Army Soldiers in Mosul.



Photo Courtesy U.S. Marine Corps

Marines with Charlie Company, known as 'Gunfighter,' foot patrolled in and around the area, ensuring the bunkers and air fields were clear of ordnance or weapons insurgents use to inflict danger on coalition forces.



Photo by U.S. Army Capt. David F. Roy

Hundreds of Iraqi Police recruits participate in weapons familiarization training at the Iraqi Police Fourat Training Center in western Baghdad on May 5.

Iraqi Police continuing to grow

By Ron Holbrook

Civilian Police Assistance Training Team Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Baghdad Police College recently graduated 479 new police officers from the 9-month police officer course as the Iraq Ministry of Interior continues to expand its police forces.

The graduation brings a total of more than 292,000 assigned Iraqi Police throughout Iraq.



Iraqi Police Maj. Gen. Ayden Khaled, deputy minister and director of security affairs for the Ministry of Interior, told the graduates they will play an important role in the Iraqi Security Forces and the future of Iraq.

“Your duty is to protect our country,” said Khaled. “Your loyalty is to the nation and to serve all its citizens. Put Iraq first and keep it in front of you as one united country. You will help build our security even more.”

Khaled also congratulated the Iraqi Police who had served in Operation Knights assault in Basra to rid the city of criminal elements that threatened the local citizens.

“Your duty is to be honest and enforce the law the same for all people,” said Khaled. Police officers who do not enforce the law honestly will be under the punishment of our laws.”

Iraqi Police Maj. Gen. Hussein, dean of Baghdad Police College, congratulated the new Iraqi Police for their dedication and hard work in becoming officers.

“Our job is to make Iraq stronger,” said Hussein. “Now go serve your country and your ministry-- long live Iraq!”

Hussein also thanked all the instructors, trainers and the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team who “have worked day

and night to make this training possible.”

During the nine-month course, the students received training in criminal law, public relations, computer technology, autopsy investigation, police operations and investigations, introduction to Iraqi law and police regulations.

At the end of the ceremony, graduates erupted in cheers and chanted the song “Baghdad will be victorious.” Graduates helped one another pin on their new rank as Iraqi Police lieutenants.

“This is like a dream come true for me,” said new Iraqi Police Lt. Abbas, who has been an Iraqi policeman for four years. “It was always my dream to become a police officer. I am proud. My family is proud. Now with this training and experience I will be better prepared to serve my country and the citizens of Iraq.” ■



Photo by Noah Miller

Students celebrate the recent graduation at Baghdad Police College Iraqi Police Officer course.

Iraqi Air Force obtains skills to build communication network

By U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Geff Diveley

Coalition Air Force Training Team



BAGHDAD - Advising the Iraqi Air Force on communications has challenges due to the language barrier. The U.S. Air Force military advisors have worked with the Iraqi Air Force communications section since July 2007, under the guidance of Iraqi Air Force Brig. Gen. Ahmed, director of communications and

his staff during the early stages of development.

"Strong communication is vital to the construction of a viable force," said Ahmed. "The communication demonstrated the understanding of this concept and began to lay the foundation to build upon."

Iraqi Air Force master trainers attended a two-month communication class instructed by U.S. Air Force instructors before teaching the same class to other Iraqis.

"It was a very good class because it was taught in Arabic. I learned a lot about computers from Lt. Col. Mohammed," said Iraqi Air Force Warrant Officer Nazar.

This training provides Iraqi communications airmen the skills to meet mission needs in providing military wide access to the Iraqi Defense Network. The IDN is an unclassified network that offers internet, email, word and computer processing to the Iraqi military throughout Iraq.

Working hand in hand with Iraqi Air Force Communication Headquarters staff advisors, U.S. Air Force Maj. Val Baker and U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. John



Photo by U.S. Army Maj. Sim Ripley

In 2004 contractors set up this satellite dish for the Iraqi Ministry of Defence. Today the network has expanded with a dedicated unclassified network that offers internet, e-mail, word and computer processing to the Iraqi military throughout Iraq.

Sisson, both Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq advisors, developed an IDN Information Management Officers Course to provide the knowledge and skills needed to manage the network.

Iraqi Air Force Lt. Col. Ayad taught the first IMO course at New al-Muthana Air Base to five Iraqi airmen. The topics of the course were: creating internet accounts, making CAT-5 network cables, detecting and removing computer viruses.

Iraqi Air Force Warrant Officer Emad said, "It was very good because they worked with us for each step in Arabic."

After the lecture portion, the students participated in practical exercises, demonstrating their new skills during the hands-on portion of the training. Iraqi Air Force Lt. Col. Mohammed, communications trainer, commented on the willingness of students to absorb the technical training material presented by their Iraqi instructor.

"Lt. Col. Mohammed gave a great IMO class for Kirkuk officers," said Iraqi Air Force Maj. Jalal. "He gave very detailed instruction in Arabic that was very beneficial for all."

Having skilled communicators at Iraqi Air Force bases is critical to their mission through communications support. The Iraqi Air Force is rapidly growing and expanding its capabilities. ■



Courtesy Photo

A Coalition instructor explains the upcoming coursework for the new Iraqi Air Force Master Trainer course that will be taught at Iraqi Air Force bases Iraq wide. The course teaches Iraqi airmen the necessary skills to teach fellow airmen to be effective Air Force communications officers and manage the Iraqi Defense Network.

Iraqi's Take Lead in Providing Aid to Sadr City Residents

Multi-National Division–Baghdad

CAMP LIBERTY — Residents in Sadr City continue to receive humanitarian aid from their local government, the Government of Iraq, Iraqi Army soldiers and Multi-National Division – Baghdad with the help of the recently opened Civil Military Operations Center and Iraqi Assistance Center at Joint Security Station Thawra 1.

At the CMOC, Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers give guidance on how to better the infrastructure and supply essential services as well as supply food, water and other necessities to the people of Sadr City.

“The CMOC has done an exceptional job bringing together all of the Iraqi officials, allowing them to take leadership in repairing some of the damages caused by the recent fighting,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Frank Curtis, commanding officer of the 432nd Civil Affairs Battalion, 360th Civil Affairs Brigade, Multi-National Division-Baghdad.

“The Iraqi Army plans and executes

mission in coordination with coalition forces, but the Iraqis determine the locations and plans the missions,” said Curtis.

To date, 114,000 liters of water have been handed out and approximately 46,000 meals have been given to the area’s residents. Iraqi Army soldiers bring the items to the community and deliver them to the people on the streets. Large appliances, such as 64 generators and 15 stoves, have also been provided for the local residents.

Although the aid provided is needed by those in the area, there is currently not a humanitarian crisis in Sadr City, said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Gerry Messmer, division chief of staff for civil military operations with Company A, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Infantry Division, MND-B.

“Because of restrictions in vehicle movement, there is a reduction of food in some of the markets, but not to critical levels,” said Messmer. “What this has done, in the free market society that they

have, is raised prices. The Iraqi Army is taking food and water in to help the poorer people and defray the expensive costs in the markets.”

IA soldiers have not forgotten about providing medical care to those in Sadr City. They have been bringing such services to the streets of Sadr City on a regular basis.

“The 11th IA Division doctors have done at least one medical engagement a week, treating the local people,” said Messmer.

They have seen more than 2,500 people over the last three weeks out on the streets in Sadr City, he added.

While the IA, GoI and MND–Baghdad plan to continue with the current aid they are providing, they are also planning for the future.

“We plan to renovate schools and clinics and then refurbish and revitalize the Jamilla Market, a wholesale market that supplies most of Baghdad,” said Messmer.

Ultimately, it is all about Iraqis helping themselves and other Iraqis. “The people see this,” said Curtis, “and they recognize that they can support their government.”

Iraqi Police Takes Greater Responsibility

214th Fires Brigade – Baghdad Public Affairs

FOB DELTA — Iraqi Police in Wasit Province have made significant capacity gains in recent months to improve security for the citizens of Iraq.

“Their planning ability has greatly improved and their effectiveness increases daily”, said Col. Peter Baker, commander of the 214th Fires Brigade.

Much of the improvement is due to the actions of Maj. Gen. Hannin al-Ameer, the provincial director of police, appointed in September.

“He is very competent,” Baker said. “He has taken a large force and made immediate and long-term improvements – not an easy task for a unit of that size.”

One significant turning point for the force happened during the late-March Shia uprising: the firing of 134 Iraqi Policemen – both troopers and officers – from IP Emergency Response Unit 4, said 1st Lt. Lynette Jefferson, a platoon leader for the 511th Military Police Company, attached to the 214th FB, of Fort Drum, N.Y., the unit responsible for training Iraqi Policemen.

“It was due to a variety of circumstances,” she said. “Some had militia ties, some weren’t coming to work and some just weren’t doing their jobs.”

“The flare-up in early March was an opportunity for [Hannin] to assess the quality of his forces,” Baker said. “It had a huge positive effect on the force.” The leadership of the unit was changed as well, not because of corruption, but to improve the unit, Jefferson said.

“The current leadership is more disciplined and training-focused,” she said. “They’re taking their jobs more seriously.”

The change in leadership at ERU 4 has trickled down to change the attitudes of the police officers on the ground, as well,

said Sgt. Melissa Overton, a squad leader with the 511th MP Co.

“They seem more disciplined in training with us,” she said. “They want to learn better skills.”

They are also more open to conducting joint patrols with Coalition forces, she added.

“Before [the firings], it was ‘yes, but not today,’” she said. “Now, it’s ‘how many do you need, we’ll go now.’”

One example of this new spirit became evident during an operation in the Zuwarijat district of al-Kut, 163 kilometers southeast of Baghdad, April 26. Iraqi Police, in support of Iraqi Army elements and Coalition forces, entered the neighborhood and established a permanent joint presence with the IA – something the Iraqi Security Forces had been unable to do before.

“When they went there [Zuwarijat] before [March 4], they had no plans or means to stay,” Baker said. “This time they planned to go in and stay. It’s had a huge effect on the population.

“Now when we go in, people ask if we will stay,” he said. “The reinforcements and improvements that we have made are a sign.”

“Overall, I know that taking ground, it was a huge step,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Erik Golden, a squad leader with the 511th MP Co.

The company’s mission has been to train IP on the ground in their stations around al-Kut. The close relationship they have developed definitely helps all those involved, Golden said.

“They’re more willing to learn, and we’re willing to teach,” he said. “We are working on a train-the-trainer program, so that Iraqi Policemen can do the training at the stations as the Americans supervise.”

Baker praised the work of the 511th MP Co. with the IP in Wasit.

“Much of what they do has a direct result on the Iraqi Police, and that translates into better security,” he said. ■

MND-B soldiers keep criminals, munitions off Baghdad streets

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division – Baghdad soldiers detained suspected special groups criminals, allegedly responsible for attacks against Iraqi Security and Coalition forces, during the early morning hours May 16.

Conducting intelligence-driven point operations against pre-identified targets, soldiers from 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, detained two individuals suspected of coordinating and carrying out violent crimes in the Rashid district of southern Baghdad at approximately 2 a.m. and 5 a.m.

Nearby, Iraqi National Policemen from the 3rd Brigade, 2nd National Police Division, turned over nine 60 mm mortar rounds captured at approximately 9:30 a.m. during a security patrol in the Risalah neighborhood of West Rashid to soldiers of 4th Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment.

“The efforts to keep the streets of Baghdad safe and the Iraqi people free of the violence and influence of these criminals and terrorists is an ongoing fight,” said U.S. Army Maj. Dave Olson, spokesman for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. “The Raider Brigade and its soldiers are committed to assisting the Iraqi Security Forces with their ongoing efforts to enforce the Iraqi Rule of Law for the citizens of Baghdad and the Government of Iraq. We look forward to the time where there will be no more violent activity in this nation’s capitol.”

–Multi-National Division – Baghdad Public Affairs

Citizen’s tips leads MND-B Soldiers to EFP-making factory in local bakery

BAGHDAD – An Iraqi citizen’s tip led Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers to a weapons cache in the New Baghdad district of eastern Baghdad May 16.

After receiving a tip about an explosively formed projectile-making operation in a Kamaliyah bakery at approximately 2 p.m., Soldiers from 4th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, cordoned off the suspected building.

Criminals attacked the Soldiers with small-arms fire but were driven off by MND-B Soldiers returning fire. Soldiers from another platoon rushed to the scene to provide additional security.

The search operation continued and the MND-B Soldiers found a cache including two explosively formed projectiles, four mortar tubes, six mortar rounds, three rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 14 rocket propelled grenade rounds and numerous armor piercing rounds, four sniper rifles, an RPK machine gun, various improvised explosive device making materials, three grenades, and a vehicle modified for a sniper to fire from unobserved. The vehicle also contained one of the EFPs.

“We are thankful to the citizen who provided the information to make this find possible. Iraqis are taking an active role in their own protection to secure a brighter and safer future for Iraq,” said U.S. Army Maj. Joey Sullinger, spokesperson for 4th BCT, 10th Mtn. Div. “We will find these criminals and their weapons of terror no matter where they hide. Along with our Iraqi Security Force counterparts, we will protect the populace.”

–Multi-National Division – Baghdad Public Affairs

Citizen’s tips leads MND-B Soldiers to EFP-making factory

FOB FALCON, Iraq – Multi-National Division – Baghdad Soldiers detained a suspected criminal at approximately 2:30 a.m. May 15 in the Rashid district of southern Baghdad.

Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conducted a point-specific operation to detain a suspected Special Groups criminal wanted in connection with extra-judicial killings, improvised explosive device attacks and weapons trafficking.

“The Soldiers of 1st BCT ‘Raider Brigade’ remain steadfast in their efforts to bring these dangerous criminals to justice,” said Maj. Dave Olson, spokesman, 1st BCT, 4th Inf. Div. “The Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition forces strive to provide a stable, secure environment for the Rashid district and its citizens.”

–Multi-National Division – Baghdad Public Affairs

MAN ON THE STREET

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

U.S. ARMY LT. COL. PAULINE GROSS,

Clinical /Education and Training advisor, Mol

“I help the Iraqi medical staff organize civilian medical operations for Iraqi community sites around Iraq.”



KIMBERLY RIFFE,

Training Analyst/Plans and Assessment, DOIA



“I provide the training curriculum for ISF by working with training advisors from CPATT and Mol to ensure the correct instruction is given.”

U.S. NAVY CHIEF PETTY OFFICER LIZA GEEZA

Coalition Army Advisory Training Team / Fielding

“I supply the training information for the Iraqi Security Forces to ensure the correct numbers are reported to Congress.”



Hillah ISWAT team captures 2 criminal members; detains 4 others

BALAD – A Hillah Iraqi Special Weapons and Tactics team arrested two suspected members of a criminal group and four of their associates during an overnight operation near the city of al-Jabella, approximately 55 miles southeast of Baghdad.

The Iraqi Ministry of Interior issued arrest warrants for the two main suspects. According to the warrants, both men stand charged with conducting a series of attacks against a Coalition Forces base with indirect fire weapons. Recently gathered information also indicated one of the suspects used his house to store illegal weapons, including mortars.

The mission was one in a series of ongoing operations conducted by Hillah ISWAT forces to pursue various insurgent and criminal groups operating within central and southern Iraq.

–Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs

ISF, Coalition soldiers seize cache in Risalah following tip

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition soldiers seized a weapons cache in the Risalah community in southern Baghdad during a joint patrol.

Acting on a tip from a concerned local Iraqi, policemen from the 5th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division, and Coalition soldiers seized explosively formed penetrators, police protective vests, ballistic plates, ballistic helmets, identification cards, Iraqi Army uniforms, and machine gun ammunition.

–Multi-National Division – Baghdad Public Affairs

Iraqi Security Forces highly visible in Basra

BASRA – Operation Charge of the Knights has successfully completed missions in several districts – rooting out criminal elements all across the city since it began on March 25.

The Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police have formed a combined effort to systematically move through the districts of Basra, in some areas going house by house, to restore order and the rule of law.

Soldiers and Policemen alike are working to make sure the criminal elements are kept out of the city by maintaining a highly visible status. In districts across the city, Iraqi Police and Iraqi soldiers are manning checkpoints, driving in patrols or simply standing in plain sight so the population of Basra can see for themselves that security is and the rule of law rules the city.

–Multi-National Division South East Public Affairs

Iraqi Security Forces capture mid-level al-Qaeda in Iraq leader; detain six other suspected terrorists

BAGHDAD – Soldiers with the 5th Iraqi Army Division and a Muqdadiah Special Weapons and Tactics team, advised by U.S. Special Forces, detained a mid-level al-Qaeda in Iraq leader and detained six other suspected terrorists in an operation in As Sa'diya, approximately 55 miles northeast of Baghdad.

Iraqi Security Forces conducted the operation to detain the leader and disrupt the operations of an As Sa'diya-based al

Qaeda in Iraq organization. The AQI group leader is suspected of managing AQI finances in the area and providing a safe haven for foreign fighters in the Hamrin Mountains. His group is also believed to be responsible kidnapping Iraqi citizens and attacking ISF with improvised explosive devices.

–Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs

Kirkuk IPs conduct successful joint operations

TIKRIT – Kirkuk's Emergency Services Unit and the Aruba Police conducted a successful joint operation against members of a suspected kidnapping ring.

One of the suspects opened fire on police as they approached the target house. The police returned fire, killing the gunman. An Aruba policeman was also wounded in the attack.

During a search of the premises, police recovered eight false identification cards, one AK 47 with 35 magazines and one pistol with 23 magazines. The police also detained another occupant in the house, who is currently been held for questioning.

–Multi-National Division – North Public Affairs

Iraqi Army Scouts discover three AQI weapons cache sites in al-Karmah

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Army Scouts with 1st IA Division, advised by U.S. Special Operations Forces, discovered three weapons cache sites in al-Karmah, approximately 27 miles northwest of Baghdad. IA conducted an operation in the area to find and recover al-Qaeda in Iraq weapons caches in the area.

Three separate caches were found containing a total of 24,000 .50 caliber rounds, 50 mortar rounds of various sizes, and 2,000 gallons of nitric acid, a substance used to make homemade explosives.

The mortar rounds were destroyed on-site by a Coalition forces explosive ordnance disposal team and the nitric acid was taken off-site for disposal.

This operation resulted in the destruction of a significant amount of al-Qaeda in Iraq munitions and explosive making materials. The destruction of this material will help reduce attacks against Iraqi and Coalition forces in the area.

–Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs

ISF detain criminal cell leader, three al-Qaeda in Iraq

BAGHDAD – Iraqi Security Forces detained a Special Groups cell leader and three al-Qaeda in Iraq terrorists in two separate operations.

Iraqi Special Operations Forces conducted an operation in Baghdad and detained an al-Bayaa district Special Groups cell leader believed to be responsible for kidnapping operations and indirect fire attacks on Iraqi and Coalition forces. Two additional suspects were detained.

In Ramadi, an Iraqi Special Weapons and Tactics team detained three al-Qaeda in Iraq terrorists known to be involved with coordinating improvised explosive device attacks against Iraqi and Coalition forces and the facilitation of foreign fighters.

–Multi-National Corps – Iraq Public Affairs