

The Advisor



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**Growing the
Training Base**

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Commanding General

USA Lt. Gen. Frank Helmick

Sergeant Major

USMC Sgt. Maj. Daniel Terwilliger

Public Affairs Officer

USA Col. Steven Wujciak

Deputy Public Affairs Officer

USA Maj. Edward Hooks

Media Relations Officer

USA Capt. Shawn Herron

Public Affairs Operations Officer

USAF Capt. Antonio Silvera

Command Information Officer

USA Capt. Yadira Carrasquillo

Public Affairs NCOIC

USA Staff Sgt. Michael Daly

Editor

USAF Airman 1st Class Andrew Davis

Journalist

USN Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

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Direct questions and comments to:

pao@iraq.centcom.mil

MNSTC-I PAO

APO AE 09348

DSN: 318-852-1332

<http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil>

>> FROM THE COVER

An Iraqi Soldier low crawls under barbed wire on the combat assault course at DTC Al-Kasik

Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

Iraqi Soldiers practice a room clearing drill in one of the new live-fire shoot houses at the Kirkush Division Training Center. For more on the new DTC, see story on page 3.

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Division Training Center opens in Kirkush

By U.S. Army Capt. Shawn Herron

MNSTC-I PAO

KIRKUSH, Iraq – Iraqi Army recruits in basic training opened the recently completed combat assault course here with shouts and grunts, during an opening ceremony at the division training center Aug. 6.

The fifth of 13 planned DTCs across Iraq includes two live-fire shoot houses, small arms ranges, a combat assault course and 28 outdoor training facilities used by the two Iraqi training battalions here and the Iraqi Army Fifth Infantry Division.

The two Iraqi training battalions make up the largest Iraqi army training capacity on a single base with the capability to simultaneously train 5,420 Soldiers in a number of courses including basic combat training, three levels of non-commissioned officer courses, re-joiner courses for former Soldiers and training in eight different specialty skills.

The \$9.1 million construction project also included new security fencing around the facilities and improvements to all-weather range access roads. During the rainy season, the previous roads, described by residents as “moon dust,” turned to mud. Plans also exist to add two grenade ranges.

Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Muthana, 2nd Iraqi Training Battalion commander, said the new shoot houses are a big improvement. When soldiers kicked open doors during training before, the door would usually break off its hinges. The new shoot houses are also constructed to be safe for live fire training.

There are many types of obstacles on the combat assault course including the “dirty name,” so called because of the words often uttered by soldiers confronted with its unique challenge.

Iraqi Army 1st Lt. Abdul, officer in charge of running the combat assault course



Photos by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

An Iraqi recruit negotiates the obstacle known as “dirty name”- so called for the profanities heaped on it by Soldiers.

said that it helps recruits build physical ability and gain trust in themselves. Muthana added that the obstacles are useful “training for village operations.”

Lt. Col. Richard Kirk, Training Center Senior Advisor concluded “for the amount of recruits, the training battalions do an excellent job of training jinood for the future. The new recruits want to learn...they want to do a good job for their country.” ■



Two Iraqi recruits race through parallel tunnels on the new combat assault course at DTC Kirkush.

108 new Iraqi NCOs graduate Corporals Course

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KIRKUSH, Iraq—108 new Iraqi Army non-commissioned officers graduated from the Corporals Course at Kirkush Military Training Base Aug. 6.

Students for this course are selected from the thousands of Jinood (Soldiers) in Basic Combat Training.

“By the end of the 10th day of BCT the training battalion commander identifies the students for the Corporals Course. His decision is a direct result of an interview of those that have shown promising leadership skills and that their records show that they are literate,” said U.S. Army Lt. Col. Richard Kirk, senior advisor at the Kirkush military training base.

During the three-week course, prospective corporals received leadership training including; command and control, administration, and accountability. There is a good deal of classroom training and the rest of the time is spent being in command of troops and marching them.

After graduation, the students will receive an order from the Iraqi Ministry of Defense authorizing them to assume their new rank. ■



Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady
U.S. Army Lt. Col. Richard Kirk presents a gift to an honor graduate of Iraqi Army Corporals Course

Al-Kasik facilities honor Iraqi martyrs

By U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

MNSTC-I PAO

AL-KASIK, Iraq - When the Iraqi Army 3rd Infantry Division opened the division training center here, Aug. 12, it was dedicated to the memory of three martyrs—Iraqi Soldiers who were killed in the fight against terrorism.

The new facilities included, known-

distance shooting ranges, a combat assault course and two live-fire shoot houses, where new recruits can hone their military skills.

Iraqi Army Maj. Gen. Horsheed, 3rd IA Div. commanding general said that as tactics and weapons become more sophisticated, the most important thing is still the human, the Soldier and how he is prepared for combat.

“When the training for the Soldiers is going to be high, the casualties are going to be less in the combat area,” Horsheed said.

The combat assault course was dedicated to Iraqi Lt. Col. Heider, the first battalion commander in the 3rd Infantry Division, who was killed Sep. 24, 2004. The north



Iraqi Soldiers negotiate one of the obstacles on the new combat assault course at Al-Kasik division training center.

shoot house was dedicated to Iraqi 1st Sgt. Salam who was killed Sep. 22, 2006. The south shoot house was dedicated to Iraqi Pvt. Nazar who was killed Sep. 24, 2007.

Horsheed said the facilities were named for “those who get assassinated by insurgents, and those who get killed by VBIEDs, and those who are killed in action.” ■



Photos by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

Iraqi Soldiers in Basic Combat Training at Al-Kasik, perform close order drill at the dedication ceremony for the division training center.

Iraqi forces take over Georgian mission

Courtesy of MNC-I PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DELTA, Iraq – Iraqi Security Forces will partner with the 41st Fires Brigade and occupy several checkpoints and patrol bases previously manned by the 1st Georgian Brigade.

“We want to train and work with the U.S. Army,” said Sergeant Namel Watak, 32nd Iraqi Army Infantry Brigade.

Namel is with a contingent of soldiers from the 32nd IA Infantry Bde., who are working together with soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery Regiment at checkpoints in Wasit to keep the province stable and secure.

“We like our job here of running the traffic control point and providing

security at the entrance of the patrol base,” he said.

The plan is to have a complete partnership with the Iraqi Soldiers, said 2nd Lt. Charles Hines, with the 2-20 FA Regt., and the IA liaison at the patrol base.

“Right now, the Iraqi soldiers have taken over the responsibility of the traffic control point, but we are going to train them to be able to take over the entire patrol base, go and do presence patrols and set-up temporary traffic control points in our area,” he said.

The 41st Fires Bde. established a very good working relationship with both the Iraqi Police and the IA, said Col. Richard

M. Francey, Jr., 41st Fires Bde commander.

“We are integrating with the ISF to make us a better fighting force,” he said. “They have stepped up to the plate, and their partnership is why we are able to take over the mission that the Georgians had to leave behind, with no change in the security and safety of the Iraqi people.”

For Namel, working with the Americans is a chance to get better training, and learn as much from the U.S. Soldiers as he can.

“I want to fight fiercely alongside the U.S. Army,” he said. By working with the Americans, “I get more training to be able to do the job.” ■

Iraqi Veterans Affairs brings healing and hope

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

MNSTC-I PAO

BAGHDAD - Iraqi armed force servicemembers have fought in many wars over the past few decades, many now have little or no income, permanent disabilities and sparse health care benefits. For these veterans, Iraqi Veterans Affairs offers hope.

IVA started in April 2004, with just five personnel and has grown to 357 in four years. Headquartered in downtown Baghdad, with offices in all the provinces of Iraq, the IVA team is comprised of roughly 20 percent active component members of the Iraqi armed forces; the remainder is Government of Iraq and Ministry of Defense civilian employees.

Tasked with a variety of missions to serve Iraqi military veterans, IVA operates under the control of the GoI and MoD with a Coalition advisory team that is part of Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

"One of the many primary missions of the IVA is to provide retirement and disability benefits for approximately 300,000 veterans from pre-2003 Coalition operations," said Ted Martinez, Ministry of Defense-Advisory Team Advisor to the Director General of Veterans Affairs.



Iraqi veterans stand in line to file their paperwork with the Iraqi Veteran Affairs office. IVA is currently working on automating its files to provide faster service to veterans.

"In addition, they provide benefits for the families of martyrs, POWs [prisoners of war], MIAs [missing in action], dissolved entities, caretaker support for those disabled more than 85 percent and those in the reserve status."

As a direct result of IVA efforts and position within the MoD, nearly 18,000 veterans have been recruited into the active military.

"On Aug. 1, the IVA began another new initiative to encourage veterans to rejoin the active military," said Martinez. "Approximately 1,500 veterans rejoined the Iraqi military on the first day. A majority of these veterans are from Saddam's army and have experience and some rank.

"The MoD is happy about this because it will fill much needed slots in the non-commissioned officer and mid-grade level officer's core that they are currently lacking."

With more than 300,000 veterans to service, IVA currently has a backlog of files of approximately 163,000 veterans waiting to receive benefits; relief is in site with a new retirement system being implemented.

"They came up with a brand new system in cooperation with

the MoD, that will provide faster service for the veterans," said Martinez. "The new system will complete 100 percent of the back log in less than a year."

Along with the new system, a Human Resource Information Management System is coming to IVA.

"HRIMS will make the personnel database totally paperless, currently there are stacks of files at the sites, which will speed up the process for the veterans," said Martinez. "The HRIMS should be completed within the next year and help with the new system they are implementing."

Plans for the future of IVA are abundant including a trip to the United States to see the U.S. VA in action.

"The intent of the planned trip to the U.S. in November is to build upon the successes of the IVA by increasing their capacity to provide full benefits and services to the current and future veterans," said Martinez. "We are also working closely with the Ministry of Health to oversee the refurbishment of clinics throughout Iraq whose main mission is to oversee the care of Iraqi veterans.

No different than proven experience in the United States, an IVA that supports the veterans establishes confidence amongst the ranks, will bolster civilian willingness to join and ultimately serve until retirement in the IAF," he added. ■



Courtesy Photos

Iraqi veterans wait their turn, to turn in their retirement paperwork at an Iraqi Veteran Affairs site.

Iraqi NCOs teach basic M-16 marksmanship

By U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

MNSTC-I PAO

AL KASIK, Iraq - As each Soldier that joins the Iraqi Army 3rd Infantry Division here is issued an M-16 rifle, it is imperative that the Iraqi Army and Coalition advisors make sure he is trained to use it.

Until now, civilian contractors hired by the U.S. government have taught basic M-16 marksmanship but that is changing. Iraqi non-commissioned officers are on the firing lines coaching Soldiers and contractors are taking a more advisory role in the training.

McCarthy Barnes is one of those contractors. At a recent session on the 25-meter sight-in range he pointed out the absence of contractors involved in the training.

"That's the NCOs running the line," said Barnes. "They get the Soldiers in the right position and run everything. Most



Photos by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class William Lovelady

An Iraqi Soldier draws five loaded magazines as he heads to the firing line to zero his M-16.

of those NCOs have only been in the Army a little more than a year. They are executing the four fundamentals: steady position, sight picture, breathing and trigger squeeze."

One of the Soldiers learning to shoot his M-16 for the first time was Iraqi Army Pvt. Saleem, a former taxi driver. Saleem joined the Army when he could no longer drive to Mosul for fear of being killed by terrorists working there.

"The training was very good," said Saleem. "We are happy to have this weapon. It is better than the Ak-47, The AKs were very old."

The instructors prefer the M-16 as well.

"You can get in the target easily," said Iraqi Army Sgt. Akram. "The instruction we give them is to use the minimum number of rounds to get in the target."

"I think all shooters

like M-16s," Akram continued, "because first you can get the target, second they are light and third they are one of the good weapons-very modern." ■



Iraqi Army NCOs observe and coach as Soldiers zero M-16 rifles.



Iraqi Army Sgt. Akram calls out sight adjustments after marking an M-16 sight-in target.

Air Force Training School graduates largest class

By U.S. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Trish Freeland

AFCENT Media Outreach-Baghdad

TAJI, Iraq - The Iraqi Air Force Training School graduated its third and largest basic military training class here Aug. 11. Nine Iraqi officers and 10 warrant officers led 283 of their countrymen through a rigorous physical and academic regimen that transformed them from ordinary citizens to Iraqi Air Force warrant officers.

The candidates will put on their new rank after completing basic technical training and English language training.

The instructor cadre is assisted by a group of 65 U.S. Air Force advisors from the 370th Expeditionary Training Squadron, part of the Coalition Air Force Training Team. U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Dilda, 370th Expeditionary Training Squadron commander said in addition to graduation, the school can celebrate reaching some key goals within the BMT program.

"When Coalition Forces stood up this school they worked with the Iraqis to set up goals they wanted to achieve within a certain amount of time," said Col. Dilda. "Some of the goals reached include the ability to run four training programs at the same time, having fully renovated facilities with the ability to house 500 students, and the availability of qualified Iraqi instructors to lead the courses. Today's class represents the attainment of those goals in the BMT program."

This BMT class was led by Iraqi instructors, under the supervision of their



Photos by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Paul Villanueva II

Iraqi Air Force warrant officer candidates salute during pass and review at the Iraqi Air Force basic military training graduation.

USAF advisors. The trainees worked hard, getting up well before the sun to clean latrines, make beds and practice drills. Their days ended long after sunset. Lt. Saef Ali, a lead trainer/supervisor, has been working as a trainer for six months. He's encouraged by the commitment of his trainees.

"These guys are not afraid of anything. They come to training and don't let anyone stop them. "They want to serve their country," he continued. "I feel proud to say I'm a lieutenant in the Iraqi Air Force."

The Air Force Training School also operates the Iraqi Air Force Academy, basic technical training and English

language training. In a little more than a year, the school's cadre and advisors have trained and graduated 526 warrant and commissioned officers from the school's various training programs.

"In the next BMT class, the Iraqi instructors will have even more responsibility as the USAF advisors transition from a full teaching function to equal parts advising and instructing," said Dilda. ■



An Iraqi Air Force warrant officer candidate waves a flag atop a human pyramid after the basic military graduation at Taji.

JHQ public affairs course

By U.S. Army Capt. Shawn Herron

MNSTC-I PAO

BAGHDAD - 15 students graduated Aug. 14 from the Iraqi Joint Headquarters Public Affairs Course.

The students, from various organizations in the Government of Iraq, represented seven Iraqi army divisions, the Iraqi Air Force, the Counter Terrorism Bureau and two departments in the Ministry of Defense and included one female graduate from the Media Relations Department of the MoD.

Iraqi Army Colonel Jasim, Joint Headquarters Deputy Public Affairs

Officer, who oversees the public affairs training, said the course includes instruction in basic journalism, preparing for interviews, developing command messages, hosting press conferences and other subjects.

"One of your most important tasks will be to convince your commanders the value of public affairs so you would be able to deliver the command message and tell your story," said Iraqi Army Colonel Ali, Joint Headquarters Public Affairs Officer, as he concluded the ceremony. ■

Coasties train marines at Iraqi port

By U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mike Daly

MNSTC-I PAO

UMM QASR, Iraq - In one of the farthest southern areas of Iraq is a training base at the port of Umm Qasr. Home to the Naval Transition Team-an assortment of U.S. Navy, Marines and



Photos by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mike Daly

An Iraqi marine guards a door after discovering a stowaway during a ship boarding drill.

Coastguardsmen -working with members of the British Royal Navy to train the Iraqi Navy and the newly formed Iraqi marines.

It's a big job. On a recent visit to the



During an after action review, U.S. Coast Guard Petty Officer Mike DeLeon talks to Iraqi Marines about performance during a training exercise on boarding ships.

base, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Frank Helmick Multi National Security Transition Command -Iraq commanding general told Coalition members, "In my mind,



U.S. Army Lt. Gen. Frank G. Helmick walks onto a pier with leaders of the Iraqi Navy to discuss construction issues at the port at Umm Qasr.

you have the most important mission. It's not going to be easy"

What makes the mission so important is the amount of commerce flowing through the nearby port. Oil is Iraq's main money maker. More than 1.6 billion dollars worth of oil passes through each week. NATT trains the Iraqis to protect the port and two offshore oil platforms.

The training takes place in extreme heat. The Khawr Az Zubayr waterway, which runs from the port to the Persian Gulf, provides no relief to the temperatures, only humidity.

On a group of stacked containers, instructors from the U.S. Coast Guard train Iraqi marines how to board a ship. In a recent training scenario, Iraqi marines climbed cargo netting up the side of one container to begin a search. "They'll clear areas inside and check passports and make sure everything matches up with the manifest inside," said U.S. Coast Guardsman Petty Officer Mike DeLeon. "The importance of checking passports is to make sure they are who they say they are and are not here for any other business such as terrorism or piracy,"

The temperatures in the containers were sweltering. Iraqi Marines ran up and down several flights of stairs while

conducting their practice search. The instructors said these marines are making headway, even though the classroom portion of the training is short. "They get one week of training here in the schoolhouse, and then the following week they are out in the North Arabian Gulf on a coalition boat doing the boarding," said DeLeon.

The Iraqi Navy secures the two oil platforms off the coast. They are also responsible for port and coastal security, law enforcement, search and rescue and commercial shipping safety. The Iraqi marines primarily handle oil platform defense and vessel boarding search and seizure. They are equipped with an arsenal of vessels including patrol boats and fast attack boats, which patrol the rivers.

The Iraqi Navy plans to acquire 15 new patrol boats, four patrol ships, two offshore support vessels and 26 fast attack boats.

NATT members are helping Iraqis work through infrastructure challenges.



An aerial view of the port at Umm Qasr.

Some older boats are dry docked either waiting for repairs or waiting to be scrapped. Maintenance facilities need to be upgraded. There are challenges with logistics management and ordering spare parts. All are challenges the Iraqis will have to work through as a young navy.

Currently, there are two oil platforms where most of the command and control is run by the Iraqis. The goal now is to complete the training of the Iraqi sailors and marines so they can take over command of all the platforms and protect the port and the nearby waterways on their own. ■



Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Randi Flaugh

U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Travis Giguere assists an Iraqi firefighter with his mask and helmet, during refresher training within confined spaces, July 30 at Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq. U.S. Air Force firefighters with the 506th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron here facilitated the training to teach Iraqi firefighters how to rescue victims trapped within a burning building.



Courtesy Photo

Iraqi Police display mines captured from insurgents and anti-Iraq forces.



Photo by U.S. Navy Lt. Nathan Christensen

U.S. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Trent Thompson, commanding officer of the coastal patrol boat USS Firebolt (PC 10), greets senior Iraqi naval officers on the pier after the boat arrives in Umm Qasr as part of Iraq Navy Day celebrations, Aug. 13. Firebolt is the first U.S. ship to visit Iraq in more than 15 months.



Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Shawn Coolman

During a training exercise, Iraqi Army Pvt. Waisam Rashash Mohammed, 22, an explosive ordnance disposal technician, locates a possible improvised explosive device at Camp Mejid, Iraq, Aug. 5. Soldiers of Iraqi Army Seventh Infantry Division have undertaken months of training and practical application by Coalition forces to keep the roads of Iraq safe.

New Iraqi Police stations strengthen police and communities

By Ronald Holbrook

MoITT Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - New police stations built throughout Iraq are helping improve security and public trust and cooperation with the police.

Since 2004, the Directorate of Interior Affairs has helped build 251 police stations for the Iraqi Police at a cost of more than \$500 million.

Forty-two additional new police stations were approved this year for construction and are expected to be completed in 2009. While most of the police stations are new construction, some stations were renovated.

Others are expedient police stations, a temporary facility set up quickly to serve the community. An expedient police station has a staff of approximately 150

policemen while the largest police stations operate with nearly 380 policemen.

When the new Lutifiyah Police Station opened Aug. 2, there were many happy residents in the area. Tribal leaders had worked for a new police station.

"This is one of our dreams to open this station," said Maj Gen. Ali Jassim Al Frejee, 17th Iraqi Army Infantry Division commander. "This area was known as the Triangle of Death. Now it is safe. You can go anywhere."

Maj. Gen. Khalid Hamed, provincial director of police, added, "The local police here give a lot of services in this area to support the people of Iraq. This station is important because it connects Baghdad and Babil. We need to have unity in this area."

When the Abu Ghraib Police Center opened in early August, Chief of Police

Brig Gen. Kareem, said as he cut the ribbon, "let them know that the Iraqi Police are working with the Iraqi Army and the Coalition forces to stop terrorism."

"We will use this place for the good of Abu Ghraib," said Shakr Fiza al-Zobai, district governor. "We have made great strides already and working together in this manner, we will only continue to grow."

The Iraqi Border Police also are receiving new infrastructure improvements. There are now 287 border forts securing Iraq's borders with 16 more under construction. The Ministry of Interior plans to finance 50 more border forts next year to continue the improvement. A large and modern port of entry opened at Al Qaim in November 2007. ■

Detainee work program building pride

Courtesy of Task Force 134 PAO

CAMP CROPPER, Iraq – Army National Guard military police teach detainees practical skills they can use to build a better life for themselves, their families and Iraq.

"When I first arrived, one of the lieutenants that worked here told me about the program—Detainee Work Program. So, I spoke to my commander, and, based on my experience, I was selected to work on the Detainee Work Program," said Master Sgt. Randall W. Morrow, 251st Military Police Company, Tennessee Army National Guard.

The detainees receive plenty of classroom instruction learning how to build projects from wood prior to testing their practical knowledge. This classroom time is focused on how to operate the tools safely, especially the power tools. Additionally, they discuss how to manipulate wood as well as identifying anyone who has previous experience working with these tools.

Morrow has been a general contractor for more than 20 years and has owned

his own contracting business since 1989. Based on his experience, his role is to ensure that all projects are structurally sound and built to the United States building code requirements.

"I am glad to pass on some of the knowledge that I have from my civilian experience to the detainees, as well as to the soldiers. Hopefully, this will give them some basic skills to build upon so that when they are released they can contribute to the future of Iraq," said Morrow.

The latest project was to build an 18-foot gazebo. The inspiration for building the gazebo came to Staff Sgt. Charles Monroe after seeing a smaller one the detainees had built.

"When I saw the large cement pad within the family visitation area I thought that would be a great place for a gazebo," said Monroe, 220th Military Police Company, Colorado Army National Guard.

"I also thought that when detainees had their family visitation time they could show off their new skills and take pride in

building this structure," said Monroe.

"It's actually been quite rewarding to be in my position, said Monroe. I get to see the final product; I have tangible evidence of their learning. You can see the pride in their faces because they made it—tables, benches, gazebo-- and now they get to use it. They also get to show off their new skills to their families."

Monroe serves as the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Detainee Work Program, which includes maintaining two four-hour shifts with 18 soldiers who oversee 20 detainees per shift.

The Detainee Work Program has nearly finished the gazebo, according to Morrow. More importantly, the two men are impressed with the pride that each one of the detainees has demonstrated towards these projects.

"Most of the time, the detainees will ask to work every day to accomplish the project. It makes you feel good that they want to complete the project. But, more than that, it is really great to see the pride they take in their projects," said Morrow. ■