

Victory Times



Telling the United States Forces - Iraq story

Vol. V, Issue 24

August 23, 2010



USF-I ushers in New Dawn

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey, USF-I Public Affairs

History will record that Operation Iraqi Freedom lasted seven years, five months and 11 days. The operation, which began with the March 20, 2003 invasion of Iraq, will end on Sept. 1 as Operation New Dawn begins, marking the formal transition from combat to stability operations.

“Operation New Dawn does not change the level of U.S. commitment to Iraq,” Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, United States Forces-Iraq commanding general, said at a July 21 Pentagon press briefing. “It changes the nature of our commitment: (from) one that is military-dominated to a civilian-led commitment.”

“As we transition to stability operations, U.S. forces will continue to train, advise, assist and equip Iraqi Security Forces and carry on with our partnered counterterrorism operations,” he said. “We’ll support the U.S. Embassy, Provincial Reconstruction Teams, United Nations and other nongovernmental organizations dedicated to building Iraqi civil capacity.”

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced the name change from OIF in a Feb. 17 memo to Gen. David Petraeus, then the commander of United States Central Command.

“Aligning the name change with the change of mission

sends a strong signal that Operation Iraqi Freedom has ended and our forces are operating under a new mission,” he wrote, adding that it will reinforce the U.S. commitment to honor the 2008 Security Agreement and recognize the evolving relationship between the U.S. and Iraqi governments.

Because the situation in Iraq has improved, the U.S. military partnership role with the ISF and Iraqi government has also changed. The ISF is taking the lead in security operations and the U.S. forces now focus their partnership primarily on honing the skills of the ISF through training and advising.

Throughout the past seven years, most U.S. military service members would compare the path of our partnership with the ISF to that of its standard three-phase model for training; crawl, walk, run.

When the ISF first started building its forces, the U.S. partnership was focused on showing them what right looks like. As the ISF grew in numbers and skill, the U.S. conducted joint missions and began to move back and let them take the lead. Now, the ISF is a capable, professional security force so the U.S. military partnership transitions into its new mission to train, advise, and assist, letting ISF

See New Dawn, Page 4

INSIDE:

A chaplain's approach to positive thinking
Page 2

Soldiers volunteer to distribute wheelchairs
Page 3

Chaplains provide unique look at Iraq
Page 6

Three Cs for a positive mental attitude

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Ira Houck
World Religions Chaplain

You are what you think. You feel what you want.

Positive thinking is a mental attitude that opens the mind to thoughts, words and images that are conducive to growth, expansion and success.

It is a mental attitude that expects good and favorable results. A positive mind anticipates happiness, joy, health and a successful outcome of every situation and action. Whatever the mind expects, it finds.

Not everyone accepts or believes in positive thinking. Some consider the subject to be nonsense while others scoff at people who believe in and accept it. Among the people who accept it, not many know how to use it effectively to get results. Yet it seems that many are drawn to this subject, as evidenced by the many books, lectures and courses about it.

Research shows that people who begin consciously to modify their inner conversations and assumptions report an almost immediate improvement in their performance. Their energy increases and things seem to go better.

One approach to positive thinking is called the three C's: Commitment, Contriteness and Courage.

Commitment

Make a positive commitment to God, to learning, work,

family, friends, duty, and honor. Praise God and others. Be enthusiastic about the gifts and talents you share with others.

Contriteness

Stay aware of earthly existence, but don't lose your connection that which is eternal. Work creatively within your limits and acknowledge when you are wrong. Be honest with yourself. Set goals and priorities for what you think and do, and invite others to help when you need it. Develop a strategy for dealing with problems. Learn to relax. Enjoy successes.

Courage

Be courageous. Change and improve each day. See learning and change as daily opportunities. Try new things and expand your horizons. Meet new people. Ask lots of questions. Consider options. Keep track of your mental and physical health. Be optimistic. Do your best and don't look back.

Commitment, contriteness and courage help build self-esteem and promote positive thinking.

Studies show that people with these characteristics are winners in good times and survivors in hard times.

Pray: We thank you O God, for Your exceeding greatness and the opportunities You provide us to grow in goodness. You call to each of us and have a plan that is good for each one of us. Help us to see the good and act rightly. Amen.

SARC Smarts



Sexual violence can occur in any type of relationship, but most perpetrators of sexual assault are known to their victims. Among victims ages 18 to 29, two-thirds had a prior relationship with the offender.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) reports that, in 2008 females age 12 or older experienced about 552,000 nonfatal violent victimizations (rape/sexual assault, robbery, or aggravated or simple assault) by an intimate partner (a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend).

Call the USF-I Deployed Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (DSARC) at 485-5085 or 435-2235 for help.

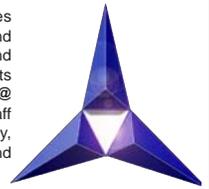
Army members should seek assistance with their Unit Victim Advocate (UVA) or DSARC.



The Victory Times is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of this publication are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government or the DOD. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of United States Forces-Iraq.

USF - I Commanding General: Gen. Ray Odierno
USF - I Senior Public Affairs Officer: Col. Benton A. Danner
USF - I Senior PA Enlisted Advisor: Sgt. Maj. James Posten
Editor: Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey
Print Staff: Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall, Sgt. Chris McCann, Spc. Britney Bodner
Layout: Spc. Britney Bodner

The Victory Times welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Please send submissions, story ideas or comments to the editorial staff at roger.dey@iraq.centcom.mil. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.



Soldiers bring smiles, mobility to Iraqi kids

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Dan Yarnall
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

Soldiers with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade and United States Division-Center Surgeons Office, among others, volunteered to help deliver 20 high-quality pediatric wheelchairs to disabled Iraqi kids Aug. 11, at Camp Iraqi Heroes.

Major Michael Torok, officer-in-charge of the United States Forces-Iraq J-9 Civil Information Management Cell, connected with Brad Blausner, founder of Wheelchairs for Iraqi Kids, to find a way to give back to the Iraqi community.

Torok was able to work with Blausner and the Iraqi Army Civil Affairs to coordinate the distribution of the chairs at Camp Iraqi Heroes.

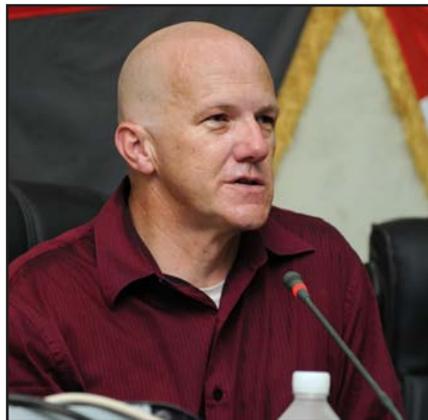
“It’s really not about . . . the U.S. Army, it’s not about the Iraqi Army,” Torok said. “It’s about those 20 children and their families.”

Blausner said future plans for Wheelchairs for Iraqi Kids include helping Iraqis set up a factory in Mahmudiyah where they can build pediatric wheelchairs locally. Currently, those who wish to purchase one normally have to go to Jordan or Dubai.

The chairs, designed by Reach Out & Care Wheels in Bozeman, Mont., were made at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in conjunction with Hope Haven International.



Capt. Shaun Reynolds with Special Operations Task Force-Central Civil Affairs, helps fit a child with a wheelchair at Camp Iraqi Heroes, Aug. 11. Service members from 354th Civil Affairs Brigade and United States Division-Central Surgeons Office volunteered to help deliver 20 wheelchairs to Iraqi kids with disabilities

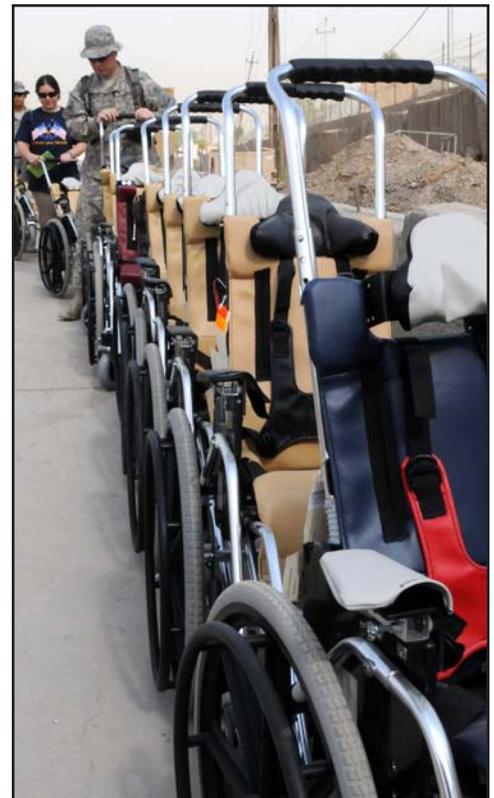


◀ *Brad Blausner founder of Wheelchairs for Iraqi Kids, speaks to the families who will be receiving the pediatric wheelchairs for their children. The families arrived at Camp Iraqi Hero, Aug. 11 to receive the chairs.*



◀ *Sgt. 1st Class Melvin Bautista and Sgt. Maj. Clark Charpentier with USD-C HQ Surgeons Office helps put together wheelchairs that will be given to Iraqi kids..*

▶ *Wheelchairs are lined up before they are given to Iraqi kids and their families. These wheelchairs are not available in Iraq and families often have to go to Jordan or Dubai to receive them.*



New Dawn, from Page 1

take charge of securing the nation, which is comparable to the run phase.

At the outset of Operation New Dawn, the change of mission may not be immediately evident to the 50,000 service members on the ground in Iraq. According to Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence K. Wilson, USF-I command sergeant major, U.S. forces have been conducting stability operations in Iraq since 2004.

“If you really asked them ... they’re doing stability operations now,” said Wilson. “So it’s not a kinetic piece anymore, it’s civil capacity ... a strategic enduring partnership with Iraq.”

Despite the shift away from kinetic missions, U.S. forces will continue to take part in Iraqi-led counterterrorism operations against terrorist networks and, in accordance with the Security Agreement, will use all means necessary to protect themselves if attacked.



Partnership

Capt. Mohamed, the division surgeon assigned to 6th Iraqi Army Division, and Maj. Eric Aguila, a native of Lacey, Wash., and a surgeon assigned to 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, share medical techniques and a smile, July 22, at Quiamacam, a government office in Abu Ghraib.

As part of the transformation from combat to stability operations, the structure of the U.S. brigades also changed to realign their personnel and equipment to perform the changing missions.

Beginning in the fall of 2009, brigade combat teams began to transition with advise and assist brigades. On Sept. 1, the official start of Operation New Dawn, six AABs will be in place and conducting stability operations. The AABs make up the backbone of U.S. forces’ support to ISF as they continue to increase their capabilities and support the Rule of Law.

To ensure they are providing the best support to the ISF and the government of Iraq, AABs are tailored to the unique operations environment where they operate. The units are augmented with as many as 24 specialty teams such as engineering, transportation, investigative and forensic specialists, counter explosives and counterterrorism and training.

By tailoring the makeup of the AABs, based on location and need, USF-I ensures the ISF and local governments are getting the right support they require to protect the local residents and grow civil capacity.

Another major role for the AABs during Operation New Dawn will be the continued support of the Provincial Reconstruction Teams.

The AABs will provide the PRTs with security, and when requested, the expertise of their specialty teams. Joint military and PRT efforts are an essential component of stability operations and Operation New Dawn and U.S. forces will continue to provide security and materiel to the PRTs, as well as the expertise of the AAB specialty teams, when requested.



Commitment

Pfc. Matthew Allen, an infantryman with Company 1st Advise and Assist Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, during a visit to an Iraqi Army medical engagement.

The U.S. forces will also continue to work with nongovernmental agencies like the United States Aid for International Development, or USAID, and the United Nations as they work to build Iraq’s civil capacity.

As the country regains its economic and political footing and the ISF take control of the country’s security, Odierno said the people of Iraq have shown patience and determination.

“Over the past seven-and-a-half years, the Iraqi people have proven to be extremely resilient and courageous,” Odierno said. “They want to move forward and make their country better than it was before.”

“Political and economic progress is more important now than ever. That’s why we believe this new stage in our relationship will help ensure that Iraq remains on a path to develop security, diplomatic, and economic depth that will ultimately contribute to peace and stability in the region.”



Photo by Spc. Mike MacLeod

Sgt. 1st Class Bryon Foreman, 354th Military Police Company operations sergeant, from Tecumseh, Mich., demonstrates proper restraining techniques on Spc. John Bosecker, Ullin, Ill., during training with the 14th Iraqi Division commandos at their headquarters in Basra, June 12.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Carney

Training

Sgt. 1st Class Bryon Foreman, 354th Military Police Company operations sergeant, from Tecumseh, Mich., demonstrates proper restraining techniques on Spc. John Bosecker, Ullin, Ill., during training with the 14th Iraqi Division commandos at their headquarters in Basra.

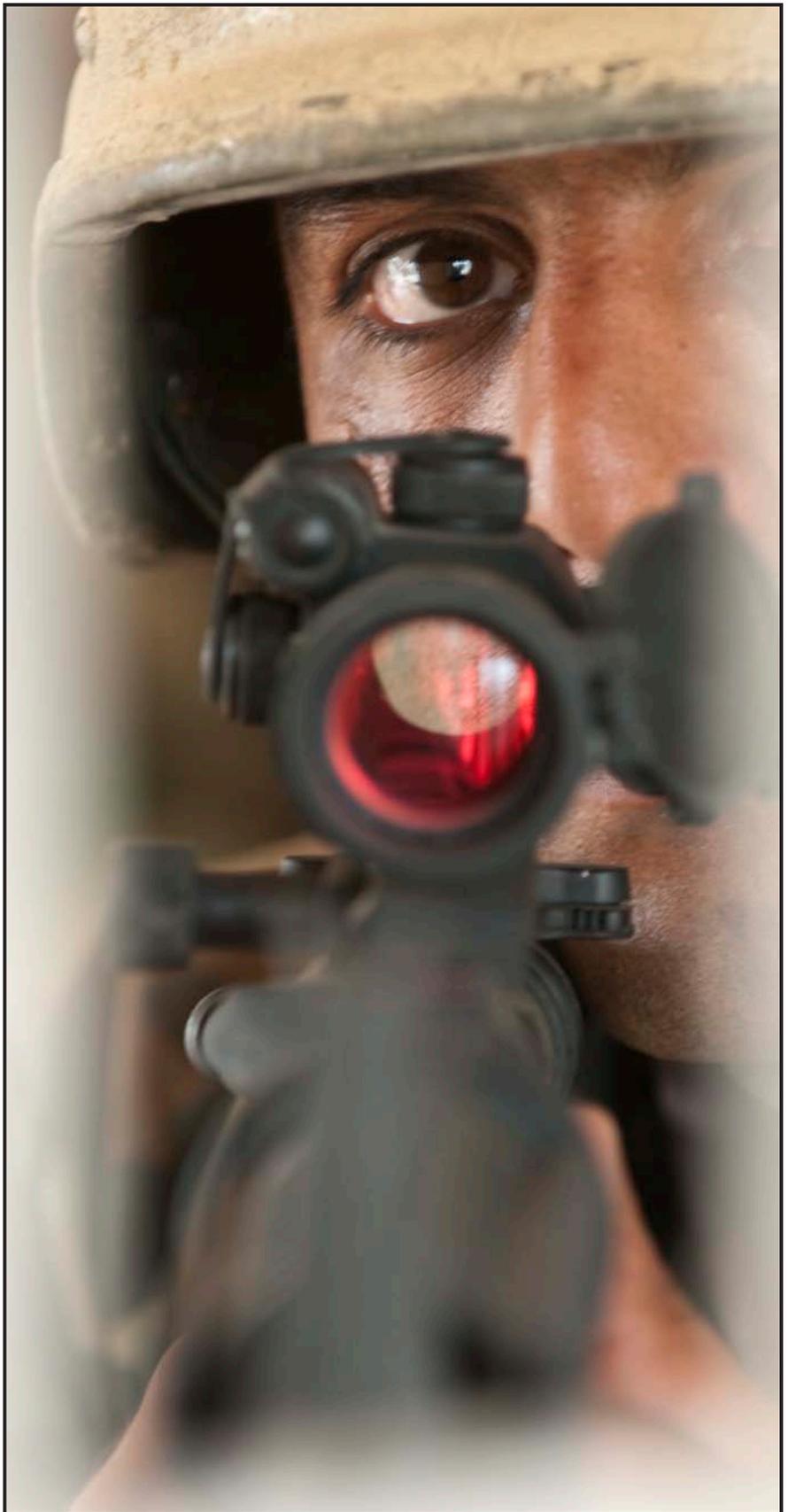


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Dey

Security

An Iraqi Special Operations Force recruit scans his sector while training to clear a building in April. Iraqi Security Forces will continue to lead counterterrorism operations against terrorist networks operating in Iraq, with the assistance of U.S. Forces.

Chaplains provide new perspective on Iraq

Story by Spc. Britney Bodner
United States Forces-Iraq Public Affairs

Like a piece of a mosaic, religious leader engagements contribute an important part to the overall information picture of Iraq for the United States Forces-Iraq command staff during a battle update assessment.

USF-I chaplains can gather information that may not be shared through normal military channels during engagements with Iraqi religious leaders throughout the country, said Lt. Col. Ira Houck, the United States Forces-Iraq world religions chaplain.

“We, the chaplains, are the religious leaders in the military and religious political leaders in Iraq have respect for the integrity of our office,” he said. “It’s because of our position that they will tell us information about their areas of expertise that they wouldn’t share with anyone else.”

Religious leader engagements have a history extending back to WWII and the rebuilding of Europe that followed, Houck said. In Iraq, these engagements have been happening since 2003.

Religion is a big part of Iraqi lifestyle and politics, he said. There is no separation of church and state here.

Colonel Mike Lembke, USF-I chaplain, says they try to focus on religion rather than politics during their discussions, but that doesn’t mean they don’t discuss how beliefs play into politics.

“When we meet with religious leaders we talk pretty specifically about the effects of religion,” Lembke said. “This includes the ability to exercise religion, security for those practicing their beliefs, and how it mixes into the political field.”

Houck, who facilitates most of the engagements, has met with leaders from Sunni, Shia, Yazidi and Christian backgrounds.

These faiths share similar themes such as peace, reconciliation, justice, integrity, and harmony, Lembke said. This provides common ground to discuss issues and to work together as theologians and people of God.

Such commonalities become important when speaking with both minority and majority religious groups.

“We provide a voice for the minority religious groups who are often excluded from powerful political parties,” said Houck. “In order for command to address

conflict situations properly, you have to have all parties heard.”

“We bring the voices of the minorities to the attention of the USF-I command staff and our strategic partners in Iraq,” Houck said. “We inform them if they are experiencing discrimination, or persecution, but we also tell them how minority religions are experiencing change in Iraq.”

“Orphans, women, and religious minorities are all important components needed to rebuild Iraq,” said Houck. “We can’t ignore the essential needs of society, and when minority groups excluded from the process are added together, they quickly become a majority no one is hearing.”

Lembke says he wants to see Iraqis talking with Iraqis despite their differences. He hopes these engagements will encourage leaders of different sects to start meeting with one another.

Houck says the combination of governmental agencies, like the Ministry of Education, and nongovernmental agencies, such as human rights organizations, and religious sects will play a significant part in the success of Operation New Dawn as they begin to work together.

“With New Dawn approaching, it’s going to become increasingly important as the military decreases and diplomacy increases that the religious leader engagements continue as a function of advisory role for the command,” said Houck.

“There are stories of particular individuals and remarkable leaders who are a representative voice for the people. That voice is heard by the USF-I commander and included in the plans for building Iraq,” he said.



United States Forces-Iraq chaplains and Iraqi religious and political leaders take part in a luncheon with Gen. Raymond Odierno, USF-I commanding general, in March to exchange ideas about clear communication between minority and majority religious groups.

HURTS ONE. AFFECTS ALL.



PREVENTING SEXUAL ASSAULT IS EVERYONE'S DUTY.

For more information or to report an incident
call:
MSG Cossio at 485-5085 / 435-2235
USF-I Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC)



MyDuty.mil



VBC Facility Operating Hours

Sports Oasis DFAC
Breakfast 5:00 - 8:30 a.m.
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Dinner 5 - 8:30 p.m.
Midnight chow 11:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.
Sandwich Bar open 24 hours

Education Center
8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Camp Liberty Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Camp Victory Post Exchange
8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Paul Smith Gym
Open 24 Hours

Victory Main Post Office
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Saturday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

**USF-I Unit Mail Room
Customer Services/Mail Call:**
Daily 3 - 6 p.m.

Al Faw Palace Post Office
Wednesday and Sunday
12:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Golby TMC Sick Call
Monday - Friday 7:30 - 11:30 a.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 - 11:30 a.m.

Mental Health Clinic
Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

Pharmacy
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon;
1 - 4:30 p.m.
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

Websites

Check it out:

USF-I Web pages
www.usf-iraq.com
www.flickr.com/photos/mnfiraq
www.twitter.com/USF_Iraq

Facebook -
United States Forces-Iraq
U.S. Army III Corps
Phantom Battalion
III Corps Fort Hood

Don't Lose CONTROL

HMMWV / UAH ROLLOVER PREVENTION IS ALL ABOUT CONTROL:

Crew Coordination Driver, senior occupant, gunner and passengers know their responsibilities; remain vigilant; identify and communicate potential hazards.

Observe your surroundings Be aware of bridge limitations, low hanging power lines, soft-shouldered roads, and the presence of culverts, canals, and ditches.

Never drive the vehicle beyond its limitations Avoid abrupt steering, excessive acceleration, and panic braking.

Training Conduct mission briefings, rollover drills, and crew coordination refreshers prior to every mission.

Reduce speed in turns and on wet or unimproved surfaces.

Organize all equipment Ensure everything is securely stored and tied-down to avoid projectile hazards in the event of an accident or rollover.

Leaders ensure only properly trained, qualified, and licensed personnel operate vehicles and equipment! Insist that all personnel wear seatbelts / gunner restraints.

ENGAGED LEADERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



ARMY SAFE IS ARMY STRONG



HEAT STRESS TIPS

Heat Stroke:

Heat Stroke is serious condition that urgently requires medical attention. Symptoms include diminished or absent sweating, which makes the skin hot and dry. Body temperature is very high - 106 F and rising - and if uncontrolled may lead to delirium, convulsions, coma, and even death.

First Aid - THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!

Brain damage and death are possible. Douse the body continuously with a cool liquid and summon medical aid immediately.

Heat Exhaustion:

Heat Exhaustion may result from physical exertion in hot environments. Symptoms may include profuse sweating, weakness, paleness of the skin, rapid pulse, dizziness, nausea, headache, vomiting, and unconsciousness. The skin is cool and clammy with sweat.

Body temperature may be normal or subnormal

First Aid - Rest in the shade or cool place. Drink plenty of water (preferred) or electrolyte fluids and call for medical attention.

Prevention:

Drink up to one quart of water per hour.

Take a break every 10 minutes in a cooler environment.

Be aware of the effect of medications that can increase the risk of heat stress.

Educate everyone on the signs and symptoms of heat injuries.