



First year of sovereignty, Page 7



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Karolina Lojewska

Staff Sgt. Michael Didonato, Government Support Team, 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion, trains local Iraqi firefighters on how to put out fires June 16 in the International Zone, Baghdad. The training provided basic lifesaving skills and fire fighting techniques. See page 14 for story.

## Australian hostage grateful to Iraqi, U.S. Army

By Spc. Erin Robicheaux  
256th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

**CAMP TIGERLAND, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — “I’m so glad to see you blokes!” said a beaming and elated Douglas Wood in his thick Australian accent. Held hostage by terrorists for six weeks, Wood was rescued June 15 by Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade, while conducting cordon-and-search missions to locate and destroy terrorist cells in the Al Adel neighborhood of northwest Baghdad.

The IA brigade was assisted by Task Force Baghdad’s 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

“The 256th Brigade conducted comprehensive offensive operations for the past month in some of the most hostile

neighborhoods of Baghdad,” said Brig. Gen. John Basilica Jr., commander of the 256th BCT. “Most of these operations were joint combat patrols with Iraqi Army units. We provided military transition teams who advised each unit and partnered with them in combat operations.”

Hours after his rescue, Wood was still giving thumbs up to the Soldiers who found him hidden under a blanket.

“Mr. Wood had just been freed and given his whole life back, and of the six or seven times that he and I spoke, all he could talk about was that a group of IA Soldiers found him and what a great job they’d done,” said Capt. Randy Green from Bossier City, La. Green, who is with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 156th Armor Regiment, 256th BCT, is the senior advisor to 2/1 IA and was with the Iraqi unit throughout the duration of the mission.

“He just couldn’t stop talking about the Iraqi Army and how he couldn’t believe that’s who rescued him.”

Wood was kidnapped in April by terrorists claiming to be with the Shura Council of the Mujahedeen of Iraq.

Around 10 a.m. on June 15, the Iraqi Soldiers were preparing to search a house when they saw movement inside. They approached, and after knocking repeatedly on the door, surrounded the house with 10 Soldiers and breached the entrance. Fifteen Soldiers of the 2/1 raced in, attacked by terrorists firing bullets at their heads. However, the terrorists were no match for the IA Soldiers and were ultimately subdued.

When Soldiers questioned them about the figure under the

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# Kentucky Soldiers decorated for gallantry in firefight

Story and photo by Spc. Jeremy D. Crisp  
Multi-National Corps - Iraq Public Affairs

**CAMP LIBERTY, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — A ceremony honoring the valorous efforts of a group of Kentucky Army National Guard Soldiers was held under a glaring sun at Camp Liberty June 16.

The 617th Military Police Company, Richmond, Ky., stood at the position of attention as seven of their own were decorated with three Silver Stars, three Bronze Star Medals with valor devices, two Army Commendation Medals with valor devices, and one Purple Heart for heroics performed during

a March 20 firefight in which their actions resulted in the elimination of more than 30 anti-Iraqi forces and a securing a large weapons cache.

The company was in formation between two armored vehicles as the command "Awardees, post," rang out from company commander Capt. Todd M. Lindner.

Decorating the Soldiers was Multi-National Corps - Iraq Commanding Gen., Lt. Gen. John R. Vines.

Each of the seven Soldiers respectfully saluted as Vines pinned medals upon their chests. Citations were read and Vines spoke afterwards of the gallantry of the awardees.

"My heroes don't play in the [National Basketball Association]," Vines said. "My heroes don't play in the U.S. Open at Pinehurst. My heroes are standing in front of me today. ... I salute you."

Receiving the Silver Star were: Staff Sgt. Timothy F. Nein from Henryville, Ind.; Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester from Bowling Green, Ky.; and Spc. Jason Mike from Radcliff, Ky.

Receiving the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device were: Spc. Ashley Pullen from Danville, Ky.; Spc. William Haynes II (who was unable to make the ceremony); and Spc. Casey Cooper from Princeton, Ky. Cooper was also awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained during the attack.

Receiving the Army Commendation Medal with "V" device were: Sgt. Dustin Morris from Murray, Ky.; and Spc. Jesse Ordunez from Marshall County, Ky.



**Award recipients Staff Sgt. Timothy Nein, Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester and Spc. Jason Mike listen as Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, MNC-I commander, addresses 617th MP Co. Soldiers June 16.**

## Soldier in Iraq makes history First female since WWII receives Silver Star

By Sgt. Sara Wood, USA  
American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** — For the first time since World War II, a woman Soldier was awarded the Silver Star medal June 16 in Iraq. Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester of the 617th Military Police Company, a National Guard unit out of Richmond, Ky., received the Silver Star.

Hester's squad was shadowing a supply convoy March 20 when anti-Iraqi fighters ambushed the convoy. The squad moved to the side of the road, flanking the terrorists and cutting off their escape route. Hester led her team through the "kill zone" and into a flanking position, where she assaulted a trench line with grenades and M203 grenade-launcher rounds. She and Sgt. Timothy F. Nein, her squad leader, then cleared two trenches, at which time Hester killed three terrorists with her rifle. When the fight was over, 27 terrorists were dead, six were wounded and one was captured.

Hester, 23, who was born in Bowling Green, Ky., and later moved to Nashville, Tenn., said she was surprised

when she heard she was being considered for the Silver Star. "I'm honored to even be considered, much less awarded, the medal," she said.

Being the first woman Soldier since World War II to receive the medal is significant to Hester. But, she said, she doesn't dwell on the fact. "It really doesn't have anything to do with being a female," she said. "It's about the duties I performed that day as a Soldier."

Hester, who has been in the National Guard since April 2001, said she didn't have time to be scared when the fight started, and she didn't realize the impact of what had happened until much later.

"Your training kicks in and the Soldier kicks in," she said. "It's your life or theirs. ... You've got a job to do — protecting yourself and your fellow comrades."

Three Soldiers of the 617th were wounded in the ambush. The firefight, along with the entire deployment, has had a lasting effect on her, Hester said.

"I think about it every day and probably will for the rest of my life," she said.

## Grateful

from Page 1

covers in the bed next to them, the terrorists said it was a sick female. Wood later told the U.S. Soldiers that when they were aware of military forces coming into the house, his captors threatened to shoot him if he moved or made a sound.

The terrorists, who claimed they were guards for a 15-man cell, told the Iraqi Soldiers they had previously murdered three other hostages just two weeks earlier, one of whom was a Ministry of Interior general.

During Wood's rescue, Soldiers also recovered 20 hand grenades and assorted firearms and ammunition.

Extracting Wood from the site was a challenge. The terrorists told Green and IA commanders they called their friends, who were on their way to stop the forces from bringing Wood to safety.

"We set up a perimeter with [U.S. Soldiers] on the outer cordon," said Green. "If they were going to get to Iraqi Soldiers, they were going to have to get through us first."

In the end, Wood was transported to the 256th BCT medical facility on Camp Liberty with no further engagements with the terrorists.

Cpl. Ryan Simon from Baton Rouge, La., of Company C, 1/156th AR was at the scene when the IA brought Wood out of the house. He said at first he felt disbelief, followed by utter gratitude for the man's life.

"When it was radioed in about what was happening, I thought, 'Yeah, right.' But when I saw him and saw that this was real, I was just so overwhelmed," said Simon.

Staff Sgt. Jeremecia Perry from Bossier City, La., of HHC, 1/156th AR, said this event is a definitive sign that the Iraqi Army is headed in the right direction.

"The Iraqi Soldiers are doing great things

for their people and getting the bad guys out of their neighborhoods," he said.

Green agreed that at least one man knows the strength of the Iraqi Army and testified to it over and over again.

"Mr. Wood had this constant look of disbelief, of joy and elation all at once, and he could not stop talking about the Iraqi Army," he said.

"This is proof positive of the coverage and competence of the new Iraqi Army," said



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Chris Foster  
**Douglas Wood shares a long-overdue laugh with Brig. Gen. John Basilica Jr., commander of the 256th Brigade Combat Team.**

Basilica. "They are making excellent progress and have done a super job. This was a great day for the Iraqi Army."

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## PERSPECTIVES

## I wanna be like Mike

By Spc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Staff

While deployed to this combat zone, I have met and read about many courageous service members of Operation Iraqi Freedom. I have recently reflected on people who have inspired me throughout my life. As I narrowed down the choice of who encouraged me the most, picking one person was a bigger challenge than I thought.

Family is at the top of the list, but apart from them, as a sports fan number one would have to be an athlete — one that has soared above the competition in all aspects.

During the 1980s and 1990s athletes were making crowds chant their names and shout, "Oooh!" and "Ahhh!" Magic Johnson and Larry Bird's rivalry was steaming hot. Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi were lighting up tennis courts across the world. Wayne Gretzky, "The Great One," was melting ice in hockey arenas across the United States and Canada. "The Baddest Man in the World," Mike Tyson, was sending contenders to the hospital with his trademark, first-round knockout, but no athlete was bigger than Michael Jordan. National Basketball Association fans introduced him to the world as "Air Jordan."

Known as the greatest basketball player the world has ever seen, some even say he is the greatest athlete ever.

The real story behind Jordan is he is a regular person, even though he is known as the king of basketball. In actuality Jordan faced scrutiny and failure plenty of times like everyone else. He bleeds blood and sweats perspiration. The difference between him and the average man is the way he battles a challenge. In his eyes, there is never one too great. What really inspires me about the man is his unquenched thirst for competition. His disciplined work ethic was unreal, and his never-quit attitude helped me push through any obstacle I have encountered in my life and especially during my time deployed here.

Michael Jordan started out playing baseball like his father. He didn't really take basketball seriously until he was in his teens. He tried out for the team in high school and was cut for lack of skills. After that he convinced the coach to lend him the keys to the gym so he could practice his jumping,

dribbling and shooting daily. That one disappointment, getting cut from the team, sparked something in Jordan that many athletes all over the world throughout time search for their whole lives and most never find. He used that negative energy and made it positive.

Jordan played high school basketball the next year, breaking records and receiving awards for his showmanship. He was recruited to play basketball for the University of North Carolina and stunned fans around the nation with his aerial assault and acrobatic moves. The game-winning shot he sunk for the Tar Heels in the 1982 National Collegiate Athletic Association basketball championship game became signature and started a chain of game winners over the next 20 years. That moment also helped start an NBA career that will never be erased from record books and never be forgotten by the fans who witnessed it.

After he finished his collegiate career, Jordan was picked third overall in the 1984 draft by the Chicago Bulls. Jordan went on to set several records that stand to this day. He helped the Bulls win six championships. The 13-time All-Star averaged 30.1 points per game for his career, which is the record for the most average points for a professional basketball player ever. He was a member of the "Dream Team" which won a gold medal at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics. He also won numerous awards including Defensive Player of the Year and Most Valuable Player while active in the NBA. He retired at age 40 for the third and final time in April 2003.

Those are a few of his accomplishments. The ones I hold dear are the times he stepped out on a limb and tried to accomplish a new task without the fear that he would fail. Jordan tried playing professional baseball and managing an NBA team. Although he was not successful in either of the ventures, the important part is that he tried. Dreams help us to keep going, and he never stopped dreaming or believing.

Jordan inspired me to make every effort to become a man of great stature. On and off the court, he is a man other men, women and children can look up to. To this day, his peers and family members have nothing but great things to say about him. MJ didn't battle terrorists or ever join the military, but he'll always be a hero in my book. These qualities I admire influence my life every day. Occasionally during physical training, I even try to fly like Mike.

## I did it!



**Capt. Sam Donnelly** with the 2/7th Infantry Battalion from Fort Stewart, Ga., laughs with the children as he hands out diplomas at a grade school graduation ceremony attended by civil affairs representatives from Forward Operating Base Danger in Tikrit, Iraq.

U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt Kim M. Allain

## Scimitar Pulse

Who has inspired you the most in your life and why?

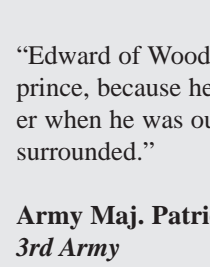
"Jean Kirkpatrick, U.S. ambassador under President Reagan, because she broke down many barriers for women."

**Army Capt. Meg Bielenberg**  
*Multi-National Force - Iraq*



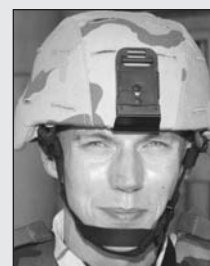
"I don't really have anyone. I just thank God for everything I have."

**Army Staff Sgt. Antone Mello**  
*Multi-National Security Transition Command - Iraq*



"Edward of Woodstock, the black prince, because he was a [butt]kicker when he was outnumbered and surrounded."

**Army Maj. Patrick Zoch**  
*3rd Army*



"My grandfather because he raised me and he had a great heart."

**Army Spc. Raymond Pettit**  
*519th Signal Company*

"Christ because he is the Lord of my life and he leads me. His words never fail."

**Air Force Lt. Col. Ike Mentzer**  
*Air Component Element*



"Myself because no one else let me do what I wanted to do."

**British Army Cpl. Pete McIntosh**  
*Military Police*

"My oldest brother because he took initiative and always tried his best at everything."

**William Buck**  
*KBR*



# Pentagon does not favor troop withdrawal deadline

By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — A deadline on pulling out U.S. troops from Iraq would simply encourage the enemy, defense leaders said June 16.

Nothing would make terrorists happier than a U.S. deadline on pulling troops from the country, said Pentagon spokesman Larry Di Rita and Joint Staff Operations Chief Marine Lt. Gen. James Conway.

The men spoke at a Pentagon press conference.

Conway said U.S. commanders in Iraq would not welcome an artificially imposed deadline. "They have their plan; it's a plan for victory," he said. "And forces will be withdrawn when victory is accomplished between U.S. and Iraqi forces."

Since the start of the Global War on Terrorism, U.S. officials maintained that troop withdrawals will be event driven and not dependent on a deadline. Di Rita pointed out that U.S. troops in Bosnia were supposed to be withdrawn after one year in country. There are still some 200 U.S. service members there.

Conway said the enemy studies the United States

just as it studies them. "They see where we have withdrawn previously — in Vietnam, in Beirut, in Somalia," he said. "Nothing would make them happier, I suppose, than to think that there is a deadline out there, there's a time and distance factor associated with it, and then ... they simply are able to wait us out."

The terrorists' tactics keep changing, Conway said. They first launched attacks against Coalition bases, but that tactic failed, he said. They next targeted Iraqi Security Forces and had some success, but the ISF now can defend itself. "They are, unfortunately, able to succeed in even greater rates against defenseless women and children forming in lines at the bank or in the marketplace," he said.

The terrorists succeed when they commit a spectacular attack, but the tactic is backfiring. More and more Iraqis are appalled at the carnage the terrorists commit and are turning in the terrorists. "We have seen some evidence of that," Conway said. "The issue is ... that people are getting fed up with the attacks on civilians, and even the insurgent groups are warring amongst themselves over this continuous slaughter of Iraqis. So there is some fragmentation that we're seeing."

**"Forces will be withdrawn when victory is accomplished between U.S. and Iraqi forces."**

Marine Lt. Gen. James Conway  
Joint Staff Operations Chief

## Army implements victim advocacy program

By Staff Sgt. Jennifer K. Yancey  
27th Public Affairs Detachment

**LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, Balad, Iraq** — Sexual assault is a criminal offense that has no place in the Army.

In response to the rising numbers of sexual assault cases — particularly in deployed environments — the Acting Secretary of the Army approved the implementation of a sexual assault victim advocacy program in August 2004.

The Department of Defense adopted the standard term "victim advocate" to identify Soldiers trained to respond to reports of sexual assault in providing advocacy support to the victim. The name "unit victim advocate" describes Soldiers trained as sexual assault victim advocates, and appointed on collateral duty to a battalion-level or higher Army unit.

In April, the Department of the Army Mobile Training Team formed to meet the Secretary of Defense's intent of producing trained, certified UVAs in every Army unit worldwide.

Instruction includes a review of the Army's policies regarding sexual assault, victim support techniques, victim healthcare management, criminal investigation procedures, the military justice system, victims' rights and difficulties in reporting.

Russell Strand, a retired Criminal Investigation Command agent and MTT team member, also serves as a CID and military police instructor at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.

That course now includes an additional three days of sexual assault training, Strand said.

For selection as UVA, Soldiers must meet the following criteria: recommended by their chain of command, with the first lieutenant colonel or

battalion-level equivalent in that chain approving recommendation; must attain the rank of staff sergeant or higher, first lieutenant or higher, or chief warrant officer; must be able to respond to a sexual assault incident at any time when on call; must be deployable (if assigned to a deploying unit) with one year remaining time in the unit; have a minimum of two years of service remaining; must not have been punished under the Uniform Code of Military Justice within five years preceding the nomination; must not have a history of domestic violence, excessive alcohol or illegal drug use; have an outstanding performance record, as evidenced by the individual's evaluation reports; must be appointed on collateral duty orders as UVA; must obtain a waiver from HQDA if the individual has withdrawn from the Human Reliability or Personnel Reliability Program during the two years preceding nomination.

Candidates undergo thorough screening prior to training. But a stellar military record alone may not be enough to fulfill the duties of UVA.

"They may meet the criteria, but do they have the right temperament?" said Lt. Col. Mary Dooley-Bernard, MTT team chief and deputy director, Family Programs, HQDA Community and Family Support Center.

UVAs can expect to become involved in emotionally-charged, highly-stressful situations and must take care not to become too personally-attached to the case or interfere with investigations.

The needs of the victim remain the UVA's top priority.

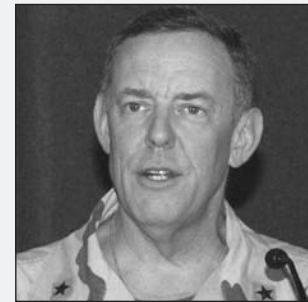
UVAs must inform victims of their options for using service providers (medical, mental health,

## MNF-I spokesman speaks about troop withdrawal conditions

By Sgt. W. Watson Martin  
Scimitar Staff

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — The Multi-National Forces - Iraq Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Communication, U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Donald Alston, briefed reporters June 16 at a press conference here on the latest Coalition measures at securing peace alongside Iraqi Security Forces, which will lead to sending troops home.

Alston said the leader of al Qaeda in Iraq's Mosul branch, Mohammed Khalaf, was arrested June 14 after U.S. forces received a number of tips from civilians. Also known as Abu Talha, he is considered a top aide to Jordanian-born terrorist leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Talha was notoriously known as a terrorist who wore a suicide vest constantly and who would never surrender — he gave up without a fight, said Alston.



Brig. Gen. Donald Alston

Information from Iraqi citizens contributed to the capture of Abu Talha. This is proof the insurgency is growing increasingly unpopular, Alston said. He further noted that cells of Zarqawi's network are concerned they cannot blend into local populations as easily as they have in the past.

Terrorists also try to blend in with Iraqi Security Forces to provide intelligence to their cell leaders. Recently four terrorists tried to infiltrate as fresh recruits, but they were found to be on a wanted list and were promptly arrested, Alston said.

Officials blame the increasing Iraqi civilian death toll on Zarqawi and other members of al Qaeda. "With Zarqawi's push recently, we certainly see the fantastic rise in the number of civilians killed, given that he has proclaimed that taking out civilians is an acceptable thing."

In Kirkuk, a suicide bomber pushed a shopping cart in front of a bank where Iraqis were cashing their pension checks. The attack killed over two dozen and wounded 90 innocent civilians. "Despite claims by terrorists' organizations, to the contrary, older civilians were the target of this attack, continuing the attacks specifically aimed at civilians throughout the country," said Alston.

"Iraq's security forces are increasing capability to conduct operations by our side. There is great promise in their ability to continue to shoulder the load in fighting this insurgency," said Alston.

Members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives have pushed the Bush administration for a timetable

to withdraw troops from Iraq. According to White House spokesman Scott McClellan, President Bush has repeatedly said U.S. troops would leave Iraq once Iraqi Forces are ready to take over the security of their country, and setting a timetable would send the wrong message.

In regards to the military view of withdrawal, Alston said, "We plan as military planners plan." Coalition officials partnered with Iraqi officials, and military leadership continue to calibrate combat readiness. "By our joint ability to size up [Iraqi Security Forces], it is going to give us insight as to when to shift responsibility from the Coalition."

Gauging their readiness has to do with personnel numbers, logistics, command and control capabilities, equipment, and effectiveness in combat, Alston said. Once all of these factors are working well and Iraqi Security Forces are holding

ground, Coalition Forces will begin troop reductions.

"It is essential for us not to forget that we started this Army from scratch a year ago, and it has come a long way to where they are today, virtually from no organization to over 100 battalions. It is a fantastic accomplishment to come this far," said Alston.

The democratic process here has been greatly challenged since Iraq's free elections, he said. "The Iraqi security forces, though their numbers were not as significant as they are now, rose up, protected the polling places, they inspired the people, they tackled the suicide bombers, and they — more than any other institution in Iraq — inspired the confidence of eight million people to go to the polls and vote Jan. 30."

A few months went by and the Transitional National Assembly began its formation under sporadic attacks and murders of its elected officials. The TNA carries on despite continuing threats from terrorists. Most recently, the invitation of Sunni participation in drafting Iraq's constitution has sparked more hatred from the fanatics, but the determination of the Iraqi people continues to form a working government.

An Iraqi interpreter who wishes not to be identified said, "Though the Coalition Forces' role is to support Iraqi Security Forces to be able to face difficulties, we believe they should stay here even if security is established, because it is their responsibility to help Iraqis make Iraq at least as it was in the Saddam era, if not better." As an Iraqi but universal saying goes, "Ikmel Ma Badatahu." Finish what you start.

# ISF, RCT-2 find torture chamber, rescue four hostages

By Staff Sgt. Timothy S. Edwards  
2nd Marine Division Public Affairs

**CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, AR RAMADI, Iraq** — Iraqi Security Forces and Marines, Sailors and Soldiers with Regimental Combat Team – 2 rescued four Iraqi men from a terrorist torture chamber in Karabilah, while conducting Operation Romhe Saturday.

The four men, who had been beaten and tortured with electric shock, were provided medical care and transported to a medical facility.

“The torture house discovered by Company K, 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment provides another sobering glimpse into the murder and intimidation campaign being waged against the citizens of Al Anbar Province,” said Lt. Col. Christopher C. Starling, the operations officer for RCT-2.

Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces, operating from intelligence obtained by advanced reconnaissance, entered a building complex thought to be either a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device factory or a cache site for weapons and ammunition.

“There were definite indications of bad guys there,” said Col. Bob Chase, operations officer for the 2nd Marine Division. “But nothing had prepared them for what they found going in.”

The hostages were found malnourished, dehydrated, beaten, bruised across the back, blindfolded and cuffed to a wall, Chase said. One was found under a stairwell away

from the others. He was at first thought to be dead.

According to the hostages, they had been held for approximately three weeks and were never told why.

Medical care for the hostages was the immediate priority. They received first aid and then were transported to Al Qaim for follow-on treatment they may need and recovery.

This type of action on the part of terrorists and foreign fighters are common, Chase said.

“We think it is part of their murder and intimidation campaign,” he said. “When terrorists lose control over an area because they can no longer provide what they originally offered, they resort to this type of intimidation. This is a way of letting the people know that they are in charge.

“They use it to keep the people quiet and in line, Chase said.” The terrorists who ran this facility are believed to be affiliated with various terrorist networks.

“Materials discovered at the city and interviews with the victims rescued by Marines clearly implicates foreign fighters linked to Abu Musab Al Zarqawi’s terrorist network,” said Starling.

Manuals, books and DVDs found in the facility and a car bomb factory located adjacent to the building containing the torture room clearly identified this as a terrorist training center and possible safe haven for those en route to Baghdad or Mosul.

According to Chase, instruction manuals were found teaching in the validity of taking hostages, the validity of beheadings and on terrorist tactics.

“The irony is one of the car bomb factories found was in a school,” he said.

A small weapons cache was also found within the com-



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Staff Sgt. Jason D. Becksted

**An Iraqi man, who was held captive and beaten, had welts and lacerations across his back and arms from being tortured with electricity. He and three others were rescued by ISF and Marines from 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, who discovered a terrorist torture chamber in Karabilah, Iraq, during Operation Romhe.**



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Neill A. Sevelius

**Bolt cutters are used to remove handcuffs from an Iraqi man who was held captive and beaten.**

plex, which terrorists used to attack the ISF and Coalition Forces entering the city.

“It is a small cache compared to others that have been located,” Chase said. “It is believed that the terrorists were using it as a source to draw from as they held the complex against us. We received a lot of [indirect direct fire] as we moved against it.

“A number of terrorists were killed when we entered the building but none were reported captured,” he continued. “Those that we are fighting are either moving or dying.”

This find confirms what ISF and Coalition Forces have told the Iraqi people and provided an opportunity for the media embedded with the forces to show that the terrorists aren’t here to help Iraq.

“It is a common theme we have been telling the people of Iraq,” Chase said. “This is visual proof of that.”

## Advocacy

from Page 4

chaplain, legal), while guiding the victim through the medical, investigative and judicial process. The UVA can, at the victim’s request, accompany the victim during investigative interviews and medical examinations. However, the UVA cannot attempt to make decisions for the victim.

Ultimately the victim decides whether to accept the UVA’s assistance.

UVAs will not be identified by a photo on a bulletin board; this is to prevent perceptions or rumors regarding interactions between victims and their UVA, said Maj. Carla Reed, HQDA G-1. Units require two UVAs per battalion. In garrison environments, UVAs will be assisted by installation

victim advocates who are civilians that work out of Army Community Service as full-time advocates for domestic violence and sexual assault. Appointed UVAs should establish a checklist identifying essential personnel involved in sexual assault cases.

Sexual assault remains the most underreported violent crime in the military. In most cases, victims choose not to report it because of their desire to not let anyone know what happened.

The Army cannot afford to regard this as mere “check the block” training, said Dooley-Bernard.

“We can’t put all of this energy [into the program] in the beginning,” she said, “then treat it like any other annual training requirement.”

“But the Army is taking a great step forward,” said Strand, “saying it needs help.”

## Court-Martial charges preferred against Liberty Soldier

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — The U.S. Government preferred charges against Staff Sgt. Alberto B. Martinez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 42nd Infantry Division (Mechanized) June 15, in the deaths of two Task Force Liberty Soldiers who died June 7 at Forward Operating Base Danger, near Tikrit, Iraq.

Martinez is charged with violation of Article 118 (murder) with two specifications of premeditated murder. This charge, along with supporting evidence, will be forwarded through the appropriate chain of command for review and disposition recommendations.

An attorney from the U.S. Army Trial Defense Service represents Martinez in this matter. He may also retain a civilian defense attorney to represent him.

Martinez is currently in pretrial confinement at a military confinement facility in Kuwait.

Capt. Phillip T. Esposito and 1st Lt. Louis E. Allen later died of their wounds in what was initially thought to be an indirect fire attack. Both officers were assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 42nd Infantry Division, New York Army National Guard. Esposito was the company commander; Allen served as a company operations officer.

The initial investigation by responders and military police indicated a mortar round struck the window on the side of the building where Esposito and Allen were located at the time. Upon further examination of the scene by explosive ordnance personnel, it was determined the blast pattern was inconsistent with a mortar attack.

## Operation Moon River Dragon seeks most-wanted suspect

By Sgt. Matthew Acosta  
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE WILSON, SAMARRA, Iraq** — “Contact is imminent. Intel reports this guy does not want to be captured and may be wearing a suicide belt to prevent this,” said Capt. Robert Croft, commander, Company B, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry, Task Force Liberty. “Be very cautious.”

Members of the Iraqi Army and Soldiers from 1/15 Infantry encircled several objectives in the village of Al Julaam as Operation Moon River Dragon commenced May 29 in hopes of apprehending the battalion’s second-most-wanted suspected terrorist.

An Iraqi Army platoon from Company D, 203rd Battalion led the assault with the support of 100 Task Force Liberty infantrymen from B Co., 1/15th Infantry and an M-1 Abrams tank company, as they searched the town, sector by sector.

The Soldiers worked in a coordinated manner to search the town.

“The Iraqi Army cleared the houses of all occupants and performed a hasty search of the home,” said Spc. James Dalton, an infantryman. “After the house was clear, U.S. Soldiers were sent into the houses to do a more detailed search.”

Iraqi Army Soldiers escorted the villagers to a designated safe house in the town where the males were questioned about insurgent activity.

Although only the males were interrogated, the women and children were brought to the site for their safety and to allow Coalition Soldiers to move freely from house to house.

Overall, the unit questioned more than 40 males, but did not find their target.

“No one was arrested, but the interrogations yielded valuable information to continue to pursue the targets, limiting their operational freedom,” Croft said.

Iraqi Army units are being integrated with the U.S. Soldiers on an increasing level as they gain more experience in combat operations, the Soldiers said.

“We have been operating jointly with Company D for more than three months,” Croft said. “In our short time with them, they have become much better at both preparing for missions and actually conducting operations on the ground.”

Dalton agreed.

“I like working with the Iraqi Army,” Dalton said. “We’re trying to get them to take the lead and be more proactive in combat operations, and eventually they will take over operations entirely.”

“Although we didn’t make contact with enemy forces as anticipated, I think they handled themselves pretty well,” he added.

Besides the added manpower, the Iraqi Army gives the Soldiers an even greater attribute to the mission, Croft said.

“The IA presence completely changes the dynamic of the operation,” Croft said. “People will cooperate with us just the same. However, when Iraqi Soldiers are in the lead giving the instructions, things happen much more quickly and with less confusion. The effect is that the operation is safer for both U.S. Soldiers and Iraqi civilians.”

Imminent danger or not, the Soldiers of Task Force Liberty along with members of the Iraqi Army will continue to assault the insurgency, rooting the terrorists out from the comfort of hiding in small communities, until their job is done.

The place to access the latest MNF-I/MNC-I news, information and policies, is online. Check out [www.mnf-iraq.com](http://www.mnf-iraq.com) to stay informed.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Water officials begin repairs after attack

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Officials are urging Baghdad residents to conserve water after waterlines leading into Baghdad were damaged in an explosion early Sunday.

An access chamber located nearly seven miles downstream of the Karkh Water Treatment Plant was damaged in the sabotage incident at 4:40 a.m.

Ministry of Water officials temporarily shut off water running through these lines as the assessment and repairs began in the early hours of the morning.

Coalition Forces are currently acting in an advisory role and the ministry’s workers are repairing the lines on their own.

Baghdad currently has more than 42 billion gallons of potable water in city reservoirs. Officials estimate there is sufficient water in reserves to last for the duration of the repairs.

Baghdad’s only affected areas should be west of the Tigris River and those residents may notice a decrease in water pressure, said engineers.

Officials are continuing to evaluate any other potential effects.

### Iraqi, Coalition Soldiers capture terrorists, foil bombings

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Iraqi Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers conducted a series of combat operations Saturday to capture targeted terrorists and seize weapons and contraband.

The Iraqi and Coalition Forces searched four locations in central and south Baghdad and apprehended five suspects, including a specifically-identified terror cell financier.

Task Force Baghdad Soldiers also arrested an Iraqi national in west Baghdad. When the Soldiers searched the suspect, they found a rocket-propelled grenade sighting device in his possession.

In other combat operations, Coalition Forces watching a house suspected of being a bomb-making facility saw a man enter the home acting suspiciously. The Soldiers surrounded the house, searched it and found a variety of devices used to make car bombs and roadside bombs, including vehicle foot pedal switches, mechanical timers, switches and relays. The unit took the suspect into custody for questioning.

Later, Task Force Baghdad Soldiers in southwest Baghdad found a roadside bomb alongside a major highway. The Soldiers blocked traffic to keep people away from the bomb. A team of

explosives experts discovered two, 130 mm rounds with a remote-controlled detonator, and safely disabled the bomb.

Another Task Force Baghdad patrol traveling in west Baghdad spotted a burlap bag with unknown items inside lying on the side of a major highway. Again, the Soldiers cordoned off the area to prevent anyone from getting hurt and called in an explosives team to safely detonate the bomb.

### Mosul’s most-wanted captured

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces captured the leader of al Qaeda in the Mosul region June 14.

Muhammad Khalaf Shakar, also known as Abu Talha, is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi’s most trusted operations agent in all of Iraq. He was captured without incident.

Multiple intelligence sources led Coalition forces to Abu Talha’s location in a quiet neighborhood in Mosul. According to former Talha associates, Talha never stayed more than one night at any one residence, and always wore a suicide vest, saying he would never surrender. Talha gave up peacefully to Coalition Forces and supporting Iraqi Security Forces and is fully cooperating with Coalition and Iraqi officials.

### Local tips break up terror cell

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Two Iraqi citizens helped Iraqi Security Forces and Task Force Baghdad Soldiers uncover a large weapons cache in the capital Monday and capture three men who were planning a terrorist attack.

A resident living in the Ghazaliyah district of central Baghdad told Task Force Baghdad Soldiers about a group of terrorists planning an attack on a coalition checkpoint in Abu Ghraib. The Soldiers investigated the tip and took two targeted terror suspects and another suspect into custody for questioning.

Later that day, Iraqi Army Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, acting on a tip from a resident living in the Adamiya district of central Baghdad, found a large weapons cache.

In other combat operations, ISF and TF Baghdad Soldiers captured five more terror suspects, including another targeted individual, and found two additional weapons caches.

The largest operation of the day netted four terror suspects, bomb-making materials, triggering devices, one propane cylinder and various fake identification cards.

## Safety first



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Eugene L. King

Soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division, 4th Battalion, 64th Armor, recover one of their vehicles that was in an accident in the International Zone, Baghdad, Iraq, June 11. The Humvee collided with a Mercedes-Benz SUV in a four-way intersection, crushing the front end and flipping the SUV onto its side.

# Iraq's

## first year of

# Sovereignty

Reviewing progress from June 28, 2004, to June 28, 2005, pages 7-10



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Trevor R. Gift

**Iraqi Special Forces Shawanis Brigade raise the Iraqi National Flag at the Al Fallujah Mayor's Office during Operation Al Fajr Nov. 10, 2004. The Iraqi Forces were involved in joint security and stability operations with 1st Battalion 8th Marines, 1st Marine Division in the Al Anbar province of Iraq.**

## Iraqis accomplish much in first year of sovereignty

By 1st Lt. Adrienne Michele  
Strategic Communications

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — On Tuesday, Iraqis will mark one year of being a sovereign nation. And while the young government has achieved many milestones, it is preparing the way for further progress.

“The Iraqis have made great progress, specifically over the last five months, building their government and setting the foundation for the future,” said Brig. Gen. C. Donald Alston, deputy chief of staff for Strategic Communication.

Despite early assessments that it would be too dangerous, about 8.5 million Iraqis — 58 percent of those eligible — came out to vote on Jan. 30. Polls showed that while 51 percent of Iraqis surveyed in June 2004 said their country was headed in the right direction, the number jumped to 67 percent as the anniversary of their sovereignty approached last week.

The political process has taken hold as well, with more than 660 community associations in 16 governorates setting the stage for grassroots democracy. More than 19 million people can engage in local policy discourse through 78 district councils, 192 city or sub-district councils and 392 neighborhood councils.

Alston said, “Since the new government was sworn in last month, they have been reaching out to the Iraqi people and making decision that will strengthen this country.”

Reconstruction projects have commenced across the country. About 200 projects had been started when the government was handed over to the Iraqis. One year later, more than 2,500 projects, valued at \$5.7 billion, are under way and more than half are finished,

with a value of \$1.3 billion.

Electricity output remains at about the same level as a year ago, but projects are ongoing — 58 are complete and more than 100 are still in the works.

Iraqis are in need of fresh water and sewer systems, and reconstruction projects are building the infrastructure to provide these services: 65 water treatment projects and 21 sewer projects are under way or complete, ensuring people have sewer lines and potable water.

In recent weeks, the Ministry of Health initiated a polio vaccination program for the first time since Saddam Hussein's regime fell, inoculating 4.7 million children against the disease.

The average Iraqi sees the results of reconstruction most often through the construction and rehabilitation of local schools — 3,000 of which have been completed.

Security remains a challenge, but the Iraqi Security Forces have seen recent successes, like Operation Lightning. “While some challenges still remain in achieving Iraq's self-reliance, the Multi-National Security Training Command - Iraq mission to organize, train, equip and mentor Iraqi Security Forces has been extremely successful. The progress and momentum the ISF have achieved over the last six months is noticeably apparent, especially in the areas of training and operations,” said U.S. Army Col. James Laufenburg, Chief of Staff, MNSTC-I. “When we look at where the ISF was just one year ago, it is truly remarkable what has been accomplished.”

In an effort to secure the borders, 61 port of entry and border fort projects have been finished. Additionally, Iraq's Coastal Defense Force is now operational, with five patrol craft, 34 smaller vessels and a naval infantry regiment that recently completed training.



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Dave Ahlschwede

Crowds gather in Karbala, Iraq, in February 2005, for the Ashura celebration. Ashura is the holiest day in the Shiite Muslim calendar and commemorates the death 13 centuries ago of Imam Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Mohammed. This is only the second time the Shias have been allowed to celebrate this day since Iraqi former president Saddam Hussein restricted the event over 30 years ago.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Elizabeth Erste

A few young Iraqi children from a neighborhood in Samarra, Iraq enjoy a little recreation at their local park. This park was being considered by the 411th Civil Affairs Battalion as a possible renovation project during an assessment of the area Nov. 17, 2004.

# A Year of Sovereignty Accomplishments ...

Compiled by Multi-National Force - Iraq Strategic Communications

## Reconstruction

- On the date of the Transfer of Sovereignty, June 28, 2004, approximately 200 reconstruction projects had been started. Since then that total has increased to over 2,500 projects with an associated value of \$5.7 billion. During the same period, more than 1,300 projects valued at over \$1.3 billion have been completed. In one year over 2,300 construction projects started with an average of 155,000 Iraqi workers facilitating the reconstruction.

- Generation plants are being built and transmission lines are being constructed to replace the decades-old, neglected electrical power system. A total of over 2,000 megawatts of power have been added to the grid, which is enough to service 5.4 million Iraqi homes. Over 1,400 electrical towers and 8,600 kilometers of transmission lines have been installed. The management and control of the distribution network continues to improve after over 35

years of neglect under the old regime. \$4.3 billion has been allocated from the supplemental appropriation for system improvements. The World Bank estimates the total necessary to be \$12.1 billion.

- Electrical generation facilities have been improperly operated and maintained for years. The industry has suffered from a lack of training and shortage of spare parts. This has not only plagued older facilities but has had an impact on new facilities recently brought on line. To counter this skill shortage, training programs similar to one developed by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Ministry of Electricity will develop qualified managers and operators that understand the state-of-

the-art facility operations and management. Eighty-three recent senior staff graduates have returned to Iraq from Jordan and have been tagged by the MOE to be used as "tiger teams," which will be regionally based and act as roving specialists to assist any power plant that has a problem or is operating as sub-standard megawatt (MW) levels.

- In the electricity sector, over 1,400 electrical towers have been erected to carry high-voltage power lines. Over 8,600 km of high-tension electrical cable have been installed. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region District, USAID and the MOE have increased power generation capability by over 2,000 MW. In addition, the sum of potential new generation projects is projected at 1,022 MW.



U.S. Navy photo by Chief Petty Officer Edward Martens

Iraqi brick layers build a wall during reconstruction efforts to the Al Hillah SWAT Headquarters in Babil, Iraq, March 21. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are working with the people of Iraq during the repair and construction of several Iraqi Police stations and schools throughout the Babil Province.

presently under construction and 41 are completed.

- After a significant drop, the average daily load of electricity has bounced back to 92,467 MW hours, comparable to the level when the transfer of power occurred. Fifty-eight electricity projects have been completed, and more than 100 are still in the works.

- Oil production has dropped by .32 million barrels per day since the transfer of power, but exports have grown by about the same margin; 16 oil projects have been completed.

- Sixty-five water treatment projects have been completed, with almost 100 still in progress; 21 sewer projects are complete, with 15 still working.
- Health care services are growing: 750 people passed their maternal and child health services training on to more than 2,000 primary healthcare providers. Additionally, 140 health care facilities have been completed and one hospital is under construction.

- Since the transfer of power, more than 3,000 schools have been rehabilitated.

- The Iraq Reconstruction Management Office has completed 79 transportation

projects since Iraq became a sovereign country.

- In April 2004, only 15 percent of Iraqis surveyed said they got enough electricity to meet their needs, while 85 percent said they did not; in April 2005, 22 percent said they got enough to meet their needs, while only 59 percent said they did not.

- In April 2004, only 30 percent of Iraqis surveyed said they got enough water to meet their needs, while 61 percent said they did not; in April 2005, 45 percent said they got enough to meet their needs, while 42 percent said they did not.

- The number of Iraqi households connected to sewer has risen 3 percent since the transfer of power.



U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Dave Ahlschwede

Steve Barker, a liaison to the Iraqi Police Department conducts training with Iraqi Police on March 15 in Baghdad. Barker trained members of the Karadet Maryem Police Department on high-risk traffic stops as part of on-going work to ready Iraqi police to begin operations in the International Zone. The Karadet Maryem Police were given a chance to demonstrate their skills in a demonstration conducted outside their facility.

## Economy

- The Ministry of Agriculture has approved a national program to identify and map areas of the country best suited to particular types of crops. This type of analysis is known as agro-ecological characterization and will lead to the preparation of land suitability maps for major crops in Iraq. The project will apply modern concepts of agro-ecological zoning for resources planning and management with an underlying goal to increase agricultural productivity, improve food security, preserve natural resources and contribute to enhanced prosperity for the whole population. All Iraqi farmers and livestock producers will benefit from the data generated by the project to assess production priorities and manage scarce resources.

- Commerce has sprung up in the past year: 26,785 new businesses have been registered.

- The Trade Bank of Iraq has issued Iraq's first credit/debit cards.

## Governance

- Reestablished joint committees with Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Kuwait, Turkey, Russia,

- Romania, Poland and other countries.

- Established 16 governorate councils, 78 district councils, 192 city or sub-district councils, and 392 neighborhood councils, allowing more than 19 million people to engage in local policy discourse.

- In May, provincial governance is progressing with all 18 provincial councils have met, and 17 of 18 provincial councils have elected governors.

- A two-day "Iraq Constitution



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jeremiah Johnson

The ink-stained finger of the first voter at one of the polling sites in Mosul, Iraq on Jan. 30. Iraqi forces provided security at the polling sites.

Roundtable" sponsored by Non-Governmental Organizations was held at an Amman-area hotel February 14-15. Approximately 20 Iraqis, including prominent behind-the-scenes political figures, representing most strands of Iraqi political opinion attended the conference, which focused almost entirely on discussion of modalities for drafting Iraq's new constitution. Despite sometimes heated discussion, Iraqi

See SOVEREIGNTY, Page 10



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Brian Aho

School children walk past members of 155 Brigade Combat Team, Company C, a National Guard Unit from Tupelo, Miss., in Babil Province, Iraq, March 8 as they conduct a presence patrol through the neighborhoods of Iskandriyah, Iraq. The patrols are to maintain community relations and to show a presence of security.





U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Trevor R. Gift

**An Iraqi Security Force Soldier holds a baby on Election Day, Jan. 30 while its mother goes to place her vote. ISF and Marines from 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, search individuals and provide security for the polling site in Nasarwasalam, Iraq.**



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo

**Iraqi National Guardsmen put up flyers in Ad Dwr, Iraq Nov. 16, 2004, for Operation Paper Cut. The combined operation conducted by the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division and the ING was to prevent Anti-Iraqi influence in the area by handing out flyers letting people know how to get help if they are threatened or hurt.**

## Sovereignty

from Page 9

and NGO sources unanimously praised the event as a valuable opportunity to exchange views and "meet each other face-to-face."

- Fallujah residents established a new city council May 17 with provincial council oversight and approval. Local groups selected 20 city leaders from various constituencies, such as tribal leaders, imams, businessmen, educators and engineers.

- Established more than 660 community associations in 16 governorates as part of a campaign targeting grassroots democracy.

- Despite early predictions that it would be too dangerous, about 8.5 million Iraqis – 58 percent of eligible voters – came out to vote Jan. 30.

- A Council of Ministries formed: in May; the 36-member cabinet included 16 Shia Arabs, nine Sunni Kurds, eight Sunni Arabs, one Shia Turkman, one Shia Fayli Kurd, one Cahldo-Assyrian and seven women counting the unfilled positions.

- Confidence among Iraqis in their national government has risen slightly since the transfer of power last June when 68 percent were confident and 16 percent were not confident; in April 2005, 72 percent were confident, with 19 percent expressing that they weren't confident; however, confidence in the ministries themselves has dropped slightly, from 63 percent to 59 percent.

- In June 2004, 51 percent of Iraqis surveyed said their country was headed in the right direction, while 39 percent said it was headed in the wrong direction. One year later, 67 percent said their country was headed in the right direction, while only 20 percent said it was headed in the wrong direction.

## Security

- The Iraqi Navy now sports five 100-foot patrol craft, 34 smaller vessels and a naval infantry regiment. The country's Air Force has three operational squadrons equipped with nine reconnaissance aircraft and three U.S. C-130 transport aircraft. And Iraq's special operations forces include a counterterrorist force and a commando battalion.

- Iraq's Coastal Defense Force is now operational, with five patrol craft, 34 smaller vessels, and a naval infantry regiment that recently completed training. Iraq's Air Force has two operational squadrons equipped with nine reconnaissance aircraft that operate during the day and at night. Two more squadrons, one comprised of three U.S.-gifted C-130E aircraft and one comprised of two UH-1 helicopters (to be followed by 14 more UH-1s and by four Bell Jet Ranger helicopters), recently stood up in mid-January.

- On Sept. 29, 2004, Iraqi and Syrian intelligence and military representatives, with a U.S. Coalition Forces delegation, reached agreement at Syrian Military Intelligence's headquarters in Damascus on key issues relating to security of the Iraq-Syrian border.

- More than 125,000 Iraqi security forces have been trained and equipped since the transfer of power.

- Security projects completed include 61 port of entry or border facilities, 82 police stations, 17 academies and branch schools, 96 unit headquarters and 19 fire stations.

- Confidence in the Iraqi Army has remained constant at 77 percent over the past year; however, confidence in the Iraqi Security Police has dropped 10 points to 79 percent.

## Other accomplishments

- Considerable progress has been made in the field of education: 860 secondary school master trainers were trained and passed on training to 31,772 secondary

school educators nationwide. More than 8.7 million revised math and science books have been printed, which no longer mention Saddam Hussein.

- Although 82 percent of Iraqis surveyed said their family could get the education it needs at the time Iraq became sovereign, one year later, only 62 percent expressed the same feeling.

- Healthcare spending is up more than 30 times its prewar levels; more than 3 million children have received life-saving vaccinations.

- Iraqi confidence in the health system has dropped: while 62 percent of Iraqis surveyed in April 2004 said their family could get needed medication, only 35 percent felt that way a year later.

- On Sept. 4, 2004, Iraq's Ministry of Health initiated the first polio immunization program in the country since March 2003 in an effort to protect 4.7 million children from the infectious disease. With support from the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the European Union, which contributed over \$2.5 million, the Iraqi authorities succeeded in immunizing the vast majority of children in the first three days of the campaign, UNICEF said. A total of 25 million doses of vaccine were purchased with help from a \$3.2 million grant from USAID.

- Since the transfer of power, the number of landline communications subscribers has risen from 794,198 to 997,675; Internet subscribers have more than doubled; and cell phone subscribers have jumped from just 488,966 to almost 2.5 million.



U.S. Army photo by Spc. Algernon E. Crawley Jr.

**Iraqi civilians work on reconstruction of an Iraqi police station in the town of Al Owja on Dec. 15, 2004.**

# Marne aviators: protecting Iraq from ground up

Story and photos by  
Staff Sgt. Nick Minecci  
214th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**CAMP TAJI, Iraq** — Mechanics working the flight line here pause and look up, trying to catch a glimpse of an aircraft literally buzzing overhead. They spot the aircraft, known as a Shadow 200, watch as it flies over and then return to their work.

What kind of aircraft makes these Soldiers who work with state-of-the-art aviation equipment take notice? It is a Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, and it is making a difference on the battlefield.

Launching and recovering the TUAVs here is the job of 1st Platoon, TUAV Company, Special Troops Battalion, said Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Bearden.

Bearden, the platoon sergeant and an eight-

year veteran, said when he tells people what his platoon does for a living, they “think it is pretty cool, especially since we are enlisted troops.”

Unlike pilots of Apaches, Black Hawks or Chinooks, who are commissioned or warrant officers, privates and specialists fly the \$500,000 Shadow.

“This really is an amazing job when you think about it,” said Spc. Eric Petrowski, a Hazelhurst, Wisc., native with two years in the Army.

“I really think there is not a better job in the Army; the possibilities in it are endless,” said the 24-year-old with one child at home and “one on the way.”

The job sounds simple enough as the Soldiers describe it: to launch the Shadow, fly it to a designated grid coordinate and then hand the flight controls over to another Soldier at a Forward Operating Base for a mission.

Missions for the TUAV are vital for the ground troops Bearden said, because they provide commanders a view from over the battlefield, which he said is known as “eyes in the sky.”

Following the mission with the ground troops, the Shadow flies back here where the 1st Platoon Soldiers take control from the FOB, landing the aircraft and conducting maintenance on it.

Being in control of an aircraft is “exhilarating” said 33-year-old Bearden, and the responsibility that comes with job is something his men don’t take lightly.



**Spc. Joshua Eldridge, assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division’s 1st Platoon, Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Company, Special Troops Battalion, conducts a pre-flight inspection of a Shadow 200 TUAV.**

“These Soldiers are very, very mature for their age,” he said. “My guys are very professional. As far as dealing with enlisted troops, these may be the most professional Soldiers I have ever seen,” the married father of two said proudly.

Having the resources to assist ground troops, and see that they come home safe, is what motivates Pfc. Jason Walker during his missions, who said he joined the Army, and the military intelligence branch in particular, because he wants to help.

Walker said while he was studying engineering and social work at Texas State University for two years, he never saw himself in Iraq piloting an aircraft to assist infantry troops on a combat mission.

“It is just the most awesome feeling, to

support those guys,” he said.

“When we are sending a bird up supporting the ground guys, you know you are helping to save a life, and when those Soldiers come home from their mission safe, that’s awesome,” said the 24-year-old Houston native.

Walker said the impact of being a pilot, even as a private, hits him when the infantry or armor Soldiers stop by the platoon area to thank him and his teammates and see the TUAV.

“They come by and tell us ‘thanks man, thanks for your support and help.’ They tell us they believe an [improvised explosive device] wasn’t triggered because of the TUAV overhead, and that’s really a great feeling,” he said.



**Spc. Joshua Eldridge, a Titusville, Fla., native, and Spc. Sean Davis, from St. Petersburg, Fla., conduct a preflight inspection of a Shadow 200 Tactical Unmanned Aerial Vehicle prior to its launch. Both Soldiers are assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division’s TUAV Co., Special Troops Bn.**

## New tough coating protects troops from fire, bullets

Story and photo by Sgt. Maj. Joe Adelizzi  
301st Area Support Group Public Affairs

**LOGISTICS SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, BALAD, Iraq** — The VSE Corporation, a company known for its technological innovation, is lending its expertise to the battlefield by developing a protective coating that can deflect bullets and seal up to .50-caliber-sized puncture holes in truck-mounted fuel tanks.

The coating, called TankSkin, is a 95 percent solid product that is sprayed onto the tanks and hardens into a surface so tough it can turn bullets, depending on the angle fired. The durable surface can also seal both entrance and exit holes to help prevent fires and large fuel spills, said Frank Wickersham, VSE International program manager.

The corporation recently opened a facility here to supplement its Camp Doha, Kuwait operation.

VSE gained its reputation in the truck products field by producing a variety of products to include LED taillights, heads-up driver’s displays and on-the-run inflation/deflation tire systems.

TankSkin was developed by the teaming of Rhino Liners, producers of fire-resistant, sprayed-in truck bed liners, with the micro expansion beads of High Impact Technologies. The MEBs are self-healing, which means they react with fuel flowing towards the puncture holes and expand up to 40 percent of their size, plugging the holes and sealing around the punctures.

The union of these two VSE Corporation subcontractors

resulted in a product that protects Soldiers from truck fires and communities from fuel spills.

The application of TankSkin requires a closed-in area. A single 5,000 gallon fuel tanker can be sprayed and up-armored in about 18 hours from start to finish. However, trailers arriving in numbers varying from company to battalion-sized units increase the processing time to up to three days of assembly-line style operations, Wickersham said.

“When the trailers first arrive, we remove certain parts and then thoroughly wash and clean the tank before sanding to rough the surface a little. We then tape on heavy paper to mask the parts we don’t want sprayed, and we’re ready to begin the process,” Wickersham said.

The first coat, or etching primer, takes about an hour to apply and another hour to cure. This is followed by a layer of polyurethane coating material containing the MEBs, Wickersham said.

Next, the TankSkin is applied over the primed surface by



**Workers apply a TankSkin protective coating on a fuel tanker, which can deflect bullets and seal up to .50-caliber-sized holes.**

spraying it on in thin layers until the desired thickness is reached. Due to its 95 percent solid composition, the spray nozzles clog often and have to be switched out with clean ones. Once the spraying begins, the process must continue without interruption until the entire fuel tank is coated, which usually takes about five hours, said Tom Burke, VSE spray chief.

“It’s tough work and takes its toll on my sprayers,” Burke said. “They wear respirators and protective clothing to protect their lungs and skin surface from the spray (of the TankSkin), which is heated to 200 degrees Fahrenheit for better adhesion.”

When the TankSkin cures, armor plates are installed beneath the fuel tank to protect the pumps and hose connectors located there. With the exception of painting warning signs and markings on the tank, the application process is complete.

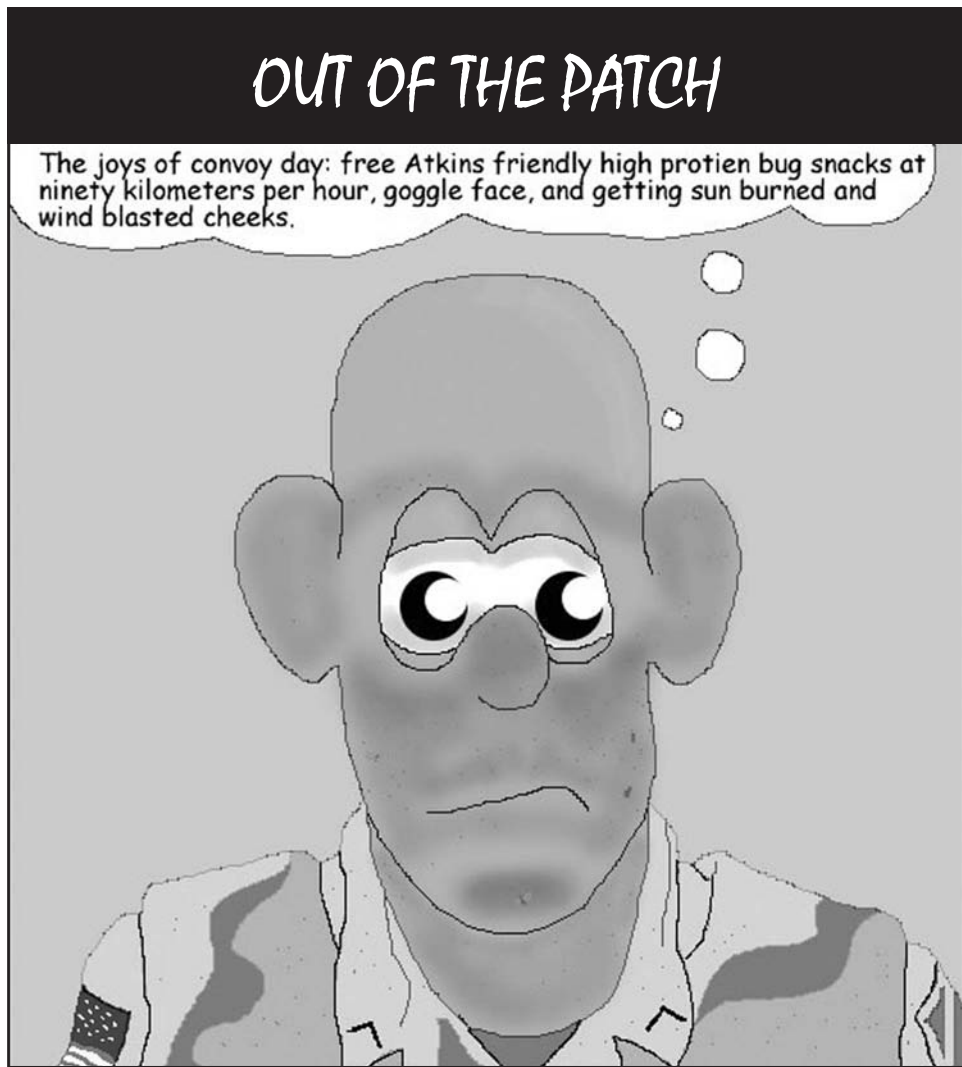
The new surface can be painted any color and also withstands the high temperatures of chemical decontamination if hit by chemical or biological agents. Each vehicle will also carry a patch kit, which can be used to repair larger punctures up to the circumference of a soda can, Wickersham said.

“The entire protective kit adds 3,300 pounds to the total weight of the 5,000 gallon fuel tanker, with 1,800 pounds of that in the armor plating. We make recommendations to compensate for the added weight,” Wickersham said.

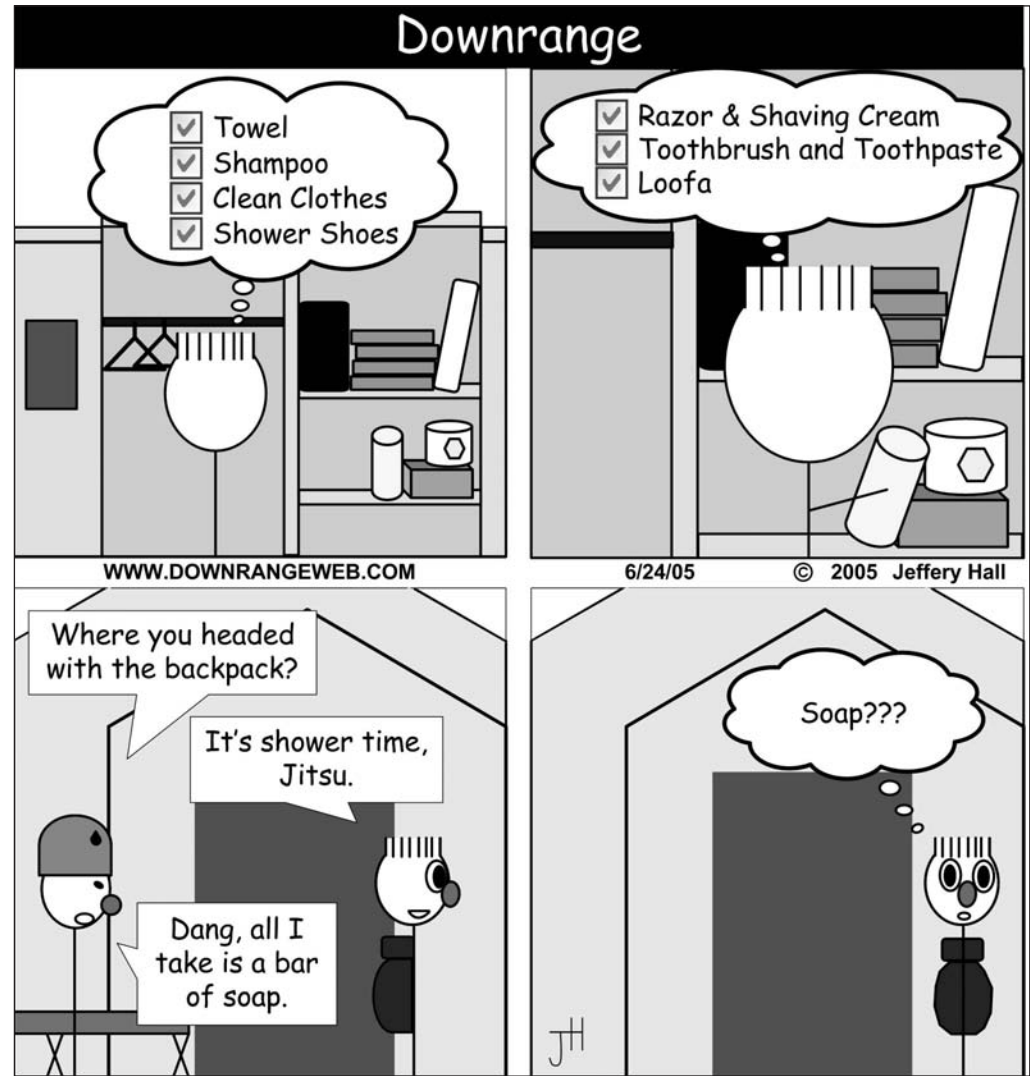
VSE is in the process of designing protective kits to fit the larger 7,500 gallon fuel tankers and smaller 2,500 gallon fuel tanks found on other vehicles currently operating in Iraq. The use of TankSkin as a protective surface in other roles is also being explored by VSE, Wickersham said.



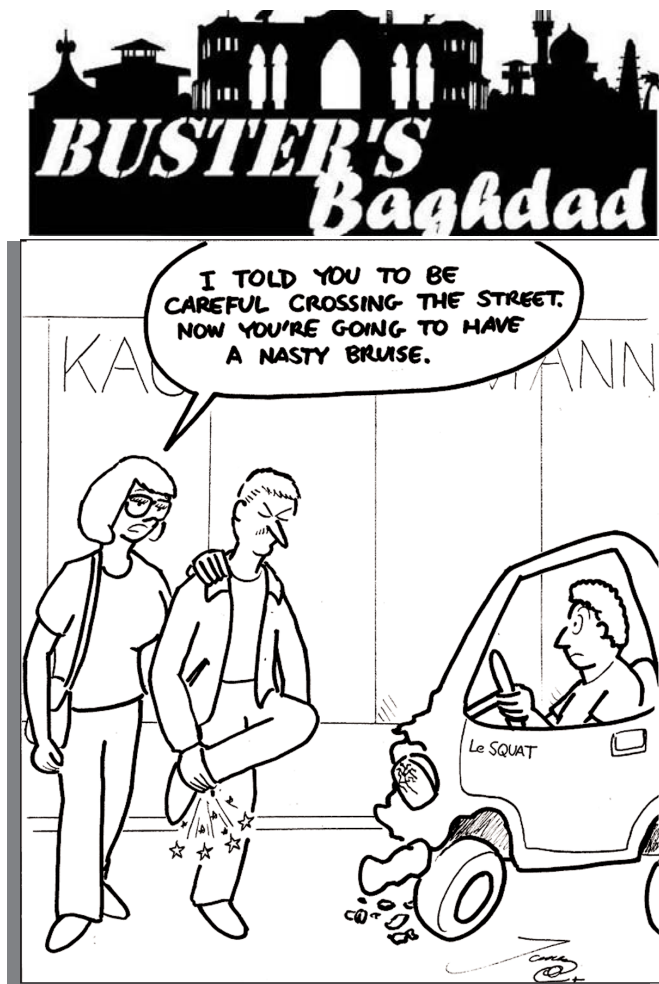
# Scimitar Slapstick



Art by Chief Warrant Officer Mark J. Hart



Art by Jeffery Hall



Art by Maj. James D. Crabtree



Art by Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Law

# Iraqi firefighters train in lifesaving skills

Story and photos by Sgt. Karolina Lojewska  
443rd Civil Affairs Battalion

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Following the explosion of an improvised explosive device, Baghdad fire fighters quickly arrive at the scene. Casualties are loaded into their trucks or ambulances and rushed to a hospital with little or no treatment provided at the scene. It is not because the firefighters do not want to help, but rather that they were never properly trained in basic life support.

Capt. Michael Gould, a physician assistant with the Public Health Team, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion and native of Boston, became aware of this critical need for training and decided to act on it. Together with the assistance of his medics, they developed a comprehensive training program.

Everything came together when an Iraqi female doctor responded to the calls for help. She simply wanted to help her people, especially if it meant saving their lives.

Finally, at the end of May, the Soldiers were able to start the first class.

“Back in the rear we always have heard about the brave Iraqi firefighters who risk their lives to save their own people. I am glad we can help out and do this training,” Gould said.

After escorting the firefighters into the International Zone,



Iraqi firefighters training in basic life support run toward a casualty during training June 16.

Staff Sgt. Michael Didonato of Manasquan, N.J., who works for the Government Support Team, provides training on the equipment located on the fire trucks. The equipment was donated by Japan.

Firefighters receive training on tasks including CPR, proper trauma assessment, bleeding and shock control, airway management, splinting fractures and immobilizing the patient. After the classroom hours they are evaluated on the different tasks.

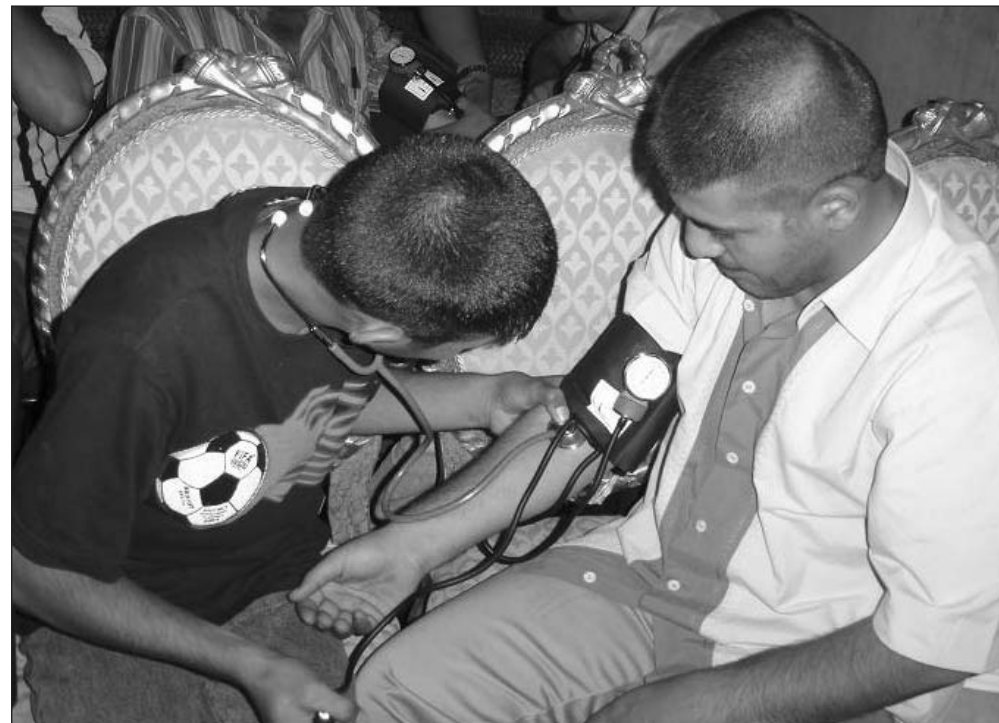
“After a while they are starting to understand the concept of the ABCs — Airway, Breathing, Circulation. They are starting to follow our rules and guidelines and perform a proper assessment on their patients. And that is our goal,” said another medic with the 443rd.

After they complete the training, they receive a certificate from the Public Health Team and a fully supplied BLS bag. With the supply shortages firefighters face, the equipment they receive in their BLS bags is sometimes all they have on their ambulances or fire trucks.

To date, the Public Health Team has already graduated three classes, totaling 70 firemen. On each graduation day, Gould reminds the firemen of what an important job they have.

On average, 20-30 firefighters show up for each class, representing all of Baghdad’s districts. Their chief comes out with them for the first class and also on graduation day and hopes to have all his firefighters trained by the end of the year.

“We are grateful to the American People, the U.S. Army and all the Coalition Forces for helping out my people,” Gould said.



Iraqi firefighters learn how to take a blood pressure during the Basic Life Support Class. The training was organized by the Government Support Team and the Public Health Team, HHC 443rd Civil Affairs Bn.



Iraqi firefighters at the International Zone, where they attended training on their new fire trucks donated by Japan.

## DoD employee lauded for improvements to Iraqi education

By Samantha L. Quigley  
American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** — Good Housekeeping magazine has recognized a Department of Defense employee for getting the Iraqi education system up and running.

Leslye Arsht’s efforts in helping to reorganize, rebuild and return the education system to the Iraqis were recognized June 15 at the Library of Congress. The magazine presented Arsht, former senior adviser to the Iraqi education minister, with a \$25,000 award as its grand prize in the Women in Government Award. Arsht currently works for the Military Severely Injured Joint Operations Center.

In accepting her award, Arsht extended the honors bestowed upon her to the Iraqi people. “I accept this award for all the Iraqis who told me that before Saddam [Hussein], Iraqi Muslims, Christians and Jews lived together as friends and neighbors,” she said, “and they wanted that Iraq back.

“I was really very pleased and, I must say,

a little surprised to have been chosen,” she said. “It gives me an opportunity now that I really haven’t had to talk about what an amazing experience it was in Iraq and how important our work there, as Americans, has been.”

Rebuilding the education system was not an easy task for Arsht and the team she worked with. The education ministry was in shambles, she said, describing it as “functioning, but crippled.”

Under Saddam’s regime, the education system had been a jobs program, she said. It was an extension of the Ba’athist party. This resulted in the top 50 leaders being removed. Those 50, she said, were the decision makers.

“So what you had left was about 1,500 career government workers,” Arsht said. “They’d never worked anywhere else, ... and they were wary and confused and worried, very hesitant. I think that was the biggest



Leslye Arsht

personal obstacle for us to get over — winning the trust of the people [and convincing them] that we really did want to help them re-determine what they wanted their Education Ministry to be.”

The education system was the best in the Arab Middle East until the 1980s, Arsht said. Under Saddam’s regime, it lost its connection to the outside world and any support for additional training, she said.

The ministry and its educators had many big decisions to make. Everything was on the table, from the length of the school day and week to the curriculum and how to handle religion in the schools. The longer she was there, Arsht said, she realized there was not going to be separation of church and state the way there is in America.

“The [planners] wanted to teach tolerance and national unity as part of the message of

school,” Arsht said. “They wanted understanding between people. So what we hope for them, and what I think what they hope for themselves, is that they recognize the role that religion plays in their society and that what they really want is a more tolerant appreciation of other people when they share a different faith.”

While in Iraq from July 2003 to April 2004, Arsht participated in rebuilding 2,300 Iraqi schools, and training 3,000 supervisors and 32,000 teachers. This was in addition to working with the education minister to help reorganize the ministry. During her stay in Iraq, textbooks were also reprinted without Ba’athist propaganda and odes to Saddam.

Even with all of these efforts under way, it was only after meeting with tribal leaders near Balad, though, that the need for American assistance in Iraq was cemented in her mind.

Arsht and the team had been invited to a tribal village north of Baghdad in the deeply

# Ukraine to remain in Coalition until Iraq mission accomplished

By Maj. Gen. Petro Haraschuk  
Ukraine Air Force

**AL KUT, Iraq** — More than 100 days ago Ukraine President, Victor Yushenko, reaffirmed in Brussels his country's desire to integrate into NATO and other European and world structures.

The notorious "multi-vector policy" of the former Ukrainian government has been left behind. On behalf of the new Ukrainian government the foreign minister of Ukraine, Borys Tarasyuk, said the days when Ukrainian officials reported different intentions in Washington, Brussels and Moscow are gone. By now there is no other aim for Ukraine than to move towards Euro-integration in both domestic and foreign policy.

Back in Kyiv, political and military officials of the country warmly appreciated the line of a new Ukrainian government. Head of the Supreme Council of Ukraine, Volodymyr Lytvyn, has offered full congressional support for joining NATO and the EU. But rather than initial integration, people of Ukraine are interested in implementation of common democratic values in the country. The widespread fight

against corruption in Ukraine meets resistance from the former regime "elites" from time to time, but the Ukrainian people who once surprised the world with their firm will, will not let the society return to how things were.

On the path to EU, Ukraine developed a basic action plan for the year, which President Yushenko outlined following his speech in the European parliament in Strasbourg. Yushenko said key provisions of the plan are to obtain a market economy nation status in the first half of the current year; to hold talks and to complete technical procedures for Ukraine's entrance in World Trade Organization by November; to begin consultations on setting up a free trade zone between Ukraine and the EU; to sign agreements on a simplified visa regime; and to conform Ukrainian border and customs procedures with EU standards.

The initiatives of the new Ukrainian government were widely supported by the world community of nations. Ukraine appreciates understanding of its aspiration by all European leaders and U.S. President George Bush, who has signaled his country's desire to see Ukraine in NATO and in the European community.

For Ukraine, striving for democratic values also means accelerating achieving its ultimate aim in Iraq — training Iraqi troops to replace the Ukrainian peacekeeping contingent. By mid-May Ukrainian military instructors manned and trained two infantry battalions for Iraqi Armed Forces' 27th Infantry Brigade — more than 1,000 Iraqi Soldiers — and about 350 personnel, who already augment the Iraqi

3rd Frontier Guard Division.

That let Ukraine downsize the peacekeeping contingent since its last rotation in April. Now 864 Soldiers of the 81st Detached Tactical Group, and 41 military advisors who serve in multinational headquarters of different military organizations, represent Ukraine in Iraq.

The 81st DTG includes administration staff, four air mobile, one reconnaissance and one military police companies, a mortar battery and engineering and chemical warfare platoons. Administration additionally includes units for government institutions' support and military assistance, and two officers for religious issues. Apart from patrolling, cargo escort and camp defense, activity of the 81st DTG will be

focused on enhancing training for Iraqi troops. As Ukraine reduces its peacekeeping contingent, coordinating this planning with other Coalition members, first of all Poland and the United States, it will remain part of the Coalition until the mission in Iraq is accomplished.

In his first speech to the local population — Ukrainian peacekeeping contingent is located in Al Kut, Province of Wazit — Commander of 81st DTG, Maj. Gen. Serhii

Goroshnikov, thanked

personnel of the recently rotated 7th Detached Mechanized Brigade for their contribution in maintaining peace and stability in the region.

The 7th DMB of about 1,500 personnel and 370 military vehicles commenced fulfilling its tasks in Iraq Sept. 22, 2004. During more than six months in Wazit its Soldiers carried out 800 convoys and 4,500 patrols. Each military driver covered about 6,250 miles of Iraqi roads. In all, vehicles of 7th DMB covered more than 1.25 million miles.

Additionally, 47 persons suspected of participation in terrorist activity were detained and passed to local law enforcement organizations. A significant amount of weapons and ammunitions were confiscated. Acting together in cooperation with a Kazakhstan field engineering detachment, which was included in structure of 7th DMB, Ukrainian Soldiers defused and destroyed more than 80,000 items of ammunition and unexploded ordnance.

The 7th Brigade Civil-Military Cooperation detachment developed and completed more than 100 significant civilian projects, at a cost of more than \$3.7 million. Ukrainian Soldiers helped Iraqis repair and refurbish schools, hospitals and monuments; restore water-supply lines and sewer systems, supplied the local population with drinking water and provided local government organizations with furniture and office equipment. Also, Ukrainian military doctors from the brigade medical company treated more than 5,500 patients.

At the same time it must be remembered that nine Ukrainian Soldiers of 7th DMB lost their lives, which extends Ukrainian losses in Iraq to 18 personnel.



Courtesy photo

**Maj. Gen. Petro Haraschuk, senior national representative of Ukrainian Armed Forces at U.S. Central Command's Coalition Coordination Center, explains to CENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid the strategy of Ukrainian peacekeeping activity in Iraq.**

## Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries serving with MNF-Iraq



### Ukraine

Local name: *Ukrayina*

Ukraine is located in Eastern Europe and bordering the Black Sea, Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Belarus and Russia. Size-wise, it is slightly smaller than Texas. Almost 47.5 million people live here and speak Ukrainian, the official language. However, some Russian is spoken throughout various regions. Ukraine has a republic government and although it is not a member of NATO, it is a member of NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

Ukraine is full of history and culture. Kiev, the capital, was founded in the 5th century as the hub for Ukraine, Russia and Belarus — all three descending from the Slavic super-state Kievan Rus in the 9th to the 11th centuries. Kiev's biggest attraction is the St. Sophia Cathedral, which contains amazing mosaics and frescoes and is the city's oldest standing church. The geologically breathtaking Kamyanets-Podilsky, which was built around the 11th century, is one of the oldest Ukrainian towns and is a rock island carved by a sharp loop in the Smotrych River. A gorgeous nine-towered stone fortress dating back to the 16th century sits at one end of a bridge that connects the town to the mainland. Odessa is home to the famous 19th century Opera & Ballet Theatre, which is renowned for its mixture of Baroque and Renaissance architecture.

Ukraine holds rank in the food world, having several world-renowned dishes recognized distinctly as Ukrainian. One of these flavorful foods is borsch, a vegetable soup made from a rich meat stock with beets as the main ingredient. It can have as many as 20 ingredients, varying by region, and is usually served with pampushki, soft bread rolls dipped in savory crushed garlic and oil. Another famous Ukrainian dish is varenyky — dumplings, which depending on the stuffing, are served as an entrée, appetizer, in soup or as a dessert. The most common varenyky stuffing is mashed potatoes with caramelized onions or cheese. Other popular foods include deruny, potato pancakes, and holubsti, cabbage rolls stuffed with meat.

Delicious food is not the only thing that makes Ukraine world-renowned; several world-famous people claim Ukrainian heritage. Sergey Korolev, inventor of the Sputnik, which was the first satellite sent into space, was born and lived in Ukraine. Igor Sikorsky, also Ukrainian born and raised, invented the first successful helicopter around 1910. Actress Milla Jovovich, who starred in "Joan of Arc" and "The Fifth Element" was born in Ukraine and later moved to America.

Ukraine — yet another piece of the Multi-National Force - Iraq puzzle, dedicated to rebuilding Iraq.



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# All-in-one Liberty Wonderland opens in IZ

Story and photos by  
Spc. Ferdinand Thomas  
Scimitar Staff

**INTERNATIONAL ZONE, BAGHDAD, Iraq** — Swimming, working out and then watching the big game with friends in a relaxing environment can equal a fun time for people in a combat zone. The Morale Welfare and Recreation department of Kellogg Brown and Root has been working for the last few months to bring International Zone personnel an MWR facility of that stature, which is now here.

The newly renovated MWR compound called Liberty Pool, which had its grand opening Wednesday, has opened to provide more MWR activities and facilities in the IZ.

“We have a lot to offer here and we would like to accommodate anyone the best we can that comes here. This is going to be the place to be in Baghdad. We have everything,” said Megan Bachman, KBR MWR technician.

Liberty Pool has definitely moved onto its own playing field. No other MWR facility except “Freedom Rest” is more equipped in the IZ than Liberty. The compound has two pools, one of which is shaded



by a 30 foot canopy tarp. Outfitted with a diving board and two water slides, the pools are the main attractions. Liberty also has a multipurpose room, which can be used for instructional classes, small parties and physical training. Other fitness activities go on in the weight room, which is equipped with a plethora of weight sets and treadmills. Liberty also has a basketball court, table tennis, pool tables and foosball outside.

Along with the obvious attractions, Liberty has a rooftop for more relaxation. One side is for watching movies and the other side is an open bar. At this time, neither area is open for use, but MWR staff is working to change that. Once the bar is open, patrons will have to bring their own food and beverages. MWR does not offer catering services, its staff said. All Department of Defense card holders and

United Nations personnel can enter and enjoy the pleasures of Liberty Pool free of charge, Bachman said.

Besides the activities, catering to military and civilians here has been high priority. Liberty is

equipped with large cubbyholes to store body armor and other bulky equipment. The pool compound also has locker rooms for men and women. Locker rooms are equipped with the



Above and left, service members and civilians indulge in the refreshing water on a hot Baghdad day at the IZ Liberty pool.

necessary facilities including showers.

“The area is very big, and it caters to the individuals who want to just chill out,” Bachman said. “People come in here every day just because it is nice and quiet. They can take the Baghdad out of Baghdad. People really enjoy that stress relief.”

Marine Cpl. Jose Garcia, deployed here with the Marine Forces Reserve, said an MWR facility like this has been long overdue. “I love the water. It helps me relieve my everyday stress. I really like this place, and I recommend it to all of my buddies.”

Those feelings Garcia displayed seemed to be a reflection of the attitude for most of the

others who visit the facility, said Allen L. Morrison, KBR MWR technician. Those positive attitudes should help the MWR staff reach the maximum number of people they have anticipated coming to Liberty Pool.

“Every day that we are open, we tack on an extra 50 to 100 people. We are hoping to have 1,200 to 1,300 people here per day utilizing Liberty Pool,” Morrison said.

Liberty’s MWR team has high expectations for the compound, he said. Morrison added that if they got a smile from one person per day, it would be worth all the hard work they have put into Liberty Pool. “Keeping the client happy is what we want to do,” he said.

## TF 1/163 Infantry Soldiers train Iraqi Army in hand-to-hand combat techniques

By 116th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

**FOB WARRIOR, Iraq** — Soldiers from the 116th Brigade Combat Team’s Task Force 1-163 Infantry are bringing their skill to bear to train Iraqi Security Forces as they prepare them to take over security operations in Iraq.

The war in Iraq has evolved from mostly tracking and capturing terrorists to a multi-faced mission that includes training the Iraqi Army and police forces. As the Army fulfills its expanded mission, members of National Guard units are often finding themselves in unique positions to draw on their civilian skills to help with this process.

Sgt. Scott Brady and Sgt. Mike Baker, both of TF 1-163 Infantry, are two such Soldiers. Drawing on skills and experiences from their civilian lives, they have volunteered to help teach Iraqi forces hand-to-hand combat and defensive tactics procedures.

“The three-day class was an introductory course designed to give the Soldiers a set of basic skills they can use right away on the streets of their cities and towns,” said Brady.

Both Brady and Baker are trained martial artists who jumped at the chance when superior officers mentioned a desire to see the local security forces receive some kind of defensive training.

“I have trained with quite a few police officers back in Montana, where we’re from,” Brady said. “Almost every one of them has a story about how the defensive tactics they

learned in the academy helped to save them when the going got tough. We wanted these guys to have some of those same capabilities.”

There were a total of 21 Soldiers in the first group who spent two hours a day for three days working primarily on defensive techniques in two-man teams.

According to Brady, this course offered a welcome break for the Soldiers from the more traditional classes on basic marksmanship, map reading and first aid skills that all Iraqi Security Forces are going through.



Courtesy photo

**Sgt. Scott Brady, a Task Force 1/163 Infantry’s headquarters company Soldier, gives one-on-one instruction to an Iraqi Army Soldier during a recent defensive tactics class at FOB McHenry, Iraq.**

“We try to keep the classes fun,” said Baker. “It helps keep everyone safe, and also gives these guys a chance to move around a little bit and build some camaraderie with each other. Nothing builds trust like giving your body over to your buddy to use as a training tool.”

Brady and some of his Iraqi counterparts have ended up with scrapes on their faces and black eyes while practicing the procedures. Brady said, “This emphasizes to the students just how powerful some of these techniques can be.”

He said students and instructors seemed pleased with the classes. “It gives us another opportunity to interact with our Iraqi Security Forces counterparts. This is training all of them can use.”

The 116th BCT took over responsibility for combat operations in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyah Provinces in February. Besides developing Iraqi Security Forces, the unit is supporting Iraq’s elected leaders, helping jump-start economic development and assisting Iraqis with communications.

## Award

from Page 14

traditional Shiia-dominated area. It was a dangerous trip, but the payoff was huge.

“[What] this tribal community ... had invited us here for was to give a petition to the minister asking that Saddam’s rules about girls going to school from the middle grades up be changed,” Arsht said. “They had a mixed primary school, ... [but] because they didn’t have a separate building, girls couldn’t go to school from the ninth grade on.”

Local leaders were seeking a mixed-gender middle school that started at the 7th grade.

“It was the beginning, for me, of understanding why Iraqis wanted self-government and why our being there was so important,” she said. “They want their children to be educated to compete in the world even though they don’t really know what that competition requires today. They want their children to be part of it, and education is the very foundation of that, not just for Iraqis, but for all countries.”

As the grand prize winner of the 2005 Good Housekeeping Women in Government Award, Arsht is taking “about half” of the \$25,000 award to establish a scholarship for an Iraqi student currently enrolled in Franklin Pierce College in New Hampshire. The scholarship will cover what the student’s scholarship from the college doesn’t: room and board, books and fees.

Arsht spoke with officials at the college, and succeeded in making the scholarship permanent. It will supplement a full-tuition scholarship at Franklin Pierce for a student from a newly freed country every year.

The other major part of the award will go to “StandardsWorks,” an organization that Arsht helped found. StandardsWorks works in America to help states, districts and schools improve student achievement and engage parents in quality education for their children.