

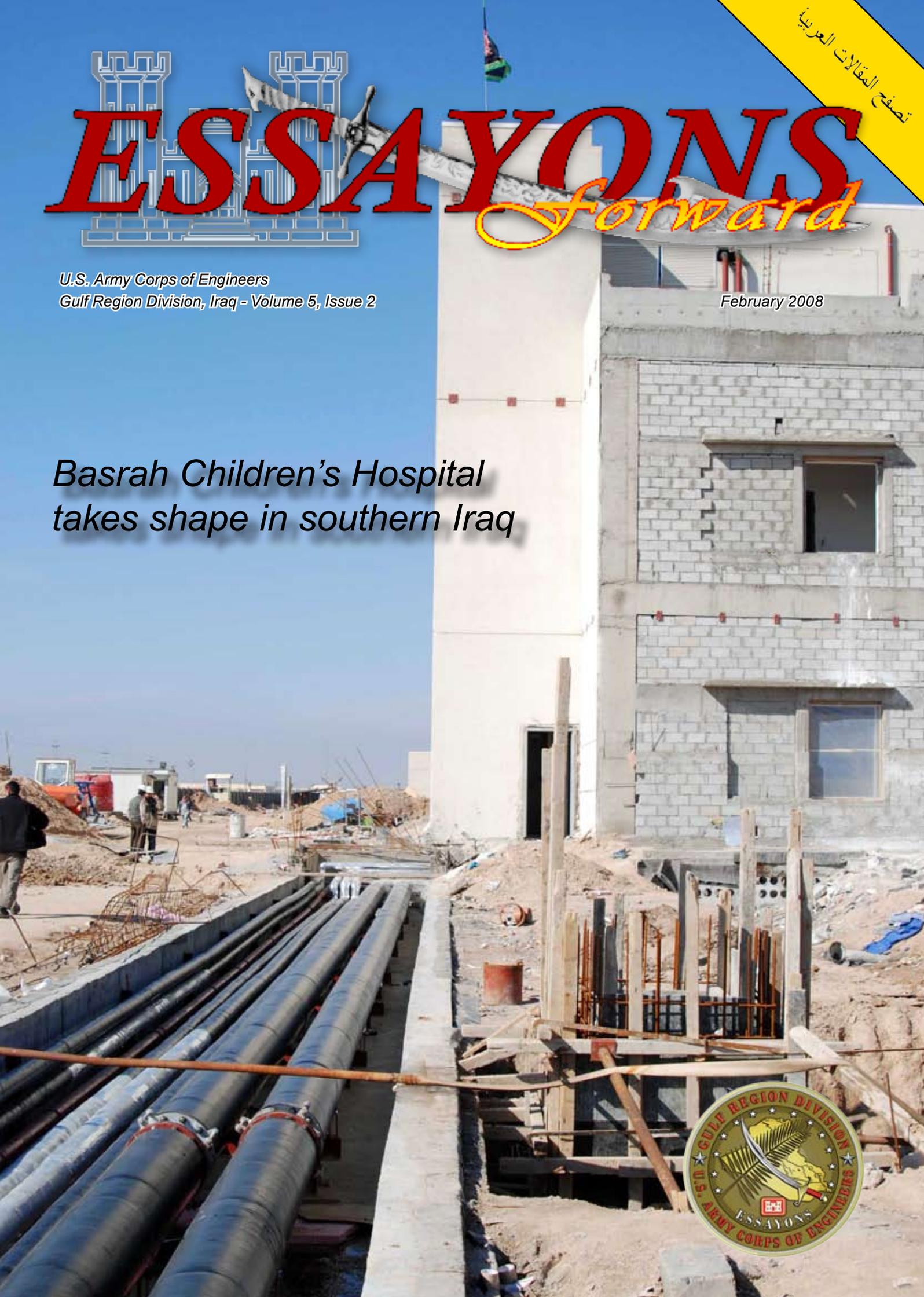
ESSAYONS

Forward

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Gulf Region Division, Iraq - Volume 5, Issue 2

February 2008

*Basrah Children's Hospital
takes shape in southern Iraq*



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INSIDE this issue

February 2008 Volume 5, Issue 2

<i>Commander's Commentary</i>	3
<i>Command Sgt. Maj. Message</i>	3
<i>Commentary: Iraqi city councils should look to CERP example</i>	4
<i>Engineers improve Basrah public works</i>	5
<i>Power projects turned over in the south</i>	6
<i>Maysan feeder lines benefit thousands</i>	7
<i>Votech rehabilitation completed</i>	7
<i>Basrah courthouse project update</i>	8
<i>Sulaymaniyah substations use new technology</i>	9
<i>Reconstruction projects map</i>	10
<i>Gulf Region Division celebrates 4th Anniversary</i>	11
<i>Kamaliya sewer project cleaning up the streets</i>	12
<i>Sadr City hospital renovation</i>	13
<i>Qadisiyah water projects</i>	14
<i>Future employment aim of projects</i>	15
<i>Wassit province road and water projects</i>	16
<i>PHC complete in Babil province</i>	17
<i>Basrah Children's Hospital</i>	18
<i>Hailing newcomers</i>	20

On the cover:



Utility and chiller connections are laid out for the Basrah Children's Hospital.

USACE photo by Mohammed Aliwi

SNAPSHOT



Col. Steve Hill, commander of the Gulf Region South district, takes a moment out recently with a group of boys in rural Wassit province during a visit of projects in the area. For more on work there, see page 16.

USACE photo by John Connor

Commander's Commentary

Districts, Division shine for Chief

The Gulf Region Division was honored recently to host the Chief of Engineers for his visit that coincided with this organization's 4th Anniversary. It was Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp's second visit to Iraq since taking command of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which to me speaks volumes to the personal importance he places on facilitating our continued success here.

It was a delight to take the Chief to have a firsthand look at some of our projects. These visits are an opportunity not only to show our leadership how well our people are doing out in the districts, but to also make key decision makers aware of the difficulties we face that they may be able to help alleviate.

It is never easy put together a productive visit within the time constraints that travel and the Chief's demanding schedule present, but the GRD team, here at the headquarters and in our districts, did an excellent job in reacting to changes.

But even more important than seeing projects for the Chief is the opportunity these visits create for him to meet personally with our team members; the people who are making the mission successful. Lieutenant General Van Antwerp made certain we included as many chances as possible for him to meet our Iraqi Associates, civilian volunteers, contractor employees, military members and key customers.

The Chief and I have a genuine interest in your suggestions for

improvement. As I traveled with him, it was obvious that he is a believer that people are our most valuable resource. He is also our greatest cheerleader and supporter of our efforts for recruitment – as we aim to bring the right teammates on board.

We not only need people with the right skills and aptitude, but we also need people with the right stamina and attitude. As he put it, the right people in the right seat on the bus.

People like those we've had the good fortune to work with over these past four years. Volunteers who have sought the challenge of new experiences. Volunteers who have benefitted by being a part of this historic mission. Volunteers who have made a personal sacrifice for the Nation and the people of Iraq. I thank you and those who support you for your continued service.



ESSAYONS!

*Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Dorko
Gulf Region Division
Commander*

Command Sgt. Maj. Message

Focus on transition ahead

This past month, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers passed a significant milestone with the Gulf Region Division's 4th Anniversary of outstanding mission accomplishment in Iraq.

This success is the result of many people's dedication and the leadership that has kept the Division focused.

This month is an important time

to look ahead and focus on improving our delivery of quality construction on time and within budget. We must continue building capacity and assisting the Iraqi government in assuming full responsibility of their national infrastructure. I encourage everyone to read our Multi-National Force-Iraq Commanding General Letter to the troops and to the civilian work force dated 28 December 2007. This letter clearly stipulates our way ahead.

One of the immediate challenges is preparation for a major change in personnel. While a high rate of personnel transition is the norm for this command, we will be experiencing a greater than usual turnover with the unit replacement of many of our Soldiers. It takes an extra measure of preparation to maintain our operations tempo without a hitch.

In March, the dedicated Soldiers of the 34th Engineer Brigade, North Dakota Army National Guard will be packing up their duffle bags for the long, bittersweet journey home.

We thank them for their honorable, selfless and dedicated service in "marching to the sound of the guns" to serve the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and MNF-I in this historic reconstruction mission.

These Soldiers have represented their unit, the Army and our great Nation proudly while assisting the people of Iraq. They have made many, many friends here.

So as they prepare for their departure, they are preparing for a smooth transition with their replacements. Much thought and attention has been given to providing the incoming unit with details on policy and procedure, battle rhythm and what has worked best for the 34th in their experience.

Soon we will welcome our newest team members from the 412th Engineer Command, U.S. Army Reserves, headquartered in Vicksburg, Miss. Many of these fine engineer Soldiers are from different parts of the States, but all have the requisite skills and the necessary training. They are absolutely ready to continue in the reconstruction mission.

Our part is to do all we can to help them "hit their stride" immediately upon arrival. I know each of you will welcome them as a valuable part of the GRD team.

ESSAYONS!

*Army Strong!!
Command Sgt. Maj. Eloy Alcivar
Gulf Region Division*

Commander's Emergency Response Program example for Iraqi city councils, officials

COMMENTARY BY J.J. ANAJAR
GULF REGION DIVISION

The Commander's Emergency Response Program has had immediate, positive impact throughout Iraq. A compliment to the much larger multi-billion dollar infrastructure projects that are in the purview of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CERP projects, undertaken by field unit commanders via local contracts or through USACE, provide much needed improvements for communities. When field commanders learn from local officials that a certain area is in urgent need of facilities, such as water compact units, sewage pumps, health centers or school renovations, they can immediately embark on executing the required projects since they have the authority and the money. All these projects are executed within the limited budget allocated to the CERP.

While individual projects under CERP may not always be large, the program is generous. For example, since 2004, CERP has budgeted \$750 million for projects in Baghdad. For the once restive Anbar province, \$287 million has been budgeted. Still one of the most heated areas in Iraq, Diyala province has \$105 million budgeted.

Talking about the projects executed through CERP throughout Iraq would take more space than I have for my commentary. Let me focus on this essential point: it is critical and imperative for the officials at city councils to look carefully at the example of the CERP. The urgency with which field commanders respond when they hear from local officials about a need is exemplary.

Too often the officials who have been elected to city councils do nothing but make promises.

If there is not enough money allocated by the central government to their areas, all they have to do is inform the field commanders of the need of the people of the districts they represent. However, even this little effort some officials have not made.

Recently, Al Hurra correspondents Maytham A Shibani and Haidar Al Badri have reported on three areas in three different provinces that suffering from the absence of essential facilities

after four years of the emergence of democracy in Iraq.

Five kilometers from the Baghdad Amanat boundaries lies a district called Al Hameediya with a population of 500,000. These people still suffer from a shortage of drinking water. There is no health center. It has only one school with a muddy playground.

In Babil province, the village called Al Hmisaniyah suffers from the absence of electricity, no sewage system, no source of drinking water, except that drawn from a slow flowing river. The people of the village and the cattle, dogs, goats and sheep share this dreary river. School children have to walk for about 12 kilometers to reach a school in an adjacent district.

In a village in A Shamiya district, about 30 kilometers away from Al Diwanya, people suffered much from the neglect of tyrant regime. They were so happy when they heard of its collapse. They thought the government of the new democratic Iraq would compensate them for the facilities they missed during the old era. They covered a long distance to go the polling stations to vote for the candidates who promised them they would bring facilities to them.

Unfortunately, the dreams of the poor people did not come true. Their candidates did not keep their promises once they won election.

In that village, the patience of the 170 or so boys and the girls never gives out. They have not lost hope in good people who, once they hear about their suffering, will do everything they can for them in providing potable water, electrical, access to health care and a new school.

For the children, a new school is desperately needed for the existing one consists of seven class rooms; five built of mud and the others are tents. When it rains, the water flows inside. The students shiver from the cold.

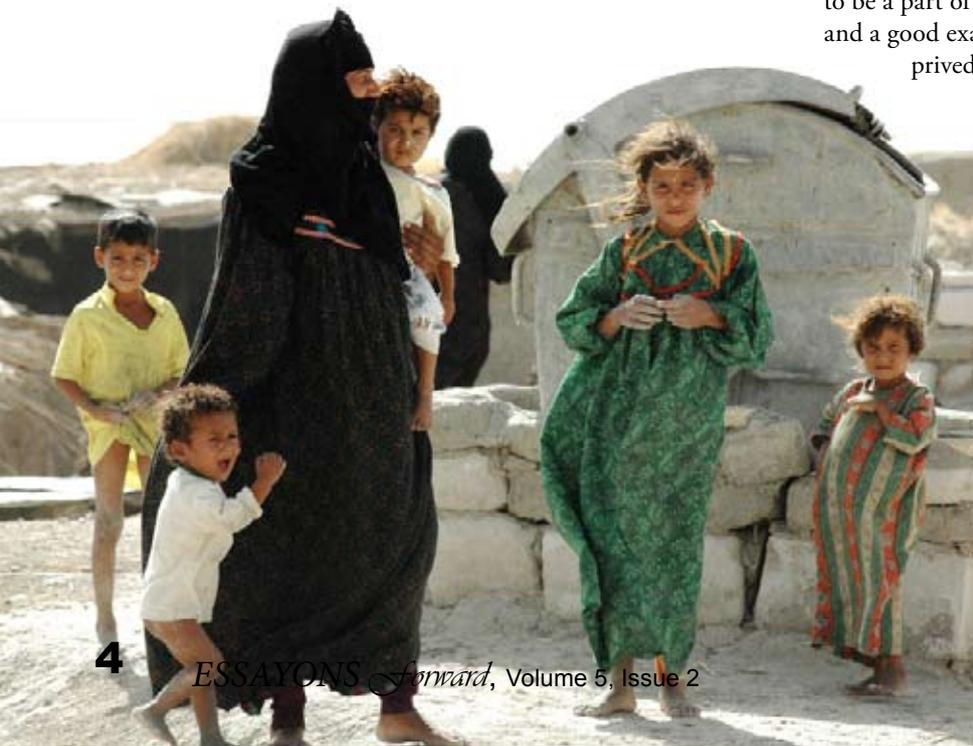
Despite all this deprivation, you find the students keep attending classes every morning. They insist on defeating all the circumstances that might thwart their efforts to pursue their study to be doctors, teachers or engineers. Bettering themselves to rebuild their country and obliterate all the wicked efforts that attempt to derail the reconstruction mission in Iraq. They want to be a part of building Iraq to become a prosperous country and a good example for the people of the other countries deprived of democracy.

CERP exists to meet these urgent needs, but the ones who can contact a field commander are the officials at the city councils in Babil and other provinces, the representative of the people elected them.

The city council members and other senior officials in the government need to know that what Iraqis want is serving democracy, not a ruling democracy.

They want to enjoy basic services that they were deprived of under the fallen regime. They need to taste change happening in their lives; they need to see action from the democracy that many people risked and sacrifice themselves to achieve.

Iraqis need to pick the fruits of democracy which are freedom, prosperity and fairness.



USACE photo by B.J. Weiner

مهندسوا الجيش الامريكي يقومون بتحسين الاعمال العامة في مدينة البصرة

وبعد انتقال السلطة الامنية رسمياً من القوات البريطانية في محافظة البصرة الى الجيش العراقي في كانون الاول 2007 . اكتسب حي المعقل وهيئات الشرطة العراقية المحيطة به أهمية عالية من خلال ادامة السيطرة الامنية في المدينة . أن عملية إعادة تأهيل الطرق في هذه المنطقة يعتبر من المهام الايجابية والذي لقي الدعم الكامل من قبل المواطنين المحليين . فقد قال مواطن عراقي يسكن في حي المعقل " اني سعيد جداً لرؤية اعمال البناء في هذه الشوارع والتي عانت من الاهمال لاكثر من 20 عاماً . أن السكان هنا يقدرون الاعمال التي تحدث في مناطقهم " كما قال جوس .

وقد قال المهندس علاء الذي يعمل مهندساً في فيلق المهندسين الامريكي - فرقة منطقة الخليج- المنطقة الجنوبية / مكتب البصرة أن مشروع إعادة تأهيل شوارع المعقل سوف يتطلب إضافة خمسة سنتيمترات من الاسفلت على الطرق التي يبلغ سمها 10 سم . كما وقام المقاول المنفذ للمشروع بتجهيز كافة المعدات ومتطلبات العمل من الايدي العاملة والمواد الاولية الضرورية لتبليط 10,700 متر من الشوارع المبطنة بمادة الاسفلت في حي المعقل . و قال المهندس جوس ان المشروع الذي تبلغ كلفته 1,7 \$ مليون دولار ، سيوفر بشكل مباشر او غير مباشر فرص عمل للعديد من اهالي البصرة . و اضاف جوس " ان حي المعقل يقع بالقرب من العديد من مؤسسات قوات الامن العراقي والتي تتضمن فندق شط العرب وهو من المؤسسات المهمة للجيش العراقي في مدينة البصرة ، و سجن البصرة ومقرات شرطة البصرة المختلفة .

أ- البحراني
فرقة منطقة الخليج - المنطقة الجنوبية
البصرة ، العراق - يقوم مهندسوا الجيش الامريكي بتنفيذ الاعمال العامة للنهوض بمدينة البصرة ، وتتضمن هذه الاعمال ترميم الشوارع واكمال اعمال الصرف الصحي .
وقد بدأ فيلق المهندسين الامريكي العمل بمشروع تبليط وصيانة مجاري البصرة في شهر تشرين الثاني 2007 ، حسب مقاله فيرديناند جوس مهندس المشاريع في فيلق المهندسين الامريكي - فرقة منطقة الخليج - المنطقة الجنوبية .
يهدف المشروع الجديد الى الانتهاء من تبليط وأكساء العديد من شوارع حي المعقل الذي يقع في الجزء الشمالي من مدينة البصرة و يتضمن المشروع ايضا اكمال نصب شبكة الصرف الصحي واكمال اعمال البناء لسياج بطول 20 متر وارتفاع 2 قدم اضافة الى اصلاح قسم من انابيب الصرف الصحي التي تم تدميرها في عام 2006 .

Army engineers improve Basrah public works

BY A. AL BHARANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A rmy engineers are conducting a public works upgrade in the city of Basrah, repairing streets and completing unfinished sewer work. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers started work on a Basrah pavement and sewer project in November 2007, said Ferdinand Guese, project engineer with the USACE Gulf Region South district.

The new project aims to complete the paving of various streets in Al-Maqil, a neighborhood in the northern part of Basrah city, Guese said. It also entails completing work on an unfinished sewer construction project and repairing a section of drainage pipe that was damaged during construction of the Basrah sewers in 2006.

Alaa, a project engineer with the Basrah Area Office, said the Al-Maqil road repair project will entail putting a five-centimeter overlay over the existing 10 centimeter pavement on the roads. "The contractor supplies all the equipment, labor and materials necessary to pave 10,700 linear meters of street with asphalt in Al-Maqil neighborhood," he said.

Guese said the \$1.7 million project will directly and indirectly provide jobs to more than 75 Iraqis in Basrah.

"Al-Maqil district...is in close proximity to many Iraqi Security Forces facilities that include the Shat Al-Arab Hotel, an important Iraqi Army facility in Basrah city, Basrah Prison, and various police stations," Guese said.

"After the turnover of security control of Basrah Province from the British to the Iraqi Army in December 2007, Al-Maqil and its surrounding ISF facilities gained increased prominence in maintaining control of the area," he said. The road rehabilitation in this area is seen as a very positive thing and has the full support of the immediate local population, he added.

An Iraqi in Al-Maqil neighborhood said, "I'm very happy to see the construction work on these streets which have been neglected more than 20 years. The residents here highly appreciate the improvements that have taken place in their neighborhood."



USACE photos



Workmen complete a 132kV substation that improves reliability and safety for the electrical distribution network supplying power to a population of approximately 80,000 people in the region.

Power projects completed, turned over

STORY & PHOTOS BY A. AL BHARANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Army engineers continued their mission of helping the Government of Iraq jump start its electrical infrastructure by completing three essential power projects in the Gulf Region South district.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recently turned the three 132kV electrical substations over to Iraqi authorities in the Basrah province, according to Tom Eidson, head of engineering and construction at GRS.

The Iraqi people currently are enjoying more electricity than at any time in the past, Eidson said. As more and more electrical projects come to completion, he said, the Iraqi people have more electrical power available for greater lengths of time and, thus, enjoy a higher standard of living.

"These 132kV substation facilities (Al-Toba, Al-Hammar and Al-Gurnah) help correct distribution problems in the system by relieving overload on transformers and switchgears," said Engineer Firas, the project engineer with the Basrah Area Office.

Eidson said the power is not only being

made available for personal use, but also for commercial and industrial use, which will strengthen and broaden the economic foundation of Iraq.

"Al-Toba 132kV substation project will provide the electricity to support the Toba tank oil transfer and storage facility, which is the backbone of the oil conveyance system for the Rumayla oil field," Eidson said. "The economy of Iraq is based largely on revenues from the marketing of its oil products. This facility is critical to getting Iraq oil to the world oil market."

The rehabilitation project at Al-Hammar 132kV substation is a critical element of the Al-Hammar and Hammar-Mishrif gas/oil separation facilities and will help provide the Basrah International Airport and the Sweet Water Facility with a more reliable and secure transmission network, Firas said.

Al-Gurnah 132kV substation project will improve reliability and safety standards for the electrical distribution network, reduce electrical outages, and supply electricity to a population of approximately 80,000 people, he added.

"Work consisted at Al-Toba and Al-Hammar substations of general

maintenance, replacement of the damaged transformers and switch gears, and cosmetic improvements," Firas said. "While the equipment used in the Al-Gurnah project includes two, 63 megavolt transformers, a building control room, a high voltage switch gear room, a protection fence and a guard house.

"All the substations were manual and using 1983 technology, but now they are computerized and using the 2005 technology," the engineer added.



Technicians work in the control room at Al-Toba 132kV substation hours before energizing the system, a joint effort between USACE and Ministry of Electricity engineers.

Maysan feeder lines benefit thousands

BY A. AL. BAHRANI
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A series of 33kV feeder line projects is among the critical jobs being undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Maysan province.

Maysan is upgrading its electrical distribution network. So far, 155 kilometers of overhead cables, 467 kilometers of underground wires, and 1,075 towers have been installed, according to Barry Stuard, resident engineer for Maysan Resident Office of the Gulf Region South district.

Stuard said four 33kV feeder line projects were completed recently and that three more 33kV feeder line projects are expected to be finished by the first quarter of next year.

“The new projects significantly and immediately benefit people in more than 25 neighborhoods in the area,” said an Iraqi project engineer with the Maysan Resident Office. He said the people in this area lack electricity, but before long, will have a dependable electrical network. Stuard said the work will connect Maysan’s seven new electrical 33kV

substations to the electrical network to help provide more electrical power to the entire province.

The projects cost \$12 million and aim to complete the power grid in Maysan, Stuard said. And once the country has the capability to produce enough power, the feeder lines and substations to the network can distribute it to the entire province.

Stuard said this huge task started with the assessment of electrical stations and condition of the feeders that connected them. He said the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity specified how they wanted the feeders; overhead or underground. Next came coordination for the installation of the new feeders with minimal interruption of the old feeders. After that, came the laborious tasks of constructing and installing overhead feeder towers, providing feeders lines and digging trenches for the underground feeders.

Stuard, who has worked for USACE for eight years, deployed from the Little Rock District, Ark., and signed up for a six-month tour. “We are helping people and all these projects benefit everyone in the area,” he said.



USACE photo

An Iraqi worker installs power cables on a transmission tower for Al Zuite 33kV overhead project.

Votech center rehab finished

BY JOHN CONNOR
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A project to rehabilitate the basic infrastructure of the Iskandiriyaha Vocational Technology Center is complete.

Thanks to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the center will be able to support the needs of more than 1,000 students, some living there full time, according to Fitsum Kebede, the engineer who handled the project for the USACE Najaf/North Babil Resident Office.

The main objective of the project was to supply materials, labor and equipment to design, upgrade and renovate water, sewage, electrical utilities and food facilities at the Iskandrariyaha Vo-tech, Kebede said.

The project, which cost more than \$600,000, included renovating and outfitting the existing food preparation and dining facility at the center, he said.

New water and sewer systems were installed, including tanks, pumps and underground piping networks, said Lt. Col. Gregory McMahan, officer-in-charge of the USACE Forat Area Office, of which the Najaf/North Babil Resident Office is part. The Forat Area Office is headquartered at Forward Operating Base Kalsu.

The work also included supply and installing new electric generators, switchgear, and automatic transfer switch, as well as providing the electrical wiring, lighting and circuitry required to support the machinery and automotive shops, and floor repairs, Kebede said.

The just-completed rehab of the facility's basic infrastructure took about three months from start to finish and was the second phase of a three-phase operation. The final phase will feature improving student living quarters by renovating seven dormitories and a theater.

The Najaf/North Babil Resident Office and the Forat Area Office are part of the Corps' Gulf Region South district, which serves the nine southern provinces of Iraq.

Kebede, who is wrapping up his tour in Iraq as a project and resident engineer with USACE, cited the Vo-tech project as one of the many projects that kept him going.

“I have seen that the reconstruction missions we are providing to the Iraqi people are essential and we are making a difference in their lives,” he said.

He also said that the Iraqi people are among “the most courteous, respectful and hospitable people” he ever has met and added that “I was honored and privileged to have the opportunity to work with them.”

محكمة شط العرب تعزز قانون الحكم المحلي في محافظة البصرة

بقلم محمد الشامي

قالت المقدم جان كارتر مديرة مشاريع القوات متعددة الجنسيات ، ان اهداف المشروع هي تأكيد تقنيات البناء وادارته وتنفيذه من قبل عمال ، ومقاولين عراقيين. اما فولتز فقد ذكر ان مشاريع عديدة اخرى ، بالاضافة الى دور العدالة ، قد قام الفيلق بتنفيذها مثل مراكز الاطفاء و مراكز الشرطة و السجون ، و النقاط و المراكز الحدودية و الثكنات العسكرية.

" مسؤوليتنا ان نتأكد بان عمل المقاول يجري حسب المواصفات المنصوص عليها في العقد " و اضاف فولتز " نحن نتابع تقدم العمل من خلال التقارير اليومية التي يقدمها المهندسون العراقيون الذين هم بمثابة اعينا واذاننا في مواقع العمل".

وقالت كارت ان العقد تضمن ايضا اعمال الكهرباء التي تتضمن نظام الانارة الكامل للبنية ، وبناء سياج خارجي و انارة امنية تتضمن الانارة في مداخل ومخارج البنية والسياس.

اما فولتز فقد قال: " عندما ينتهي العمل في هذا المشروع فانه سيساعد على تطبيق القانون وترسيخ العدالة" و اضاف " نحن هنا لكي نحدث تغييرا في حياة العراقيين ، ونساعدهم على استعادة بلدهم".

العراق--البصرة: يقوم فيلق المهندسين الامريكي ببناء دارا للعدالة لدعم القانون في محافظة البصرة ، وقد سميت محكمة شط العرب لوقوعها على ضفتي النهر. قال دان فولتز ، المهندس المقيم في مكتب البصرة ، ان المشروع تضمن بناء محكمة ذات طابقين ، ستساعد السلطات العراقية التي تفرض سيطرتها على المحافظة ، على تطبيق القانون بعد استلام الملف الامني من القوات متعددة الجنسيات .

وذكر فولتز ان كلفة مشروع شط العرب هي 1.3 مليون دولار. وقد بدأ العمل به في شهر اب من السنة الماضية ، وهو الان في طور بناء الاسس ، ومراجعة التصاميم وتحضير الموقع للبناء.

سيحتوي الموقع على حدائق ، وموقفين للسيارات ، وغرفة صيانة ، وحمامات شرقية. ومن المقرر الانتهاء من المشروع وافتتاح البنية في منتصف 2009 .

للمشروع فوائد اخرى منها توفير فرص عمل كثيرة ، الامر الذي سينعكس ايجابيا على الوضع الاقتصادي في المحافظة.

Courthouse, witness protection facility source of pride *Showpiece for Basrah province*

BY A. AL. BAHRANI

GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A courthouse and witness protection facility project is providing hundreds of jobs, as well as technical and management training for many people in this southern Iraq city.

At last count, the project was employing an average 350 local workers a day and has helped the local economy grow, according to Leo Sandoval, resident engineer with the Basrah Area Office of the Gulf Region South district of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In addition, Sandoval said, USACE has trained construction and management staff on construction processes from in-the-trenches field construction to management responsibilities for handling multi-million dollar contracts. This has enabled a number of Basrah workers to become leaders for others to follow in the process of rebuilding Iraq.

The project involves the construction of a two-story courthouse and witness protection annex in Basrah, the second

largest city in Iraq. "When completed, the installation will provide the Iraqi people with a complete courthouse and witness protection facility to assist in the justice process," Sandoval said.

The courthouse is about 85 percent complete and the witness projection annex is approximately 90 percent complete, according to the GRS Iraqi deputy resident engineer with the Basrah Area Office.

The contract is split into two contract line items, Sandoval explained. He said the first is the Main Courthouse Facility built at a cost of \$8.8 million and the second is the annex built at a cost of \$2 million for a \$10.8 million total cost for the complex. In addition, GRS has renovated three other courthouses in Basrah province and is in the process of building another courthouse costing about \$1.4 million in the Shat Al-Arab area.

The total cost of all these justice-related projects is just under \$15 million, according to Tom Eidson, head of engineering and construction for GRS. Eidson said the new courthouse and witness

protection facility in Basrah will be a source of pride and a showpiece for the entire provincial government. The Basrah province is one of the nine southern Iraq provinces in which GRS is conducting reconstruction projects.

Eidson said an effective legal system is essential to a stable social structure and a foundation of a high standard of living.

"The rule of law is something I strongly believe in and feel is crucial to the success of Iraq," Sandoval said. The witness protection annex, he said, "...will provide protection to the people of Iraq who wish to come forward in the name of justice." He said Iraq's children deserve the hope of a life of freedom from fear.

Sandoval added, "The Iraqi Minister of Justice has followed this project very closely and in fact has visited the site personally and by representation on numerous occasions to ensure that the project is proceeding without impacts. They have expressed that they are very satisfied with the construction they have seen and know that this is critical in their country's pursuit of peace and justice."

Substation boasts technology, smaller footprint

BY LUANNE FANTASIA

GULF REGION NORTH DISTRICT

More than 20,000 homes in the Sulaymaniyah province have reliable electrical service today since a new substation went live.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers turned the South Sulaymaniyah electrical substation over to the Government of Iraq on Dec. 27, 2007. When Iraq's Ministry of Energy installs three additional 132kV power lines this year, the project will service another 50,000 homes.

The gas-insulated system is new technology for the province. "It's the first time this technology has been used in the 33kV field here," said Shafqat Malik, resident engineer in the USACE Sulaymaniyah Resident Office. Unlike the more common oil- or air-insulated methods, sulfur hexafluoride gas insulates the system.

"This is the largest and most modern substation in the province," Malik said. "It brings in high voltage, acts as a distribution point, and sends out lower voltage to smaller substations."

Gas-insulated switchgear has a higher equipment cost, but requires less maintenance and saves space. Approximately 80 percent of the South Sulaymaniyah substation is indoors, with the main transformer outside. The contractor is funding follow-on training.

"There are six electrical engineers training on operation and maintenance of the 33kV GIS switchgear in Germany now,"



In a gas-insulated system, or GIS, sulfur hexafluoride gas is used to insulate busbars that bridge connections between currents and switchgear that energizes and de-energizes circuits. Because the system saves space, 80 percent of the South Sulaymaniyah substation is indoors.

Malik said. The European training facility is a model of the system, where power can be switched off and on; which is normally not possible in other types of working substations.

The \$28 million project was funded through the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund and currently employs 95 Iraqi workers daily.

محطة كهرباء ذات تكنولوجيا حديثة في السليمانية.....

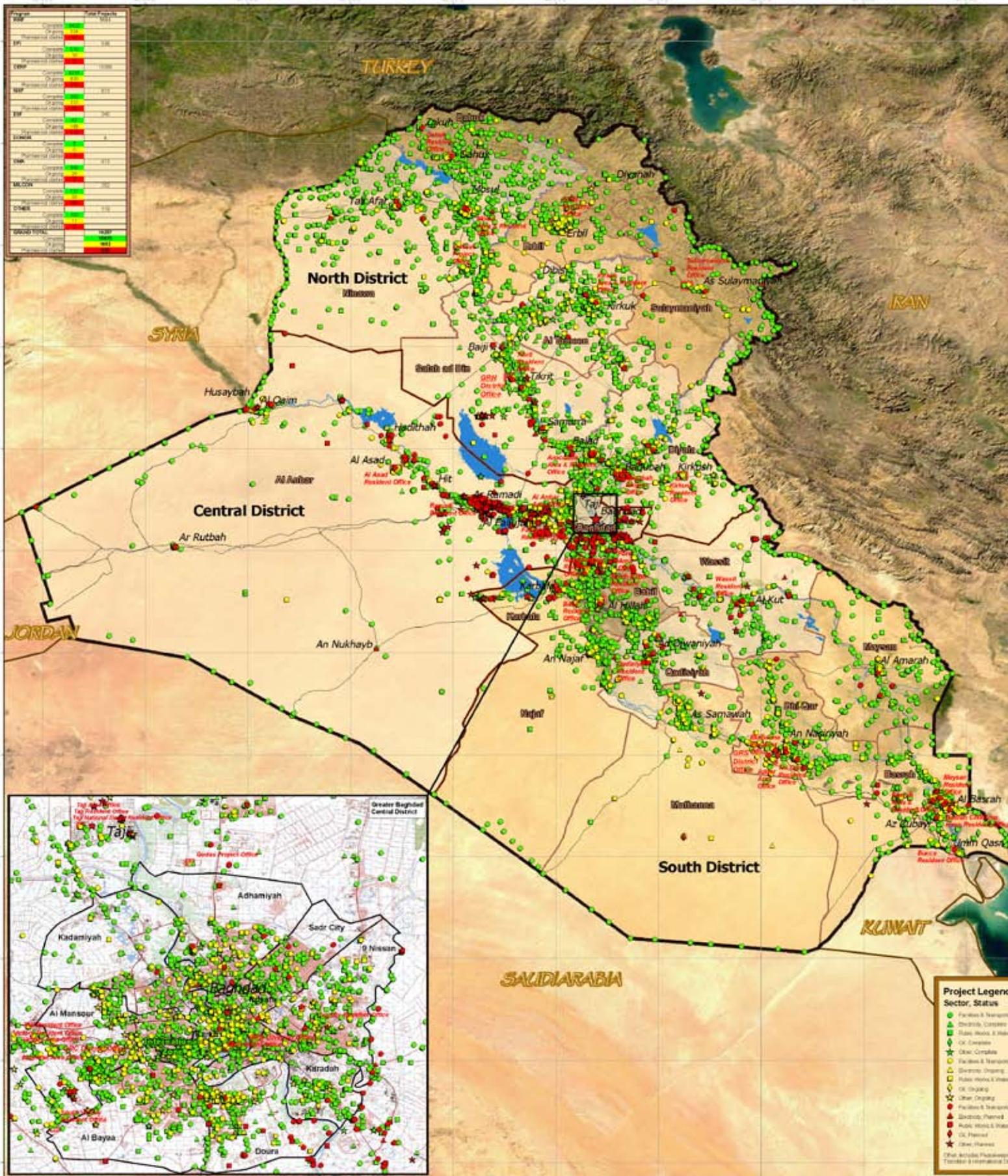
ترجمة عبد الهادي النجار

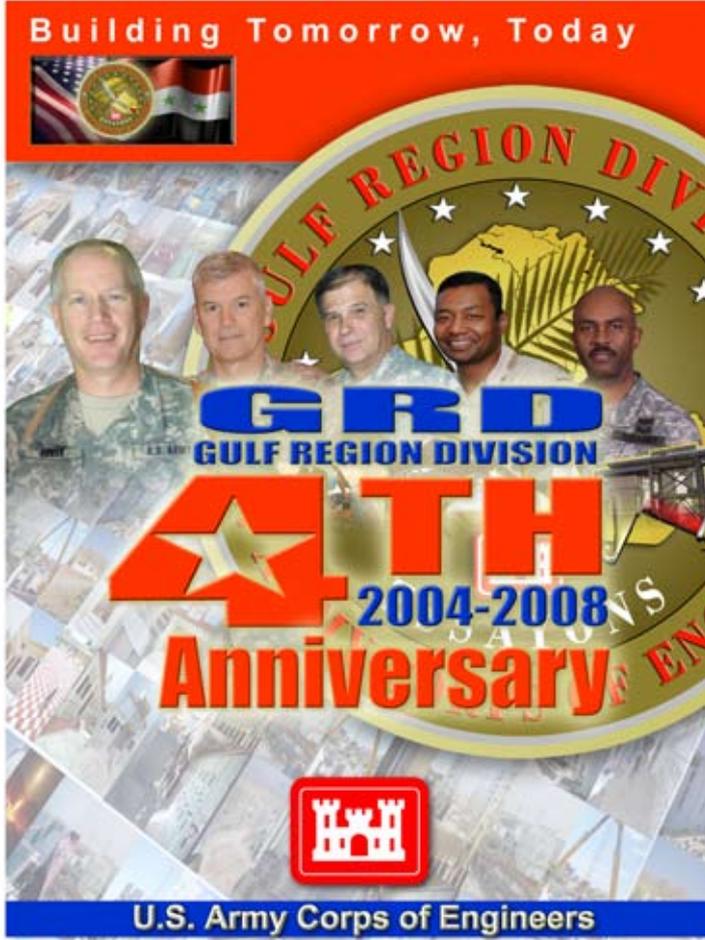
فولتيات واطنة الى المحطات الاصغر".
اما جهاز عزل الغاز المستخدم في تشغيل
المحطة يعتبر من المعدات ذات الكلفة العالية الا
انه يتطلب اقامة ومساحة اقل. ويعتبر حوالي
80% من محطة السليمانية في الداخل بينما
الجزء الرئيس للمحولة يقع في الخارج .
ويقوم المقاول بتمويل عملية التدريب، حيث قال
المهندس ان هناك 6 مهندسين يتدربون على
عملية تشغيل وادامة المحطة في المانيا الان. ان
محطات التدريب في اوربا تعتبر نموذجا لهذا
النظام حيث ان اسلوب اطفاء وتشغيل المحطة
يختلف عما هو موجود في المحطات الكهربائية
العاملة حاليا. وتبلغ كلفة المشروع الذي يقوم
صندوق دعم اعمار العراق بتمويله 28 مليون
دولار. ويعمل فيه 95 عاملا عراقيا بضمنهم
50 فردا لحماية المشروع.

يتمتع الان اكثر من 20 ألف بيت في السليمانية
بالكهرباء منذ بدأ تشغيل المحطة الثانية الجديدة في
الشهر الماضي. وقد قام فبلق المهندسين الامريكي الذي
قام بانشاء المحطة بتسليمها للحكومة العراقية في 27
كانون الاول الماضي. وبعد ان قامت وزارة الكهرباء
بنصب ثلاثة خطوط اضافية لنقل الطاقة بقدرة 132
كيلو فولت سيمكن ذلك 50 ألف بيت اخرى من
الاستفادة من هذا المشروع.

وقد افاد المهندس المقيم في مكتب الفيلق في
السليمانية ، شوكت مالك " انها المرة الاولى التي يتم
فيها تشغيل محطات بقدرة 33 كيلو فولت في
السليمانية بواسطة الغاز ، انها تكنولوجيا حديثة تستخدم
لاول مرة على عكس ما كان يستخدم في السابق من
الوقود الاعتيادي". و اضاف مالك " انها المحطة الاكبر
والاحدث في المحافظة ، حيث ستوفر تلك المحطة
فولتية عالية ثم تعمل كنقطة توزيع تقوم بارسال

Iraq Reconstruction Projects Jan 2008





Below: Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp watches as contracting specialist Myrlande Lee, the newest arrival to the Gulf Region Division in attendance, and Executive Assistant Bonnie Corbin cut the cake commemorating the organization's 4th Anniversary.



Top left: Pictured are former Gulf Region Division commanders, from right, Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson, Maj. Gen. Thomas Bostick, Maj. Gen. William McCoy, Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, and current Commanding General Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Dorko.

Above: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commanding General and Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp speaks with Gulf Region Division personnel during a celebration of the division's Jan. 25, 2004 activation.

Facing page: A map shows the dispersion of projects completed, in progress, and planned as part of the reconstruction effort in Iraq. Project totals are broken out by funding sources: Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF); Development Fund for Iraq (DFI); Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP); Iraq Security Forces Fund (ISFF); Economic Support Fund (ESF); Donor nations; Operations and Maintenance, Army (OMA); Military Construction (MILCON); and other funding sources.

Cleaning up

Sewer project helps east Baghdad

BY NORRIS JONES

GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

Thousands of families in east Baghdad will soon have their neighborhoods free of raw sewage in the streets.

Iraqi construction workers are completing a \$30 million sewer project in Kamaliya, southeast of Sadr City. About 60 kilometers (36 miles) of sewer pipe has been installed, ranging in size from 110 millimeters for house connections to 800 millimeter trunk lines. In addition, 10 pump stations were constructed with the largest having the capacity to move 600 liters per second (more than 2,000 cubic meters per hour).

“Residents there appreciate the improvements taking place,” said Iraqi engineer Mustafa Haddad, who works for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “For over two years, we’ve been working on this project and the community has been very supportive. They were using slit trenches and wading through raw sewage to get to their homes, a definite health risk.”

Haddad is the deputy resident engineer of USACE’s Loyalty Office located south of Sadr City. More than 20 Iraqi engineers work out of the office overseeing more than \$125 million in infrastructure improvements in east Baghdad, from school and hospital renovations, electric network upgrades, road paving and new water treatment facilities.

Haddad has put up with mortars, one of his fellow Iraqi engineers was gunned down after visiting a school project, other office workers have been injured, and he personally has been targeted by insurgents and had to move his family to a different area.

“We’re here because we know how important this work is for our country and our people. Yes, it’s a difficult time. But those in need are looking for help and we’re going to continue to do everything we can to offer it to them,” he continued.

“Their streets will soon be dry and clean. People in Kamaliya are seeing significant signs of progress,” said the 29-year-old, who earned a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Baghdad’s University of Technology.

“My family worries about me and the dangers I face, but they understand how important this work is. We need to keep making things better and some day soon Iraq will turn the corner.” Apart from Kamaliya, Haddad is overseeing 20 other sewer projects in east Baghdad.



USACE photo

A street in Kamaliya in east Baghdad before work on the community's first sewer system began.



USACE photo by Norris Jones

Improvements connect homes in eight mahallas (neighborhoods) to a functioning network.



USACE photo by Norris Jones



Sadr City's Ibn Al Baladi Hospital renovation nears end

East Baghdad's Ibn Al Baladi Hospital entrance.

STORY & PHOTOS BY NORRIS JONES
GULF REGION CENTRAL DISTRICT

Extensive renovations will soon be complete at one of Sadr City's major hospitals in east Baghdad. Ibn Al Baladi Maternity and Children's Hospital initially opened in 1982, and during the following two decades little was spent on routine maintenance, said Iraqi Project Engineer Mohammad Attar, who oversees the hospital's upgrade for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. "During Saddam's time, patients there had to tolerate 100-degree-plus interior temperatures because the air conditioning system was broken," he said.

The \$12 million, three-year renovation included the installation of four new chillers, four cooling towers and four new boilers. "Those improvements helped the elderly and infants, who have little tolerance for heat and cold. The hospital is now able to maintain a comfortable interior temperature in both summer and winter," Attar said.

Other improvements include an oxygen plant, central vacuum system, nurse call system, intercom paging system, data communications network, new toilets and showers, new exhaust system to remove unhealthy air, new generator for emergency power, medical waste incinerator and new water purification system.

The medical staff of eight doctors and 30 nurses is treating five times the number of sick people they saw prior to the renovation.



The Ibn Al Baladi Maternity and Children's Hospital renovation included roofing, plumbing, electrical, flooring, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, a new surgical suite and X-ray department.



Ibn Al Baladi Maternity and Children's Hospital provides modern medical care for an average of 150 to 200 patients daily.

They are seeing 150 to 200 patients daily, 80 percent of whom are children.

Their obstetric department is delivering 30 to 40 newborns every day. "One of their main goals is reducing the infant mortality rate and the new equipment is making a difference," Attar said. The two-story hospital has a bed capacity for 200 patients.

More than 100 Iraqis have been part of the construction crew. They installed a new roof, put in new plumbing and electrical, rebuilt the physicians' family-size apartments, added a new cafeteria area and kitchen, new lighting, new plastering, redid all the floors and ceilings, new surgical theater suite and X-ray equipment.

"It's truly rewarding to know we've helped some of the poorest people in Baghdad," Attar said. "They were tolerating absolutely horrible conditions. The toilets were overflowing, the air was stagnant, the medical equipment was outdated and much of it didn't work. Despite ongoing insurgency threats, the contractor kept making steady progress. Today, Sadr City families have a modern facility and access to equipment that was simply not available three years ago. We're all proud to have been a part of the effort."

Clean water on tap

BY JOHN CONNOR

GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

A water treatment facility being constructed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will bring clean water to thousands of people in the Al Badeer district of Qadisiyah province.

The facility, a 50 cubic meter per hour water compact unit with a distribution network pipeline of six kilometers, is being built at a cost of \$341,000, according to USACE Resident Engineer Su-Chen Chen.

She said the area has not had clean water since 1972 when a well constructed in 1967 ceased to function due to lack of maintenance.

The Abo Hussein water compact unit will provide clean water to an estimated 3,000 persons, a USACE project manager said.

Money for the facility comes from the Economic Support Fund, which is used for physical and tangible public welfare facilities and public infrastructure reconstruction projects.



Courtesy

Under a Local Economic Promotion Plan including the contract, about 20 percent of the project's cost will be recycled to the local economy by using local workers, subcontractors and suppliers, said Chen, who is the resident engineer at USACE's Qadisiyah Resident Office.

She said the contractor is a local resident and that about 30 unskilled workers are employed at the project.

The Qadisiyah Resident Office is part of the Forat Area Office of the Corps'

Gulf Region South district. The district provides construction and reconstruction services in the nine southern provinces of Iraq. The district at last count has completed more than 1,360 projects worth over \$2.68 billion in the last four years.

The plant is half finished and is projected to be completed by mid-April. About 20 water compact units are under construction or in the project development stage in the GRS area of responsibility, a USACE program manager said.

فيلق المهندسين الامريكى يوصل مياه الشرب الى منطقة آل بدير في محافظة القادسية

ترجمة عبدالهادي النجار

ووفق خطة تعزيز الاقتصاد المحلي ، سيتم تدوير حوالي 20% من كلفة انشاء المشروع الى الاقتصاد المحلي من خلال استخدام العمالة المحلية والمجهزين والمقاولين الثانويين. ويقوم بتنفيذ المشروع احد المقاولين المحليين الذي يستخدم حوالي 30 عاملا محليا في عملية التنفيذ . ويعتبر مكتب المهندس المقيم في القادسية جزءا من مكتب منطقة الفرات التابع لفرقة منطقة الخليج- المنطقة الجنوبية التي تقوم بتنفيذ عمليات الاعمار واعادة الاعمار في المحافظات الجنوبية التسع. وقد بلغ عدد المشاريع التي نفذتها المنطقة الجنوبية اكثر من 1360 مشروعا بلغت كلفتها اكثر من 2,68 مليار دولار خلال الاربع سنوات الاخيرة. وقد تم انجاز حوالي نصف المشروع الذي من المقرر اكماله في منتصف نيسان القادم، ويوجد هناك حاليا حوالي 20 وحدة لمعالجة المياه قيد الانجاز او في مرحلة الاعداد لها في مكتب المنطقة الجنوبية التي تدخل ضمن نطاق مسؤولياته .

يعمل فيلق المهندسين على انشاء مشروع لمعالجة مياه الشرب الذي سيستفيد منه الاف الناس القاطنين في تلك المنطقة.

تبلغ كلفة المشروع 341 ألف دولار، وبطاقة انتاجية تبلغ 50 متر مكعب بالساعة، ويشتمل على نصب شبكة لتوزيع المياه بطول 6 كيلومتر. هذا ما افادت به السيدة سوشن التي تشغل منصب المهندس المقيم التابع لفيلق المهندسين. وازافت ان تلك المنطقة ظلت تعاني من غياب الماء الصالح للشرب منذ عام 1972 عندما توقفت محطة معالجة المياه التي انشئت في 1967 بسبب عدم الصيانة .

وستزود وحدة معالجة المياه ، التي تسمى محطة ماء ابو حسين ، المياه الصالحة للشرب لحوالي 3000 مواطن من سكان المنطقة. وقد جاء التمويل لهذا المشروع من صندوق الدعم الاقتصادي الذي يستخدم لتمويل مشاريع الخدمات العامة المنظورة ومشاريع اعادة اعمار البنى التحتية على حد قول مدير البرامج في فيلق المهندسين الامريكى

Project focus: put Iraqis back to work

BY LUANNE FANTASIA

GULF REGION NORTH DISTRICT

“How do we measure the encouragement and the hope a new school gives children eager to learn; or the security of having a health clinic in your village for the first time; or the comfort of electricity 12 hours a day versus two hours a day this time last year? We can’t.”

Col. Mike Pfenning is the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region North district. In the four years since GRN was activated Jan. 25, 2004, it has completed more than 1,300 reconstruction projects in 66,000 square miles of northern Iraq.

“...We gave the Iraqi people ‘a fish and fed them for a day’... and now we are ‘teaching them to fish, so they can feed themselves for a lifetime,’” Pfenning said. “They realize they need to take hold of the reins of independence and self-sustainment.”

With U.S. government funds, the reconstruction program has provided a jumpstart to the governance and economy of Iraq with specific types of local projects for U.S. customers, such as the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Department of State, Brigade Combat Teams, Military Construction, and the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

In the seven northern provinces that comprise Pfenning’s district, that jumpstart includes more than 580 schools and primary healthcare clinics; 180 electrical projects; 233 security and justice facilities; 260 water and sewage treatment plants; 40 oil improvements; and 100 roads and bridges. Ongoing construction contracts include an average of 643 Iraqi workers a month, based on the last two fiscal quarters.

Pfenning said there are varying levels of success at the provincial level in renewing the Iraqi peoples’ confidence in their leaders, and that part of good governance includes infrastructure planning, development and execution of annual provincial

budgets to meet its citizens’ needs.

“Once the Iraqi people know their government can provide them basic services in electricity, fuel and water, their societal needs will expand in other economic areas,” he said.

“We will continue working with the Provincial Reconstruction Teams to focus project efforts on essential services,” Pfenning said, “but will also target projects that, when completed, will put Iraqis back to work,” e.g., Vocational/Technical schools, asphalt plants, police academies, and water distribution networks for a Farmers’ Co-op.

GRN’s higher headquarters, the Gulf Region Division, has other capacity-development initiatives that include operations and maintenance for completed (Iraq’s) Economic Support Fund projects, as well as city master plans and facility management. Initially funded with U.S. Government dollars, they are also hiring local Iraqi engineers to supplement provincial engineering capability through the Provincial Reconstruction Teams, or PRTs, according to Pfenning.

He said, “Maj. Gen. Hertling, the commanding general of the Multi-National Division-North, or MND-N, and 1st Armored Division, owns the battle space—GRN’s 66,000 square miles. In the recent MND-N Reconstruction Board, he announced his goal is to create an additional 50,000 jobs in the northern seven provinces before July 15 to develop the country’s economic capacity—the next step in weaning the Government of Iraq from U.S.-funded efforts.

“I expect GRN’s future projects from the PRTs and BCTs will focus on these same priorities; using the Economic Support Fund, Quick Response Fund and the Commander’s Emergency Response Program funds.

“The sooner the Government of Iraq improves its ability to plan, develop and execute their infrastructure budget, the sooner we’ll work ourselves out of a job in Iraq—the ultimate goal of the Coalition Forces in Iraq,” Pfenning said.

Spell it out

An Iraqi employee working at the Gulf Region Division Headquarters in Baghdad expresses his vision for his country recently on a coverall uniform he purchased with his own money.



USACE photo by Laith Hashim

Rolling along in Iraq's Wassit province

STORY & PHOTO BY JOHN CONNOR
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

There's something about the feel of driving on a freshly repaired road or highway.

It is more than just a lack of potholes, crevices and bumps.

A fixed road, even a road in the process of being resurfaced, can convey a sense that the neighborhood is on the rise and things are looking up.

So it may well be for the countless Iraqis who are and will be driving along a stretch of road in Wassit province being repaved under a project undertaken by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The project, which is about 60 percent complete, entails the repaving almost 25 kilometers of seven-meter wide bituminous roadway, with two meter shoulders on either side, according to Maj. Clay Morgan, resident engineer in the Wassit Resident Office.

The so-called Ahrar-Numaniyah-Sudadiyah-Suwayyah road maintenance project is projected to be completed in February 2008 at a cost of more than \$2 million.



A contract worker operates an asphalt paver along the Ahrar-Numaniyah-Sudadiyah-Suwayyah road in Iraq's southern Wassit province. Work is scheduled to be completed in February 2008.

In addition to improving access to vital centers of commerce throughout the province, Morgan expects the project to provide a boost to local morale and security.

He also noted that this road is one of the main supply routes for supply and equipment convoys traveling to Forward Operating Base Delta.

Clean water coming to rural Wassit

STORY & PHOTO BY JOHN CONNOR
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Work is under way on two compact water unit projects that will bring clean water to Wassit province.

These projects are ideal for serving Iraqis living in rural areas, which abound in Wassit province, said Maj. Clay Morgan, resident engineer of the Wassit Resident Office of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

One water project is in Al Bender, a small village south of Al Kut, and it will replace a 30-year old system. More than 20 percent complete, the project includes the design and construction of a new 50 cubic meter per hour compact water plant; an above-ground storage reservoir; about 200 linear meters of perimeter fence; and a pipe network of about 5,000 linear meters for distribution and about 2,500 for house connections.

The second project is down the road at Al Takadoom village. This project will provide clean drinking water to about 1,000 people and is scheduled to be completed in February 2008.

Each project cost more than \$600,000 and is being handled by the Wassit Resident Office on Forward Operating Base Delta.

Clean water is at a premium in the south of Iraq, where there is a high salt content and a history of neglect by the former

regime. Water projects are an important piece of the reconstruction effort being undertaken across the nine southern Iraq provinces served by the Gulf Region South district.

Right now, "We have 18 water compact units being installed across GRS with a contract value of \$10.6 million," said Tom Eidson, head of Engineering and Construction for GRS.

Clayton Waller, an Engineering and Construction staff member, said compact water units take raw water from a source and "settle out" most of the suspended solids and sediment through a flocculation chamber, settling tanks and clarifying tanks using chemicals that make the solids and sediments heavier than water and thus lead them to settle at the bottom of the tanks. The units then pump the water through the filters to reduce even more the solids and sediments, Waller continued. The water is collected at the filters and a disinfectant agent is added while it is being pumped to the treated



Concrete columns are placed as work begins in Al Bender.

water tanks or network, he said.

Kelly Brown, until recently the head of the Program and Project Management Division at GRS, predicted that the law of rising expectations will help to keep these and similar projects operating over time. He said that as the Iraqi people become accustomed to a reliable supply of clean water, they will exert pressure on local leaders to keep facilities working.

Primary Healthcare Center complete

Seven facilities to improve medical care opportunities in Babil province

BY JOHN CONNOR

GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

Work is complete on a primary healthcare center at Al Mahaweel in Babil province.

The facility was constructed at a cost of approximately \$1 million under two construction contracts and five non-construction contracts, according to Robin Parks, health sector program manager for the Gulf Region South district of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The district does construction and reconstruction work in the nine southern provinces of Iraq. The money for the clinic was provided under the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund program.

The non-construction contracts provided medical equipment, plus installation and training, as well as generators/electrical and furniture and office equipment, Parks said.

“This project will provide much a needed primary and preventative care facility for the neighborhoods surrounding Al Mahaweel, a city of approximately 238,000 in Babil province,” said Maj. Tracy Coleman, resident engineer and officer-in-charge of GRS’s Babil Resident Office, who oversaw the project.

The Al Mahaweel project is a 1,155 square meter two-story facility providing for medical/dental examination and treatment



USACE photo

with space dedicated for X-rays, vaccinations, laboratory, pharmacy and public education. The PHC will employ an estimated 42 people if fully staffed, Parks said.

The facility is one of the many primary healthcare clinic projects coming to fruition in southern Iraq. This is the second clinic to be completed of the seven in Babil province being worked by USACE, Coleman said, adding that the other five clinics are very near completion.

Work on about three dozen other health clinics is approaching completion or has been completed in recent months in the GRS area of responsibility.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Gulf Region Division

Farewelling:

Sigmund Roh, GRN
Kevin Reed, GRN
John Lozano, GRN
Norbert Suter, GRN
Gene Sommerville, GRN
Robert Williams, GRN
Spc. Walter Whitley, GRN
Col. Anthony Foti, GRD
Col. Gabriel Lifschitz, GRD
Cmdr. Hewitt Hymas, GRD
Lt. Col. Christopher Duffy, GRD
Cmdr. Angel Salinas, GRD
Navy Lt. Cmdr. Eric Haun, GRD
Maj. Tina Nguyen, GRD
Lt. j.g. Joseph Wignarajah, GRD
Master Sgt. Jeffrey Wardlaw, GRD
Tech. Sgt. Devon Blackwell, GRD
PO1 Rose Wasko, GRD
Leslie Wright, GRD
Diane Davis, GRD
James Simmons, GRD
Maj. Todd Lazaroski, GRD
Milton Nauman, GRD
Myrna Boehning, GRD
Lt. Col. Jeffrey Rumrill, GRD
Mark Warner, GRD

Maj. Anthony Hughes, GRD
B.J. Fagan, GRD
Van Williams, GRD
Sgt. Chris Carraway, GRD
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Allan Giese, GRD
CWO2 Edward Polzin, GRD
Heather McDonnell, GRD
Dave Dawson, GRD
Sherry Lee, GRS
Kelly Brown, GRS
Sgt. 1st Class Michael St. Pierre, GRS
Navy Senior Chief Stephen Blease, GRC
Navy Chief Tim Hedglin, GRC
James Worthington, GRC
In Park, GRC
Joe Araz, GRC
Paul Anderson, GRC
Arlene McGhan, GRC
Janet Embry, GRC
Gene Embry, GRC
Martha Coley, GRC
Norris Jones, GRC



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

Building for Iraq's children

BY B.J. WEINER
GULF REGION SOUTH DISTRICT

One of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' largest projects in Iraq is 76 percent complete and is on track for construction to finish this summer, according to the Gulf Region South district commander, Col. Stephen Hill.

The Basrah Children's Hospital will be a state-of-the-art acute and referral care hospital that focuses on pediatric oncology. The 19,800 square meter complex includes a 94-bed main hospital building, two utility buildings, warehouse, oxygen plant, steam autoclave building, and a 36-bed residence hall. The two-story hospital building includes two operating rooms, two special procedure rooms, emergency room, specialty clinics, pediatric and neonatal intensive care unit, dental suite, and training classrooms.

"This project is one of the largest in Iraq," Hill said. "It's multi-national support system focusing on one goal and that is to provide this hospital for the children of Basrah and Iraq."

The international community has focused on the hospital and its importance to Iraq because of the infant mortality rate in the region, which currently stands at 13 percent, one of the highest



USACE photo

A worker at the Basrah Children's Hospital installs cable trays near ceiling duct work.



USACE photo

Workers lay down ceramic tiles. Some 800 people are employed by the construction of the Basrah Children's Hospital, scheduled to be completed by July 2008.

in the world. The structure boasts a multi-national coalition behind its construction, according to Hill.

The project is funded through multiple sources, including the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund; Project HOPE; and the Spanish government through the United Nations Development Program.

Overseeing a UNDP-funded contract is a first for USACE in Iraq, said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Neil Underwood, the project engineer.

The project was chosen by the Government of Iraq in conjunction with the Department of State and United Nations, Underwood said. The idea germinated from the desire to eradicate cancer from Iraq's second largest city and will bring to U.S. medical standards all treatments that children can receive for cases of leukemia and other childhood cancers – treatments that are available in the United States in every major city.

see **Construction**, page 19



USACE photo illustration

Construction passes 75 percent mark for Basrah Children's Hospital project

Continued from page 18

"The work we will be executing includes the resident buildings for the doctors, nurses and other hospital staff," Underwood said. "Some of our other work includes the primary structure of the hospital, along with roof work, air conditioning and installation of generators. We presently have four generators and have identified a fifth as being necessary because most of Iraq has a power problem; we want to ensure the hospital can function no matter what."

Underwood took his first trip to the hospital after control of the Basrah Province was returned to the Iraqi Security Forces. "As we rolled through the gates in our convoy, I didn't know what to expect with the Iraqi forces," he said. "The soldiers appeared eager to meet us and prove themselves. We traveled to and from the Basrah Children's Hospital without incident. The Iraqi soldiers performed their duties with great competence." He added that this will greatly enhance the ability to maintain the construction schedule.

The hospital building construction is scheduled to be completed by July, with some of the more complex equipment - such as the linear accelerator - being installed in November. The hospital is tentatively scheduled to open January/February 2009. The construction is being done in a phased approach, according to Hill. USACE is working with all its partners to ensure quality construction, delivery of equipment and proper turnover necessary for subsequent staffing and training - critical for the overall project's success, Hill added.

USACE has assembled a quality team to deliver the hospital to the Iraqi people,



USACE photo by Mohammed Aliwi

A laborer works on a protection fence around the hospital's chillers at the Basrah Children's Hospital in Basrah province.

Hill said. Because the project is so complex, USACE went to multiple sources to provide the services necessary. It is about the construction being performed by the contractor, about the equipment yet to be installed - about bringing the right people together to work within a team framework, he added. The economic impact for the local people reflects positively on the project's stability.

"The jobs available to people in the Basrah area number from 700 to 800 on any given day," Hill said. "Many trades and professions work together on the job site - from brickwork and stone cladding to electrical. The most significant aspect of a project focuses on the people. What's interesting here is I spent time talking to Iraq engineers - all highly educated and professional. They know the project and what is necessary, and they are the most important piece. The Corps has the

benefit of working with them as brothers, partners and colleagues on this sophisticated project for the people and children of Iraq. People make this happen."

Underwood agrees with Hill, noting that some of the challenges on the job site reflect differences in construction standards, but that the prime contractor is ensuring that the work being done at the site is quality.

"The project is being operated by local Iraqis who take a lot of pride in their work," Underwood said. "It is not us - we tell them that this is for Iraqi people and they want to see this benefit for themselves."

The hospital project began in 2005 under the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Bechtel Corporation. USACE took over oversight of the work in August 2006, when the project was about 35 percent complete.

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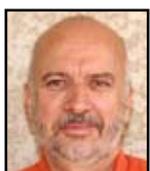
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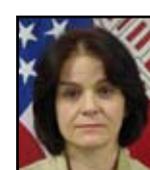
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