



# ESSAYONS

*Forward*

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Gulf Region Division (Provisional), Iraq - Volume I, Issue 6

June 28, 2004



**RIO stands down —  
Corps' role in restoring Iraqi oil**





## Commander's Farewell



There are only two words that I can think of to tell you how I feel about having been your commander. Those two words are THANK YOU. These are simple words from a simple Soldier, but in my mind these two words together are the most powerful “people words” that I know.

As I depart, I want to thank all of you in GRD for your dedication to duty and your selflessness in volunteering to come here to Iraq. I want to thank your families and loved ones who sacrificed so much to have you away from home, while they took care of business on the home front. I want to thank your bosses back home, who allowed you to leave your important work back home to come here to serve. I want to thank you for your patience with one another as we dealt with fast-moving operations, oftentimes without the resources required. I want to thank you for your loyalty and your patience with me, a commander driven to excel and to make people better. I want to thank you for taking the time to meet, know, and share what you have with the wonderful Iraqi people working right here in our HQs. By doing this, you all became ambassadors for our great Nation. Finally I want to thank you for your tireless efforts to get a very important mission done, in spite of the dangers that we experience each and every day.

As I leave Iraq, I feel a bit happy and a bit sad. I am happy to go back home to see my family and step on the ground in my country and to tell the story of the Gulf Region Division. I am sad because I know that I will never get a chance to work with a group of people like you. While changing command and passing it on to another great Soldier provides relief, it also creates emptiness in my soul that I cannot describe in words. I know that this opportunity will never be available to me ever again, but if it is, I want all of you on my team because I know that we can do anything with all of you.

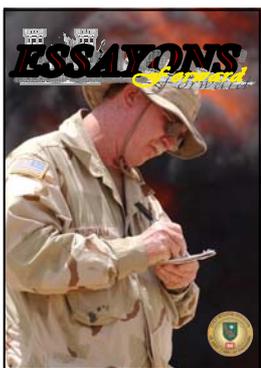
In closing, I want to thank God for his blessings of command and his shield of protection he placed on me (and all of you) each day as I traveled about the country. I want to thank Him for providing me the wisdom to act when necessary and the wisdom to not act when not necessary.

I wish you all the best of luck. When our paths cross again, I expect each of you to stop me and tell me that we served together on a world class “Super Bowl” team in Iraq, called GRD. God bless each of you and THANK YOU for allowing me to be your commander.

-RLJ

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**Cover: Richard Bingham, Fort Worth District, performs environmental assessments at a pipeline fire near Baiji, Iraq, during the early days of the Corps' Restore Iraqi Oil Mission.**

*(Photo by Nola Conway)*

**ESSAYONS FORWARD**  
 CPA-USACE-GRD, Engineer Villa, Essayons Base, Baghdad APO AE 09316

DSN: 318-542-1431  
 DESK: 540-542-1431\*  
 CELL: 011-964-790-192-5105\*

\*CONUS area codes

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[steven.wright@tac01.usace.army.mil](mailto:steven.wright@tac01.usace.army.mil)

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**Commanding General:**  
 Maj. Gen. Ronald L. Johnson

**Division Public Affairs:**  
 Steven E. Wright (Chief)  
 Thomas O'Hara (Deputy), Editor  
 Nola Conway Maria Or Bill Roberts

Photo: (top) Castle in Kirkuk (Photo by Maria Or). (Inset) Commander photo illustration by Tom Hudson, CENWO-IM.

**“We are very proud of everything you and your team are accomplishing”**  
 —John Paul Woodley, Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army in a personal note to MG Ronald Johnson

# Power for the People a United Iraq, Corps Mission



**United Effort:** (left to right) Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi thanks the efforts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the United States in the rebuilding of the nation's electrical infrastructure as Dr. Aiham Alsammarae, minister of electricity shakes hands with Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson, Gulf Region Division commander.

Putting megawatts on the grid has been the mantra of U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's electrical infrastructure rebuilding efforts in Iraq. Leaders of the new Iraqi government took time Saturday to recognize the incredible reconstruction effort by the Corps during an informal ceremony at the Qudas Power Plant north of Baghdad.

"This is a very important project that will contribute electricity to Iraq and is another step forward in rebuilding Iraq and restarting services," said Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. "It is a present to the Iraqi people from the United States executed by the engineering corps of the U.S. military. We are very appreciative and (give) thanks for the efforts that have

gone into this project."

The Qudas Project consists of six new generators which will ultimately add 422 MW of new generation to the national Iraqi power grid – almost a 10 percent increase to the current level. The first of these six generators, Unit #3, is completing commissioning and punch list processes and should be online within a

few weeks. The remaining generators are scheduled to be completed before the end of August.

The \$145 million Qudas project, executed under a contract with Fluor, and using hundreds of local Iraqi workers, is but one example of more than three dozen new generation, rehabilitated generation, transmission, distribution or switching projects managed by the Restore Iraqi Electricity (RIE) Directorate of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Currently the national capacity is near 4800 MW. It reached an all-time peak this past week by surpassing 4900 MW for the first time in a generation for much of Iraq. However, as capacity has increased, so has the demand as more Iraqis purchase air conditioners, freezers, and other appliances as markets have opened under the liberation.

Dr. Aiham Alsammarae, Minister of Electricity, was also on-hand to unveil the new project and touted the continued effort to improve the electrical capacity of Iraq.

Since last September, the RIE effort has added more

than 1300 MW to the national grid and is on track to add 2000 MW total by the end of summer despite attacks on the infrastructure by terrorist groups in theater.

The forces of evil in Iraq have been trying to hurt our infrastructure and the civilians, said Allawi. "The forces of evil will not win."

"I would like to thank the United States, the leadership of the United States and President Bush for help and (providing) assistance that you can see here in this very important project," Allawi said.

Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson, commander of the Gulf Region Division, was on hand at the ceremony to represent the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in recognition of the country wide effort.

—Thomas O'Hara



**The project, using several hundred local Iraqi workers, is one example of more than three dozen new generation, rehabilitated generation, transmission, distribution and switching projects under the management of the Restore Iraqi Electricity Directorate of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**



**The \$145 million project at Qudas, under contract with Fluor, will add 422 MW of new generation to the Iraqi power grid.**

(Photos by Thomas O'Hara)

## *Iraqi Oil Restored, RIO Directorate Stands Down*

**T**he last of the Gulf Region Division's Restore Iraqi Oil Directorate (GRD-RIO) employees have returned to their home stations leaving behind a proud legacy of accomplishments.

The Directorate completed the task they were given, by restoring the oil production in Iraq and handing its operation back to the Ministry of Oil—they accomplished their mission.

Their task assigned by the Department of Defense to the US Army Corps of Engineers and subsequently to the South West Division (SWD) was to restore Iraq's infrastructure and oil production to its prewar condition.

Iraq's oil production prior to the liberation averaged 1.8 million barrels per day. Beginning in Apr. 2003 with Iraq's oil production completely stood down, a partnership of the Corps, KBR (Corps contractor) and the Iraqi oil industry was able to reach two million barrels per day oil production by Oct. 2003 and reached 2.5 million barrels of oil per day by Mar. 2004, one year after the invasion.

Initially RIO was a Field Force Engineering Team formed by SWD as Task Force RIO commanded by Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, SWD Commander. TF-RIO became the RIO Directorate when GRD stood up Jan. 25, 2004.

Since Jan. GRD-RIO transferred primary responsibility for the oil mission and the oil construction contracts with KBR and Parsons Worley Group to the Office of Program Management (PMO) under the direction of retired Rear Admiral David J. Nash in mid Apr. 2004.

GRD will continue to do the construction management for PMO, soon to be renamed the Project and Contracting Office (PCO) on June 30, on all infrastructure development in Iraq to include key oil infrastructure projects. Also, GRD retains several key holdover projects from its RIO days. These construction projects are under the direction of Gulf Region South (GRS) and Gulf Region North (GRN).

The key project in GRN is the al Fathah river crossing. This is a project to directionally drill seven tunnels under the Tigris River near the town of Al Fathah. Five tunnels will each have a pipeline. Two of the tunnels will have a large pipeline that serves as a conduit for bundles of five smaller pipelines. In total, the seven tunnels under the Tigris River will contain 15 pipelines of varying sizes.

The importance of this project is that these pipelines will provide the oil produced in the northern area at Kirkuk Oil Fields access to Baiji and Doura Refineries and the export Iraq to Turkey Pipeline. This project is the most critical piece of oil infrastructure in Iraq and without its completion oil produced in northern Iraq is landlocked.

The project replaces 16 pipelines lost during the war when the Coalition bombed a bridge across the Tigris River with oil pipelines running below the bridge's surface.

Other oil projects in the north include 50 kilometers of pipeline replacing a heavily corroded section of a key pipeline from Kirkuk south and a maintenance project at the Baiji Refinery. The most impressive element of the Baiji work will be to replace a tip on one of the refinery's waste gas flares. This tip weighs ten tons and is 100 meters high.

In GRS, the most important remaining oil project is the completion of the Quarmet Ali water treatment plant and water injection system for the Ramaylah Oil Fields. Treated water from this plant is injected into the oil fields to retain the pressure that forces oil to the surface in production wells. As oil is removed from the oil reservoirs located about 8000 feet below the surface



**The sun sets on another day of successful exportation of a currently estimated 1.6 million barrels a day from the Mini Al-Basrah export terminal in the Persian Gulf. As oil production and export exceeds pre-war levels, and the Ministry of Oil assumes responsibility on Iraq oil operations, the sun sets too on the Corps Restore Iraqi Oil Directorate. (Photo by Steven Wright)**

an equal amount of replacement water is injected through existing wells at the edges of oil reservoirs.

Water from Quarmet Ali is also used to wash salt from the crude oil. Salt naturally occurs in crude oil and is removed by mixing water with the crude oil. The salt molecules in the oil adhere to the water molecules. The wastewater containing salt is then separated from the crude leaving the crude oil salt free.

The magnificent accomplishments of hundreds of men and women, military and civilians that were members of the Task Force RIO and GRD RIO teams are now part of the proud history of the Army Corps of Engineers and Operation Iraqi Freedom. They partnered with the Iraqi oil workers and oil companies and leveraged the capabilities of their contractors KBR and Parsons Worley.

Work on the oil infrastructure will continue and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will continue to support improvements to the oil infrastructure positioning Iraq for success as an economically viable nation. With 95 percent of the national income coming from oil, this mission is vitally important to the future.

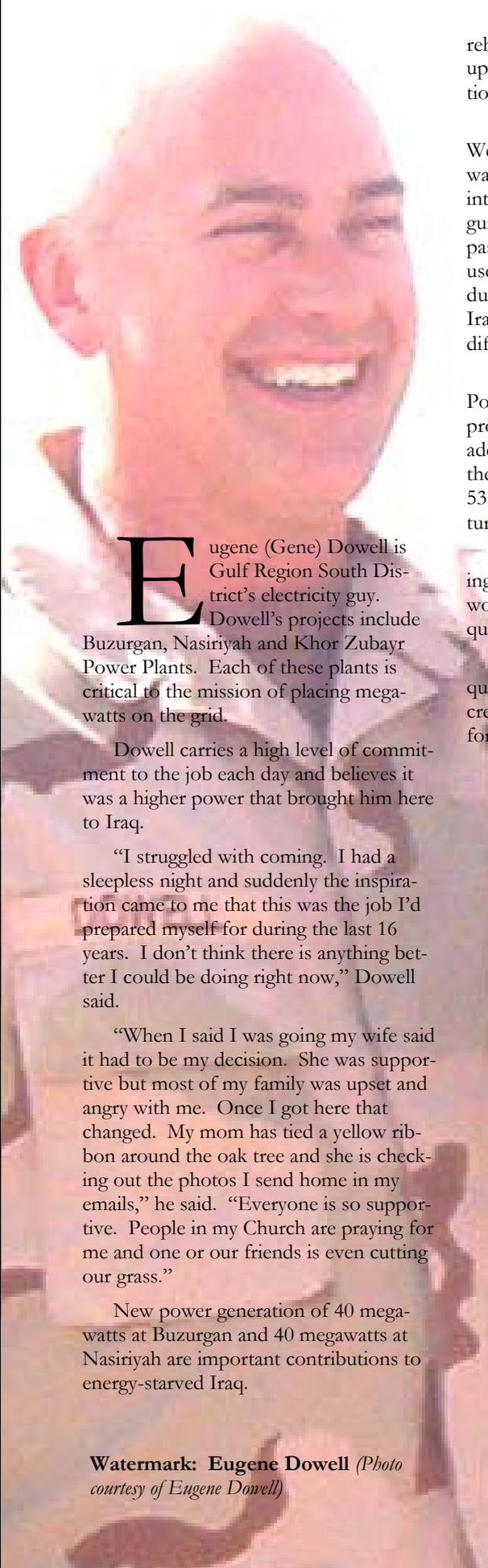
For those in the Corps who continue work with Iraq's oil infrastructure, the footprints they see in the sand belong to a great Corps team that preceded them.

—Steven Wright

**Watermark: Camel herders pass a lake of crude oil in southern Iraq. Oil production, like much of life in Iraq, is beginning to return to normal thanks in part to the engineering efforts of the US Army Corps of Engineers.**

*(Photo by Alicia Embrey)*

# Profiles of Army Values—Respect: Eugene Dowell



**E**ugene (Gene) Dowell is Gulf Region South District's electricity guy. Dowell's projects include Buzurgan, Nasiriyah and Khor Zubayr Power Plants. Each of these plants is critical to the mission of placing megawatts on the grid.

Dowell carries a high level of commitment to the job each day and believes it was a higher power that brought him here to Iraq.

"I struggled with coming. I had a sleepless night and suddenly the inspiration came to me that this was the job I'd prepared myself for during the last 16 years. I don't think there is anything better I could be doing right now," Dowell said.

"When I said I was going my wife said it had to be my decision. She was supportive but most of my family was upset and angry with me. Once I got here that changed. My mom has tied a yellow ribbon around the oak tree and she is checking out the photos I send home in my emails," he said. "Everyone is so supportive. People in my Church are praying for me and one or our friends is even cutting our grass."

New power generation of 40 megawatts at Buzurgan and 40 megawatts at Nasiriyah are important contributions to energy-starved Iraq.

**Watermark: Eugene Dowell** (Photo courtesy of Eugene Dowell)

Added to the new generation is the rehabilitation of existing power plants to upgrade and restore their energy production capabilities.

"Nasiriyah is rich with opportunities. We are going to be able to add 144 megawatts to the grid by cleaning out the water intake. It was filled with barnacles and gunk and didn't allow the water to freely pass. Water from the Euphrates River is used in the plant's cooling towers to reduce temperatures. High temperatures in Iraq rob efficiency and make it even more difficult to produce power," Dowell said.

"Another opportunity at Nasiriyah Power Plant is to repair filters and improve the intake function which could add from 20 to 40 more megawatts for the power grid. Khor Az Zubayr will add 53 megawatts by reworking an existing turbine," he said.

When he was given his job after arriving here, Dowell didn't think that he would be able to catch on to the job as quickly as he did.

"I was surprised that I made such quick progress in learning the job. I give credit to my predecessor, Chuck Oliver for showing me the ropes and getting me

up to speed. Col. Koning also helped make this happen," Dowell said.

"He's (Col. Koning) really fired up and knows each project, but when it came to briefing the CG (Maj. Gen Ron Johnson) he put me in the spotlight. He makes sure that his people get the credit. He really appreciates what we do. When I listen to him he is so pumped up that it is contagious for all of us. He is a leader, a natural leader and helps us grow."

When finished with his tour, at some date in the future he's not exactly sure of, Dowell will return to the Louisville District. The reason he's not quite sure of when is that he came to Iraq on a temporary duty tasker, but converted to a temporary change of station commitment that has not been finalized.

He said he's never served on a deployment before, or even for disaster duty. But Dowell volunteered to come to Iraq thinking that if he did and made his own contribution, it would help to get everyone back home quicker.

Helping put megawatts on the grid and a better life for all Iraqis, he's in the right place to help make that happen.

—Steven Wright

## Partnering for a Better Iraq



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works sign Iraqi Internship Program memorandum of understanding to promote capacity building potential for Iraq, June 26. (From left to right) Mahmoud Ahmed, MMPW Director General for Water/Planning and Follow-up, Ayad Al-Safi, MMPW Deputy Minister for Technical Affairs, Her Excellency Minister Nesreen Berwari, MMPW Minister, Maj. Gen. Ronald L. Johnson, USACE Gulf Region Division Commander, and Zana Rawandoozi, MMPW Director General for Human Resources. (Photo by Maria Or)

## *Iraqi Coastal Defense Force receives it's first Naval Base at Umm Qasr*

**T**hose present at Umm Qasr, Iraq, witnessed history and the birth of the new Iraqi Navy as the Iraqi Coastal Defense Force (ICDF) officially received control of its first naval base, Saturday, June 12, 2004.

The call to attention and sharp salute by the Iraqi Coastal Defense Force marked the beginning of a handover ceremony, the culmination of an enormous task to reconstruct the naval base, and a new beginning for the free nation of Iraq.

The Iraqi Naval Base at Umm Qasr was rebuilt and renovated under a joint project with the Coalition Provisional Authority, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense, Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (Maritime) and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Construction at the site included the Corps renovation of an existing warehouse, force protection infrastructure, new barracks for the sailors, classrooms for training, a new headquarters, a fire station/medical center complete with fire engine and ambulance, a floating dock, fuel stations for vehicles and ships, a water treatment facility, and a dining facility.

The facility provides a base of operations where the ICDF will conduct policing operations on the Iraqi coastline and territorial waters out to 12 nautical miles to counter terrorism, smuggling, piracy and other unlawful activities.

Admiral Sir Alan West, First Sea Lord, United Kingdom was the day's principal speaker. West

**Left:** USACE Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Balch inspects floating dock construction at the Umm Qasr project. *(Photo by Steven Wright)*

**Watermark:** Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (Maritime) gathers onboard the new Iraqi Navy patrol boat prior to dedication ceremony to celebrate the opening of the Umm Qasr Naval base. *(DoD Photo)*

**Right:** In addition to port construction, the project included facilities such as rehabbing existing warehouses into dining hall facilities. *(Photo by Steven Wright)*



pointed to the day's activities as an important day for the new Iraq.

"The mark of having a competent Navy is the mark of becoming a proper nation," said West. "Today marks the first step in moving towards a fully capable and functioning Navy to meet the tasks required."

After the briefings were complete, the ICDF offered tours of their five new PT boats and took guests out to sea for a first hand look at the new Iraqi Navy in action. The tour included briefings by U.S., Australian and British forces who helped train the Iraqis for their new missions.

The training started in January 2004 when all the recruits were sent to Tadjji Training Camp for basic military instruction. In May, Iraqi Coastal Defense Force Training began. This training was broken down into two parts: the core course that began April 21 and Specialist Training that began in May 2004.

Training for the officers took place in Iraq, United Kingdom, and Jordan. After recruitment and basic training was completed in January, selected officers were sent to the United Kingdom's British Royal Navy Training Center and then to Jordan for additional training. The curriculum was modified from US, British and Australian Naval Training techniques.

The Coalition Provisional Authority provided naval equipment for Iraq's Coastal Defense Force. Five new Rubber Inflatable Boats and five new patrol boats (PTs).

The arrival of the first PT Boats on May first enabled the crews to train and team build. Using all five boats the crews were able to train simultaneously, conducting exercises both alongside and at sea. The patrol boat officers also received additional training in bridgeman ship and navigation skills.

The boarding teams undertook a series of classroom-based lessons on boarding operations before taking to the water. Boarding team leaders were also trained in post boarding administration, which must be completed after intercepting and boarding a vessel.

Training for the inflatable boat coxswains began with aptitude testing at sea where sailors were given the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities under actual conditions that they would face. The ten top sailors from this exercise will be fully trained as inflatable boat coxswains.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was responsible for constructing and renovating the Umm Qasr Port. The base, neglected over the last ten years, was damaged by combat, looted, and vandalized during and after the Gulf War. Utilities including power, water and sewage that were inoperable.

The only buildings in use were two warehouses, a battered headquarters building, a guardhouse and a run down maintenance facility.

Since February USACE and its contractor, Weston Solutions, Inc with their team of Iraqi workers safely accomplished more than 500,000 man-hours in reconstruction efforts. More than \$2 million in cost savings were realized by using existing on-site discarded pontoons to construct a floating dock facility and other building materials to rehabilitate the base dining facility.

"This contractor truly went above and beyond any expectations we had," said Sam Watson, Quality Assurance Representative for the project. "They took the initiative to identify cost saving ideas while meeting all of our required end states. It was a pleasure working with this contractor."

The completed base is capable of supporting an entire battalion of new Iraqi Naval Infantry, a five boat fast patrol squadron and associated administrative and logistical functions.

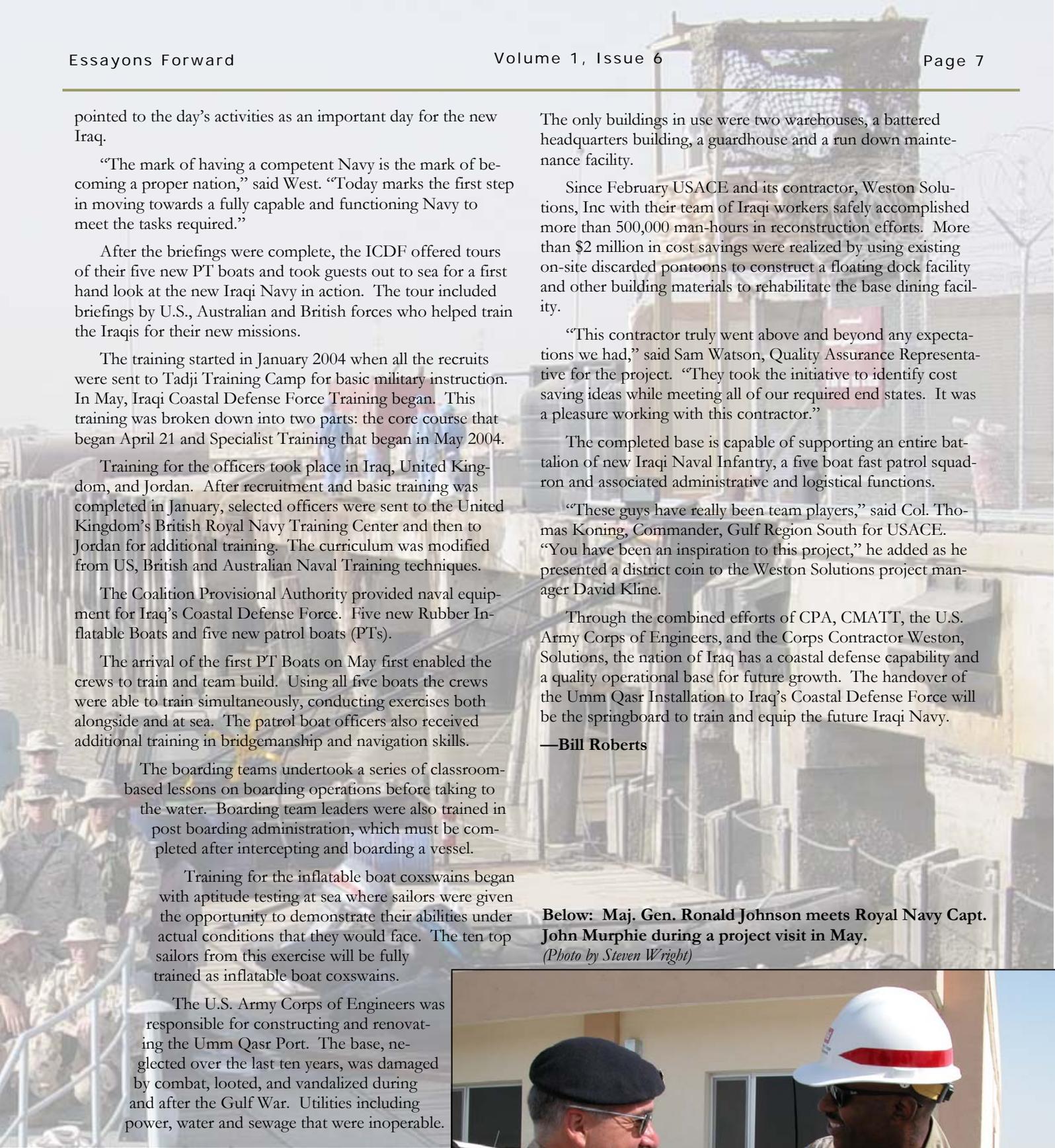
"These guys have really been team players," said Col. Thomas Koning, Commander, Gulf Region South for USACE. "You have been an inspiration to this project," he added as he presented a district coin to the Weston Solutions project manager David Kline.

Through the combined efforts of CPA, CMATT, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Corps Contractor Weston, Solutions, the nation of Iraq has a coastal defense capability and a quality operational base for future growth. The handover of the Umm Qasr Installation to Iraq's Coastal Defense Force will be the springboard to train and equip the future Iraqi Navy.

—Bill Roberts

**Below: Maj. Gen. Ronald Johnson meets Royal Navy Capt. John Murphie during a project visit in May.**

*(Photo by Steven Wright)*



*This is the sixth of a multi-part series highlighting the achievements and advancements made by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This series will continue up to June 30, 2004, the scheduled date for the transfer of authority from the Coalition Provisional Authority to the new interim government of Iraq.*

## *One Year Later: Forward Engineering Support Teams*

### How FESTs were formed

Even before the hostilities in Iraq had started, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Transatlantic Program Center (TAC) was busy getting Corps personnel and equipment ready to deploy. Volunteers from throughout the divisions and districts were solicited to join classified missions. For some, depending on the mission, the recruitment process was nothing short of eerie.

The first Forward Engineering Support Teams were being formed and prepared to set out to Iraq and they didn't know it.

The stand-alone question, 'Are you interested in deploying on a mission?' had only two answers.

'Yes or no.'

And still, a number of people took a leap of faith and said 'yes' to the mysterious mission that they knew very little about, or nothing at all.

"I didn't know until Kuwait that they were going to send me to Iraq," said Schappi Marsh, from Savannah District, who voluntarily signed up to join an Emergency Response Team and to his surprise ended up in Iraq.

For those who joined the Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO) FEST-Main, they had no idea that they would be stepping in to manage a multibillion-dollar mission.

One thing was obvious to them however; these would be extraordinary missions and a chance to be a part of something great. Something that one year later would develop into major infrastructure improvements all throughout Iraq. It would also lead to the stand-up of the Gulf Region Division command and aid the transition of sovereignty back to Iraq.

### The First Forward Engineering Support Teams

In the beginning, military planners could only make assumptions as to what the implications of the war might mean to the disarray of Iraq's infrastructure.

What they did know, was pre-positioning needed to be done. Engineers would have to be sent in-country early to prepare for the worst and start work on recovery quickly.

Because of the rapid response and reach back capabilities of the Corps, civilian FESTs naturally became a vital part of supporting combat forces.

Some of the FESTs that were deployed into Iraq were initially responsible for safely closing



Eric Arndt (standing), a FEST-A Corps civil engineer, leads a group discussion with Iraqi engineers from Mosul, Tikrit, and Kirkuk. (Photo by Grant Sattler, Europe District)



David Luff, civil engineer technician with the Coalition Provisional Authority (South) FEST talks with Iraqi police in one of the classrooms they renovated. (Photo by Grant Sattler, Europe District)



Coalition Provisional Authority South Baghdad before departing for Hillah: Yost, Mike Stickler, Larry Drown, L. Mike Stickler, Huntington District)

down Iraq's oil infrastructure. Others were tasked to quickly fix critical life support systems throughout the failing country and support base construction assessments.

**The FEST work**

In the spring of 2003, in the midst of major combat operations, Schappi Marsh, a civil engineer, found himself in a Kurdish village way up in the mountains of Arbil. He and four others negotiated contracts with locals, did design work and assessments on infrastructure damaged by war.

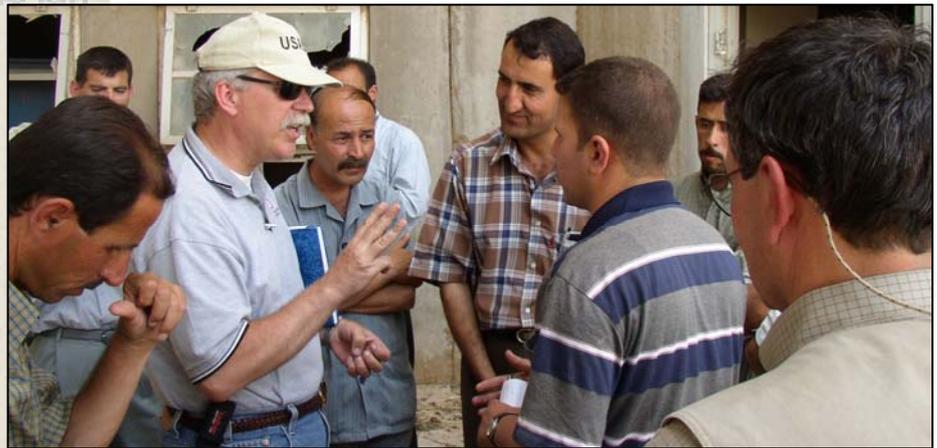
They were rebuilding villages.

His most memorable moment, "was actual work accomplishment, employing people, and seeing the gratitude in the Iraqi faces," said Marsh.

His FEST-Augmentation team traveled throughout the country restoring and repairing water purification systems, substations, culverts, roads, schools, municipalities and hospitals. In addition they did hundreds of assessments on various projects to provide efficient solutions to quickly get things up and running again.

Labor, relative to the cost of living and materials in Iraq, was inexpensive and good. Marsh said they were able to hire a local contractor to do 50 computer-aided design (CAD) drawings for \$500 USD. The Iraqis would also do design work for about \$7 a day. One project, which entailed cleaning and renovating a 300 acre prison, cost about \$3000.

"We were getting a bargain and we were helping people – and they were helping themselves," said Marsh.



FEST members Russ Broich (right front with back to camera) and Ken Cooper (white cap), explain the concept of the "Just Do It" card to the manager of the Sinjar Grain Elevator. That is why Cooper has three fingers extended. The Iraqis had not received "permission" from Baghdad to accept harvested wheat from local farmers. It was beginning to rot in the fields. Cooper explained the decision process : 1) Is it good for the customer?; 2) Is it legal and ethical?; and 3) Are you willing to be accountable for your action? Cooper indicated they already had permission to take actions on their own. That was a major departure from the previous regime's approach of asking for approval of every action, no matter how small. Cooper left his "Just Do It" card with the manager, although the manager did not speak or read English. (Photo provided by Ken Cooper)

**I-FESTs**

By late summer, they were helping themselves even more through the form of Iraqi FESTs otherwise known as I-FESTs.

David Carte, whose FEST-A team was augmented to support the Army's 4th Infantry Division, helped to interview, hire and train one of the first I-FESTs.

The idea was their FEST-A team would teach the new I-FEST to do the same types of assessments that Carte's team and others had been doing for months.

The Corps realized that by employing

and teaching the Iraqis to do engineering assessments they could become a great resource multiplier and develop competencies.

Carte's team interviewed a total of 120 Iraqis and hired a team of eight.

The talent pool was obviously there, said Carte.

"They were all educated and had engineering degrees," said Carte "and they were all very smart."

By late fall, Michael Stickler's FEST-A team, from Huntington District, representing a third rotation of their FEST would carry on the process of hiring and training an I-FEST.



Central FEST team in L-R: Leo Arbaugh, Jeff Weber (Photo provided by)



Capt. Tom Asbery and Christina Bohrmann send data of damaged bridges to Vicksburg, Miss., using a deployable Tele Video Conference system. As a part of the reach back capabilities of the Corps, they were provided with the information they requested in less than 24 hours. (Photo by Pete Corona, Europe District)



Schappie Marsh (right), visiting with locals. He was part of one of the first FEST-As that deployed at the beginning of the hostilities in Iraq. (Photo provided by Savannah District Public Affairs Office)

## What a difference a year makes...

The I-FEST that they set up, continue to work out of an office in Hilla even today.

### The multitude of FESTs

Corps FEST-A teams were scattered throughout the country. Some would support the Combine Joint Task Force-7 (CJTF-7), Task Force Fajr and Major Subordinate Commands like the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force, the Army's V Corps and 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Others supported the Coalition Provisional Authority and were dispatched by region.

The Transatlantic Center alone supported seven FEST-A teams in Iraq at any given time with teams rotating in and out of deployment approximately every four months.

In April of 2003, the Iraq Area Office (IAO) was established on Camp Victory from a couple of FEST-As that were in support of CJTF-7. They situated eight

camps in central Iraq and supported coalition military construction, did work for the New Iraqi Army and other specialized troop support contracts.

Simultaneously, the Corps had an evolving South Atlantic Division (SAD) FEST-M in country to help coordinate and stand up the, then, Corps Iraq Provisional Command (IPC).

The SAD FEST-M's first mission however was to develop a Corps agreement with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to form the Iraq Reconstruction Office (IRO). Once it was stood up the Mississippi Valley Division (MVD) took it over to work with staffing requirements.

Eventually, the IRO mission became a separate mission altogether and the IPC began staffing it with people Corps wide.

On separate missions, Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO) operated as a Southwestern Division FEST-M and Restore Iraqi Electricity (RIE) as a Lakes and River Division

FEST-M.

### Evolution of FESTs

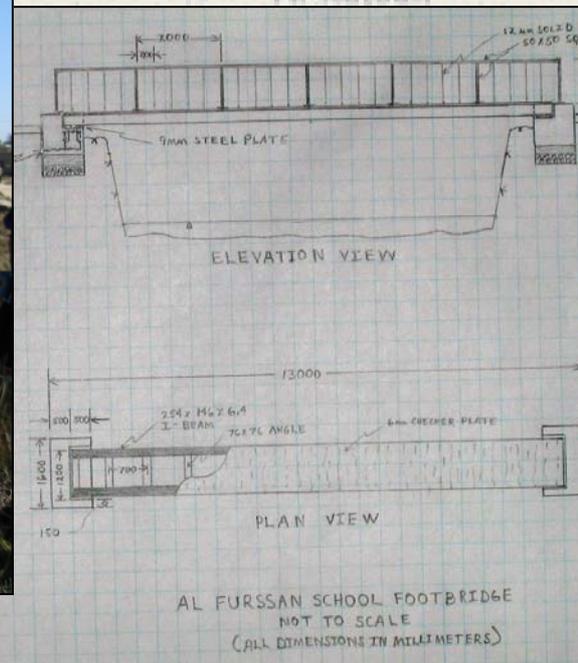
The IPC in coordination with the CPA would work towards the future plans to consolidate all of the FESTs in the field.

Located in the "green zone" of Baghdad, Iraq, the IPC would set up its operation center and identify its new home as "Essayons Base".

IPC provided localized support throughout Iraq in Mosul, Baghdad, Al Hilla and Basrah. Helping to stand up the Iraqi government in close cooperation with CPA, the IPC continued to grow and transition the FESTs under its command as planned.

A few months later, the IPC would complete the evolution by the formation of the Gulf Region Division (GRD).

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, GRD and three districts activated to bring under one structure all of the separate Corps offices and organizations which included a few still existing FESTs.



FEST successes came both in large and small projects. Here, (left) Iraqi children cross a makeshift footbridge to get to school. The construction, as shown, consisted of a couple of six inch I-beams laid on their side. FEST-A team members were told children had fallen off the bridge and drowned so they designed and constructed a new one. By talking to locals through translators, and observing behavior, capacity needs, and taking measurements, FEST-As were able to determine the types of structure that was needed (right). The Huntington District infrastructure assessment team stateside, was able to provide the designs and specifications for the Al Furssan School Footbridge. Reach back and Tele-engineering operations allow FESTs the capability to access the expertise of 35,000 Corps employees worldwide. Although relatively small to most projects undertaken by FESTs in Iraq, this project is but one example of the many goodwill improvements accomplished in Iraq, thanks to Corps teams. (Photo/image provided by Mike Stickler, Huntington District)

The district offices, Gulf Region North, Gulf Region Central, and Gulf Region South, would assume directives over IRO which was renamed USAID Project Office, IAO which was renamed the Victory Area Office, Task Force RIO which was renamed GRD RIO, and Task Force RIE which was renamed GRD RIE.

Capt. Tom Asbery was one of the last FEST-A commanders. His FEST, which was responsible for supporting mostly base construction, left Iraq on May 17. His would represent the fourth and last rotation out for his mission and just in time for the transfer of sovereignty back to the Iraqi people.

While Corps FESTs were a vital part of the recovery efforts in Iraq because of their rapid deployment and reach back capability to 35,000 Corps employees worldwide, they were never meant to be more than a temporary expeditionary force.

The plan is for the I-FESTs to continue to sustain the momentum of construction assessments towards a brighter future for Iraq.

Working hand in hand with the Iraqi people, their provisional government and CPA, GRD was designed to provide a more enduring and efficient base of support to both the U.S. and Coalition operations in Iraq.

One year later, the Corps has proven its success through its evolution and continued mission accomplishments as it cross through the threshold of transition together with the Iraqi people.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has touched the lives of every Iraqi in one way or another.

Whether it has been through restoring schools, hospitals, roads, providing clean drinking water, getting sewage off the streets, or getting the oil flowing again, and electricity to homes, the Corps has played a vital role in the recovery of Iraq.

—Maria Or

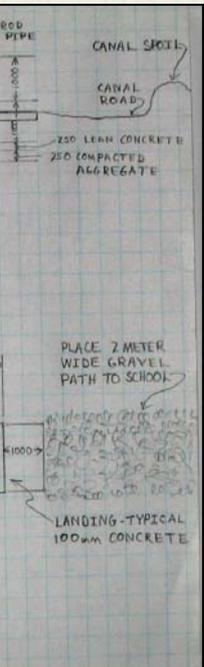


(Left) Maj. Kim Colleton, Corps FEST team leader, and Rex Isley, Director of Logistics for Vinnell, discuss plans for the new Iraq Army Training Program in Kirkuk. (Photo by Jonas Jordan, Savannah District)



(Below) Demolition specialist Ron Madden, Restore Iraqi Oil FEST-M, checks out an unexploded M-42 submunition from a 155mm artillery round. The submunitions were marked with orange spray paint and detonated in place. (Photo by Steven Wright, Huntington District)

(Below) The 4th ID-FEST-A and one of the first Iraqi-FESTs gather at the Sharqut Water Treatment Plant. (Photo provided by David Carte, Kansas City District)



—Maria Or

# Hail and Farewell

(June 14 — June 28, 2004)



**BG Thomas Bostick**  
GRD Commander  
Hailing from:  
Washington, D.C.



**CPT John Panhorst**  
GRN-Kirkuk  
Hailing from:  
Savannah District



**Tony Sijohn**  
GRN-Kirkuk  
Hailing from:  
Walla Walla District



**Bill Roberts**  
GRD Public Affairs  
Hailing from:  
Detroit District



**Michael Brown**  
GRD RMS  
Hailing from:  
LA District



**Mike McClenan**  
GRC  
Hailing from:  
Galveston District



**MAJ Gregory Baisch**  
GRD G3  
Hailing from:  
Omaha District (IMA)



**James Cullum**  
GRD Asst. Counsel  
Hailing from:  
Little Rock District



**SFC Keith Felde**  
GRD Reachback Coord.  
Hailing from:  
TAC EOC



**CPT Starr Corbin**  
CG Aide de Camp  
Hailing from:  
Ft. Hood, Texas



**Reginald Wuornos**  
GRC  
Hailing from:  
Memphis District



**Robert Boley**  
VAO Qual. Assur.  
Hailing from:  
Albuquerque District



**Darnell Baker**  
VAO Admin. Asst.  
Hailing from:  
San Francisco District



**John Baker**  
IM—GRD/VAO  
Hailing from:  
St. Louis District



**Kathy Driskill**  
E&C Admin. Asst.  
Hailing from:  
Vicksburg District



**Julio Arocho**  
Chief, CM-PCO  
Hailing from:  
HQ USACE R&D



**Frank Lands**  
UPO  
Hailing from:  
Vicksburg District



**Carlos Glover**  
GRD RM  
Hailing from:  
Dept. of Treasury



**John Kasbar**  
GRD Attorney  
Hailing from:  
Jacksonville District



**Lawrence Leahy**  
PCO—Proj. Mgr.  
Hailing from:  
Southwestern Division



**Sean Rose**  
GRD Civil Engineer  
Hailing from:  
Northwestern Division



**Robert Lewis**  
USAID/UPO  
Hailing from:  
Portland District



**Jo M. Robinson**  
Contract Specialist  
Hailing from:  
Huntsville Supt. Ctr.



**Barbara Windham**  
Adm. Asst. Const Mgt.  
Hailing from:  
New Orleans District



**MAJ John Pickering**  
G3-GRD  
Hailing from:  
Huntsville Supt. Ctr.



**William Prater**  
GRD RIE  
Hailing from:  
Seattle District



**Bill McFarland**  
GRD RIE  
Hailing from:  
Kansas City District



**Fredrick Freeman**  
RMS-SME  
Returning to:  
Los Angeles District



**Sharon McDonald**  
GRD Contracting  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**Dan Pridal**  
GRD Proj. Mgr.  
Returning to:  
Omaha District



**LTC David Press**  
Director GRD-RIE  
Returning to:  
Honolulu District



**CPT Doyle Fontenot**  
CG Aide de Camp  
Returning to:  
HQ USACE



**Edward Morente**  
RCMO Proj. Eng.  
Returning to:  
Jacksonville District



**Nola Conway**  
GRD-Public Affairs  
Returning to:  
Walla Walla District



**Thom Stan**  
GRS-Logistics  
Returning to:  
Huntington District



**Schappi Marsh**  
GRD RIE Proj. Mgr.  
Returning to:  
Savannah District



**Michael Martinez**  
GRC Proj. Eng.  
Returning to:  
Albuquerque District



**CPT Sean Egan**  
GRN-Kirkuk  
Returning to:  
Tulsa District



**T.J. Fichera**  
GRS Project Eng.  
Returning to:  
Pittsburgh District



**Nick Peschang**  
GRS QA Inspector  
Returning to:  
Rock Island District



**Kim McKnight**  
GRS COR  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Seressa Puh**  
GRS Admin Asst.  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Eddie Miller**  
GRC Proj. Engineer  
Returning to:  
Vicksburg District



**Walter Mattingly**  
GRC Mech. Eng.  
Returning to:  
Vicksburg District



**Dave McDonald**  
GRS, Deputy for Spt  
Returning to:  
Detroit District



**Dave Carte**  
GRN-Bajji  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**Ron Saunders**  
GRS F&A  
Returning to:  
Huntington District



**Jesse Pullen**  
GRS-Proj. Engineer  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Hank Maser**  
GRS-Chief, Const.  
Returning to:  
Pittsburgh District



**MAJ David Bitner**  
GRD—RIE  
Returning to:  
Ft. Bragg



**Rose Lucero**  
GRC Baghdad  
Returning to:  
Albuquerque District



**Carolyn Seaman**  
GRD-PM  
Returning to:  
Mobile District



**Gary O'Keefe**  
GRS Chief, Const.  
Returning to:  
Detroit District



**Chuck Oliver**  
GRS Resident Eng.  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Andy Harkness**  
GRS Prog. Manager  
Returning to:  
Pittsburgh District



**Terry Williams**  
GRD Env. Prot. Spec.  
Returning to:  
Mobile District



**John Weisbender**  
GRN QA Rep.  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**Robert 'Oney' Pruett**  
GRD Ops NCO  
Returning to:  
Memphis District



**Joe Chesire**  
GRS IM Spec.  
Returning to:  
Chicago District



**Jimmie Moore**  
GRN-Kirkuk  
Returning to:  
Far East District



**Erik Nelson**  
GRD RIO  
Returning to:  
Galveston District



**James McNeil**  
GRN-Kirkuk  
Returning to:  
Fort Worth District



**MG Ronald Johnson**  
GRD Commander  
Returning to:  
HQ USACE