



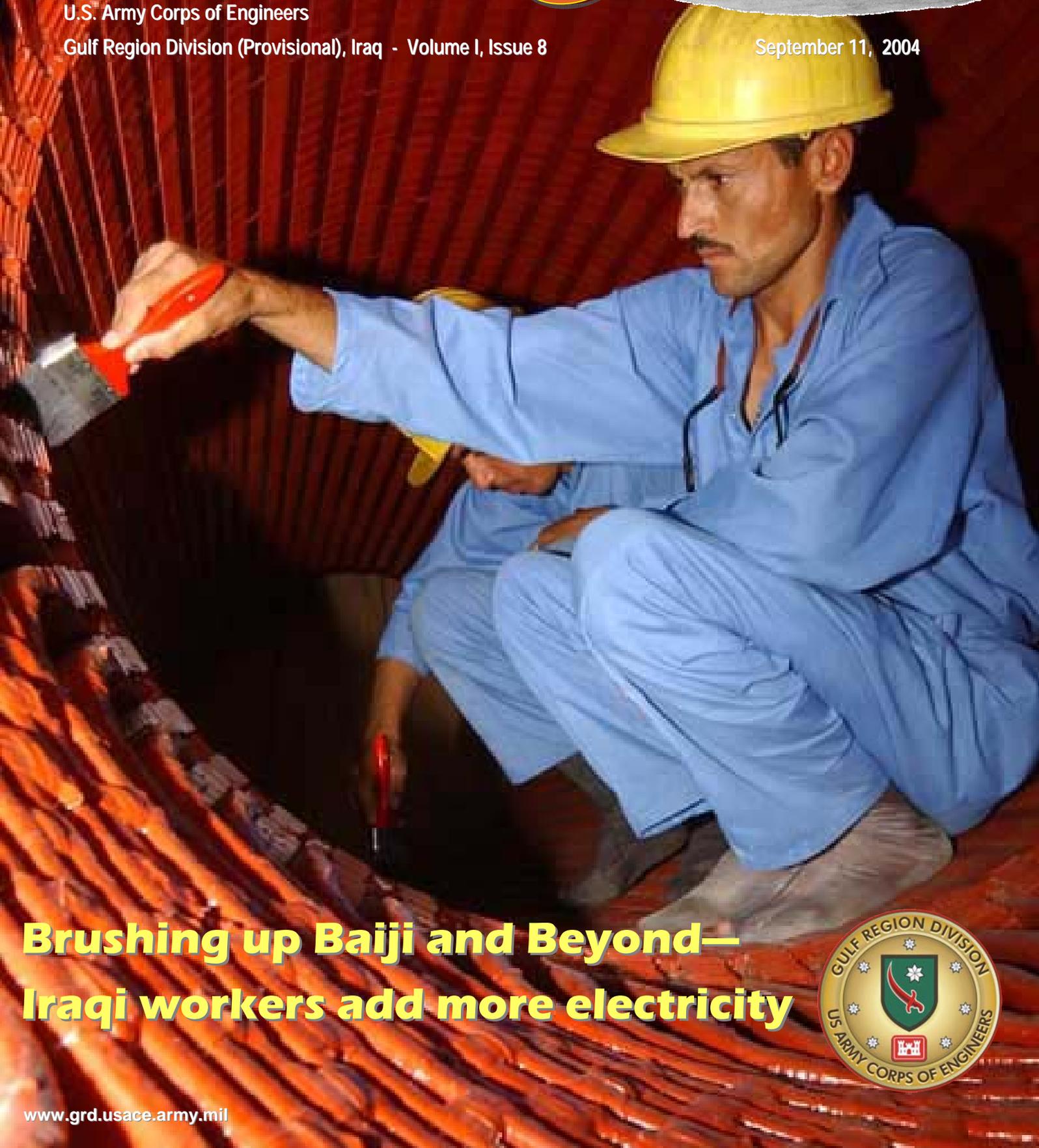
ESSAYONS

Forward

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Gulf Region Division (Provisional), Iraq - Volume I, Issue 8

September 11, 2004



**Brushing up Baiji and Beyond—
Iraqi workers add more electricity**



September 11, 2004

Volume 1, Issue 8



Essayons Forward

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Commander's Column



We planned a small ceremony here in Baghdad, Iraq, the Gulf Region Division recognizing those who lost their lives during 9-11. It is time to reflect on the fact that since that time, our country has been at war for three years. During those three years, many men and women in uniform and a number of civilians have lost their lives in the defense of freedom. The work we're accomplishing both here in Iraq and Afghanistan will have an impact on the War on Terrorism. A war we will win – no doubt.

For all of those who lost their lives, for the Iraqi people, and for all who believe in freedom and democracy, we must win this fight. And the Corps' part of the fight is with the reconstruction effort. We have a two-fold strategy. First we must rebuild the economic infrastructure of the country, and secondly, we must put Iraqis to work quickly with visible projects in their communities. We are pressing forward and making good progress with the help of the great volunteers of the United States Army Corps of Engineers. From districts, divisions, and headquarters across the Corps, your volunteerism has made all the difference. We will soon move into the major portion of the reconstruction effort, and I want to take this opportunity to tell all who have served, those who will serve, and those wearing multiple hats back home, so that others may deploy, this is a great team, executing an enormously important mission.

Since our last update, we've come a long way by adding 202 megawatts to the grid in August, started over 100 schools in time for the academic year, and began a host of border forts, police stations, hospitals and many other projects that will help Iraq live a better life. We have an ambitious goal of starting more than 1800 projects by December 2004. With this construction effort, we anticipate over 145,000 Iraqis to be working before their elections early next year.

Again, to those victims of 9-11 and all of those who have lost their lives in the fight against global terrorism, we salute you.

Essayons!

TPB

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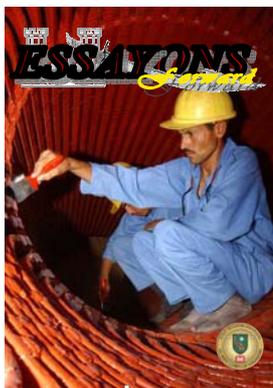
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Cover: Iraqi laborers clean a turbine housing for a generator at the Baiji Power Plant in Baiji, Iraq.

(Photo by Mitch Frazier)



New School house in Baiji compliments of Corps contractor



A new schoolhouse in Baiji, compliments of Corps' power plant contractor Washington Group International, is opened during a ceremony August 20. Capt. David Unger, a member of the 1st Infantry Division, who was deeply involved in electrical restoration work in the local Baiji area, in northern Iraq, is surrounded by local children. (Photos taken by Lt. Col. Jeff Ogden, Restore Iraqi Electricity Director)

CREST volunteer aids Iraqi mission; sees main role as good will ambassador

HIGHLIGHTING THE LEGACY OF CORPS PERSONNEL SERVING IN THEATER, A STRINGER STATESIDE FEATURE

As the sun rose over the Tigris River, a civilian Soldier relished the few quiet moments of his day sitting on the roof of his temporary “home,” before assisting the Army Corps in one of its many missions to help rebuild Iraq’s infrastructure. He didn’t climb up there for the view, which, except for the ‘green zone’ (the protected areas bordering the Tigris River) was a decaying brownish-tan landscape enveloped in sand.

“I made it a point to escape to the roof of the ‘Villa,’ as my assigned home was called, before anyone got up, to enjoy the solitude and pray,” said Jim Burch, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, Real Estate Appraiser.

There was a lot to pray about. During his recent 120-day assignment, seven out of almost 300 American Soldiers that were part of the “Red Falcon” mission were killed. Every civilian Iraqi he came in contact with had suffered family losses. The threat of death was everywhere... car bombs, missiles, land mines, trucks hiding mortars with machine guns and Improvised Explosive Devices hidden in everything from innocent-appearing concrete blocks to dead dogs along the highway. “We were told to stay in pairs, never take the same route twice and never stop,” said Burch. When traveling outside their compound, they were accompanied by gunners posted in front and back of their SUVs. It wasn’t easy living with fear of the unknown permeating everyday tasks.

“It was a surreal situation, but greatly improved from my first deployment during the war effort in the Spring of 2003,” said Burch. During that time, American civilians were required to wear NBC (Nuclear, Biochemical, Chemical) gear, a head-to-toe covered plastic uniform with a gas mask, to protect against possible biochemical warfare. As Burch prepared to deploy to Baghdad in a trailer on the Doha Military Base in Kuwait, the uneasiness of the situation was punctuated by the wail of the alert siren. “I will never forget being alone in the trailer when that haunting scream sounded,” said Burch. “Although I’d heard it many times before, it felt like the ‘Twilight Zone’ waiting alone for the ‘all clear’ call.”

To prepare for the worst, Burch, along with other Corps volunteers, took a week’s worth of defense training that included mine awareness at Fort Bliss, Texas, where they also received uniforms, gas masks and sleeping bags. However, all the preparation was a refresher course for Burch, who, as a member of the Contingency Real Estate Support Team (CREST), had already received extensive boot-camp-like training years ago and practiced what he learned as a CREST volunteer in Bosnia in 1996 and 1997.

When Corps volunteers like Burch first arrive in Iraq, they are in-processed at Doha in Kuwait, flown by C-130s to Balad and then taken by helicopter to an open field beside the Baghdad airport. They camp out under the stars until picked up for their individual assignments by fellow Corps volunteers in SUVs and trucks. “It was an incredible sight to fly aboard the helicopter and look out at total blackness because there were no lights to guide the pilot,” Burch said.

Burch bunked with 10 other volunteers at the Villa, a partially destroyed former three-story home of King Faisal. It was a 20 minute drive from the Villa to his assigned work area, a partially developed, 2000 lot subdivision, that became the U.S. Army’s forward operating base “Red Falcon.” Here, Burch working with young Iraqi translators, measured and appraised homes and searched for owners, so America could compensate the owners for commandeering their homes.

“Our translators were very helpful and intelligent young Iraqis, who made my time there pleasant by bringing fresh fruit and a popular fish dish,” said Burch. “All the Iraqis that I encountered were grateful to have us there, even a man who lost 15 family members, some to a misdirected missile.”

Burch made many friends during his recent deployment, including five U.S. Army reservists who were part of a civil affairs team living on one of the semi-restored homes at Red Falcon. “They called their dwelling, ‘The Alamo,’ because they were all from Texas, and were a perfect bunch of people to foster good will interacting with the Iraqis,” Burch said. “I marveled at the deep commitment of all the Soldiers I got a chance to see. They all had highly motivated and ready-for-anything attitudes. My Alamo friends, along with my two interpreters, Wesson and Mohammed, became my second family.”

During one of his rounds at Red Falcon, Burch had a close scare in finding what was thought to be a mine. Burch and other CREST members were cautioned about mines and unexploded ordnance while doing field work. Although the area had been swept by EOD, there was the occasional unexploded ordnance. One day, while measuring a house accompanied by a soldier assigned to Burch, he found a suspicious circular metal object with a lever on the top. It looked similar to mines



Col. Dale Knieriemen, left, deputy commander of the former Iraq Provisional Command, presents James Burch with the Civilian Service Award.

(Photos provided by Jacksonville District)

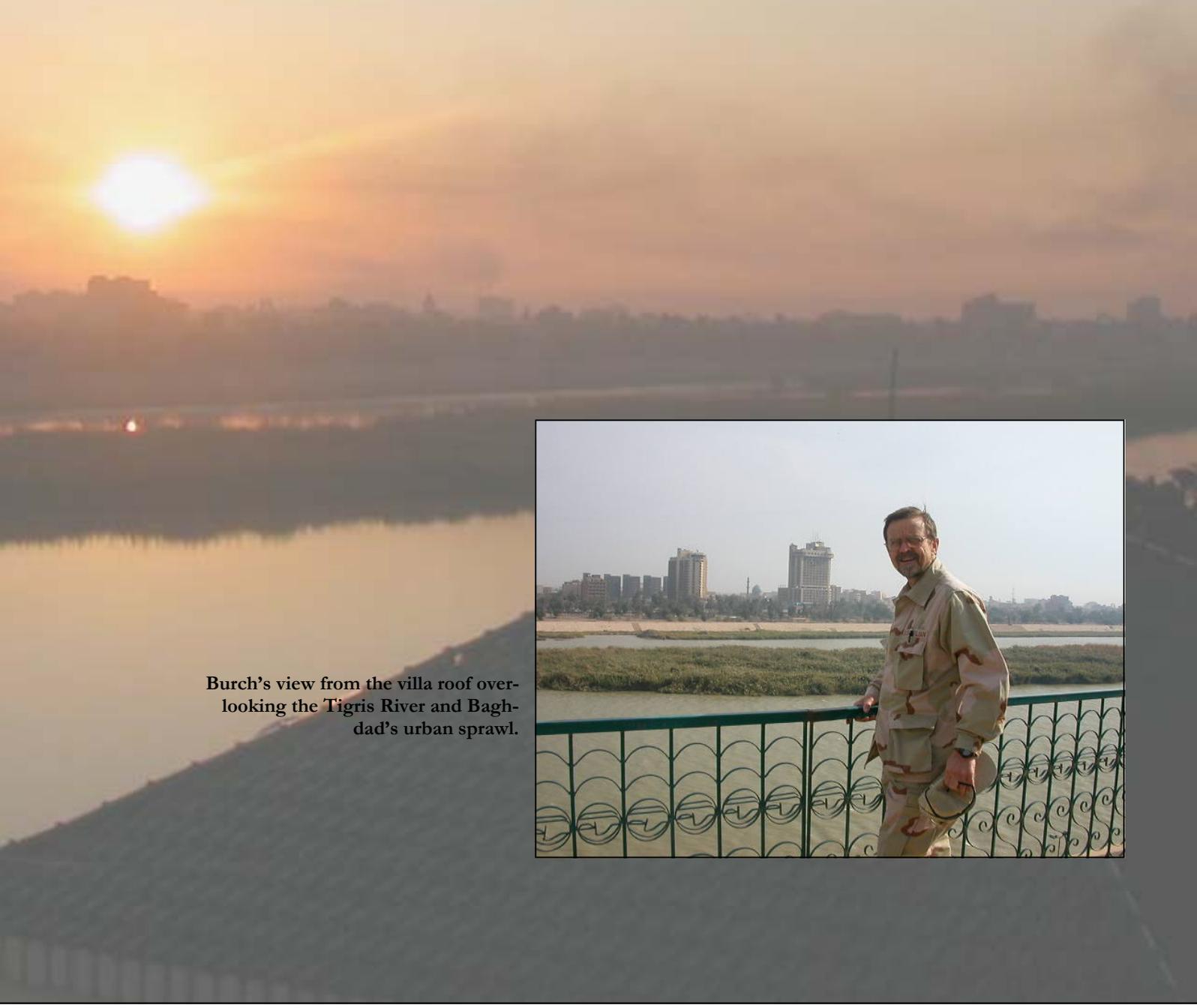
he'd seen as it ominously sat there nuzzled in the sand. "I called the soldier over and he identified it as an anti-tank mine, so we gingerly backed out stepping in our footprints and reported its position to EOD," said Burch. "A few hours later we had a good laugh at ourselves as EOD came back with the 'mine' in the back of a humvee that was identified as a part of a blown up vehicle."

Although Burch was never in the midst of any violence, it was very painful to learn of befriended Americans and Iraqis who were killed or wounded by car bombs and missiles during his stay. He couldn't help but admire several Iraqis he had spent some time with, equating them to being the 'Patrick Henry's' of their time, whom he later found out had sacrificed their lives. "Freedom is again being proven not a cheap commodity," said Burch.

Despite the danger involved, Burch is anxious to go back a third time, especially when he reads emails from CREST friends. "Just as our Chief of Engineers says, helping out in Iraq is an 'unparalleled opportunity for professional and personal development, adventure, and national service,'" said Burch. "Serving in a war-torn environment is both a sobering and enlightening experience. It's not until you visit a third world country that you truly realize how fortunate and blessed we are as Americans."

Burch views his role when volunteering as a CREST member as being a good will ambassador. "We don't get much of an opportunity in life to help one person, but in Iraq, we get to help an entire nation. Nothing is more important than that."

By Christina Swanson, Jacksonville District



Burch's view from the villa roof overlooking the Tigris River and Baghdad's urban sprawl.



A bright business future for Iraq, Corps and Iraqis meet to discuss opportunities



Billions remain in the international coffers for rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure; most earmarked for employing Iraqis to rebuild the war-torn nation's schools, hospitals and infrastructure.

Language barriers and foreign processes have prevented some of the nation's private and state-owned businesses from landing reconstruction contracts, but U.S. officials are working to bridge the gap and teach Iraqi business men and women how to get involved in what has been called the largest civil reconstruction effort in history.

Contracting officers from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division spoke July 27 to an assembly of Iraqi Ministry of Construction and Housing officials and director generals of the nation's state-owned construction companies, to familiarize the group with the U.S. contracting process.

"This is about communicating our knowledge and processes to the Iraqi people and helping to further the overall objective of peace and democracy here," said Leo Hickman, the Corps' top contracting officer in Iraq. "They have a vested interest in rebuilding this country themselves and by landing these contracts, they will have that opportunity and be able to reinvest in their own economy."

U.S.-based prime contractors have already hired thousands of local Iraqi laborers, as have Iraqi private and state-owned enterprises. However, Hickman and other U.S. officials want to see the number of Iraqis employed increase.

Brig. Gen. Thomas Bostick, commander of the Gulf Region Division, addresses the Minister of Construction and Housing and an assembly of Iraqi Ministry of Construction and Housing officials July 27 to familiarize the group with the U.S. contracting process.

(Photos by Mitch Frazier)

“This is critically important because the key nuts and bolts issue is to get the Iraqis in the position to understand how to bid for and secure construction contracts,” said Roliff Purrington, a senior U.S. State Department consultant charged with serving as the primary contact between the U.S. government and the Ministry of Construction and Housing. “If they can go to work that solves a lot of their problems and helps us execute the \$18 billion supplemental budget.”

The only way that gap will be closed and the execution of those projects will go forward is if the Iraqi side understands how to bid in the context of what we consider modern bidding and proposal process, he said.

Instantaneous email solicitations common in the tech-savvy states, are foreign to the Iraqi private and state-owned enterprises, as are the voluminous two- to three-inch thick U.S. proposal packages required for bidding.

“These people are used to getting two or three pages with a list of quantities and specifications,” said Purrington. “The time for bidding is shorter in the U.S. context than it is in this context, and the language and cultural barrier add to the difficulty for the Iraqis to do business with the U.S.”

Flanked by an Iraqi interpreter and a presentation screen, Hickman explained the Corps’ mission in the Iraqi reconstruction efforts and walked the business owners and ministry officials through the contracting process from statement of work to contract award.

“This was helpful,” said an Iraqi engineer who withheld his name for fear of becoming a target of anti-Iraqi forces. “We still have a long way to go and learning needs to continue on both sides to make this successful.”

Security for Iraqi engineers and members of the ministry working to rebuild the nation is a concern that continues to make headlines. At least six ranking Iraqi government officials have been slain this year.

“It’s not glamorous or high-profile in a media sense to see people going to training sessions and talking about how to rebuild the country,” Purrington said. “There is a lot of courage associated with this. There are a lot of quietly inspirational things going on in these training sessions that are helping the people of Iraq.”

The ministry officials who attended the session oversee the construction and

maintenance of the country’s 4,500 km of roads, expressways and 1,250 bridges; public buildings and public housing.

All were quick to ask how they could bid on work associated with the more than 2,000 infrastructure construction and rehabilitation projects remaining to be finished in the country.

The questions, most of which were translated from Arabic, focused on the gap between U.S. business processes and the preferred way of doing business in the Middle Eastern country.

The work available for the Iraqi businesses runs the gamut from intense manual labor to high tech engineering, a spectrum common in the country that remains heavily rooted in relationships fueled by state-owned enterprises.

The nearly 200 state-owned enterprises in Iraq associated with the nation’s ministries knew little of competition and free market prior to the introduction of the concept by the Coalition Provisional Authority shortly after the end of major hostilities last year.

Iraqi business owners and director generals of the nation’s state-owned enterprises were then forced to leave behind the notion of awarding contracts based upon friendships and handshakes, and were required to compete for business in a fair and open process.

“We are not trying to force our system upon them,” said Chris Tew, Hickman’s deputy contracting officer in Iraq. “We are being responsible to the American tax payer and ensuring the U.S. tax dollars spent over here are awarded through a legal process that is fair and is compliant with the laws that govern the use of the money.”

Although the Corps had met with business leaders in Baghdad earlier in the year, the meeting Tuesday marked the first time the agency met with ministry officials in an effort to bolster the number Iraqi contractors for reconstruction work.

—Mitch Frazier

An Iraqi female business owner takes notes as Leo Hickman, GRD contracting chief, familiarizes the Ministry of Construction and Housing with the U.S. contracting process.



Finding future power

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been working to provide resources for the Iraqi people including water, electricity and ways to build a strong economy. Though millions of dollars in renovation and construction have been completed and many new projects are already beginning the Gulf Region Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers continues to look for new and better ways to provide vital services to the people. One such mission was recently completed as engineers from the Restore Iraqi Electricity Directorate did an assessment of Bekhme Multi-purpose Dam in Northern Iraq.

Finding new resources is an important step in rebuilding the nation. Immediately after the war ended, Forward Engineering Support Teams (FEST) were sent throughout Iraq to identify critical projects and begin prioritizing what needed to be done to get vital services restored to the people.

The initial assessment of Bekhme Dam was conducted by the C. Lotti & Associates of Italy in April. They determined that the site showed promise but recommended detailed economic, environmental and other assessments before resuming the project. The R.I.E. engineers traveled to the far Northern reaches of Iraq to further explore possibilities of finishing the dam project that had been abandoned many years ago.

"In order for us to provide an accurate assessment to the Iraqi government, we felt it was necessary to bring our experts to the site and see the dam's potential for ourselves, said Maj. Eric Stor, Operations Officer for the R.I.E. Directorate. "This will be a significant decision for the new government and we owe it to them to provide the most accurate assessment possible."

The Bekhme Multi-Purpose Dam project was originally awarded to a Russian company nearly 20 years ago, but was abandoned when Iraq invaded Kuwait. The dam was approximately 30 percent complete and was considered the most significant and vital infrastructure component needed to secure the future of Iraq according to John Hunter, the Deputy Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Water Resources in November 2003.

The dam would serve many purposes including electricity generation of more than 1500 Megawatts, irrigation for much of southern Iraq including control of more than 17 billion cubic meters of water storage, flood control to protect cities and villages and would give Iraq control of the only major non-controlled tributary into this country. Other benefits include

potential for recreational development, creation of numerous jobs, increased fishing and tourism industry and significant economic development for the area.

Bekhme was to be a Rock Filled Dam 230 meters high and 570 meters long. The Greater ZAB River would provide water for the new reservoir if the project is completed.

Though the possibility of generating new electricity is a priority for the new government, the potential for Iraq to control water for irrigation during the summer months is extremely important as well. The long dry summers in Iraq often leave farmers at the mercy of Turkey and Syria as to how much water will be

This initial assessment doesn't mean construction is definitely going to take place. A cost-benefit ratio will be completed and submitted to the new Iraq government for consideration. Experts from various agencies will have to do more detailed studies on the dam as well.

"Some specific considerations have to be given to geology since drilling tunnels through different types of rock and clay may mean special requirements for structural integrity," said Bill McFarland, a geologist and Program Manager for the Restore Iraqi Electricity Directorate. "This would be an incredible project to be part of," he added. "We just don't build dams like this in the U.S. any more.

Environmental experts would look at the impact to various species currently living in the area and to other ecological impacts in the region as well.

"We want to be sure that all the impacts are carefully considered before making a recommendation," said Dr. Larry Lynch, Deputy Director of the R.I.E. Directorate. "Although we are excited about the many benefits a project like this can provide, we want to be sure we won't be causing more harm to Iraq and it's people in the future."

The site is near Aqrah, almost at the Turkish border, and would be a great way to increase tourism in Iraq as well. The scenery is beautiful and the dam would make a sizeable lake for recreation. The very deep water would be ideal for fishing, boating and other activities that could draw people in from around Iraq and other nearby nations significantly improving the local and national economy.

Of course building the project would be very costly up front. It could take more than 2 billion dollars and up to seven years before it would be complete. The economic benefits through additional jobs would be realized immediately and the cost could be split over several years making the project more economically feasible for the new free Iraq.

As the recommendation on Bekhme Dam is finalized and forwarded to the government, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will continue searching for other opportunities to provide vital services to the people of Iraq.

— Bill Roberts

Dr. Larry Lynch, Restore Iraqi Electricity Directorate, inspects one of several tunnels started at Bekhme Dam prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

(Photos by Bill Roberts)



A security team finishes a sweep of the cave before Maj. Erik Stor, RIE operations officer, leads the assessment personnel deeper into the tunnels. Security remains part of all operations for Corps personnel even in areas that are considered safe.



Above: Bill McFarland, (left) a RIE program manager and former geologist, examines the structural content of the caves. A series of detailed assessments must be completed before a final decision is made on the project.

Right: Some of the tunnels at Bekhme were not completed and require extensive excavation before hydroelectric, irrigation and flood control potential of the site can be fully realized.

A month of new power success

August 4, 2004

The people of Iraq woke up to more power this morning as a new generator came on line bringing the country an additional 20 Megawatts of electrical generation.

The addition of the generator at the Baiji Power Plant in north central Iraq is the first of many slated to come on line this month.

"This marks yet another step forward for the Iraqi people and provides them with additional power," said Lt. Col. Jeffery Ogden, Director of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Restore Iraqi Electricity Directorate. "We will continue to work alongside the Iraqis and help them build a solid foundation for the future of the nation."

"Electricity is a commodity that is extremely important in ensuring the well-being of Iraq," he said.

Since beginning its work in the country nearly a year ago, the Corps has added an additional 1392 Megawatts to the Iraqi national grid.

"It's the hard work and dedication of the Minister of Electricity, the Iraqi workforce and the members of the multinational team that are making these advances possible," said Maj. Erik Stor, operations officer for the Corps's RIE Directorate. "So many have made Herculean efforts to bring more electricity to Iraq, and we are now seeing the fruits of that labor."

"We will not falter in delivering the new Iraq a modern infrastructure," Stor said. "Anti-Iraqi forces continue to conduct operations to disrupt reconstruction efforts; however, the resolve of the Iraqi people and the brave men and women of the Corps and the Multinational Force remain committed to freeing the country from anti-Iraqi forces intent on obstructing the country's progress."

August 9, 2004

Engineers from Iraq and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have breathed new life into a generator near Kirkuk, bringing an additional 17 Megawatts of electricity to the country's power grid.

The renovation of the generator at the Mullah Abdullah power plant, located 265

km north of Baghdad, is the fifth at the plant to be rehabilitated by Iraqi and Corps engineers.

Since the regime change, Iraqi and Corps engineers have worked to stabilize the country's neglected electrical infrastructure, increasing electricity production to a level that exceeds pre-war provisions.

"Electricity is an essential element of a safe and secure Iraq," Ogden said. "With electricity, medicines can be refrigerated, air conditioners can cool homes and lights can remain on to protect homes from darkness."

Electricity production in the country averages approximately 4,625 MW, a total that services an estimated 13.9 million Iraqi homes.

The demand for electricity in Iraq continues to grow, according to a fact sheet published by the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity.

"With more than half a million new jobs created, new industries and new factories coming on line and with the sale of thousands of home appliances such as washing machines and air conditioners, Iraq has experienced a rapid increase in electricity demand," the fact sheet reads.

"The increase in demand is a good sign of a thriving economy emerging from three decades of isolation. "As demand increases, the Ministry of Electricity will continue to increase the nation's available power," according to the sheet.

Since beginning its work in the country nearly a year ago, the Corps has added an additional 1,409 Megawatts to the Iraqi national grid.

August 15, 2004

For the third time in two weeks, Iraqi and U.S. engineers have brought more electricity to the people of Iraq by commissioning a power plant in Southern Iraq.

The 52 Megawatt generator at the Khor Az Zubayr Power Plant, located 40 kilometers south of Basrah, fired for the first time today, bringing enough power online to service 156,000 Iraqi homes.

"This is a very important step in overcoming the power shortage across the country," said Raad Shalal, a senior Iraqi Ministry of Electricity official. "This will

help us reach our goal of increasing power for the country."

Electricity production in the country averages approximately 5,000 MW, a total that exceeds pre-war levels and services an estimated 15 million Iraqi homes.

Since regime change, much of the news in Baghdad has focused on the availability of less power in the capital city, a focus Stor said is misleading.

"It is important to remember that Baghdad was one of few cities across this nation that had electrical service prior to the regime change," he said. "Within months of freeing the Iraqi people from the Saddam rule, power was redistributed to help build a fair and equitable national power system for Iraq and its future."

August 18, 2004

The first new electricity generator since 1976 came online today in Southern Iraq, adding enough electricity to the national grid to service nearly 120,000 homes.

The 40 Megawatt generator located near Basrah fills a void in the Maysan Governorate, which was previously isolated from the Iraqi national grid.

The commissioning of the generator marks the fourth time in three weeks Iraqi and U.S. engineers have brought additional electricity to the national grid.

Construction of the generator began nearly 10 months ago when senior Iraqi and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials identified the site and began building a power station in what was then a sandy rock-laden field.

"A lot of work went into this from the scraping of the earth, to pouring of the concrete to placing the generator; it makes you really appreciate the magnitude of work that was done by Iraqi and Corps engineers to make today possible," said Stor. "The electricity this new produces will offer the Iraqi people a long-term aid in bettering the safety and security of this country."

Electricity production in the country continues to climb to more than 5,200 MW, a total that exceeds pre-war levels and services an estimated 15.3 million Iraqi homes.

stories for Corps projects in Iraq

August 22, 2004

The Iraq electrical grid can service an additional 84,000 homes today thanks to a new generator in Southern Iraq.

The 23-Megawatt generator at the Nasiriya Power Station near Al Amarah came on line today and is the second new power station in the country built from scratch by Iraqi and American engineers.

“This is very good news,” said Raad Shalal, a senior Iraq Ministry of Electricity official. “This will help to reduce the shortage of electricity across the country.”

Iraq and U.S. engineers have reduced the shortage this month, adding 152 Megawatts to the national grid to bring the national total to more than 5,200 Megawatts – enough to service 15.6 million Iraqi homes.

The commissioning of the generator marks the fifth time in Aug. that Iraqi and Corps engineers have brought additional electricity on line for the country.

“We and the Corps continue to work as one team,” Shalal said. “They are doing a great job, not just on this project but across the country as well.”

Since beginning its work in the country nearly a year ago, the Corps has added an additional 1,524 Megawatts to the Iraqi national grid.

August 29, 2004

An electricity generator that had fallen into disrepair after two decades of neglect and war is back on line this morning in northern Iraq, producing enough electricity to service 51,000 Iraqi homes.

The 17-Megawatt generator at the Mullah Abdullah Power Station in the Tameem Governorate is the sixth generator that Iraqi and U.S. engineers have brought on line this month.

Iraq and U.S. engineers have reduced the shortage this month, adding 169 Megawatts to the national grid bringing the national total to more than 5,300 Megawatts – enough to service 15.6 million Iraqi homes, which far exceeds the pre-war electricity level of 4,400 Megawatts.

Since beginning its work in the country nearly a year ago, the Corps has added an additional 1,541 Megawatts to the Iraqi national grid.

August 30, 2004

A new generator is turning this afternoon in central Iraq, producing enough electricity to service nearly 100,000 Iraqi homes.

The 33-Megawatt generator at the Qudas Power Station north of Baghdad is the seventh generator Iraqi and U.S. engineers have brought on line this month, bringing the national electricity capacity to more than 5,300 Megawatts – a level that exceeds the country’s pre-war capacity of 4,400 Megawatts.

Since beginning its work in the country nearly a year ago, the Corps has added an additional 1,574 Megawatts to the Iraqi national grid.

August 31, 2004

Red, white and black Iraqi flags ripple in the desert wind atop the six new electricity generators at the Qudas Power Plant north of Baghdad as teams of Iraqi laborers work to bring the generators online.

The whine of the turbine in the third unit from the end is the sound of progress for Iraqi and U.S. engineers. It’s the first of the six to produce electricity at the site, a site that grew from the desert floor in the past eleven months.

“The flags are something (the Iraqis) put up to show pride in their work and for their country,” said Ron Bertram a project manager with the Army Corps of Engineers at the site. “What they are doing here is huge not only for themselves but for their country, and they know it.”

Nearly \$150 million is being poured into the site by the Iraqi government to bring the six new generators online, an effort that when complete will produce 516 Megawatts and service 1.5 million Iraqi homes.

The site is one of seven that Iraqi and U.S. engineers have brought on line in August, adding 202 Megawatts to the national electrical grid – a total that will fuel 606,000 Iraqi homes and brings the total available electricity in the country to

5,300 Megawatts far exceeding the pre-war level of 4,400.

“This month alone, we have added enough to fuel more than half a million homes, and we are looking at more units coming on line next month,” he said. While the waning of fighting in war-torn Najaf offers a glimmer of hope for the new Iraq, a religious leader in another of Iraq’s battleground cities said more electricity could be the answer to quelling violence across the country.

“The people of Iraq need electricity; it is the number one thing,” said a Sadr City sheik who asked to remain unnamed. “When Iraqis can come home, turn on the lights in an air-conditioned home and are able to watch television, they will set down their weapons and quit fighting. “Who would want to go out and fight when you can sit in an air-conditioned house?” he said.

Linkage between a safe and secure Iraq and the availability of electricity prompted the multi-national effort that began in 2003 to restore the country’s electricity.

“The work began in 2003 paved the path for what we are doing today,” said Stor. “The plants coming on line now are a direct result of the hard work and commitment that began more than a year ago to deliver for the Iraqi people.”

“We continue to work with the Iraqi government to help them establish a fair and equitable electricity distribution and generation system that would allow all of Iraq to enjoy the modern conveniences electricity brings,” Stor said. “This means giving power to some in the most remote areas of the country, while cutting back electricity in areas like Baghdad that was accustomed to uninterrupted service.”

While creation and maintenance of the generation and distribution system continues, Stor said the future for Iraq looks brighter every day as more electricity generators come on line to service the country.

“This is the most electricity on the national grid Iraq has seen for more than a decade,” he said. “As the Ministry and the multinational team continue to bring more generation sites on line, the people of Iraq will have more electricity.”

--Mitch Frazier

Saving Sayf...

HIGHLIGHTING THE LEGACY OF CORPS PERSONNEL SERVING IN THEATER, A STRINGER STATESIDE FEATURE

Nobody knew his last name or where he lived. All anyone seemed to know was that in a country decimated by war, where poverty and political instability still crippled much of the population, a 10-year-old boy put a face on who America fights for in Iraq. He became tangible proof of what the efforts of employees of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers can mean to people in a country a half a world away.

Cathey Robertson, a contracting officer with Baltimore District, arrived in Iraq last October excited to contribute her professional skills to the War on Terrorism. She left in March touched by the kinship she had found with the boy.

During her stay, after adjusting to life on a military compound, Robertson became friends with two Corps employees—Marjorie Courtright, Tulsa District, and Katie Brasfield, Europe District; and with two other women—Jackie Farmer and Judy Burke with contractor Kellogg, Brown and Root, or KBR. Robertson worked closely with all of them in the Restoring Iraqi Oil mission, or RIO, which included repairing pipelines, helping

to get oil refineries up and working and importing fuel from Kuwait, Jordan and Turkey for humanitarian purposes.

Robertson said that their missions were challenging, with grueling seven-day workweeks and 10-to 13-hour workdays, all under a skyline of sandstorms and artillery bombings. In the middle of all of this, the five friends met a 10-year-old boy who redefined their mission.

Sayf, pronounced "safe," appeared to them as a skinny, hungry and enthusiastic boy who had no real home. He attached himself to Robertson and her friends, along with many others in the compound. For Robertson, Courtright and the others, he embodied the full scope of why they were there. His constant enthusiasm against a backdrop of constant war became a source of motivation.

"He slept most nights in a guard shack or on sidewalks, wrapped up in a sleeping bag provided by the U.S. military who were guarding the compound," said Robertson.



Sayf rides a bike given to him as a gift by Robertson and her friends.

(all photos by Marjorie Courtright).

His poverty sparked their sympathy.

“He was so friendly...so alive,” she said. “He lit up my day, especially when I saw him at 6 a.m. lying on the ground between the two hotels we lived in, bundled within a sleeping bag a soldier had given him or inside the back of the Bradley with the ‘guys.’”

The women are uncertain of Sayf’s history, other than stories that his parents beat him and wouldn’t let him into the house at night unless he brought home money. No adult ever came to claim him.

Despite his desperate situation, his spirit never faltered. His hope for a brighter future provided a source of inspiration, according to many of his new friends who also began to view him as family.

“I thought he was a gift from heaven to us to take away the fact that we were away from our families,” said Courtight.

Unfortunately, Sayf was just one of dozens of children who struggled to survive. Seeing how life challenged Sayf and other children around the compound, a small group formed to help Sayf and others like him by sponsoring a clothing and school supplies drive.

“The small group of us at RIO Palestine, plus the contractor folks from KBR, got together and asked our family and friends at home to send clothes, school supplies and toys for us to hand out to the Iraqi kids,” Courtight said. “At first, we intended to give them to the local kids at the entrance to the hotel complex, but things got a little hairy there to do that safely. So we hooked up with the Army and gave some for the orphanages in Baghdad and to the west.”

Over the next few months, the team of Corps employees, contractors and friends collected more than 85 boxes of clothes and school supplies and distributed them to the Iraqi children in the area. The Contracting Division in Baltimore alone sent four boxes.

“We have no census, but probably there are thousands of (orphans),” Huda Raphael, an advisor to the Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Services, said in Stars and Stripes. “Kids who hang around the Palestine or Sheraton are just the tip of the iceberg.”

Until the 1980s Iran-Iraq war, homeless children were rare, added Raphael. But that war left thousands of widows in grinding poverty, and more war and sanctions throughout the 1990s worsened their lives. The United Nation’s Children’s Fund said that the number of homeless children in Baghdad rose last year after the U.S. invasion began, and services for them remained nearly nonexistent.

In the Stars and Stripes article, Sayf said that he had brothers and sisters and a mother, but that she wouldn’t let him come home unless he brought back \$50 dollars each day.

As with the military, Corps employees serve their tour on rotation. No sooner had Sayf grown to care about his new American family than it was time for them to return to the United States.

“One sergeant wanted to take him home,” Robertson said.

When the time came for Robertson to leave Iraq, she said that Sayf ran alongside of the car waving, a puzzled frown on his face.

“He didn’t want to say goodbye,” Robertson said. “And neither did I.”

—Christopher Augsburger, Baltimore District



According to Robertson, the sparkle in Sayf’s eyes is evident in this photo taken at a holiday party in Baghdad.

Cathy Robertson and Sayf pose for a picture in the Sheraton-Palestine Hotel.





Baltimore ‘bean-counters’ in Baghdad

They left the United States with 120 days worth of belongings stuffed into two duffel bags, 14 hours of flying ahead and little knowledge of what awaited them on the other side of the world.

When they arrived in Kuwait, they received flack jackets and boarded a C-130 bound for downtown Baghdad. Once on the ground their escorts issued them additional protective gear before joining an Army convoy headed into the heart of the city. For the next four months Walt Garman and Dean Hall, a Systems Accountant and Project Manager from the Resource Management Division of Baltimore District provided their expertise in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

During that time Garman and Hall lived within five square miles of a highly secure territory in central Baghdad called the Green Zone. It was used as the headquarters of the U.S.-led occupation authority.

“I reached a point in my life and career where I asked myself what I did to make a difference?” said Hall of his reasoning for volunteering to serve in Iraq. Garman echoed Hall’s sentiments, while both remarked on an overwhelming need to positively impact the lives of others. Over the next four months, they would experience the culture, the people and the dangers of Iraq, exposing them to the bloody realities of war as well as the merciful face of humanity.

But the motivation for embarking on such an adventure went beyond career fulfillment. Each carried with them a deeper and more personal investment in this journey. For Hall, he said he needed to fulfill a sense of adventure, while at the same time allowing a patriotic desire to support the Army guide him.

“Four months is a small price to pay compared to the time and sacrifice that our soldiers pay every day to make our country safer and help the people of Iraq,” said Hall.

To a lesser extent, this experience also presented him with an opportunity to fully appreciate the U.S. Armed Forces. Hall, who grew up with a fascination of the military and all its nuances,

enjoyed the chance to work with and around high-tech military equipment, and live among the traditions and life-style of the military.

Garman’s reason touched a little too close to home to ignore. At the time of his deployment, his two sons were already overseas fighting in Afghanistan as Marine Corps soldiers.

“They were in it, so there was no reason why I couldn’t do my part,” said Garman.

With seeds of desire firmly planted in their minds, the Coalition Provisional Authority of Iraq, or CPA, made a request to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that seemed tailor-made for Garman and Hall. The CPA needed some proven experts to install and train users on the Corps of Engineers Financial Management System, or CEFMS – a software capable of managing and directing the more than \$18.65 billion allocated to rebuild Iraq’s infrastructure. CEFMS wasn’t just a system with which Garman and Hall were familiar, but they had already done virtually the same system implementation and user training in their district. They understood the full capabilities of the system and knew the importance its role would play in the rebuilding Iraq’s infrastructure.

Aside from its ability to manage a high volume of money, projects and users remotely, CEFMS has the advantage of incredible speed, according to Hall and Garman. This allows contractors to rebuild pipelines, restore electricity and reconstruct any other facilities in the region in a relative instant.

“The rate at which the work had to be done was incredible,” said Garman. “They had to be done in a fraction of the time that it normally takes to do these types of projects.”

With 14-hour workdays and 7-day workweeks, Garman and Hall became entrenched in their work, sharing a modest trailer at night and eating in the mess hall among other soldiers and civilians in the Green Zone, all with “mortars and rockets whizzing overhead.” Soon though, those moments blended into the background.

Walt Garman (left) and Dean Hall (right) pose in front of a U.S. tank located in the middle of the Green Zone in Downtown Baghdad.

(Photos provided by Dean Hall, Baltimore District)

“After a while, you become desensitized to those things,” said Hall.

During the next four months, bouncing around from offices in Baghdad, Mosul and Basra, Garman and Hall experienced all of Iraq, from the sights to the culture and people, and they saw it all first-hand. Their vision of Iraq didn’t match the anger and hostility that television and print media had portrayed.

“During jogs around the Green Zone, I came across lots of Iraqi children who would wave and want to hold my hand as I ran,” said Hall. Both he and Garman described a city and country that expressed a deep appreciation for America, one by one, in both word and deed.

“Thousands of Iraqis worked with us in the Green Zone,” said Garman. “Many of them knew relatives or friends who had been tortured by Saddam and were glad to see him go.”

Admittedly, Garman said that some residents were frustrated with the rate at which the Iraqi infrastructure was being rebuilt, but never showed any sense of anger or displeasure with the Americans.

“They were all polite, respectful, and seemed supportive of what’s been done,” said Garman.

“Being there, in that environment, to separate fact from fiction, that was all important to me,” said Hall.

While the reaction of many of the Iraqi citizens proved refreshing and positive, it could not diminish the glaring price of freedom. A contractor with whom they worked suffered a severe injury to the head from a rocket-propelled grenade. Hall and Garman decided to pay him a visit to the Army hospital outside of the Green Zone. There, they witnessed a sight that won’t soon leave their memory.

“We saw just a tremendous amount of shot Iraqis, both for and against the United States. But we were impressed by the first rate care that the Army hospital provided to all of the wounded,” said Hall and Garman.

“It was a very sobering sight,” they said.

One sight that warmed the hearts of Garman and Hall and showed the human face of the war was in a school that another Corps employee from St. Louis District had ‘adopted’ to support. Robert Pruett coordinated an ad hoc program that solicited donations, supplies and other necessary items to help a local school teach many of the children of the Green Zone (*See Essayons Forward Vol. 1, #5*). It didn’t take long for others to notice.

“Much of what was initially collected was formed with his own money, but cash, chalk, books and other supplies got donated,” said Hall, whose wife helped with contributions to the school.

For Hall and Garman, participating in this make shift school seemed to represent a sort of microcosm of why they volunteered to serve in Iraq in the first place.

“Most of the kids wanted to touch my hand,” said Hall. “It felt really good to know that we could have that kind of impact on these people’s lives.”

Hall, Garman and the other Corps of Engineers employees, contractors and soldiers took a demolished palace and transformed it into a place of education, much like the allied forces are across the country of Iraq.

“It is easy to work an entire career and wonder if what you did had any impact or importance,” said Garman.

Perhaps both he and Hall will wonder no more.

—**Christopher Augsburger, Baltimore District**

The former headquarters for the Coalition Provisional Authority is located at this palace in Baghdad, just off the Tigris River.





Corps' cop teaches Iraqi police

Deploying to train Soldiers is nothing new for 45-year-old Matt Breeding, an Army Reserve major and military police officer from Oldtown, Md. After a nearly 27-year career in the Military Police Corps and 22 years as a Maryland State trooper, Breeding had become one of the Army's top cops in security and keeping Soldiers and their belongings safe.

Nearly seven months after major hostilities were declared over in Iraq, the Army called upon Breeding's expertise to help secure the rank and file of the world's largest public engineering organization operating in the war-torn country – the Soldiers and Civilians of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The Corps had already sent hundreds of its civilian volunteers and military officers to Iraq to rebuild the depressed and devastated country when Breeding was forced to step back into his Army combat boots in November 2003 and report to Washington D.C., where he would lead the Corps' Anti-Terrorism and Force Protection planning in the agency's Provost Marshal's Office.

Breeding, who had taught at the Maryland State Police Academy and also served as the lead officer of the Army Re-

serve's curriculum to instruct military police, was at home in Washington teaching classes to the Corps' leadership and coordinating the safe movement of the initial Corps reconstruction efforts in Iraq.

"It was a perfect marriage for me," said Breeding, a husband and father of three. "Teaching and planning are certainly my strengths, and the opportunity at the Corps allowed me to do both."

In less than a month in his D.C. office, Breeding became well known around the beltway for his work in keeping Corps employees safe in Iraq. His work drew the attention of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program and prompted a request for Breeding to deploy to Iraq to work on the front-lines of bolstering security for Corps personnel and other U.S. interests.

As the agency worked to enlist Breeding's expertise, the Corps' director of Homeland Security, Edward Hecker, was also seeking opportunities for the Corps to liaison with other federal agencies involved in the Global War on Terrorism in Iraq.

The fit, Breeding said, was perfect.

Maj. Matt Breeding, a reserve military police officer activated to support the Corps' force protection in Iraq, teaches senior Iraqi police officers the basics of policing.

(Photo by Mitch Frazier)

“A properly instructed police force free from political and military control is the backbone of any free democracy.”
—Breeding

He soon found himself in Baghdad serving on the Iraqi Ministry of Interior’s Civilian Police Assistance Training Team, an interagency and international group of law enforcement officials charged with teaching the new Iraqi police force how to restore and maintain law and order in the newly freed country.

“The Corps is spending and managing an incredible amount of money in country to restore the infrastructure and to keep its people here on the ground safe,” Breeding said from his Baghdad office. “By investing in teaching the new Iraqi police forces, we will increase security here and allow everyone to further concentrate efforts on building a solid foundation for the Iraqi people to build upon.”

Sitting beside special agents from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Federal Bureau of Investigation and officials from the Department of State, Breeding works 14- to 18-hour days building curriculum that will teach the squads of new Iraqi police the philosophies and principles of democratic policing and human rights.

“We used to focus on how to deal with the enemy, because our police force operated like the military. We didn’t focus on the criminal aspect or human rights,” said Maj. Gen. Jihan Baban, the second in command of training at the newly established Iraq Ministry of Interior. “Now we focus on the police officer’s duty to serve and protect and to protect human rights.”

Building upon international policing standards from the United Nations and the European Union, Breeding and his team continue to evolve the 320-hour new basic police training to include everything from criminal investigations, counterterrorism, site security, executive protection, firearms training, kidnapping investigations, post-blast investigations and human rights.

The course, he said, will help bridge the gap between former Iraqi police officers and the new program graduates and that will eventually fill the country’s 396 police stations and more than 250 border patrol check points.

“It is critical we develop a sustainable system for the new Iraqi police force from the top down,” said Denver Fleming, the team’s director of training for law enforcement and former Smyrna Beach, Fla., police chief. “A properly instructed police

force free from political and military control is the backbone of any free democracy.

“Without it, you don’t have true law enforcement . . . you have what was here before, and clearly we know that doesn’t work,” Fleming said.

While Fleming and Breeding continue to develop the new Iraqi police force, it won’t be a short-lived effort.

“This is about building long-term, comprehensive and sustainable law enforcement organization and program that will include police and border and highway patrol,” Breeding said.

The long-term portion of the training is where Breeding currently focuses most of his time, as he now serves as the deputy director of training and bureau chief for specialized training and professional development.

“They are hungry for this training,” he said. “You can see it in the classroom . . . their willingness to learn and to become a better, more modernized police force.”

That goal, Breeding said, requires an assurance of an agency that is free the former regime’s system of nepotism, a system that put the police at whim of the elected leadership.

It also requires a constant evolution of the training, he said.

“This is not a static program or environment. We have to continue to help the new force evolve, which will in turn make this a safer place for the Corps in country as well as the Iraqis,” he said.

“Just like in the U.S., threats here change and the demands on police change,” Flemming said. “In light of current kidnapping events, we are working with the FBI at Quantico, Va., to develop a kidnapping investigation course based entirely on the actions we have seen here.”

The course is slated to begin July 17.

“The cooperation between the Multi-National forces and the Iraqi government to make a better police force is exceptional,” Baban said. “With this level of coordination, I think everyone in Iraq will see a very good outcome.”

Nearly 29,000 new Iraqi police officers have graduated from the team’s basic and advanced training academies since 2003.

—Mitch Frazier

Corps of Engineers uncovers artifact at Baghdad power plant, returns it to Government of Iraq

An artifact of Iraq's oppression-plagued past was preserved July 28 when U.S. forces turned over a stone plaque found during the reconstruction of a power plant here.

Civilians with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers found the 18-by-24-inch marble foundation stone June 29 amidst broken bricks, trash and rubble while rehabilitating the Taji Power plant in the capitol city's impoverished northern region.

"This is a first," said Dr. Zainab Bahrani, an antiquities advisor to the U.S. State Department's Iraq Reconstruction Management Office in Baghdad. "There have been antiquities returned from other locations, but nothing of this kind."

Chris Spidle, a contractor working for the Corps on site, first noticed the Arabic inscribed stone among a pile of broken bricks while working on one of Taji's seven generators.

Within minutes, he and Corps' employee Robert Weakland were on hands and knees sifting through the sand and rubble to get a closer look at Spidle's find.

"Chris came in and told me he had found something, so we went together to see what it was," Weakland said. "We uncovered the stone and realized it had been broken which made us think more was probably more in the area."

A search of the nearby area uncovered four additional pieces, confirming the two's hunch and completing the stone.

With stone fragments in hand, the two returned to the site's management trailer and photographed the stone before setting it aside on an empty table.

"We knew this was something important that was related to the former regime within minutes of finding it," Weakland said. "The Iraqi laborers onsite wanted to destroy it with sledge hammers, so we knew we needed to collect and protect it."

Clarity came later that afternoon after a contract interpreter onsite translated the stone's Arabic inscription.

The stone dedicated the Taji power plant in 1976 to the memory and celebration of the founding of the Iraqi Army and acknowledged one of the 52 most wanted men in Iraq – former Revolution Council Member, Taha ai-Jizrawi.

Days passed as the stone sat in Weakland's north Baghdad trailer waiting for someone to provide direction on how to return the artifact to the Iraqi government.

The wait ended July 11 when Bill McFarland, a Corps program manager, visited the site on an inspection tour and saw the stone sitting atop Weakland's table.

McFarland, who typically serves as an environmental project manager in the U.S., contacted the Corps's legal office in Baghdad and coordinated the transfer of the stone to Bahrani, who will transport the stone to the Iraq State Board of Antiquities Museum in Baghdad later this week.

"This is absolutely the right thing to do," said Bahrani, who is slated to return to her career as an archeology professor at Columbia University this fall. "As more and more people begin working on the reconstruction efforts, I think we will run into more of these kinds of things."

While Bahrani said there were no official plans for the stone,



Dr. Zainab Bahrani, an antiquities advisor to the U.S. State Department's Iraq Reconstruction Management Office in Baghdad, accepts a stone tablet found by GRD personnel at the Taji Power Plant. (Photo by Mitch Frazier)

she said it would probably go in some kind of a museum commemorating the atrocities of the previous regime.

"Whether you are working on oil pipelines, electrical systems or building roads, there is a possibility of running into cultural artifacts when you are doing field work in this country," she said. "The best thing to do is to ere on the side of caution and assume its something that should be returned to the State Board of Antiquities and Heritage and allow them to judge."

The last remains of some of mankind's earliest cities have virtually disappeared through unprecedented looting and destruction in the wake of war.

"The precedent this is setting here is really important, because it is possible the next time it will be something from 2000 BC," Bahrani said.

—Mitch Frazier

Wonders of Iraq...



Ur (USACE Photo)

Mesopotamia is the land between the Tigris and Euphrates known to many as the Cradle of Civilization. Iraq is rich with sites of religious importance to people of three of the great world religions—Christians, Muslims and Jews.

The US Army Corps of Engineers has established Gulf Region Division in Iraq and three district offices located in the south, north and central areas of Iraq. The division and districts have the job of assisting in the reconstruction of Iraq.

The Gulf Region South District is now located in the extreme southern Iraqi city of Basrah. The district will soon be relocating to Tallil Air Base.

Tallil is in the very heart of Mesopotamia and built close to the ancient city of Ur referred to in the Bible's Old Testament as Ur of the Chaldees. The civilization that evolved here dates back 6500 years.

What is now dry desert once was a fertile land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers near the Persian Gulf where farmers irrigated their land and produced rich agricultural crops and raised sheep and goats.

Within sight of the new headquarters is the an impressive 4100 year old structure known as the Ziggurat. This is a temple built in 2100 B.C. was for the worship of the moon god Nannar by King Ur-Nammu. In addition to building the Ziggurat, he was a social reformer that collected a law system that predated the Code of Hammurabi.

Ur is also known as the birthplace of Abraham, the common ancestor of each of the three faiths of Christians, Muslims and Jews. Abraham's lineage through Hagar's son Ishmael comes worldwide in believers of the Muslim faith. Abraham's other son from Sarah is Isaac and through Isaac comes the Jewish and Christian faiths. Ishmael and Isaac stood together and buried their father Abraham in a cave.

Ur was occupied for 3700 years and abandoned after the Euphrates River changed its course due to siltation. When the river course changed the agricultural production declined and layers of sand covered the fertile plain.

—Steven Wright

Facts about Iraq, according to various theologians...*

- The Garden of Eden was in Iraq, nestled at the 'cradle of civilization' in Mesopotamia, where the Tigris and Euphrates meet.
- Noah built the Ark in Iraq.
- The Tower of Babel was in Iraq.
- Abraham was from Ur, in southern Iraq (see story)
- Issac's wife Rebekah is from Nahor, in Iraq.
- Jacob met Rachel in Iraq.
- Jonah preached in Nineveh, located near Mosul, Iraq.
- Assyria, in Iraq, conquered the ten tribes of Israel.
- Amos cried out in Iraq!
- Babylon, described in Revelation as the "Empire of Man", is in Iraq, and destroyed Jerusalem.
- Daniel was in the lion's den in Iraq.
- The three Hebrew children were in the fire in Iraq (Jesus had been in Iraq also as the fourth person in the fiery furnace.)
- Belshazzar, the King of Babylon saw the "writing on the wall" in Iraq.
- Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, carried the Jews captive into Iraq. (Note: It is reported that Saddam Hussein saw himself as the modern day Nebuchadnezzar, and two murals in his palace were painted with that imagery.)
- Ezekiel preached in Iraq.
- The wise men were from Iraq.
- Peter preached in Iraq.

* Editor's note: These factoid are based on a variety of theological perspectives. Christian, Muslim, Jewish and many other faiths exist and are practiced in Iraq. This list only represents a few of the theologically-significant locations that exist within that country.

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



Hail and Farewell

(June 29 — August 01, 2004)

Hailing:

Mike Atwell, Project Manager GRS, Seattle District
 Maj. Bruce Bates, GRN Kirkuk, DOE (IMA)
 Tom Berry, QA Rep GRS, Louisville District
 Ronnie Boswell, QA Rep, Louisville District
 David Brooks, QA Inspector GRS, Kansas City District
 Elaine Bustillos, Administrative Assistant GRS, Nashville District
 Ken Comfort, Construction Rep GRS, FT. AP Hill
 Mike Costello, Operations Officer GRS, Southwestern Division
 Greg Croon, Project Engineer GRS, Louisville District
 Bob Deroche, Env. Protection Specialist, Detroit District
 Lt. Col. Harold Dingman, Emergency Management, Omaha District
 Gene Dowell, Resident Engineer GRS, Louisville District
 Jim Drake, GRN Kirkuk, Walla Walla District
 Joe Faustine, GRS, Nashville District
 Yong Foston, Contract Specialist GRS, Louisville District
 Mitch Frazier, Deputy Division PA, Kansas City District
 Dennis Fuentes Contracting Officer RIO, Kansas City District
 Maj. Mark Gerald, Asst Chief Operations GRS, Ft. Irwin, CA.
 Francisco Gomez, VAO, Fort Worth District
 Mel Good, IT Specialist GRS, Seattle District
 Neal Gray, Construction Rep GRS, New Hire
 Coleen Haney, Deputy for Support GRS, Buffalo District
 Roderick Hill, Contracting Officer GRD, Savannah District

Elizabeth Hilliard, Project Manager RIE, Savannah District
 Dallas Jackson, Logistics Technician GRS, Louisville District
 Michael Jaroski, Logistics GRD, Walla Walla District
 Kevin Jefferson, Area Engineer GRS, Louisville District
 Frank Kalisz, Sr., Project Engineer GRS, Louisville District
 Robert Kiddy, Civil Engineer GRS, Mississippi Valley Division
 Maj. Stephen Lefebvre, QA Rep, Ft. Leavenworth, KS
 Rene Lopez, Emergency Operations Officer GRD, Europe District
 Hugh Lowe, Project Engineer, Nashville District
 Sam Masters, GRN Kirkuk, Fort Worth District
 Capt. Keith Matiske, GRS Plans & Security, 1st BN, 345th REG
 Marcia Meekins, Area Engineer GRS, Savannah District
 Ricky Meers, QA Rep GRS, Huntington District
 Patty Mixon, RIE, Vicksburg District
 Lt. Col. Jeff Ogden, Director RIE, HQ USACE
 Scott Parker, Chief of Construction Division GRS, Detroit District
 Max Pastor, Supv. Construction Rep., Albuquerque District
 Mary Priddy, Administrative Assistant GRS, Louisville District
 Jayne Reichert, UPO, Savannah District
 Nestor Reina, Resident Engineer GRS, Chicago District
 Anthony Risko, Project Manager RIE, Los Angeles District
 Jim Ruyak, Program Manager GRD, Retired Annuitant
 Fred Sheffield, Project Engineer GRS, Louisville District
 Steve Spicer, QA Rep GRS, Little Rock District
 Bob Stanick, QA Rep GRS, Detroit District

Donna Street, GRN Kirkuk, Walla Walla District
 Jamie Sunderland, QA Rep GRS, Huntington District
 Chris Tew, Contracting Officer GRD, Alaska District
 Russ Ty, Logistics GRD, AMC
 Robert Vanoor, Project Engineer GRS, Chicago District
 Edwards Vincent, QA Rep GRS, Huntington District
 David Walker, QA Rep GRS, TAC
 Lt. Col. Randy Westfall, Deputy Commander GRC, HQ USACE
 James Williams, IT Specialist GRS, Louisville District
 Shirley Wilkins, Administrative Assistance GRS, Mobile District

Farewells (photos not available)

Clark Roberts, KAO, Pacific Ocean Division
 Katie Beasfield, GRD Contracting Specialist, Europe District
 Charlie Danford, GRD RIO, Mobile District

Note: During transition of PA staff in August, some Hail and Farewell items may have been inadvertently omitted. Every effort will be made to retroactively identify those serving in Iraq in future issues. Due to space, the monthly format of ESSAYONS FORWARD, and as Corps staffing in Iraq increases, HAILS will be by name only, FAREWELLS will be by photo feature.



Ken Drum
 Const. QA—GRS
 Returning to:
 Detroit District



Kevin Nelson
 Project Engr. GRS
 Returning to:
 Huntington District



Col. Thomas Koning
 Commander GRS
 Returning to:
 New England District



Tom Gorman
 GRN
 Returning to:
 Omaha District



Richard Green
 GRN
 Returning to:
 Tulsa District



Ghassan Al-Chaar
 Proj. Engr. GRS
 Returning to:
 ERDC



Steve Vriesen
 Security Mgr. GRS
 Returning to:
 Buffalo District



Steve Zalis
 Proj. Engineer GRS
 Returning to:
 Pittsburgh District



Tavis Hanley
 Proj. Engineer GRS
 Returning to:
 Louisville District



Maria Calla
 Proj. Engineer GRS
 Returning to:
 Pittsburgh District



LTC Norman Grady
 Deputy Cmdr GRS
 Returning to:
 Chicago District



Aaron Goldner
 QA Rep GRS
 Returning to:
 Tulsa District



James Trumble
 Project Engineer GRS
 Returning to:
 Louisville District



Paul Zorko
 Team Leader GRS
 Returning to:
 Louisville District



Marty Wahking
 GRS
 Returning to:
 Louisville District



Rob Lesko
 Project Engineer GRS
 Returning to:
 Pittsburgh District



John Love
 FEST-A
 Returning to:
 Detroit District



Joshua Feldmann
 Project Engineer GRS
 Returning to:
 Buffalo District



MSG Steven Spears
 G3-NCOIC
 Returning to:
 Europe District



Mike Henry
 GRC Safety
 Returning to:
 St. Louis District



Maria Bock
 QA Rep—GRS
 Returning to:
 Huntington District



Julie Richardson
 GRN
 Returning to:
 Walla Walla District



Gary Hawkins
 GRD PM
 Returning to:
 Vicksburg District



Don Cleary
 QA Rep GRS
 Returning to:
 Louisville District



Linda Miller
 Admin Asst GRS
 Returning to:
 Pittsburgh District



Brad Scully
 Team Leader GRS
 Returning to:
 Honolulu District



MAJ Trina Patterson
 Area Engineer, Oil
 Returning to:
 Little Rock District



Randy Melby
 QA EBAO
 Returning to:
 St. Paul District



Andrea Leal
 GRD Contracting
 Returning to:
 Albuquerque District



John Crooke
 GRD CREST
 Returning to:
 Mobile District



Stephanie Ehnstrom
 Adm. Asst. GRD
 Returning to:
 St. Paul District



Richard Cummings
 GRD CREST
 Returning to:
 Nashville District



Steven Wright
 Chief, GRD PA
 Returning to:
 Huntington District



Frank Trent
 GRD Safety
 Returning to:
 FEMA/Retirement



Alex Skinner
 CG Exec. Asst.
 Returning to:
 San Francisco District



Greg Wilson
 GRD CREST Chief
 Returning to:
 Kansas City District



Steve Purdy
 EBAO Eng
 Returning to:
 Albuquerque District



Julie Blanks
 GRD G1
 Returning to:
 HQ USACE



Thomas O'Hara
 Deputy GRD PA
 Returning to:
 Omaha District



Douglas Plachey
 Senior RIE PM
 Returning to:
 Savannah District



Gene Morisani
 RIE PM
 Returning to:
 Mobile District



Scott Lowdermilk
 Reachback Coord.
 Returning to:
 TAC



Bob Sanders
 GRD PM
 Returning to:
 Alaska



Joyce Owen
 Security Spec. GRD
 Returning to:
 TAC



Doug Bruner
 RIE PM
 Returning to:
 St. Paul District