

# ESSAYONS

*Forward*

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Gulf Region Division (Provisional), Iraq - Volume 2, Issue 5

June 29, 2005



**Changing of the guard in GRD -  
Continuing a promise of progress**



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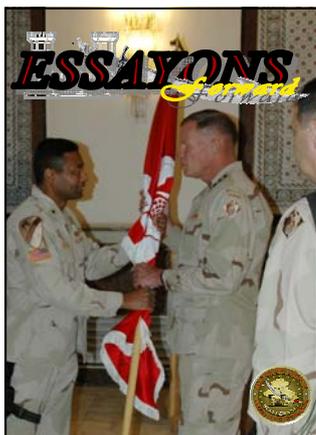
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## Iraq Image....



Col. Roger A. Gerber, Gulf Region South District, gives a district coin to the daughter of the contractor who refurbished the border fort at Al Zaid. (Photo by BJ Weiner)



**COVER:** Brigadier Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, left, hands the division colors to Chief of Engineers, Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock during the Gulf Region Division Change of Command ceremony, June 29, 2005. Brig. Gen. William H. McCoy, Jr., (right) waits to receive the colors as the new GRD commander. (Photo by Jim Gordon)

#### ESSAYONS FORWARD

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## Commander's Column



In this, my last Essayons Forward article, I would like to start by thanking each of you, past and present, for your service and sacrifice in support of this very important mission. It has been my great honor and privilege to lead this wonderful organization. The reconstruction mission has been an important factor in the planning, execution, and success of the coalition campaign plan. It remains vital to the hope that many Iraqis have for a brighter future.

I have often said that reconstruction and security go hand-in-hand. While our brothers and sisters in uniform, both coalition and Iraqi Security Forces, fight the insurgents to bring peace and stability throughout Iraq, our reconstruction efforts help them in a non-lethal way. The military forces and the Iraqi people are counting on us, and you have not let them down. You never have, and I know that you never will.

From transition to sovereignty in June 2004, where we had started only 236 projects, we have now started nearly 2,600 projects valued at almost \$6 billion. In terms of weekly placement (construction value on the ground), we rank among the top half dozen companies in the world in money placed. Of those top companies, however, we're operating with less than one-tenth the people of the next smallest-sized organization. This is a huge achievement made possible only by the hard work, courage, and determination of the entire team involved in reconstruction.

The reconstruction team is diverse: men and women in uniform, Civilians, GRD, PCO, IRMO, JCC-I, the embassy, contractors, USAID, NGOs, many others and, most importantly, the Iraqi people. The key to our success and to future progress will always be teamwork!

We have built a great team. However, change is constant so we'll regularly need to reach out to each other to ensure that we will win this fight together. My thanks to those who supported our deployed Civilians and Soldiers; that support is crucial to our success whether in providing reach back assistance, wearing two hats to cover for those deployed, or the loving support of our family and friends. Each of you helped give us the strength to focus on the mission at hand.

To the Iraqis on our team, thank you for the courage, determination, and optimism that you display each day. I have learned much from watching each of you, but above all, I've learned how much you are willing to sacrifice for freedom as you help to build a brighter future.

To our team, I am humbled to serve with you. In my new assignment, I'll not be far from the mission here. I'll always be thinking about you, praying for your safe return, and cheering you on from afar.

Few times in a person's life will they ever have the opportunity to make a significant difference in a worthy cause. I have been blessed to have served by your side in such an endeavor.

Deliverance was essential in this mission, and you did so in many ways. Keep safe as you...Continue the mission!

**BG Thomas P. Bostick**

## Cmd. Sgt. Major's Column



If leaders risk more than others think 'wise'...and dream more than others think 'practical', then all of you are participants as we collectively lead change in Iraq with our Iraqi friends. You

accepted a challenge that many would not even consider. You're doing a job in a place that many could not do — either physically or emotionally. You represent the best of a free society and you demonstrate to the world the true character of the American people.

Serving you and having been part of a team of men and women in uniform, and civilian employees who continually roll up their sleeves and answer "yes" to the call of duty has been both a privilege and an honor for me as we work side-by-side with the Iraqi people in rebuilding their country.

Command Sgt. Maj. Greg Glen will be your Division Command Sergeant Major, and you'll be proud to serve with him. I know him to be a competent and trustworthy leader. Memories of a recent past come to mind when he and I spent time in Kuwait and prepared our units for combat in the beginning of the war against the oppressive regime that held the Iraqi people captive for over 34 years. His leadership and caring demeanor for his unit remain vivid in my mind. Thinking about those long evenings and the difficult tasks of readying for combat operations reminds me of his true professionalism and dedication to the mission—attributes he'll surely display as he joins the command team and works with you in the reconstruction of Iraq.

A Baltimore, Md., native, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Glen entered the Army almost 27 years ago, and comes to the Gulf Region Division from the 555<sup>th</sup> Engineer Group in Fort Lewis, Wash. He has been the command sergeant major since November 2000.

Glen has served in Korea, Germany, Calif., N.Y., Mo., Panama, Bosnia, Texas, Ga., and Tikrit, Iraq.

It's hard to remember where we first met, as our service often brings us together briefly and then we move on. As every command sergeant major does in his or her career, Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Glen succeeded at every level as a non-commissioned officer—from team and squad leader; to platoon, drill, and first sergeant; instructor, and battalion and brigade command sergeant major.

His military schools include all levels of the NCO Education System; Ranger, Airborne, Air Assault, Master Fitness, Drill Sergeant, and Sapper Leader Courses. He's a graduate of Class #48 of the U.S. Sergeants Major Academy, and holds an Associates Degree in General Studies.

The list of Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Glen's awards and decorations is long and impressive, and includes the Bronze Star Medal with Valor, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.

Help us welcome Cmd. Sgt. Maj. Glen to the team and continue the mission.

God bless every one of you and your families ... see you 'round the battlefield.

Respectfully,  
**CSM Jorge L. Gutierrez**

# Change of Command

## Brigadier Gen. William H. McCoy, Jr., takes command of Gulf Region Division

**B**rigadier Gen. William H. McCoy, Jr., took command of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers June 29, in a military ceremony at the Palace Chapel Hall. Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, Chief of Engineers, and Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, hosted the ceremony. McCoy replaces Brig. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, who returns to Washington D.C. as the Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Bostick served as the second commander of the Gulf Region Division, which was activated Jan. 25, 2004.

"Tom Bostick took command of the Gulf Region Division at the same time of the Iraqi transition to sovereignty in June 2004, and proceeded to make steady progress in the largest reconstruction effort undertaken since World War II," Strock said.

"He is a deeply caring and determined leader—tirelessly engaging others ... to give the people of Iraq a sense of hope and a sense of future."

Speaking directly to Bostick, Strock said, "You have every reason to be proud of the work you've done here. I look forward to your return to Washington, D.C."

"In the meantime, Bill McCoy will take the Gulf Region Division to the next level," Strock added.

Bostick began his remarks by saying that no one person is as smart, as strong, or as capable as everyone together on the team.

"Today, we are working to reconstruct Iraq while fighting a counterinsurgency," Bostick said. "Reconstruction in Iraq is dangerous, historic, and very rewarding to those serving here."

"But the Iraqi people are optimistic about everything," Bostick said, adding that he had talked with one of the Iraqi ministers yesterday. "No, they're not satisfied about the water or the electricity, but they remain positive about the reconstruction of their country."

During the formal and traditional ceremony, Bostick and McCoy passed the ceremonial colors, symbolizing the change of command.

McCoy's previously served as assistant commandant for the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. A native of Texas, McCoy graduated from Texas A & M University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Building Construction. He was commissioned in the Corps of Engineers in 1974.

"To the Iraqi employees and the U.S. Soldiers and Civilians of GRD ... you make a difference everyday," McCoy said to the guests. "Everything you do to work and help the Iraqi people moves them forward in their quest for democracy."

"We take a lot for granted as Americans, including saying the Pledge of Allegiance," he continued. "To pledge our allegiance to a flag ... and to one nation under God is a freedom we take for granted ... with liberty and justice for all."

As commanding general of the Gulf Region Division, McCoy and the Soldiers and Civilian employees of his organization work side-by-side with Iraqi citizens executing the Iraq Reconstruction Program. At the transition of sovereignty, June

2004, there were more than 200 reconstruction projects started. Today, there are more than 2,500 projects started, valued at \$5.8B. Currently, more than 1,380 projects have been completed, at an associated value of \$1.4B.

Nationwide, there are approximately 147,000 Iraqis working in support of the reconstruction effort. Currently, there are 223 local nationals employed by GRD; 31 percent of GRD's total workforce.

**LuAnne Fantasia**

# Command

In a town hall meeting at Gulf Region Division June 28, Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, Chief of Engineers and Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, awarded Brig. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick the Silver de Fleury Medal for his distinguished service as the commanding general of the Gulf Region Division. GRD's mission is to execute the Iraq Reconstruction Program.

*(Photos by Jim Gordon)*



"We take a lot for granted as Americans," said Brig. Gen. William H. McCoy Jr., as he took command of the Gulf Region Division in Baghdad June 29. "To simply pledge our allegiance to our flag and to one nation under God is a freedom many don't have."



During his farewell party at GRD June 25, CSM Jorge L. Gutierrez was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for his tour as command sergeant major of the Gulf Region Division from Oct. 26, 2004 through July 10, 2005. Gutierrez' exceptional leadership, foresight and dedication to his Soldiers and Civilian employees made a difference everyday for the GRD team and ultimately for the Iraqi citizens. Gutierrez' next assignment will be in Hawaii but his unit has not yet been determined.

Watermark: Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers commander passes the ceremonial colors to Brig. Gen. William H. McCoy Jr. today in Baghdad, as McCoy becomes the third commanding general of the Gulf Region Division since it was activated January 2004.

# USACE Deployment Center readies Corps employees for Iraq and Afghanistan service

The War on Terrorism has resulted in the deployment of more than 2000 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) military and civilian members to Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001. Until recently, the gateway for Corps Civilians deploying to these combat theaters was through CONUS Replacement Centers (CRCs) located at Ft. Benning, Ga., Ft. Sill, Okla., and Ft. Bliss, Texas.

Early in 2005, USACE directed TAC to establish the Deployment Center with the mission of certifying Corps Civilian members for deploying to and redeploying from Afghanistan and Iraq.

Beginning May 8, all Corps Civilians deploying to Iraq started coming through the USACE Deployment Center located at the Transatlantic Programs Center (TAC) in Winchester, Va. Prior to May, TAC deployed all Corps Civilians and contractors to Afghanistan and had done so for the last two years. When TAC formally opened the Deployment Center in May, there were two changes. First, all Civilians headed to Iraq went through the Deployment Center and, second, contractors going to Afghanistan no longer came to Winchester. They now deploy through Ft. Benning, along with Corps military team members.

By establishing the Deployment Center, the Corps accomplished several important goals, said Scott Lowdermilk, TAC's Plans and Operations chief. Lowdermilk's office has responsibility for running the Center.

"People in the Corps have talked about opening a Deployment Center since our involvement with Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1991, but we've never had the funding," Lowdermilk said. "However, when Afghanistan and Iraq came along and we had people deploying in larger numbers, it began to make economic sense. We are able to send people through the Deployment Center several days quicker than they can go through CRC at Ft. Bliss. We estimated that we could save \$1,800 per person if we trained our people at our own USACE Deployment Center. When we were able to show that a deployment center would save money, everything became possible."

Taking care of people is equally important to the USACE Deployment Center. Certainly for Civilians, deploying to a

combat zone is unsettling, Lowdermilk said. He also pointed out that deploying through a military installation made the transition for Civilians even more difficult. They learned first hand about the expression 'hurry up and wait,' as well as experiencing open-bay sleeping.

"Some of our Corps folks have never been on an installation. It is one thing to go to an installation and another thing to play by the Army rules. You get up at 0500 for the first roll call and find out what you are doing for the rest of the day. You also find out that there is a three-hour gap between roll call and when you first do something. Civilians also experienced sleeping in open-bay barracks with several hundred people making more than a little noise," Lowdermilk said.

The Deployment Center curriculum is organized to cover the same essential requirements covered at CRC. These include medical screening, shots, and training courses in first aid, cultural awareness, and force protection. Deployees are issued military clothing and gear and trained in the proper use of equipment such as gas masks, protective vests and Kevlar helmets.

Added benefits to the training schedule are briefings on filling out time sheets and travel vouchers. As a result, the number of pay and voucher-related issues have dramatically dropped according to Judy Lynskey, who oversees the Administrative Processing Personnel Office (APPO) at TAC. Her office processes pre-deployment paperwork, issues travel orders, and keeps time and attendance for 600 people located throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The timesheets for our people serving in Iraq and Afghanistan are very complicated. They have regular pay, scheduled overtime, unscheduled overtime, holiday pay, holiday premium pay, and night-differential pay, as well as danger pay, post differential pay and travel pay. Needless to say, the class we teach on pay results in many questions," Lynskey said.

"Our number one problem used to be

pay issues," said Lowdermilk. "I worked 200 pay issues at the Gulf Region Division (GRD) when I was in Iraq. I thought at the time that most of these issues could be lessened if we offered a class to explain pay to the people being deployed. Once we had the chance to work with our people being deployed, the number of pay issues dropped significantly."

Selecting TAC to stand up a deployment center is a natural fit due to TAC's long standing responsibility for Corps missions in the Middle East. Although the organization has had five names since it was established in 1952, TAC's constant has included a mission of engineering and construction support in the Middle East. In addition, TAC has been designated as the Corps' organization to provide reachback assistance to GRD and its Districts, as well as the Afghanistan Engineer District.

"Having our team members process through TAC provides an opportunity for many of the deployees to meet TAC people who will provide them with technical or reachback support services," Lowdermilk said. "That helps to build relationships for the successful completion of our missions in Iraq and Afghanistan."

For Lynskey and the 10 members of her team, meeting the people who volunteered to serve is special. "One of the highlights is that we get to see the people we work with and know them on a first name basis. Now that we have a Deployment Center, we have the chance to meet everyone who we issue orders to and make sure that they are paid," she said. "It is truly rewarding to talk to someone over the telephone, get their information and qualifications, and then have that person walk through our door to say hello."

**Steve Wright, TAC**



**Watermark: Mary Warren, New York District, and Chad Gartrell, ERDC, are issued gear for their deployment to Afghanistan. (Right) Gartrell receives a series of inoculations from UDC nurse, Sandra Ginn, as part of the one week processing at the Deployment Center.**

*(Photos by Janet Dove, TAC)*

## Lieutenant Gen. Petraeus attends largest Iraq SAME

The Baghdad Chapter of the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) held a monthly meeting in the Baghdad Convention Center, May 28<sup>th</sup>.

With more than 200 people in attendance, the event was the Iraq chapter's largest meeting since its inception, according to Brig. Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division, and Baghdad post president.

"Eleven months ago, my change of command reception was in this same room," said Bostick. "I can remember a previous SAME luncheon when only six people attended and two of those were me and my aide. Today, because of the team effort with our Iraqi engineer counterparts, government and military organizations, our contracting partners, and members of the private sector, we've surpassed previous attendance numbers."

Bostick described the meeting's guest speaker, Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, as an "athlete, statesman, and diplomat with a wealth of command and combat experience."

Petraeus explained that MNSTCI is just what the name states – a tool for the coalition governments to assist the Iraqis in establishing effective military, police, and border forces to guarantee and maintain their own security against internal and external enemies who fight both conventionally and unconventionally.

"The security transition process is dependent on many people and it has a special dependence on engineers," said Petraeus. He added, "the MNSTCI construction program so far has run about \$1.92 B in size. This [expense] is larger than the military construction budgets of the Navy and Air Force combined in fiscal year 2005."

Commenting on reconstruction, Petraeus addressed the "iron triangle of engineering," known in the textbooks as "cost, schedule, and quality," or in simpler terms – "cheap, fast, and good." He discussed the Federal Acquisition Regulation that was developed to minimize financial risk to the government in delivering goods, services, and construction in a peaceful, orderly U.S.

"Contracting officers and engineers have spent their careers in the U.S. reducing financial risk through intensive management and carefully crafted procedures," said Petraeus. He stated that Iraq clearly calls for a construction delivery model emphasizing quality (Good) and, most of all, for MNSTCI – schedule (Fast).

Petraeus focused most of his comments on the need to use contingency contracting models to meet the massive require-



**Brigadier Gen. Thomas P. Bostick, Commander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division, thanks Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, for his comments at the Society of American Military Engineers luncheon held recently in Baghdad. Bostick is also the SAME Baghdad post president.**  
*(Photo by Harry Weddington)*

ments to reconstruct Iraq. He said the 'perfect storm' in the U.S. is similar to the one in Iraq. The phrase was coined for the large construction demand as the Army globally repositions its forces, coupled with restructuring its forces into modular units while executing Base Realignment and Closure. In Iraq, "the big wave of construction created by the Iraqi 'perfect storm' of requirements is enormous. The demand cannot be met using the old models of construction contracting and delivery emphasizing cost and quality.

"A more innovative way of addressing risk while speeding delivery is required. We have to change our construction delivery organizations now to deal with this on the timelines that are needed for strategic and military reasons and on the timelines created by our globally networked peoples' expectations of us."

Petraeus finalized his points to the engineers in the audience by saying that the "techniques that have been used in Iraq by all of you must be codified and made into the norm rather than the exception" in order to meet the challenges of the coming decade.

The general expressed clearly that peacetime reconstruction processes must be adjusted to fit the realities of large-scale, wartime building requirements. Despite his concerns, he reminded the group that it was almost four years after World War II ended when the European Recovery Act was first passed and nine years later when the U.S. helped Germany to re-develop a military.

Just two years after the rapid campaign to collapse the former regime, and still in the midst of an unconventional war, the U.S. military is conducting large scale reconstruction and training, housing, and equipping over 100 battalions of Iraqi Security Forces to fight against the enemy.

It's "pretty astonishing historically."

Parsons sponsored the luncheon.

**LTC Stan Heath**

"The security transition process is dependent on many people and it has a special dependence on engineers,"

—Petraeus

# Isn't fighting fires dangerous enough?



A thirty-two year veteran of Baghdad firefighting tells Peter Rutherford and Martin Daniels (middle), of the Japan International Cooperation System, how much the 70 new fire trucks, contributed by Japan, will help him in better doing his job. Ten new fire stations have been built in the immediate Baghdad area. Across Iraq, 93 stations have been completed, are being built or started soon. (Note: firefighter name withheld) (GRD photo)

Actions speak louder than words - particularly in Iraq. Such is the case, when Baghdad Fire Chief, Laith Abbas, gets out of bed and heads to work.

Each day, he faces the reality that there is a significant "price on his head" by those who would destroy efforts to build a democracy in Iraq. However, for the good of the country, there are those - like this intense, wiry professional - who strive each day, one difficult step at a time, to build their part of what they hope will soon become an active, viable democracy.

An example of what these people face may be seen in that, barely three months ago, near midnight, insurgents broke into the home of Col. Abbas' driver. Then, they methodically killed him, his wife and five children. No sooner did another volunteer take the driver's job before he, as well, was brutally murdered.

A deep and fervent belief in what he's doing, plus long, hard, work-filled days keep the Chief going, though the threatening specter of violence looms ever near. And, work he does - long, arduous hours.

Recently, Abbas took a moment from his hectic schedule to view fire fighting training by the teams from seven of Baghdad's fire stations, representing slightly less than 10% of Baghdad's total firefighter force. On this sweltering,

120-degree afternoon, these activities were being conducted by Staff Sgt. Michael DiDonata, of the 443rd Civil Affairs Battalion in the Government Support Team, of the 3rd Infantry Division. Chief Abbas paused briefly from his "active observation" to note that "before the war, we had only empty fire trucks that did not work, and no equipment." And, training in those days? "None," conveys his rueful expression.

Such is no longer the case. "Sgt. D," as the Iraqis he teaches fondly call him, cites that over the last nine months, nearly 500 of Baghdad's fire fighters have undergone various aspects of training. Some of the training that he has overseen includes first aid, driver's training, engine-driven water pumping, drafting from a water source, advancing a hose line into a blaze, application of fire foam, and thermo-imaging camera work.

Understandably proud of all that has been accomplished, the intense Army Reservist is a fire fighter with the Tinton Fall, NJ, Fire Department 36-1, and a fire instructor at the Middletown Fire Academy. A resident of nearby Manasquan, he says, "I'm impressed with the 'can do' attitude by all of these Baghdad area firefighters. They clearly come to these classes to learn."

The Chief praises Staff Sgt. DiDonata's work and asserts, "We need to build our country and must do so by working with coalition forces." He con-

tinues by giving expansive credit to the diverse coalition elements that have been integral in building a modern, firefighting team with the necessary equipment, facilities, and training.

Examples of this assistance are seen from U.S. Agency for International Development, a key partner in this effort, along with their contractor, Skylink, that also provided hands-on firefighting training, as well as contributed a substantial amount of first aid supplies. Also supporting this huge task are the Project and Construction Office, and GRD, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, that built 10 new stations in the immediate Baghdad area and re-built many more. Countrywide, 93 stations have been completed, are being built, or soon will be started.

More than these endeavors, numerous countries have played an active part in this critical effort. In addition to the U.S., new fire trucks were contributed by Germany and Japan - 70 in total from the latter. Regarding these bright and shining vehicles, the Chief smiles slightly and states simply, "It's all modern and new for my guys!"

Before racing to his next pressing meeting, with one eye ever glancing over his shoulder, he affirms that the Iraqi people are ready. He expresses appreciation for the coalition's many efforts. Then, just prior to leaving, he turns and says quietly, "We need to build a new Iraq with freedom and liberty."

**Tom Clarkson,**

# Basrah International Airport Opens to Commercial Flights

**A**fter almost 20 years of sporadic use and finally being closed, the Basrah International Airport reopened with the help of the Gulf Region South (GRS) District, on June 4, to welcome the landing of an Iraqi Airways flight.

The Corps' goal was to give the Iraqis a functioning civil aviation airport that will allow planes with passengers to land and take off, both domestically and internationally, according to Robert Vanoer, resident engineer for the Basrah Resident Office.

"The details the Corps is involved in are critical to the airport," said Vanoer. "One big piece is to ensure the terminal has air conditioning. Another big piece is the air control tower, which is 12 stories high and has no elevator. The British Army uses it for their physical training. There are other things that are in the works, such as the rehabilitation of the water treatment plant, which is critical to the chillers (air conditioning)."

The chillers need ultra clean processed water to run smoothly, according to Dan Drew, Project and Contracting Office (PCO) project manager for the airport project.

"These chillers weigh 1,700 tons," said Drew, "and they feed a chilled water system in underground tunnels through the whole airport. One of the reasons they failed is because the water from the water treatment plant had scale – metallic particles – in it that ended up settling and clogging a lot of tubes and small orifices in the chiller units."

Drew said the water is also needed for fire protection, and that this water comes from a reservoir from the water treatment plant. Originally built in 1986, the plant, like many of the airport's facilities was never maintained and now needs refurbishment. "The airport was like a small city – self contained," he said. "So, when one component failed, a lot of the systems were affected."

The next project, the second largest at the airport, involves the installation of Navigational and Visual Aids, according to Drew. The \$28 M Navigational Aids contract was awarded to Raytheon and negotiations are continuing. The airport's radar

equipment falls under this contract and the airport cannot receive International Civil Aviation Organization certification without it.

"Raytheon is the sole proprietor of the radar equipment," said Drew. "That allows the airport to track all weather operations, such as fog and sandstorms. The Visual Aids are things like runway markings and lighting."

The Corps does the quality assurance and oversees the work being done, according to Vanoer. He said that once the prime contractor, Nana Pacific, Inc., hired its subcontractor, Carrier Corporation, a big air conditioning and ventilation manufacturer, whose agents are authorized in Baghdad, things began to roll.

"These people worked diligently and pulled double shifts," said Vanoer. "Right now they are waiting on parts, and when those parts come in, I have no doubt they'll finish the chillers on time, by July 2005."

Vanoer said parts of the original contracts are on schedule and that Iraqi Airways began flying after pressure from the Ministry of Transportation. They installed a split system air conditioner to provide some cool air, and passengers are shuttled to the terminal from Baghdad. "I modified a contract to energize the departure and domestic ticket desk," he said. "And I had the baggage scales recalibrated. Now, passengers can get their baggage and it is quite something to see."

Mr. Razek, airport director for 15 years, is excited about the changes and that flights are now coming in and out of Basrah International Airport. "We have three flights a week making two trips each day," he said. "We fly from Basrah to Baghdad and then to Amman, Jordan and back. The flights are on Saturdays, Mondays and Wednesdays. People buy their tickets in downtown Basrah and are shuttled here to the airport."

There was one recent incident, he recalled, where a sandstorm forced the closing of Baghdad International Airport for two days. "A flight from Jordan flew directly here," he said. "We are the alternate airport for Baghdad and truly now are international. We look forward to having the entire airport back and to many more flights that will be cheaper for people. Right now, tickets are \$75 to Baghdad, but we are looking for ways to bring the cost down. It is a very exciting time for us here in Basrah."

**BJ Weiner**

**Watermark: An Iraqi Airways 727 jet from Baghdad is directed by two airport employees. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South District is providing the quality assurance necessary to ensure the work in and around the terminal continues and moves forward. (Photo by BJ Weiner)**

# Water Project on schedule in Southern Iraq

Iraq's clean water supply, country-wide, has ebbed slowly for decades because of war, an antiquated pipeline network, and co-mingling with sewage as a result of illegal line tapping. The USACE Gulf Region South District is riding the waves of progress to get the people of southern Iraq the clean drinking water they need.

In the Thi Qar Province, the \$173 million Nasiriyah Water Treatment Plant has two scopes of work. One is to finish the construction on the partially completed plant. The other is to run water pipeline from Ash Shatrah to Suk Ash Sukyakh, and a pipeline approximate seven kilometers north to Har Al Diwiyah, according to Darrell Flinn, construction manager for the Water Sector. He said that the former regime built many canals to take

water all through the country so people could use it for their own needs, be it drinking or agriculture

“At the Nasiriyah Water Treatment Project, they are constructing an intake structure that expands out over the Shatt Al Gharraf River, with pumps that will pump the water from Gharraf River and into the 10 large clarifiers to allow the sediments to settle,” said Flinn. “Many of the solids will filter out simply by gravity. The next step involves the mechanical mixing of the water with aluminum sulfate, commonly known as alum. Alum causes the remaining particles to coagulate prior to sending the water through the flocculators (a specialized mixing tank), which removes ‘flocs’ or clusters of sediments by allowing them to settle in the flocculators.”

Having flowed through the flocculator, the partially cleaned water is filtered through slow sand filters, said Flinn. He explained that the water goes into a dosing/ mixing tank where chlorine is added to kill remaining bacteria as well as other bacteria which may lurk farther along the pipeline. Once the sediment is removed and the chlorine added, the water is shot to an underground and an above-ground storage tank.

Flinn said that construction completion is scheduled to take place in November 2005, and systemization and operation will begin in March 2006. The contractor is going to install a 33 kilovolt transformer at the plant, and run a 33 kilovolt transmission line four kilometers from the Ash Shatrah Sub Station to the plant.

**Left:** A water clarifier tank will provide the means by which to purify water for the city of Nasiriyah. The Corps of Engineers will provide quality assurance throughout the project. Throughout Iraq, there are there are 208 Water projects programs going and 66 are complete.





This Iraqi worker works on reinforcing steel for clarifier walls at the Nasiriyah Water Treatment Plant project. The Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South District provides quality assurance on the project. (Photos by BJ Weiner)

purify drinking water for the assurance at the site. ...med, of which 96 are on-



As of late May, some transmission pipe work had been installed, the construction of the raw water pump station foundation wall dowels and perimeter forms had been completed and kicker form construction is underway, he said.

One of the challenges, according to Flinn, is the fact that pipelines in Iraq are 30 years old, leaking, and comingling with sewer lines that are in the same shape because of the war. "We have a situation where people tap into the water lines illegally to get water," he said. "You also have a lot of open land fill areas where it runs off in to the canals and people drink it. Moreover, you have cattle in there. It is a country-wide problem."

The importance of the success of the mission at the Nasiriyah water treatment plant, said Flinn, depends on the citizens of Nasiriyah and Thi Qar Province understanding that the drinking water supplied by this plant is only

for them; it is not being piped outside of the province. Rumors that it is being piped to Kuwait simply are not true. This water belongs to the citizens of the province, period."

Flinn said the GRS Water Sector has projects for everything from rehabilitation of potable water pipeline networks, to new construction of pipeline networks, and turnkey water treatment facilities. He also said that two other water treatment plants in Nasiriyah are being rehabilitated, and that three compact units will be built in the Missan Province. Fourteen are currently in various stages of completion in Najaf Province.

"In Basrah, we have several different projects including the Al Tannumah water tower repair project. But the largest is the leak repairs we will be doing all over the city," he said. "We will be repairing

and patching existing lines. There is close to \$9 million for four water main extension jobs, five compact water treatment units at R-Zero, Basrah's million gallon-per-day treatment unit."

He added that water projects with reverse osmosis cost roughly \$45,000 more per unit, but they are capable of removing salt from the water. Making the water drinking quality makes up for the initial price tag.

**BJ Weiner**

Fernando Aguilar, project engineer from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region South District inspects rebar for the clarifier wall with two Iraqi engineers at the Nasiriyah Water Treatment Plant project.

# Mountain spring water to supply Khalifan

**K**halifan water project, scheduled for completion later this summer, will provide about 530,000 gallons of fresh, clean, mountain stream water per day to the residents. Khalifan is a small town of about 7,500 residents in Soran District, Erbil Governorate, Northern Iraq.

The \$876,000 project will capture the spring water near the village of Gurgal and pipe it to Khalifan about 10 miles away. The project will replace the current system that takes water from the Alana River as it passes the town. Ismaiel Ibrahim an Iraqi engineer working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as the Project Manager, Quality Assurance said, "The water from the river is dirty after passing through several villages. The new system will provide clean, healthy water to the residents."

Two local contractors are working separate parts of the system. One is busy laying the new pipe from Gurgal to Khalifan while the other is building a 120,000-gallon storage tank. The project is a strong unifying, community-building project. "Khalifan water project has united the local people, contractors, and government officials to produce a quality water project," Ismaiel said. He sees this project as one of the first steps to building a better Iraq, a dream he has had for many years.

In the hills just above the village of Gurgal, a fresh stream of mountain spring water flows out of the ground. According to Ismaiel, the project will be able to capture about 40,000 gallons of water per hour. "The water is captured in a six-inch pipe and pipe net where the water is filtered through gravel and sand before exiting with a eight inch pipe." he said.

About 165 feet down stream the water enters a 2,000-gallon collection tank before the water moves down the pipe to the 120,000-gallon storage tank located in Khalifa on a hill across the valley from its final destination.

The path of the pipe from Gurgal to Khalifan runs through the villages of Alana, Remawezh, Sharkan, and Jolamerg. Area residents were concerned that some of their agricultural land would be lost to the project. The contractor worked with the local village leaders while Ismaiel worked with government agencies to try to make everyone happy along the path of the water project.

Ismaiel says, "The contractor hired an old Peshmarga, (local army in the Kurdish Region), who had work experience and good position among the people in that area." The man worked hard at coordinating the hiring of local villagers to work on the project as it approached their village. Each village provided 50 to 55 workers for the project.

The contractor is very happy for many reasons, according to Ismaiel. A true partnership has been built in the construction of the Khalifan water project. "I was able to help the contractor execute the project successfully; teaching him and assisting him with learning new methods of administration with paper work," he said. The contractor and his workers are proud they can lead their country to a brighter future as they work this and other projects in the future.

Ismaiel also worked with the Governor of Erbil, a friend, to inform him of the damage to the agricultural land. The Governor agreed to make payment to the landowners for damages suffered.

The contractor also has performed work not included in his project contract. In an example of community relations building he replaced a footbridge over the Alana River with one that can handle vehicle traffic. This benefited the community in cutting travel time.

The success of the project, community building, community sharing, and a brighter future for the Iraqi people is coming together over a clear, clean, fresh, mountain spring. The Khalifan water project is a start of great things to come.

With the abundance of spring water available, the project can be expanded in the future by doing some relatively minor changes and adding a few items according to Ismaiel.

A great asset to his community, Ismaiel holds degrees in Nuclear Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, French Art, and is a Civil Engineer. His long-standing relationships in the community have been essential to the success of the project.

Khalifan Water Network Project is one of three water projects programmed for construction in the Soran District, Erbil Governorate, all of which are currently under construction. Nationwide, there are 208 water projects programmed, of which 90 are currently under construction and 72 are complete.

**Mike McAleer**



Work progresses on Khalifan water project storage tank. The tank located in Khalifa will have a capacity of 120,000 gallons. The Khalifan water project will provide 540,000 gallons of water daily. (Photo by Mike McAleer)

## GRS Opens First Border Post on Iranian Border

Officials from the Gulf Region South (GRS), the Iraqi Border Patrol (IBP), Multi-National Forces Southeast (MND-SE), the Project Contracting Office (PCO) and the contractor celebrated the first border fort opening in southern Iraq May 10 at Al Zaid, on the Iran-Iraq border.

The border fort, recently turned over to the IBP, had been 80 percent renovated and was completed in the middle of March. Renovations included new sanitary facilities, living quarters for the border guards, several guard towers and a renovated roof. There are 23 border forts in the Basrah Province, with an additional six scheduled to be completed and turned over this week. The southern district currently has 59 border posts slated for renovation.

The project, which began Aug. 25, 2004, has had its share of difficulties, according to Maysoon Tawfik, Parson's project manager for the Security and Justice Sector. "Even accessing the site was difficult," she said. "It is a single, treacherous road that goes out to the fort. And both sides of the road are littered with land mines left over from the Iran-Iraq war."

The project exemplified teamwork according to Tawfik. She praised the Corps of Engineers and Col. Roger Gerber for much help and support. "We employed both an Iraqi subcontractor and an Iraqi consulting firm," she said. "And they grew with the project. The Iraqi construction manager and site engineer were grateful for the guidance and support. We, as a team, overcame all the challenges with the help of GRS. We couldn't have done it without them."

The mines are still active, according to Stan Dowdy, Corps resident engineer, Basrah Palace Resident Office. Precautionary measures were taken to ensure the group's safety on the way to the opening. "This project enabled the border patrol police to be more comfortable in their outpost," he said. "It has been a struggle to renovate because of some of the physical constraints, but it has been a successful project and Brig. Gen. Ali expressed his appreciation."

Representatives from the Turkish, Iraqi and American media interviewed Col. Roger Gerber, commander, GRS and Brig. Gen. Ali, commander, IBP. Both men emphasized the importance of partnering on the projects the Corps has been undertaking with regard to the border police and the strength of their alliance.

**BJ Weiner**

## All Mud School Replacement Projects Completed in Babil Province

Headmasters at three mud schools took charge of their new brick and concrete replacement schools as the USACE Gulf Region South District signed the schools over to the education minister in the Babil Province. Local laborers completed the three projects in May.

All three replacement schools boast 12 classrooms instead of the usual six, according to Valerie Schaffner, Buildings, Health and Education project manager for mud school replacement projects. The usual six-classroom design was geared to smaller rural areas, servicing about 100 students, and the schools in Babil - Yaum Al Huria; Al Masoodi and Al Ma'rrij - serve 275, 370 and 590 students respectively.

"The cost was about \$160,000 per school," said Schaffner. "That includes storage space, student and teachers' bathrooms, electricity for fans, a partially paved playground area and a security fence around the school."

She added that, because of security risks in the area, no opening day ceremonies were held. These schools will get some new furniture for the teachers and the headmasters' offices.

Schaffner said that originally, 38 schools mud schools were to be replaced throughout southern Iraq, but that the number increased to 40.

"We saved enough in negotiations to build two more, which we are now writing contracts for, but are not yet advertised," said Schaffner. "The \$4 million program, funded by the Iraq Restoration and Reconstruction Funds, now is paying for 40 new schools, 36 of which are the standard six-classroom design and four - these three in Babil and one more in the Karbala Province - are of the larger, 12-classroom design."

Of the 40 mud school replacement projects in southern Iraq, 13 have been completed, and 25 are more than 70 percent finished. Contracts for two more are being negotiated and are expected to be awarded soon.

**BJ Weiner**

## Two Kirkuk rail stations' reconstruction complete

Passengers and consumers in the Kirkuk area will be pleased to learn that two rail station rehabilitation projects were recently completed in Kirkuk. The Kirkuk and Al Maraei stations are the first two completed of four station renovations scheduled in Kirkuk Governorate. Stations in Al Thawra and Al Reyadh are scheduled for completion later this year. From all indications, the once bustling Iraqi rail system is on the track to

steady recovery.

Both station renovation projects took about four months to complete at a cost of over \$70,000 each. The initial work mainly consisted of cleaning and removing rubbish from the sites and demolishing unsafe portions of the buildings. Station renovations included repair and replacement of plumbing and sewer systems, replacement of roofing and other structural components, painting, plastering, installing new windows, doors and frames, as well as flooring and tile.

The Iraq Republic Railroad (IRR) supervised all of the renovations performed. Prior to 2003, the IRR operated a network of 2,603 kilometers of railway.

The main railway routes are Um Qasr/Basra-Baghdad and Baghdad-Husaiba on the Syrian border. There are also branches to Kirkuk and Akashat.

"There are 105 kilometers of railway in Kirkuk," said Shakir Mahmoud Shukri, manager for Kirkuk Region IRR.

Renovations and repairs to these stations and others around Iraq are restoring the operational readiness of the IRR.

"Rehabilitation of the railway and stations will allow the IRR to move passengers and commodities throughout the region and connect Kirkuk by rail to the other parts of the country," said Shukri.

The rehabilitated railroad stations will provide the facilities necessary to accept the control equipment required to operate the railroad. Operational readiness and safety were exacerbated by the lack of pre-war maintenance and post-conflict looting. According to Shukri, work on the railway and the stations improves as the local security situation improves.

A local contractor employed about 30 local hire Iraqi trade workers, and artisans applied their skills to reach the finished product. The renovation projects positively affect the local economy through the hiring of labor and the purchase of necessary construction materials. The use of local contractors and local labor has been instrumental in inspiring pride in the local communities and injecting money into the local economies.

The stations in Kirkuk are part of a 15-station project that includes the reconstruction of 11 stations in Ninewa Governorate. The goal of the project is to repair the stations and make them safe and efficient once again.

Rebuilding the train stations allows the Iraqi people to see steps are being taken to restore the country's infrastructure. At the same time, renovation projects such as these send a clear message to the insurgents that, despite their attacks, Iraq is moving forward.

"I am looking forward to the return of full operation of the IRR serving the people of Kirkuk and being part of the national rail system," said Shukri.

**Mike McAleer**

# *Najaf Teaching Hospital shows evidence of improvement*

**T**he Najaf Teaching Hospital has transformed from a run-down hospital that once harbored militia, into a full-time, operational outpatient clinic capable of outpatient surgeries and emergency room visits. The hospital, built in 1982, is identical to six other hospitals built at that time throughout Iraq. The 420 bed facility, with 13 operating theatres, provides surgical specialties for eyes, thoracic, cancer treatment and dialysis.

“The hospital contains 200 medical school students, 50 pharmacy students, and 100 residence doctors,” said Dr. Safaah Al Ameen, hospital manager. “We employ 1,250 people here.”

This transformation from a Sept. battleground to a viable patient facility is a result of hard work and extensive renovations. Parsons, Inc., performed work under Phase One. The remainder of the project is being managed by USACE. “Dr. Safaah has been a close partner in all that we have done since we took over the management of this project,” said Val Schaffner, PE, project manager for the hospital. “I knew it would be a great relationship when, the first time I met him, he turned over to me his entire and only set of 20-year-old original plans for the entire building.”

“Phase One of the project began in Sept 2004, and was completed in Feb. 2005. It was a major cleanup of the basement and first floor. Parsons repaired walls, ceilings and floors, said Capt. Josh Miller, Camp Hotel resident engineer, who oversees the hospital project. “Phase Two repaired heating, air conditioning, plumbing and mechanical components that serve the hospital’s first floor, provided security grills on windows, and a vehicle access control gate. The goal for Phase Two was to advertise and quickly award a local contractor a small 30-day, competitively bid, contract. This phase would include repairs needed to outpatient services to offer them to the public again quickly. The outpatient clinic opened to the general public Apr. 18.

Phase Three is undergoing contract bidding now and will repair and renovate the hospital’s basement (including industrial kitchen, laundry, and mechanical rooms), second through seventh

(R to L) Col. William Ottenbacher, Dr. Safaah Al Ameen and Col. Roger Gerber discuss the Najaf Teaching Hospital reconstruction effort. The Najaf Teaching Hospital is a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers reconstruction project worth just over \$15 M. Twenty hospitals in Iraq are under renovation and 9 have been completed, including 1 U.S. Agency for International Development project.



floors, major utility penthouses on the eighth and ninth floors, and as many out-buildings in the hospital campus as we can do with funds available. Outlying buildings include a four-story doctors’ residence facility, morgue, sewer treatment plant, workshop and storage building, garage, entrance gate and other options.” The total cost of the Najaf project is just over \$15 M.

Colonel John Ottenbacher, Camp Hotel surgeon, also plays a key role to assist Dr. Safaah and Najaf. He worked directly with Safaah since Feb. to help him find key instruments that are missing from the hospital’s inventory. “The hospital needs surgical supplies such as endoscopes, cancer treatment medications, and cardiac monitoring equipment.” Ottenbacher meets with Safaah and other hospital officials every Wednesday to help them with patient advice and services.

The hospital’s outpatient clinic has seen approximately 200 patients daily since it opened last month. By fall, Safaah expects 1500 patients per day.

“Our clinic will feature specialists in the areas of General Surgery, Orthological Surgery, Dental Surgery, Breast Clinic, Diabetes Clinic, Cancer Clinic, Neurology, Endoscopy, Ultrasound, X-rays, Plastic Surgery, Ear/Nose and Throat, Medical Rehabilitation, and Laboratory Services,” Saafa said.

“We appreciate the assistance from all of the agencies that helped us so far [by supplying equipment and medicine], to include the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Higher Education. And we are ready to cooperate with anyone willing to assist the hospital in the future,” he added. The funding for the hospital facility rehabilitation does not include funds for the hospital equipment, so these items are being pursued through other avenues.

**LTC Stan Heath**

## *Soldiers of the 416<sup>th</sup> Engineer Command: they came from all over*

**S**ergeant Maj. David Murphy likes to quote Margaret Mead, “A small group of committed, thoughtful people can truly change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” The 32-year veteran from Illinois arrived here earlier this month with a small group of 20 committed and thoughtful Soldiers.

His unit is the 416<sup>th</sup> Engineer Command. The 416<sup>th</sup> deployed a detachment on a Request for Forces, or RFF, order to supplement the command and staff of the Gulf Region Division—whose mission it is to execute the Iraq Reconstruction Program.

“Although I’m still surprised at the enemy activity, the types of projects interest me and marry well with my background,” Murphy said. In his civilian life, he is a project manager for Johnson Control Company.

He explained that the detachment that deployed here is comprised of five original Soldiers, plus 15 Soldiers who cross-leveled into the unit from all over—Arkansas to Puerto Rico, from Kentucky to Hawaii. All of the Soldiers are on 18-month orders, but expect to be here only for a year.

“The 416<sup>th</sup> deployed to Central America; most recently to Panama in Operation New Horizons,” Murphy said. He’s been away for extended trainings and exercises, but nothing lasting a year long. “My wife is in shell shock,” Murphy said.

Murphy is at the headquarters Security branch here until early July, when he transfers to GRS in Talill, as the sergeant major. But, Murphy isn’t the first to peel off from the detachment. According to Lt. Col. Wayne Potuznik, four of the Soldiers were reassigned to Corps of Engineer outlying districts before leaving Kuwait.

“It depends on the skill set and where that Soldier is needed,” Potuznik said. “One Soldier went directly to the central district here in Baghdad, and three went to the north district in Mosul.”

Potuznik is one of the 15 pulled from other units to fulfill the RFF. His unit is the 88<sup>th</sup> Regional Readiness Command at Fort Snelling, Minn.

“GRD needed specific skills, and the 416<sup>th</sup> filled as much of the requirement as possible internally, before the Reserve Command had to be asked to fill the rest,” he said.

In the three districts, the Soldiers will be subject matter experts in planning, design and construction management; at

the Division level here, battle management and support, according to Potuznik.

He said that although the Soldiers in the 416<sup>th</sup> came from all over, they did start developing working relationships while at their month-long training at Ft. McCoy, Wis.

“Based on work assignments, occupations and other things, the Soldiers in the unit began forming working relationships while at McCoy, and we soon began feeling more cohesive. Now that all 20 are integrated into the Corps here, they’re ready to launch,” Potuznik said.

### **Green turned purple**

In conjunction with the 416<sup>th</sup>, there are 48 Soldiers deployed from the 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Engineer Brigade, for a total of 102 additional personnel on hand and 150 authorized. This RFF has made the Gulf Region Division a multi-component one—with Soldiers from the Army (Active, Guard and Reserve); Navy and Marine Corps Reserve; and an Air Force officer due to arrive soon.

Lieutenant Col. John Geider, GRD’s acting operations officer, said the RFF was a personnel action necessary to provide a sufficient number of uniformed military members.

“We needed more Soldiers to contribute value-added engineer services to the reconstruction effort,” Geider said. “The RFF allows us to reinforce and expand the success already enjoyed by GRD.”

Geider said the Reconstruction Program is a critical pillar of the counterinsurgency strategy, along the economic line of operation.

“Setting the stage for the provision of essential services and economic growth is vital for the stability of the interim Iraqi government,” he added.

The GRD Deputy Commander, Col. Frank X.

Kosich, said it had become difficult to maintain strength levels and momentum by resourcing from within the Corps of Engineers with temporary duty personnel.

“Now, we interface primarily with the military units in sector, so the military personnel we bring in establish

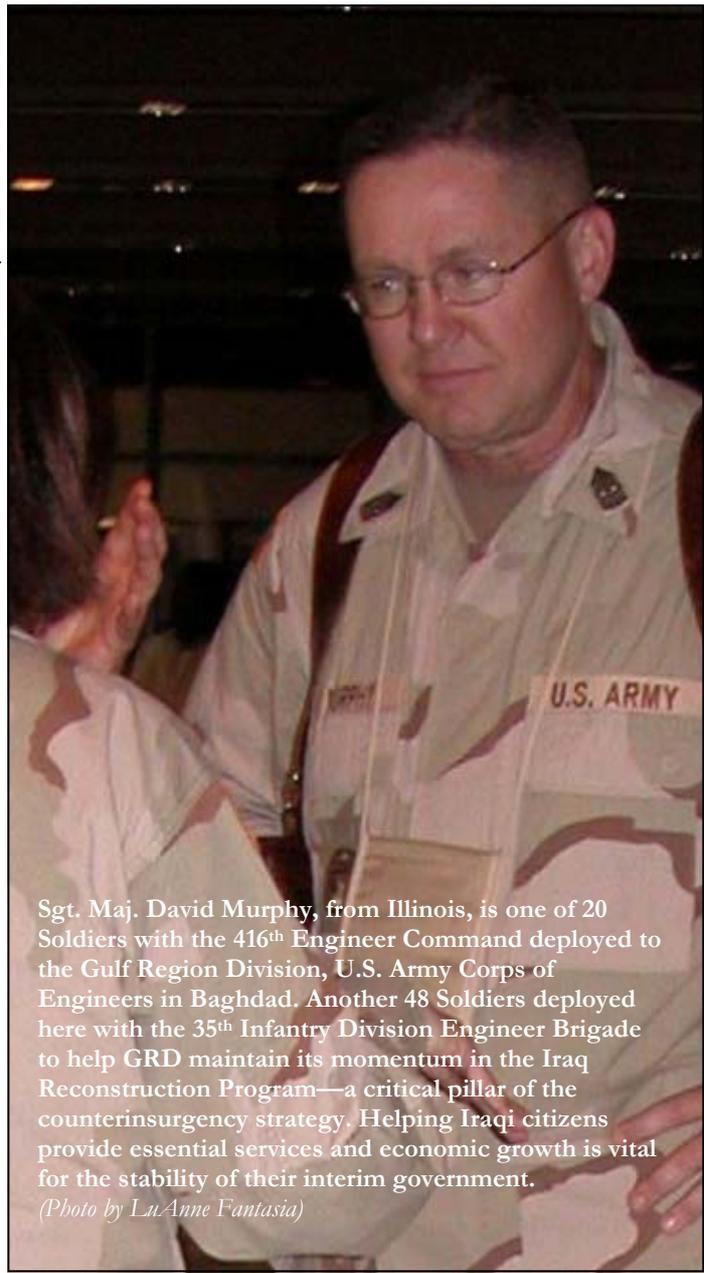
and maintain communications with those we work alongside,” Kosich said. “They’re also the continuity, as they tend to stay longer than most of the senior level civilians—the opposite of what we see state-side.”

Kosich added that the majority of the force expected is “in the net” at this point.

“There are a few more service members expected in July and early August, but for the most part, they’re here and making things happen.”

At the transfer of sovereignty in Iraq June 2004, there were just over 200 reconstruction projects started. Today, there are over 2,500 projects started, valued at more than \$5.8B. A total of 1,380 projects are complete. Construction will continue across the country, at a total of \$11B in reconstruction money.

**LuAnne Fantasia**



Sgt. Maj. David Murphy, from Illinois, is one of 20 Soldiers with the 416<sup>th</sup> Engineer Command deployed to the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Baghdad. Another 48 Soldiers deployed here with the 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Engineer Brigade to help GRD maintain its momentum in the Iraq Reconstruction Program—a critical pillar of the counterinsurgency strategy. Helping Iraqi citizens provide essential services and economic growth is vital for the stability of their interim government.

*(Photo by LuAnne Fantasia)*

# Women's Business Day



Many of the Iraqi women contractors attending the Women's Business Day in Baghdad met, for the first time, three representatives of the Iraqi Business Women's Union—a grassroots organization that has grown from nine to 33 members in two short months. The three founders explained, "Most Iraqi women are well-educated but not working. And, we have money in our country, but we don't know how to invest it. This is our goal...to teach that." (Note: names withheld) *(Photo by LuAnne Fantasia)*

**W**ith more than \$270M worth of projects open for local contractor bids, 130 Iraqi women attended a Women's Business Day at the Baghdad Convention Center to learn more.

The workshop was sponsored by the Projects and Contracting Office (PCO), with co-sponsorship and support from the Gulf Region Division (GRD), and the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq (JCC-I).

"This day was designed and organized to benefit the Iraqi business woman and the Reconstruction Program," said Senior Executive Service, Karen Durham-Aguilera, director of programs at PCO. "Our goal is to create diplomatic and long-lasting relationships based on our mutual desire for peace."

With every one-in-five in the Iraqi workforce being a woman, Durham-Aguilera told the group she is encouraged by their progress and pleased to be part of the workshop designed to further promote the involvement of women in the reconstruction process. As a woman with Middle-Eastern roots, she noted that it's rare in the Arab world for women to enjoy as much power as they do in Iraq.

"You have the freedom to build a better future for all of Iraq and ensure that the door of opportunity is open to everyone," Durham-Aguilera said.

"I had coaches who helped open doors for me, and we're here today to help Iraqi women—to be their coaches, to help open that door.

"Our aim is to help the women of Iraq to network and gain a helping hand for business opportunities and increased professional and economic growth," she added.

Ella Snell, director of contracting at GRD, told the group of women contractors about upcoming contract opportunities and solicitations. Managers from six companies currently working

Reconstruction Program projects addressed the group and with exhibits of their companies.

"Our three objectives for today's conference are to provide women-owned companies an opportunity to get to know the different contracting officers from the Corps and JCC-I; provide an opportunity for the women to meet and greet the large business contractors to enhance their sub-contracting opportunities; and to provide an immediate opportunity for women to bid on a project," Snell told the group.

She made available copies of an immediate project to build a chapel, with an estimated dollar value is \$500 K to \$1 M.

Dean Sinclair, business development manager of IAP Worldwide, challenged the women to "know exactly what your company has to offer—service, product, and construction—and be the best at what you do." He asked them to visit all of the vendors' exhibits and "tell us what you can do for us."

One Iraqi woman contractor, Kate, said she usually doesn't communicate with other contractors because it's not safe to do so.

"I am surprised at the large number of women here today," she said. "It is encouraging." After living in England for 20 years, Kate returned to Iraq six years ago, and although her company is general construction, she expressed that she does want to specialize someday. "Right now, we just take all construction work we can get."

Another contractor, Nadia, said her company consists of five specialty companies: printing, catering, supply, maintenance, and transportation.

"We have projects in Anaconda, Bayji, Al Asad, and at Camp Victory, and Freedom Camp in Mosul. Some of the areas are dangerous but what am I going to do? We have to go there to work. It's our duty," Nadia said.

Continued...

Many of the women met, for the first time, three representative of the Iraqi Business Women's Union—a grassroots organization that has grown from nine to 33 members in two short months. Its members are teachers, housewives, electrical engineers, and commercial managers, to name a few. The founders have established bylaws, membership is free.

"We pay for everything out of our pockets, because we must get this union started," one of the founders explained. "Most Iraqi women are well-educated, but not working. And, we have money in our country, but we don't know how to invest it. This is our goal...to teach that."

The three women have been invited to Iran next month to study and get ideas for sorely-needed commercial products that can be produced or manufactured at home in Iraq.

"We need everything from pre-fab homes to canned foods," they said. "And, we need to train women to become business women."

Iraqi-born Azza Humadi, women's issue coordinator for the PCO, organized this event, as well as numerous, previous successful conferences for Iraqi business women.

The day following the event, Humadi received an e-mail from a woman in Kirkuk that read, "... your conference is proof that Iraqi women have the main role in rebuilding Iraq ... I hope your next conference is for women and how they can develop business ... and about investment in order to foster economic growth for Iraq."

Durham-Aguilera got the same feedback the day after the conference. "Many Iraqi ladies told me afterwards, and some sent me e-mails, that I touched their hearts and their minds that day with my words and our actions."

Army Col. Edwin Martin, a principal for the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq, said, "We want to encourage our prime contractors—through award incentives—to provide maximum opportunities for women-owned businesses to compete for subcontracts. We also encourage informal mentoring by our large prime contractors with the Iraqi women-owned small businesses."

Currently, there are 91 electricity and five potable water projects in the Reconstruction Program that will be available for local contractor bids.

**LuAnne Fantasia**

## Star of the Morning

**"Through the mists of dawn;  
I look,  
And the star of the morning,  
From the sky,  
Is gone."**

**William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet***

**W**hen Madame K read William Shakespeare's tragedy "Romeo and Juliet," this couplet moved her so much that she decided to name her fledgling construction business Star of the Morning. On June 15, that company completed the first of its two police station construction projects for the USACE Gulf Region South District one week ahead of schedule.

Five women make up the small business that has been so successful to date, according to Rick Mers, project engineer, Tallil Area Office. "They submitted their bid like everyone else and there was no special treatment accorded to them except the preference given to women-owned businesses," he said. "Fifty-one percent of the company has to be female in order to get the preference."

The contract was awarded on March 18 and the preconstruction meeting was held March 26, according to Mers. What he liked about the company from the offset was their eagerness to move forward quickly. "They started construction on March 28," he said. "They mobilized in three days. They finished the project early and the quality of the work was excellent. I wrote that on the closing and I rarely do that; I was just so impressed with the work."

The added touches the contractor included in the project convinced Mers that Star of the Morning deserved accolades in his evaluation. The police chief received new furniture and curtains were added in the rooms. Mers said he took a photo of the windows as an example to show the rest of his contractors. "They were sparkling," he said. "I want to show others that this is what we are looking for. We are looking for contractors to go that extra inch – to please the client and to take pride in their own work. Star exemplifies that."

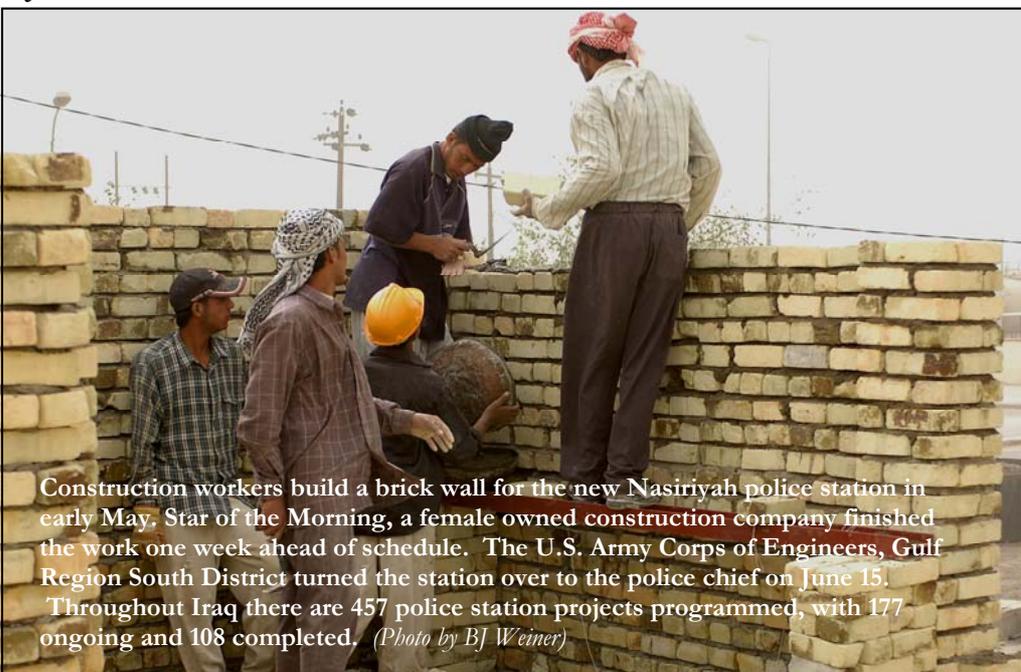
Mers said he asked the women if they had any trouble with their male laborers and they told him there were no real issues. Periodically, he said, Madame K's husband would stop by the job site and attended the closing. Another family member served as an interpreter so he was always on site.

"They had a lot of family support," he said. "We have awarded them another contract to do construction on a police station next to the one we just closed. They are having a difficult time with the police chief, but not because they are women. There are three police stations in this area – he is giving the other contractor a hard time as well."

Mers looks forward to working with more women-owned businesses in the future and said Star of the Morning has changed a mindset in Iraq. "They broke ground," he said. "It's great. This wouldn't have happened under Saddam's rule. When I first got here last November, there was a female engineer who went out on site and she was held back. But now, this has changed. Star of the Morning is on site most of the time and they handle themselves very well."

Madame K said that she wanted to form an all female company and learned about construction from her father. "After he died," she said. "I talked to the engineers and we were all in agreement about starting the company. My husband supports my efforts fully, and we have not experienced many problems because we are all female. It is the quality of the work that counts in the end."

**BJ Weiner**



Construction workers build a brick wall for the new Nasiriyah police station in early May. Star of the Morning, a female owned construction company finished the work one week ahead of schedule. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region South District turned the station over to the police chief on June 15.

Throughout Iraq there are 457 police station projects programmed, with 177 ongoing and 108 completed. (Photo by BJ Weiner)

## *For the Baisches, support to Iraq is a family affair*

Maj. Greg Baisch's last duty before departing Iraq in June was to personally deliver 200 pairs of sandals to an orphanage in Baghdad. His daughter, Hailey, was directly responsible for inspiring fellow students at Mountain View High School in Boise, Idaho, to donate the shoes for Iraqi citizens. Employees of the CH<sup>2</sup>M Hill global engineering and construction company donated money for shipping and handling.

*(Photo by Jim Gordon)*



**H**ailey Baisch is out of school for the summer but this energetic high school junior is driven to work through the season. Her Dad, Maj. Greg Baisch, an operations officer at the Gulf Region Division Headquarters here, has bragging rights about his first-born. “She’s always been this way—working to do something for others—even when she was little. She’s a hard worker!”

As a direct result of Hailey’s desire to make a difference for others and her determination to see projects through to the end, 200 pair of sandals were delivered to an orphanage in Baghdad recently, which will be distributed further by the nuns there to Iraqi men, women, boys and girls—especially little girls—who need shoes desperately.

“All of the donated sandals were great,” Hailey said in a telephone interview from her home in Boise, Idaho, “but there were a lot of really cute ones for little girls. But, we had sandals or flip-flops for men and women and boys, too.”

Hailey dismisses the complicated logistics of this project as routine—which it is, since she’s been involved in toy drives and other service projects many times in her short 15 years.

As a member of the National Honor Society, she inspired and effected a long chain of events of class competitions at her school and called friends of the family in her Dad’s (civilian life) company, CH<sup>2</sup>M Hill, a global engineering and construction company.

John Slonaker, Mark Bowen, and Tammy Phillips matched Hailey’s energy and enthusiasm for the project by collecting money for shipping and handling costs, and producing fliers. Fellow students purchased and donated 200 pair of sandals. Hailey and her mother Laurie, boxed the sandals, prepared them for shipping, moved them to the post office, and mailed them to the GRD headquarters.

Hailey has already collected another 50 pair of sandals which will soon make their way to Baghdad, as well.

If a leader is a person who cares more than others think is wise, Hailey is already a leader. At Mountain View High School, Hailey carries a full load of honor’s courses balanced with her participation as a varsity cheerleader. She aspires to become an anesthesiologist.

“My brother’s godparents live in Seattle and his godmother is a neonatal intensive care nurse. So, I plan to apply to Seattle Pacific University to study pre-med.”

No doubt, she will do it. “That’s just the person she is,” her mom, Laurie, said.

Maj. Baisch departed Iraq in June and will report to the Seattle District, USACE, as his next duty station.

**LuAnne Fantasia**

# ENGINEER DAY MESSAGE

Every June, we celebrate Engineer Day to honor the contributions of U.S. Army Engineers, which began when Col. Richard Gridley became the first chief engineer in June 1775. His fortifications at Bunker Hill began a long heritage of service by Army engineers that continues today. Although much has changed during the centuries, the commitment, courage, and competence exhibited by Army engineers have never changed.

During the past year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the entire Engineer Regiment have accomplished terrific work. Thanks to the Corps of Engineers team, we accomplished our daily, important work at home on the nation's waterways and recreation areas, on our military facilities, and in our research facilities. This past year, when our fellow citizens needed aid after four hurricanes struck the Southeast, you rushed to help them.

Around the world you supported the armed forces with quality facilities, and you helped to improve the quality of life in Afghanistan and Iraq. Thanks to your contributions, the Gulf Region Division passed its one-year anniversary in January. Later that month, Iraq held free elections. Many people will never forget the photos of smiling Iraqis leaving polling places, showing their fingers stained with purple ink like badges of honor. Be proud that *wherever* you served, you contributed to that important milestone.

Sadly, many in the Engineer Regiment have paid the ultimate price. In March, the nation awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously to Sgt. 1st Class Paul Smith of the 11<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. His extraordinary, unyielding courage during a firefight outside the Baghdad Airport in April 2003 saved many of his fellow Soldiers' lives.

His award reminds me that the regiment is blessed with Soldiers and Civilians who live the Army values, and who are dedicated to public service. As a member of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, you are part of a great team that has made many contributions to the nation's security, economic prosperity, and environmental quality. With your help, we will do more.

We published our campaign plan June 16, and I ask that you read it at [www.usace.army.mil](http://www.usace.army.mil) so you can help us become "One Team: Relevant, Ready, Responsive, and Reliable." The campaign plan describes goals, supporting objectives, and enabling capabilities that will help us achieve our vision. As you read the plan, remember that our goals and objectives are connected, and *every* Corps member has a role to play in making our vision a reality.

Thank you for your service to our nation, and thank you for being part of the Corps team. With your help, we will add to the long, proud heritage of service that began more than two centuries ago.

**Essayons!**

**CARL A. STROCK**  
 Lieutenant General, USA  
 Commanding

**Watermark: Lt. Gen. Carl Strock speaks to members of the Gulf Region Division during change of command ceremony held in Baghdad in June. In addition to the installation of the new GRD commander, Strock brought with him his Chief of Engineer's message. (Photo by Jim Gordon)**

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

### Hail and Farewell

**Hailing:**  
 MAJ Eric Andrews, GRN, Sacramento District  
 Edward Belk, GRN, Memphis District  
 James Beaujon, Project engineer GRS, Nashville District  
 Bruce Brune, GRN, AF Communications Agency, Scott AFB, Ill.  
 Scott Bullock, GRN, Rock Island District  
 James Gilmore, GRN, South West Division  
 CSM Greg Glen, Ft. Lewis, Wa.  
 Michael Greco, GRN, Seattle District

Rixby Hardy, GRN, retirement  
 Richard Jenkins, GRN, Mississippi Valley Division  
 Sung-Kun Kim, GRN, TAC  
 Torrey Leiner, Construction Rep GRS, Portland District  
 Arthus E. Macstas, Project Manager GRS, Albuquerque District  
 BG William McCoy Jr., GRD Commander, Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo.  
 Laurie Pierce, Contracting Officer GRS, ???  
 Brent Rose, PPM GRS, Savannah District  
 Billy Sellin, GRN, Omaha District  
 Chris Stack, IT Manager GRS, CERL  
 Norman Storro, GRN, Seattle District  
 Berry Stuard, Construction Rep GRS, Little Rock District  
 Kenneth Westlund, GRN, TRADOC  
 Debra Woodward, GRN, Kansas City District

**Farewells (photos not available)**  
 James Allen, GRN, Walla Walla District  
 CPT William Clark, GRC, Alaska District  
 Jacob Davis, GRN, Seattle District  
 John Drake, Construction OM GRC, Los Angeles District  
 Malhon Good, IT Specialist GRS, Seattle District  
 Reginald Heywood, GRN, Seattle District  
 Steve Ireland, LOGCAP GRC, Galveston District  
 James Jones, GRN, Seattle District  
 Seong Kim, GRN, TAC  
 Marlowe Kulseth, GRN, Los Angeles District  
 Alan Miller, GRN, Savannah District  
 Eddie Miller, RE UPO (GRC), Vicksburgh District  
 John Murner, GRN, New England District  
 MAJ Ronald Payne, GRN, Ft. Polk, La.  
 SGM Thomas Sigee, Sr., GRN, TAC  
 Walter Scott, GRN, New York District  
 LTC Robert Smith, G-3 GRC, Pacific Ocean Division

**Continued on back**



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**



**Fred Sheffield**  
GRS  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Robert Harry**  
Proj. Engr. GRS  
Returning to:  
Bluefield, W Va.



**Keith Jones**  
Project Manager GRS  
Returning to:  
Jacksonville District



**Greg Reiff**  
Resident Engr. GRS  
Returning to:  
Far East District



**Ken Paton**  
Proj. Engr. GRS  
Returning to:  
New England District



**Don Cleary**  
Construct. Rep. GRS  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Dillie Rapley**  
Constr. Rep. GRS  
Returning to:  
Honolulu District



**Don Hasslet**  
Constr. Rep. GRS  
Returning to:  
New England District



**Bob Hanacek**  
Resident Engr. GRS  
Returning to:  
New England District



**Alex Herrera**  
Proj. Engr. GRS  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Rita Burns**  
Contract Spec GRS  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**Thomas Mack**  
GRN  
Returning to:  
Rock Island District



**Robin West**  
GRN  
Returning to:  
Portland District



**Richalie Griffith**  
GRN  
Returning to:  
New England District



**Paul Holcomb**  
GRN  
Returning to:  
Rock Island District



**Clifford Dorniney**  
GRN  
Returning to:  
Galveston District



**Matthew Napolitano**  
Budget—GRC  
Returning to:  
Los Angeles District



**Roger Devereux**  
QA Rep. GRC  
Returning to:  
Nashville District



**Alicia Embrey**  
PAO - GRC  
Returning to:  
Tulsa District



**LTC Randy Westfall**  
Depty. Cmdr. GRC  
Returning to:  
Ft. Meade, Md.



**COL Richard Thompson**  
Cmdr GRC  
Returning to:  
South Pacific Division



**Dennis Thomas**  
Sr. Const. Mgr. GRC  
Returning to:  
Galveston District



**MAJ Melody Smith**  
GRC  
Returning to:  
Rock Island District



**James Worthington**  
Res. Engr. GRC  
Returning to:  
Galveston District



**John Quenga**  
Office Engr GRC  
Returning to:  
San Diego, Ca.



**Timothy Unger**  
IT Spec GRC  
Returning to:  
Soul, Korea



**Eileen Farley**  
Contract Spec GRC  
Returning to:  
New Orleans District



**Patricia Mason**  
Contract Spec GRC  
Returning to:  
Portland District



**Marlin Ranum**  
Construction GRC  
Returning to:  
St. Paul District



**Roy Lawson**  
Construction GRC  
Returning to:  
St. Paul District



**Danny Kissam**  
Contract Spec. GRC  
Returning to:  
Wilmington District



**Theodore Gibbs**  
Logistics GRC  
Returning to:  
Memphis District



**Christopher Abshire**  
Proj. Eng GRC  
Returning to:  
Huntington District



**George Locke**  
Cont. Spec. GRC  
Returning to:  
USACE



**Pam Kelly-Fawley**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
TAC



**Greg Wilson**  
Real Estate GRD  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**CPT Paul Hicks**  
Real Estate GRD  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**MAJ Roosevelt Samuel**  
Real Estate GRD  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**Alan Williams**  
Real Estate GRD  
Returning to:  
Kansas City District



**LTC Rick Howlet**  
GRD LNO MNSTCI  
Returning to:  
HQ USACE



**Marc Kodak**  
PM GRD  
Returning to:  
TAC



**Walter Scott**  
Proj. Engr. GRN  
Returning to:  
New York District



**John Murner**  
Con. Rep. GRN  
Returning to:  
New England District



**Laura Stigler**  
Cont. Spec. GRD  
Returning to:  
Huntsville



**LTC William Fooks**  
Deputy G3 GRD  
Returning to:  
HQ USACE



**Walt Garman**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Baltimore District



**COL James Green**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
USACE



**Jeff Pfannes**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Portland District



**LTC Jeff Ogden**  
RIE GRD  
Returning to:  
Louisville District



**LTC Mike Donovan**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
USACE



**LTC David Diehl**  
G-1 GRD  
Returning to:  
Huntsville Center



**CPT Frank Myers**  
Aide-de-Camp  
Returning to:  
USACE



**Harry Weddington**  
Photographer GRD  
Returning to:  
Omaha District



**Bill Yerabek**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Portland District



**Mark Umerley**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Jacksonville District



**Darralyn Williams**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Huntsville Center



**Bill Ryals**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Home



**Joe Pimenta**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
ERDC



**MAJ Greg Baisch**  
GRD  
Returning to:  
Seattle District



**Maureen Trainor**  
Admin Asst GRN  
Returning to:  
Jacksonville District



**CSM J Gutierrez**  
CSM GRD  
Returning to:  
Hawaii



**BG Thomas Bostick**  
Commander GRD  
Returning to:  
HQ USACE