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 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

8th Iraqi Army Division To Get Six New Garrison Buildings

By BJ Weiner
 Gulf Region South

QADISSIYAH, Iraq – Restoration and refurbishment of existing Iraqi army facilities has taken center stage as the focus of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shifts to capacity development in all aspects of its reconstruction projects. With the completion of some projects at the 8th Iraqi Army Division Headquarters, USACE has dedicated another six buildings, worth a total of \$16 million, to complete that effort.

The buildings are two stories, and 50 meters by 35 meters, according to Lt. Col. Ed Patterson, Forat area engineer. Designed to be a public works department, the buildings are to be built at six 8th Iraqi Army Division facilities throughout the five provinces in the Forat area: Qadissiyah, Babil, Wasit, Karbala and Najaf.

“You would have one person who works in



These barracks were constructed for the 8th Iraqi Army Division Headquarters. They are officers' quarters. The quality assurance on the project was performed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. [USACE Photos by BJ Weiner]



8th Iraqi Army Division commander Maj. Gen. Othman Ali Farhood speaks through an interpreter at the Army's headquarters [USACE Photo by BJ Weiner].

the building doing work orders and work electrical project,” said Patterson. “This will be a garrison support mission and it is my understanding that he (8th Iraqi Army Division Commander Maj. Gen. Othman Ali Farhood) will employ a garrison support commander who will do nothing but that.”

Patterson said the project falls under the capacity development initiative of Col. Gary Johnston, commander of the Gulf Region South district. This initiative emphasizes mentoring and training Iraqi personnel in all aspects of civil affairs – from engineering to maintenance training. “Capacity development is being emphasized throughout Iraq,” he said. “And it has a lot of merit. What I would like to see is standing up a vertical engineering facility so we could train them in all aspects of plumbing, carpentry and electrical maintenance. This would really help sustain them in the future, when we are not



Two Iraqi soldiers sit outside 8th Iraqi Army administration buildings at Army headquarters. The U.S. Corps of Engineers provided quality assurance on the project. [USACE Photo by BJ Weiner]

here.”

Patterson met with Farhood recently and told him about the new buildings. Farhood promised to meet with his division commanders to decide where the buildings should be constructed. “Once we get that information, we can get the solicitations started right away,” said Patterson. “I’d like to have this whole thing moving by April 1st – and we can do it.”

The other projects that USACE has built for the Iraqi army include staff offices, a dining facility and a maintenance facility worth \$2.4 million; a barracks facility, worth about \$712,000; and a security wall for about \$873,000. These projects help the 8th Iraqi Army Division, which is responsible for security in the five south-central provinces. “The 8th Army has about 10,800 soldiers,” said Patterson. “And we work well with the division.”

Farhood said that the Corps has provided much needed expertise and support for his division. “I have been with the 8th Division a long time and, frankly speaking, all of our facilities

have been built by the Corps. I am most satisfied with this work, but my ambition is to see more buildings such as officer housing and gyms built for the division.”

He added that he wanted to thank all Corps employees, military and civilian, and all Americans for supporting the army and taking part in Iraq’s reconstruction. “You have made sacrifices for the sake of starting our new army,” he said. “I think the army is better than last year’s, and we should be able to secure the areas and provide safety for all people. My wish is also after our army has the ability to do this; that you come back to Iraq as tourists to see what you built and record in our history.

“I need to exploit this moment to express my thanks and appreciation for the U.S. Army and its help to the Iraqi army and for the sacrifices of people who have helped the Iraqi army under the very bad circumstances inside Iraq,” Farhood said. “Bear in mind we are one mission - one team against terrorists. I thank you very much.”

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