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Basrah Regional Courthouse Enhances Justice System in Iraq

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[Arabic Version](#)

AN NASIRIYAH, Iraq -- In an effort to support security, unity and prosperity in Iraq the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is building a new courthouse in Al Basrah Province.

Leo Sandoval, resident engineer with Gulf Region South district's Basrah office said the Basrah Regional Court House project involves the construction of a two-story courthouse and witness protection annex in the city of Basrah. When completed, the installation will provide the Iraqi people with a complete courthouse and witness protection facility to assist in the justice process.

"The witness protection facility portion of this project will provide a level of protection for those that are willing to come forward in the name of justice," Sandoval said.

Andrew Schmieder, Basrah Area Office area engineer said "The 11,000 square meter facility includes five elevators [and] a link between the main building and the witness protection facility.

"It has a café, parking lot, electricity room, generator platform, maintenance room, water tank room, clerk kiosk and benches, bath rooms, administrative check point, public check point and vehicle check point and a garden," Schmieder said. "The facility is scheduled to open by



Iraqi workers mixing concrete to build the second floor's roof of the Basrah Regional Courthouse in Al Basrah Province. The \$10 million courthouse is scheduled to open by the beginning of 2008. (USACE photo by Alaa Al Bahrani)

mid-year 2008. Currently more than 300 Iraqi workers are helping build the facility."

Lt. Col. Jan Carter, senior project manager with the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq said the Basrah courthouse has been designed and constructed to support the Iraqis within the design/ build budget. Basic systems to be installed are the sanitary, electrical, communications, and security camera and video surveillance systems.

"The contractor has been conducting operations and maintenance training appropriate to the facilities and equipment



The Basrah Regional Courthouse project in Al Basrah Province provided more than 300 Iraqis with good paying jobs in an effort to refresh the Iraqi economy. (USACE photo by Alaa Al Bahrani)

installed and constructed in the scope of this project," Carter said. "Training on the system will be arranged by the contractor and will include appropriate technicians from the city of Basrah."

Sandoval said the current costs of these facilities are split into two separate entities, although they are considered as one. "The courthouse is approximately valued at \$8 million and the Annex is valued at \$2 million for a total of \$10 million for the entire complex," he said. "We in the Corps want in this project to ensure quality management and construction techniques are being implemented by local Iraqi contractors and employees. This pro-

ject will provide the local governance with a quality facility for its intended purpose."

Sandoval said he has a strong belief in the justice system. He said the rule of law will be enhanced by this facility's capabilities and help make Iraq a safer place for all who want peace and justice.

Carter said that the electrical work includes a complete building electrical power and lighting system, and a complete telephone and local area network. Perimeter and security lighting system includes lights at building entries, exits, building perimeters, and courtyard areas.

"The contractor had to build internal roads including all sub-grade work and storm drainage and sidewalks connecting buildings and along roads, utility access points, vehicles, public and administrative check points," Carter said.

Schmieder said the construction of the Basrah courthouse is considered one of the critical projects for the southern region and will serve more than two million residents. The project started in September 2006 and is currently halfway to completion. "Once completed, Basrah courthouse is critical to enforcement of the rule of law," he said.

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