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## *Basrah Railroad Station Turned Over to the Iraqi Ministry of Transportation*

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Workers wash new platforms and sidewalks replaced as part of the railway station project. The \$480,000 project was recently turned over to the Iraqi Ministry of Transportation. The port of Umm Qasr appears in the background. (USACE photo by A. Al Bahrani)

**Basrah, Iraq** -- The rehabilitation of the Basrah railroad station, one of the main transportation projects of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the south of Iraq, marks an important achievement in developing the basic transportation services and strategic infrastructure for the Iraqi people.

"The Basrah Railroad station was re-

cently completed and turned over to the Iraqi Ministry of Transportation," said Rebecca Wingfield, GRS project engineer with Adder Area Office. "This \$480,000 project does not only help to develop the basic services and the strategic infrastructure, but it provides a critical link for the country of Iraq. It ties the southern portion of the country with the northern portion."

Wingfield said the Basrah railroad station was unusable without renovation, noting that the structure of the building was damaged and unsafe and that the platforms and the walkways were torn up or removed.

An Iraqi engineer said work on this facility included the construction of many outer buildings as well as rehabilitation to the existing structures. In addition, he said, the platforms and sidewalks were replaced so people could get on and off the trains.

"Transporting goods and services is extremely important for any growing region and economy," Wingfield said. "The railroad system will continue to grow in serving the Iraqi people while [they are] rebuilding their country."

She said the mission of the Gulf Region South district throughout Basrah Province includes performing site evaluations and rehabilitation work on seven railway stations, many of which were looted and damaged after the fall of Saddam Hussein. She said the goal is to repair the stations and make them safe and efficient once again.

"The railroad [is a] main source of transportation and the major transporter

of goods, materials and people throughout the country of Iraq," Wingfield said. "This project was to install all new platforms and walkways as well as renovating portions of the interior of the station and exterior façade.

"These improvements will greatly facilitate enhanced operations at this site," she added. "We applaud the Iraqi team with whom we have closely worked in making this challenge become a reality."

The Iraqi engineer said rebuilding the rail industry in Basrah is very important to Iraq's economy. Basrah, one of the oldest cities in Iraq, has a great impact on the country's economy.

"The Iraq railroad system provides efficient, reliable transportation," the engineer said. "It is also essential for trade and commerce from the port and business centers in Southern Iraq to the population centers in Northern Iraq.

"Iraq has a network of 2,603 kilometers and the main railway routes are Baghdad –Husaiba and Umm Qasr/Basrah – Baghdad" he said, pointing out that there are also branches to Kirkuk and Akashat.

Note: The Iraqi engineer quoted in this article can not be named for security reasons. The author, Mohammed Aliwi, is a Media Relations Officer with Gulf Region South district, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. For more information, contact John Connor, deputy public affairs officer at 540-665-2656 or email requests to CEGRD.PAO@tac01.usace.army.mil. For more information on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Iraq, visit [www.grd.usace.army.mil](http://www.grd.usace.army.mil).