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 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Iraq Reconstruction - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completes fourth year

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BAGHDAD, Iraq – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers marks its fourth year of executing reconstruction projects across Iraq with the January 25th anniversary of the activation of the Gulf Region Division.

Iraq's infrastructure is continuing to improve and U.S. assistance projects are having a real impact on the lives of Iraqis, rebuilding vital public service facilities, supporting the emergence of democracy, and establishing a foundation for a strong economy.

"This isn't so much the celebration of a birthday as it the celebration of an anniversary and a relationship," said Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Dorko, GRD commanding general, in remarks at the GRD Headquarters in Baghdad during a Jan. 24, 2008, visit by USACE Commanding General and Chief of Engineers Lt. Gen. Robert Van Antwerp and USACE Director of Military Programs Maj. Gen. Bo Temple. "We wouldn't exist if we didn't have someone to serve; if we didn't have deployed coalition forces to serve on the military construction side. We wouldn't have a reason to exist if we did not have a role serving the Iraqi people and the leadership of Iraq to set conditions for them to go forward... We are first and foremost a service organization."

At a cost of \$13.4 billion, in a building program the size of which has not been seen since the reconstruction of central



Chief of Engineers Lieutenant General Robert Van Antwerp observes as contracting specialist Myrlande Lee and Executive Assistant Bonnie Corbin, representing the newest arrival to the Gulf Region Division and it's longest serving member, cut the cake commemorating the organization's 4th Anniversary. The Division was activated Jan. 25, 2004. (USACE photo by Grant Sattler)

Europe under the post-WWII Marshall Plan, USACE is jumpstarting reconstruction by tending to critical repairs and improvement projects in oil, electricity, potable water and sewerage; much needed facilities for healthcare, education, governance and security; and transportation improvements for roads, railways, bridges, air and sea ports.

The Iraq national infrastructure--devastated by 25 years of neglect and underfunding by the socialist regime of Saddam Hussein, years of war, international sanctions and a costly insurgency--is be-

ing rebuilt in an environment where hard-liner insurgents, armed criminal elements and Al Qaeda terrorists do not want to see the popularly elected Iraqi government be successful. Reconstruction efforts, in concert with greater security won by Iraqi and Coalition forces, are vital to Iraq's progress.

Activated Jan. 25, 2004, GRD and its three subordinate districts in the south, center and north of the country, are providing engineering, program and project management, and logistical services in support of civil and military construction throughout Iraq.

Building on the momentum of separate USACE elements that had served in Iraq since the start of the war, GRD unified Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil, Task Force Restore Iraqi Electricity, the Iraq Reconstruction Office, the Iraq Area Office, and the Iraq Provisional Command and Forward Engineer Support Teams working with U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Army combat engineers around the country. In January 2005, contracting functions of the Project and Contracting Office (PCO) were transferred to the newly established Joint Contracting Command-Iraq / Afghanistan (JCC-I/A) and by August of that year the PCO's program management merged with GRD, eventually being fully integrated in the GRD organization on Oct. 1, 2006.

USACE has completed more than 4,465 projects costing \$8.4 billion and work continues on more than 500 additional projects worth more than \$2.1 billion. Work is funded by the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, Development Fund for Iraq, Commander's Emergency Response Program, Economic Support Fund, and Iraq Security Forces Fund.

Projects executed by USACE have been selected to kick start the reconstruction of the national infrastructure, an effort estimated to require more than \$100 billion. U.S. funds are only a part of the broader

effort, which will be continued with Iraq's own enormous human and capital resources and the support of other donor nations.

"We've accomplished great things in the past, but we need to be steeled and continue to focus forward," Dorko said. "While conditions have improved and things are better today, we know we're going to take a couple steps backwards and things will be hard, but there's a mission still out in the future."

The World Bank 2004 estimate to rebuild the electrical system is \$20 billion. With a U.S. IRRF funding allocation of \$4.3 billion, USACE has achieved program goals for providing more power more equitably across Iraq through key infrastructure improvement in electrical generation, transmission, and distribution. Peak daily power generated has exceeded the pre-war level of 4,300 megawatts and is exceeding 9,500 megawatts as more generation is brought on line.

Work in the oil sector carried out by USACE at a cost of \$1.7 billion has ensured the Iraqi oil industry has the capacity to produce 3 million barrels per day of oil, natural gas production capacity of 800 million standard cubic feet per day, and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) production of 3,000 metric tons per day to meet domestic need. Projects included key repairs at refineries and gas-oil separation plants, repairing pipelines, reworking oil wells, and overhauling the Al Basrah Oil Terminal offshore in the Arabian Gulf. The Coalition Provisional Authority estimate to rebuild the oil infrastructure in Iraq was \$8 billion. The remaining shortfall is being addressed by the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, the South Oil Company and North Oil Company.

In the water sector, the goal of 1.1 million cubic meters per day of potable water as the GRD portion set by the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund has almost been reached. An estimated 3.8

million more Iraqis have access to potable water than did before the start of the program. USACE projects range from multi-million dollar water treatment plants--like those completed at Erbil and Nasiriyah--to compact water units provided to rural communities.

Across Iraq, 908 water projects are improving living conditions for Iraqis. Currently 718 of the projects have been completed. They range from new wastewater treatment plants, such as the \$78 million Phase II of the Fallujah Wastewater System project, to rehabilitation of pre-existing facilities and lift stations.

In the facilities and transportation sector, major programs include: buildings, health and education; security and justice; transportation and communications; and infrastructure security.

GRD has completed 33 of the 53 planned hospital renovation projects across Iraq that focus on children and maternity care; another 14 are ongoing. Two are new hospitals in Basrah and Maysan. The Basrah Children's Hospital expected to be completed in a year is a pediatric oncology specialty hospital and will be the first new hospital built in the country since the 1980s.

More than 140 new Primary Healthcare Clinics are being completed across the country and turned over to the Iraqi Ministry of Health. The clinics are smaller than traditional hospitals, but they can serve 300 patients a day, providing much needed medical treatment for underserved populations in rural and urban areas.

GRD has completed 1,081 school renovation, expansion and new construction projects positively impacting an estimated 324,000 students. Before reconstruction started, many schools had dirt floors. The new facilities, with potable water, desks, blackboards and play area outside, give Iraq's most precious natural resource, its children, clean and safe places to learn.

Projects in the transportation sector include 607 kilometers of roads, five bridges, renovation of 104 railroad facilities, 25 aviation projects and eight projects at the port of Umm Qasr.

Security and justice projects include the completed construction of 155 border posts and 13 Point of Entry facilities, and completion of 96 fire station and 38 courthouse projects. Construction and rehabilitation of additional correctional facilities is providing 8,000 additional beds and improved conditions for a crowded prison system.

Communications projects include 33 post offices and the on going construction of the Al Mamoon switch building in Baghdad.

While the steel, bricks and mortar part of reconstruction is important, it is not the entire story. Every bit as important in meeting the needs of Iraqi society are the operations, management, maintenance and sustainment policies that allow the physical infrastructure to meet the needs of the people for decades to come.

"When you think about infrastructure, you can't just focus on projects that you put out on the ground, it's that capacity building role that we increasingly have here to help establish conditions so that the infrastructure we build today can be cared for, can be budgeted, so that in years, decades and generations to come the Iraqi people will continue to benefit," Dorko said.

The USACE Sustainment and Technical Capacity Program is designed to develop the capacity of Iraqis at plant and facility levels. The \$345 million Economic Support Fund program trains employees to provision materiel necessary to operate facilities, properly use and maintain equipment, and to manage operation and maintenance training.

Effects of the capacity development projects include: 470 contracts totaling more than \$200 million awarded to Iraqi business women; monthly Web-based training for Iraqi engineers focusing on project management skills, masonry, and fundamentals of design; more than \$33 million in electrical sustainment with safety equipment, cranes and other tools to build system reliability; and, more than 690 Ministry of Water Resources employees trained on operations and maintenance.

GRD Logistics manages the receipt, transportation and distribution of \$12 billion worth of material and equipment to support reconstruction and security, providing items ranging from hospital beds, laboratory equipment and X-ray equipment, furnishings and computers for Iraqi government offices to vehicles, weapons, ammunition, and uniforms for Iraqi police and army units. GRD Logistics has processed almost 24,000 customs exemptions and tracked more than 16,000 materiel convoys since August 2004. More than 35,000 vehicles, 510,000 weapons, 447 million rounds of ammunition, 3.4 million sets of individual body armor and helmets, and 947,000 uniforms have been delivered.

GRD is supported by the 35,000 Department of the Army Civilians and Soldiers in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in USACE divisions and districts, centers and laboratories. The GRD team in Iraq includes Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, USACE civilians and government civilians from other U.S. Federal Agencies, contractors and Iraqi associates, all of whom have a common purpose: to complete the reconstruction mission in Iraq and assist the Iraqi Government in assuming full responsibility for national infrastructure.

"There are no non-critical jobs in the Gulf Region Division, absolutely every job is critical," Dorko said to those attending the event. "You are key contributors day in and day out for us to be able to deliver on the promise of a better future for Iraq because of what we are doing today and the conditions we are setting for the future."

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