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Gulf Region Division builds Justice Complex on site of former tyranny

By Kendal Smith
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Sandblasting has restored the exterior of Courthouse 1 and the connecting colonnade to Courthouse 2 on the Anbar Judicial Complex in Ramadi. (USACE Photo)

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The \$21.5 million renovation and new construction at the Anbar Judicial Complex in the provincial capital of Ramadi is under way by the Gulf Region Division on palace sites of the Saddam Hussein family. Courtrooms and judges' chambers will be located in palace buildings formerly used by Saddam and his infamous sons, Uday and Qusay, at the so-called "Hurricane Point" on the Euphrates River. Ramadi is one of several Sunni-majority towns along the Euphrates and was a stronghold for Saddam. But times have changed.

In acknowledgement of continuing security improvement, al Anbar Province transferred from Coalition forces to Iraqi control in ceremonies on Sept. 1, 2008. A

further reflection of improvement is the "Sunni Awakening" born of the local tribal leaders who struck back at al Qaeda and reached out for help to U.S. forces. The capital city claims to be the starting point of that movement and the group's efforts to reduce terrorist influence in Anbar. This striking evolution is keenly felt by the engineers and construction workers who are part of the project.

"Construction of the Anbar Judicial Complex will create a point of strength for security and law in Iraq. It is a profound moment to contemplate the changes in this province over the past year that make this construction possible. I'm grateful we are small part of this historic event. It feels good to be an engineer, building this

country back," said Cmdr. Edward Danek, Officer in Charge of USACE's Ramadi Resident Office for the Central district, Gulf Region Division.

The Phase 1 Complex renovation will transform two former palaces to individual 1,000 square meter courthouses by the end of October 2008. Each one will contain a central courtroom, investigation offices, bathrooms and judges' chambers. A smaller 500 square meter courthouse will be used as a juvenile courtroom facility. Included in the renovation are a pre-trial detention building, two 440 square meter buildings for offices and training and a cafeteria.



Above: Sandblasting has restored the exterior of Courthouse 1 and the connecting colonnade to Courthouse 2 on the Anbar Judicial Complex in Ramadi.

Photos to the right: Workers hand finish the restoration of the columns of Courthouse 1 at the Anbar Judicial complex in Ramadi. (USACE Photos)

Phase 2 is new construction to add to the Complex's security, capabilities and suitability as a judicial center. Phase 2 is to be completed by the end of June 2009. Housing for the justices as well as barracks for the junior and senior security guards will enable them to live in a secure environment. Also in this phase are plans for student billeting and classrooms to incorporate training for court reporting and





(USACE Photo)

paralegal workers. Training units for the guards and housing for the detainees will provide additional support structures.

Life support systems to be constructed include an electrical generator facility, a water treatment plant, a sewage treatment plant plus facilities for refrigeration, laundry, a supply warehouse and equipment storage.

“We’re making great strides in the right direction to get this completed for the people of Anbar province,” said ALMCO contract project manager, Andy Schmeider. “We know it is important to both continued security and the judicial process to have proper facilities.”

Looks like justice is returning to Hurricane Point.

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