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## *Adding mega watts to Iraq's electrical grid*

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The \$170 million Qudas Generation Plant expansion features two huge General Electric Frame 9E generators that will add much needed mega watt capacity to the grid, resulting in more hours of power [USACE Photo]

**Baghdad, Iraq** – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Gulf Region Division's largest remaining electrical generation project added two work shifts to keep pace on one of Iraq's most important infrastructure projects, the Qudas Generation Plant.

The Qudas expansion initiative, first started in September 2006, will result in an additional 200 mega watts of power added to the electrical grid. More than 200 Iraqi skilled and semi-skilled laborers are working hard to finish construction, and begin commissioning and testing in

early 2009. Full electrical production is scheduled for April 2009.

“We are helping meet the basic needs of the people of Iraq - with electricity, water and medical care... things many of us take for granted everyday,” said Maj. Gen. Michael R. Eyre. “After Qudas is finished, GRD’s goal of adding 2,160 mega watts to the Iraqi grid will be complete.”

U.S. Navy Commander Jerome Zinni has been in Iraq for almost four months with most of his time spent at Qudas. He has a short mission statement: “Finish Qudas and get those mega watts on the grid to strengthen the Baghdad Ring.”

The \$170 million project features two huge General Electric Frame 9E generators that will add much needed mega watt capacity to the grid, resulting in more hours of power for average Iraqis “that have growing desires, but still have a very limited supply of electricity,” Zinni said. “Formulas vary and are far from an exact science; but each mega watt is enough to benefit approximately 904 households.”

Using these figures, more than 180,000 Iraqi households could benefit from the Qudas expansion project. Many factors determine hours of power, but this expansion will create more power that is not currently on the Iraqi grid. Demand outstrips available power supplies as Iraqis



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purchase and hook up energy hungry electrical appliances like air conditioners, refrigerators, microwave ovens and a litany of other electrical items.

GRD Deputy Energy Division Chief Kent McAnany explained that essential services such as "Hospitals, police, fire stations and other Government of Iraq services are supposed to receive power 24/7, while additional government buildings (schools, etc.) receive electricity during regular business hours," said McAnany. "Finally, Iraqi residents get the remainder."

During the former regime, little money was expended on the development or maintenance of the electrical infrastructure in Iraq. In 2004 the World Bank estimated that \$20 billion would be needed to rehabilitate and restore Iraq's electrical infrastructure. Since then, the U.S. Department of State's Iraq Transition Assistance Office analysts have determined the actual cost may be closer to \$30 billion.

"GRD's role is to help 'jump start' Iraq infrastructure construction and rehabilitation after three decades of neglect," said Eyre. To date, GRD and its Iraqi partners have completed more than 4,200 projects in electricity, oil, water, health, education, and security and justice projects.

Note: Erich Langer is a public affairs officer with the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Iraq. 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)