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For Immediate Release  
January 24, 2007  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## Iraq Electrical Grid gets a Boost

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*TIKRIT, Iraq*—The \$31.2 million rehabilitation and expansion of a 400kV/132kV substation, along with the five feeders in the Diyala Province, will provide a more reliable power source for more than 63,000 people.

Built by local construction companies with quality assurance managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, these renovations and additions will add stability to Iraq's electrical grid. The 400kV substation – called Baghdad East - is considered to be an important component of the national electrical system, having a significant impact on the national grid.

Rehabilitating the substation not only improves the electrical distribution network in the province by reducing the load of the already overloaded substations; it also increases the reliability of the power supplies for domestic, industrial and commercial uses with less down time.

This substation ties into the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition system (SCADA). SCADA is the system that controls the overall national power management and national electrical grid system monitoring and control. It also synchronizes the power facilities throughout Iraq so they work together as a system, which ultimately protects the national network from shutting down when there is an unsynchronized situation.



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Shutdowns are common in Iraq as the electrical systems are not yet stable and consumption is more than the source can handle. The substation is designed to reduce and eventually eliminate blackouts by the continuous automatic monitoring and control of the system, which provides a smooth power management procedure and distributes the power available on the national grid evenly all over the country.

“Since 2003, the Government of Iraq has imported electricity from Turkey and Iran, and at one time Syria, to help sustain the national power system,” explains Saman Mosa, a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers electrical sector project manager. “This solution adds power to the national grid, but at a great cost. The goal is for Iraq to be self-sufficient and provide its own power source, instead of sending money to the country that can never be recovered.”

It would take almost 10,000 megawatts of electricity to sustain Iraq with constant power 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Currently, the country is only producing 3,300 MW, which is only 33 percent of the actual demand and leaves a shortage of 67 percent. The current average is seven hours of power a day broken into 2 to 3 hour increments throughout the day.

“While the impact of these projects may not be felt immediately,” explained Maj. Neil Doherty, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, engineer-forward, “they are all a part of a larger plan. If the projects continue to proceed at this pace, the people of Iraq will see in a matter of months.”

Currently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Gulf Region North has 35 completed substations with four under construction and scheduled for construction within the year.

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