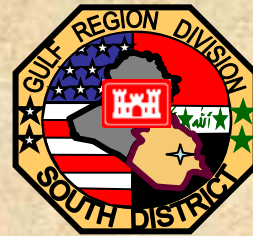




Southern Views

Produced for the Men and Women of Gulf Region South



Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2007

Army Engineers Improving Electricity in Iraq

By Mohammed Aliwi

The huge consumption of electricity as a result of the large quantity of electrical goods the Iraqi people are buying with their increasing prosperity, combined with the sabotage of power lines, have contributed to Iraq's challenge of keeping up with electrical demands.

Despite those obstacles, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has made significant progress in improving electrical production and distributing power equitably throughout the country.

USACE engineers oversee the building, refurbishing and upgrading of the electrical power systems, including generation, transmission and distribution countrywide according to Lt. Col. Anthony G. Reed, resident engineer for the Karbala and North Babil resident offices of the Gulf Region South District (GSR).

"The Babil province has awarded 24 electrical



ARMY PHOTO BY JAMES BULLINGER

An Army engineer officer gets an update from Iraqi contractors building a new electrical distribution substation in Hamzah, one of 60 substations the Gulf Region South is constructing in southern Iraq.

distribution networks and several substation projects in 2006. Ten of these projects have been completed and 14 are still under construction," he said.

Reed believes that every project helps improve the flow of electricity to Iraqis to some degree.

Electricity continued page 5

Engineers Work to Improve Iraq's Oil Exports

By A. Al Bahrani

The regime change in Iraq has opened many new opportunities and important development projects in the southern oil fields of Iraq.



The Al Basrah Oil Terminal, or ABOT, is Iraq's principle export facility located near the Persian Gulf. (ARMY PHOTO BY A. AL BAHRANI)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is working on various projects to ramp up oil production for the new democratic country and help improve Iraq's economy.

One important project is the Al Basrah Oil Terminal, formerly known as Mina Al-Baker and now called "ABOT," and is considered to be the gateway to Iraq's prosperity.

"Right now oil is Iraq's major export. It isn't easy to increase oil exports, but the Corps has plans of raising the crude output to meet 3 million barrels per day in 2007," said Bob Tillisch, oil program manager with the Basrah Area Office of the Gulf Region South District.

He said that experts estimate Iraq has about 115 billion barrels of oil reserves, concentrated mainly in the south.

"The main objective of the ABOT development project is to create a strong and reliable source of income for Iraq, improve Iraqi living conditions, and creates new opportunities for employment," Tillisch said.

According to Tillisch, during Phase One of the refurbishment of the ABOT a hydraulic bridge system

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Sunset on Another Day of Freedom

ARMY PHOTO BY JAMES BULLINGER



The American, Iraqi and Minnesota flags flutter proudly in the breeze and the orange glow of the setting sun. The flags fly over the headquarters building of the 1st Bde. Cbt. Team, 34th Inf. Div., Minnesota Army National Guard, on Camp Adder, Tallil Airbase, near An Nasiriyah, Iraq.



Southern Views

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Commander's Corner

By COL Gary Johnston

As I was trying to think about what to write for the new year, I went through some of my draft writings and found a prayer I had written for Memorial Day but didn't publish.

I think it may be appropriate for the new year.

At this time of year we all make resolutions: we are going to lose that little extra holiday weight, spend a little more time with the kids, read a little more, etc.

For those of us deployed, our New Year should focus on the root word for resolution, resolve.

We have a lot left to complete in terms of projects for the Iraqi people.

It will require all of our resolve to work through the issues prevalent in this fledgling democracy.

However, it is an opportunity to do good, and we should resolve to seize upon this opportunity.

For the past year I want to thank you for the work you have successfully completed but more importantly for the demonstrating the resolve that will be required for this New Year.

Lord, Today I Lost A Brother

Lord, today I lost a brother and I am a little concerned about my mother.

You see Lord, she has lost other sons and daughters and it is beginning to weigh heavily on Her.

I am concerned because she has done so much for me and my brother.

She has sacrificed much to ensure our prosperity and give us the life we enjoy today.

By her example, she taught us the importance of justice, truth, and your forgiveness.

I take great pride in her because of the pride she holds for me and my brother.

As we were growing up, there have been many times she has been scorned and ridiculed for her beliefs of individual rights, and religious freedom.

Yet, she has continued to manifest those beliefs as self-evident.

I know many of her children no longer believe in you, but you and I both know that in God she still trusts.

How do I tell her Lord she has lost another son?

You know how hard she struggles each day to keep the family together.

She strives for peace and to keep my other brothers and sisters united in the beliefs she instilled in us from her conception.

Yes, I know, I know Lord... faith is the key, I have to let her know I still have faith in her and my family, and that I still believe in her.

My brother and I believe in her, he to his death.

I fear Lord, I fear the void of his death will be filled with pessimism, hate and fear.

Help us Lord to turn pessimism, hate and fear into good.

Help us in the mist of conflict to secure a place in which good will have a chance to take root and flourish.

Take away our arrogance and give us the wisdom to make Godly decisions.

Grant us this request Lord, so that good may come from his death.

Lord, absolve me of the guilt I feel for not being in his place.

Dampen my regret for not being able to hold tight his hand as you took him home.

Lord, today I lost a brother and I had never seen his face.

A brother in arms, a brother of faith, a brother for right.

Lord, today I lost a brother and I didn't know his name, religion or race.

A brother to freedom, a brother of liberty, a brother of your kingdom's might.

Lord, today I lost a brother and I pray for him and my mother.

God hold my brother close in your loving embrace and continue to bless my mother.

Please God, continue to bless *America*.

Amen.





The “Word” from the Desk of the Command Sgt. Major

By SGM Benny Hubbard

If we all stop and reflect on last year, we will soon realize how fortunate we are.

Last April I had the opportunity to come to a foreign country and work with some of the brightest people on the planet and help the people of Iraq rebuild their country.

I have loved every minute of it.

I continue to reflect on the many people who came through GRS, and the many new friends in whom I will cherish forever.

I hope everyone had a great holiday season and the New Year brings much joy as the last.

We will continue to focus on why we are here in Iraq and continue to do the best job we can in order to accomplish our mission.

Most of us have had a chance to charge our batteries while on R&R and would have a new commitment in the rebuilding of this great country.

I do wish everyone a great and Happy New Year.

I hope you have set your goals and set them high.

You should have your game plan laid out to meet the goals.

The only thing now is to execute what you have planned.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you and continuing to support you in any way that I can.

You are the best and I enjoy working with you in our efforts to help the Iraqis improve and rebuild their country.

Together each achieves more...GRS.



Basrah Children’s Hospital Celebrates Progress

Field Report and Photos by A.Ali Al-Bahrani

A community celebration and ceremony was held at the Basrah Children’s Hospital Dec. 19 to publicize the project and celebrate the re-commencement of construction activities. MID-Contracting, the primary contractor organized the event attended by about 150 people.

Numerous Iraqi officials attended the ceremony, including one of the deputy prime ministers of Iraq, the director general for the Basrah Health Directorate, the assistant governor of Basrah, the deputy governor of the Al Basrah province, the Basrah police commander, representatives from the ministries of Defense and Health, and representatives from various sectarian groups.

The ceremony started with the arrival of more than 70 children, walking to the site from local schools. The children were welcomed and given Iraqi flags and balloons. Then the children paraded outside of the hospital grounds carrying flags and banners to perimeter fence.

Outside, the children helped to paint some drawings and stamp their handprints a portion of the fence. Then all returned back inside for juice and sweets, followed by introductions and speeches.

At the end of the ceremony, the children received a toy



and a stuffed animal, and concluded with the singing of several national songs about Iraq.

The ceremony received excellent coverage by the Iraqi media, interviewing numerous people. Seventeen local media sources covered the event, including Al-Iraqia-TV (the Iraqi official channel), several local newspapers and French media AFP.



Electricity continued from page 1

Most projects focus on distributing electricity from one town to another, and to the outlying neighborhoods. Some of these neighborhoods have never had electricity before he said.

"Due to the fact that the projects are focused on distribution, they really don't reduce the number of blackouts created by power generation source failures. However, the electrical feeders do help people get electricity when they have the power coming to them," he explained.

An Iraqi electrical engineer with the Babil Resident Office, requesting anonymity, said their new projects included "two 132,000 volt over-head lines and three 33,000v overhead lines."

"We supervised three 33,000 and 11,000 volt substations in Babil, four electrical distribution networks in Al-Mahweel and Al-Imam districts, and four electrical distribution networks which were installed in Al-Iskanderia area north of Babil," the Iraqi said.

"All the projects GRS

executes are to improve the distribution networks in the residential neighborhoods and businesses. It also improves the ability of the transmission feeders to handle the transmitted power between the 132kv substations," he said. The Iraqi electrical engineer explained that electrical trans-mission lines were a target for sabotage by terrorists in the Hilla, Karbella and Najaf areas.

"When such sabotage happens, it causes a shut-down for all substations that are connected to the 132kv line," he said.

Maj. Kevin J. Stoll, the Babil resident engineer, blamed sabotage for contributing to power outages in areas of the country.

"Combined with the antiquated system that existed under the previous regime, sabotage keeps power from reaching homes for an extended amount of time. When one central grid transmission tower falls, it knocks out power to the entire grid," Stoll said. "It then takes time to repair or replace that tower and any others that are affected, and even more time to re-energize the system (sometimes 48-72 hours) before finally getting power to the consumers."



Local villagers watch as an Iraqi contractor crew sets a new electric tower in place for the Al Mazraa Tower Project in North Babil, a project to increase electrical capacity and better power transmission in the region.

Stoll believes consumer demand for electricity has hindered the supply of reliable power.

"Because of the freedom to purchase the 'luxury' items that were not as readily available in the past—such as air conditioners, heaters, refrigerators and microwaves—extra demands have been placed on power grids at an incredible rate over the past three and a half years. Sometimes the power demand exceeds the amount generated, causing brown- and black-outs," he said.

Greg F. Fillers, GRS chief of programs and project management, said that the Corps is responsible for reporting progress on projects.

"The electrical projects are assigned to us to monitor during construction. We have a total of 160 electrical projects for the nine southern governorates worth about \$964 million that GRS is responsible for," he said. "In Thi-Qar province that total is 17 projects worth \$149 million."

The biggest improvements for the city of An Nasiriyah are the upgrades to several substations and

construction of additional new substations.

"The new substations prevent problems with overloads to the electrical network which causes equipment to fail and power outages without warning," Fillers said. "The Corps recently provided An Nasiriyah with 50 new transformers to replace the outdated ones which were the main cause for the outages and the rationing across the city."

He explained the old transformers could not handle the amount or load of high voltage electricity flowing

through to feed the damage from all of the electrical devices this past summer, and this caused continuous blackouts during the summer.

New transformers were ordered and installed to convert the electricity to usable levels at the consumer end.

"Most of the new construction substations are in other towns around Thi-Qar, which takes a load off of the existing substations in Nasiriyah and prevents damage," Fillers said.



ARMY PHOTOS

USACE Engineers are working many projects to improve electricity distribution in Iraq. Pictured here is a new 250 volt transformer connected to new power lines to provide safe and reliable electricity to users; similar transformers were provided to An Nasiriyah in late summer.



ABOT continued from page 1

ARMY PHOTO BY DAVID ANDERSON



One of refurbishment projects the Army Corps of Engineers oversees at the ABOT is lighting and power. Here workmen install new lighting fixtures along a walkway.

was installed at Platforms A and B, and the telescopic platform bridging systems at Berths 1, 2, 3 and 4 were removed, repaired and reinstalled.

Also, the hydraulic power units, the directional control valves and other system-critical equipment were refurbished.

Tillisch explained that the ABOT previously operated without a functioning fire and gas protection system, and that there were no fire or gas detection sensors, or pressure alarm systems.

The emergency shutdown valves were either corroded or missing, and the firewater pumps did not work effectively.

"During Phase Two, we (USACE) provided a modern fire-fighting system with both diesel and electrical fire-water pumps throughout the platform in case of fire. Also, this new system will have fire-fighting foam capabilities in order to increase its effectiveness. This replaces the previous system which was outdated," he added.

At present, there is no effective way of metering how much oil is loaded on board tanker ships.

Iraq's South Oil Company (SOC) has to measure the cargo tanks by hand.

Tillisch said the USACE will supply modern metering devices for platforms A and B, which will

ensure that the total amount of oil exported from the ABOT can be accurately measured electronically.

"The renovation includes new radio communication equipment at eight sites throughout the southern Iraq oil fields and refineries including the ABOT," Tillisch said. "This will ensure that pumping oil from the mainland to the ABOT can be done more safely and effectively by a modern communication system.

"The installation of radios, battery back up systems and new microwave dishes will greatly increase safety to enable the South Oil Company to start and shut down in an orderly and efficient means. In case of an emergency at the ABOT, all pump stations can be shut down immediately. Such an action will increase the safety in case of fire here at the ABOT," he said.

David Anderson, a construction representative with the Basrah Oil Office, said, "USACE will provide an emergency shutdown system for Platforms A and B.

"This will consist of an electrical control station and all associated wiring and valves. In case of an emergency, the SOC operators will have a safe and efficient means to turn off the loading to the oil tanker which is tied alongside the pier," Anderson said.

In order to provide a reliable source of lighting and power for the ABOT, USACE refurbished the four old diesel generators installed in 1979. The Corps is also providing life-saving equipment and life rafts for evacuation from the ABOT in case of an accident.

"Remember, being on the ABOT is almost like being on a ship," Anderson said. "All SOC personnel can safely use the SOLAS (Save Our Lives at Seas) equipment, which are approved life-saving boats."

For Anderson, this \$50 million project has been designed to increase the terminal's loading capacity to three million barrels of oil per day, and to enhance the reliability and safety of the terminal operations.

The ABOT program will help all of Iraqi's people.



Workers lower a new hose assembly with fire-fighting foam capabilities onto the upper platform of the ABOT. Army Engineers are working several projects to increase safety and lifesaving measures.



ARMY PHOTO BY DAVID ANDERSON

Najaf Teaching Hospital Nears Completion

By Betsy Weiner

The Najaf Teaching Hospital, a project worth over \$10 million, will open in early 2007 featuring a seven-story building capable of housing 420 patients and containing 13 operating rooms.

The hospital development, which has survived gun battles, the termination of its primary contractor, as well as technical and serious security issues, first came to the attention of the Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) in September 2004.

During that month, the flooded basement, containing debris and human remains, was cleaned and repaired, as were outpatient emergency services.

After assessing the damage, IRMO decided to refurbish the entire hospital in December 2004.

Parsons Corp., the design-build contractor for the project completed the emergency repairs in February 2005, but pulled out of the project soon thereafter.

A local contractor finished the outpatient facilities and completed all the immediate emergency repairs by April 2005.

"We awarded the final 370-day design build contract to a local Najaf contractor in July 2005," said Jim Lockard, health care project manager for the Project Contracting Office (PCO) and Gulf Region South District (GRS).

"Renovation features that were included in this phase of the renovation were to renovate the industrial kitchen, laundry and mechanical rooms, repair the second through the seventh floors, refurbish the doctors' residences, the morgue, the sewer treatment plant and several other buildings on the hospital campus."

Lockard said bids were taken for the work that remained from the original contract, the hospital director was consulted and the award was made to a local company.

"We selected an Iraqi engineer Kal (not identified for security concerns) to be the project manager and he has been a great motivating force on the project for the past 18 months."

Najaf is a holy city to Shiite Muslims, not only because of the shrine of Al Iman Ali, son-in-law to the prophet Mohammed, who was killed while praying in Al Kufa Mosque, but also because of the Valley of Peace, a gargantuan graveyard in which the Shiite prefer to be buried.

Many Islamic religious institutions, called the Al Hawza Al Ilmia, or scientific schools, for clerical candidates, are also located in Najaf, adding to the



The new hospital facility of the Najaf Teaching Hospital has seven floors, it can hold over 450 patients, and has 13 operating rooms.

mystique of the city.

Because of its importance to the Shiite faith, millions of people visit the city, placing extra demand on the hospital, Kal said, and added that the facility also serves the entire Najaf province as well as adjacent provinces for certain medical specialties such as oncology and kidney dialysis.

"Many physicians who worked at the hospital but left when it closed are now returning to work," he said. "Sixty-five specialists and 145 general physicians work here now."

He added that the hospital will employ about 1,250 people; that 100 physicians will reside on the hospital grounds; and that 200 medical and 50 pharmaceutical students will train at the facility.

The Gulf Region Division, IRMO and the Japanese government are supplying equipment to the campus.

The GRD and IRMO will provide beds, room accessories and enough equipment for three of the operating rooms.

"Getting the equipment here – that has had security challenges," Kal said. "A lot of times, the roads were closed or there was a curfew because it was unsafe. But we faced the same problems with some of our technicians, so we told the contractor he had to house some of these people until the job was complete. And he did that."

Kal emphasized the fact that, because of the different kind of construction a hospital requires, technical people capable of building the complicated systems a hospital requires were not easy to find, and that this put an extra strain on the contractor, as well as on the laborers doing the actual building.

Systems such as the mechanical, electrical and plumbing – all demanded that the team work closely with the construction company to ensure quality work.

Army Engineers Bring Joy to Iraqi Orphanage

By Mohammed Aliwi

An Nasiriyah orphanages recently received numerous packages of stuffed animals delivered to promote goodwill between the Iraqi children and the U.S. children and help in the rebuilding effort in Iraq.

"The children were extremely happy and did not believe that the stuffed animals were especially given for them," said Edmay Mayers, a program analyst with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

An Iraqi associate told Mayers that the headmistress of the orphanage welcomed the team that delivered the toys and appreciated what the Americans were doing for the Iraqis. On her first tour to Iraq, Mayers visited one of the elementary schools and saw a beautiful interaction between the Americans and the children.

"The children of Iraq have stolen my heart. They are precious, young and innocent, and if only a child remembers that an American, British, South African or Australian person gave them something that made them feel special as a child, then we have done our part to help these little ones," Mayers said.

For her the children need these toys as much if not more than the school supplies. They need something to hold close to them and love and these stuffed animals have a lot of love left in them for these children.



A young Iraqi boy holds two stuffed animals after a delivery to the An Nasiriyah Orphanage in December. (ARMY PHOTO)

Toys continued next page

Najaf continued from page 7

"In the medical field, it is necessary to always have back-up systems because the hospital cannot adequately treat people if these systems fail," he said. "So we spent extra time with the contractor to make sure he understood the scope of work."

Security issues in Najaf itself cost the project five months



A view of the Najaf Teaching Hospital campus, when the facility opens later in 2007 it will accommodate 200 medical and 50 pharmaceutical students. (ARMY PHOTO)

time, but were overcome by the dedication of the team and the tenacity of the Iraqi engineers who worked the project.

"The GRS team could not always make it out to the site because of the danger," he said. "And sometimes the hospital staff tried to direct the contractor to perform their agenda. But after many meetings with them, we were able to convince the staff to work with us as a team to finish the job."

At one point, Kal said, the hospital was sending "disappointing reports to the health ministry, but now they come with us every day to inspect the systems and accept them. And because of this big change, the end production is good and the project is running smoothly."

But the project experienced a severe loss when the hospital director, Dr. Safaah Al Ameer, was murdered in September 2006.

"It was a very sad day," Kal said. "But the only impact his assassination had on the project itself was the coordination between GRS and the hospital's engineers. It took us two weeks, but we got back on schedule. And he would have wanted that."



Think OPSEC – Everyone's Safety Depends on It!





LEFT: Helping to sort and repack stuffed toys for Iraqi children are (left to right): Robin Parks, Army Lt. Col. Gene Griffin, Edmay Mayers, Jenny Hughes, Frank Sanchez, Army Staff Sgt. Jessica Harvey and Air Force 1st Lt. Richard Hallon. ARMY PHOTO BY MOHAMMED ALIWI

BELOW: An Iraqi toddler at the An Nasiriyah Orphanage sits with his stuffed monkey friend. ARMY PHOTO

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"I wanted to tell all that we are receiving 'tons and tons' of stuffed animals, toys, school supplies, clothes, etc. All are being given to the Iraqi children in the schools, orphanages, clinics and now the Basrah Children's Hospital. I am so thrilled that so many individuals have opened their hearts to the mission in Iraq," Mayers said.

According to Robin Parks, a project manager with GRS, all children love stuffed animals. They are brightly colored, soft and huggable, and can provide cheer and comfort to children.

"Everyone involved in this exchange wins but the person who is happiest is the lucky soldier or civilian who has the honor of actually giving that toy to a child. They probably feel like Santa Claus. One day the Iraqi children may remember that a stranger gave them a favorite gift," Parks said.

Mayers said that countless Iraqis are displaced and have been unable to restore their lives, but you still see the children smile in spite of all the bad living conditions that surround them.

"We put the toys, animals and candy into plastic baggies to give to the children. Sending the stuffed animals makes the people at home happy to be a part of this effort; receiving the animals makes the children here

happy; and I am happy that I can help in some small way to make this exchange happen. Everyone wins," Parks said.

Mayers said that she Googled "free stuffed toys" and came up with a internet hit saying that someone was looking to give away "gently" used stuffed animals.

"I emailed Asha Dornfest (website manager) and she immediately posted it to her website and called it 'Spread the Word,'" she said.

"It is now on approximately 50 or so websites. It also has been announced on a radio station in North Carolina, and an article in a newspaper in Troy, New York," Mayers said, "People have read the websites, newspapers, listened to the radio and opened their hearts to these beautiful children. I have also been in touch with a

gentleman in the U.K (England) who has lots of toys to send us."

According to the Air Force 1st Lt. Richard L. Hallon, a project engineer with the Thi Qar Residence Office of GRS, a stuffed animal is like a companion to the children; it helps them when they are scared of the dark, and helps them to fall asleep.

"One day, I saw a four year-old Iraqi child looking up at a Soldier, smiling with wide-eyes, trying to communicate with hand signs and gestures. His little shiny eyes were not directed to me, but stopped me from thinking about war," Hallon said, "If a smile can do this,

imagine what a toy can do. It is in an effort symbolizing the notion of people helping people regardless of beliefs."





Basrah Children's Hospital Provides More Than Healthcare

By James Bullinger

Of the thousands of reconstruction projects in Iraq, projects that benefit children have special interest.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is leading the construction efforts for the Basrah Children's Hospital (BCH), which when complete, will provide help and comfort to generations of Iraqi children.

Lt. Cmdr. Scott King, a U.S. Navy Civil Engineer Corps officer, is the USACE resident engineer for the BCH project. He leads the BCH Project Office (BCHPO) team, which includes a project engineer, a construction representative, an engineering staff of three, and eight local national engineers.

"The project was originally identified through a 2003 investigation into the state of Iraqi health care by Project HOPE, an international non-profit health, education and humanitarian assistance organization," King said. "The statistics uncovered in the investigation were staggering: child mortality rates were very high with 150 out of 1,000 children dying before reaching the age of five.

"The incidence of childhood cancer was found to be eight to 10 times more common than in the west, and cancer rates in southern Iraq were even higher than that of the national average," he said. "Statistics such as these made it obvious that a children's hospital with a special focus on pediatric oncology, built in Basrah, would have an enormous positive impact to the country, especially in the southern governorates."

Frederick Gerber, country director for Iraq with Project HOPE, said the hospital would fulfill a dire need for health care services targeted to children in Iraq.

"The World Health Organization statistics indicate that 53 percent of Iraqis are adolescents, so we estimate that the hospital will support more than half of the population of Basrah alone," Gerber said.

The BCHPO accepted management responsibility for the hospital's construction at the end of the summer from another U.S. government agency, when construction was approximately 30 percent complete.

"Taking over a major construction program midstream with project materials and equipment in various locations across the Middle East has certainly been a challenge," King said. "Thanks to some great cooperation from the previous management team and some long hours from our current team, it's been a reasonably seamless process.

An artist's concept of how the Children's Hospital in Basrah will appear when finished. When completed, the \$157 million project will provide help and comfort to generations of Iraqi children.

"We've assembled a talented team to move the project forward and are having a lot of success partnering with the contractors and other government agencies involved with the project's funding and execution," King added. "The pace has picked up on-site and the community is seeing a lot of progress."

Andy Frank, a BCHPO project engineer, said the construction project funding and contractor staffing is a multi-national effort.

"The cost to make the facility fully operational is estimated to be \$157.1 million. The U.S. is providing about \$95 million, with \$84 million from the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, and \$11 million from the USAID's Child Survival and Health Fund. The Spanish Government has donated \$22 million. Project HOPE will contribute \$30 million for medical equipment and training. The Iraqi Ministry of Health is expected to contribute \$10 million to aid portions of the initial outfitting and operation of the hospital," Frank said.

In addition, Frank said MID-Contracting, an international company based in Amman, Jordan, is the lead contractor for the project. The Project Office also manages two additional contracts with specialized hospital and medical equipment design and consulting firms out of Jordan.

Brian Pitt, the lead engineer for the BCHPO, said USACE has the lead role in the project.

"The Gulf Region South District's Basrah Children's Hospital Project Office will directly oversee approximately \$74 million worth of design, construction, medical equipment procurement and integration, furnishing procurement, and facility maintenance contracts," he said. "In addition, the project office has the lead in coordinating the efforts of their fellow partners in the project, the Iraqi Ministry of Health and Project HOPE."

According to Frank, the BCH project is located in the southwest section of Basrah and is being constructed on a 71,000 square meter site.

"A specially designed foundation and engineered soil was brought in to prepare the existing conditions for the hospital complex," Frank said. "The project includes a two-story 16,350 square meter main hospital facility, a separate 1,000 square meter building that

provides sleeping accommodations for 32 physicians and nurses, two separate electrical and mechanical buildings at 600 square meters each, three separate guard houses, landscaping, paved parking, a soccer field and a 1,134 meter security wall enclosing the site."

The main hospital facility has 94 patient beds, 20 outpatient exam rooms, an eight-bed pediatric intensive care unit, a seven-bassinet neonatal intensive care unit, and four general nursing wards, Frank said.

Other features include two operating rooms, an oncology center; an imaging department with radiography, fluoroscopy, CAT scan, MRI and ultrasound capabilities; an emergency department, and an outpatient endoscopy suite.

Besides the positive health aspects of a new hospital, the project will boost the overall economic prosperity of the region.

"Within the first month of our contract, the project was employing over 400 people on a daily basis including construction workers, a supervisory staff of over 30 contractor personnel, and over 100 security workers who provide 24-hour site security," said Paul Farley, the BCHPO's construction rep.

The project is expected to employ between 450 to 750 workers during the various phases of the project. Gerber said there will be other benefits as well.

"The children's hospital will have a huge economic impact on the Basrah area, not only with the employees, physicians, nurses and ancillary personnel hired and paid by the Iraqi government; but with such supporting industries as food, lodging, supplies, equipment, facilities, grounds maintenance, retail stores, etc., in the



The hospital is being funded by the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, USAID's Child Survival and Health Fund, Project HOPE and the Spanish government. ARMY PHOTOS BY THOMAS O'HARA

surrounding areas," Gerber said. "While the hospital will require a minimum of 510 Iraqis to staff the facility, additional employees will be needed to staff the grounds, kitchen, laundry and other ancillary operations."

The hospital also complements the Basrah Medical College, Gerber said, and will be "a support base for training physicians and nurses in the Basrah Province."

The BCHPO is helping to ensure the success of the hospital when finished by integrating the end-users of the facility into the construction process.

"There are three Ministry of Health engineers, who will eventually manage the hospital's systems, working full-time alongside our Iraqi quality assurance engineers," King said. "When we turn the hospital over to the Ministry of Health, they'll be much more familiar with the installed systems, facility operations and required replacement parts."

"Going forward, our major challenges will be ensuring the site is properly staffed with the right skill-sets, while integrating the specialized medical equipment and furnishing requirements into the facility construction," King said.

Despite previous funding issues that slowed construction efforts in the past, King said the project is back on track and that construction was more than 30 percent complete at the end of November.

"Construction of the hospital is expected to be completed in the summer of 2008," he said.

Following the installation of medical equipment, commissioning, and the initial outfitting of the hospital, it is scheduled to open its doors to patients in early 2009.

"The completed hospital will deliver much needed specialty medical care to the children of Iraq and serve as a model training hospital for the nurses and physicians of the country. It will be a major step towards reducing child mortality rates and improving the health and quality of life of Iraqis – a definite sign of hope for the people of Iraq during challenging times," King said.



News Around the District

GRS HQs Completes Consolidation
Opens Camp Extension

The Gulf Region South opened a new extension to the living area behind the headquarters building on Logistical Support Area Adder at Tallil Airbase Dec. 16. The project helped to relocate the living quarters and offices of the security teams from across the base, saving time and transportation problems. The new camp, with running water, septic tank system, T-walls, fences and gates, and sidewalks, was completed in early December. A GRS certificate of appreciation was presented by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard to Gary Gray, project manager with the Fluor Daniel Government Group, who had responsibility for the camp consolidation efforts.



ABOVE: Assisted by representatives from the security contractors, camp project manager and GRS headquarters staff members, the ribbon is cut to open the camp extension. RIGHT: Gary Gray holds his certification of appreciation presented by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard.



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GRD CG Visits Nasiriyah Drainage Pump
Station

Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, the commanding general of Gulf Region Division, made a Dec. 29 stop in the south sector to visit the Nasiriyah Drainage Pump Station project. Walsh was accompanied by Air Force colonels James Kasmer and Lonny Baker, the departing and incoming Water Sector Lead for GRD. The purpose of the trip was to get a first hand look at the progress on one of the largest water related projects in Iraq. Morgan Morehart, site manager for the prime contractor Washington International, escorted and briefed Walsh's party on \$89 million refurbishment of pump station located southeast side of the city. When completed, the NDPS will help to pump waste run-off water from the Euphrates Eastern Drain and Main Outflow Drain under the Euphrates River and out to the Persian Gulf.



Morgan Morehart (in red jacket) leads Brig. Gen. Michael Walsh, followed by Col. James Kasmer, Col. Gary Johnston and party on an interior tour of the pump station



GRS People Notes

Promotions

Army Promotes Air Force Engineer

Col. Gary Johnston, left, the GRS commander, and Lt. Col. Dale Johnson, Adder Area Engineer, had the honor of promoting Air Force officer Richard Hallon to 1st Lt. on Dec. 16 at Camp Adder. Hallon served as the project engineer and provincial reconstruction team representative for the Dhi Qar Area Office. At the end of December Hallon returned home to Eglin Air Force Base, Fort Walton Beach, Fla.



Farewells

RIGHT: James C. Lockard, a contractor, was recognized for his service to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers by Col. Gary Johnston with the presentation of a *Commander's Award for Public Service* on Dec. 16. Lockard served as a project manager for Transportation and Communications with GRS for 24 months. His efforts greatly contributed to many of the construction successes enjoyed by the district.



LEFT: Col. Gary Johnston, assisted by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, presented the *Commander's Award for Civilian Service* to Arthuro Sosa on Dec. 16. Sosa, a project engineer with the Qadisiyah Resident Office at Camp Echo, was recognized for his contributions to the Iraqi Reconstruction efforts during his four month deployment.

Farewells



Clockwise: Johnston congratulates and thanks Balzano, McVaney and Hallon for their service Dec. 23 and for a job done well while serving with the GRS District.

Col. Gary Johnston, assisted by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, bid farewell to five departing joint military members in December. On Dec. 23 Johnston awarded Air Force Lt. Col. John Balzano (upper left), GRS deputy commander, with the Bronze Star Medal for his service. Navy Master Chief Petty Officer David McVaney (upper right), GRS operations non-commissioned officer in charge, was awarded the Defense Meritorious Service Medal. Air Force 1st Lt. Richard Hallon (left), the project engineer and provincial reconstruction team representative for the Dhi Qar Area Office, was presented the Joint Service Commendation Medal. On Dec. 16 Air Force Capt. Jason Campbell (lower left), the Qadisiyah Resident Office engineer, received the Joint Service Commendation Medal. Then Air Force Master Sgt. Patrick Beckford (lower right), construction NCO with the North Babel and Karbala Resident Office, was presented the Bronze Star Medal. All of these individuals received the Iraq Campaign Medal as well.



Johnston congratulates and thanks Campbell (flanked by Hubbard) and Beckford for their service while serving with the Gulf Region South District during a farewell awards ceremony on Dec. 16.

ARMY PHOTOS BY JAMES BULLINGER

Pins and Patches

Pins and certificates for *Civilian Service in a Combat Zone* were presented by Col. Gary Johnston and Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard to 14 qualified Department of the Army civilians Dec. 16 at the GRS Headquarters at Base Camp Adder. Individuals qualify after serving more than 60 consecutive days in a combat area.



Robert Lee



Johnston and Hubbard congratulate Michael Fellenz



Jenny Hughes



Left: Russell Holeman and Crystal Bond



Keith Loos and Robin Parks



Natasha Priddle and Matthew Johnson



William Zett, Tosca Patchus, Antonio Bandtidas, Inhui Spann and Frank Sanchez



Awards & Recognitions

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Johnston presented George Schmidt, GRS logistics and facilities manager, with an award for his efforts with property accountability and management with the Basrah Area Office.



Col. Gary Johnston, assisted by Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, presented numerous Achievement Medals for Civilian Service Dec. 16 to GRS employees for special services and acts.



Johnston presented Terrence Stitt, GRS information technology manager, the award for his efforts with planning and executing the IT support for the Camp Blackadder II relocation in Basrah.



Johnston presented (top left clockwise) Wayne Robertson, program analyst; Detriess Edwards, program analyst; Edmay Mayers, program analyst; and Nicholas Ash, GRS resource manager, with awards for their efforts in the successful execution of all Iraq relief and reconstruction fund obligations culminating on Sept. 30.



Johnston presented Kaaren Geter, GRS project manager for Transportation and Communications, the award for her efforts in quickly getting a contract and project started in the Maysan Province to build 21 kilometers of road.



Johnston presented Keth Loos, a contracting specialist with the GRS Contracting Office, the medal for his efforts in quickly resolving the award of contracts for construction of Iraqi Police Force Stations in the district.

Awards & Recognitions

Jobs Done Well



Lt. Col. Ed Patterson, GRS deputy commander (MND-CS) at Camp Echo, recognized the service and efforts of three departing members on Dec. 14. Patterson presented certifications of appreciation and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flags, which had flown over the Forat Area Office Headquarters at Camp Echo, to Air Force Capt. Jason Campbell and Master. Sgt. Patrick Beckford, and to Arturo Sosa. Beckford, left, was the construction NCO with the North Babel and Karbala Resident Office, while Campbell, below right, was the Qadisiyah Resident Office engineer. Both were completing one year deployments. Sosa, bottom left, a project engineer with the Qadisiyah Resident Office, had completed a four month deployment.



More Pins and Patches

Lt. Col. Ed Patterson, GRS deputy commander (MND-CS) at Camp Echo, presented Su-Chen Chen with her pin and certificates for *Civilian Service in a Combat Zone* Dec. 14 at the Forat Area Office, Camp Echo. Chen is a project engineer in Wasat Resident Office at Camp Delta. She qualified for the award after serving more than 60 consecutive days in a combat area in Iraq.



New Arrivals

GRS welcomed two new arrivals on Dec. 16. Pictured here between Col. Gary Johnston, right, and Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, left, are Valerie Schaffner and Navy Lt. Allen Willey. Both are assigned to the Basrah Children's Hospital Project Office at Camp Blackadder II. Willey is the BCH Resident Engineer and Schaffner, a returning USACE engineer, is the BCH pro-program manager.



Col. Gary Johnston, left, and Navy Master Chief Petty Officer David McVaney, right, acting GRS Command Sgt. Maj., welcomed new arrivals Roderick Hill and Navy Senior Chief Petty Officer Stanley Steger to GRS on Dec. 23. Hill is a returning volunteer and the new chief of Contracting for GRS. Steger replaces the departing McVaney as the S3 operations non-commissioned officer in charge.

More Recognitions



Col. Gary Johnston presented Gulf Region South District certificates of appreciation to Sgt. Maj. Benny Hubbard, Kenneth Brown, Capt. Jubilee Satele, Edmay Mayers and Terrence Stitt Dec. 16. Johnston thanked these individuals for their support of the GRS Construction Contract Administration Course conducted from Dec. 3 to 6 for Iraqi Engineers at Camp Adder. They helped provide the logistical and technical support, lodging and transportation, and scheduling coordination to allow 30 Iraqi and American engineer to receive problem free training.

