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Iraqi Force Development: Can Iraqi Forces Do the Job?

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Executive Summary

Experts disagree on many aspects of the Iraq War, including the ways which American strategic mistakes led to the initial failures in creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces. There is little disagreement, however, over the fact the US should have done more in its invasion planning, during the invasion, and in the year that followed, to conduct stability operations, nation building, and establish security.

There is also broad agreement among most analysts who have examined the way in which the US went to war in Iraq, and dealt with its Coalition allies and Iraqi exile groups, that the US failed to anticipate the threat of terrorism and insurgency. The Bush Administration planned for success. It did not accurately assess the problems an invasion would create in political, economic, social, and religious terms. It ignored warnings about the risk of ethnic and sectarian divisions, the need for large forces to secure the country, and the risk of “postwar” terrorism and insurgency. It saw the removal of Saddam Hussein as enough of a grand strategic goal, and did not see the need for a massive effort at stability operations and nation building.

Achieving Failure by Planning for Success

The Department of Defense ignored such risks before and during the invasion. It had no meaningful plans to secure government offices and maintain the process of governance. It was not organized and manned to provide local security and prevent looting, or seize exposed arms depots. The original office charged with reconstruction – the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) -- was not given significant manpower and financial resources, and its head – General Jay Garner – was initially given a three-month appointment.

The US planned to inherit stability, not achieve it, and to begin major force reductions within a few months following Saddam’s fall. The preservation or creation of effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces was not a high priority in the pre-war, wartime, or immediate postwar US planning effort. The US and Coalition were then slow to react as terrorism and insurgency became serious problems, and underestimated the scale of Iraqi resentment and hostility that occurred as a result of the invasion and the problems that followed.

US planning assumed before the war that many Iraqi military units would come over to the side of the Coalition, or be passive and remain intact. Little thought was given to the possibility the bulk of the Iraqi armed forces and police would desert, that facilities and arms dumps would be abandoned and looted, and there would be a need for security and paramilitary forces to deal with terrorism and insurgency. It was assumed that both the bulk of Iraqi forces and Iraqi government would remain intact and functioning.

None of the major assumptions US policymakers and military planners made before or during the fight to depose Saddam Hussein from power proved to be true. The Iraqi military forces did not have large elements that supported the Coalition, key elements were shattered during the fighting, and other elements experience mass desertions and

effectively disbanded themselves during the fighting or shortly after Saddam Hussein fell from power. Facilities that were not crippled in the war were abandoned, looted, and wrecked to the point where they were unoccupiable. The Iraqi government and police deserted and their facilities were looted as well.

ORHA was both unprepared for these realities and had no time, funds, or authority to deal with them. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) that replaced ORHA effectively took advantage of the self-disbandment of the Iraqi military and security forces to make this official policy. In the process, it banned many Sunnis and Ba'ath Party members from any role in the Iraqi forces and government in ways that helped trigger an insurgency, and prevented the rebuilding of truly inclusive and national forces.

For most of the year following Saddam's fall, the broad goal was to spend several years shaping a 30,000- to 40,000-man military designed to defend Iraq's borders. For much of that time the training was of so low priority that it was left to an uncoordinated effort by US State Department and Department of Defense.

The Department of Defense did not give the US military in the field the manpower, expertise, and money necessary to create effective Iraqi military forces. The State Department effort to create police forces initially ignored the need to create specialized security forces to fill the vacuum left by the disappearance of Saddam Hussein's forces, and fell badly behind the real-world requirement. The State Department lacked the resources to create effective security and police forces, and did not seem the need to give these efforts high priority. As a result, the Iraqi Ministry of Interior that lacked US policy support for more than the creation of regular police forces tailored to deal with civil crime, and was given almost none of the advisory manpower it desperately needed.

These problems continued even though the insurgency rapidly became more serious, and it was clear that much more effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces were needed. The transfer of power to the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG) in June 2004 did succeed in giving added legitimacy and Iraqi leadership to the nation building effort. At the same time, it created new problems. It brought new Ministers of Defense and Interior to office in half-formed offices and disrupted plans to disband the various party militias. Tensions between the new ministers made many problems worse, as did their lack of administrative experience and drive—moreover, new tensions developed with the Ministry of Finance. These problems were increased by a major turnover in lower ranking personnel.

For all of these reasons, the Coalition efforts to shape, train, and equip Iraqi military and security forces need to be put in historical perspective. It was not until the spring of 2004 that the effort to create the Iraqi forces that both Iraq and the Coalition needed gained real urgency, and until then no guidance was given to shape the training program to meet the needs that were evolving in the field.

Correcting Course in 2004

US and Coalition policymakers did begin to see the need for a radical change in policy, and much stronger Iraqi forces by late 2003. They were, however, grindingly slow in implementing such policies and giving them adequate resources. Senior policy levels in

Washington failed to authorize the necessary level of effort or force the pace of action. Jurisdictional feuding and infighting delay action, with a struggle between the Department of State and Department of Defense for control, and these problems were matched by poor civil-military relations between the CPA and US military command in Iraq. The US military gave priority to its own combat forces and was slow to see the need for rapid action in staffing the military advisory effort and rushing resources forward. The State Department and other civilian agencies were even slower to provide the resources needed by the special security forces and police.

Serious progress only began in the late fall and early winter of 2004, as Iraqi forces began to be trained and equipped to the level where the newly formed forces could be deployed in the field. Coalition and Iraqi forces showed in November 2004 that they could cooperate in winning win major battles.

The battle of Fallujah in November 2004 was a particularly striking example of a tactical victory that took place while Iraqi forces were only beginning to deploy significant strength. The loss of the city deprived Sunni insurgents and terrorist groups of a major sanctuary inside Iraq.

At the same time, Fallujah still remained a troubled city more than a year later. Many of its citizens had not returned. Rebuilding was slow and far behind the original plan to restore the city, and insurgents was still sporadically active. The evacuation of hundreds of thousands of residents had added to hostility against the Coalition and government, and had disrupted part of the effort to register Sunni voters before the January 30th election.

Only a few of the best Iraqi forces were just beginning to develop any real effectiveness by the end of 2004, and the vast majority continued to have major readiness, leadership, equipment, training, and readiness problems. Corruption and desertions were still major problems, particularly among the various elements of the IPS. Iraq did, however, take major steps to restructure its forces like merging the National Guard into the Army.

Developments in 2005

Iraq held its first true legislative election in decades in January 2005. During months leading up to the election, insurgents had made repeated efforts to keep Iraqis from going to the polls and voting. They failed – some 58 percent of registered Iraqis voted on January 30, 2005. This election turnout gave a sense of legitimacy to the Iraqi government, and a combination of a large and visible Iraqi security presence and relative security of most polling places reinforces this position.

While it was 150,000 Coalition troops that provided the core of the security effort, Iraqi forces did provide the inner two rings of security for over 5,200 polling sites. An estimated 130,000 Iraqi Security forces deployed on election day, January 30, 2005. Not a single polling site was penetrated, and several Iraqi Security Force (ISF) members gave their lives while stopping suicide bombers on election day.

The vast majority of ISF forces could only provide token guard and security duty, but the very fact so many were even assigned was striking, since there was no approved election

security plan until 10 days prior to the election. In fact, if some local ISF commanders had not acted to create plans on their own initiative, the operation could not have been successful.

Still, Iraqi force development remained very much a work in progress during 2005. It was not until the last months of the year that large numbers of Iraqi Army and Special Security Battalions were active in the field, and major elements could control their own battle space without US support.

Events also showed how much success in Iraqi force development interacted with the course of the insurgency and Iraqi politics. The seeming pause in insurgent and terrorist activity after the January 2005 election was followed by a sharp increase in violence, particularly in major bombings and suicide attacks by Sunni insurgent groups that were clearly targeted at trying to prevent Iraqi Sunnis from joining the government and government forces, and at dividing Sunni, Shi'ite, and Kurd.

In some cases, this triggered new problems in Iraqi forces and new desertions. By May 2005, Arab Sunni Islamist insurgent attacks had driven sectarian and ethnic tensions to new highs, and created a growing risk that the struggle between the Arab Sunnis, and the Arab Shi'ites, Kurds, and other Iraqi minorities could become a broader form of civil war.

In addition, there were serious problems in Iraqi politics and governance that affected the force development effort. The new Iraqi government took nearly two months to agree on a Presidency Council and Prime Minister, and took from February 1st to May 8th to fully select a cabinet and choose a defense minister. The 55 members of the new committee to draft a constitution were not named until May 10th and then included only one Sunni.

New problems arose as some of the supporters of the incoming government called for purges of the government and the Iraqi security forces to eliminate all "Ba'athists," including many whose only "crime" had been to go along with Saddam Hussein's regime to survive. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that some of the most effective Iraqi units were largely Shi'ite and Kurd in character, including special police and security units in the Ministry of Interior. These units could sometimes be as ruthless as they were effective, and compounded Sunni fears and resentments.

The good news was the January election produce such a dramatic shift in power to the Shi'ites and the Kurds that this helped lead some Sunni clerics and politicians to call for Sunnis to join the armed forces and police. The bad news was that Sunnis began to accuse government forces of excessive force, targeted killings and disappearances, and deliberately attacking Sunni targets, a problem that grew worse during the summer, fall, and winter of 2005.

Serious imbalances remained in the relative capability of the Iraqi military forces, special security forces in the Ministry of the Interior, and police. They also occurred in spite of the fact that the US had spent well over \$5.8 billion to develop Iraqi forces by May 2005, and the President requested another \$5.7 billion to accelerate their development. Nevertheless, the Iraqi force building effort continued to gather momentum in spite of the problems in governance and the new surge of terrorist and insurgent activity.

Force Development at the End of 2005

In spite of these problems, Iraqi regular military forces made major progress by the last months of 2005. Changes in the US-led Coalition advisory effort led to steadily higher selection and training standards and better equipment and facilities. Embedding US training teams in each new Iraqi unit, and pairing them with US combat units until they could operate on their own made a major qualitative difference while more and more Iraqi units came on-line. By the end of 2005, some 125 Iraqi battalions were active in the military and security forces, some 40-45 had achieved enough readiness to play a significant role in security operations, and over 30 were able to operate in their own battle space without direct US or other Coalition support.

This progress occurred in spite of the fact that the Sunni Arab insurgents increasingly focused their attacks on fellow Iraqis and hit hard at every element of Iraqi forces. The insurgents also struck at virtually every element of Iraqi society, and attacked Shi'ite Arab and Kurdish political leaders, religious figures and journalists, other members of the Iraqi elite, and ordinary citizens -- often in the form of suicide bombings that created mass casualties. They clearly had the goal of paralyzing the Iraqi political process, and the Sunni Islamist extremist groups attacked Shi'ite and Kurds in a way that seemed designed to provoke a major civil conflict.

This progress, however, was not enough to guarantee either any meaningful force of Iraqi victory, or the ability of the US to make major troop withdrawals and still claim success. The following remaining problems in shaping effective Iraqi forces still had to be addressed:

- Ensuring that they will act as national forces, and not Shi'ite and Kurdish forces,
- Giving Iraqi combat battalions better balance and support,
- Giving the security and police forces the same level of training and advisory support as the regular Iraqi forces,
- Matching force development with political development and inclusiveness, and
- Supporting Iraqi forces with effective governance by civil authorities.

The regular Iraqi military still lacked balance. They were still lightly equipped, and an initial emphasis on putting as many combat units into the field as possible, meant they lack adequate headquarters, support, and logistic units. As a result, major further improvements were still needed in the regular forces that would take well into 2007, and require sustained US advisory efforts, aid, and military support.

As for the political dimension, most top Iraqi officials, and senior Iraqi Arab Shi'ite and Kurdish political leaders, continued to stress the importance of developing Iraqi forces that would maintain a rule of law, and respect for human rights in spite of the insurgent attacks. They stressed the need to fight corruption, and change the past culture of Iraq's military and police forces to stress professionalism and promotion by merit.

Nevertheless, the Ministry of the Interior had failed to act on such goals and had allowed some elements of its special security units to act as a virtually extension of Shi'ite efforts

to attack the Sunnis. This required major new efforts to reform the forces of the Ministry of the Interior and both the special security services and police. Such efforts were only beginning to have an impact at the end of 2005, although the Ministry of Interior fired the commanders responsible for the worst abuses.

More broadly, the police still could not act as an effective force in many areas of the country, and have many elements that lacked both competence and loyalty to the central government. These problems were compounded in Sunni areas by the difficulty of finding forces loyal to the national government. They were compounded in Shi'ite areas by loyalty to Shi'ite religious parties and intimidation by -- or partnership with -- Shi'ite militias. Many of the police were also local, and lacked the training and discipline of the police units trained and equipped by the Coalition and central government.

Both Iraqi forces and civil government were still slow to occupy the areas where the insurgents were defeated by the military and security forces. This lack of governance and the ability to establish security without military forces remained a major problem in many parts of the country, but made it difficult to exploit Iraqi and Coalition military victories in areas favourable to the Sunni insurgents.

The Impact of the December 15, 2005 Election

The political dimension of force development also became increasingly important. The December 15, 2005 election changed the political landscape of Iraq in ways whose impact is currently impossible to determine, but will play a critical role in determining the success or failure of the Iraqi force development effort. It may be the fall of 2006, before the full impact of the December 15, 2005 election in Iraq is clear. It will certainly be months before the full nature of the new political structure it has created has been negotiated and every element of the new government is in place. There is still some risk that significant numbers of Sunnis will not accept the result, or that some combination of the insurgency and tension between Sunni and Shi'ite may divide the country.

So far, the election has not unified Iraqis or defused the insurgency. Both Sunni Arab and secular political groups formed a united front to protest the results of the elections on December 12th. According to Reuters they demanded a rerun of the election. They made charges of massive fraud, and threatened to boycott the new parliament and cripple it. The meeting at which this decision was taken included former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, and secular Sunni leader Saleh al-Mutlak, and some 70-80 other politicians from the Iraqi Unified Front, Allawi's Iraqi National List, the Sunni Islamist-led Iraqi Accordance Front and several other groups. Those attending said they had formed committees and would take their complaints not only to the Electoral Commission but also the Arab League, European Union and United Nations.

There is a serious risk that Iraq will divide or experience a more intense and overt form of civil war. This could easily divided the new Iraqi forces, converting them into largely Shi'ite and Kurdish units, and pushing out Sunnis -- potentially as part of the insurgency. It has again exposed both the fact that Iraqi force development is totally dependent on Iraqi political success, and that successful force development must pay as much attention to internal politics and the political nature of an insurgency as to force effectiveness. It

has also shown that any effort to develop effective military forces must be matched by an effort to develop effective security and police forces and ones that will not ally themselves with militias or other irregular forces that can divided the country.

The end result is that 2006 is a year that can see either successful political compromise, and major further progress in developing Iraqi forces, or the division of the country and Iraq's forces. Success can be relative. Virtually any form of compromise that most Shi'ites, Sunnis, Kurds, and other minorities can accept is good enough to be defined as "success." Any force development effort that avoids the division of the regular armed forces, ends most abuses in the Ministry of the Interior and security forces, makes the police more professional and neutral, and gradually limits the role of the militias will also be success. It has become all too apparent that "victory" for the Coalition is the art of Iraqi compromise, and that the goal of "transforming" Iraq into some shining example to the region was always little more than a neoconservative fantasy.

The alternative is not victory for the insurgency -- the Sunni insurgents are a divided minority within a minority and a minority that only has serious support from only a relatively small part of Iraq's population. It can, however, be national paralysis, civil war, or separation. There is no certain way to know the motives behind the bloody wave of new suicide attacks and bombings that began in January 2006, but there are good reasons for such attacks as seen from the viewpoint of hard-line insurgents. One key insurgent objective has to block the creation of a stable coalition that includes Arab Sunnis, Arab Shi'ites, and Kurds, and any following efforts to make an inclusive coalition government successful.

Bloody attacks on Shi'ites and Kurds are a key way to do this. So is attempting to discredit the whole process of governance by exploiting political and economic vulnerabilities like the rise in fuel and gas prices in late 2005, and attacking/threatening refineries to make things worse. At least for the near term, the primary goal of hard-line insurgents is logically to disrupt coalition building and discredit the government.

This, however, is only part of the strategy hard-line Sunni Islamist insurgents will logically follow. They also need to maintain their Sunni base and attack/discredit Sunnis moving towards compromise. This did not make sense during the elections. Security was at an all time peak that US and Iraqi forces could not sustain.

Giving Arab Sunnis legislative power made sense to at least some Sunni insurgents as long as those elected used it to check Shi'ite power and limit coalition building. Zargawi and Al Qa'ida still opposed the elections, but others were willing to wait and intimidate the Sunnis who gained office, exploit charges of election fraud, and make it clear that it was safe to oppose coalitions and compromise within the political system, but not to oppose the insurgency.

If one "red teams" insurgent motives at the start of 2006, there were also reasons for insurgents to be more optimistic about what they might accomplish during the coming year that might counter the successes in Iraqi politics and force development:

- The insurgents showed by early January that they still could mount large numbers of attacks. The Coalition forces stressed that the number of attacks has risen, but that successes had dropped. It

was far from clear this is true if one considered the impact of the successful attacks, and such claims ignored the key point that the insurgents were still strong enough for the number of attacks to increase.

- Some key aspects of the fracture lines between Sunni and Shi'ite were still growing. The Arab Sunni vs. Arab Shi'ite and Kurd tensions in the security forces were gradually becoming more serious, although the US and UK were making major new efforts to control and ease them. Sectarian divisions within the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior continued to grow. The new army continued to become steadily more Shi'ite and there were still growing problems in promoting Sunni officers. The police remained divided along sectarian and ethnic lines.
- These problems were being increased by rushing new Iraqi units into the field, many in areas where they create sectarian friction. (There seems to have been some manipulation of readiness data to get the number of battalions with level 3 and level 2 readiness up to 50. Low quality units may have been added somewhat prematurely to the level 3 readiness total in spite of poor quality and experience.)
- The election was proving to be highly controversial among Sunnis, with all kinds of charges and conspiracy theories. Many who voted, voted against the constitution and as a check to the growth of Shi'ite and Kurdish power.
- It was clear than any new Iraqi coalition that did emerge would be inherently unstable even if it did include Sunni groups that were willing to compromise. The new Iraqi government faced at least 6-8 months in which ongoing political debates had to occur over federation, control of oil resources and revenues, power of taxation, allocation of government funds, role of religion in government and law, and virtually every other "hot button" issue.

The tragedy of this strategy is that a failure by the new Iraqi government, and/or the division of the new Iraqi forces, almost certainly means that most Iraqi Sunnis will suffer more than the Shi'ites and Kurds. They will live in the area where the real fighting takes place, their economy will continue to deteriorate, and they will get little oil money and few government services. There is no charismatic Iraqi Sunni leader, radical insurgents like Zarqawi and Al Qa'ida -- can only disrupt the nation, not lead Iraq's Sunnis. The insurgents only have limited foreign support, the hard-line insurgents were a distinct minority within the Sunni majority, and most of the successes in building up the new Iraq forces are real enough so that alienating the Shi'ites and Kurds might well backfire if the country did divide into more serious civil conflict.

Yet, this simply may not matter to hard-line Sunni insurgents. At least some would welcome a divided Iraq as a means to their broader goal of weakening moderate regimes throughout the region and polarizing its people in ways that push Sunnis toward Islamist extremes. In any case, the immediate goal of many insurgents is not to win, or to implement a given program (most such insurgents have no coherent practical program). It is rather to deny victory and success to the newly elected Iraqi government and push the US and Coalition out in a war of attrition. From a "red team" view, this goal must still seem all too possible and most insurgents seem to be acting on this strategy.

Developments in 2006 / Early 2007

2006 saw much of the previous year's work unravel in the midst of increasing bloodshed. The conflict in Iraq took on more of an ethno-sectarian character, with battles between sectarian militias, ethnic cleansing of neighborhoods, and sectarian executions overshadowing the continuing violence of the insurgency. Most ISF elements reached their total objective force-generation targets by the end of 2006. Despite this achievement, the overall levels of violence rose steadily throughout the year. The bloodshed grew considerably worse in the Fall of 2006 and into the Winter, as the total number of attacks on civilians, the ISF, and Coalition forces continued to increase, and the security situation across the country continued to "deteriorate."¹

The nature of the conflict did, however, vary from province to province. Much of the violence was focused on local or regional issues, rather than on control of the entire country. Baghdad continued to be the center of much of Iraq's violence, and by the Fall of 2006 there were dozens of bodies turning up everyday, most showing signs of torture and bullet wounds in the head. Firefights and bombings were an almost daily occurrence, with the violence being characterized by sectarian struggles between the Mahdi army and Sunni groups, as well as continuing attacks on Coalition forces.²

A massive operation to secure Baghdad, dubbed 'Operation Together Forward' was launched by the MNF-I over the summer. The operation focused on a strategy of "clear, hold and build," hoping to sweep neighborhoods of militants using MNF-I forces, and then have the ISF provide security while reconstruction efforts took hold. The plan relied very heavily on Iraqi forces and consisted of steps like increased checkpoints and patrols, curfews and enforcement of weapons bans in targeted areas of the city. US troops were to hold cleared areas for 60 to 90 days, during which infrastructure and economic reconstruction would start.³ It also included a three-day reassessment of all Iraqi brigades.⁴ Unfortunately, while US and Coalition forces were able to "clear" many neighborhoods, the ISF was unable to either "hold" or to "build."

This failure stemmed from many factors. Many of the Iraqi Army brigades that were ordered to deploy to Baghdad to take part in Operation Together Forward never showed up at all, or showed up at a fraction of their strength. Even in neighborhoods where sufficient forces were present, the sectarian loyalties of the Iraqi Army, and to a much greater extent the police, allowed insurgent and militia forces to return. Insurgent groups and sectarian militias were often forewarned of MNF-I sweeps, and hid or fled to other neighborhoods. While violence levels briefly fell, by late 2006 it was painfully clear that US and Iraqi forces had not succeeded in curbing the overall level of violence in Baghdad, defeating the insurgents in any lasting way, or breaking up the militias. The overall number of armed attacks on US soldiers and Iraqis in the capital had *increased* by 43 percent since midsummer.

Violence in Baghdad, and across much of Iraq, continued to rise throughout the end of 2006. In light of the unceasing violence, popular support for the war in America waned, especially after President Bush discarded many of the recommendations of the Iraq Study

Group. In January 2007, the Bush Administration announced a new security plan for Baghdad. This plan, dubbed “Operation Imposing Law” was helped by a “surge” of 21,500 US troops into the capital.

Gen. David Petraeus was put in overall command of US forces in Iraq on January 23, 2007. A counter-insurgency expert, Petraeus instituted a comprehensive strategy in Baghdad centered around “gated communities” and Joint Security Station (JSS). The new strategy permanently placed US soldiers in neighborhoods they had previously only sporadically patrolled. The soldiers were to isolate a neighborhood and then secure it, creating a “gated community”⁵ of safety and expanding out from there. Each JSS would be a small outpost with 50 or so Iraqi police and Army personnel, and at least 1 platoon of US troops with another in support.

18 Iraqi battalions were deployed to Baghdad as part of the operation, many from Kurdish areas. Manning levels in the ISF battalions were much higher than they were during operation together forward, due to several reforms instituted in light of that failure. Although there were serious concerns as to the wisdom of placing Kurdish soldiers in the middle of the Sunni-Shi’ite strife, as of April 2007 no major problems had been reported with the Kurdish forces.

In the weeks prior to the “surge,” the Mahdi militia was ordered by Sadr to stand down, and maintain a low profile during the security operation. It was unclear whether Sadr’s order to stand down demonstrated a genuine commitment to peace, a ploy to outwait the US surge, or rather a temporary measure aimed at eliminating rivals.

The influx of American soldiers, aided by the stand down of the Mahdi militia, led to a decrease in sectarian killings in Baghdad in March and April. The overall levels of violence in Iraq did not fall, however, as attacks shifted from Baghdad to the ‘belt’ of smaller cities ringing the capital.

One bright spot did emerge in Anbar province in late 2006. The leaders of several tribes decided to ban together against Al Qa’ida in Iraq, which had previously been quite powerful in the province. The move was brought on by Al Qa’ida’s frequent beheadings, kidnappings, and bombings of Sunni civilians. An immediate result of the tribal leader’s shift has been increased cooperation with American and ISF forces. Additionally, police recruitment in the province, which had been extremely low, jumped. During the winter of 2005/2006, there were roughly 1,300 police in the province. As of April, 2007 there were 13, 200, with more in training.⁶

In a more ominous development, British Prime Minister Tony Blair announced on February 21st, 2007 that 1,600 British troops would be withdrawn from Iraq in the following months. Although the move was not portrayed as a retreat in the face of defeat, violence in the provinces under British control had been steadily growing since Fall 2006. April, 2007 was the deadliest month for British forces since the invasion of 2003.⁷

Prospects for Development in 2007 and the Search for National Unity

No analysis of Iraqi force developments can ignore the fact there are still many threats to national unity and there are still a long list of political, military, and economic uncertainties that will shape the outcome of the insurgency and the success of the Iraqi force building effort. This list includes the nature of the new government that will emerge out of the December 15, 2005 election, and the efforts to forge an inclusive government, and deal with all of the issues raised by the new constitution.

Iraqi internal politics could still lead to a major civil conflict between ethnic factions and sects. It is too soon to predict how well Iraqi forces can or cannot supplement, whether they will remain unified and serve the nation and not give factions, and the extent to which they can eventually replace Coalition forces. The nation-building aspects of the “war after the war” remain a struggle in progress, and there still is no way to know whether the light at the end of the tunnel is daylight or an oncoming train.

This analysis documents many positive trends, but it also shows that Iraq, the US and its allies, and the world can “lose” the struggle in Iraq as well as win it. Such a defeat is not *probable*, but it is *possible*. There is no one variable that could produce such a “defeat,” and there is no agreed definition of what “victory” or “defeat,” mean. A “defeat” could take the following forms:

- A war of attrition whose cost and casualties eventually meant the Bush Administration lost the public and Congressional support necessary to go on fighting.
- The open failure of US efforts to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces and any ability to phase down the US and MNF presence at an acceptable rate.
- A large-scale Iraqi civil war -- where some combination of Arab Sunni versus Arab Shi’ite, Arab versus Kurd, secularist versus theocrat, or struggle for authoritarian rule made continuing the Coalition presence purposeless or untenable.
- The collapse of effective Iraqi governance because of divisions between Shi’ite, Sunni, and Kurd.
- The creation of a religious state without the pluralism and tolerance critical to a US definition of victory.
- The creation of open or de facto divisions in Iraq that allied the Iraqi Shiites with Iran and created the equivalent of a Shi’ite crescent divided from the Sunni part of the Arab and Islamic world.
- The continued failure of US aid and Iraqi economic development to meet the needs and expectations of the people and the destabilizing impact of long-term, large-scale unemployment.
- The failure to meet popular expectations regarding personal security, reductions in crime, availability of key services like water and electricity, and education and medical care.
- Demands by an Iraqi government that US forces leave on less than friendly terms.
- Domestic US political conditions that lead to the enforcement of some “exit strategy” that made the US leave before a stable Iraq can be created.
- The isolation of the US from its regional and other allies, most remaining members of the Coalition and the support or tolerance of the UN.

The variables in this list are interactive and can combine in a wide range of ways to produce different real-world scenarios for “defeat.” Furthermore, the cases on this list are simply the key candidates; there are many more scenarios that might possibly occur.

Defining “Victory” and the Future Role Iraqi Forces Should Play

“Winning” is equally hard to define. Iraq will be unstable for at least the next 5-10 years, and what appears to be “victory” could become a “defeat” if later political and economic upheavals created a hostile regime, chaotic country, or state with a theocratic or strong man regime so far from democracy that it made our current fight futile. The most likely “best case” outcome is now the kind of “victory” that produces an unstable, partially dependent state, with a unified and pluralistic regime but one that is scarcely an American client.

Iraqi forces can help create the conditions for “victory,” but neither they nor the Coalition forces can defeat the insurgency by military means alone. Victory or defeat will ultimately be determined by the Iraqi political process and has already become an Iraqi responsibility. Counterterrorism and counterinsurgency require political and economic, as well as military, solutions. At least as much depends on Iraqi capability to build on the foundation provided by outside aid, and to create the right kind of political and economic context for military success. Serious problems have emerged from the inability of the Iraqi Government to follow up on US and Iraqi military and security efforts and to establish effective governance at both the central government level and in the field.

Iraqis must work out a form of power sharing that can include Arab Shi’ite, Arab Sunni, Kurds, Turcomans, and Iraq’s smaller minorities. The politics of ethnic and sectarian tension and rivalry cannot be resolved by force in any stable or lasting way. Only the Iraqis can bridge the gaps between Sunni and Shi’ite, Arab and Kurd, and various Shi’ite factions. Only Iraqis can find the proper way of sharing the nation’s oil wealth, and find the right balance between a secular and religious state.

In any case, Iraq, the Coalition, and friendly outside states can only succeed if they recognize that the level of progress required to produce any meaningful definition of “success” or “victory” in all of the necessary areas will be a matter of years, if not a decade. No matter how impatient policymakers may be, history still takes time. It is certain that there will be reversals, even if the ultimate result is success.

Strategic and Grand Strategic Lessons

No lesson of the Iraqi force development effort is more important than the need to accurately assess the full nature of the grand strategic situation in going to war, and to act decisively and comprehensively in every dimension of war that is essential to victory. Any strategic or military doctrine that focuses purely on the military dimension of war, particularly in conventional warfighting terms, is mindless to the point of being a recipe for self-defeat.

Much has been made of the intelligence failures in assessing Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. These failures pale to insignificance, however, in comparison with the failure of US policy and military planners to accurately assess the overall situation in Iraq before engaging in war, and for the risk of insurgency if the US did not carry out an effective mix of nation building and stability operations. This failure cannot be made the responsibility of the intelligence community.

Making the right strategic assessments in going to war is a policy level responsibility. In the case of Iraq, it was the responsibility of the President, the Vice President, the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. All had the responsibility to bring together policymakers, military planners, intelligence experts, and area experts to provide as accurate a picture of Iraq and the consequences of an invasion as possible. Each failed to exercise that responsibility. The nation's leading policymakers chose to act on a limited and highly ideological view of Iraq that planned for one extremely optimistic definition of success, but not for risk or failure.

War Planning Means Planning for Stability Operations and Nation Building

No civilian policymaker or senior military officer can ever be excused for focusing on warfighting and ignoring the political dimension of war. This is especially true when a war does not affect national survival and is optional. Defeat of the enemy is always a means to an end. It only has meaning if it can be translated into a lasting political success and grand strategic outcome.

The President, the National Security Council, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and other senior policymakers and military officers failed to meet this responsibility at a fundamental level. There was no real planning for stability operations. Key policymakers did not want to engage in nation building and chose to believe that removing Saddam Hussein from power would leave the Iraqi government functioning and intact. Plans were made on the basis that significant elements of the Iraqi armed forces would turn to the Coalitions' side, remain passive, or put up only token resistance.

No real effort was made to ensure continuity of government or stability and security in Iraq's major cities and throughout the countryside. Decades of serious sectarian and ethnic tension were downplayed or ignored. Actions by Saddam Hussein's regime that had crippled Iraq's economic development since the early years of the Iran-Iraq War – at time when Iraq had only 17-18 million people were ignored. Iraq was assumed to be an oil wealthy country whose economy could quickly recover if the oil fields were not burned, and transform itself into a modern capitalist structure in the process.

The nation's most senior military commanders compounded these problems by planning for the conventional defeat of the enemy and an early exit from Iraq, by making a deliberate effort to avoid "Phase IV" and stability operations. The fact they did so to minimize the strain on the US force posture, and the "waste" of US troops on "low priority" missions played a major role in creating the conditions under which insurgency could develop and flourish.

The intelligence community and civilian and military area experts may not have predicted the exact nature of the insurgency that followed. Analysis is not prophecy. They did, however, provide ample warning that this was a risk that Iraqi exiles were often failing to provide a balanced or accurate picture, and nation building would be both necessary and extremely difficult. The nation's top policymakers choose to both ignore and discourage such warnings as "negative" and "exaggerated," and to plan for success. They did so

having seen the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the sectarian and ethnic problems of Afghanistan.

Planning for Failure and Not Just for Success

Iraq reiterates a lesson that has been consistent since the US army's first military engagements, and dramatic defeats in its initial battles with Native Americans. To succeed, the US must plan for failure as well as success. It must see the development or escalation of insurgency as a serious risk in any contingency where it is possible, and take preventive and ongoing steps to prevent or limit it.

This is an essential aspect of war planning and no Secretary of Defense, service secretary, senior civilian policy official, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, service chief, or unified and specified commander can be excused for failing to plan and act in this area. Responsibility begins directly at the top, and failures at any other level pale to insignificance by comparison. The fact that failure can always be explained is irrelevant at this level of policymaking and command, it can never be excused.

This is even truer in Iraq because top-level policymakers failed to recognize or admit the scale of the problem as it developed. Their failures were as much failures of reaction as prediction or contingency planning, and failures to accurately assess and react to ongoing events are far less excusable. There were no mysteries involving the scale of the collapse of the Iraqi government and security forces within days of the fall of Saddam Hussein. The reaction was slow, inadequate, and shaped by denial of the seriousness of the problem.

This situation did not improve until more than a year after the fall of Saddam's regime, and at least six months after it became apparent that a serious insurgency was developing. Major resources did not flow into the creation of effective Iraqi forces until the fall of 2004. The US aid effort behaved for nearly a year and a half as if the insurgency was truly a small group of diehards or "terrorists." Even in late 2005, top US civilian policymakers split hairs over semantics to try to even avoid the word insurgency, failed to perceive that many Sunni Arab Iraqis see such an insurgency has legitimate causes, and choose to largely publicly ignore the risks of civil conflict and the developing problems in Shi'ite forces and political structures.

The US denied risks and realities of the Vietnam War. European powers initially denied the realities that forced them to end their colonial role. Israel denied the risks and realities of striking deep into Lebanon and seeking to create a Christian-dominated allied state. Russia denied the risks and realities of Chechnya in spite of all the brutal lessons of having denied the risk and realities of Afghanistan.

The failure to learn the need for accurate characterization of the nation and region where counterinsurgency may -- or does -- exist seems to be a constant lesson of why nations go to and stay at war. The failure to plan for risk and failure as well as success is equally significant. Ruthless objectivity is the cheapest solution to be preventing and limiting

insurgency, and planning and deploying for the full range of stability operations and nation building is an essential precaution wherever the stakes are high and the risk is significant.

Partnership versus Changing the Nation and the Culture

Iraq -- like Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia -- is a warning that even the best planning for stability and nation-building will not be enough unless they take place in the right context. The US must plan from the start to treat host countries as partners and not as clients or “experiments.” This means avoiding the kind of procounselor operation the US established in the CPA, making the creation of effective local governance and authority a key grand strategic priority, and giving the same priority to the creation of local military, security, and police forces. It should be clear before the US fires the first weapon that it will treat the nation that emerges from a war as a partner, not a people to be occupied. It should be equally clear that the US will not seek to establish bases or a lasting presence, and will transfer all forms of authority as soon as possible.

At the same time, the US cannot afford to have illusions about restructuring cultures and nations in its own image. Force development efforts do not occur in a vacuum. They must be part of a much broader effort to deal with a foreign population -- with different religions, ideologies, goals and cultural values -- on terms that population wants. “Relativism” is inevitable and must be tailored to the political, ethnic, and sectarian divisions within a given nation. Under most conditions, the US will be perceived by a significant percentage of the people as an invader, occupier, neo-colonial power, “crusader,” or simply as selfishly serving its own strategic interests. Language alone presents serious problems, and American public diplomacy is too ethnocentric to be effective.

The US can encourage political, economic, and social reform, but cannot demand implement it. Like Iraqis, people must find their own leaders, political structures, and methods of governance. The US must also recognize that it lacks basic competence in the economics of nation building in societies whose economic structures, ability to execute reforms and projects, and perceived values differ significantly from the US. Different cultures, human rights practices, legal methods, and religious practices can be influenced to evolve in ways the US sees as positive, but there are no universal values, and the US cannot shape a different nation, culture, or religion.

In many cases, the sheer scale of the problem will be a major factor. Force development is difficult enough and it must be tied to political, economic, and social goals that the host country wants and the US can credibly achieve as a “partner” and not an occupier. Demographic, ethnic, and sectarian problems can take a generation or more to fully solve. Decades of economic failure, neglect, and discrimination can take a decade or more to fix. A lack of rule of law, working human rights, pragmatic and experienced leaders and political parties cannot be fixed by a few years of outside aid and education.

This does not mean that the US cannot exert tremendous influence, or that the US should not seek reform and change. But, the swamp will almost always be undrainable unless a host government and power-set of local political movements drives the process. Religious, cultural, and ideological reform must come largely from within. The local populace must see the reason for economic reform, and believe in it enough to act. Governance and security must be largely local to be perceived as legitimate. Equally important, if the swamp can be drained, the process will generally take so long that a US counterinsurgency campaign will be lost or won long before the process is completed.

Force Development Must be Tied to As Broad a Structure of Alliances as Possible

Iraq, like so many other serious Post-WWII insurgencies, shows that successful counterinsurgency means having or creating a local partner that can take over from US forces and that can govern. Both Vietnam and Iraq show the US cannot win an important counterinsurgency campaign alone. The US will always be dependent on the people in the host country, and usually on local and regional allies. And to some extent, will be dependent on the quality of its operations in the UN, in dealing with traditional allies and in diplomacy. If the US can't figure out a way to have or create such an ally, and fight under these conditions, a counterinsurgency conflict may well not be worth fighting.

This means the US must do far more than creating effective allied forces. In most cases, it find a ways to help its partners reshape their process of politics and governance so that the development of security forces is matched by the steady development of governance, and a matching civil presence and the provision of effective government services.

Economics and Counterinsurgency: Dollars Must Be Used as Effectively as Bullets

Force development must take place under conditions where the US is prepared to use aid and civic action dollars as well as bullets, and the US military has done far better in this area in Iraq than it has in the past. Unfortunately, the history of the insurgency shows that the same cannot be said for USAID in Washington, or for any aspect of the economic planning effort under the CPA. The US ignored the economic and related political and cultural realities of nation building going into Iraq and ignores the economic realities now.

Every independent assessment of the US aid effort warns just how bad the US performance has been in these areas -- even in critical areas like the oil industry. The US has now spent or committed its way through nearly \$20 billion, and has virtually no self-sustained structural economic change to show for it. Most aid projects spend more money on overhead, contractors, and security than gets to Iraqis in the field. It can't protect most of its aid projects; for too much of post-March 2003 Iraqi economic "growth" has been illusory and comes from US waste and wartime profiteering.

Iraq is also a warning that self-congratulatory measures of achievement are mindless regardless of whether they report on force development or the other US actions necessary to achieve a grand strategic outcome. The way in which the US lied to itself during the early phases of the Iraqi force development effort -- and focuses on the number of units created, the total number of men in service, and total forces deployed -- showed such

numbers are meaningless unless they are tied to clear measures of success and effectiveness.

Similarly school buildings completed is irrelevant unless there are books, teachers, furniture, students and security, and the buildings go to troubled areas as well as secure ones. Bad or empty buildings leave a legacy of hostility, not success. Empty or low capacity clinics don't win hearts and minds. Increasing peak power capacity is meaningless unless the right people actually get it.

Warfighting, Stability Operations, and Nation-Building Lessons

Finally, this analysis of the Iraqi force development effort raises lessons about the way in which forces should be developed from a military perspective.

- o **First, warfighters must focus relentlessly on the desired outcome of the war and not simply the battle or overall military situation.** The development or improvement of allied forces and counterinsurgency or counterterrorism forces should be part of a broad set of political and grand strategic goals for the war. This may not be direct responsibility of war fighters or military advisors, but shaping such efforts at the command level must ask is whether the US is actually moving toward a strategic outcome that serves the ultimate interests of the US? If warfighters don't know, they should not spend the lives of American men and women in the first place.

More broadly, the US military, and any military force that may be engaged in counterinsurgency warfare and armed peacemaking, should be taught at every level that stability operations and conflict termination are the responsibility of every field-grade officer. (And, for that matter, every civilian.) Warfighters need to act on the principle that every tactical operation must have a political context and set of goals. The US needs to tie its overall campaign plan to a detailed plan for the use of economic aid at every level, from simple bribery to actually seeking major changes in the economy of a given country.

- o **Second, US military planning and operations in major counterinsurgency and counter terrorist campaigns should be based on the principle that the best "force multiplier" will be effective allies, and interoperability with a true local partner, are both a means and precondition to serious counterinsurgency warfare.** Even when US forces can dominate the battlefield in conventional or asymmetric warfare, this can only shape the broader political and strategic struggle.

The US can only win most counterinsurgency campaigns if it creates strong allies, and the US must act decisively on this principle. US tactical victories will often only be a means to this end. The real victories will come when the US has allied troops that can operate against insurgents in the field, and a friendly government to carry out nation building and civil action activities at the same time. Furthermore, creating a real partnership with allies means giving respect and treating them as true partners; it does not mean using allied force to create proxies or tools

- o **Third, stability operations, counterinsurgency, armed peacemaking, and many aspects of nation building must focus on creating effective local military, security, and police forces as a primary objective from the initial planning for military operations to their completion.** The creation of effective host country forces must be given the same priority as effective operations by the invading or occupying force. Providing the proper resources in terms of training teams, equipment, facilities, and money is an essential aspect of planning and operations, and officers and officials who do not act on this principle should be removed from command.

The time in which occupying forces could act independently is over, particularly in countries and areas with different religions, ideologies, cultures, political systems, and values. Political legitimacy and stability will almost inevitably depend on the level of success in creating effective national forces. So will political and operation acceptance and support by the people in the country

where operations take place. To ignore this reality, is to breed insurgency and resistance, and cede a fundamental advantage to opponents in asymmetric warfare or efforts to go from peace enforcement to internal stability.

- o **Fourth, creating effective forces means creating effective security/paramilitary forces and police forces, not simply local military forces.** The US must recognize that creating the conditions for effective governance and police are as important as the military. Military forces can defeat insurgents, but security forces and specially trained police are the key to securing “liberated” or “pacified” areas, providing day-to-day local security, and establish local legitimacy for the government the US is seeking to aid.

In virtually all cases, this means that the effort to create effective police and security forces must take place simultaneously with the creation of local military forces, and must be given the same priority. Planning and strategy must similarly see the deployment of police and paramilitary security functions as an essential part of military operations, “pacification,” and winning hearts and minds. Advisory efforts and funding must be shaped accordingly.

- o **Fifth, success requires effective political structures and governance.** Military and security success require matching success in the military, political, economic, and governance dimension. They also require the creation of effective civil ministries to take over local military, security, and police forces.

Success in both counterinsurgency operations, and the development of effective local forces, can only come in a broader political and economic context. Victory cannot be imposed on a people by either US or local forces. Moreover, national politics will generally be less important than establishing effective governance at the national, regional, and local level. Government must be present and provide effective services at the local level for the same reasons that effective local police forces are critical to perceptions of legitimacy and winning hearts and minds.

- o **Sixth, creating effective local forces also requires the creation of effective ministries to command, manage, and fund them.** Iraq shows all too clearly that both creating effective local forces and creating political legitimacy requires effective civil control at the level of the ministry of defense and ministry of the interior, and effective fiscal management by the ministry of finance.

The exact names and functions of such ministries may differ by war, but local forces cannot be developed in isolation from civil authority and political control, and all of the key ministries must be functional if all forces are to achieve balanced effectiveness, by subject to reasonable levels of fiscal control and honesty, and create a transition to full local sovereignty.

- o **Seventh, in practice, this means the US must carry out an integrated advisory effort under the Department of Defense with a unified command in the field.** The US cannot afford to rely on interagency coordination in shaping allied forces in serious counterinsurgency, or attempt to manage such efforts from Washington versus the field. It cannot afford to attempt to split the force development effort between a Department of Defense-led effort to shape military forces and a Department of State-led effort to shape police and security forces.

The overall structure of the US effort at counterinsurgency, stability operations, and nation-building should be directed and coordinated by an ambassador heading a strong country team that directly integrates civil and military command. However, as long as there is the reality or a major risk of insurgency or large-scale terrorism, the Department of Defense and the military command and advisory team should shape the overall force development effort as part of an integrated effort to create and deploy the necessary mix of military, security, and police forces. The time may come in which creating a civil police force will have priority and require a different approach, but this is only after the defeat of the insurgency or terrorism.

- o **Eighth, the advisory and force development effort must focus from the start on creating forces that will unite the country, and avoid become part of ethnic, sectarian, and other divisions. It must create a force trained to see human rights and the rule of law as an essential part of counterinsurgency and counter terrorism.** Insurgency and terrorism are often

bred by national ethnic, sectarian, tribal, and racial differences. Insurgents and terrorists may not be legitimate but the causes that create or encourage them often are. Defeating them requires forces that will unite the country, have a balance that does not make them the tool of divisive interests, and which will respect the rights of ordinary citizens and understand the need for restraint and winning hearts and minds.

The US and Coalition may have made mistakes in shaping Iraq's forces, but they were correct in recognizing these needs from the start and the need for a "culture" within Iraqi forces focused on national interests, inclusion, and the restrained and focused use of force. Internal political factors made this far more difficult in the case of the Special Security Forces and police than the regular military, but such political problems will be typical of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, as well as stability operations and nation-building. Overcoming as many of such problems as possible will be critical to establishing the legitimacy of the local government and forces, creating trust and winning hearts and minds, and ensuring that operations do not create new opponents as they defeat old ones.

Even from the narrow perspective of operational priorities, the issue is not human rights in any theoretical or ideological sense. It is that unfocused operations that deny the populace security, and the innocent such rights, will often be inherently self-defeating.

- **Ninth, the training and force development effort must become a local and national effort as soon as possible.** Effectiveness, perceived legitimacy and victory are all dependent on having local forces taking over as much of the force development and training effort as soon as possible. This means plans to train the trainers must be a high priority from the start, and that foreign or foreign-led training efforts should become a supplement to local efforts as soon as possible.

This is also a key element of making vetting successful, training forces to be national and not factional, and to assume responsibility, rather than deferring to US or other foreign elements and passing responsibility outwards. In many cases, creating successful national training facilities will also be a key to changing the culture and operational values of local forces. This can only take place if such change is institutionalized in local training facilities at every level.

- **Tenth, the force development effort must focus on giving local forces responsibility and visibility as soon as they can become effective.** Legitimacy is a matter of visibility and perception. Local populations need to see their own forces on the ground; they need to see their own government as establishing control. Moreover, even the most skilled US forces can never have the HUMINT capabilities, language skills, cultural sensitivities, and ability to distinguish friend from foe or neutral, of effective local forces. There are key operational, as well as political, advantages to this lesson.
- **Eleventh, it is not enough to train and equip local forces. They must be assisted in deploying into the field, given increasing responsibility at rates they can accept, have embedded advisory teams until they can assume responsibility for their own battle space, and be paired with US or allied units until they can largely fight on their own.**

This analysis describes these efforts in detail, and they are scarcely new lessons of war. New or reorganized forces need more than basic training and equipment. They need patience, time to transition, support in combat, and the benefit of experience. This is particularly true in countries and cultures where initiative has been discouraged, there is no strong NCO corps, corruption and phantom manpower are common, and far too many officers and officials have led from the rear.

- **Twelfth, the US must devote the necessary resources from the start.** Much of the problem in Iraq during the first years of the Iraqi force development effort occurred because the US attempted to "nickel and dime" the resources it provided, and to judge the cost-effectiveness of given plans from the year and without any operational experience. The US has paid a high price in blood, time, and dollars for these mistakes. Allied force development must have the proper funds, advisory manpower, and be given the proper priority.

- o **Thirteenth, interoperability and effectiveness require proper support in terms of equipment and facilities, and the proper level of US aid.** The US was far too slow in recognizing the need for proper equipment and facilities. Even now, US advisors may still be underequipping Iraqi forces in terms of protection and some aspects of firepower, having made a present virtue out of past necessity. The proper equipment must not lag local force training, deployment, and operations.

At the same time, the US military needs to tailor its equipment, netcentric warfare capabilities, intelligence and battle management efforts, and training and doctrine, to working with local forces at the level of interoperability they can actually achieve. It is not the responsibility of local forces to catch up. It is the responsibility of the US military to ensure that no matter how advanced its warfighting capabilities may become, they can always adapt to allied needs -- even at relatively unsophisticated levels.

- o **Fourteenth, the force development effort must move as quickly as possible towards a balanced and self-sustaining force with the capability to transition out of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism to peacetime operations. There must be a long-term plan.** Any force development effort will require constant change and priority must be given to immediate operational needs. But, far too much of the effort in Iraq focused initially on total manpower, and then on rushing combat battalions into the field without the necessary headquarters, combat and service support, maintenance and logistics to operate as balanced and independent forces. This situation is being corrected, but it should not be repeated.

There also needs to be a clear plan that convince local forces and political leaders that the US and its allies plan to leave, prepares them to change the role and mission of their forces as internal stability is established, ensures that military forces will transition to securing the nation against foreign enemies, and the police will become regular police. The force development effort must define the meaning of victory in practical force planning terms, and set goals that can end in successful conflict termination.

- o **Fifteenth, US military forces must have the proper training and skills to perform the mission.** The US military has a long history of relearning the need for area expertise, language skills, cultural sensitivity, and force development efforts the hard way. It does not play easily with others, particularly if they do not have the same degree of professionalism and effectiveness, and cannot operate at technological levels close to US forces.

The US cannot focus solely on asymmetric warfare, counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations, nation-building, and stability operations. It cannot afford, however, not to retain and expand the skills it has learned from Iraq and Afghanistan and institutionalize them as a key element and career path within US forces. Improvisation should not be a necessity; its cost is measured in body bags.

- o **Sixteenth, the US needs to have a functional interagency process and partner its military with effective civilian counterparts.** Iraq has shown that political leaders and senior military cannot afford to bypass the system, or to lack support from the civilian agencies that must do their part from the outset. The US needs to begin by deciding on the team it needs to go to war, and then make that team work. It is one of the oddities historically that Robert McNamara got his largest increase in US troops deployed to Vietnam by bypassing the interagency process. The Bush Administration began by going through an interagency process before the war, but largely chose to ignore it after January of 2003.

This is the wrong approach. Counterinsurgency wars are as much political and economic as military. They require political action, aid in governance, economic development and attention to the ideological and political dimension. The US can only succeed here if the interagency process can work.

At another level, the US needs civilian risk-takers. It needs a counterpart to the military in the field. There is no point in supporting the staffing of more interagency coordination bodies in

Washington unless their primary function is to put serious resources into the field. The US is not going to win anything by having better interagency coordination, and more meetings, unless the end result is to put the right mix of people and resources out in the countryside where the fighting takes place.

The US needs to put a firm end to the kind of mentality that overstaffs the State Department and intelligence community in Washington, and doesn't require career civilians to take risks in the field. Foreign Service officers should not be promoted, in fact should be selected out, unless they are willing to take risks. The US can get all of the risk takers we want. There already is a flood of applications from qualified people. It can also ensure continuity and expertise by drawing on the brave group of people already in Iraq and Afghanistan -- a remarkable number of whom are already contract employees -- and giving them career status.

In the process, the US also needs to "civilianize" some aspects of its military. It needs to improve both their area and language skills, create the added specialized forces it needs for stability and nation building operations, and rethink tour length for military who work in critical positions and with allied forces. Personal relationships are absolutely critical in the countries where the US is most likely to fight counterinsurgency wars. So is area expertise and continuity in intelligence.

Counterinsurgency needs a core of military and civilians who will accept 18 month to 24-month tours in key slots. The problem today is often that the selection system does not focus on the best person but rather on external personnel and career planning considerations. Moreover, it fails to recognize that those who take such additional risks should be paid for it in full, and be given different leave policies and promotion incentives. Today, a soldier who is only a battalion commander is *only* a battalion commander. The key officers are those with area and counterinsurgency skills that go beyond the combat unit level. Those officers need to have more diverse skills, and deal adequately with the broader dimension of war, and stay long enough to be fully effective.

- o **Seventeenth, information operations must make local force building a key focus:** Iraq is yet another example of the importance of information operations focused on local values and perceptions. No matter how well the US and its allies attempt to justify and explain their behavior, some form of local resentment, fear, and conspiracy theories are inevitable. US forces operating in nations with different religions, cultures, ideologies, and values are likely to be seen as "occupiers," or as supporting rival factions. Defeating these perceptions must be a major goal of US information operations in maintaining local support, dealing with neutral or undecided local nationals, and winning over hostile nationals.

The key to success will often be to convince the local populace that the US is making the best effort possible to develop local forces, and these forces will be national and inclusive in character, rather than serve US or factional interests. This will do much to establish the legitimacy of the national political structure the US is seeking to create, to convince local nationals and others the US plans to leave and do so as soon as this is feasible, and reduce the hostilities and fears that feed insurgency. Like many aspects of information operations and public diplomacy, the key to success will not be "selling" US values and goals, but convincing the local populace, the region, and outside world that the US is seeking to achieve local values and goals and will not be an occupier or seek bases and strategic influence that does not represent the legitimate desire of the nation involved.

- o **Eighteenth, local force development takes as long as it takes.** Iraq is a clear warning that there is no present way the US can predict how long it will take to create effective local forces, or set deadlines and calendar dates for such efforts. In many cases, the initial effort may take years of continuing advisory support, and US forces may have to provide air support, transportation, intelligence aid, and emergency combat support for years after local forces take over most responsibilities. US political and military leaders need to accept this reality as the price of engagement and going to war.

The Basic Lesson for Future Conflicts

The subtext of all of these points is that the US must adopt a fundamentally different approach to counterinsurgency and large-scale counterterrorist operations than the one it used in going to war with Iraq. The goal of such battles is not to win US military victories, but rather to shape nations that can begin to win such battles on their own and emerge as reasonably stable and functional entities that serve the broad interests of their peoples.

This means that building capable local forces is not a luxury or afterthought, or a means of aid US forces, but a key grand strategic goal. It must be an integral aspect of plans and operations from the start, and the feasibility of such efforts must be a key consideration in deciding whether to commit US forces. In the case of Coalition operations, this means they must also be a key part of Coalition planning and operations from the outset.

This requires a top down change in priorities and attitudes from the President to the battalion commander in the field. It requires a commitment at the level of the National Security Advisor, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense to make such efforts real and effective, and to accepting their cost as a price of US operations. It inevitably requires interagency coordination, but this is a hollow goal unless it leads to effective interagency action in the field. The purpose of such interagency efforts is to support operations, not micromanage or discuss them.

A basic change is needed in US military thinking, attitudes, and operations. This change may already be underway. A combination of the US experience in Afghanistan and Iraq has taught the need for specialized forces with area and language skills and the fact that nation-building and stability operations are now aspects of the military profession that no competent officer can ignore. The new Department of Defense directive on stability operations issued in the fall of 2005 is a vital step in making such efforts part of US doctrine. US military training is adapting both to counterinsurgency operations and the need to work with allied forces.

Much will depend, however, on just how far the US military can learn to look beyond war fighting to grand strategic outcomes, and become effective in both creating allied forces and seeing the political dimension of victory. It is fair to say that many previous failures to deal with conflict termination and stability operations began at the highest policy levels.

The uniformed military are, however, the professionals and policymakers come and go, with very different levels of practical experience. At a minimum, military officers have the responsibility to plan and advise for every element of victory, to be capable of every necessary element of operations, and to see “jointness” in grand strategic terms. The officer who cannot see this necessity, and act upon it with full professional competence, is unfit to serve.

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I. Introduction

Much depends on Coalition and Iraqi success in creating effective Iraqi forces. These forces not only are a key to the legitimacy of the Iraqi political process, they are critical to defeating the insurgency and terrorism. They must become the visible element of security operations that Sunnis and other Iraqis see on a day-to-day basis. The lack of such highly visible Iraqi forces, and the fact that US “occupiers” dominated most security activity in the past, have created the image of a nation where fighting is done by foreigners and non-Muslims, has done much to sustain the insurgency.

Important as many Coalition and Iraqi Interim Government tactical victories have been, they have also produced a costly political and military backlash. Successful military engagements sometimes lead to the creation of as many new insurgents as they kill or capture. The lack of popular support for the security effort means that many existing insurgents disperse with their weapons or bury their weapons and supplies for later retrieval.

Many Iraqis have seen -- and still see -- US and Coalition-dominated military actions as actions by “occupier” forces; they are a source of constant propaganda and fuel conspiracy theories. Real and imagined civilian casualties, collateral damage, and the impact on civilians and shrines that these engagements cause remain a constant problem. All of these points reinforce the need to create larger and more effective Iraqi forces as soon as possible, and to give them full force protection and counterinsurgency capability.

At the same time, Iraqi forces must be truly national forces -- not forces that serve the interest of given sects or ethnic groups as the expense of others. They must unite Arab Sunni, Arab Shi’ite, Kurds, and other minorities; and not divide them. Iraqi police forces must replace Iraqi military and security forces as quickly as possible. Iraqis do not want their own military constantly visible in the streets, or militias and other unofficial forces that often support hardline interpretations of Islam and/or enforce their own selfish interests

It is not enough to be effective, have Iraqi nationality, and operate independently from Coalition forces. Iraqi forces must have the trust of the people as well. Many ordinary Iraqis have a history that gives them every reason to fear the military and security forces, and distrust the police. Some, particularly Sunnis, have more than a past history. They have faced threats, pressure, intimidation, and corruption from the forces that have been created since the fall of Saddam Hussein. This raises serious issues about how the new Iraqi military, security, and police force treat their own population that the new Iraqi government must address and where continuing US pressure will be vital to success.

Put differently, Iraqi forces must be inclusive, and be a mix of Sunni, Shi’ite, Kurd, and other minorities. Iraqi leaders have recognized this in the past. One of Jalal Talibani’s first acts in becoming Iraq’s new president in April 2005 was to offer an amnesty to Iraqi Sunni insurgents. This followed up on a more limited offer of insurgent by then Prime Minister Ayad Allawi in 2004. Such acts of political inclusion are as critical to Iraqi success in defeating the insurgents as the effectiveness of Iraqi forces.⁸

It will be a vital message to the new government that Iraq elected on December 15, 2005. Iraq's first permanent four-year parliament can only succeed if it manages both an inclusive political process and an inclusive Iraqi force development effort.

Fortunately, for all of the tensions and charges that have followed the election, there is reason to hope. More than 1,000 Sunni clerics issued a fatwa urging Sunnis to vote before the election. Yet, it is clear that the act of voting, while significant, is not a conclusive abandonment of violence, however. An effective -- and widely accepted -- ISF therefore remains a key element to protecting Iraq's new political structures. Along with the need to recruit, train, and equip the force, there exists a concurrent prerogative to assure that the ISF develops as a professional military, and an inclusive security apparatus.

This does not mean Iraqi force development can be part of a perfect world, or hope to mean Western ideals and "standards" in the near term. Counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations are necessarily brutal and violent; war is war. They also, however, are also battles for the hearts and minds of both the people where the war is fought and of the enemy. "Effectiveness" in this battle is as essential as defeating terrorists and insurgents in the field.

The effectiveness of Iraqi forces is heavily dependent on their winning such support and not mirroring the actions of Saddam Hussein's forces and regime. As similar US errors at the Abu Ghraib prison compound demonstrated all too clearly, excessive force and interrogation methods quickly become counterproductive and self-defeating even if they produce useful short-term results.

This may now be the most serious problem the Coalition and Iraq face in completing the development of Iraqi forces. In the winter of 2005, some Iraqi forces -- including commando units -- continued to use far more brutal methods in searching for, interrogating, and dealing with other Iraqis than Coalition forces were permitted to use.⁹ These abuses included their treatment of Iraqi detainees. Such actions were particularly divisive when largely Kurdish or Shiite units operated in Sunni areas.

The political dimension and impact of military, security, and police operations is not one that either Coalition or Iraqi commanders and forces can afford to ignore, even in the heat of battle. The Coalition, US, and MNSTC-I must make every effort to give the new Iraqi military, security, and police forces human rights training and the kind of respect for the rule of law necessary to win hearts and minds are vital to success. The same is true of NATO training efforts and those of other countries.¹⁰

The primary purpose of Iraqi operations is to re-forge a nation; not defeat an enemy. Efforts to create effective police and security forces, in parallel with creating effective military forces, are absolutely critical to nation building, political legitimacy, effective government, and the effort to eventually create a true civil society.

II. The Importance of the Initial Failures in Grand Strategy and Strategic Assessment: The Background to the Effort to Create Effective Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces

The US, its Coalition allies, and all nations interested in stability operations, nation-building, and peace have a great deal to learn from the mistakes the US made before, during, and after the battle to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Experts disagree on many aspects of the Iraq War, including the ways which America's strategic mistakes led to the initial failures in creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces.

Failures occurred in spite of the fact that the US had spent well over \$5.8 billion to develop these forces by May 2005, and the President had to request another \$5.7 billion to accelerate their development.¹¹

There is broad agreement, however, among virtually all analysts who have examined the way in which the US went to war in Iraq, and dealt with its Coalition allies and Iraqi exile groups, that the US did not properly prepare for stability and nation building operations, and failed to anticipate the threat of terrorism and insurgency.

These failures should not have happened. Anyone who participated in any part of the interagency studies the US government conducted before the war heard many warnings from serving officials and military, ex-officials and military, intelligence officers, and area experts that nation building and instability could present major risks. This included intelligence warnings that Saddam Hussein's regime was preparing for insurgency and resistance if Coalition forces defeated Iraq's regular military forces and forced the regime out of Baghdad and to give up overt power.

While it may be years before the full record of this interagency effort is declassified, the Bush Administration had ample strategic and tactical warning of what might occur, much of it coming from the intelligence community and career officers in the State Department. As Secretary of State, Colin Powell communicated this message to the President and National Security Advisor on August 5, 2002:

When the United States took out the Iraqi military it would be striking a blow at the institution that held the country together. When the army cracked, the Iraqi government structure would crack and Bush would be the proud owner of 24 million people. It would take time to put a new Iraqi government in place and in the meantime the United States would be the government. It would be a multiyear commitment, which would tie up 40 percent of the US Army for years. It would, Powell said, suck the oxygen out of everything else the administration wanted to do.¹²

The administration seems to have chosen to disregard such warnings because some senior policy officials believed their vision of Iraq was far more correct than the warnings they were given.

There are also strong indications that the Administration ignored the portions of previous USCENTCOM war plans that called for stability operations and much larger force levels than the Administration choose to deploy, and that the policy cluster in the Department of Defense chose to ignore much of the advice it was given by the State Department and

intelligence community when the Department of Defense was given operational authority for stability operations in late 2002 and early 2003.

The Department of Defense then not only largely ignored the risk of terrorism and insurgency, it did little to realistically plan to create and maintain stability. It had no meaningful plans to secure government offices and maintain the process of governance. It was not organized and manned to provide local security and prevent looting, or seize exposed arms depots. The original office charged with reconstruction – the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) -- was never given significant manpower and financial resources, and its head – General Jay Garner – was initially given a three-month appointment.

The US planned to inherit stability, not achieve it, and to begin major force reductions within a few months following Saddam's fall. The preservation or creation of effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces was never a serious part of the pre-war, wartime, or immediate postwar US planning effort.

Early Warning of the Need for Effective Iraqi Forces and True Interoperability: The Polls Before the Transfer of Power

The US and Coalition were then slow to react as terrorism and insurgency became serious problems, and underestimated the scale of Iraqi resentment and hostility that occurred as a result of the invasion and the problems that followed.

The US not only failed to properly assess the growth of terrorism and insurgency during the first year following the fall of Saddam Hussein, but the US failed to react by treating the Iraqi forces it was creating as serious partners as the insurgency rose and became steadily more effective. It failed to promptly restructure its force goals and its training and equipment effort for Iraq military, security, and police forces.

The end result was a growing asymmetry in interoperability between US military forces and the new Iraqi forces as the insurgency took hold. As the data in the following chapters make clear, the US initially failed to provide minimal facilities and equipment such as body armor, communications and vehicles. While the US training teams and US commanders in the field made steadily better efforts to organize and train forces to protect themselves, the US as a whole concentrated more on manpower numbers during the fall of 2003 to the spring of 2004 than on effectiveness.

The consequences of this focus on rushing to create large numbers of lightly equipped Iraqi forces became all too clear when one considers the impact of less serious shortfalls in equipment in US forces. The US was slow to uparmor Humvees and trucks for its ground forces in December 2004, and this sharply increased US casualties. Yet the resulting debate over the equipment issued to US and Coalition forces failed to ask what equipment was being provided to Iraqi forces, although they had been a prime target of the insurgents and terrorists since late summer of 2003.

The US was equally slow to understand the political and economic impacts of failing to create effective Iraqi Forces. Polls consistently showed from June 2003 onwards that the number one concern of Iraqis was personal security for themselves and their families, and

that crime was an even larger concern than terrorism or insurgency. Concerns over jobs, medical care, and education came next, and politics lagged significantly behind. It should have been clear from the start that creating effective Iraqi police for local security and to fight crime were as critical as creating Iraqi security forces to takeover counterinsurgency missions, and removing or minimizing the signs of the Coalition as “occupiers.”

The patterns in such polls may be summarized as follows:

- First poll conducted in Iraq in August 2003 by Zogby International, revealed that just over 50 percent of Iraqis felt that the U.S. will “hurt” Iraq over the next five years and that a slightly higher number thought “democracy is a Western way of doing things and it will not work here.” *Some 31.6 percent felt that Coalition Forces should leave within six months; 34 percent said within one year; and 25 percent within two years.* In addition, just fewer than 60 percent felt that Iraq should determine its political future alone and without the help of the Coalition.¹³
- Some of these findings were substantiated by a poll conducted in May 2004 by BBC, ABC News, the German network ARD and NHK in Japan. Among these: while more than half said that life was better a year ago under Saddam, “only 25 per cent expressed confidence in the US/UK occupation forces and 28 per cent in both Iraq’s political parties and the CPA.”¹⁴
- USA Today/CNN/Gallop polls published in April 2004 revealed further developments in Iraqi perceptions of U.S. policy, presence and operations. *Among these was that “53 percent say they would feel less secure without the Coalition in Iraq, but 57 percent say the foreign troops should leave anyway”, while 71 percent of the respondents identified Coalition troops as “occupiers.”*¹⁵
- In the 29 April 2004 USA Today poll cited earlier, many Iraqis considered American troops to be arrogant and insensitive:
 - 58 percent said [Coalition Forces] soldiers conduct themselves badly or very badly;
 - 60 percent said the troops show disrespect for Iraqi people in searches of their homes, and 42 percent said U.S. forces have shown disrespect toward mosques;
 - 46 percent said the soldiers show a lack of respect for Iraqi women; and
 - 11 percent of Iraqis say Coalition Forces are trying hard to restore basic services such as electricity and clean drinking water.
- US/Oxford polls show 78 percent of Iraqis had no confidence in Coalition forces in October 2003 and 81 percent in June 2004 – and this figure included the Kurds.

“Disbanding” Iraqi Forces

Some aspects of the initial nation-building effort did much to create a climate in which insurgency and terrorism could flourish. The US initially did little to create the kind of Iraqi forces that Iraqis wanted and the Coalition needed. The CPA announced that it was dissolving the former regime’s military and security forces on May 23, 2003, and plans to create a new set of national self-defense capabilities for Iraq.¹⁶ This decision, however, did little more than recognize a fait accompli.

US forces had shattered much of the Republican Guard force and regular army in the south. Coalition airpower used some 18,000-guided air-to-surface munitions, and thousands of unguided weapons, most against military targets. Imagery of Iraqi military

facilities shows that many were essentially destroyed during the fighting, and others were looted, re-looted, and looted again – often to the point of being totally unusable.

Most of the regular forces were dependent on conscripts and had collapsed because of mass desertions. The heavier units in the regular army were less dependent on conscription, but had been hit hard in the war, and were largely ineffective and suffered from both desertions and massive looting. The Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard units had been decisively defeated in the field and were too politicized to preserve. Additionally, much of the Iraqi police vanished during the collapse of virtually every aspect of governance. Few facilities survived intact, most equipment was looted, and what remained was generally unsuited to the needs of forces that could serve a post-Saddam Iraq.

No one who did not overfly Iraqi military and police installations and bases after the war, or who did actually walk through some of their remains, can appreciate just how badly looted they were. With a few exceptions, like some of the facilities at Taji, the armed forces not only were gone, they had nothing to come back to. The police that did return often had empty buildings with no arms, furniture, communications, or vehicles. Moreover, many facilities simply did not suit a democratic and volunteer force. Barracks and other facilities paid minimal attention to the needs of enlisted men and other ranks.

This is the context in which the decision to disband Iraq's forces must be judged. Saddam fell from power on April 9, 2003, and the Iraqi military, security, and police forces had largely disintegrated by mid-April 2003. The decision to formally disband the Ba'ath Party was taken on May 16, 2003 -- more than a month after the fall of Saddam Hussein and the virtual disintegration of Iraqi forces. Ambassador Paul Bremer did not issue Order No. 2, the Dissolution of Entities, which "abolished" the Iraqi army along with the security forces and several other ministries, until March 23, 2003.

Ambassador Bremer, the former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), described this situation as follows in early 2005. He stated:

Recently some Monday morning quarterbacks have questioned the Coalition's decision to "disband" Saddam's army and bar senior Ba'athists from government jobs after we liberated Iraq. These were the right decisions. They served an important strategic purpose and recognized realities on the ground.... Conservative estimates are that Saddam's security and intelligence forces killed at least 300,000 of their fellow countrymen.... During my time in Iraq, Iraqi citizens from all over the country, from every sect, religion and ethnic group, repeatedly praised the de-Ba'athification and disbanding of Saddam's security forces as the Coalition's most praiseworthy decisions.... There was a practical side to our decision, too. By the time Baghdad and Tikrit fell, the Iraqi army had already disbanded itself. There was not a single organized Iraqi military unit intact after mid-April 2003...In many military bases at Liberation not a single brick was left standing on another. No base was usable without major repairs.¹⁷

Disbanding the Corrupt and Incapable

Force quality is also a key issue. Many Sunni Iraqis talk about the competence of Iraqi forces, and how well they would have performed if they had been preserved and recalled. Anyone who watched Iraqi forces operate during the Iran-Iraq War, however, became aware of the deep ethnic and sectarian divisions in Iraqi forces, and that the regime often punished competence and professionalism rather than rewarded it.

The uprisings following the Gulf War triggered a continuing series of purges in the Iraqi military that lasted until Saddam's fall, while a vast number of promotions inflated the ranks of senior officers and filled slots with loyalists and incompetents. The security services grew in size and ruthlessness, the regular police were kept largely a passive tool of the regime, and promotion of all the military, security, and police forces increasingly became a matter of loyalty. Regular military forces became tied down in garrison duty along the Iranian border and opposite the Kurdish security zone in the North and declined sharply in capability. Units like the Republican Guards and security forces were used to attack the Kurds, and in an enduring low-level civil struggle with the Shi'ite resistance in the south.

The "culture" of the Iraqi military was a key problem. Junior officers were trained not to show initiative and others failed to actively support their men or "lead forward." Aggressive and active mid-rank officers were seen as a threat by their superiors. Non-commissioned officers had little status or training and were not the key partners of their officers. Conscripts were given minimal training and support and sometimes were subjected to harsh conditions. The active army of 1980-1988 had become a politicized, barracks-oriented force by 2003. Illiteracy, poor physical condition, and appointment by nepotism and favoritism were common in both the military and police. Tests and exams were minimal. Men who supposedly had training were often passed or promoted because of influence or to avoid "shaming" a failure. Poor officers stayed on indefinitely.

As one senior US expert put it, "The police ranked 11th out of Iraq's 11 security services, and had minimal pay, training, and equipment. They feared any form of interference with government activity, and were largely passive and station-bound. Investigations and prosecution had to be paid for by complainants coming to the station, and follow-on investigations and prosecutions could become corrupt bidding contests between opposing sides, followed by feuds and revenge. Corruption, favoritism, and nepotism were endemic. The lack of a retirement system also meant many older police stayed on indefinitely and "phantoms" stayed on police lists after their death to pay their widows."

The end result was that far too many of the military, security, and police personnel that served under Saddam lacked the training, leadership, and motivation to act as the kind of military, security, and police forces Iraq needed in the post-Saddam era. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, speaking on this issue, commented that "...the units that existed—previous to the invasion are not ones that were trained in the type of skills that we necessarily prize, to include a respect for the lives of civilians and civilian property."¹⁸

There were still some outstanding Iraqi leaders and force elements in each service, but the vast majority were poorly trained, lacked effective leadership and organization, and were designed more to protect the regime – at the cost of corruption, self-interest, and inertia – and not the nation. The services were vastly overstaffed with senior officers who were used to getting privileges, but not to leading and taking initiative.

The “De-Ba’athification and De-Saddamization” of Iraqi Forces

Nevertheless, the decision in May 2003 to abolish the Ba’ath Party and then to remove former regime officials; disband military, security and police personnel; and remove other supporters – including many teachers -- as parts of a postwar “de-Ba’athification” program did have serious effects.

Many Iraqis felt (and still feel) that Ambassador Bremer and the CPA chose to carry out “de-Ba’athification” in sweeping and all-inclusive ways that included large numbers of middle ranking Level 3 and Level 4 Ba’ath members. This meant many Iraqi’s who had had no choice other than to go along with Saddam’s regime or join the Ba’ath Party could not serve in the government or be politically active. It meant they were excluded from service in the Iraqi forces until this decision was largely reversed in October 2005, in an effort to include more Sunnis and weaken support for the insurgency. It sent the message that many Sunnis and other innocent former “Ba’athists” were being excluded from a role in the new Iraq. The fact that so many other jobs -- like that of teacher -- were included in “de-Ba’athification,” further reinforced Iraqi fears and concerns.

Ambassador Bremer was determined to ensure that his tenure in Iraq “be marked by clear, public, and decisive steps to reassure Iraqis that we [the US] are determined to eradicate Saddamism.” The de-Ba’athification order had actually been drafted by Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith’s staff and “approved by Bush when he was briefed on it in March [2003].”¹⁹ It was clear to Iraqis at the time that the US and CPA were reacting to pressure from Shi’ite exile leaders like Ahmed Chalabi, and many saw this as a sign that Sunnis would no longer have a major role in governing Iraq. The end result was to further alienate an already hostile Sunni leadership, and make Sunnis reluctant to participate in either the new political process or the Iraqi forces.

One senior leader in the Coalition effort to create effective Iraqi forces described the impact as follows:

The disenfranchisement of the Sunnis through the process of de-Ba’athification and the dissolution of the Police Force and the Army was a mistake. The Sunnis, in particular, were left with nothing and without hope having been the ruling elite. Opinion on the Army is very much divided but my own view is that we should have put what we could in cantonments – no matter how smashed up they were –, fed them, provided tentage, generators whatever – purged the upper ranks and run a subtle info ops campaign that did not show them as comprehensively outmaneuvered and defeated but one that had eventually surrendered. All very easy with hindsight of course but relevant in relation to what we might do in future conflicts.

These problems were compounded by the near-collapse of the Iraqi economy, the looting of most military and police facilities, mass desertions of the military and police during and immediately after the war, and the loss of the government and military jobs upon which many Sunnis depended. The CPA was then slow to offer former military and security officers retirement or pay, and slow to make good on the offer. There was little understanding that the impact would be far worse in the Sunni areas where such jobs, government investment, and military industries virtually dominated the local economy.

In the process, the CPA and Interim Iraqi Government (IIG) disbanded all of the special security and intelligence services, and excluded many competent former Ba’ath and

career military and police officers and personnel from eligibility for the new military and security services. This again included many innocent Iraqis who had simply gone along with the former regime to survive or because of the very national threats that developed during the Iran-Iraq War. While the overall manning of Iraqi leadership cadres consisted of timeservers, uniformed bureaucrats, and men seeking their own advantage, there were still many in these cadres that had served with honor in previous wars. It also seems to have been conducted in a way where Arab Sunnis were much more likely to be purged, or blocked from jobs, because of connections to the Ba'ath than Arab Shi'ites and involved at least some corruption on the part of the Iraqi officials involved.

The end result was a legacy that created serious and interrelated problems when it came to creating post-war military, security, and police forces:

- Most of Iraq's pre-invasion police came back after the invasion, but far too many were timeserving instruments of regime security with little training and competence and who were largely passive. Its security forces were much better trained and equipped, but largely active instruments of regime repression. They did not go along to get along; they were key parts of the problem, but they were both the only forces trained for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism and largely Sunni elements trained to be insurgents once excluded from power. The end result was that untrained police had to support the military, while trained ex-intelligence and security personnel were pushed into becoming insurgents.
- The armed forces had many elements that were effective and were not regime loyalists, and that could later be recruited into the police and security forces. They had effectively disintegrated during the war, so they were a pool of talent to draw upon – rather than a disbanded force – but they were keys to creating effective forces, avoiding a Sunni-Shi'ite split, and avoiding driving another group of skilled manpower into the insurgency.
- De-Ba'athification blocked the US teams developing the military, security, and police forces from recruiting many of the most experienced leaders and military personnel for much of the first year of the occupation. Some of the best and most qualified personnel could not be recruited.
- This, in turn, ensured there were few stable unit elements with proven leaders and personnel, and no amount of training and equipment can substitute for experienced leadership and the level of unit integrity that creates mutual loyalty among those assigned. Essentially, the US and Iraqi government ended up emphasizing sheer throughput in terms of numbers of personnel going through a grossly inadequate training system without bothering to give them any place to go.
- The near collapse of much of Iraq's economy following the invasion, coupled to the disbanding of the armed forces and much of the government, put tremendous pressure on young men to join the armed forces, security forces, and police regardless of their personal goals and ambitions. It then placed them in a society undergoing political, economic, and social turmoil – as well as a society experiencing a growing insurgency. Inevitably, large numbers of men joined for all the wrong reasons, often had no incentive to take risks, did not take training and discipline any more seriously than they were forced to, focused on family and local problems, and had little reason to be loyal. Some became informers or supporters of the insurgency.

It is interesting to note, however, that the Iraqi military and police officials and officers who serve in the new Iraqi forces and generally less critical of the “disbanding” of the military and security forces by the CPA than other Iraqis. Most had lived with the real-world shortcomings in Saddam's forces and acknowledge that the war, desertions, and looting left few units and facilities intact, and that most were not worth preserving. They do not blame the CPA for “disbanding” Iraqi forces as much as they blame “de-

Ba'athification" for failing to retain key personnel or anticipate would happen to those with no political and career options.

Many of the Iraqis involved in creating Iraq's new forces during 2003-2004 also acknowledge that Shi'ite exile elements in the interim government had considerable responsibility for the pressure they put on the CPA to take a hard line stand on De-Ba'athification – and did not simply blame US officials. Such Iraqis also felt that the Interim Government made a major error in not reaching out to Ba'ath and Sunni elements who had had to go along with Saddam's regime, and in allocating positions in fixed shares to Shi'ite Arabs, Kurds, and Sunni Arabs, rather than trying to create a national government.

The Initial Ideological Approach to Creating Iraqi Military, Security and Police Forces

The US did more than fail to plan for an effective effort to secure the country and develop effective Iraqi forces before or during the invasion. It failed to deal with the risk, and then with the reality, of a growing insurgency effort for nearly a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein. This delay was largely due to the fact that a relatively small group of "neoconservatives," rather than the interagency process, dominated planning for the stability and nation building phases following the fall of Saddam Hussein, and that the Department of Defense was put in charge of the operation.

The initial US approach to dealing with the Iraqi Army and security forces was shaped largely by ideologues that had an unrealistic grand strategy for transforming Iraq and the Middle East. Their strategic assessments of Iraq were wrong in far more important ways than their assessment of the potential threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

They were fundamentally wrong about how the Iraqi people would view the US invasion. They were wrong about the problems in establishing effective governance, and they underestimated the difficulties in creating a new government that was legitimate in Iraqi eyes. They greatly exaggerated the relevance and influence of Iraqi exiles, and greatly underestimated the scale of Iraq's economic, ethnic, and demographic problems.

They did not foresee the impact of the war on America's overall structure of alliances and world opinion. They fundamentally misread the linkages between the invasion of Iraq, the Arab-Israel conflict, and the fighting in Afghanistan. They did not foresee its impact on the Middle East and the Islamic world, the resulting decline in support for the war on terrorism, or the risks that Islamists inside and outside Iraq could become part of an insurgent threat. They failed to see that Iraqi Shi'ites might welcome the Coalition as liberators, but not as occupiers, were almost certain to divide into factions, and could present another insurgent risk.

They saw military action by the Department of Defense as a workable substitute for effective coordination and action by all the agencies of government. Above all, they failed to see the importance of serious stability operations and nation building; they did not plan effectively for the risk of insurgency; and they assumed that they were so right that America's allies and the world would soon be forced to follow their lead.

The end result was that they had no practical grand strategy beyond Saddam's fall, and their strategic assessments were slow to improve thereafter. Many "neoconservatives" wasted a year after the Coalition's apparent military victory, living in a state of ideological denial. The US effectively occupied Iraq as proconsuls, rather than rushing to create a legitimate government and effective Iraqi military and security forces. US aid efforts faltered in a mix of uncoordinated, ideologically driven plans to make the Iraqi economy "American," and bureaucratic fumbling. They failed to rush aid in where it might have bought acceptance and stability – a fault only corrected much later when the US military implemented effective emergency aid as part of its Commander's Emergency Relief Program (CERP), and the State Department and Defense Department restructured aid plans to provide quick reaction funds and reprogram money to meet urgent needs.

No analysis of the successes and failures in creating effective Iraqi forces can ignore the impact of these failures. What realism there is in the present US approach to the "war after the war" in Iraq was thrust upon the "neoconservatives" managing the Iraq War after the fall of Saddam Hussein. Ironically, to the extent the US may be evolving a workable approach to a grand strategy, that evolution has been shaped largely by the people that "neoconservatives" chose to ignore in going to war in the first place. The adaptation to the political and military realities in Iraq has come from military, State Department, and intelligence professionals.

Problems in the Culture of the US Military

The US military, however, must share part of the blame. The US military talked "asymmetric war," but it planned and organized for conventional war. It entered the Iraq War focused on conventional combat, high-technology warfare, and short wars in which the use of decisive force was assumed to produce decisive results.

At almost every level, it failed to tie warfighting to a grand strategy in any practical terms. It failed to learn from the lessons of being unprepared for conflict termination in the Gulf War of 1991, and the practical problems of nation building in Bosnia and Kosovo. Its leadership largely saw stability operations, nation building, creating security, and dealing with local military and security forces as secondary missions that diverted and locked down scarce military resources.

While some senior US officers in Washington did warn that large occupation forces would be needed, this warning seems to have been more an argument for large war fighting forces, or a counter to the enthusiasm of ideologues, than the result of detailed analysis and planning. In general, the military, as well as the civilians, did not plan for successful conflict termination or stability operations, and it focused on early withdrawal rather than the range of missions that might occur.

The US military did not plan for an effective occupation of the country and never planned for extensive civil-military operations or to create the kind of area expertise, military police, and human intelligence (HUMINT) resources it might need. It focused on the military dimension of battle, and forgot the fundamental principle that all victory is ultimately political in character. In doing so, it seems to have ignored or put aside at least

some of the prior contingency planning by USCENTCOM, the command with real expertise in the area.

US officers indicate that the operational plan called for rapid withdrawals from Iraq after Saddam's fall – with some plans calling for a rapid reduction to 30,000 troops – rather than for an effective stability and security effort. It is also all too clear that the US military did not plan either to provide US forces training and equipment for counterinsurgency missions, or to provide the kind of training cadres and facilities necessary to help Iraqi forces.

The US military – like most of the world's militaries – focuses on its own priorities and force developments. Its exceptional level of professionalism and technology, however, often has the negative effect of making it reluctant to cooperate fully with allies and to develop true interoperability. When it does, it tends to do so only with proven, highly professional partners like Britain and Australia.

Some US field commanders did see the need to establish “interoperability” with the Iraqis, particularly in gaining local political support, HUMINT, translation skills, etc. A few saw that the counterinsurgency, security, and police missions required a different kind of interoperability that would make the development of Iraqi forces critical to nation building, security, and counterinsurgency missions. The senior US military leadership in both Iraq and Washington did not see the need for such interoperability at the start of the occupation, however, and it took roughly a year of developing insurgency to make senior US military commanders in Washington and the Gulf region understand the essential importance of allies. In the process, they repeated many of the mistakes made in Vietnam and Lebanon – forgetting, if they ever knew – the lessons of those operations.

At the civil-military level, the top leadership of the US military failed to establish effective links to the civil occupation authority in the Office of Reconstruction & Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) before, during, and immediately after the fighting that toppled Saddam Hussein. It then tolerated, if not encouraged, the poor relations between Bremer, the CPA, and General Sanchez and the field commanders for the year that followed. The lack of interagency cooperation in Washington had its mirror image in the field, made worse by two leaders who proved unable to develop an effective working relationship on a personal or staff level.

These military failures must be kept in perspective. They might well have been avoided if it had not been for the more fundamental failure of the interagency process to coordinate the efforts of the Department of Defense with those of the State Department and other civilian agencies lies with the President, his National Security Advisor, the Secretary of Defense, and the Secretary of State. There is no question, however, that the military did not see the need for “jointness” at the civil-military level in the field, that this inevitably complicated virtually every aspect of the effort to create effective Iraqi forces and to link the effort to create them to the effort to create effective Iraqi governance, and to implement key aspects of the US aid program.

Failures at the US Advisory and Civilian Assistance Level: The Problem of the Security Forces and Police

Other kinds of failures took place at a different level on the civilian side of the aid process, and failures that contributed to training the wrong kinds of forces and support for the insurrection. The US and Coalition failed to create any meaningful plans for effective paramilitary and police forces, to create effective civilian structures in the Ministry of the Interior, or to developing the police and specialized police forces that Iraq needed. The State Department failed to staff the advisors that were needed or to understand the kind of security and police forces that would be needed.

Stability operations require strong and effective police forces, even in climates where there is no political instability or terrorist and insurgent threat. Creating such forces created special problems in a country where Saddam Hussein's legacy had left so little to build upon. In practice, almost all of Iraq's elite police and law enforcement functions had been concentrated in the security services the regime used to protect itself and repress the Iraqi people. These functions were largely decoupled from the regular police, which were corrupt, passive, badly undertrained and educated, and often physically incapable or overage.

As a report by the Inspector Generals of the State Department and Department of Defense notes,²⁰

Three levels of police existed under the previous regime: Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), Assistant Officers, and Officers. At the most basic level, NCOs possessed little formal education, normally only completing primary school. When hired, they were trained within their provincial area in an unstructured program that could last up to three months. Standards and length of training varied widely from province to province. Upon graduation, NCOs were responsible for most of the daily contact with Iraqi citizens. NCOs were the first responders to calls for service and were responsible for dealing with disputes and for the maintenance of public order.

At the mid-grades, Assistant Officers completed secondary school education, usually from the Police High School, and then underwent on-the-job training. They were normally assigned to various administrative functions within the Iraqi Police Force. They would only respond to serious crimes and only in a supervisory capacity. Their duties usually consisted of administrative work for the Officer corps. Officers were also secondary school graduates, but were further educated at the Police Professional College in Baghdad, undergoing a three-year course of instruction. Upon graduation, the Officers received the equivalent of a Bachelor's degree in police science; however, the curriculum was steeped in military doctrine and training. After graduation, the academy Officers were posted around the country and normally served in the assigned region for the rest of their careers. Traditional training in leadership, management, and command and staff functions was not institutionalized.

...even more than the military, the Iraqi police during the Saddam Hussein era were perceived to be corrupt and brutal implementers of oppression. Accordingly, an early decision of the CPA was to cashier police officers closely tied to the former regime. Other members of the IPS abandoned their duties or were casualties of the conflict. Only about 30,000, mostly low-ranking police remained on duty as a residual force—a number clearly insufficient to enforce law and order even had stability been established...

The Iraqi police initially were seen as a minor aspect of the security mission, and largely in terms of training a police force with a respect for the rule of law and human rights. The

Iraqi police largely deserted in April 2003 during the fighting. Many voluntarily returned to duty during May 2003, but the CPA made no real effort to vet them or review their performance. The CPA's Director of Police was tasked with providing rush training to get as many police on the streets as quickly as possible with no real vetting.²¹

It took the Coalition well over a year to realize that the police and security forces were critical to stability, and any form of effective Iraqi governance and reconstruction. The Coalition sometimes found itself reacting to an Iraqi lead in creating elite counter-insurgency security forces, and training the regular police for a combat mission that went well beyond ordinary police work. Even then, priority was given to the military although the police and security forces involved substantially more manpower, and no defeat of the terrorists or insurgents could be secured without their lasting presence.

A study by the Inspectors General of the Departments of State and Defense indicates that,²²

The deficit of policemen was only one of the myriad problems that confronted Coalition planners after the June 2004 transition from the CPA to the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG). More vexing is the growth of terrorism and insurgency that continue to challenge both Coalition military forces and the nascent Iraqi military and police forces. Faced with this situation, Coalition officials perceived a primary objective should be the fastest possible creation of a sizeable police force.

... As a result of the conflict in 2003 and the ensuing state of chaos and looting, much of the IPS infrastructure was destroyed or badly damaged. Many of the IPs who served during the Saddam Hussein era abandoned their positions, were casualties of war, or were cashiered.

... Consistent with the CPA goal of erasing troublesome aspects of the Hussein regime, command and control of the remnants of the police force were decentralized. This further diluted cohesion and effectiveness of the residual force...The CPA decision to cleanse the political system of Hussein sympathizers—notably, the 'de-Ba'athification' effort—effectively decapitated the IPS of its standing leadership. Even though some former police officers have been reincorporated into the force, it was necessary to start almost from scratch to build a new police force. The result was a 'bottom-up' approach with primary emphasis on minimal basic training.

...On May 2, 2003, the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA—the predecessor of the CPA) called for police in Baghdad to return to work. Coalition force commanders made similar announcements for secured areas outside the capital. In June 2003, the CPA and MOI issued a directive that all police officers had to return to work no later than July 3. Those failing to do so were subject to immediate termination. According to International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) officials, about 38,000 had returned to the IPS as of July.

...To bolster the force, an additional 30,000 police were recruited by Coalition Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7) and the Major Subordinate Commanders (MSCs). The driving objective was to get "boots on the ground." In doing so, the CPA enunciated minimal requirements for entry into the IPS...Subsequently, to meet MNSTC-I training quotas, two patterns of recruiting evolved. Iraqis did most of the recruiting in the Baghdad area. Coalition forces (working through the major subordinate commands or MSCs) were in charge of recruiting in the rest of the country. Iraqi recruiters appear to have enforced minimum requirements as enunciated by CPA, while the MSCs sent to JIPTC some recruits who did not meet those minimum standards.

...the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) took the first steps to assist the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in developing an Iraqi Police Service (IPS) that would be a respected force based on public trust and confidence. Creating this force from the brutal and corrupt remnants of the Saddam regime police would probably have required dissolution of the entire force and slow rebuilding

into a force that echoed the new democratic ideals of Iraq. The security situation, however, dictated rapid infusion of police into the cities and governorates, a requirement that mandated an accelerated training program. To optimize required quantity and equally important quality, CPA designed a program based on the International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) “Kosovo” model that would give police recruits eight weeks of training. They planned to complement the eight-week basic program with a structured on-the-job training program guided by an experienced mentor.

In order to meet the capacity required, two academies were established: the Baghdad Public Safety Academy (more recently renamed the Baghdad Police College) and an academy in Jordan, outside Amman, the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC). Several regional academies were subsequently added. The basic training instructional program consisted of two distinct, but integrated, components: academy training and field training. New police recruits would spend two months at one of the academies, training in modern policing methods. New cadets would receive 320 standardized hours of intensive education in modern policing techniques. The basic course would include academic and practical training in firearms (pistols), defensive tactics, and emergency vehicle operation. The academic instruction also included policing in a democracy, constitutional framework, human rights, use of force, police ethics and code of conduct, gender issues, community policing, traffic accident management, etc.

For recruits who completed the academy courses, the concept prescribed subsequent participation in a structured field training program, focusing on the practical application of the coursework and seeking further development of proactive, service-oriented policing skills. During this probationary period, newly graduated cadets were to be paired one-on-one with a senior Iraqi Police Service (IPS) Field Training Officer (FTO), who would function as a mentor. International Police Advisors (later renamed International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) would oversee the program. The concept consisted of four phases conducted over a six-month period involving daily, weekly, and monthly evaluations by senior IPS FTOs.

The CPA plan relied upon building a foundation in the classroom, but also counted on the structured and mentored training that was to occur in the months following graduation. In March 2004, the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) was established, and an initial Field Training Coordinator Program was implemented locally in Baghdad. Unfortunately, the deteriorating security environment, coupled with a dearth of experienced IPS and insufficient numbers of International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs), precluded full implementation of the mentoring program.

At the outset of the CPA effort to build IPS capacity, the assumption—even to some extent, the reality—was that training could be molded within a rapidly stabilizing political and security environment. The unexpected virulence and scope of subsequent terrorism and insurgency induced changes in the program, but such modifications... lagged the ‘street reality’ in Iraq.

A CPA decision to decentralize command and control of the IPS has had unintended consequences. Decentralization was consistent with the intent to disperse political power. Commendable in concept, the emerging result within the IPS is a pattern of fiefdoms, subject to political machinations. An example of this political maneuvering is the situation of competing chiefs of police in Najaf where one responds to the provincial governor, the other to the MOI.

Pay problems have been an equally troubling result of decentralization. Under the CPA designed system, much of the central government’s funding is allocated to the provincial governors. Thereafter, the monies are sub-allocated to respective elements, such as the police. Accordingly, each provincial chief of police controls his share of sub-allotted funds. Allegations of mismanagement and corruption in the disbursement of pay for IPs, equipment purchases, etc., are credible.

In practice, a great many men were rushed into service in the new police forces with minimum vetting, inadequate training and equipment, a failure to reorganize the regular

police to make them functional, and no controls on corruption and “phantom” personnel. Coordination between the Department of State and Department of Defense training efforts, and the newly forming Iraqi Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense was poor at best. The flow of Coalition aid was grossly inadequate, and Iraq did not have a budget to make the new force work.

The police were not properly trained, equipped, or facilitated for counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions, and little serious effort was made to add the elite forces needed for these missions because of the fear they would end up being the same kind of repressive tools of the regime that they were under Saddam Hussein. It was not until April 2004 that the Coalition fully recognized that the field training that was originally planned could not deal with the insurgency and terrorism, and even then the Coalition was, “reluctant to increase the length of basic training because of the urgent need to build IPS capacity and get policemen on the streets.”²³

State Department, USAID, and Department of Justice aid efforts were organized around the idea that regular police forces should be created as soon as possible to replace reliance on outside forces and the armed forces. The US Congress also pressed hard to keep the US military role in training paramilitary forces to a minimum, largely as a legacy of problems in Latin America and elsewhere during the Cold War. This reflected a legitimate concern with the human rights abuses that can occur when military or paramilitary forces become involved in police functions.

According to the GAO, it was not until May 2004, that a national security presidential security directive was issued that gave CENTCOM the responsibility of directing all US government efforts to organize, train, and equip Iraqi security force, which led to the Multi-National Security Training Command-Iraq, operating under MNF-I, being given a clear lead on all Coalition efforts.²⁴

In several critical instances, the US did not listen to its own advisors in the field, even as the problems of crime, terrorism, and insurgency continued to grow. According to research by Robert M. Perito, the Department of Justice sent a team from its International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICTAP) to Iraq in May 2003. It also focused on creating a conventional police force, not the problems of terrorism, insurgency, and mass organized crime. It did recognize that the Iraqi police could not function effectively, and called for the deployment of some 6,600 international police advisors, with 360 police trainers in a police academy, and a total of a 2,500 man international police force organized into 10 units to support coalition military forces in reaching stability and training Iraqis.²⁵

A Bush Administration review of these recommendations, however, felt such requirements were exaggerated and they were largely put aside. Similarly, the White House deferred a State Department recommendation for a 1,000-person team until fall – by which time the insurgency had become a serious problem. Action then had low priority. US police advisors were obtained on a contract basis from DynCorp for a 500-person force, were precluded from actual police action, and did not begin to arrive until the spring of 2004. There were only 283 deployed in June 2004, and the rise in attacks discouraged both US recruiting and any allied presence.

Ultimately, a small 6-person Department of Justice team was asked to remain under the direction of Bernard Kerik, the former police commissioner of New York, working for the Ministry of Interior in isolation from the efforts in the Ministry of Defense. The US team not only had responsibility for creating a virtually new Iraq Police Service (IPS), but Iraq's firemen and emergency response forces, and border police – a total of roughly 100,000 men. Equipment deliveries were also slow and inadequate: Only about half the short term requirement for weapons, vehicles, and communications equipment had actually be delivered by June 2004.²⁶

Some other aspects of the police training effort were more effective, although it should be stressed that such efforts initially trained police only for operations in a permissive environment, where even serious organized crime was not seen as a threat. (Some estimates put the level of criminal violence as so high that it killed some 10,000 Iraqis between April 2003 and April 2004.)²⁷ The training efforts did not include effective vetting, provide proper equipment, get rid of large numbers of incompetent officers, or adapt from failures. Many illiterate, physically weak, overage, and corrupt personnel were retained. The US and its allies also lacked the language skills, area skills, and manpower to perform such training functions, and could not discriminate easily between civilians, criminals, and insurgents. This sometimes led to the killing, wounding, and detainment of innocent Iraqis when US and other Coalition force did perform such functions.²⁸

A further major problem developed over time because the small Iraqi border force had never been effective, and border security had always been the function of the military, security, and intelligence forces. Most of Iraq's some 240 border "forts" were looted and abandoned during the Coalition advance, and most of the 614-man force deserted along with customs and other border officials.

There was no planning to deal with this situation, and only one man from the Department of Justice Police advisory team could initially be assigned. The Department of Homeland Security was forced to rush in a team to provide a few days of training for immigration and custom procedures to a 30-person US military team. Many of the US military involved in immigration training had only about three hours of formal instruction and no language or area skills. As the insurgency developed, priority was given to military and police training and efforts to create an effective, new Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) under the Ministry of Interior did not begin until the late spring of 2004.

The US police advisors did succeed in developing a training course for the Iraqi police called the Transition and Integration Program (TIP). This was a three-week course for rehired police that came back into service in large numbers in May-June 2003. It was administered by US Military Police and gave some 30,000-40,000 limited training by December 2004, although a large part of the training was more in human rights and the rule of law than modern police work. It is also not clear how many of those credited with attending the course actually attended.

In December 2003, a Department of Justice approved program began to function at the Jordan International Police Academy in Jordan, based to some extent on a much longer sixteen week course developed for the Kosovo Police Service School. The eight-week

course pushed some 2,500 recruits through every month, and did so with minimal vetting and examination of qualifications, and sometimes graduating personnel that neither met course standards nor fully attended the entire course.

They then received no follow-up training, and efforts to create a field training program using DynCorp's police advisors were not put into practice because of the rising security threat. The end result was that 120,000 men were recruited back into the police, at least 30,000 of which were either unqualified or simply took pay (if they actually existed), and the government then had to offer retirement and other incentives to get rid of many of the police who had been so rapidly recruited. One result was a \$60 million buyout program to cut the size of the police force by 25 percent -- a program that came to involve an additional element of favoritism and corruption.²⁹

This inadequate approach to nation building would have been unworkable at any time, and was little more than a disaster when there already were major threats to the police from militias, insurgents, organized terrorists, and large criminal elements. The transition to stability requires well-armed and well-protected security forces in large numbers that can coordinate directly with the military and handle serious threats. Trying to create regular police forces is a recipe for disaster or constant reliance on the military – a lesson that became brutally clear in the Balkans and Afghanistan long before the US became involved in Iraq.

Creating additional light guard forces like the Facilities Protection Service (FPS) was treated as a low level task that was as important in terms of employing Iraqis as creating effective units. The police and the bulk of the security forces were given grossly inadequate training, equipment, facilities, transport, and protection, and with a lack of the kind of structured leadership and emphasis on “unit integrity” necessary to equip police units to protect themselves and fight.

The end result was to waste nearly a year until police and security force training were better integrated with the military training effort and the US military advisory team was given responsibility for planning the kind of security and police force Iraq needed—the kind of forces which the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior and its initial set of US civilian advisors were incapable of planning and creating. It then was to leave General Petraeus and the Iraqi government with a legacy of vast numbers of men with few real qualifications, the wrong kind of training, and that had been recruited without proper vetting and often without proper regard to even elementary qualifications like physical condition and literacy. In the case of the Ministry of the Interior, these problems remained so serious that the US advisory effort had to be shifted away from the State Department, and shifted to MNSTC-I as late as October 1, 2005.

Problems in Governance and Iraq's Economy and Society

Another set of problems that contributed to the difficulties in creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces involved governance and economic and societal factors.

Effective security efforts require effective governance at every level. They require coordination at the central government level to ensure they are properly financed, given

clear direction, and that coordination takes place between the ministry leading the armed forces (Ministry of Defense) and the police and paramilitary security forces (Ministry of Interior). Effective planning and direction must take place at the regional and local levels, and more importantly, there must be local government to support, give direction to, provide effective services, and win the support of the local people.

Police and security forces can never be effective by themselves. They must serve a local government and the local population to win popular support, or they find themselves isolated and locked into a fortress and defensive mentality. They also are inherently vulnerable. They have to move, they have families, and they have relatives. In most cases, they are local. Leaving such forces vulnerable and unsupported has two major effects: it leads to constant desertions and turbulence within local forces, resulting in alliances with threat elements for self-preservation, corruption to try to buy security and status, and to cases where the security and police forces use excessive violence without really knowing who the enemy is.

In practice, there still is no effective governance in much of Iraq, and serious efforts to address these problems only began to be solved after the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) took power in June 2004. Coordination problems still exist within ministries, and between the defense, interior, and finance ministries. The central government cannot give effective direction and leadership, implement policy or react effectively to local requests, and above all move money and resources on anything like a timely basis.

Many regional and local governments are weak or ineffective. In many cases, the local government serves its own interest, and in high threat areas, the local government often simply does not function or will not confront the insurgents or other threats. Insurgent sympathizers have penetrated the government at many levels, corruption is common, and senior officials are often unwilling or reluctant to replace incompetent or corrupt subordinates until they fail so conspicuously that they create major security problems.

All of these problems were made worse, however, during the first year of Coalition occupation. The “green zone” mentality of the CPA, and its focus on Baghdad, meant that there was little effective leadership and help at the regional and local level. Some State Department and other civilians did outstanding personal work, but the US civilian teams in the field were far too small to help compensate for the lack of effective local government, or to provide the US military with the kind of support they needed in any part of the nation building and aid process. In terms of local governance and local police and security operations, the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime left a vacuum that US civilians were not available to fill and that the US military was not trained to deal with.

Criticizing Iraq forces – particularly the police and security forces – for failing to perform under these conditions is both unfair and misses virtually every relevant lesson for nation building.

The Iraqi View: Failure to Foresee Insurgency, Not Postwar Disbandment, is the Key Problem

There was no way to comprehensively survey Iraqi defense officials and officers as to their view of such developments at the time, but discussions with a number of officials and officers in 2004 do provide further insight into the problems that occurred during the initial stages of the US and Coalition effort to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces. These Iraqis are less critical of the “disbandment” and “de-Ba’athification” of the military and security forces by the CPA than outside Iraqis. They acknowledge that the war, desertions, and looting left few units and facilities intact, and that most were not worth preserving.

Some did blame “De-Ba’athification” for failing to retain key personnel or to anticipate what would happen to those with no political and career options. Many of the Iraqis involved did feel, however, that Shi’ite exile elements in the interim government had considerable responsibility for the pressure they put on the CPA to take a hard line stand on De-Ba’athification – and did not simply blame US officials. Such Iraqis also felt that the Interim Government made a major error in not reaching out to Ba’ath and Sunni elements who had had to go along with Saddam’s regime, and in allocating positions in fixed shares to Shi’ite Arabs, Kurds, and Sunni Arabs, rather than trying to create a national government.

In general, the Iraqi officials and officers involved in creating Iraqi forces saw the most serious problem behind the lack of effectiveness of Iraqi forces until late 2004 as the result of a failure on the part of the CPA and US military to anticipate the threat of a major insurgency, and to train and equip regular military, security, and police force for this mission.

They stressed that the initial goals in creating new Iraqi military and security forces were to avoid the abuses of the past and to avoid creating a threat to democracy. As a result, the pace and scale of the military effort was slow to the point of reaching only token levels. The military was being shaped as a light border defense force which would only emerge with anything approaching serious capabilities long after the Iraqis finished drafting a constitution and had successfully created a new democratic government.

Similarly, the development of police and security forces was placed under the Ministry of the Interior and little coordination took place with the military effort under the Ministry of Defense. Security forces were given minimal paramilitary and intelligence elements, and most were initially assigned to low-grade facility protection forces like the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) – the predecessor to the National Guard. The ICDC was recruited locally with minimal attention to manpower quality and given minimal equipment and facilities.

MNSTC-I does seem to have established priorities for force development in cooperation with their Iraqi counterparts and Multi-National Corps-Iraq. Iraqi needs changed as political and other facts on the ground evolved. While MNF-I did not have operational control of the ISF, the US and its allies retained enough leverage so that Iraqi military and security forces were often developed and deployed to meet the priorities and security

needs of the Coalition. This led to a lack of any cohesive follow-up to the initial training efforts, and an inevitable dependence on MNF-I forces for equipment and all forms of serious combat, service, and logistic support.

Iraqi police forces were created and recruited with minimal coordination and seen as little more than “beat cops” that required token training and equipment. In general, they were not shaped to deal with looting and Iraq’s rapidly growing crime problems, much less the problem of security.

They were created on a “helter-skelter” basis -- with little equipment and training and minimal facilities. Much of this effort occurred at local levels with little attention to manpower quality, and the Ministry of the Interior often had no serious picture of the strength of given local police forces, much less any picture of their quality and leadership.

Many police were chosen by local leaders more as a matter of patronage than as part of an effort to create effective forces, and corruption and favoritism were rampant. Vetting was little more than a “by guess and by God” effort, and little attention was paid to past training, education, and physical condition – problems that were equally serious in the ICDC/National Guard.

At a technical level, the Iraqis involved in these efforts feel that the US was far too slow to provide anything like adequate numbers of experienced personnel; to see that the police and security effort had to be coordinated with the military effort, and to understand that the mission was counterterrorism and counterinsurgency and not building conventional military and police forces. They note that most initial cadres had no knowledge of how to deal with Iraqis or a different culture, that the high levels of rotation meant that personnel did not have the necessary on the job training and personal contacts, and that US and MNSTC-I constantly changed focus and were different in each of the five major operational areas under MNSTC-I control.

The Legacy

The end result of these complex forces is that the US-led Coalition initially tried to restrict the development of Iraqi armed forces to a token force geared to defend Iraq’s borders against external aggression. It did not try to create police forces with the capability to deal with serious insurgency and security challenges. As time went on, it ignored or did not give proper priority to the warnings from US military advisory teams about the problems in organizing and training Iraqi forces, and in giving them the necessary equipment and facilities.

The US failed to treat the Iraqis as partners in the counterinsurgency effort for nearly a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein, and did not attempt to seriously train and equip Iraqi forces for proactive security and counterinsurgency missions until April 2004 – nearly a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein and two-thirds of a year after a major insurgency problem began to emerge.³⁰

Moreover, the US did not react to the immediate threat that crime and looting presented throughout Iraq almost immediately after the war, and which made personal security the

number one concern of the Iraqi people. It acted as if it had years to rebuild Iraq using its own plans, rather than months to shape the climate in which Iraqis could do it.

The Importance of Creating Effective Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces

In retrospect, the early failures of the Coalition to deal with stability operations, nation building, and the risk of insurgency, deprived its rapid military victories against Saddam Hussein of much of their meaning. They also helped create a situation where any kind of “victory” in Iraq for either the Iraqi people or the Coalition had five key elements that went well beyond any narrow definition of warfighting and conventional military operations:

- Establishing a pluralistic Iraqi government capable of both governing and providing security to the people of Iraq, and finding a new balance of political power acceptable to Arab Shi’ite, Arab Sunni, the Kurds, Turcomans, and other minorities. This means effective governance at the local, regional, and national level.
- Creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces capable of bringing security to the entire country, of eventually replacing all Coalition forces, and capable of conducting effective operations while winning the support of the vast majority of the Iraqi people.
- Providing effective aid, debt and reparations relief, and Iraqi economic reform efforts that – coupled to effective security – move the nation onto the path to stable economic development where wealth and economic growth are distributed in ways that meet the needs of all of Iraq’s people.
- Developing a new national consensus that legitimizes Iraq’s post Saddam government and social structure, and that can find a “golden mean” between the different goals and expectations of its different ethnic and religious elements.
- Finding a new balance of relationships with Iraq’s neighbors that will ensure that they do not threaten Iraq, or interfere in its affairs, while making it clear that Iraq no longer poses a threat to any neighboring state.

At the same time, it was already clear by late 2003 that building effective Iraqi military, security, and police and security forces was a critical element critical to the creation of a legitimate government in Iraq, and to giving Iraq the stability and security that was vital its political and economic development.

III. Coalition Training and Equipment Efforts: The Failures of 2003

For most of the year following Saddam's fall, the broad goal was to spend several years shaping a military designed to defend Iraq's borders. For much of that time the training was of so low priority that it was left to an uncoordinated effort by the Iraqi Ministry of Interior that lacked US support for more than the creation of regular police forces tailored to deal with civil crime.

This occurred even though it was becoming clearer and clearer that the insurgency was rapidly becoming more serious, and that much more effective Iraqi forces would be needed. A GAO report, issued in June 2004, summarizes Coalition reporting on the growth of the insurgency, its impact on the nation building and stability effort, and on the need for more Coalition (and Iraqi forces) as follows:³¹

According to U.N. reports, the security situation in Iraq began to deteriorate in June 2003. Reports from the U.N. Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq show that attacks against international organizations and the multinational force began to increase during June and July 2003. The U.N. Secretary General reported that the overall security situation had deteriorated dramatically by the end of August 2003, a month marked by the bombing of the Jordanian embassy on August 7, the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad on August 19, and the killing of an important Shi'a leader on August 29.

By September 2003, according to the U.N. Secretary General's report, Iraq had entered a new phase. All international organizations and contractors, as well as Iraqis cooperating with the CPA, were potential targets of deliberate, direct, and hostile attacks. The assessments of contractors and nongovernmental organizations with whom we met generally agreed with the U.N. assessment of these security trends.

Various U.S. and U.N. reports and data indicate that violence escalated sharply against the coalition, Iraqis cooperating with the coalition, international organizations, and international civilian aid groups and contractors in October-November 2003 and again in April-May 2004. CPA data show an extended increase in certain significant insurgent activities during those two periods, with the level of the attacks in April-May 2004 exceeding the level of attacks during October-November 2003. In April 2004, Sunni insurgents fought the multinational force in Fallujah, Ramadi, Samarra, and Tikrit, while a radical Shi'a militia attacked the force in the southern cities of Karbala, Kut, Nassiriyah, Kufa, Najaf, and Basra, as well as in part of Baghdad.

According to CPA data, the number of significant insurgent acts against the coalition declined soon after the early April escalation but then rose again in May, with the number of attacks in May exceeding the number of attacks in April.

DOD data on the number of U.S. military personnel killed or wounded due to hostile action in Iraq generally support U.N. and CPA assessments of the security situation since the declared end of major combat operations...initial increases in U.S. military casualties in June-July 2003 were followed by much more significant increases in October-November 2003 and April-May 2004. While the number of significant insurgent acts against the coalition increased from April to May, the number of U.S. military casualties declined.

Overall, according to U.N. and U.S. reports, the nature of the attacks against the coalition and its partners changed significantly from the summer of 2003 through the late spring of 2004 in terms of their targets, source, location, sophistication, and effectiveness. In general, the insurgents' targets expanded to cover almost all foreign groups operating in Iraq, whether military or civilian personnel, as well as Iraqi security forces and Iraqi political leaders viewed as collaborating with

the occupation. Further, the group of insurgents grew from former regime loyalists to include foreign terrorists, Sunni Islamic extremists, and, most recently, Shi'a radicals. The areas of instability expanded from Baghdad, the Sunni Triangle, and to a lesser extent the Kirkuk and Mosul areas that were already very unstable due to ethnic and political tensions, to include majority Shi'a areas in the south.

According to State Department public opinion polls, the majority of Iraqis remain extremely concerned about the security situation in their country. The State Department reported in early January 2004 that about 62 percent of residents in five Iraqi cities named safety and security as their greatest worry. According to a late January 2004 State Department report, Iraqis tended to fear general street crime and low-grade explosions as the greatest threats to self and family. This poll also showed that most Iraqis see the greatest threat to their country's security to be sectarian or ethnic conflict and large-scale attacks. In a later polling report published in mid-June 2004, the State Department reported that security remained the most urgent issue for residents of five Iraqi cities.

...the Secretary of Defense said in early May 2004 that there will be uncertainty in Iraq and increased attacks against the coalition, Iraqis, and the United States during the period leading up to the elections.

...In April and May 2004, the Deputy Secretary of Defense said that the multinational force was engaged in combat and a continuing war in Iraq, rather than peacekeeping as had been expected. The increase in attacks has had a negative impact on the presence and operations of international military and civilian personnel in Iraq. It has led to an increase in U.S. force levels and to a decrease in freedom of movement for international civilians working to rebuild Iraq and assist in its political transition.

As a result of the increase in violence during April 2004, the United States and the United Kingdom decided to increase their overall force levels in the country. The United States decided to maintain a force level of about 138,000 troops until at least the end of 2005, keeping about 33,000 more troops in Iraq as of May 2004 than the 105,000 troops originally planned. On May 24, 2004, the President said that if military commanders determine that they need more troops to fulfill the mission, he would send them. The following week, the United Kingdom announced that it would send an additional 370 troops to southern Iraq in response to the increased violence, bringing its total troop contribution to the multinational force to about 8,900 military personnel. This figure includes 170 engineering personnel who would deploy for 3 months to help fortify U.K. military bases and facilities in Iraq against the increased threat of mortar and rocket attacks.

...During April 2004, the United States redeployed forces from Baghdad and northern areas of Iraq to cities in the south that had come under the control of a radical Shi'a militia. The United States did so because Iraqi security forces and at least one contingent of the multinational force would not or could not fight the insurgents. For example, according to a CPA official, Iraqi police in the cities of Karbala, Najaf, and Kut collapsed in April when a radical Shi'a militia overran the cities and took control of police stations. Moreover, according to a USAID report, after heavy fighting in the city of Kut, a non-U.S. contingent of the multinational force withdrew from the city as the militia overran it.

The deteriorating security situation has also adversely affected the operations of civilian organizations in Iraq. The dangerous environment has led many to halt operations completely or to reduce activity by severely restricting staff movement around the country. No systematic data exist on the effect of these restrictions on efforts to assist in Iraq's political transition and reconstruction. Anecdotal evidence suggests, however, that the efforts overall have been scaled back.

...In general, international civilian staff have had increasingly little contact with the Iraqi people, and Iraqi staff working for the coalition, including interpreters, have been increasingly threatened for cooperating with foreign organizations. Many important reconstruction efforts had to at least temporarily cease operation. Civilian organizations that continue to operate in the country face

increased security measures for their personnel and compounds in the country. The following examples show the effect of the security situation on the operations of the CPA and supporting U.S. agencies, reconstruction contractors, international organizations, and nongovernmental aid organizations.

- Due to the unsafe security environment, the CPA and its supporting U.S. agencies have had difficulty staffing their operations, opening offices throughout the country, and providing protection for U.S. civilian personnel as they travel around the country. U.S. agencies, particularly USAID, had difficulty in attracting and retaining personnel because security concerns. In addition, according to a CPA official, as the security situation worsened during 2003, the CPA abandoned plans to fully staff offices throughout Iraq to assist in Iraq's political transition and reconstruction and instead established a much smaller field presence. Further, the CPA established stringent security measures that U.S. government staff had to follow in traveling outside the Green Zone, the coalition's "safe area" in Baghdad, thereby making it difficult for them to move around the country. In late February 2004, the Department of Homeland Security decided to stop sending teams of customs investigators to assist CPA. They could no longer do their jobs because it had become too dangerous for them to move around the country. CPA officials also stated that they were concerned about the safety of their Iraqi employees, particularly their interpreters, as insurgents had increasingly targeted them for cooperating with the coalition.
- In an April 17, 2004, document, the CPA administrator stated that lack of security is the key obstacle to reaching reconstruction objectives. Referring to the entire reconstruction program, the administrator stated that a worsened security situation would mean that projects would take longer to complete and that the kinds of projects undertaken and their costs would change to an unknown extent. Our review of selected electricity projects showed that the security situation delayed the implementation of key projects, thereby contributing to the CPA not meeting its objective of providing 6,000 megawatts of electrical generating capacity to the Iraqi people by its original goal of June 1, 2004. In late March 2004, the CPA Inspector General reported that that rising security concerns were a significant cost driver for CPA activities and contractor projects, representing at least 10 percent to 15 percent of total costs.
- The United Nations and its programs have faced significant setbacks as a result of the deteriorating security situation. Most importantly, after the attacks on the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad in August and September 2003, the U.N. Secretary General redeployed all U.N. international personnel from Baghdad, Basra, and other area offices to neighboring countries, particularly Jordan and Kuwait, where they have continued to support assistance operations inside Iraq. As of late 2004, the United Nations had not allowed most of its international personnel to return to Iraq. Although Iraqi staff continued some U.N. programs, the United Nations had to scale down or delay both ongoing activities and new initiatives. The United Nations sent three separate assessment teams to Iraq during the first half of 2004 to assist Iraqis in assessing options for forming an interim government and in preparing for national elections. The dangerous security situation forced these teams to restrict their travel around Iraq during the first half of 2004, thereby limiting their interaction with Iraqis during important political discussions about the country's future.
- In discussions during the fall of 2003 and the spring of 2004, nongovernmental organization representatives stated that the deteriorating security situation has forced numerous nongovernmental aid organizations to reduce or shut down operations in Iraq. In response to the dangerous security environment, many nongovernmental organizations and contractors that we interviewed have hired private security to provide protection for their staff and compounds. In addition, one representative emphasized his view that as

more international workers leave Iraq, insurgents will increasingly focus their efforts on killing Iraqi nationals who are seen as collaborators. U.N. officials and documents have expressed concern that the lack of security could threaten Iraq's transition toward a democratic government. According to a U.N. assessment, the lack of security may lead to major disturbances that could undermine the administration of the elections, alter the established timetable, and compromise the overall credibility of the process. By mid-April 2004, the multinational force had begun to consider how it could provide security, logistical, and other support for the elections, but the United Nations and others had not yet developed a specific plan for important tasks such as the registration of political parties, voters, and candidates or the number and locations of polling sites.

Since June 2003, the security situation has become more dangerous for international military and civilian personnel operating in Iraq and for Iraqis who work with them. Instead of engaging in post-conflict nation building, the United States and its partners have been rebuilding the country in a wartime environment. They have attempted to combat a growing insurgency through military, economic, and political measures. The deteriorating security situation, however, has generally hindered the implementation of economic reconstruction and political transition efforts.

Planning for the Wrong Forces and the Wrong Mission

In spite of such warnings, and the developments discussed in Chapter III, the Coalition continued to concentrate much of its efforts on providing the wrong mix of forces for the wrong mission. Planning for Iraqi military, security, and police forces still focused more on ensuring that they would not be a challenge to the new democratic Iraq that the CPA expected to create than on creating forces that could be effective in dealing with meaningful threats.

Virtually all of those interviewed regarding the effort to shape Iraqi forces during 2003 cite major organizational problems, and a lack of meaningful priorities, coordination and resources. One senior advisor, with extensive prior experience in working in such international efforts describes the situation as follows:

The CPA was, by some margin the most dysfunctional organization I have ever encountered – and I've worked in the UN! No one could doubt the energy, commitment and engagement by principals, managers and workers, but it was sorely lacking in any organizational rigor, central control, and clear lines of authority and responsibility. The vacuums created by CPA dysfunctionality were inevitably filled with bureaucracy, endless committees, the inept, the displaced, and those brought out of retirement. We should not underestimate how much further on we would be in Iraq if we had been organized from the beginning with a reasonably coherent organization managing the post conflict phase and equipped with the right people. This may be a harsh judgment but one that is necessary if we are to avoid making the same mistakes in the future. The CPA was, of course, created in a hurry but only because the realization that the scale and magnitude of the task was beyond a retired three-star general and the ninety days he had predicted he would be on the ground. Some of the consequences, I suspect, was that our engagement with the Iraqis suffered horribly, the info-ops campaign was a near disaster, and the political and military intent were never really synced and then executed in any meaningful sense. Clearly, personalities played a part in all of this, as did the omnipresent Washington desire for exceptionally long screwdrivers. We all have our views on the policy errors and cock ups - as each have their advocates and antagonists (e.g., disbanding the Iraqi army, extent of de-Ba'athification, enough troops for the job, funding mechanisms, war-fighting versus counter insurgency campaigns etc.) - but the one thing coherent, well-led organizations can do is retrieve, recover, and stabilize the consequences of poor policy decisions. Poor organizations find this next to impossible and end up living with the legacy rather than addressing the outcome.

It was very apparent that the internal conflict going on between the Departments of Defense and agencies within the Department of State - INL[State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement] in particular had an appalling reputation - and others had a substantial effect on our ability to make progress. Influencing the agencies in Washington in-order to achieve success in Baghdad was critical, but throw in the time difference, inexperienced staffers, [and] the sheer weight and magnitude of the challenges being faced and it is of little wonder that for every minor success there were any number of frustrations and inefficiencies that were left unresolved. Interestingly, when allowed to fester for a while they inevitably grew in complexity until they attracted attention and then you would begin to get the appropriate attention. This would start with a torrent of e-mail from Washington. That is fine – the key was ensuring that you were not responding to some minor staffer eager for information to feed the machine but to someone who could act on your requirements.

The key lesson has to be that you must take proper consideration of what the most appropriate organization is needed to manage the inherent complexity of somewhere like Iraq. The policy- and decision-making processes need to be put in place, and the functional areas, exact roles, and clear lines of authority need to be established. Considerable frustration was caused by visitors who would come into theatre, take a look, identify a problem or two (a particularly easy task in Iraq), and then leave. They would leave the difficult part-identifying, resourcing and implementing the solution-to others.

Until the end of 2003, the initial goal the CPA set for the Iraqi army was to create three light motorized divisions that were designed for border defense (over a period of several years). These were to be built slowly from the ground up and gradually become heavier, mechanized divisions, with a vaguely defined longer term goal of creating 6-9 divisions over a period of 5 years or more.

The police were still treated as a secondary mission with little understanding of the growing scale of crime, much less the problems the police faced in dealing with well-organized terrorism and insurgency. The security and civilian intelligence services were initially seen as a potential political threat and as elements that had to be kept weak and free of any taint of the repression of the past regime. The key to developing military forces was to keep them subordinate to the new civilian authority and democratic system the US hoped to create, and that they would not repeat the past mistake of creating large, corrupt, expensive, and political military forces.

Time was not yet seen as a critical issue, nor was the need to bring Iraqi forces on-line with any speed. Unlike the previous Iraqi forces, the new Iraqi military was to be lean with the appropriate leadership, and driven by well-trained officers and cadres of NCOs. They were to grow at a pace dictated by manpower quality, and they were to have the incentives, pay, facilities, and career structure necessary to create a relatively moderate-sized force in a functioning democracy. Furthermore, several members of the Interim Government, including Ahmed Chalabi, continued to oppose an effort to create effective military forces of any kind and continued to make efforts that slowed down the US effort in the months to come.

Providing the Equipment and Training Effort with Too Little, Too Late

The first serious efforts to create Iraqi military forces began in July-August 2003, and the Coalition formally established the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team

(CMATT) in August 2003, and made an initial IRRF Appropriation in November. This effort was led by Walter Slocombe, who became Iraq's de facto Minister of Defense, and Major General Paul D. Eaton, who became the commanding general of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team. General Eaton arrived in Iraq only weeks after the CPA officially disbanded the old Iraqi military forces in May 2003.

At this point the US/MNSTC-I effort relied heavily on training in Jordan and using Jordanian officers. In addition, an NCO academy was set up in Iraq. The goal was to create US-trained and equipped battalions that would become cadres that could train other Iraqi forces. Eventually, three Iraqi light motorized brigades would be created which could grow to three divisions over time.

The team on the ground did all it could with the resources and guidance it was given. In practice, however, every aspect of the actual program faced massive political and material problems. There was no plan to build on, and only minimal staff was provided. General Eaton was initially given a team of five and a facility with little equipment and no air conditioning.

Facilities were also a key problem. As has been noted earlier, the Iraqi barracks and facilities left intact by the fighting were looted – lacked wiring and plumbing – and would not have been acceptable even by the standards of Saddam's conscript forces. Suitable facilities had to be built or reconditioned virtually from scratch, and getting the proper material not only involved formal contracts, but then ran into delivery problems compounded by the growing violence, sabotage, and theft in the country. As a result, facilities became the initial limiting factor.

Initial Equipment Difficulties

These problems were compounded by equipment supply difficulties. The US issued competitive bids for the equipment for the three initial motorized battalions modeled largely on US Army tables of equipment and organization (TO&E). They were to have a mix of shoot, move, and communications capabilities that could grow rapidly to a three-division force, and gradually become heavier over time. It should be noted, however, that the request for proposals was geared to providing light forces to screen a border. No attempt was made to develop TO&Es tailored to serious counterinsurgency warfare, and this meant steady follow-on efforts to provide better and heavier equipment in virtually every area.

The winner -- the Neur Corporation -- was selected in a "blind" evaluation with almost unanimous support. The winning company, however, was said to have ties to a relative of Ahmed Chalabi and the award was contested. Given the lack of priority for effective Iraqi forces, the award was rescinded and the contract was then held up. As a result, the US team had to improvise, building on existing contracts and finding any vehicle possible to get the required services and equipment.

Training and Force Development Coordination Problems

Equally significant, the training mission for the army was kept separate from training for the security and police forces. This was done to create new security and police forces that

would be typical of those in a Western democracy, but it meant that the training teams and methods for the police did not prepare them for terrorism and insurgency, and much of the recruiting and training mission was left to local authorities. The largest elements of the security forces were created as the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) and Facilities Protection Service (FPS), which were little more than a mix of poorly trained and equipped security guards, locally recruited with minimal regard to qualifications and loyalty, and could not cope with serious criminal activity, much less terrorism and insurgency.

Still further problems existed. The Interim Iraqi Government placed the regular military under the new Minister of Defense and the central government controlled security and police forces under the new Minister of the Interior. There was little coordination and poor cooperation between these Ministries, the Ministry of Finance, authorities in the governorates, and local authorities – many of which created their own security and police forces at the local level. Moreover, the US and Coalition efforts to create national forces took place at a point where the CPA was still negotiating to persuade the various Shi'ite and Kurdish factions to integrate their militias into the regular military and security forces, and disband the rest – an effort that had real promise under the CPA, but was never properly implemented after the transfer of sovereignty in June 2004.

The fact so little manpower and resources were available for training also meant that much of the mission of creating Iraqi forces also took place at the field level. In practice this meant that each of the five MNF-I regional commands took a different approach to what each saw as a relatively low priority mission. They shaped Iraqi forces around the needs and perceptions of that command rather than as part of a coordinated plan or one designed to have them eventually takeover the security mission, and located Iraqi forces where it was convenient to the MNF-I command element – rather than deploy them where they were most needed to establish sovereignty and control.

Throughout this period, the efforts to shape the Iraqi police forces lagged badly behind the efforts to shape the military forces. A combined assessment of the CPA effort to develop the Iraqi police by the Inspector General of the Department of State and the Inspector General of the Department of Defense summarizes the nature and impact of the CPA effort as follows:³²

Perhaps even more than the military, the Iraqi police during the Saddam Hussein era were perceived to be corrupt and brutal implementers of oppression. Accordingly, an early decision of the CPA was to cashier police officers closely tied to the former regime. Other members of the IPS abandoned their duties or were casualties of the conflict. Only about 30,000, mostly low-ranking police remained on duty as a residual force—a number clearly insufficient to enforce law and order even had stability been established.³ Consistent with the CPA goal of erasing troublesome aspects of the Hussein regime, command and control of the remnants of the police force were decentralized. This further diluted cohesion and effectiveness of the residual force.

... In June 2003, the CPA and MOI issued a directive that all police officers had to return to work no later than July 3. Those failing to do so were subject to immediate termination. According to International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) officials, about 38,000 had returned to the IPS as of July.

To bolster the force, an additional 30,000 police were recruited by Coalition Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7) and the Major Subordinate Commanders (MSCs). The driving objective was to get

“boots on the ground.” In doing so, the CPA enunciated minimal requirements for entry into the IPS. Subsequently, to meet MNSTC-I training quotas, two patterns of recruiting evolved. Iraqis did most of the recruiting in the Baghdad area. Coalition forces (working through the major subordinate commands or MSCs) were in charge of recruiting in the rest of the country. Iraqi recruiters appear to have enforced minimum requirements as enunciated by CPA, while the MSCs sent to JIPTC some recruits who did not meet those minimum standards.

...During the time of the CPA, such an approach was both inevitable and, perhaps, appropriate. In the wake of the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime, no Iraqi policy makers were in a position to make authoritative decisions. The CPA decision to cleanse the political system of Hussein sympathizers—notably, the ‘*de-Ba’athification*’ effort—effectively decapitated the IPS of its standing leadership. Even though some former police officers have been reincorporated into the force, it was necessary to start almost from scratch to build a new police force. The result was a ‘bottom-up’ approach with primary emphasis on minimal basic training.

Overall, there is little consensus on how to train Iraqi police. One exception is the universal agreement that the eight weeks devoted to the basic course is insufficient time to produce a capable policeman. Thus, there is tacit consensus that the training program to date has not created an effective IPS. (There is no consensus on how long a time would be required to achieve the desired results.)

As this assessment was being conducted, MNSTC-I and CPATT leaders were planning to lengthen the basic training course to 10 weeks. This seems to be an appropriate step, but the IG Team makes no recommendation as to the optimum time required for such training.⁷ At the outset of the CPA effort to build IPS capacity, the assumption—even to some extent, the reality—was that training could be molded within a rapidly stabilizing political and security environment. The unexpected virulence and scope of subsequent terrorism and insurgency induced changes in the program, but such modifications have lagged the ‘street reality’ in Iraq.

Adjustments in the training course have been and are being made. During this assessment, the JIPTC staff completed a CPATT-directed revision of the basic curriculum to include more ‘hands on,’ self-protection exercises. Other IPS in-country academies are adopting these changes. IP personnel and MOI officials strongly support the adjustments and the shift in emphasis.

A CPA decision to decentralize command and control of the IPS has had unintended consequences. Decentralization was consistent with the intent to disperse political power. Commendable in concept, the emerging result within the IPS is a pattern of fiefdoms, subject to political machinations. An example of this political maneuvering is the situation of competing chiefs of police in Najaf where one responds to the provincial governor, the other to the MOI.

Pay problems have been an equally troubling result of decentralization. Under the CPA designed system, much of the central government’s funding is allocated to the provincial governors. Thereafter, the monies are sub-allocated to respective elements, such as the police. Accordingly, each provincial chief of police controls his share of sub-allotted funds. Allegations of mismanagement and corruption in the disbursement of pay for IPs, equipment purchases, etc., are credible. Re-centralization of control is not the total answer to these issues—especially to corruption—but the IG Team concludes that tighter MOI control is desirable.

As is the case with many aspects of Iraqi force development, the mistakes made early in the effort had a major and lingering effect. In some cases, this legacy may take years of additional effort to correct.

Shifts During October 2003 to Spring 2004

The steady rise in insurgent activity forced the Coalition to deal with some of these mistakes. In October 2003, the MNF-I created a four-phase plan that took a more serious approach to creating Iraqi forces. The phases were:³³

- To provide mutual support and create the conditions by which the Iraqis could take over.
- Give local Iraqi forces the security responsibility for the surrounding area.
- Slowly increase Iraqi force responsibility to larger and larger geographic regions.
- Provide a strategic overview while the Iraqis assumed the national security missions.

The US decided to triple its planned rate of initial build-up for Iraqi military forces, although the mission of the army still focused primarily on border defense and not on counterinsurgency warfare. This decision was made in November-December 2003, and largely as a result of the steady increase in insurgent attacks.

This ongoing increase in the insurgency led to further US action in January 2004, when Major General Karl W. Eikenberry was sent to survey the situation and subsequently recommended possible changes.³⁴ General Eikenberry did not actually arrive in Iraq, however, until January 2004.

Yet it was only in February 2004 – nearly a year after Saddam’s fall – that the Eikenberry mission helped give building up Iraqi military forces for the counterinsurgency mission the priority it needed. The assessment in the Eikenberry Report also led other aspects of the mission to be greatly expanded and escalated. The US also acted upon its recommendation that a Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) be generated and subordinated with the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT) under the umbrella organization that became known as the Office of Security Transition.

As a result, shaping the structure of the police, border forces, and other security forces was finally made part of the US military training and equipment mission, and the necessary emphasis was placed on integrating the development of military, security, and police forces. Up until that time, the creation of the police, border forces, and other security forces had remained under the Ministry of the Interior. Much of the effort within the Ministry had been left largely to individual programs and uncoordinated efforts – some of them highly regional. There was no real top down direction for the effort until March 2004 when CPATT was created and a Commanding General Brigadier Andrew Mackay appointed to command it. His first assessment – as part of what was known as the Police Working Group – set up by Sanchez to try and get concurrent planning ahead of Washington prevarication over the Eikenberry report made for bleak reading.³⁵

It assessed that the Coalition effort had the following status and issues:

- Facing strategic failure in delivering an effective police force
- Current emphasis is on quantity not quality
- Not clear what an ‘effective’ policeman is
- We need to reverse the situation in time for elections
- Introduce ability to manoeuvre police forces around Iraq
- Ensure quality over quantity – will take time though
- Police and border infrastructure very poor
- Communications for police and border very poor

- Introduce broad range of policing capability/specialist courses
- Accelerate training output but not at the cost of quality
- Substantially involve Iraqi's more
- Entire funding/resource situation needs major overhaul
- Build a police counter insurgency force
- Substantially reform Ministry of Interior
- Ensure CPA conduct justice and prison reform concurrently

And, it concluded that:

- No centralised coordination or control either within the CPA or the MoI. 1 year has been wasted
- No overall policy, no vision, no real control. Organise element of mission needs urgent attention
- Running out of time – we need IPS to counter the insurgency and be ready for the elections
- Supplemental budget needs to be harnessed – not a single statement of requirement has yet been made
- Expect opposition from CPA who view this as a civil not military function

The Washington Problem

The US Congress must accept some blame for failing to create procedures that allow time-critical expenditures on security aid. Yet, as officers like Major General Charles H. Swannack, the commander of the 82nd Airborne, pointed out in interviews, the CPA sometimes made it as difficult to use US aid funds to train and equip Iraqi security forces as did the Congress, and commanders sometimes had to use CERP aid when they should have had all the funds they needed.³⁶

It is also impossible to ignore the fact that the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs were slow to act on many aspects of the advice of the Coalition training mission, slow to task General Eikenberry, and then slow to act upon his report. Until April 2004, the US failed to recognize the need to treat the Iraqis as full partners in achieving security in Iraq and to make meaningful efforts to train and equip them effectively to perform counterinsurgency missions and more conventional warfare.

The US issued National Security Presidential Directive 36 in May 2004. This directive placed the US assistance to Iraqi military and police forces under the control of CENTCOM, and gave high-level policy direction to the force development effort. The timing, however, was awkward because the transfer of authority to the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) was scheduled for June 2004, and was about to create an interregnum of several months in many Iraqi efforts as a new government and new (and inexperienced and sometimes feuding) ministers took over. Moreover, the \$1.8 billion in Iraqi Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) appropriation in November 2003 was not actually allocated to the security sector until the fall of 2004.³⁷

The situation was then complicated by the transition of power from the CPA to a sovereign interim Iraqi Government, and the appointment of new Iraqi Ministers of

Defense and Interior – which became a serious source of disruption and coordination problems for several months.

Given this background, it is surprising that General Eaton was able to give his successor, Lieutenant General David Petraeus, as good a start and as good a mix of capabilities as he did. By June 2004, the Iraq Army had many of its initial training facilities and barracks ready, and had trained some 1,500 officers for a force of three light divisions – most were trained in Jordan. It had also trained some 3,500 NCOs.

The problems did not lie with the military and civilians who were actually trying to build Iraqi forces in the field. They occurred at the highest policy levels.

IV. Failing to Deliver an Adequate Training and Equipment Program Through the Tenure of the CPA and Mid-2004

The transfer of power to the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG) in June 2004 did succeed in giving added legitimacy and Iraqi leadership to the nation building effort. At the same time, it created new problems. It brought new Ministers of Defense and Interior to office in half-formed offices and disrupted plans to disband the various party militias. Tensions between the new ministers made many problems worse, as did their lack of administrative experience and drive—moreover, new tensions developed with the Ministry of Finance. These problems were increased by a major turnover in lower ranking personnel.

These problems were particularly serious in the case of the Ministry of the Interior. One of the leaders of the Coalition effort to create effective security and police forces notes that,

Another major weakness of the campaign was the inability to build the necessary institutional capacity...in 2004... there were three ministers of interior. The first barely left a mark. The second, Samir Sumaiday, was outstanding. He immediately set about redesigning the organizational structure of the MoI, sorted out functional areas of responsibility and created a C2 structure that got away from the Iraqi instinct of trying to ensure that all decision-making was centralized. He was however only there for about 10 or so weeks and the progress we were beginning to make was astonishing.

He then fell victim to the political maneuvering that occurred within the CPA over the formation of the IIG during the course of the transition at the end of July. Another Sunni minister was put in because it was felt that he had a larger and more substantial political constituency. Unfortunately the pace and progress begun by Sumaiday then ground to a halt and remained so throughout 2004. We all watched the inevitable train crash occurring but the political imperative won out despite the consequences of a highly dysfunctional Ministry of Interior. Building institutional capacity within the MoI was clearly critical if we were to have a functioning police force a fact lost in the politics of it all.

As for the Coalition effort, the administrative changes were more consistent and positive. Ambassador Bremer and General Sanchez had a poor relationship that seriously hurt civil-military cooperation between the CPA and US Command in Iraq. Interviews and press reports indicate that their successors, Ambassador John Negroponte and General George Casey, developed far better relations, and cooperation in strengthening Iraqi military; security and police forces improved strikingly when they took over in June 2004.

One press report indicates that they met in Washington in April 2004 to try to avoid the deep tensions, and civil-military friction that had affected their predecessors -- General Sanchez and Ambassador Bremer. According to this report, they assembled a red team when they arrived in Baghdad which began to meet on June 28, 2004, and which created a four-phase plan based on (1) integrating the political, military, and economic assistance efforts, (2) building up the Iraqi security forces, (3) rebuilding Iraq's ruined economy,

and (4) instituting a two-part communications strategy to show the insurgents could not offer Iraq a meaningful future and try to alienate the Iraqi people from the insurgents.³⁸

A more formal level, the Bush Administration made its first real effort to define responsibility for managing the Iraqi force development process, although it did so well over a year after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime. The US issued National Security Presidential Directive 36 (NSPD-36) that clearly defined the responsibilities for U.S. Government operations in Iraq after the June 28, 2004, termination of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The key portions of the directive stated that,³⁹

"Commander, USCENTCOM, under the authority, direction and control of the Secretary of Defense, shall continue to be responsible for U.S. efforts with respect to security and military operations in Iraq . . . The Secretary of State shall be responsible for the continuous supervision and general direction of all assistance for Iraq. Commander, USCENTCOM, with the policy guidance of the Chief of Mission, shall direct all United States Government efforts and coordinate international efforts in support of organizing, equipping, and training all Iraqi security forces. At the appropriate time, the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense shall jointly decide when these functions shall transfer to a security assistance organization and other appropriate organizations under the authority of the Secretary of State and the Chief of Mission . . ."

In order to implement NSPD-36, the Department of Defense created the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) under the overall direction of Commander, Multinational Force-Iraq (MNF-I). MNF-I's Civilian Military Assistance Training Team (CMATT) was assigned the responsibility of managing the Iraqi Army (IA) training program, which included Special Forces, the Navy, and the Air Force. The MNF-I's Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) was assigned the responsibility of managing the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) training program.⁴⁰

The Period from June 2004 to the Fall of 2004

It is difficult to track just how successful such efforts to restructure the creation of effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces were once the decision was actually taken to create the kind of forces the new Iraqi government needed. The data that are available, however, strongly argue that changes in US policy did not mean rapid changes in implementation, and that the flow of resources remained far too low during much of 2004.

Certainly, the Coalition effort still concentrated more on quantity than quality, and -- as it becomes all too clear in later chapters -- produced grossly inflated numbers of men and forces that lacked the qualifications, motivation, training, equipment, facilities, leadership, unit continuity and integrity, and follow-on advisory support to be effective. According to DOD updates, Iraqi Security Forces totaled about 219,000 personnel as of June 18, 2004. These included approximately 7,000 Iraqi Armed Forces, 36,000 Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC), 84,000 police officers, 18,000 Department of Border Enforcement staff, and 74,000 Facilities Protection Service (FPS) personnel.

The structure of Iraqi forces as of May 2004 is shown in Figure 1 below, and it is important to note that overwhelming emphasis was still being given on forces with little or no value in counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and dealing with serious crime. Moreover, only 7,000 men out of 219,000 were in the armed forces (3.2 percent), and

110,000 were in the poorly trained, equipped, and facilitized FPS and ICDC (50 percent) The FPS was so weak and ineffective that it was later dropped from the totals for Iraqi forces. The ICDC was so weak that it was first reorganized into the Iraqi National Guard in June 2003, and when that proved ineffective, merged into the Iraqi Army in January 2005.

Figure 1:

Controlling Authority and Mission of Iraqi Security Forces in May 2004

<u>Ministry</u>	<u>Force Element</u>	<u>Mission</u>
Defense	Iraqi Armed Forces	The regular army and other services will provide the military defense of Iraq when fully operational, including defense of the national territory and protection and security of critical installations, facilities, infrastructure, lines of communication and supply, and population.
Defense	Iraqi Civil Defense Corps	Perform security and emergency service that directly supports coalition operations to provide security and stability. Complements the police force but designed to perform operations that exceed the capacity of the police.
Interior	Iraqi Police Service	Provide primary civil law enforcement for public safety, security, and order.
Interior	Department of Border Enforcement	Monitor and control the movement of persons and goods to, from, and across the borders of Iraq. Includes Iraqi Border Police charged with border and customs enforcement and immigration.
Interior	Facilities Protection Service	Guard and secure individual ministry and municipal facilities against vandalism and theft. These guards are hired and equipped by individual ministries and can vary greatly in capability.

According to a CPA official, the Iraqi Armed Forces then included units of the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Naval Infantry, Iraqi Army Aviation, Iraqi Coastal Defense Force, an Iraqi counterterrorism force, and associated headquarters. Sources: DOD status reports; CPA Orders 22, 26, 27, 28, 67, 73, and GAO, Rebuilding Iraq: Resource, Security, Governance, Essential Services, and Oversight Issues, Washington, General Accounting Office, June 2004, GAO-04-902R, p. 55.

Progress in Training and Equipping Iraqi Security Forces

The US government only issued limited data on its efforts to train and equip Iraqi forces during this period. The material available from unclassified US sources during the time of the CPA omits critical details on the nature of the training Iraqis received, and provides little data on the portion that actually went through academy and received significant military training. It provides only limited data on the flow of US aid to the Iraqi army and security forces, and US reports often use unrealistic metrics to report on how the equipment effort actually met Iraqi requirements.

The reporting systems on the overall progress of the US effort in Iraq that the US adopted after the end of the CPA also disguised the details of many serious problems in the security and aid efforts that were revealed in previous reporting. The reporting no longer distinguished construction and non-construction expenditures by category, no longer reported the number of serious incidents occurring by day and week, and began to omit any data on equipment transfers either in terms of absolute numbers or relative to requirements.

US officials and officers justified these shortfalls in reporting in three ways:

- The first, and least convincing, explanation was that their mission focused on the future and past reporting wastes time focusing on the past.
- The second was that they lacked the resources to provide such reporting -- which was tantamount to saying they lack the resources to develop adequate data and trend analysis to manage their programs and ensure they are effective.
- The more convincing explanation is that the debate in Washington over how many troops are on the ground, equipped, or trained has focused on the wrong issues and misleading numbers: As one senior officer intimately involved with the effort to create Iraqi forces has put it, “The real issue is how many will actually fight, how well they will fight, and who they will fight for.”

The end result, however, was that US reporting on the development of Iraqi forces, like US reporting on the insurgency and terrorism, lacked the transparency to provide a clear picture of what was happening and to establish serious credibility. The US adopted a public relations approach that seemed to be “no new news but good news.”

Yet, the data the Coalition and US did provide are still adequate to show that there were serious problems in the effort to train and equip the Iraqi security forces through the fall of 2004. The data that describe progress through September 2004 document a major failure on the part of the US, and particularly on the part of the CPA and Department of Defense, to develop effective Iraqi military, security, and police capabilities on a timely basis.

According to a September 2006 GAO report, the President, senior DoD officials, and multinational force commanders all described Iraqi forces in retrospect as “unprepared to assume security responsibilities” from coalition forces in 2004. They responded poorly to a series of anti-coalition attacks in April 2004.⁴¹

In May 2004, the President issued a National Security Presidential Directive, stating that, after the transition of power to the Iraqi government, DoD would be responsible for US activities relating to security and military operations. CENTCOM was to direct all US government efforts to organize, equip, and train Iraqi forces.⁴²

In the summer of 2004, MNF-I developed a comprehensive campaign plan, which refined the original strategy for shifting security responsibilities to Iraqi forces.⁴³

Progress at the Time the CPA Went Out of Business at the End of June 2004: The CPA View

The CPA made the following claims about its progress in creating security and effective Iraqi forces when it gave sovereignty back to the Iraqi Interim Government in June 2004:

- The Iraqi government announced a new law allowing it to impose emergency security measures to combat terrorism.
- The initial battalion of the Iraq Intervention Force (IIF) deployed into Baghdad at the end of June.
- The IIF was being established, trained and equipped for urban counterinsurgency operations.
- All three battalions of the first IIF brigade were scheduled ready by the end of July.
- At the end of June, 41 of 45 battalions of the Iraqi National Guard (formerly the Iraqi Civil Defense Corp) were manned above 75 percent strength.
- Iraqi forces had begun joint patrols throughout Iraq with Coalition and Iraqi police forces.
- Efforts were underway to recruit six additional 400-man public order battalions as part of the Iraqi Police Service civil intervention force.
- With these additions, the Iraqi Police Service civil intervention force would total nine public order battalions and two counterinsurgency battalions.
- A total of 5,502 new IPS recruits had completed the eight-week training course.
- Five classes, or over 3,411 students, had graduated from the Jordan Academy.
- Four classes, or 2,091 students, had graduated from the Baghdad Public Safety Academy.
- Approximately 25,000 IPS personnel who served as police under the former regime had completed a three-week Transition and Integration Program taught by the Coalition.
- IPS officers were also being taught basic criminal investigation, criminal intelligence, and dignitary protection by Coalition advisors.
- The Iraqi Air Force was to be given two Seeker reconnaissance aircraft to conduct surveillance of the borders and oil facilities, and was rushing procurement of 14 more.

None of these claims said anything about force quality, and it is more than a little ironic that Department of Defense public relations efforts after early 2005 stressed that Iraq had only one deployable battalion in July 2004.

Progress at the Time the CPA Went Out of Business at the End of June 2004: The GAO View

The CPA's reassuring statements contrast sharply with both the historical background provided in previous chapters and the reporting by the General Accounting Office (GAO) during this period, and this GAO analysis was based largely on MNC-I reporting. The GAO report only received limited attention at the time, but it remains the most authoritative picture of what was actually happening to Iraqi forces at the time sovereignty was transferred to the Iraqi Interim Government:⁴⁴

The multinational force is also organizing, training, equipping, mentoring, and certifying Iraqi security forces so that it can transfer security responsibilities to them and eventually draw down the multinational force...The multinational force's security transition plan calls for a four-phased transfer of security responsibilities from the multinational force to effective

As of March 26, 2004, Iraq had about 203,000 security personnel of greatly varying capabilities. Of these forces, only the Iraqi Armed Forces are specifically mandated for the military defense of Iraq, while the others are intended exclusively for civil law enforcement and protection duties. However, according to senior DOD officials and multinational force documents, these security

forces, especially the Iraqi Police Service and Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, were insufficiently trained and equipped for these duties. During the escalation of violence that occurred during April 2004, some of these security forces collapsed. The multinational force has taken action to address training and equipping problems, but it is unclear how this will affect the long-term plan to shift security responsibilities to Iraqi forces.

Since the fall of 2003, the multinational force has developed and refined a plan to transfer security responsibilities to Iraqi security forces in four phases. In October 2003, a multinational force document outlined the security transition concept, including (1) an initial phase, called mutual support, where the multinational force establishes conditions for transferring security responsibilities to Iraqi forces; (2) transition to local control, where Iraqi forces in a local area assume responsibility for security; (3) transition to regional control, where Iraqis are responsible for larger regions; and (4) transition to strategic over watch, where Iraqi forces on a national level are capable of maintaining a secure environment against internal and external threats, with broad monitoring from the multinational force.

Transition through these phases is contingent on decreasing threat capability, increasing Iraqi security capability, and the ability of civil administration to exercise control of Iraqi forces. According to the multinational force document, transferring control for local security to Iraqis should allow the multinational force to reduce the number of troops devoted to stability operations and reduce the number of forward operating bases. This would allow the multinational force to focus on offensive operations against coalition opponents.

...The multinational force began to shift responsibilities to Iraqi security forces in February 2004, earlier than planned, citing the growing capability of these forces. In Baghdad, for example, the coalition forces withdrew to bases outside of the city, giving Iraqi forces greater responsibility for security within the city. According to State Department public-opinion polls published around that time, about 20 percent of Iraqis said that the multinational force was very effective at keeping law and order on the streets, and one-third believed the force was very effective in protecting Iraqis from major threats and civil war. Furthermore, Iraqis preferred that more security responsibilities be transferred to their own police and army. In a later polling report published in mid-June 2004, the State Department said that Iraqis viewed the multinational force as part of the security problem, not the solution. According to the report, Iraqis were confident that Iraqi security forces would be able to maintain security without the multinational force.

Iraqi security forces include more than 200,000 members of the armed forces, police, and other agencies of the Ministry of Interior. These forces have varying missions and capabilities, but most are not trained or equipped to engage well-armed insurgents. The CPA and multinational force reported problems in training and equipping these forces in 2004. ...According to senior DOD officials, these forces performed poorly in the crises in Fallujah and southern Iraq in early April 2004.

...As of May 2004, the multinational force was responsible for training, equipping, mentoring, and certifying all Iraqi security forces, such as the Iraqi Armed Forces and the Iraqi police. U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546 states that after the transfer of power, Iraqi security forces would fall under the command of appropriate Iraqi ministers, and welcomed the continued development of a security partnership between the sovereign government of Iraq and the multinational force. According to an annex to the resolution, the Iraqi Armed Forces will be responsible to the Chief of Staff and Minister of Defense, while the other security forces will report to the Ministry of the Interior or other government ministers. The resolution states that the government of Iraq has the authority to commit Iraqi security forces to engage in operations with the multinational force. According to the resolution, the multinational force and Iraqi government are developing various coordination mechanisms to achieve unity of command of military operations when Iraqi security forces operate with the multinational force.

The total number of Iraqi security forces as of March 26, 2004, just prior to the insurgent activities of early April, was 203,000—approximately 86 percent of the goal set by the multinational force.³

Of these forces, the Iraqi Armed Forces is the only force specifically trained and equipped for the defense of Iraqi territory and population. However, in March 2004 this force experienced the greatest shortfall in personnel, with only 8 percent of the troops needed.

Although the other Iraqi security forces existed in greater numbers, they were not intended to fight a pitched battle against well-armed insurgents. Iraqi police officers are tasked solely to uphold general law and order through such activities as performing criminal investigations, arresting suspects, and questioning witnesses. Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers are trained for constabulary duties, such as setting up traffic control checkpoints, patrolling and cordoning off streets, performing crowd control, providing convoy security, and other civil functions. Members of the Facilities Protection Service are trained to guard Iraqi ministry buildings and other fixed sites. According to CPA officials, they are effective exclusively in locations already controlled by local military and law enforcement personnel. For example, according to a CPA official, Facilities Protection Service guards at a fixed site would be overrun by an enemy force that contained more than 10 to 20 insurgents, or one that had numerous heavy weapons, without prompt help from the multinational force.

According to the President, senior DOD officials, and multinational force commanders, Iraqi security forces responded poorly to a series of anti-Coalition attacks in April 2004. In western and central Iraq, insurgents attacked the multinational force in Fallujah, Baghdad, Ar Ramadi, Samarra, and Tikrit, while a radical Shi'a militia launched operations to dislodge multinational forces and occupy cities from Baghdad to Basra in the south. In particular, units of the Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police Service, and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps refused to engage the enemy.

According to DOD officials, the 2nd Battalion of the Iraqi Armed Forces refused to engage insurgents and support the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Fallujah. One problem cited included the belief of the soldiers, reinforced by briefings during their training, that they would never be used as an internal security force. Weak battalion leadership and insufficient or poor equipment were also mentioned as contributing factors. According to a CPA official, Iraqi police forces in Fallujah, Najaf, Karbala, and Kut collapsed. The number of police officers dropped by 2,892 during the week of April 17 to 23, according to the CPA weekly assessment. These declines resulted from officers being killed in the line of duty; sent for retraining and reintegration; or removed from the Iraqi Police Service for actions supporting the insurgency. According to a CPA official and an assessment by the multinational force, the Iraqi Police Service was overwhelmed due to disorganization, insufficient training and equipment, and weak mentoring. However, CPA also said the police forces are civil law enforcement units and are not intended to withstand guerilla attacks. Nonetheless, in other locations they stood up to the attacks. Iraqi Civil Defense Corps units also collapsed during April, with soldiers staying home, declaring a neutral stance, or resigning throughout central and western Iraq. According to the multinational force interim assessment, desertion was most prevalent between April 2 and April 16. During this time, up to 12,000 Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers did not show up for duty."

The assessment also found that Iraqi Civil Defense Corps units were not sufficiently equipped or trained for high-intensity tasks, such as engaging large numbers of insurgents. Furthermore, lack of equipment and poor training resulted in general fear and disillusionment among personnel. Additionally, better-equipped and better-trained battalions in northern and southern Iraq held together during the crises of mid-April, although they did not face the same level of threat. Iraqi Civil Defense Corps soldiers were also susceptible to intimidation or sympathy for anti-coalition fighters. Finally, soldiers were less likely to carry out their duty when their home township was under insurgent pressure, leading to the collective desertion of units from the troubled townships.

The multinational force is taking steps to assess and respond to the various problems of the Iraqi security forces and is considering how these forces can provide security during Iraq's upcoming election process. As of late May 2004, a new team of senior military officers was assessing every unit in the Iraqi security forces. This team will oversee the accelerated training of Iraqi soldiers, police, and other security personnel.

In April 2004, the multinational force began a new reconstitution program for police officers that had deserted in Najaf and Karbala and scheduled senior leadership and additional specialized courses for the end of May. In addition, it planned to begin implementing its equipment distribution plan, define the equipment requirements for the entire Iraqi Police Service and the Department of Border Enforcement, and better inform major subordinate commands about which equipment they would receive and when. Further, the multinational force planned to start institutionalizing a monthly report and certification plan for police stations.

...According to a Department of Justice (DOJ) official, in an effort to support the multinational force training program for the Iraqi Police Service, DOJ and its components have developed a number of specialty courses designed to transition the fundamentals of basic training into operational and investigative capacity. The specialty courses are designed to build investigative directorates in the areas of intelligence analysis, counterterrorism, organized crime, basic criminal investigation, post-blast investigations, and fingerprinting. Teams of personnel and experienced contractors from many DOJ components are currently deployed or are preparing to deploy to provide training in support of this initiative.

...According to an implementation order published in April 2004, the multinational force is pursuing multiple courses of action to rebuild the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. It will also develop and rebuild battalions with new equipment scheduled to arrive throughout May 2004. However, a CPA official with access to CPA contracting information stated that Iraqi Civil Defense Corps equipment would probably not make it to Iraq until June or possibly July 2004. The multinational force will also review the criteria for recruitment and possibly change recruiting practices to stop commissioning entire battalions from the same area.

The multinational force also plans to ease de-Ba'athification standards and invite experienced and capable former soldiers and officers to join the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. The multinational force expects some 4,000 to 5,000 Sunni to be incorporated into the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps in this way. The training program will begin concentrating on developing and mentoring leaders at all levels of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. Furthermore, all major subordinate commands will permanently embed training teams within Iraqi Civil Defense Corps battalions. These teams will perform refresher training and mentoring, and provide direction until battalion leadership is fully developed and capable of assuming command.

Given the poor performance of the Iraqi security forces during April 2004, it is unclear what level of security they will be able to provide during the period leading up to Iraq's national elections, which are currently scheduled to be held by the end of January 2005. As of mid-April 2004, the multinational force was considering what sort of security and other support it would provide during the election process. According to a planning document, the extent of this support will depend on the ability of the Iraqis, international organizations, and contractors to provide for security and other support tasks. The document stated that the multinational force expected some areas to be under the local control of the Iraqi security forces by the time elections take place. The document did not acknowledge, however, the poor performance of Iraqi security forces during early April 2004.

Effective Iraqi security forces are critical for transitioning security responsibilities to Iraq. However, Iraqi security forces proved unready to take over security responsibilities from the multinational force, as demonstrated by their collapse during April 2004. Of these forces, only the Iraqi Armed Forces are specifically mandated for the military defense of Iraq, while the others are intended exclusively for civil law enforcement and protection duties. The multinational force identified problems in the training and equipping of the Iraqi forces as reasons for poor performance.

Although the multinational force is beginning to address these problems, it is unclear what impact April's security collapse will have on the plans for transitioning Iraq's security to Iraqi security forces or the extent to which these forces will be capable of providing security during the Iraqi

election process. What is clear, however, is that the development of effective Iraqi security forces will continue after the transfer of power to an interim Iraqi government.

Too Little and Too Late in Getting Resources to the Iraqis

It is unclear how serious a problem that funding, and the ability to actually obligate and spend money, was during this period. One legacy of the CPA was that Iraq's total defense budget for 2004 was only \$101 million and its justice budget was only \$151 million, although Iraq's actual defense budget for 2004 became \$450 million. There is, however, an unexplained category called "additional security projects" that was raised from \$500 million to \$1 billion in March 2004.⁴⁵

Other CPA reporting also showed how slow the flow of resources to Iraqi forces really was:

- The weekly status reporting issued by the Department of Defense as of 13 July 2004 confirmed the fact that the actual flow of US aid to Iraq, and its impact on the Iraqi security, still remained almost glacially slow. As of 13 July, the US had only actually spent \$220 million out of the \$2,976 million apportioned for security under the FY2004 aid program of \$18.4 billion.
- CPA reporting as of June 29, 2004 showed that obligations for non-construction security procurement were about 25 percent of goal, and commitments were around 50 percent. The figures for construction tasks were far more favorable and almost totally misleading. They indicated that the \$749 million was obligated and \$1,003 million was committed, to meet a goal for 1 July 2004 of \$749 million.
- The CPA status report issued on 6 July 2004 showed that obligations for non-construction security procurement were about 30 percent of goal on 30 June 2004, and commitments were around 60 percent. The figures for construction tasks were far more favorable, but almost totally misleading. They indicated that the \$825 million was obligated as of 30 June 2004, and \$985 million was committed, to meet a goal for 1 July 2004 of only \$749 million. Yet, virtually every report on Iraqi security efforts indicates that facilities remain grossly inadequate.
- The status reports as of July 13th were less detailed than previous statements, but showed that the CPA 2207 Report called for \$3.243 billion in FY2004 aid funds for construction and non-construction projects for security and law enforcement. While \$1.507 billion of this total had been obligated, only \$220 million had actually been spent. The CPA 2207 Report called for \$1.038 billion in FY2004 aid funds for justice and public safety, but only \$300 million had been obligated and only \$14 million had been spent.

Force Status Data

Additional sources of data that the US made available on the status and readiness of Iraqi forces in the summer of 2004 helped make this list of CPA claims less than credible:

- As of 26 June 2004, the US reporting summarized in the final CPA status report showed a net average increase in the number of significant insurgent attacks using improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne IEDs, mortars, rocket propelled grenades, and improvised rockets over the period since September 2003. They were averaging over 40 per day and the total number of incidents of all kinds was far higher.⁴⁶ The US had reported the capture or killing of many Iraqi foreign and domestic insurgents, but no decline in the total number of active insurgents since its first meaningful estimates in July 2003. It could not characterize the leadership or membership of either domestic or foreign insurgent groups with any precision, or the level of actual Al Qa'ida central influence and control.

- The Iraqi Interim Government was experiencing critical loyalty and performance problems in critical areas like Baquba in late July. Some reports indicated the top four security officers in the new government security forces had to be removed during fighting with insurgents during this time.
- The CPA went out of business just as the first battalion of the Iraq National Task Force division began to deploy to Baghdad, and as the new Iraqi government overrode its plans to leave the Iraq Civil Defense Corps as a largely passive defense force and converted it to a National Guard. The Iraqi police were just beginning to acquire serious counterinsurgency capabilities in the form of nine public order battalions and two counterinsurgency battalions as part of an Iraqi Police Service (IPS) civil intervention force.
- The efforts to create an effective Iraqi Police Service (IPS) remained a near-disaster. The 120,000 man force reported in some US documents had at least 25,000 totally unqualified personnel, and training was more of a myth than real.⁴⁷
- In early August 2004, defections were reported to remain a major problem, and the police and security forces were reported to be including 30,000 more names on their roles than they could actually account for. The British officer in charge of CPATT, Brigadier General Andrew Mackay, referred to the fact that many police left without sending in resignations or having their departure reported as “ghosts.”⁴⁸
- As of July 30, 2004, the central Iraqi police office dealing with the key problem of kidnapping still had almost no office equipment, no phone of its own, no air conditioning, no computers, and a small fraction of an authorized staff far too small to do the job. There were 42 officers assigned to a task that the head of the section estimated required 1,000.⁴⁹
- By June 2004, the new Iraqi Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) was supposed to have a strength of some 18,000. Priority had been given to the police, however, and it only had 255 men who had actually been trained as a rapidly improvised new border patrol academy.⁵⁰

Manpower and Training Status

The CPA never standardized its public reporting on the status of Iraqi training, and its data always implied a much higher level of training than actually took place. A later study by MNSTC-I showed that the CPA reported an increase in total Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) strength from some 90,000 in October 2003 to roughly 200,000 in January 2004. The CPA continued to report figures of over 200,000 through April 2004, although this was a rough estimate of the total manpower claimed to be “on duty” and had nothing to do with training and equipment, or even audits of actual personnel as distinguished from authorized levels.⁵¹

The training data on the Iraqi security forces were also altered in ways that disguised the level of training in most services in the CPA reporting issued from April 2004 onwards. This was done by implying that training under the Ba’ath regime, or limited on the job training under the Transition Integration Program (TIP), was adequate.

This kind of reporting was so misleading that the entire manpower reporting process had to be restructured after Iraqi forces failed to perform in Fallujah and Sadr City in the spring of 2004, and the MNF-I issue a new set of totals based on “trained” manpower in May 2004. This figure was closer to 130,000 than the peak figure the CPA issued in February 2004, which was close to 210,000. It still, however, ignored major quality,

vetting, and training problems, and the fact much of the manpower involved was too weakly equipped to carry out anything but the most limited missions.

The end result was yet another reappraisal of such numbers in August 2004. This led the MNSTC-I to create a new category called “trained and equipped.” The total for such manpower was only 96,000 in September 2004, a massive contrast to the CPA reporting over 200,000 some 10 months earlier, and the peak of some 160,000-170,000 reporting for “trained” manpower in August 2004.

The Overall Status of ISF Manning and Training Efforts

The problems in emphasizing quantity over quality are illustrated by the fact that the final status reports of the CPA used different types of training data for each report. For example, the data issues on 25 June 2004 shows that only 5,857 out of 88,039 Iraqi police had serious academy training, although another 2,387 were in the training pipeline. The CPA report issued on 6 July 2004 did not provide the same detail on training data in previously reports, but did indicate that only 3,411 students had graduated from the Jordanian Academy and 1,674 students had graduated from the Baghdad Public Safety Academy. Even these students had courses lasting less than a fifth as long as similar training in the US and Europe. The figures for the Department of Border Enforcement showed that only 255 of the 18,248 officers had postwar academy training, with an additional 25 in training.⁵²

The CPA went out of business before the Civil Defense Corps was transformed into the National Guard, but its final reports stated that only 2,362 out of 39,128 men were “in training.” It should be noted, however, that the other 36,762 had completed their initial training and were with units conducting follow-on training or security operations with Coalition Forces. Some of these ING units were some of the first ones the Coalition formed and trained, and some had been training and operating for nearly a year by this time.

The CPA’s final report on the status of the Iraqi Army for July 6 showed that 10,222 men were said to be in service, of which 2,316 were “in training.” The data for the Facilities Protection Service showed an active strength of 74,069. No data were provided on what portions were regarded as trained and only 77 were reported to be “in training.”

Most of this training, however, was little more than at the “boot camp” or token level. An investigation by the GAO—based largely on the work of Coalition advisors to the Iraqi police—described it as follows:⁵³

The multinational force and CPA had problems training and equipping the Iraqi Police Service and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps in late March 2004. While some police training occurred at academies in Jordan and Baghdad, according to an official from the State Department Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (State/INL), the prevailing security situation has prevented CPA and State/INL police trainers from moving freely across the country and establishing additional training facilities.

As a result, multinational force commanders assumed responsibility for temporary police training in their areas of responsibility. State/INL provided the commanders with a temporary curriculum, the Transition Integration Program. The full curriculum is 108 hours long and provides basic police training in such subjects as basic human rights, firearms familiarization, patrol procedures,

and search methods. According to a State Department official, the various major subordinate commanders had wide latitude in terms of training police and did not uniformly adopt the Transition Integration Program. They were free to establish their own curriculum and requirements for police, which varied in depth and scope. Training could last between 3 days and 3 weeks.

According to a State/INL official, some commanders required trainees to undergo class and field training, while other commanders only required officers to wear a uniform. According to a multinational force interim assessment from May 2004, the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps also lacked proper training. It stated that investment into training the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps units varied among the multinational divisions and that the units in the western and center-south major subordinate commands in particular were the least prepared for combat. Furthermore, the training was not sufficient for high-intensity tasks.

One CPA official agreed with this, stating that the training for the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps did not prepare it to fight against well-armed insurgents with mortars and rocket-propelled grenades, for example. The assessment also noted that the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps units contained too many inexperienced officers and soldiers.

Progress and Problems in Creating an Effective Police Training Effort

As has been touched upon earlier, the US created a Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (CPATT) in March 2004 under military command and the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I group that later became the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I). This put the police training and organization effort under a general officer – Brigadier General Andrew Mackay - supported by a civilian Deputy from the ICITAP team of the Department of Justice.

Unlike the team training the military, the CPATT had both civilian and military elements.⁵⁴ The Department of Defense now had primary responsibility for security operations in Iraq, including training of security forces, but the Department of State had overall responsibility for security assistance in nation building operations within the US government – in part because of past cases where US military training of police forces.

The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) had the most the institutional experience in training police forces and had been tasked with developing an appropriate training program for the Iraqi Police Service for the CPA and before the rise of the insurgency led to need for a military focus on counterinsurgency and the issuing of NSPD-36.⁵⁵ As a result, the Department of Defense and Department of State continued to share responsibility for the development of the Iraqi Police Service.

Views differ over how effective these initial efforts were, the scale and nature of the problems involved, and how effective cooperation was between the civilian and military elements of CPATT. Work by Robert M. Perito provides a highly critical picture of the problems in the efforts to create an effective Iraqi Police Service (IPS). The 120,000-man force reported in some US documents had at least 25,000 totally unqualified personnel, and training was more of a myth than real.⁵⁶

Moreover, it was not until June 2004 that a MNSTC-I "troop to task" study began to define the size and nature of the force that was really required, and set a goal of 135,000 men. This was a major increase over the a prewar strength of 58,006 men for the IPS

authorized for the General Director of Police under Saddam Hussein, and it rapidly became a moving target as the rise of the insurgency made it clear that more and more specialized elements and security forces were needed.⁵⁷

In practice, terrorism, insurgency, and organized crime had already long made this impractical. Whatever Iraq might have been with proper stability operations and nation building, it was now a nation involved in low-level insurgency and civil war. The police had to be able to fight to survive -- much less give ordinary Iraqis security -- and had to coordinate its operations with the military.

Others feel that the police and security advisory effort was beginning to accomplish what it could in the face of major resource and bureaucratic constraints and laid the groundwork for the more effective efforts that followed. One senior advisor within CPATT provided the following inside view of what was happening at this time, and a significantly more positive picture of the progress that began in the spring and summer of 2004:

...it took the best part of a year for Washington and CJTF-7 to realize that the planning and progress for SSR -- as it related to the police - was woefully inadequate and that the limited individual training that had been introduced was not going to produce a police force of any real effectiveness. The counter insurgency campaign was also beginning to take real shape and there was a realization that decisive remedial action had to be taken if the Iraqi Police and Border Police were going to be built into an effective force.

Additionally US International Police Advisors were deploying into theatre but with no real sense of what their task or purpose would be. The plan was to have 500 of these individuals in theatre and there was a recognition that they could have real value but they would have to be coordinated and commanded by the military within CPATT if they were to be of any enduring utility.

By the time therefore that Eikenberry had visited, compiled his report and the police working group had been put together the counter insurgency campaign had moved on apace and there was a growing urgency to fulfill the CPATT mission. CPATT were required therefore to bring all of these disparate and different strands together and try and weld it all into a coherent organization that would Organize, Train, Equip and Mentor the Iraqi Police and Border Police.

On the command and control side CG CPATT worked, initially, directly to Gen Sanchez. Gen Sanchez, at that point, had not received formal direction from DoD to proceed with the setting up of CPATT although it was clearly gathering a head of steam within Washington. The police working group was primarily his means of getting ahead with some concurrent planning ahead of the formal direction arriving. That subsequently arrived in the form of a memo from Rumsfeld that directed that CENTCOM take on the Organize, Train, Equip and Mentor mission for the IPS and Border Police.

With the formal direction received the Command and Control arrangements began to take shape although it was a chaotic and particularly fractious birth. The original plan saw CPATT coming into existence at the beginning of April 2004 but as events unfolded around Iraq it was patently obvious that we should just get on with it and as a result CPATT was formally established on 08 March 2004. CPATT established itself in a former kitchen which crammed in about 10 military and civilian officers.. As CPATT expanded we stuck desks into the corridor.

Essentially CMATT was re-subordinated from the CPA to CJTF-7 but with its CG being told to form an OSC (Office of Security and Cooperation), which then commanded both CMATT and CPATT. The organizational model had both CPATT and CMATT sharing the same central staff -- all of whom were CMATT one day but OSC the next and therefore responsible for CPATT staff functions as well. Numerous frictions were caused by the speed of this re-organization.

CPATT was also in a separate part of the building from CMATT and MG Eaton which had its benefits in that we just got on with the Organize, Train, Equip and Mentor mission with minimum interference. Gen Sanchez, to all intent and purposes continued to have CPATT working directly to him as he really did understand what was required. Another aspect worth highlighting was that the 'policy' ownership issue became a real bone of contention without anyone really understanding that there was no 'policy'. The issue was, of course, military control over a civil function but given the lack of progress it was inevitable that the military would have to take on the task of rebuilding the Iraqi police and border force.

A compromise on policy was eventually hammered out that had the head of CPATT Brigadier General Andrew Mackay reporting to two bosses. The CG of the OSC (eventually to become MNSTC-I with LTG Petraeus arrival in June 2004) and the 3* US civilian head of the MoI within the CPA. The involvement of the latter allowed everyone to state that policy direction of a civil function was coming from a civilian. Not surprisingly none was ever forthcoming – it hadn't up until then - and it was therefore developed by the military and civilian officers within CPATT.

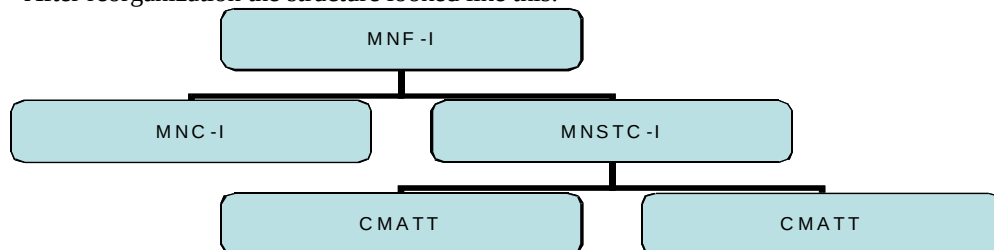
The command and control arrangements were eventually made more coherent with the arrival of LTG Petraeus who changed the name of the organization to MNSTC-I On transition at the end of July 2004 CJTF/7 itself changed and became MNF-I (Multinational Force-Iraq)¹ and took the Corps (MNC-I: Multinational Corps-Iraq) and MNSTC-I under command...

Brigadier General Andrew Mackay reported:

...the re-organization and subsequent aligning of functions and responsibility in the creation of CPATT was a particularly brutal and fractious period. It should and could have been avoided but was absolutely necessary if progress in rebuilding the Iraqi Police Force was to be made. Too much time had been lost. Security Sector Reform is, in reality, a nascent concept and one that many people do not understand well yet the lessons from Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan were all ignored or perhaps they were lessons that had never been gathered in the first place. Convincing Washington of the virtues of quality over quantity was not easy either. The statistics being bandied about gave a false impression of what was being achieved. We did try to come up with coherent Measurement of Effectiveness but that system was only maturing as I left. There was too much concentration on the OA (Operational Analysis) effort on intelligence and info ops rather than measuring success and, as a result, were not able to articulate the considerable progress that they were actually making.....on the formation of CPATT my clear intent was to try and have the Iraqi Police and Border Force in some kind of shape to ensure the delivery of the elections in January 2005. This was, I think, achieved but by the skin of our teeth. We managed to get just enough equipment fielded, just enough training conducted, just enough mentoring into the right places and just managed to plug the various organizational or institutional capacity holes in the Ministry of Interior. To be sure the prime deliverer of the elections were the coalition forces but the Iraqi police and border police stood alongside them on election day and should, rightly, take significant credit for being there.

An American expert, who participated in a later phase of the CPATT effort, made the following points -- some of which highlight issues that a report by the Inspector General

¹ After reorganization the structure looked like this:



of the Department of Defense and Department of State found had left an important legacy that still had a major impact on the Iraqi police and security services in mid-2005. They note that the Coalition and CPATT were very slow to provide the Iraqi police with weapons, equipment, and training they needed to operate and survive in a counterinsurgency campaign. They also highlight tensions between the Department of Defense and Department of State whose merits are hard to judge at a distance, but which struck a number of both US and British advisors as significant.⁵⁸

I started to recommend back in February 2004 that JIPTC modify its curriculum to place more emphasis on paramilitary training as opposed to women's rights, human rights, etc. That type of training is not unimportant for democratic policing, but it is useless if the policeman is dead. Unfortunately, the police trainers--particularly from Western Europe--were adamant about the need to train Iraqis in community and democratic policing.

When I departed in March 2005, JIPTC still did not provide firearms training to IPS recruits on anything but 9mm pistols--not terribly effective against AKs, RPKs and RPGs. The reason constantly given by JIPTC/INL management as to why the level of firearms training had not been increased was that DOS/DynCorp had contractual issues in getting the terms built to handle the firing of AK-47s. In my view this was inexcusable and reinforced a pattern of significant mismanagement of JIPTC by DOS--instances that I could detail in another venue.

... That is not to say ICITAP was perfect, but they did indeed establish and run the police training through the spring of 2004 with INL providing only funds and DynCorp providing the construction/logistics. In a political move, DOS muscled ICITAP out of the directorship of JIPTC in the spring of 2004.

When the ICITAP director and founder of JIPTC returned to Kosovo, DOS installed their own director... who so horribly mismanaged JIPTC that the UK was considering pulling their contingent...(The director) was subsequently relieved--or "promoted" in DOS speak--and a new INL director was installed. LTG Petraeus had pushed for (the director's) removal and was rebuffed by then-INL director ... Eventually, it took GEN Casey to weigh in to get (The director) removed.

...one of the significant lessons that should be learned from this effort is that a lack of unity of command and competing bureaucratic aspirations SIGNIFICANTLY hampered the IPS training and, in my view, cost lives unnecessarily. DOS is not primarily a law enforcement organization and while they contract out for police mentors through INL in various countries, DOJ/ICITAP actually is responsible for police academies. There should only be one agency responsible for law enforcement training and the Department of Justice would seem the logical choice since they maintain far more requisite knowledge in this area. INL is simply an anachronism that seeks to keep DOS "relevant" in areas where they have little expertise. What really needs to happen is a change in the funding authorizations to allow DOJ to directly fund international law enforcement training. At the moment ICITAP is dependent upon funds from INL and so the golden rule is in effect--they who hold the gold, rule.

In any case, the creation of new Iraqi security forces and police forces was anything but ideal. Paramilitary and gendarmerie-like forces were what Iraq really needed, and special elements like the Emergency Response Unit, Civil Intervention Force, and SWAT teams were vital. The Minister of the Interior's creation of a Special Police Commando Unit -- led by his cousin a former Iraqi intelligence officer and with a large number of members of the Republican Guard -- was more questionable, but the unit did have considerable effectiveness.⁵⁹

Manning and Training Issues in Mid-2004

Data provided by the Department of Defense and Department of State in June 2004 provide additional insights into what was happening to Iraqi military, security, and police forces as of mid-2004:

- As of 25 June 2004, the CPA reported that only 5,857 out of 88,039 Iraqi police had serious academy training, although another 2,387 were in the training pipeline. No figures were made available for how many could be said to have the necessary equipment, transportation, communications, and facilities. The figures for the Department of Border Enforcement showed that 255 had postwar academy training out of a total of 18,248, plus 25 in training.
- Another study of the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) showed a total force of 79,876 as of July 1, 2004, with 50,000+ untrained, 7,000 academy trained, 18,000 TIP trained, and 450 field trained. The goal was then to create a force of 85,000 by January 1, 2005, with 38,000+ untrained, 19,000 academy trained, 28,000 TIP trained, and 10,000 field trained. The goal was to create an Emergency Response Unit with high end SWAT units, Public Order Battalions with maneuver capability, counterinsurgency police regiments, highway patrol units, leadership courses, and a specialist training academy. This same plan called for the completion of the full range of IPS training facilities, including an Iraqi Police Academy, by July 2005.
- The same report indicates that the Iraqi Border Police (IBP) had 8,200 men with 400 academy trained, and the goal was then to create a force of 8,200 by January 1, 2005, with 1,800 academy trained.
- Brigadier General Andrew Mackay, the CG of CPATT, reported that only 87,000 men and women of 120,000 on the payroll could actually be accounted for. Only 6,000 police recruits out of the totals shown had police academy training as of early August 2004, with another 21,000 taking a “three week” course that was sometimes more than a week shorter. At least 60,000 men were serving in police related functions with no training.⁶⁰ The eventual goal, was a minimum of eight weeks of training.
- According to Perito, even as late as December 2004, the 90,000 men in the Iraqi Police Service (IPS) called “available for duty” included 48,000 officers rehired and reactivated through the Transition and Integration Program (TIP) training discussed earlier, plus 18,000 rookies trained at the eight-week course in Amman.⁶¹ Other data provided in a background brief to the press indicated that it took until the end of 2004 to train 20,000 police.⁶²
- No figures were provided for trained manpower in the new National Guard, although 2,362 out of 39,128 were said to be “in training.” The same was true for the Iraqi Army. A total of 10,222 men were said to be in service, of which 2,316 were “in training.” The data for the Facilities Protection Service showed an active strength of 74,069. Once again, no data were provided on what portion was regarded as trained and only 77 were reported to be “in training.” The service has since been dropped from the State Department’s updates.
- Previous reporting by the CPA showed that the July 13th totals for trained manpower were almost meaningless for the Iraqi National Guard, where most men shown as “trained” were actually figures for the output of the token training program conducted for the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps – when the force had a different name, role and mission. For most men involved, the total training program for most new recruits to the National Guard lasted all of two weeks, and the first week is largely orientation. There also were serious problems in paying the National Guard, and skimming off part of their pay was common at the command level. Many of those who were paid got less than \$145 a month out of a pay scale that calls for a minimum of \$170.
- Training in urban warfare, providing reconnaissance assets and other special equipment, were only beginning, and the few meaningful details that have been made public are not reassuring. For

example, the CPA reported as it went out of business that it had decided to give the new Iraqi air force two Seeker reconnaissance aircraft to conduct surveillance of the borders and oil facilities and was rushing procurement of 14 more.

- Brigadier General James Schwitters, the US commander of the coalition training team assisting the army, stated in early August that only 3,000 of the men in the army could be regarded as trained.⁶³

It should be noted that there were special conditions in Iraq that cannot be blamed on the US effort to organize and fund the facility, equipment, and training effort. For example, both the CPA and post-CPA manpower totals were somewhat misleading because some 25-33 percent of men were on leave, in training, or absent dealing with family and pay issues at any given time, but this was a fact of life in Iraq. Many Iraqis were in mixed units and had to get home to give their families their pay as well as deal with family issues.

Equipment Issues in Mid-2004

The data the US provided on the equipment holdings of Iraq's forces at this time reflected continuing problems. The Department of Defense and CPA failed to provide meaningful metrics of actual progress and success, as distinguished from metrics of money spent, buildings contracted for, peak power generation capacities, etc. One of the most glaring of these failures was the inability to provide data on the progress in equipping the Iraqi security forces and giving them proper facilities – a failure matched by what may well have been the most avoidable problem in the early stages the US aid effort.

Equipment Status Under the CPA

According to a multinational force-planning document, units were still awaiting basic initial deliveries of uniforms, helmets, body armor, vehicles, radios, AK-47 rifles, RPK machine guns, ammunition, and night vision equipment.⁶⁴ This was a time when a CPA official claimed that most, if not all, of this equipment was currently flowing into the region.

A multinational force assessment noted that Iraqis within the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps felt the multinational force never took them seriously, as exhibited by what they perceived as the broken promises and the lack of trust on the part of the multinational force. Yet, initially these forces were not trained, equipped, or intended for offensive and active counterinsurgency missions. Equipment shortfalls are more than statistics. They are a measure of how many Iraqis were being put into the field without the essential equipment and facilities needed to function and survive.

These problems help explain why the Department of Defense reported the following desertion and manning problems in the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps from 2-16 April: Northeastern Iraq, including the cities of Baquba and Tikrit - about 9,100 to about 6,100, or 30 percent; Baghdad and surrounding area-about 6,200 to about 3,200, or 49 percent; Central-southern Iraq, including Karbala, An Najaf, and Al Kut - about 3,500 to about 2,500, or 30 percent; Multinational Division-Center South Western Iraq, including Fallujah - about 5,600 to about 1,000, or 82 percent.⁶⁵

The Equipment Effort at the End of the CPA

It is striking that it took the US government until 13 July 2004 to provide reporting on efforts to equip the Iraqi forces in anything approaching a systematic form, and that the entire system had to be revised again in August and September of 2004. This new reporting still did not provide any insights into facility problems that were still a critical weakness for virtually every element of the Iraqi security and police forces. The data also had serious category and definition problems that understated the seriousness of the CPA and CJTF-7 failure to provide effective support to the Iraqi police, security forces, and military:

- They reported on requirements in terms of the goals set by the CPA before the transfer of power, and not on the new requirements set since April 2004. As a result, they sharply exaggerated the adequacy of the equipment for every element, and especially the National Guard, Special Forces elements, and the police.
- The figures for weapons did not reflect the fact that current plans did not recognize the need for heavier weapons that only became part of the program once the decision was taken to create heavier forces and a mechanized brigade.
- The figures for vehicles were based on very limited requirements, and did not reflect the need for armored/protected vehicles. The figures set for the Facilities Protection Service, covered a force of security guards with the mission of guarding and securing individual ministry and municipal building against theft and vandalism, and counting them sharply understated actual need for any kind of serious counterinsurgency/counterterrorism environment. This became a source of embarrassment in US reporting on Iraqi forces and they were not counted in the totals after August 2004.⁶⁶
- The figures for communications were generally outdated, and did not reflect the understanding that much better systems are needed if the Iraqi forces are to play an active role in counterinsurgency. As a result, some holdings were reported as zero, although limited communications are in place. The Iraqi Special Operations Forces, however, did operate with interim equipment that was adequate and often directly from the Coalition, when operations required it. The US command in Iraq feel their overall effectiveness has not been hampered by a lack of communications equipment during operations regardless of what the equipment data reflect.

A GAO report issued in June 2004 made the following comments about the equipment effort at this time, and again reflected the analyses and complaints of the advisors in the field:⁶⁷

Providing equipment for Iraqi forces also posed problems. According to DOD officials, both the Iraqi Police Service and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps were poorly equipped in late March 2004 due to significant delays for provisioning all Iraqi security forces. According to CPA, these delays were related to several factors, including delays in contractor delivery and performance, delays in allocating and releasing the funding, and a shortage of experienced contracting officials in Baghdad. The Iraqi Police Service was beset by continued delays in equipment provisioning and a lack of awareness of equipment, funding, and contracting status. According to data from the CPA's Provost Marshal's Office, as of March 28, 2004, the Iraqi Police Service was operating with 41 percent of its required patrol vehicles, 63 percent of its required uniforms, 43 percent of its required pistols, 21 percent of its required hand radios, 7 percent of its required vehicle radios, and 9 percent of its required protective vests.

In March 2004, equipment provisioning for Iraqi Civil Defense Corps was months behind schedule. According to a CPA official, no Iraqi Civil Defense Corps units possessed body armor,

and many were using Saddam-era helmets for protection. According to a multinational force planning document, as of April 23, 2004, units were still awaiting the delivery of uniforms, helmets, body armor, vehicles, radios, AK-47 rifles, RPK machine guns, ammunition, and night vision equipment. A CPA official stated that most, if not all, of this equipment is currently flowing into the region. A multinational force assessment noted that Iraqis within the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps felt the multinational force never took them seriously, as exhibited by what they perceived as the broken promises and the lack of trust of the multinational force.

Another report on the Iraqi Police Service provides more tangible figures. It shows that the IPS needed 3,329 more radios and 100 more police radio base stations. Plans called for one pick up truck or SUV per 3.5 officers, but the IPS had 268 out of the 3,356 pickup trucks needed and 27 out of 305 SUVs. It had one water truck out of 20 required, and one fuel truck out of 20 required. Body armor and basic weapons deliveries were still in progress.

Another measure of the scale of the IPS police equipment effort was that the Coalition had now identified a requirement for 553 police stations, 26 headquarters, 15 training academies, and 18 Joint Coordinating Centers. The Iraqi Border Police needed 85 stations, and there was an additional requirement for 87 customs and training posts. The total facilities cost was now \$182 million.

Militia and Civilian Disarmament Issues

The United States and the Coalition made other mistakes during this period, although many of the problems in Iraqi force development during this period were also the result of mistakes and political pressure coming from Iraqi interim officials and leading Iraqi political figures in various exile movements. For much of the first year of the occupation, there was more talk about disarming Iraqi civilians and Iraq's Shiite and Kurdish militias. It was not until February 2004 – five months before it was disbanded – that the CPA really staffed the effort to disarm the major militias that had been key elements of the resistance to Saddam, and it only reached key agreements and began to implement them in May 2004 – when it was beginning to go out of business.

According to a GAO report, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) developed a transition and reintegration strategy for disbanding or controlling the militias in late May 2004. CPA Order 91, which was issued in early June 2004, was intended to provide legal authority for implementing a transition and reintegration process. It declared militias outside of central government control, declaring them illegal except as provided by the order and law.⁶⁸

The CPA's transition and reintegration strategy took three major approaches disbanding or controlling militias operating outside the control of Iraq's central government: (1) recruiting militia members into officially recognized Iraqi security forces, (2) retiring some militia members with veterans' benefits, and (3) reintegrating others into Iraq's civil society and economy through education, training, and job placement.

On June 5, 2004, the CPA announced that nine parties that maintained militias had agreed to develop and implement transition and reintegration plans. The parties were the Kurdistan Democratic Party, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, Iraqi Islamic Party, Supreme Counsel of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq/Badr Organization, Iraqi National Accord, Iraqi

National Congress, Iraqi Hezbollah, Iraqi Communist Party, and Da'wa.

They then included roughly 100,000 former resistance fighters. The key militias involved included the Kurdish Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) militia that claimed some 41,000 men, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK militia), that claimed 31,000. Together, they were known as the Pesh Merga, and had a nominal strength of some 72,000 men. They also included the Badr Corps with a nominal strength of 16,000-16,500, and six other militias: the Iraqi Hezbollah (not affiliated with the Lebanese Hezbollah), the Iraqi Communist Party, the Iraqi National Accord (INA), the Iraqi National Congress (INC), elements of Al Dawa (the Jafri faction), and the Iraqi Islamic Party – the only Sunni militia.

In spite of the short time involved, the CPA was able to get an agreement in early June 2004 from all nine of these militias to disband or integrate into the Iraqi forces. This agreement did not cover all militias. Several smaller militias were not contacted because they were small, difficult to contact, or politically less important. Some militias have decided to continue hostile operations against the Coalition rather than take part in the transition and reintegration process.

The agreement did, however, cover about 100,000 former resistance fighters, with phased draw-down agreements reached with six of the nine militias while the remaining three claimed to have already disbanded their fighting organizations. The CPA estimated that about 90 percent of these individuals would complete the transition and reintegration process by January 2005 – the rest would complete the process by October 2005. The CPA estimated that out of this total, about 60 percent of the militia members would transition into Iraqi security services—such as the Iraqi Armed Forces, Iraqi Police Service, or the Internal Security Forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government.

The Kurds agreed to transform the Pesh Merga into three elements that would still provide them with some element of security while serving the interest of the government: mountain rangers to guard the borders, a counterterrorism force, and a rapid reaction force. The other militias were to disband and either receive veterans benefits or join the Iraqi military, Civil Defense Corps (ICDC and predecessor of the National Guard), or police. CPA Order 91 also established penalties for those who did not implement the agreement, which effectively banned any leaders and political movements that did not participate in the Iraqi political process.

Both the CPA plans, and this agreement, were coordinated with the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, and Ministerial Committee for National Security. The Ministry of Labor and Social affairs and other Iraqi agencies (e.g., the Foreign Ministry, the Iraqi Intelligence Agency and Ministry of Education), came together in a body called the Transition and Reintegration Committee that was to administer the process after the transfer of authority, and in fact began to do so in late May of 2004.

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs was critical to implementing one of the most innovative elements of the program: treating those in the militias opposing Saddam as if they were veterans in the Iraqi army. For example, militias with 15 years of service became eligible for pensions and those wounded with disabilities were treated as if they

were soldiers. This was to be part of a \$205 million program in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to provide a nation-wide job training and placement program that included significant funding for veterans and to ease the impact of both employment problems and the tensions growing out of the break up of Iraq's regular forces.

The CPA developed phased plans to disband the militias (busing was part of the recruiting efforts, primarily of the IAF – there was no plan to move militias in mass) and plans to integrate those who wanted to join the Iraqi forces to enter the military, ICDC, and police. Quotas were established by province and city for those who wanted to join the ICDC, and broader quotas for the police – largely because the Ministry of the Interior simply did not know the short-term employment needs of local police forces.

The CPA office asked for \$9.7 million for a staff of international experts and Iraqis to manage and coordinate this effort. This request was still pending when the CPA disbanded in June, though it had explicit support from the Prime Minister and the National Security Advisor. Some progress was made with elements of militias like the Badr Corps – each of the four Arab militias with T&R plans had a complete schedule for moving their designated members through IAF recruiting, and, indeed, had had at least one group of former fighters processed through the recruiting stations in Baghdad, Basra, or Mosul before the CPA went out of business (some, such as the Badr Corps, had several). Such arrangements were not needed for the Pesh Merga, as there were Pesh Merga Transition Offices (established by the CJTF – 7) in Iraqi Kurdistan that assisted with transition efforts there.

There were some weapons recoveries, but they were limited and fell behind the goals originally set. For example, the CPA set a ceiling of \$1.5 million for a MANPADS weapons buyback program using funds seized from the Iraqi government, but only found it useful to commit \$610,000, and had only expended \$320,000 at the time it ceased to exist.⁶⁹ The pattern of attacks as of early August 2004 indicated the program had had little or no impact.

The team the CPA put together was able to achieve a great deal in its negotiations, but the effort began too late to be implemented while the CPA was still in power, and the new Iraqi government failed to implement it. As part of the transfer of power, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs all gained new Ministers and none gave implementing the CPA's plans any serious priority.

The new Minister of Defense resisted any effort to integrate any militia in a movement with a religious character into the armed forces, and the new Minister of Finance did not implement the Prime Minister's decision to fund the \$9.7 million program recommended under the CPA. Even more seriously, the new minister of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs cancelled the nation-wide job training and placement program, effectively eliminating one of the key aspects of the Veterans program for either the militia personnel who qualified or those in the Iraqi forces under Saddam Hussein.

The situation grew steadily worse as it became clear that Sadr's Mehdi Army posed a threat to the Shi'ite and other militias operating in the south and the east, and the insurgency steadily grew in strength. It became clear that CPA Order 91 was effectively

dead, and that the Iraqi Interim Government could not afford to take action against leaders and parties simply because they maintained militias. The fighting against Sadr then further reinforced the reluctance of such militias and parties to comply.

The legacy of this failure was that the militias continued to be a serious problem, and one that became all too apparent in June 2005, when senior ministers endorsed using militias like the Pesh Merga and the Badr Brigade against Sunni insurgents. In early June 2005, Prime Minister Jafari held a press conference in which he lauded the Kurdish Pesh Merga and the Badr Organization, formerly the Badr Brigade. Iraqi President, and Kurd, Jalal Talibani joined the prime minister as well as the founder of the Badr Organization and SCIRI head, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, at Hakim's headquarters to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Badr group.⁷⁰

The president applauded what he, and presumably Jafari, viewed as the militias' positive contributions to Iraq. Talibani stated, "[The Badr Organization] and the Pesh Merga are wanted and are important to fulfilling this sacred task, to establishing a democratic, federal and independent Iraq."⁷¹ Addressing a variety of allegations against the two militias, Talibani remarked, "It [Badr Organization] is a patriotic group that works for Iraq's interest and it will not be dragged into sectarian or any other kind of struggle."⁷² Jafari went on to dub the Badr Organization a "shield" protecting Iraq.

As later chapters show, this praise disguised the fact that such militias could penetrate or influence the security forces and police, and presented a continuing risk that ethnic and sectarian forces could trigger civil fighting. By the early summer of 2005, some Sunni groups were charging that such militias were detaining and killing Sunnis – compounding the risk that the insurgency might take on the form of a more serious civil war.

The largely ethnic (Kurdish Pesh Merga) and sectarian (various Shiite factions) units in the military and security forces became sources of considerable tension when they operated in Sunni and mixed areas, and they sometimes used excessive force or violate human rights. Ex-militia forces became a major problem in the Shiite south. They sometimes bypassed or ignored the official police, acted as Shiite religious enforcers, and clashed with other Shiite factions.

Moqtada al-Sadr and the Mehdi Army

Moqtada al-Sadr's militia added a new dimension to the militias that existed when Saddam was driven from power. His forces began playing a role in the intra-sect Shiite power struggle as early as October 13, 2003, when al-Sadr's men attacked supporters of moderate Shi'ite Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani near the Imam Hussein shrine.⁷³

His Mahdi (Mehdi) Army presented a serious threat to Coalition and government forces in Najaf, in Sadr City in Baghdad, and in other Shi'ite areas in the south during much of the summer and early fall of 2004. Moqtada al-Sadr called on his followers in Iraq to rise up and attack US forces on August 5th, and clashes broke out in three cities between his supporters and US and Iraqi security forces, especially in Najaf and Sadr City in Baghdad. US officials indicated that US forces faced up to 160 attacks per week in Sadr City between August and September 2004 of varying severity.

The near collapse of Moqtada al-Sadr's militia, following fighting in the south in late 2004, seemed to remove an immediate threat from his militia to the Iraqi government and MNF-I. The defeat of Sadr's forces, and a series of political compromises, led Sadr to turn away from armed struggle. US officials indicated that the number of attacks dropped significantly to between zero and five a week in early 2005, and they remained at or below this level through November 2005. More important, Sadr joined the Shi'ite coalition in the election campaign and his supporters play a role in the new National Assembly and government.

Sadr did not, however, disband his militia and it became the de facto police force in some areas. General John Abizaid warned in March 2005 that, "we have not seen the end of Muqtada Sadr's challenge."⁷⁴ Sadr's movement continued to play a major political role in Sadr City in Baghdad and an increasing role in cities like Basra. It remained active in poorer Shi'ite areas throughout the country.

The HUMINT Problem

The problems in creating effective Iraqi forces greatly complicated the difficulties the US had in obtaining the intelligence it needed to fight a counterinsurgency campaign. The US initially tried to use the same technical intelligence means it brought to the theater to deal with Iraq's regular military forces as it did to deal with the rising threat of insurgency and terrorism. While such systems could be adapted to provide information of great value, they could not provide the level of political detail, situational awareness, and other information that could only come from human sources and networking with Iraqis.

The US then tried to develop effective human intelligence (HUMINT) largely on its own, relying on the interface between Iraqis and US officers and intelligence experts, rather than creating a partnership with the Iraqis in which Iraqis played a major role in the intelligence collection and analysis effort.

The US initially tried to create a network of informers and local contacts and carry out analysis on its own, rather than create effective Iraqi intelligence collection and analysis, and rely on Iraqis due to its lack of area and language skills and understanding of local political and tactical conditions. While the situation had improved by mid-2005, Iraqi intelligence was still in its early formative stages, training and equipment was limited, and senior Iraqi ministers and officials saw the Iraqi effort as weak and badly needing additional US support. Iraqi battalions and field units did seem to be developing better HUMINT and networks of informers, but the overall structure was very weak at the brigade headquarters level and all higher levels.

Iraqi operations had to depend heavily on Coalition inputs, and effective training was just beginning to be developed and put in place. Deep divisions existed within the new Iraqi government over how much various elements of the new Iraqi intelligence efforts could be trusted. This led to serious tensions over the new national intelligence service and even ministers in the newly elected government charged that the US and CIA were still controlling the service and would not turn it over to Iraq. The functional problem had become a political one, fueling all of the endemic conspiracy theories about US motives and intentions.

Creating “partner” intelligence organizations is anything but easy. At the same time, one of the critical lessons of Vietnam was that the US and its outside allies simply could not create intelligence networks with the scale and access necessary to substitute for effective national intelligence, security, and police efforts, and that language, access, and local expertise are critical elements of HUMINT in dealing with insurgency and terrorism on a national scale. The US simply did not have the capability in terms of expertise and access to suddenly improvise a largely autonomous HUMINT effort as a substitute for partnership with an intelligence organization run by local allies. It needed Iraqi help and was far too slow to create the kind of help it needed.

V. The Fall of 2004: The Effort to Train Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces Slowly Begins to Gather Momentum

As summer faded into fall, the reorganization of the training and equipment effort that had begun in the spring of 2004 did begin to gather momentum and to have more effect. The Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-1) began to get the manning levels it needed to be effective. It also was now organized into three key elements dealing with the military, security, and police forces, and with senior US and British commanders. These three elements included:⁷⁵

- Military
 - CMATT - Coalition Military Assistance Training Team: Organizes, trains, and equips the Iraqi Armed Forces. During operations, provides ongoing mentoring and advising to Iraqi leaders at all levels of command. Assists the MoD leadership in developing accession sources and leadership programs across all services of the Iraqi Armed Forces. End state is the development of an Iraqi Armed Forces capable of planning and conducting unilateral operations in order to maintain security within Iraq and defend its sovereignty.
 - JHQ - Joint Headquarters Advisory Support Team: Mentors and assists the Iraqi Joint Headquarters in order to become capable of exercising effective national command and control of the IAF, contributing to the IAF capability development process and, in partnership with coalition forces, contributing to improving the internal security situation within Iraq.
- Police
 - CPATT - Civilian Police Assistance Training Team: Organize, train, equip and mentor the Iraqi Civilian Police Forces and Department of Border Enforcement forces and monitor, advise and certify the Facilities Protection Service forces in order to develop capable and credible Iraqi security forces.

Creating More Effective Core Forces

Various elements of the Iraqi Army and National Guard slowly became more active. Small elements of Iraqi combat forces became active in a number of high-threat areas like Samarra, Sadr City, Najaf, Fallujah, and Mosul. Chronologies of these operations are provided in the Operational Readiness sections.

The total number of capable forces remained small, however, and the total manpower in mission-capable units was far lower than figures for total ISF manpower and training manpower in Figure 2 below might indicate. The core force of combat-capable Iraqi units, however, still consisted of only six army and Intervention Force battalions with an authorized strength of roughly 700 men each (total of 4,200 men). Six more army and Intervention Force battalions were supposed to be ready by the end of October (for a total of 8,400 men), but the State Department Iraqi Military Forces Update report issued as late as November 3, 2004 indicated that only 3,987 army and Intervention Force soldiers were active.

Looking back at these data, only six battalions were operational in the fall of 2004, and those had limited combat capabilities and were dependent on US support. Regular Army and Iraqi Intervention Forces reported as fully trained and equipped totaled 6,323, but this figure included several hundred men at the brigade level and higher headquarters, and included a number of AWOLs that were subsequently dropped from the rolls and which can be seen in subsequent reports.

Nevertheless, the few combat elements that were given enough training and equipment to make them combat-ready began to play a larger role. More importantly, the Coalition advisory team placed more and more emphasis on leadership and unit integrity, and less and less emphasis on sheer numbers. It pressed harder to reward effective leaders and remove weak ones. It also attempted to compensate for the lack of trained units and cadres by stiffening weak units with officers and enlisted men until they could function, rather than on replacing weak units with new units that might be just as weak. This emphasis on leadership and unit integrity is scarcely a new lesson of warfighting, but is a critical warning of the dangers of focusing on throughput and end-strength, rather than meaningful capability.

Two Iraqi Army battalions, a commando battalion, a counterterrorist force, and two National Guard battalions were active in the fighting in Najaf in October 2003. Approximately 2,000 Iraqis were involved in the operation in Samarra, and another 2,000 Iraqi soldiers fought in Fallujah. These troops still lacked the experience, armor, and heavy weapons to take lead roles in combat without substantial US support, and some elements presented problems, but they steadily improved their performance over time.

This core force increased steadily in the fall of 2004, and the groundwork was laid for creating a much larger Iraqi force structure. The Coalition had trained an additional twelve battalions of Regular Army and Intervention Forces by the end of December, bringing the total of these battalions to 18. In addition, six brigade headquarters and three division headquarters had been formed. Command and control mechanisms within the Army had improved, with one division establishing a command post in Fallujah to assist in the command and control of Iraqi forces that were operating under the operational control of the Multi-National Force. The total number in those 18 battalions and higher headquarters totaled 9,660, indicating that a number of units were operating at low strength.

The Ministry of Defense implemented a system to recruit and train former Army soldiers, and the first replacements from that pool began flowing into units by the last week of December. This proved to be a more viable replacement system, but still had serious problems. The goal was to have 27 battalions (18,900 men) ready for the Iraqi elections at the end of January. Due to infrastructure delays at two separate locations, however, the training of five battalions of the Regular Army was delayed two to four weeks. A total of five battalions were slated to complete their initial training in February.

The training and equipment effort began to go beyond creating infantry units, and a mechanized brigade was being created. At this point, the unit was planned to consist of 50 T-55 tanks, 48 BMP-1s, 57 MTLBs, and 36 Spartans. The unit was titled the 1st Mechanized Brigade, and 259 soldiers of the first battalion were in training. These men

were being trained to handle 10 MTLBs in the near future. There were plans for additional battalions, and the MNSTC-I hoped to have the one battalion ready for the elections.

Major progress was being made in the construction and repair of military facilities. More than one billion dollars had been spent, or was under contract, in this effort by October 2004. There was a joint command headquarters operating and Iraqi military officials regarded it as a high status appointment. Five major bases for brigade-size forces, to include three with divisional headquarters, had been built. Police stations were being renovated, and a total of 41 border forts were completed, including 27 in the north. Roughly 300 were then planned.

The Iraqis had also developed a concept for their own training command, modeled on a NATO-developed design. The goal for the command was to eventually oversee seven basic training centers, several branch training centers, officer military Academies, and other officer professional development schools to include a staff college. While fully implementing this plan was planned to take at least two years, important initial efforts were underway, and the very fact such a plan existed was a sign of progress.

Manning, Training, and Equipment of the Overall Mix of Iraqi Forces by Major Force Element

Total active strength went down as largely incapable forces were omitted from the count, but the total of forces with meaningful mission capability increased. While the US Government continued to provide only limited details as to the progress made in training and equipment, and provided no breakouts on the number and adequacy of bases and facilities, the Department of Defense did report enough data on Iraqi manpower, training and equipment as of late September 2004 to provide the quantitative breakout shown in Figure 2.⁷⁶

Figure 2
Iraq Manpower, Training and Equipment as of September 22, 2004

<u>Service</u>	<u>Manning</u>		<u>Training</u>		
	Required	Actual	Untrained	In Training	Trained
Army	27,000	12,699	0	7,910	4,789
National Guard	61,904	41,461	0	2,189	39,272
Iraqi Intervention Force	6,584	7,417	0	5,489	1,928
Iraqi Special Ops Forces	1,967	651	0	75	576
Air Force	502	182	0	39	143
Coastal Defense Force	409	412	0	130	282
Total	98,366	62,822	0	15,832	46,990

	<u>Weapons</u>		<u>Vehicles</u>		<u>Communications</u>		<u>Body Armor</u>	
	Required	On-Hand	Required	On-Hand	Required	On-Hand	Required	On-Hand
Army	23,606	15,432	2,298	1,768	3,596	1,021	20,949	6,137
National Guard	68,760	37,636	2,142	727	11,209	427	62,032	23,320
Iraqi Intervention Force	8,850	3,300	583	152	1,789	1,583	6,584	2,741
Iraqi Special Ops Forces	1,898	1,274	180	67	1,212	115	1,620	605
Air Force	383	0	34	4	21	0	502	0
Coastal Defense Force	486	12	15	15	156	1	409	0
Total	103,983	57,654	5,252	2,733	17,983	3,147	92,096	32,803

These data reflected a far greater rate of progress that had existed as late as June 2004, and some \$1.8 billion in additional IRRF funds were allocated to the security sector in October 2004. At the same time there were still major problems in the Iraqi forces counted in these totals as of September 2004:

- The manpower totals did not reflect the fact 25-33 percent of men were on leave or in training at any given time. Many men were in units deployed a considerable distance from their home, and had to travel to give their families their pay and deal with family issues.
- Figures for training had a somewhat uncertain meaning since they included all men trained or in training, but their training was sometimes limited or did not prepare them for demanding aspects of their mission. At the same time, US experts involved in the training process felt that the numbers reported as “trained” did indicate that those counted had at least completed their initial training and were equipped sufficiently to conduct security operations. For many of those reported, the level of their actual training also exceeded basic training because of prior experience or experience in the field. Some had already participated in combat, to include those in the National Guard. Although National Guard initial training is only three weeks, Coalition units were working closely with many National Guard units to develop their capabilities. The short initial training of these units was not, in many cases, a good indicator of their capabilities.
- The total armed forces, however, had only 55 percent of the weapons authorized for their prior force structure, half of authorized total of 4,421 vehicles, 28 percent of communications, and 46 percent of body armor.

- The weapons data shown only included small arms and light crew served weapons, and did not reflect Iraqi and US plans to create heavier forces with armor.
- Some armor was being delivered; including at least 35 reconditioned Iraqi tanks, armored fighting vehicles (AFVs), and armored personnel carriers (APCs) and 50 armored cars from the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- The MNSTC-I had been promised armor for more Iraqi mechanized units from Jordan and the United Arab Emirates that was slowly delivered.
- The DoD stated totals for communications equipment were misleading, because: “Some radios are on-hand, but they are interim capability only.” US advisors feel that civilian and other radios bought as part of the CERP program are adequate, and communications are much better than statistics show.

The Army had 12,699 actives trained or in training, out of which was then a 27,000 man-authorized force, and its manpower, equipment, and training effort can be summarized as follows:

- Of active strength, 4,789 were defined as trained (3 weeks for former military and 8 weeks for new recruits; the vast majority went through the 8 week course). This total was roughly 18 percent of authorized strength and 38 percent of men actually on duty.
- Equipment holdings, as of mid-September, were 65 percent of authorized weapons, 77 percent of vehicles, 29 percent of communications, and 30 percent of body armor.
- Training was sufficiently limited so new forces normally needed 6-8 weeks of working with US forces. There were exceptions, where units were rapidly formed out of experienced army personnel, and some company and battalion-sized MoD and MoI, fought well.
- The Iraqi commandos formed by the MoD had proven to be a well-trained and effective source of manpower.

The Iraqi National Guard was Iraq’s largest force, but most of it was not a “combat ready” force, even in terms of local security duty. Its status can be summarized as follows:

- It had 41,461 actives vs. requirement for 61,904. Claims that 39,272 were trained and 2,189 were in training ignored the fact that basic training was limited and generally did not prepare most forces for more than limited counterinsurgency and counterterrorism missions. At the same time, follow-on training with Coalition forces did help prepare them for such operations, and many units gained experience by conducting “framework operations,” which played a significant role in the counterinsurgency conflict.
- 40 of the 44 National Guard Battalions were operating in some way with Coalition forces throughout the country -- although most in very limited security missions. All except those in the Fallujah-Ramadi area were carrying out joint operations with Coalition forces on a daily basis.
- There were some effective, combat ready elements, but only of battalion size or smaller.
- Equipment holdings, as of mid-September, were 55 percent of authorized weapons, 34 percent of vehicles, 4 percent of communications, and 38 percent of body armor.

The Iraqi Intervention Force was being trained as a counterinsurgency force, but was still being formed. It had 7,417 men active for a force with an authorized strength of only 6,584:

- DoD reported that 29 percent (of authorized strength) had been trained in the 14-week initial training program.
- Equipment was 37 percent of authorized weapons, 26 percent of vehicles, 86 percent of communications, and 41 percent of body armor, indicating that all of those trained had been equipped.
- The creation of specialized counterterrorism/counterinsurgency elements was underway, and by September, some of these units had conducted operations with Coalition forces in Najaf.

Iraqi Special Operations Forces was another specialized counterinsurgency force whose development was underway. This force was then more combat experienced and proven than any other force in Iraqi service, but had 651 men active for a force with an authorized strength of 1,967:

- DoD reported that 88 percent of actives had some training, and that 29 percent of the fully authorized force was trained and fielded. It stated that the force would grow once the conditions for doing so are in place and properly set.
- Equipment included 67 percent of authorized weapons, 37 percent of vehicles, 10 percent of communications, and 37 percent of body armor, indicating that equipment levels were becoming more sufficient for those who were trained and conducting operations with the exception of communications. Interim communications (which often refers to equipment provided by Coalition forces) were available when required.
- The new Civil Intervention Force and Emergency Response Unit, which were other key elements in the counterinsurgency plans developed by Allawi, were just beginning to form. Both of these forces were conceived by the Coalition between April and June. The Civil Intervention Force had not yet begun training. The Emergency Response Unit had started training with roughly 25 percent of the force having completed initial training and conducting operations.

The Iraqi Air Force and Coastal Defense Force were still only token forces. The Department of Defense reported that the Air Force then had zero percent of authorized weapons, 12 percent of vehicles, zero percent of communications, and zero percent of body armor.

Equipment Holdings

The data summarized in Figure 2 reveal there were still massive shortfalls in weapons, vehicles, communications, and body armor relative to the planned requirement. The data showed Iraqi forces only had about 40 percent of their minimum weapons needs, less than one-third of the minimum number of vehicles, about 25 percent of the necessary communications gear, and about 25 percent of the necessary body armor.

At the same time, the data summarized in Figure 2 have shown that the mix of weapons, vehicles, and communications equipment authorized in MNSTC-I plans now generally kept pace with the schedule for training and expanding Iraqi Security Forces. Individuals and units had the equipment they needed to continue their collective (unit-level) training and conduct security operations in an environment where they were needed.

- The regular military had about two-thirds of the minimum requirements for weapons, about half the necessary vehicles, 20 percent of the necessary body armor. All of this equipment was new or reconditioned. The Iraqis did complain about the ambulances provided in the fall of 2004, but

MNSTC-I has acquired or ordered new ambulances to replace those that were judged unsatisfactory.

- The new Iraqi Intervention Force and Iraqi Special Operations Force were still in development. However, the Iraqi Intervention Force Brigade that had completed training was equipped, and the Iraqi Special Forces soldiers who were conducting actual operations were equipped. Equipment was on order for the remainder, evident by the fact that all three brigades of the IIF are now trained and equipped.
- The air force and coastal defense force were still hollow forces with little meaningful capability. However, there were equipment plans for both forces, and both forces were developing initial capabilities in September.
- The security forces and police had about 40 percent of their minimum weapons requirements, and a third of their authorized vehicles. They have only about 25 percent of the necessary body armor, and their crippling communications shortfalls are even worse than that of the Iraqi military.

These figures again show that far too many Iraqis were being exposed to insurgent and terrorist attack without having the weapons and protection they needed to perform their missions and survive. They do reflect some positive trends, but it is not possible to put them in perspective.

Iraqi Minister of Defense Briefing — September 22, 2004

The US was not the only source of information on the problems in the force development effort. The Iraqi Minister of Defense gave a briefing in Washington on September 22 where he discussed problems that he perceived in the training and equipment effort. He did note that some \$1.7 billion had been spent to augment the Iraqi forces. Additionally, he highlighted the fact that Iraqi pilots were beginning to use two Seeker light reconnaissance aircraft to cover the border areas and that it was the first role the Iraqi Air Force had played.

He also stated, however, that the police and Border Enforcement forces were corrupt, frequently did not show up for work, and have many loyalty issues. The minister labelled them “70,000 men filled with corruption.” He repeated that the National Guard and Army had elements with the same problems and that some would be purged due to their loyalty to Sadr or their unwillingness to fight. The minister declared that past training efforts had failed to screen and ensure loyalty.

Furthermore, the minister highlighted the fact that the vehicle pool for the military and security forces consisted mostly of 3,000 vehicles transferred from former civilian ministries like Agriculture. Problems with equipment extended to the weaponry the Iraqi security forces employed. They lacked armor and heavy weaponry. The minister attributed this largely to the CPA’s fear that the weapons would be turned over to hostile forces.

Resources as of September and October 2004

The data on US expenditures to support the force development effort presented in US reporting on the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) as of October 2004, indicated that the US had dispersed \$798 million for its Security and Law Enforcement Program at a rate of only \$8 million a week.⁷⁷ It should be noted, however, that the lag

between the receipt of goods or services and payment for them was sometimes months long, and affected the time when the payment actually showed up in the accounting system. These totals also ignore expenditures made under the Development Fund for Iraq (DFI).

The true total for such spending was higher, because the figures just quoted only cover the FY2004 program. Some \$51.2 million had previously been allocated to the Iraqi army in PL-108-11 April 2003. At the urging of the US Embassy, an additional \$1,808.6 million out of the FY2004 total funding for the Iraq Infrastructure Reconstruction Program (IIRP) was reprogrammed to “security and law enforcement” in September 2004.

Unfortunately, the way in which the US government reported on such aid expenditures in Iraq continued to make it almost impossible to reconcile the various reports coming out of the Department of Defense and Department of State.⁷⁸ For example, the Inspector General of the CPA reported on October 30, 2004 that, “As of March 2004, the US had obligated about \$58.5 billion to stabilize the security situation in Iraq: About \$57.3 billion for the US military operations and \$1.2 billion for Iraqi security forces.” Embassy and MNSTC-I officials also report that accounting and corruption were serious problems both on a project basis and in areas like CERP.

To put such reports in broader perspective, the original program level for all aspects of publicly identified security expenditures in the \$18.4 billion FY2004 aid program was \$3,235 million. This was raised to a \$5,045 million program for the FY2004 fiscal year because of reprogramming on September 30, 2004 (\$1,808.6 million was reprogrammed to “security and law enforcement”).

In any case, these figures illustrate the slow pace of the US effort to create effective Iraqi forces at the time, although they also reflect the disparity between a large Coalition force presence in Iraq and the initial buildup of Iraqi Security Forces, and the problems in trying to rapidly create effective Iraqi forces in a country with poor infrastructure, limited administrative capabilities, and wracked by an insurgency.

Operational Readiness at the End of 2004

Operational readiness remained very low, but Iraqi forces had begun to play a somewhat stronger role in the counterinsurgency campaign. The following chronology records operational progress, and setbacks for the Iraqi security forces:

- **September 2004**—Prime Minister Allawi and President Bush both state that there are 100,000 fully trained and equipped Iraqis providing security in Iraq. NATO ambassadors agree to send 200 trainers to help rebuild the Iraqi army. The First Infantry Division arrests a senior commander of the Diyala Province’s Iraqi National Guard, alleging that he maintained ties to insurgents. The end manning goal of the Iraqi National Guard increases from 41,000 to 61,900 as does the end manning goal for Border Enforcement, from 16,300 to 32,000. The end manning goal for the Iraqi police increases from 90,000 to 135,000.
- **September 6, 2004**—7 US soldiers and three Iraqi soldiers are killed by a car bomb outside of Fallujah.
- **September 10, 2004**—The Fallujah Brigade disbands without having secured the city. A small riot breaks out as people leave a mosque. Iraqi police fire into the crowd killing two people and injuring five. Aides to al-Sadr claim that the dead and injured were unarmed.

- **September 14, 2004**—12 policemen are killed in Baquba by a drive by shooter. 47 Iraqis are killed and 114 are wounded by a car bomb outside a military recruitment area. The recruits were forced to stand outside blast absorbing concrete barriers. The ensuing crowd curses the US and blames US warplanes for the attack. Elements associated with Abu Musab Zarqawi claim credit for both attacks.
- **September 17, 2004**—13 are killed by a suicide car bomb near a police checkpoint in Baghdad.
- **September 18, 2004**—A suicide car bomb kills 19 and wounds 67 more in Kirkuk. The bomber targeted a crowd of young men seeking employment with the Iraqi National Guard.
- **September 19, 2004**—A car bomb aimed at a joint Iraqi-US patrol near Samarra kills one Iraqi soldier, one Iraqi civilian, and wounds seven others.
- **September 21, 2004**—An insurgent abandons a car loaded with explosives near the Iraqi National Guard recruiting center in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad. No one was hurt.
- **September 22, 2004**—The Iraqi National Guard center in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad is hit by a suicide car bomb that kills at least 11 and wounded an unknown number. Recruits had gathered around the center and were apparently the target.
- **September 23, 2004**—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld testifies that since May 1, 2003, 721 Iraqi personnel have died providing their country with security.
- **September 25, 2004**—Seven Iraqi National Guard applicants die in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad at the hands of insurgents. A US army soldier faces 25 years in jail for his part in the death of an Iraqi National Guardsman in Adwar in May. An Iraqi police captain, Salman Turki al-Shamani, is killed by insurgents near Baquba.
- **September 26, 2004**—Two suicide car bombers try to drive into a base used by US Marines and Iraqi National Guardsmen in Karma, near Fallujah. When challenged, they detonate the cars. No injuries are reported.
- **October 2004**—The Highway Patrol and the Dignitary Protection service are established with end manning goals of 1,500 and 500 men each.
- **October 1, 2004**—3,000 US and 2,000 Iraqi forces launch an assault on the approximately 500 militants controlling the city of Samarra, an area 60 miles north of Fallujah. Estimates now indicate that the Iraqi security forces will need to number some 346,700 men, double the estimate from October 2003.
- **October 4, 2004**—General James Jones, NATO's commander, announces that up to 3,000 NATO troops could be involved in the training of Iraqi security forces. US and Iraqi forces take Samarra, killing 100 militants. Iraqi units fight with distinction and capture 24 suspected foreign fighters. Three car bombs, two in Baghdad and one in the west, kill at least 26 people and wound more than 100 others. Iraqi security forces fight a gun battle in downtown Baghdad after one of the blasts. One of the suicide bombers rams a recruiting center for Iraqi plainclothes policemen.
- **October 5, 2004**—An estimated 3,000 US and Iraqi troops begin a campaign designed to wrest control of insurgent-held areas of the Babil Province. Iraqi Special Forces play a prominent role in the subsequent raids.
- **October 6, 2004**—A suicide bomber drives an explosives-laden vehicle into an Iraqi checkpoint at the Iraqi national guard encampment near Anah, 160 miles northwest of Baghdad. Approximately 1,200 members of the 202nd Iraqi National Guard, 7th Army Battalion, and 1st Ministry of Interior commando battalion are designated to stay in Samarra. The governor pledges to send 1,500 additional police officers.
- **October 9, 2004**—11 Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and six others injured during an insurgent attack on the National Guard compound located in Karabilah, near the Syrian border. NATO declares its commitment to sending 300 military trainers to Iraq after stiff resistance, especially from France. The program is unlikely to be in place until the end of the year.
- **October 10, 2004**—Iraqi National Guardsmen assist in a border operation that results in the deaths of two insurgents or smugglers. At least 10 Iraqis die in explosions near the oil ministry and police academy.

- **October 12, 2004**—In Ramadi, a joint force of US and Iraqi troops arrests a Sunni cleric, Sheik Abdul Aleem Saidy, and his son. Iraqi police in Sadr City continue buying heavy weapons from al-Sadr's militia forces.
- **October 15, 2004**—A suicide car bomber narrowly misses a unit of Iraqi police on patrol, killing 10 bystanders.
- **October 19, 2004**—Four Iraqi national guardsmen are killed and 80 are injured in a mortar attack 80 miles north of Baghdad. Insurgents unsuccessfully try to assassinate Col. Mohamed Essa Baher, the commander of the 507th Iraqi National Guard Battalion. Baher had identified a financier allegedly a part of the Zarqawi terror network the day before the attack.
- **October 23, 2004**—Three minibuses filled with 49 Iraqi recruits for the 16th Iraqi Army Battalion, 7th Army Brigade are ambushed by insurgents dressed as Iraqi police. All 49, as well as 3 accompanying civilians, are killed. The ambush takes place as the recruits leave a training base in Kirkush, 15 miles from the Iranian border and northeast of Baghdad. This is the singlemost deadly insurgent ambush to date. Several Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed by a car bomb at a checkpoint south of Samarra. At least four are killed. Another car bomb kills between 10 and 16 Iraqi policemen at a checkpoint outside of the Marine base in Al Asad in the Anbar Province.
- **October 25, 2004**—An Iraqi national security aide declares that up to 5% of Iraq's security forces are most likely infiltrated by insurgents.
- **October 26, 2004**—Prime Minister Allawi blames the US and its Coalition allies for the massacre of the 49 Iraqi army recruits. Iraq's interior minister, Falah al-Naqib, announces a new campaign to rid the police force of corrupt and ineffective members. The militant group, the Army of Ansar al-Sunna, claims responsibility for the murder of 11 Iraqi National Guardsmen it had captured on the road between Hilla and Baghdad.
- **October 28, 2004**—Two senior Iraqi police officers are killed near Latifiya, south of Baghdad, allegedly by the Army of Ansar al-Sunna.
- **October 30, 2004**—Iraqi police officers allegedly fired indiscriminately on civilians after an attack on an American convoy south of Baghdad. Reportedly, the police direct their fire on three minibuses and three vans, killing 14 and wounding 10.
- **November 2, 2004**—A car bomb intended for an Iraqi security convoy kills four Iraqi civilians and wounds 12 Iraqi National Guardsmen in Mosul. NATO begins its first eight-week training course for security personnel at its Joint Warfare Centre in Norway. Nineteen mid to high-level officials from the Iraqi military, Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of the Interior attend.
- **November 3, 2004**—Three decapitated bodies of Iraqi National Guardsmen are found underneath the 14th of July Bridge in Baghdad. A group calling itself the Brigades of the Iraqi Honorables claims responsibility for killing the three men. Ansar al-Sunna posts pictures of another decapitation on the Internet, claiming that the victim is Maj. Hussein Shanoun, an officer in the new Iraqi army.
- **November 6, 2004**—More than 15 Iraqi police officers are killed by a series of closely coordinated assaults against police stations in Samarra. In addition, an Iraqi National Guard Commander, Abdel Razeq Shaker Garmali, is among those killed in Samarra.
- **November 7, 2004**—Insurgents launch an attack against a police station in the town of Haditha, taking 21 policemen hostage. The insurgents kill all of them execution-style. In another attack on a police station in the town of Haqlaniya, insurgents kill the head of security in western Iraq, Brigadier Shaher al-Jughafi. Unknown gunmen kill Iraqi police Col. Abdul Adim Abed in the Mualmeen neighborhood of Baquba. The director of security in Sulaimaniyah, Brigadier Sarkout Hassan Jalal, claims that Islamic militants regularly smuggle recruits from Iran into Iraq and on to Fallujah and other "hotspots." The Iraqi government declares a state of emergency for 60 days with the exception of the northern Kurdish regions. The declaration coincides with the beginning stages of an assault on the restive city of Fallujah. Iraqi commandos from the 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion supported by US Marines take control of Fallujah's main hospital just prior to the declaration.

- **November 8, 2004**—The battle for Fallujah begins. Approximately 10,000 US troops and 2,000 Iraqi forces confront 3,000 to 5,000 insurgents. Iraqi commandos seize a hospital and a railway station. The hospital was the focal point of erroneous casualty reports following the first assault on Fallujah.
- **November 9, 2004**—Two police stations in Baquba are attacked. One police officer is killed and eight are wounded. Reportedly, the police stand their ground and fight well. Elsewhere, a suicide car bomb strikes an Iraqi National Guard base north of Kirkuk, killing at least three. Prime Minister Allawi visits Camp Fallujah and gives a speech in front of the assembled Iraqi forces. The prime minister's speech is met with praise and cheers.
- **November 10, 2004**—Insurgents loot and strip an Iraqi National Guard base in the town of Hammam al-Alil. The National Guard battalion stationed there falls apart when attacked, leaving the base, armory and all, to the militants. Two members of the Iraqi security forces are reported killed in action in Fallujah. Prime Minister Ayad Allawi places Maj. Gen. Abdul Qader Mohammed Jassim, the Iraqi ground forces commander in Fallujah, in control of the Western Anbar province until a civilian authority can be appointed. In Fallujah, the 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force begins operations against the insurgents in Fallujah on its own and controls one part of the city by itself. The 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade aids US forces in bringing the Hydra Mosque under control. The 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, and the Iraqi Police Service's Emergency Response Unit see action. The 5th Battalion, 3rd Brigade helps US forces subdue insurgents in the Al Tawfiq Mosque. The 6th Battalion, 3rd Brigade mans vehicle checkpoints with US forces in the heart of Fallujah.
- **November 11, 2004**—An Iraqi police vehicle and an American convoy are attacked by a suicide car bomber in central Baghdad. Nineteen people are killed. In Mosul, reports indicate that insurgents openly roam the streets and repeatedly attack police stations and government facilities. The insurgents, numbering between 400 and 500, split into groups of 15-20 to carry out attacks. Several police stations are burned to the ground despite pleas from imams via mosque loudspeakers. Insurgents seize control of six to seven police stations for the better part of an hour. When they are repelled, the fighters seize vehicles, weapons, body armor, radios, and uniforms. One senior police officer, the brother of Mosul's police chief, is shot dead in his front yard. Fighters attack the Iraq Media Network. Brigadier General Carter Ham, commander of Task Force Olympia, states that he has never seen the level of command and control exhibited by the insurgents prior to today. Ten Iraqi National Guard troops die in the fighting. In response, US soldiers and members of the Iraqi National Guard raid southern portions of the city. In Fallujah, US and Iraqi forces seize control of 70% of the city. A total of nine Iraqi security force members are wounded.
- **November 12, 2004**—The 1st battalion of the new Iraqi army encounters stiff resistance in the Jolan section of Fallujah. Brigadier Abdul Hussain Mahmoud Badar arrives in the Maysan province to take command of the Iraqi National Guard 73rd Brigade. Badar flees the same day, having been verbally threatened by individuals who claimed to be actively involved in the insurgency.
- **November 13, 2004**—Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Allawi declares Fallujah liberated. Insurgents launch two attacks on an Iraqi National Guard base near Mosul, killing two guardsmen and wounding 21.
- **November 14, 2004**—A total of six Iraqi military personnel are reported killed and more than 40 wounded in the fighting in Fallujah. Reports indicate that Iraqis are taking over the screening process for police recruits and are firing thousands for incompetence or inaction. Iraqi sources state that such competence or corruption in the police led to the death of the 49 recruits last month. Reports indicate the firing of the police chiefs in both Samarra and Mosul following waves of insurgent attacks. The same reports state that Iraqi military officials have raised the recruiting age from 17 to 20, require a letter of approval from a local community council for each recruit, require that recruits must have a family member in the service to be eligible, and that committees will be sent to recruits' neighborhoods to investigate their morality.
- **November 15, 2004**—Insurgents attack two police stations in Baquba. Elements are believed to have belonged to Saddam Hussein's intelligence apparatus. It appears that there are a few foreign fighters, mostly Syrians, mixed in. Fighting continues in Mosul. The Iraqi Interior Minister reports that in one unidentified Iraqi city, a wounded Iraqi police officer was taken from his bed, dismembered, and that his remains were strung up in the city square.
- **November 16, 2004**—Militants fight with National Guardsmen from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in the northern Mosul neighborhood of al-Ta'mim. Three guardsmen are hurt and at least two insurgents are killed.

US officials state that between 1,000 and 2,000 insurgents have been killed in Fallujah, with an additional 1,000 detained.

- **November 17, 2004**—Brig. Gen. Carter Ham states that Mosul is back under US and Iraqi control. Insurgents fire mortar rounds on the al-Ahrar police station within the city. The Iraqi Interior Ministry states that it is investigating reports that 31 security force recruits may have been kidnapped in Rutbah. The Iraqi police in Karbala indicated that they believed that they may have been taken. NATO unanimously agrees to increase the number of military trainers in Iraq from 65 to approximately 400. These trainers require around 1,600 supporting staff and will not serve in a combat role. Reports indicate that new personnel will be in place in the next six weeks.
- **November 18, 2004**—Militants detonate a car bomb in Baghdad outside the emergency Yarmouk police station in the west of the city. Two civilians die. Reports indicate that insurgents in Baghdad are lining one particular street with police uniforms in an effort to intimidate future recruits. Shelling and sporadic fighting continues in the southern outskirts of Fallujah. In Mosul, a mortar attack in the western portion of the city wounds five Iraqi soldiers. Iraqi commandos, backed by US troops, prepare to storm rebel-held parts of the city. Two Iraqi National Guard officers are publicly beheaded in the city by a group claiming allegiance to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.
- **November 19, 2004**—A suicide car bomber rams an Iraqi police checkpoint in Maysalon Square in east Baghdad. The attack kills five police officers and wounds four others. Elsewhere in Baghdad, worshippers outside a mosque protest the assault on Fallujah. Some of the protestors fire on Iraqi National Guardsmen who subsequently return fire. A police convoy traveling through the city is hit by a suicide car bomber, killing one policeman and a bystander and wounds five others. In Fallujah, the commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force states that the assault had “broken the back of the insurgents” in the city. He reports that 51 US troops and eight Iraqi troops had been killed and that an additional 425 US troops and 43 Iraqi troops were wounded. He states that approximately 1,200 insurgents were killed, 25-30 civilians were being treated for injuries, and that he knew of no civilian deaths caused by the fighting. Insurgents attack a police station in Muqddiya with mortars, killing a police officer. In Mosul, reports indicate that residents are growing uneasy with the presence of Kurdish National Guardsmen in the city.
- **November 20, 2004**—Unidentified assailants kill an Iraqi National Guard recruit in a drive by shooting near Baquba. He was on his way to a training center when he was attacked. Iraqis find the bodies of eight Iraqi policemen some 15 miles west of Mosul. US forces reportedly detain three Iraqi National Guardsmen who were working for the insurgency. Reports indicate that approximately 15 Iraqi Army troops were killed in the last 24-36 hours.
- **November 21, 2004**—Militants attack a convoy ferrying Iraqi National Guardsmen in Ramadi. The insurgents kill nine guardsmen and wound an additional 17. In Mosul, US troops discover the bodies of nine Iraqi soldiers who had been shot execution style. Attackers kill the police chief and his driver in the town of Khalis. An Internet statement from a group purportedly affiliated with Abu Musab Zarqawi appears claiming that the group had killed 17 Iraqi National Guardsmen from Kisik.
- **November 23, 2004**—Approximately 5,000 US, British, and Iraqi troops launch an offensive dubbed Plymouth Rock in locales south of Baghdad in an effort to pacify the restive area. Reports indicate that the main elements involved are Iraqi SWAT forces supported by the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit. The campaign begins with early morning raids in the town of Jabella in the Babil province which net 32 suspected militants. Elsewhere, interim defense minister Hazem Sha’alan tells reporters that he cannot provide safety for voters in candidates in the upcoming election. He states that Iraqis don’t understand elections and that they are not aware of the candidates. Sh’alan accuses a “vile coalition” within interim Prime Minister Allawi’s government of obstructing the flow of funds to former soldiers’ pensions and to the new Iraqi army. In Baghdad, insurgents attack the deputy chief of Baghdad’s Major Crime Unit, Col. Ziyaa Hamed’s, car. In Baquba, gunmen attack a convoy carrying Iraqi security forces, killing three of them. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states in a press briefing that, though Iraqi forces took part in a supporting role, they performed well in recent operations in Fallujah.
- **November 24, 2004**—Iraqi interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi attends the graduation of 2,500 troops of the Iraqi Intervention Force at the Numaniyah military base near Kut, south east of Baghdad. The graduates will form the 2nd Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force and are specially trained in counterinsurgency tactics. US Lt-Gen. David Petraeus states that they will be operational within two weeks and that the 3rd Brigade

should be ready by the end of December. In Mosul, militants attack Iraqi Gen. Rashid Flaih, the head of the Iraqi commando unit in the city. Flaih is unhurt.

- **November 25, 2004**—US troops and Iraqi National Guardsmen launch raids on suspect buildings in the west side of Mosul. Reports indicate that some 11 dead Iraqi soldiers were found in and around Mosul. They were bound and shot in the back of the head. Iraqi Minister of State, Qasim Dawood, states in a press conference that Colonel Fawas Armoot was chosen as Ramadi's police chief. Dawood declares that soldiers in Fallujah have discovered a rudimentary chemical and biological weapon facility that was being run by insurgents. The minister states that Iraqi police have captured five foreign terrorists, Libyan, Tunisian, and Syrian, trying to cross the border into Iraq.
- **November 26, 2004**—US troops and Iraqi National Guardsmen continue to conduct operations in Mosul. The forces raid one mosque run by an imam who is suspected of being an insurgent leader. The Iraqis perform well though they encounter no enemy fire. Two executed Iraqi soldiers are dumped at a busy traffic circle in downtown Mosul. US forces believe that soldiers are being kidnapped at taxi stands when they return home on leave.
- **November 27, 2004**—Three Iraqi police officers die in a bombing attack. The location of the attack remains unclear.
- **November 28, 2004**—Iraqi police detain two men and a vehicle packed with explosives in the Al-Jadriya neighborhood of Baghdad. In Baquba, militants fire mortars at the Al-Wahda police station, wounding a police officer. Militants storm a police station in Samarra, stealing several police vehicles and looting the armory. Iraqi police fail to confront them. US and Iraqi forces launch land and amphibious raids to the south of Baghdad, killing 17 militants and capturing 32. In Basra, British and Iraqi troops surround the headquarters of the southern regional Iraq National Guard after Brigadier General Daa al-Kadhimi refused to step down as commander in favor of Salah al-Maliki.
- **November 29, 2004**—A car bomb near Ramadi explodes, killing four Iraqi police officers and wounding three others. Three Iraqi National Guardsmen are injured as well. In a separate attack in Baghdadi, 120 miles northwest of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates his car at a police checkpoint, killing seven Iraqi police and National Guardsmen. The blast injures an additional nine security personnel. Brig. Gen. Kadhimi continues his standoff in Basra. Reports indicate that at least 50 pro interim government or security force personnel have been killed in Mosul in the last 10 days. The police chief states that no police are on active patrol because the city remains too dangerous. The US and Iraqi National Guard strike a deal with Mosul police to move back in to several of the police stations that were seized or looted during the beginning of the Fallujah campaign. The police agree to man some of the more dangerous stations by mid-December. Reports indicate that Iraqi security forces have abandoned Tal Afar. The governor of Najaf, Adnan al-Zurufi, announces that his security chief has been arrested by police in connection with a plot to assassinate the governor and several other top regional officials.
- **November 30, 2004**—In the Babil Province south of Baghdad, Iraqi and US forces captures 14 suspected militants and discovers three arms caches. Near Iskandariyah, the Iraqi SWAT team and the Iraqi Specialized Special Forces capture several high value suspects in separate operations. In Najaf, the 11th US MEU commander declares that Iraqi security forces have formally assumed control of the entire province and have the ability to conduct limited operations on their own.

VI. The Status of Iraqi Forces in November 2004

Further progress occurred in the late fall and early winter of 2004. Coalition and Iraqi forces showed in November 2004 that they could cooperate in winning major battles. The battle of Fallujah in November 2004 was a particularly striking example of a tactical victory that took place while Iraqi forces were only beginning to deploy significant strength. The battle is reported to have killed some 1,200 insurgents and led to the capture of nearly 2,000 -- at the cost of 54 American and eight Iraqi lives.⁷⁹ While Iraqi troops played a limited role in the fighting, they did attack key targets like mosques, and fought effectively in the limited engagements where they were employed.

The loss of the city deprived Sunni insurgents and terrorist groups of their major sanctuary inside Iraq. At the same time, Fallujah still remained a troubled city more than six months later. Many of its citizens had not returned. Rebuilding was slow and far behind the original plan to restore the city, and insurgents were still sporadically active. The evacuation of hundreds of thousands of residents had added to hostility against the Coalition and government, and had disrupted part of the effort to register Sunni voters before the January 30th election.

At the same time, even the best Iraqi forces were still only beginning to develop any real effectiveness, and many continued to have major readiness, leadership, equipment, training, and readiness problems. Corruption and desertions were still major problems, particularly among the various elements of the IPS.

Numbers of Active, Trained/Equipped/Authorized Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces as of Late November 2004

It is difficult to track overall progress in creating more effective Iraqi forces during the fall and winter of 2004. The data the US made public on Iraqi force development after September 2004 were cut back to the point where they no longer indicated how quickly the problems in equipment delays reported in early September were being corrected. All detailed equipment delivery data were deleted from the weekly status report.

The same is true of the amount of detail data on trained manpower. Reporting by force element was largely eliminated from public US reporting by the Embassy, Department of Defense, and Department of State. The only heading in the Weekly Status Report became "Trained/On-Hand." This figure had more value than previous totals, however, since it reflected the trained manpower that actually remained on duty, and avoided the problem of reporting those who were trained and were not on duty for whatever reason.

Some useful data were made available by MNSTC-I, although such data still did not provide the level of detail needed to distinguish between the total number of men trained and equipped, and the much smaller numbers of men with fully adequate training and equipment for counterinsurgency and combat missions. They also did not provide any detail on the rate of increase in cadres of fully trained officers and NCOs.

The MNSTC-I data show total Iraqi manpower by force element as of November 18, 2004, are summarized in Figure 3 below:⁸⁰

Figure 3
Iraqi Military and Security Forces as of 11/18/2004

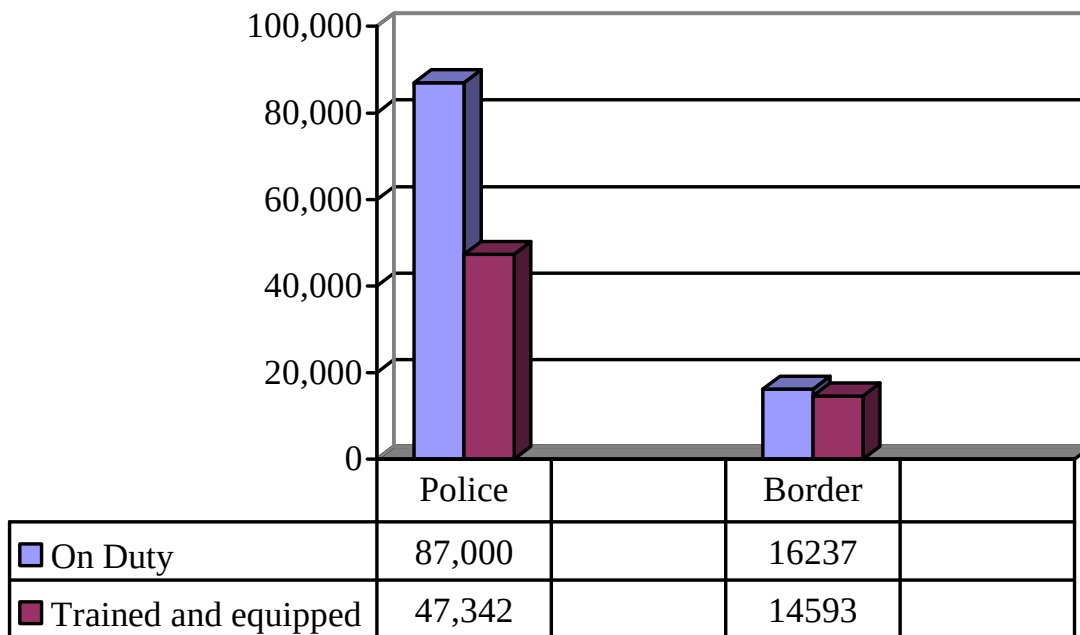
<u>Force element</u>	<u>Current strength</u>	<u>On Duty, Trained And Equipped</u>	<u>Total Authorized</u>
Police	87,133	47,342	135,000
Special Police Commando Battalions	2,019	900	2,019
Border Enforcement	16,237	14,593	29,360
Highway Patrol	925	370	6,300
Bureau of Dignitary Protection	484	484	500
Emergency Response Force	168	168	270
Civil Intervention Force	1,091	1,091	3,720
National Guard*	43,318	41,409	61,904 (for 65 battalions)
Special Operations Force	604	590	1,967
Intervention Force	6,584	1,816	6,859
Army	16,634	4,507	27,000
Air Force	206	167	502
Coastal Defense Force	409	536	582
TOTAL	175,812	113,437	271,681
<i>Military Forces</i>	<i>(24,437)</i>	<i>(7,080)</i>	<i>(36,328)</i>
<i>Security Forces</i>	<i>(151,375)</i>	<i>(106,357)</i>	<i>(235,353)</i>

**Data from MNSTC-I are not clear. Data in parenthesis are taken from US Embassy Weekly Status Report of November 3, 2004.*

On Duty Versus Trained and Equipped

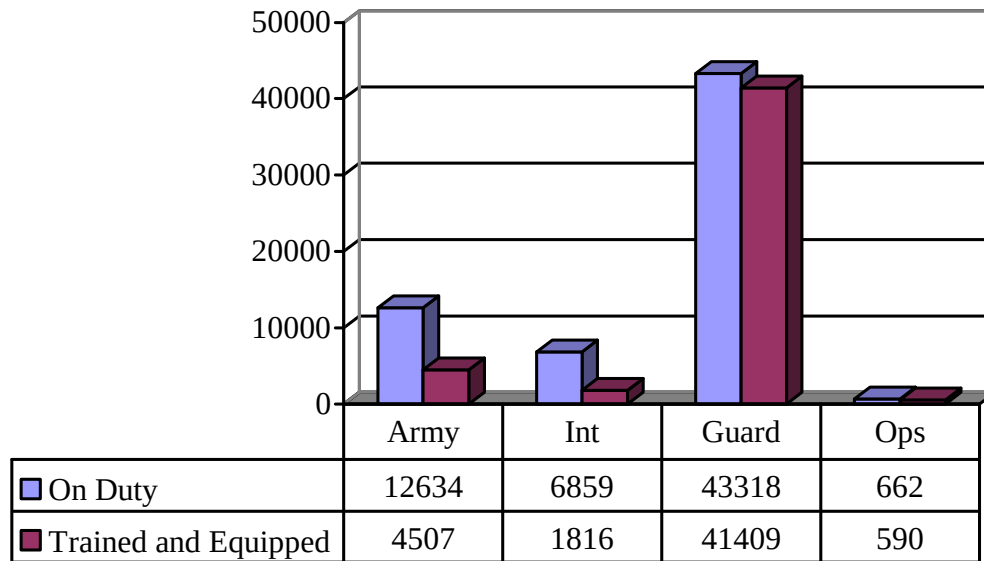
Graphic comparisons make it easier to understand the level of progress that was now being reported by MNSTC-I. Figure 4 shows the numbers of police and Border Enforcement personnel on duty, and how many of those on duty were reported to be “trained and equipped” as of November 18, 2004. Figure 5 shows the numbers of special operations, Intervention Force, and conventional army troops who are on duty and how many of those on duty that are fully trained and equipped as of November 18, 2004.

Figure 4
Iraqi Security Forces—Manning vs. Trained/Equipped as of 11/18/04



Source: MNSTC-I answer to inquiry November 2004. "Border" includes the entire Border Enforcement branch.

Figure 5
Iraqi Armed Forces—Manning vs. Trained/Equipped as of 11/18/04



Source: MNSTC-I answer to November 2004 inquiry. “Int” represents the military Intervention Force. “Ops” represents Special Operations Forces.

Lack of Meaningful Equipment Reporting

While data on the overall progress of the equipment effort were limited, MNSTC-I did release a general statement about the equipment delivered to the Iraqi security forces in November 2004. The military reported distributing 5,400 Kalashnikov rifles, 16,000 sets of body armor, 1,900 9mm pistols, approximately 1,000 machine guns, 44 armored personnel carriers, and four T-55 tanks. Exactly which forces received what armaments was not made clear.⁸¹

In another statement on November 13, 2004, MNSTC-I indicated that it had delivered 2,919 AK-47 assault rifles, 4,210 helmets, 107 PKM machineguns, 832 RPK machineguns, 7,850 sets of body armor, 11,000 field jackets, 50 Glock pistols, 100,000 RPK/PKM machinegun rounds, 2,400 9mm pistol rounds, 300,000 AK-47 rounds, 600 tactical vests, 30 computers, 300 kneepads, 50 radios, 15,763 pairs of running shoes, 20 holsters, 20 Walther 9mm pistols, 1,300 army t-shirts, and 19,782 desert combat uniforms since November 1.⁸²

These delivery rates were far higher than the rates reported during the spring, summer, and early fall of 2004.

Key Iraqi Force Components

MNSTC-I also provided useful data on Iraq's developing force structure and type of training and equipment in key elements of the emerging Iraqi forces in November 2004 that remained current through late December 2004. The MNSTC-I summarized Iraqi force developments as follows:⁸³

- *Special Police Commando Battalions:* The Special Police Commando Battalions represent the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's strike-force capability. The commandos – ultimately to be comprised of six full battalions – are highly vetted Iraqi officers and rank-and-file servicemen largely made up of prior service Special Forces professionals and other skilled servicemen with specialty unit experience.

All members of the unit are chosen based on loyalty to Iraq and its new democratic model. The unit focuses primarily on building raid operations, counter-terrorist missions including anti-airplane hijacker, kidnapping and other similar missions.

The force resembles more a paramilitary army-type force complete with heavy weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, AK-47 assault rifles, mortars, and 9mm Glock pistols. The commando battalions give the MOI a high-end strike force capability similar to Special Forces units and was quickly stood up to capitalize on previously existing skill sets in Iraq.

- *Iraqi Police Service Emergency Response Unit:* An elite 270-man team trained to respond to national-level law enforcement emergencies. Team members undergo a robust eight-week specialized training course spawned from the current wave of anti-Iraqi forces actions.

The mission of the emergency response unit is to provide a national, high-end, rapid-response law enforcement tactical unit responsible for high-risk search, arrest, hostage-rescue, and crisis response operations. The emergency response unit is the predominant force for national-level incidents calling for a DELTA/SWAT capability and will only be used in extreme situations by local and national authorities.

The \$64.5 million effort is part of a larger mission to create nationwide law enforcement, investigative and special operations capability within the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to counter terrorism and large-scale civil disobedience and insurgencies throughout Iraq. The capability will eventually include a Counterterrorism Investigative Unit and Special Operations Unit. Volunteers for the force must first complete the standard eight-week basic training course or three-week transition integration program course for prior service officers before entering the specialized emergency response unit training modeled after the U.S. State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and Explosives' training programs.

Of the total force, 235 eligible candidates received rigorous instruction based on the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Crisis Response Team training program while the balance of 35 recruits are part of the Special Operations Explosive Ordinance Team, based on the State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance Explosive Incident Countermeasures training course.

Team members receive instruction on terrorist incidents, kidnappings, hostage negotiations, explosive ordnance, high-risk searches, high-risk assets, weapons of mass destruction, and other national-level law enforcement emergencies. Officers also have an opportunity to receive supplementary training in hostage negotiation, emergency medical procedures, and counterterrorism task force coordination.

- *Iraqi Intervention Forces:* The Iraqi Intervention Force is the counter-insurgency wing of the Iraqi army. Ultimately to be comprised of nine battalions, organized into three brigades, forces negotiate the standard eight-week basic training all Iraqi soldiers go through learning basic soldiering skills such as weapons, drill and ceremony.

Soldier discipline and physical training skills: After graduation, IIF battalions spend several weeks and months in intensive "military operations in urban terrain" follow-on training – otherwise known as "MOUT" training. In this period, soldiers work through instruction in the art of street fighting and building clearing operations typical of anti-insurgent operations in cities and towns. Units work in close coordination with other IA battalions and will be completely stood-up to the nine-battalion force by early 2005.

- *Iraqi Special Operations Force:* The Iraqi Special Operations Force – the Iraqi Armed Forces' high-end strike force resembling U.S. Special Forces units – continues training and operations in the country with multinational force assistance.

Consisting of two trained battalions, including the 36th Commando Battalion – an infantry-type strike force – and the Iraqi Counterterrorism Battalion, the force has been involved in many operations throughout the country fighting anti-Iraqi forces with great distinction while continuing the stand-up effort of the unit. The force will add a third "support" battalion to its ranks in the coming months. Training is conducted at an undisclosed location.

"Selection" for the force begins in the Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi army units already operating in the country much like typical multinational Special Forces' recruiting efforts in their own countries. Outstanding recruits successfully negotiating the vetting process, including exhaustive background checks, skill evaluations, and unit evaluations along with literacy, psychological, and physical tests, are run through various team-building and physical events meant to lean down the recruit pool. The selection process runs roughly 10 to 14 days.

The Iraqi Special Forces undergo intense physical, land navigation, small-unit tactics, live-fire, unconventional warfare operations, direct action operations, airmobile operations, counterterrorism, survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training. Special Forces soldiers are an army's unconventional warfare experts, possessing a broad range of operational skills. The unit was formed based on a conversation between the Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and multinational force personnel to give the Iraqi Armed Forces a high-end strike force in its ongoing security mission against anti-Iraqi forces operating in the country.

- *Iraqi Army:* Iraqi army soldiers negotiate the standard eight-weeks of basic training including basic soldiering skills instruction in weapons, drill and ceremony, soldier discipline, and physical training. Units negotiate advanced follow-on infantry, land navigation, and other operational training after graduation before deployment.

The Iraqi army will ultimately be comprised of 27 battalions of infantry – including nine special Iraqi Intervention Force battalions – and three transportation battalions. The army will be organized into nine brigades and three divisions. The bulk of the force is slated to be in place by early 2005. Plans to create heavier and better armored forces are still in flux, but there are now 259 soldiers in the 1st Mechanized Brigade, preparing to train with 10 MTLB armored personnel carriers. These vehicles were drawn from a pool of over 300 armored vehicles that the Iraqis intend to make ready as the unit grows.

- *Iraqi Coastal Defense Force:* The Iraqi Coastal Defense Force is the Iraqi Armed Forces' naval component. Ultimately to number just more than 400 servicemen, the force also includes a land-based Coastal Defense Regiment resembling western-type "Marine" infantry forces. Land and sea based forces negotiate IAF eight-week basic training courses before moving on to follow-on training and sea training for the boat crews.

Boat crews learn the basics in seamanship before moving on to instruction in advanced seamanship, towing, gunnery, sea rescue, chart reading, navigation, anti-smuggling operations, and rigid inflatable boat integration and small boat drill instruction. Training is put in the context of a democratically based maritime sea force.

Primary duties include protecting the country's roughly 50-mile coastline from smuggling and foreign fighter infiltration operations as well as the port assets at Umm Qasr in Southern Iraq and oil assets in the Persian Gulf. The force patrols out to the 12-mile international water boundary in the Persian Gulf with five 27-meter long Chinese-made patrol boats and various other support craft.

- *Iraqi Air Force:* The Iraqi Air Force has begun to fly light reconnaissance missions. All Iraqi Air Force pilots and maintenance personnel negotiate comprehensive one to four-month "conversion courses" largely comprised of familiarization instruction. The Iraqi Air Force is not yet assigned C-130s, but does have plans to obtain them.

The training brings air force recruits up to speed on current Iraqi Air Force aircraft as well as serving to augment prior skills. The air force actively recruits from prior-service personnel pools in the country – officially sending personnel to training after the Iraqi Ministry of Defense's vetting and screening process clears recruits for duty. Training is almost entirely conducted in the United Arab Emirates and Jordan by multinational force partners. After "conversion course" training is completed, trainees go to assigned squadrons in Iraq for follow-on training comprised of advanced instruction and specific operational training.

The Iraqi Air Force is initially slated as a six-squadron force of various-make light reconnaissance aircraft and various support aircraft including C-130 transport planes and other helicopter craft with operations mainly centered on supporting Iraqi Security Force operations on the ground, infrastructure reconnaissance, and border security missions. The majority of the force is scheduled to be operational by Fall 2005.

Continuing Problems in Training the Police Forces

Progress was still much slower in creating effective police forces than in creating military forces. While some aspects of criminal activity did drop over time, sporadic terrorism and high levels of criminal activity continued to be a major problem in the 12-14 governorates where the threat was not high enough to be characterized as an active insurgency.

Warnings in a Senate Staff Report

One of the best insights into these issues is provided in a draft staff report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "Iraq – Lessons in Stabilization and Reconstruction, November-December 2004." The report found many of the same problems the GAO report referenced earlier found in the spring of 2004. It made the following key points:

The civilian-military structural gap is particularly damaging in the effort to re-build the Iraqi police and security forces. At the International Police Training Academy in Jordan, the staff members found confusion and frustration with the lack of communication and coordination between the civilians and military. The State Department, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau (INL) which funds the U.S. police training assistance programs for the Iraqis had minimal interaction with the Department of Defense/CENTCOM team that has the policy lead in development of Iraq's police and security forces. Moreover, neither State nor Defense appears to be in charge of coordinating efforts with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, which is the "customer" for which the newly trained police forces are produced.

The cadets receive eight-weeks of training, but leave the academy without a uniform, weapon, or any idea of whether, or where, in Iraq they will be employed. This has provoked questions about the number of Iraqi police actually trained. There also are no minimum standards imposed in vetting cadets or in certifying the capabilities of the newly trained Iraqi police and no identification of cadets who might excel and should be trained further. Civilian contractors who run the Academy cannot hire security guards or order the military to provide security escort for the cadets on the return trip across the border to Iraq. Sadly, a number of cadets have been killed on the journey back, victims not only of the insurgents, but in some measure, of the civilian-military institutional gap.

Confused Roles and Responsibilities: The Iraqi Ministry of Interior, responsible for Iraq's police forces, has no single U.S. counterpart agency. While there is a U.S. Embassy Advisor to the Ministry of Interior, no single U.S. agency appears to have responsibility for the full spectrum of the Iraq police force development. State/INL, the FBI, Treasury, CENTCOM and various contractors all have a role. The State Department, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Bureau (INL) which funds the U.S. police training assistance programs for the Iraqis, had minimal interaction with the Department of Defense/CENTCOM team that has the policy lead in development of Iraq's police and security forces. The International Police Training Academy in Jordan is not clearly directed by CENTCOM, although it is run by CENTCOM contractors, under the direction of INL, with a Deputy Commander from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Moreover, it is unclear which office is responsible for coordinating with other donor nations providing police training such as Germany, the UAE, Jordan, Canada, Finland, and Hungary.

Overlapping Funding Sources: Assistance funding takes a circuitous route from State/INL to CENTCOM, to contractors who actually implement the police training program. The Police Academy was set up under a Bilateral Agreement between State/INL and the Government of Jordan, using Circular 175 authority delegated to INL by the Secretary of State. CENTCOM and the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPAT) in Baghdad are, however, the source of funds for INL support of police training. For 2005, funds are expected to be provided directly to INL from the IRRF. Yet, some instructors for the Academy are apparently under the Department of Justice and others under the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) including active DHS Agents from the Border Control/ Customs agency to teach border police. A number of DynCorp private contractors who were supposed to handle follow-on and on-the-job-training in Iraq were diverted to support the training requirements of the Police Academy. CENTCOM has directed the Academy to increase output of Iraqi border police cadets, but there apparently was insufficient funding under the contract for additional staff and insufficient numbers of border police cadets recruited to be trained.

Inadequate Vetting/Quantity vs. Quality: Staff members were told that anyone in Iraq can be a police cadet. Personnel vetting processes for the police forces are inconsistent and uncoordinated. There are no uniform selection criteria and potential cadets are usually only subject to minimal screening. Staff members were told that there is no list or database of people eligible for training or trained for the police forces. There is so much pressure to get more Iraqi cadets that the quality of the candidates has been virtually ignored. There are three basic methods for getting Iraqi cadets: 1) those who volunteer; 2) those who are recruited directly by the military at training centers around the country; and 3) referrals by the chief of police, tribal chief or other authorities in the provinces. There are no women in the Academy classes. All Kurds, Shi'a and Sunni are trained together although not all, particularly Kurds, speak Arabic.

Staff members were told that some cadets have arrived at the academy illiterate and with unrealistic expectations. For one class, early in the program, out of over 700 former senior Iraqi Border Control/Customs agents nominated by the Ministry of Interior to be trained, 259 were illiterate, lacked basic skills and/or did not want to stay at the Academy. They thought they were going to be in hotels, with time to relax in Jordan. One was over 80 years old. The cadets are not allowed to go out of the facility to enter Jordan unless it is work related as an escorted visit. There are an estimated 32,000 Iraqis expected to be trained at the Academy by December of 2005. An estimated 16 countries are providing the training with a total of 322 instructors. Student capacity total for the facility in Jordan in November 2004 was at 3600, but Academy officials indicated they could use more instructors. There are currently an estimated 2.6 instructors per class. An estimated 8,297 police officers had been trained as of November 10, 2004 out of an expected 11,000 goal. The problems have been too few recruits with the right skills as well as recruits who leave for personal or other reasons.

Inadequate Training - Several officials the staff members talked to expressed concerns about the substance of training provided to the Iraqis and the security and reliability of the police cadets trained. In classes on explosives countermeasures, cadets are taught to defuse a bomb by learning how bombs are made. Some expressed fears that insurgents have infiltrated the cadets and are being taught how to attack better. Thus, there is hesitation on what types of training the Iraqi cadets should receive.

In training, the cadets are not trained on the use of AK-47s, the most common weapons used in Iraq, but on pistols as the facility has constraints on the size of the shooting range protective barrier. There also are limited amounts of other personnel security-related equipment for training and staff members were told that equipment ordered has not been delivered for months. After the staff visit, a new curriculum with greater emphasis on personnel security was reportedly implemented in December 2004.

The Jordanians provide instructors, language assistance and a Cadet Command Brigade that implements, mentors, drills and provides discipline for the Cadets. Defense Department contract instructors could not do all the discipline in Arabic for the cadets and the Jordanian Brigade facilitates training significantly. A senior Jordanian police officer noted that "very few" of the Iraqis selected for training would qualify for police training under the Jordanian system, which involves extensive tests and screening.

Inadequate Follow-up: Once trained, it is not clear what happens to the graduates. There is no differentiation in cadets who excel to allow them to specialize after they complete the basic course and no team building for units to learn to operate together in the future. Cadets are sent back to Iraq with no job or certainty that they can perform police functions.

Iraqi police cadets are given a basic eight week training course at the Police Training Academy in Jordan, but leave the Academy without a uniform, a weapon, other equipment or any plan for follow-up to ensure they are integrated into and become productive elements of the new Iraqi police force. Those interested in continuing as police officers simply show up at neighborhood or municipal police stations once they return, at which time they may or may not be given work. The contractors hired by the military cannot even hire civilian security guards to protect the cadet

graduates returning to Iraq. The day after the staff members visit to the Academy, there were press reports of the kidnapping of between 30-60 returning police cadets who had been transported by bus to the border by Police Academy officials. The Academy apparently had requested security escort but it had been denied reportedly due to operations in Fallujah. Staff members asked, but failed to learn from CENTCOM or Embassy officials the true fate of these cadets. A number of other cadets have been killed on the journey back into Iraq from Jordan, in many respects, victims not only of the insurgents, but in some measure, of the civilian-military institutional gap.

Evaluating Improvements in Police Training: There have been some improvements reported over the past six months. The numbers of police trained reportedly are rising. Some officials indicated cadets are more confident when they leave, but there is no way to evaluate these claims or measure performance. Improvements were not evident from reports of the wholesale disintegration of the Mosul police force in November. State Department/INL is trying to develop a follow-on evaluation capability for the Police Training Academy in Jordan and get a better assessment of how many police trained have been hired in each province and their capabilities. The contractors running the Police Academy, however, are not responsible for such continuity. There also appeared to be no recognition of the need for more consistency between military and civilian police training curriculum in Baghdad and Jordan.

Duplicating Efforts by Civil Defense Force/Civil Intervention Force: The roles of the new Iraqi Civil Defense Force and new Civil Intervention Force, both under the Ministry of Interior, are not clear. Both units are expected to be more closely related to military units than to civilian police forces. These forces are being established under CENTCOM, but the Defense Department has not coordinated this effort or integrated it with the civilian police force. State Department personnel recognized that State does not have the experience or expertise to provide aid, training and equipment for these new forces. State Department's office of Diplomatic Security / Anti-terrorism Assistance program (DS/ATA) does dignitary protection, but has no plan for transitioning this responsibility to the new Iraqi Civil Defense or Civil Intervention Forces or even a clear vision of the objective of these forces. There also is an Emergency Response Unit being trained with both military and civilian applications. It is not clear if the future of these forces will be with the military or if there will be a transition back to civilian oversight. In addition, there are questions about who will fund this organization in the future.

Some of the U.S. and other foreign advisors involved feel this criticism was too demanding. CPATT noted that the problems in creating effective police and security forces were, if anything, considerably more challenging at this point than the problems in creating a military force focused purely on military missions. One such advisor put it this way:

The SSR project for the police and border police was the biggest of its kind in the world: Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan all pale into insignificance beside it. The Police in Iraq had been only third or fourth in the pecking order under Saddam and they had all but disappeared, the police stations had all been ransacked and the Ministry of the Interior was dysfunctional to say the least. There was no real capability to speak of and absolutely no ability to maneuver properly trained and equipped police around Iraq.

The IPS had 80,000 people in uniform and of those 12-15,000 had received some form of formal training (four weeks). The payroll though had about 120,000 individuals on it. The training program was designed for democratic policing not for counter insurgency operations. The Baghdad Police Academy was to produce 1,000 policemen every other month and another Academy was being built in Jordan, to produce 2,000 every other month. In the midst of this we introduced the 'Qualifying Committee' that was essentially a redundancy program aimed at about 30,000 police. We set ourselves the aim of capturing the biometric data of every single police and border officer. We recognized that unless we did so we would never bring the police numbers under control nor would we get the payroll sorted out. We worked out that we needed \$60m and went ahead and got it a week before transition.

We had to accelerate the police training program markedly, as well as its recruitment. In addition, we had to accelerate the training program for existing police officers. We had to identify a broad range of specialist courses too (organized crime, forensics, intelligence and so on) as well as trying to shape the Ministry of the Interior – by utilizing the Organize element of the mission - into a more coherent and effective organization. We had to harness what ended up as being a \$2 billion funding program and begin the acquisition process.

We had to organize 300 international police advisors (that number rose every month), as well as 80 international police trainers, to act as mentors. Incoming agencies that were going to assist with the specialist training programs -such as the FBI, ATF and DEA had to be harnessed, brought under command of CPATT and pointed in the right direction. We had to look at the Border Police; where we were going to build 100's of border forts and main crossing points and what they would consist of including the necessary technology. We had to look at the 80,000-strong Facilities Protection Service, who were to protect infrastructure and buildings. We had to buy 45,000 AK-47s, 90,000 pistols, 180,000 uniforms, 15,000 vehicles and refurbish 450 police stations.

We also had to factor in 10 percent for losses, which were needed to replace casualties and destroyed infrastructure and equipment. We also had to create some maneuverability into the police force after they proved unable to deploy from Baghdad, following the US recapture of the Najaf police stations. To do this we created nine Public Order Battalions, two Special Police Regiments (equipped with light armor – we just went ahead and purchased STRYKER) a 250 man Emergency Response Unit and a 5,000-strong highway patrol organization.

Interestingly we also got on with what became known as the Baghdad policing plan. The DCG MNF-I essentially got me in told me there was no plan – some 12 months on – for policing in Baghdad and that we needed to come up with one. This did not require professional police officers – we had some very able Iraqi officers who could articulate what was required we just had to write the plan, identify the resources and get on with implementation.

Clearly this all took time

Few advisors felt, however, that many of the points made in the senate staff report were not valid at the time. A number of the Iraqis involved also felt such comments provided a good picture of the problems seen from Iraqi side. They point out that if anything, such criticism may have understated some aspects of the problem because the MNF only reported on the police trained by the US and Coalition and many local police and security forces were locally recruited, and not integrated into the national/Coalition effort.

The Critical Importance of Effective Police Forces

These points highlight an issue that some who focus primarily on Iraq's military forces tend to ignore. The insurgency may be the greatest threat to the government, but crime has been, and is, a constant day-to-day threat to ordinary Iraqis even in the more secure provinces. White-collar crime and official corruption threaten their livelihoods. Theft and looting not only threaten their economic well-being, but also help cause the break down of essential services like water and electric power. Violent crime, kidnappings and extortion threaten their lives and those of their families, as well as their economic well being.

In areas where the insurgency is active, crime is often linked to insurgency and former regime elements in the insurgency have become particularly good at establishing contacts with criminal elements and paying them to carry out acts of crime and sabotage. In the 10-12 provinces where there is relative safety from insurgent attacks, crime remains endemic and often interacts with local ethnic, sectarian, and tribal violence, as well as

police corruption. The failure of the police also encourages local militias and vigilante groups, creating local rivals to the government.

For most Iraqis, as for most human beings throughout the world, governance is measured in terms of the ability to provide security and essential services. Iraqis, however, are particularly sensitive to the problems caused by police corruption and violence after decades under Saddam Hussein, and are even more sensitive to the use of military forces in urban areas and civil affairs.

Saddam's heritage of using military force to repress the people is particularly important in Shi'ite and Kurdish areas, but almost all Iraqis had reason to fear those elements of the military, like the Special Republican Guards and special security services personnel in military uniforms. The presence of Coalition military as "occupation" forces have compounded these fears and concerns.

As has been discussed earlier, the Coalition's slow beginning ensured the police effort lagged behind the military effort, and the impact lingered through late 2004, and will play out for some years to come. The fact that the following chapters document real progress in this effort does not mean that anyone can ignore the lessons that delayed a critical aspect of Iraqi force development.

As Brigadier General Mackay noted:

We ...made the big mistake of making the Police a second or even third priority task, in the same way that we had done in Bosnia, Kosovo and Afghanistan. As had happened there, a capability gap emerged between the military, who saw policing as "mission creep", and the indigenous forces, who were incapable of doing anything. That vacuum was filled by organized crime, which, in turn fuelled the insurgency; insurgents need to be funded from somewhere and organized crime did just that. Our ability to withdraw from theatre is in direct proportion to the effectiveness of the institutions we have built because, in the absence of law and order, the military have to remain in order to provide security.

The creation of effective police forces was never a luxury that could wait on defeating the insurgents. Giving Iraq stability, and giving the Iraqi government full legitimacy, meant that the Iraqi police had to become as visible as possible and not the Iraqi military. This meant, however, that Iraqi police forces had to have the paramilitary support necessary to operate in moderate threat areas, and the competence necessary to establish a the rule of law with proper regard to human rights. The police have to be perceived as relatively honest and effective, reluctant to use violence, and as free of local tribalism and special interests as possible.

As the following chapters show, creating such a force remained a difficult challenge even when far more resources were made available. Progress does not mean miracles. Creating far more effective vetting and training programs cannot suddenly change the police. The police must change their very "culture." They must become proactive, select and promote on the basis of merit, reduce corruption, and respect human rights and the rule of law. This will take time, and there will be some significant police corruption, problems, and abuses for at least the next five years, and probably for the next decade. Yet, such progress is vital. Building up the best possible police and security forces -- and giving

them the training, equipment, and facilities to deal with organized crime and low-level insurgent violence – is critical to Iraq's future.

VII. End of 2004 as a Benchmark: Trends in the Progress of Iraqi Security and Military Forces in December 2004

One of the ongoing problems in assessing the progress in creating Iraqi security forces is that MNF-I, MNSTC-I, and US reporting on these developments has kept changing over time. As has been discussed earlier, the positive side of these changes is that the initial counts of “on duty” manpower, which exaggerate quantity without regard to quality, were replaced by counts of “trained” manpower after the Eikenberry assessment, and desertions in Fallujah and Sadr City in the spring of 2004. These, in turn, were replaced by still more realistic counts of “trained and equipped” manpower in the early fall of 2004, following a new assessment of Iraqi capabilities by MNSTC-I.

None of these methods of counting Iraqi strength reflected combat readiness or mission capability, which is the purpose of creating Iraqi forces. It was not until the spring of 2005, when the MNSTC-I developed a still further Iraqi Security Force Unit Capability rating system -- with four levels of readiness, based on personnel, command and control, training, sustainment, equipping, and leadership -- that either the Coalition or the Iraqi government began to measure mission effectiveness.

Manning at the End of 2004: A Statistical “Snapshot”

Data provided by the MNSTC-I do, however, provide a set of 2004 benchmarks for comparing future progress, although the data cannot be conveniently provided on an exact end of year basis because of reporting problems and changes in the categories being reported. If nothing else, such data show that significant changes were occurring in Iraqi efforts and that the force development effort was gathering further momentum by the end of the year.

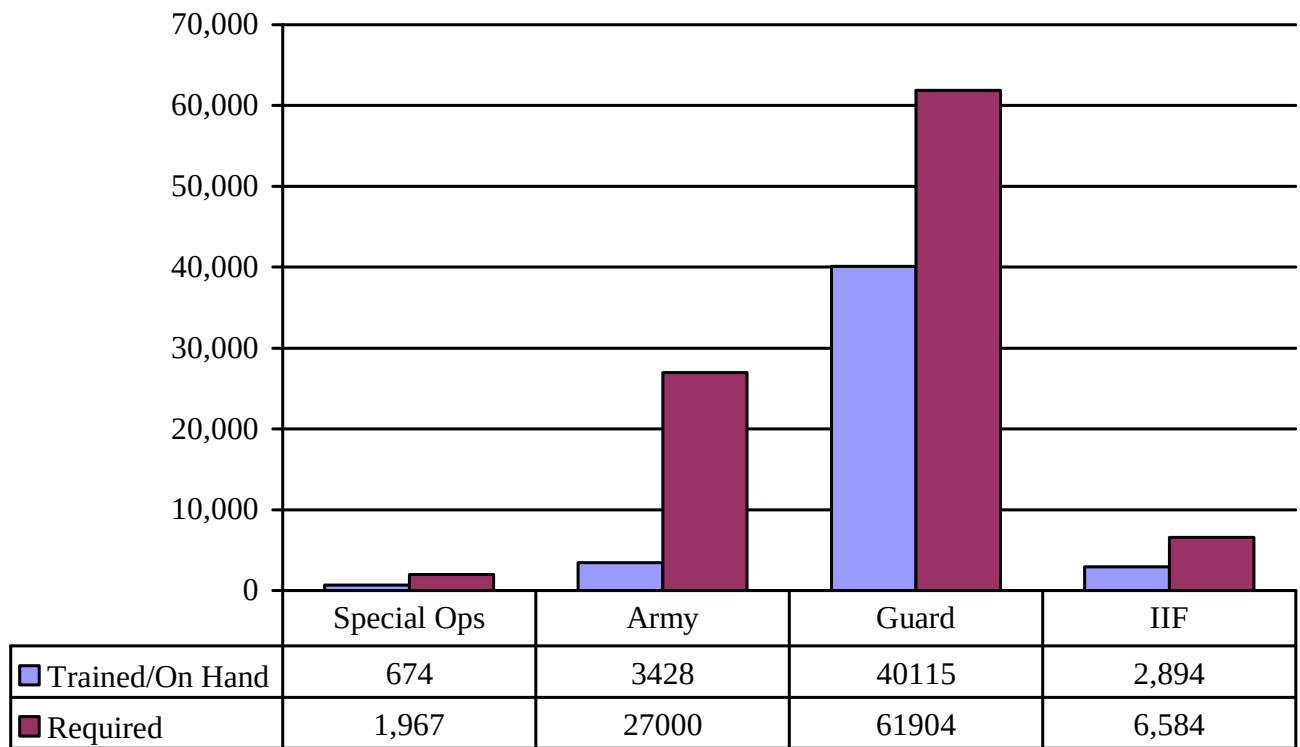
Figures 6 through 9 illustrate the status of the Iraqi security and military forces through December 2004. These figures are based on Coalition reporting to the UN Security Council, issued on December 6, which provides a better picture of the difference between trained and untrained Iraqi security and military forces than the US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Reports, issued after September 2004. It should be noted, however, that the numbers for the forces under the Ministry of the Interior are generally unreliable, as some data were provided by local chiefs of police, whereas military force numbers were reported by Coalition commanders.

- Figure 6 shows the numbers of National Guard, army, and special operations forces that trained or on hand compared to the numbers required in December 2004.
- Figure 7 shows the number of police and Border Enforcement personnel that were trained or on hand compared to the numbers required. It is important to note that those troops listed as trained/on hand were not all fully trained or equipped. Despite repeated assaults on police stations and National Guard posts, and attacks on officers and Guardsmen headed home on leave, the total numbers of police and National Guardsmen had increased slightly. The numbers for the army, special operations, and Border Enforcement, however, had decreased, as more demanding standards were applied to “trained and equipped” manpower and low-grade manpower was eliminated or deserted.

- Figures 8 and 9 show the composition of the Iraqi military and security forces as of December 6, 2004. The military was overwhelmingly dominated by National Guardsmen while police made up the largest proportion of the security forces. It takes time to order equipment, receive it, distribute it to large numbers of forces going through training, train units, and to provide bases for units that have completed training. The fact remains, however, that the slow beginnings in trying to create effective Iraqi forces mean that the progress in the manning of both the military and security forces remained well below the required strength necessary to meet the mission need, and similar problems still existed in terms of a force quality.

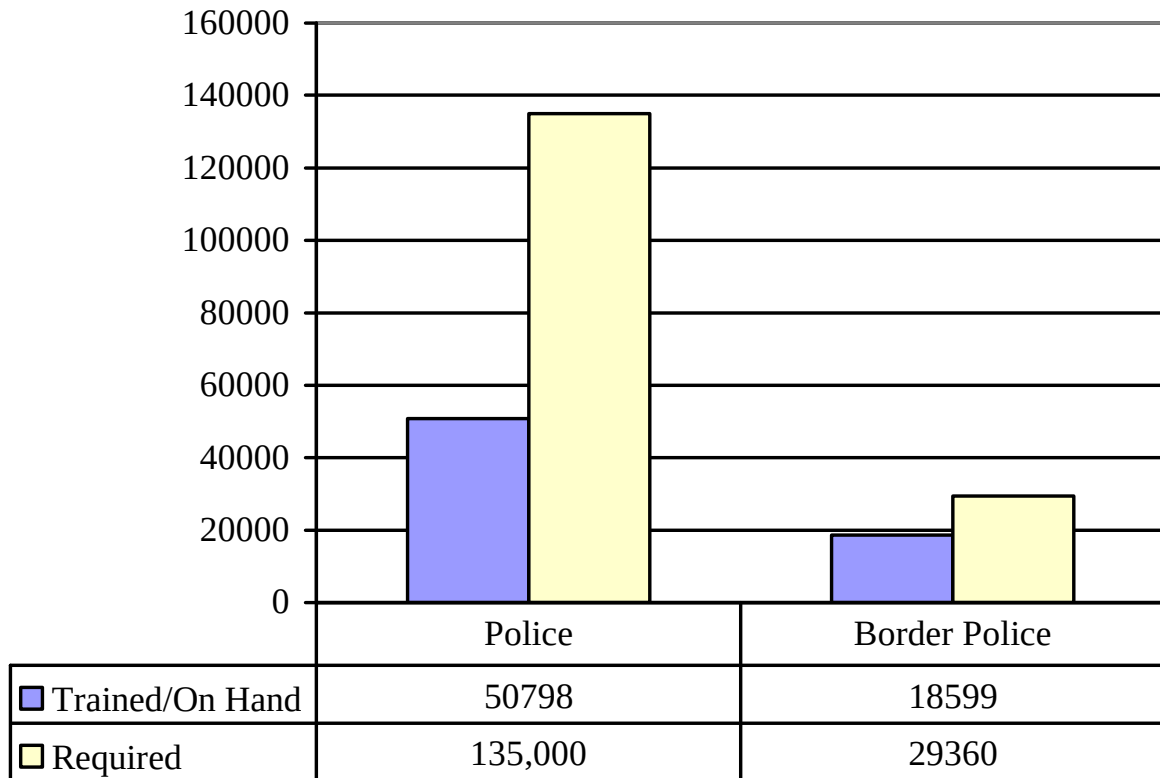
Figure 6

Iraqi Military Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 12/06/04



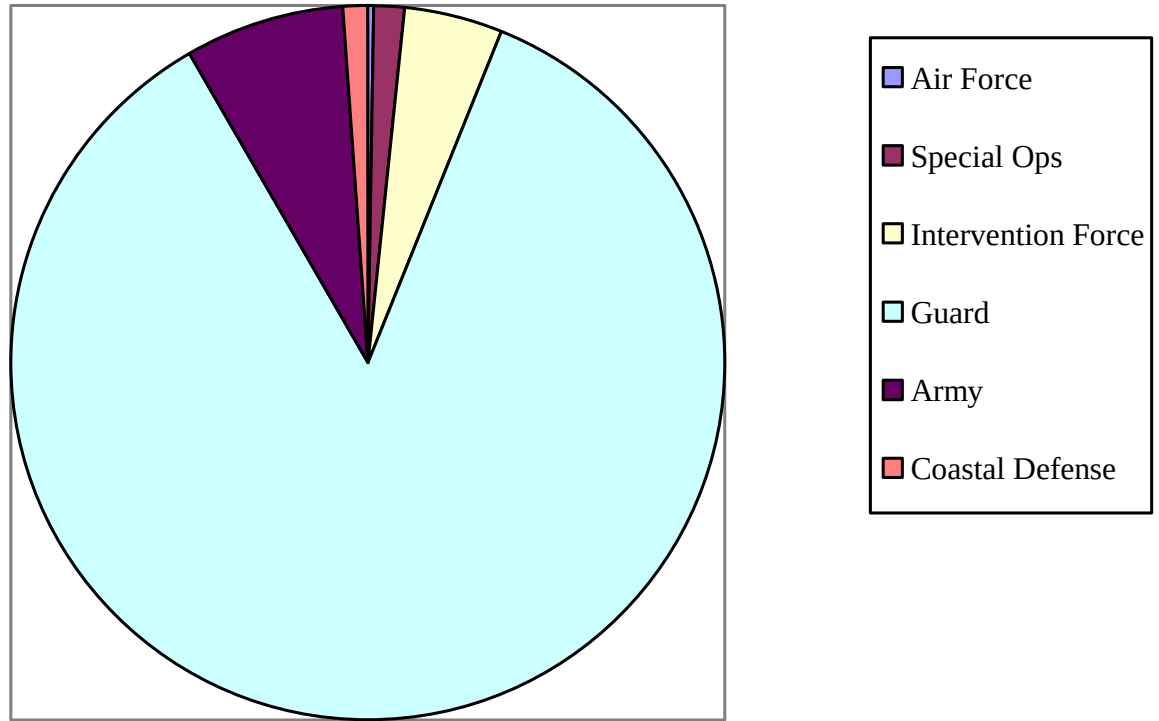
Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546. The "IIF", or Iraqi intervention Force numbers, are taken from the 01 December 2004 Iraq Weekly Status Update available at www.defendamerica.mil.

Figure 7
Iraqi Security Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 12/06/04



Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546.

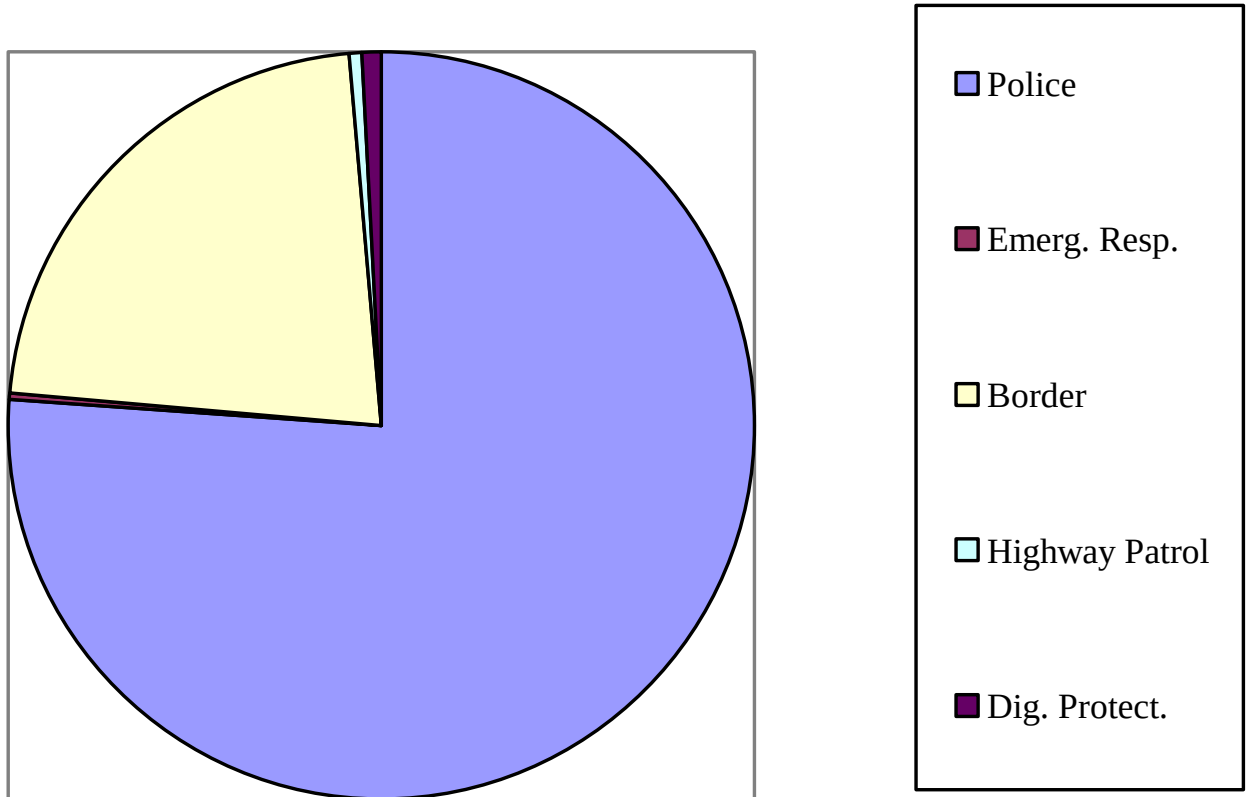
Figure 8
Iraqi Military Forces by Force Element as of 12/06/04



Air Force	Special Ops	Intervention Force	Guard	Army	Coastal Defense
167	674	2062	40115	3428	484

Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546.

Figure 9
Iraqi Security Forces by Force Element as of 12/06/04



Police	Emergency Response	Border Patrol	Highway Patrol	Dignitary Protection
43627	168	14593	370	484

Source: 6 December 2004 report by the United States on behalf of the Multinational Force pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1546. These numbers include those on hand. The report to the UN did not include numbers for the Highway Patrol and Dignitary Protection Service. These numbers were taken from the 1 December 2004 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil. 'Emerg. Resp.' stands for Emergency Response Unit. 'Dig. Protect' stands for the Dignitary Protection Service.

Manning at the End of 2004: Force Trends

Figures 10 through 14 expand the end of 2004 statistical “snapshot” shown in the previous figures to portray the trends in Iraqi force development:

- Figure 10 shows the levels of manning in both the Iraqi Army and Iraqi National Guard from December 2003 to January 2005. The army’s manning levels were erratic throughout 2004. They consistently fell towards the end of 2004 but saw an upsurge to 7,598 in January 2005. What would appear to be a significant drop in the Intervention Force’s manning levels from January 12th to January 19th is more likely the result of reassigning forces as opposed to desertion or dropout.
- The forces listed as part of the IIF January 12th were re-designated as part of the regular Iraqi army as of January 19th. The National Guard’s manning level has remained relatively constant, though it is important to note a decrease in over 6,000 Guardsmen between December 2004 and January 2005. The number of trained and equipped soldiers dropped in November, but has gone up as more units have completed their training.
- Reports from Fallujah and Samarra continued to indicate that small units of both the army and National Guard fought well. It also appeared that the quality of both the Guardsmen and soldiers was slowly improving. In one instance on January 18, 2005, four suicide bombs rocked Baghdad within 90 minutes. Yet, the loss of life was far less than it could have been because of Iraqi action. Col. Mike Murray, commander of the US 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry, stated that all of the bombers failed to reach their designated targets. He stated, “Out of four car bombs in Baghdad...in every case there was an Iraqi soldier either from the Iraqi army or the Iraqi national guard or an Iraqi policeman that prevented that car bomb from getting to its intended target.”⁸⁴ The challenge to retain Army soldiers remains a concern.
- Figure 11 shows the levels of manning in both the Iraqi police and Iraqi border enforcement from December 2003 to January 2005. Police manning levels steadily decreased from the peak in June 2004 (92,227) until late November 2004 when the numbers slowly began increasing once more. The drastic drop in the numbers of police needs to be kept in perspective. While police units were frequently overrun, failed to report for duty, or joined the insurgency, newer reports indicate that some units in Samarra fought tenaciously when attacked. It should be noted that the Justice Department training team has been administering the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) since May 2003 and they claim that 400 women are employed as police officers in Iraq. The levels in the manning of the Border Enforcement Agency remain erratic and it is unclear as to how many individuals are actually out on patrol.
- Figure 12 depicts the stated manning goals of the Iraqi Army in contrast with the actual manning levels of the army over the previous year. The manning end goal of the Iraqi Army has steadily dropped since the peak estimation of 40,000 in December 2003. In May 2004, the total required dropped by 5,000 and it dropped by a further 8,000 in July. The drop in the requirements for the army is likely caused by further specialization within the Iraqi military and security forces with regard to missions and roles. The Iraqi Intervention Force and the Iraqi Special Forces were created as separate entities with specific missions and the police and National Guard generally confront insurgents with US backing unless they are massed in some large force like in Fallujah. When they are in static positions, the army tends to have a larger role.
- Figure 13 contrasts the manning goals of the Iraqi National Guard with the actual manning levels of the Iraqi National Guard over the last year. Iraqi National Guard requirements increased slightly in May 2004 and July 2004 before skyrocketing in

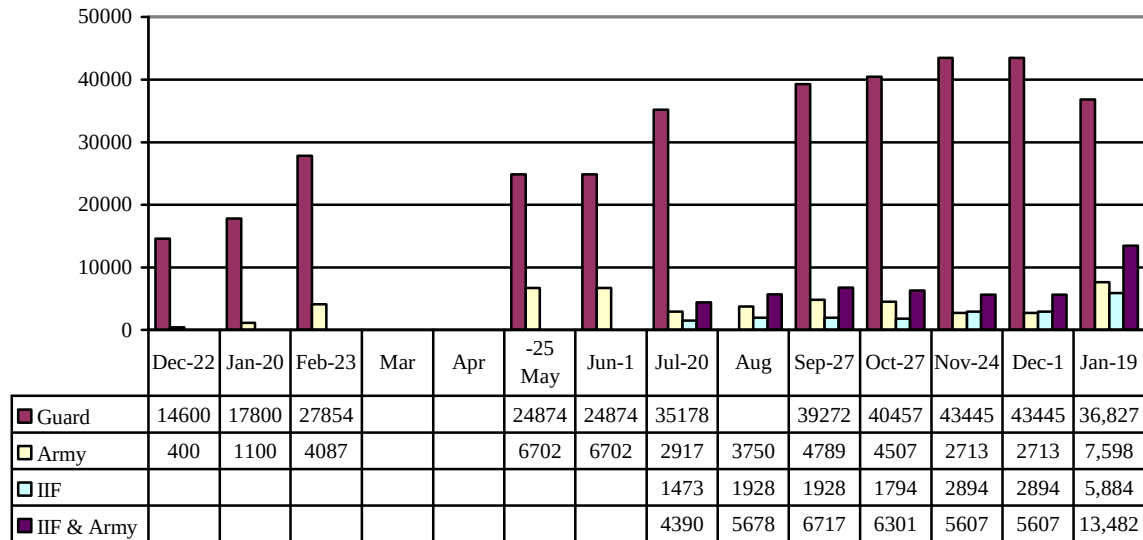
September 2004 with an increase of over 20,000 in the end goal strength as a result of the comprehensive review of Iraqi Security Force requirements that Ambassador Negroponte undertook in the fall of 2004.

- The National Guard was “merged” with the army on January 6, 2005, in an effort to create a larger, more cohesive, and more effective military force, although experts involved in the US training effort cautioned that it requires synchronization of effort to train, equip, base, and to integrate training resources such as trainers and training locations. As one expert put it, “One should not expect a constantly increasing generation of force given the complexity of the task and the requirement to use Coalition forces (i.e. those who sometimes conduct operations) to assist with the training process. The Coalition spent considerable time and effort to improve the capabilities of ING battalions, something this report overlooks because it focuses so much on the alleged weakness in the initial training program without any focus on the follow-on training the Coalition provides to ING units. Some 42 battalions of ING are conducting operations at the squad to battalion level (as of early January 2005). They are on the street, and elsewhere, providing security — often with strong effect. Some units are not as strong as we would like, but others are doing better than expected.”
- Lastly, Figure 14 illustrates the stated manning goals of the Iraqi police in contrast with the actual manning levels of the Iraqi police over the last year. Police manning actually exceeded early estimates of the required numbers. Subsequent decreases are, in part, a result of Iraqis taking a larger role in the candidate screening process. The Iraqi Interim Government, while slow to do so, has begun to fire police that fail to show up for work, police that cooperate with insurgents, and police that are blatantly corrupt.

It should also be noted, however, that the insurgent campaign of intimidation and attacks also affected police manning levels. Since October 2004, manning seems to be slowly increasing, but it is nowhere near the estimated 135,000 that are needed. The requirements for police manning increased dramatically in May 2004 and then increased in September 2004 as a result of the review undertaken by Ambassador Negroponte.

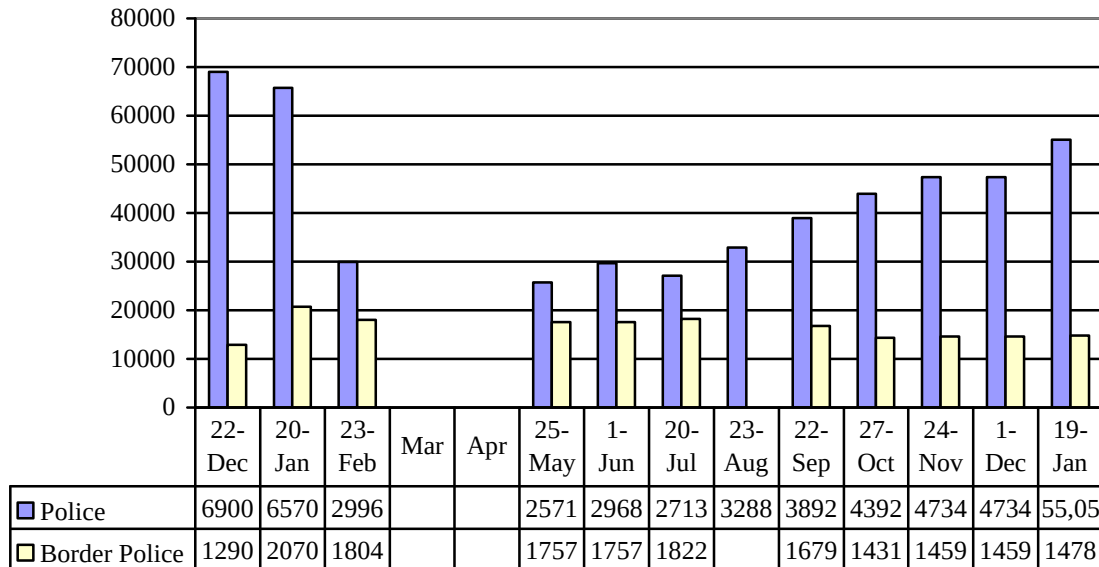
Taken together, these figures show trends that reflect progress in strengthening the force elements most critical to giving Iraqi forces the capability to deal with insurgents, terrorists, and serious criminals. They do not show how many men actually served in units that stood and fought, or that had proper training, equipment, and facilities. They do, however, show that Iraqi forces had come a long way since June 2004, and that a major effort was now underway to overcome the legacy of the earlier failures.

Figure 10
Levels of Iraqi Military Forces Over Time, 12/03-01/05



Note: Breakouts of the numbers of National Guard on duty but not trained are not available prior to February 23rd, in May and June, and are not available after September 27th. The Army figures include only those soldiers considered trained and equipped. This figure uses the Iraq Weekly Status Reports released first by the Department of Defense and now the Department of State, available at <http://www.defendamerica.mil> as well as information provided by MNSTC-1. For consistency, the figure uses the reports that appear at the end of each month. There are no available numbers for March and April, and only the IIF and Army numbers are available for August. This figure does not include the Iraqi Air Force, Civil Intervention Force, Highway Patrol, or Iraqi Navy.

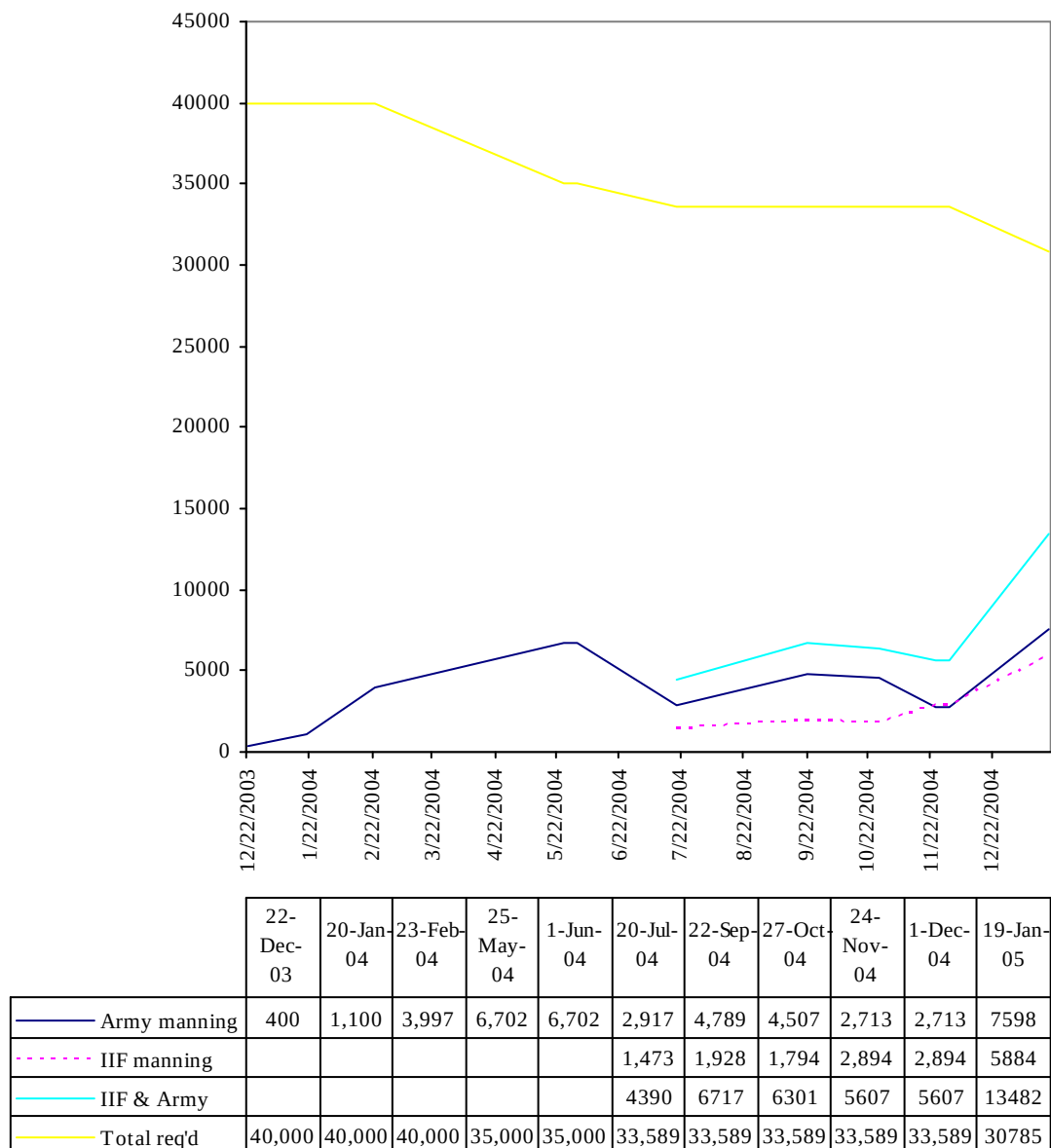
Figure 11
Iraqi Security Forces Over Time, 12/03-01/05



Note: There are no data for Iraqi security force levels for March, April, and August 2003. From February 2003 on, the Border Police include the entire manpower for the Department of Border Enforcement. This figure uses the Iraq Weekly Status Reports released by the Department of Defense, available at <http://www.defendamerica.mil>, as well as data provided by MNSTC-1. For consistency, the figure uses the reports that appear at the end of each month. Gaps in data reflect unavailable numbers.

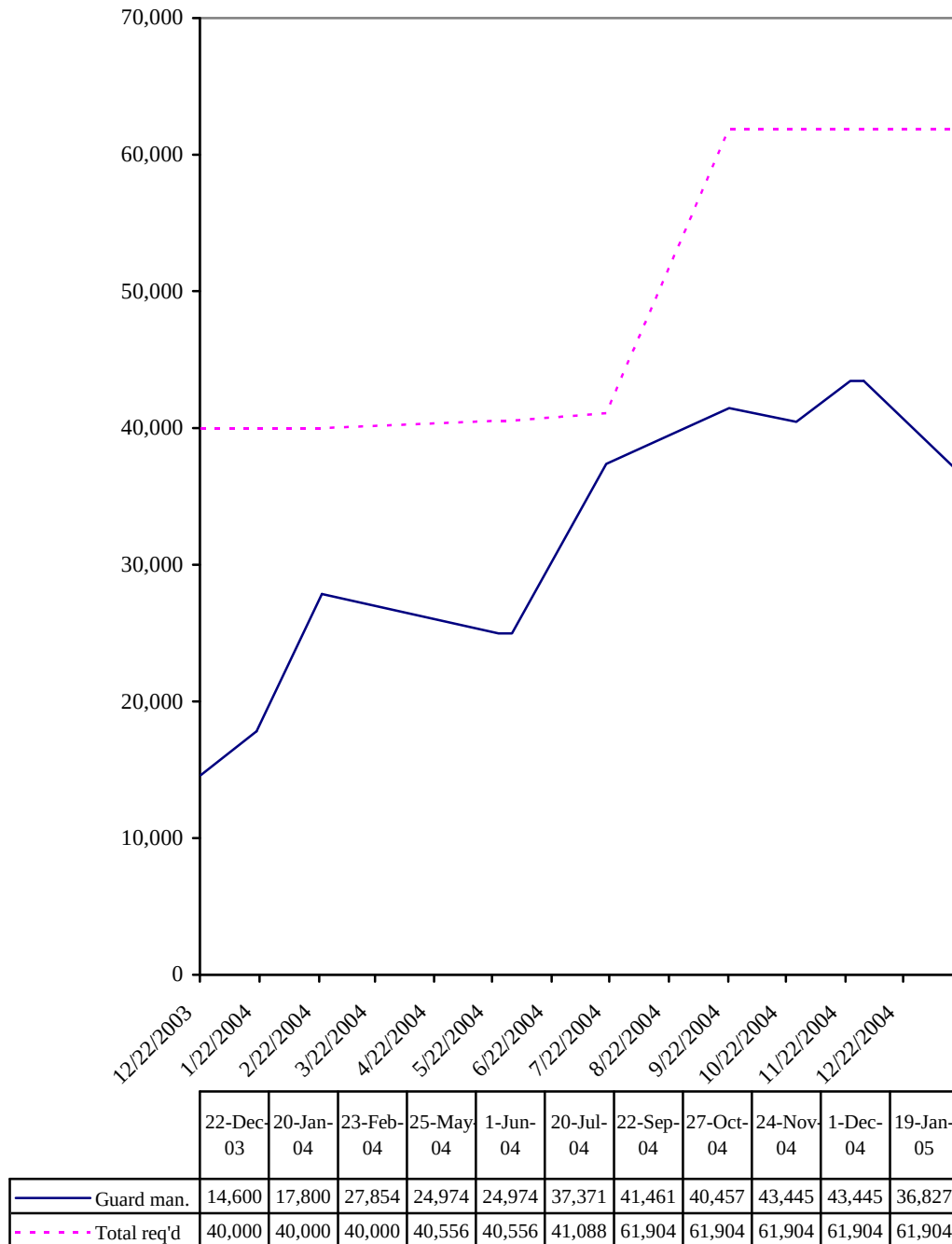
The row for police (above) shows two different types of data: The numbers for police up until 23 February reflect police reported as being on duty. The numbers since 23 February reflect the number trained and equipped and from 27 October the total numbers reflect those trained and equipped either through the 8-week or 3-week program. Thus, the drop in numbers is not as significant as it first appears.

Figure 12
Trends in Iraqi Army vs. Required Total over Time as of 01/05



Source: Weekly Status Report available at http://www.defenselink.mil/la/iraq_stat.html, <http://www.defendamerica.mil>, and inquiries to MNSTC-1. These numbers include those in training and on hand up until July when numbers indicating those trained/equipped became available. The graph utilizes the figures available at the end of each month. Months have been omitted when data were not available. The “total required” column lists the total number of soldiers required by the army up until the creation of the Intervention Force. Following the creation of the Intervention Force, the “total required” column includes the soldiers needed by the regular army and the Intervention Force.

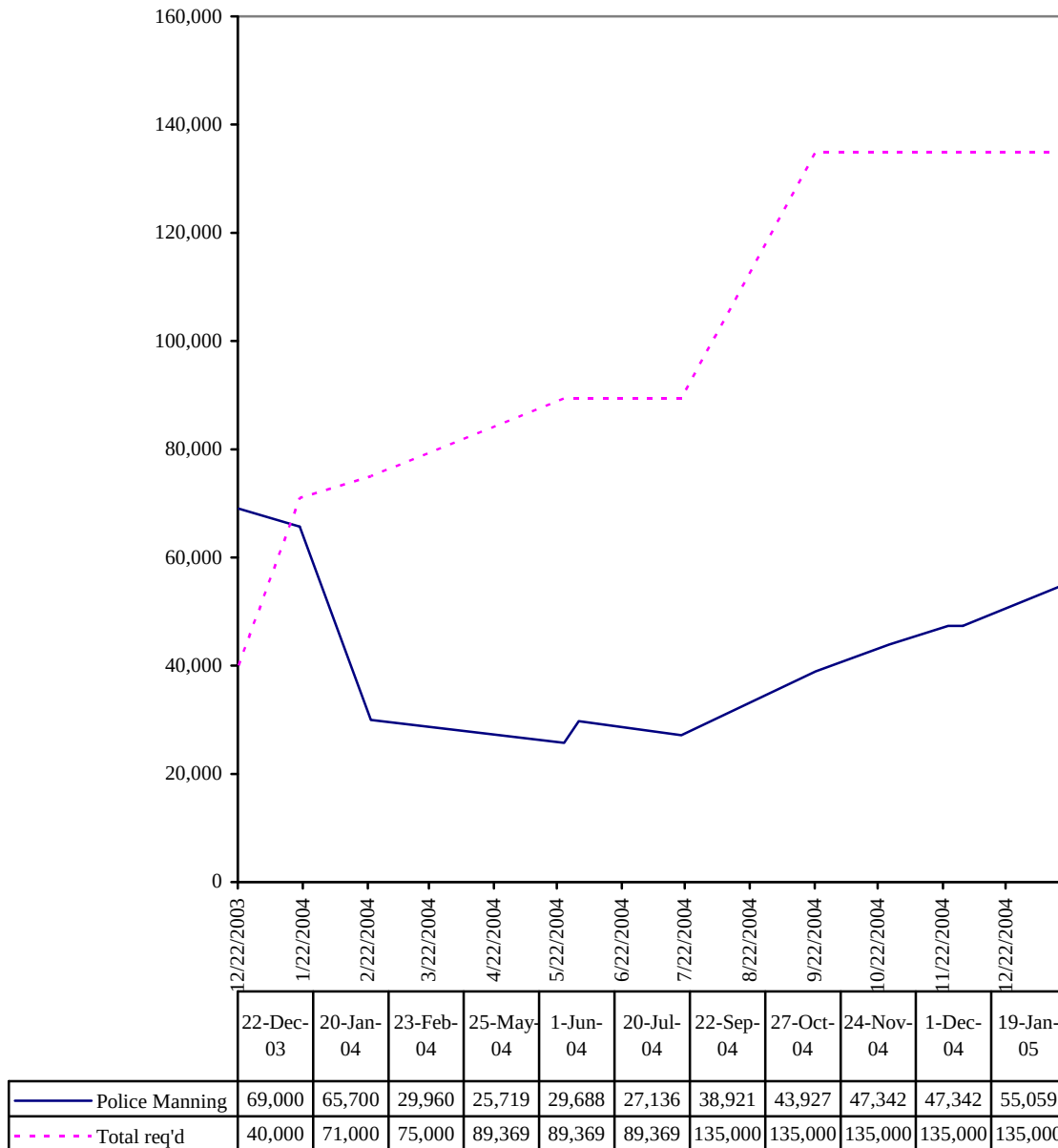
Figure 13
Trends in Iraqi Guard vs. Required Total over Time as of 01/05



Source: Weekly Status Report available at http://www.defenselink.mil/la/iraq_stat.html and <http://www.defendamerica.mil>. This graph includes those in training and on hand, as breakouts are unavailable. It utilizes the figures available at the end of each month. Months have been omitted when data were not given.

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Figure 14
Trends in Iraqi Police vs. Required Total over Time as of 01/05



Source: Weekly Status Report available at http://www.defenselink.mil/la/iraq_stat.html, <http://www.defendamerica.mil>, and data provided by MNSTC-1. The numbers for police up until 23 February reflect police reported as being on duty, not those on duty and trained, as breakouts are unavailable prior to February.

Understanding the Manpower Trend Data

Ironically, some of the trends that had the effect of cutting total manpower, or lowering the rate of manpower increase, conceal positive developments. Far too many men had been recruited or retained at all ranks during the first year of occupation that lacked the proper physical capabilities, ability to absorb training, and sometimes literacy. Many were poorly vetted or recruited for political purposes. Others were corrupt, failed to lead, or were cowardly. These men now had to be phased out or dismissed, sometimes including senior officers. As a result, the build up of manpower was in some ways more impressive than the figures shown might imply.

At the same time, the trends in total manpower numbers disguised other significant problems.

- Recruit quality remained a problem, as did the quality of the output of those training courses that accepted low-grade entrants. Facilities, training, and equipment had improved, but many recruits had limited literacy, no experience with vehicles and modern technology, and little experience with disciplined or structured work experience. The level of education and work experience Iraq had before the Iran-Iraq War was long gone, and even many recruits with military backgrounds under the regime of Saddam Hussein were loosely organized garrison forces, conscripted into service, and with little meaningful operational experience.
- The facts of day-to-day life in Iraq created additional difficulties. Iraqis lived in a social structure and cash economy and one where forces had to visit their families to transfer money and provide services that simply are not as yet available at a local level. Social contact was an important fact of Iraqi life, and families were vulnerable and subject to intimidation in many areas. This often led units to have 10-15 percent of their manpower outside the unit. MNSTC-I reported that in an effort to combat the limits of a cash only economy, a fourth company was added to the battalion structure to give increased scheduling flexibility (so that Iraqi soldiers can get the cash home) and to improve readiness.
- Motivation remained a major problem. From the start, recruiting relied heavily on the fact so many young men could not find any other job. This inevitably meant much of the recruitment base had a limited incentive to fight or take high risks, and such problems were compounded by the fact the proper leadership, facilities, equipment, training and reinforcement capabilities were often lacking. Some insurgents and terrorists may seek martyrdom. When the system fails the man, the man cannot be blamed for failing the system.
- The ethnic and religious makeup of the Iraqi military and security forces was an additional concern. The stated MNSTC-I goal was to create an army that is at least 30 percent comprised of Sunni Muslims, yet reports indicate that Shi'ites and Kurds did much of the fighting in 2004.⁸⁵ Data are not available on the current ethnic and religious mix of the Iraqi forces is unknown. But both US advisors and Iraqi officers felt more still has to be done to create religiously and ethnically diverse forces in such a way that no group feels disenfranchised or threatened.
- The improvements in the vetting and training problems made in virtually all elements of Iraqi forces in 2004 could only be implemented slowly, and great caution was needed in removing incompetent, incapable, or corrupt personnel. The risk of a political "backlash" in the form of hostility against the Iraqi government or Coalition was all too real, as was the risk of providing new recruits to the insurgency. Changing a manpower "culture"

based on favouritism and corruption could not be done quickly, and new retirement and severance payment options had to be developed and implemented. Vetting and training facilities remained limited in size, and in many cases, any form of manpower could serve some useful purpose—even if this was a token deterrent or minor security function.

- Corruption and favoritism remained a problem, particularly in the police. Incompetent and inactive officers sometimes were left in office until a major scandal or failure occurred. Selection and promotion was still beginning to be carried out on a merit basis and according to the rules, and large numbers of officers and personnel still lacked the kind of training that could change the “culture” of Iraqi forces that had developed under previous regimes. Significant numbers of local police were still appointed outside the new system the Ministry of Interior and MNSTC-I were trying to establish, and CPATT still lacked all of the manpower and resources it needed to be effective.
- No amount of vetting and training can substitute for experience in combat or crisis. Large numbers of men were being put into new units without experienced leaders, and without any history of unit cohesion. These units lacked cadres of MNSTC-I and MNF-I advisors to help them through the transition, and lacked the equipment and support to outmatch the weapons and equipment in the hands of terrorists and insurgents. Police units in particular often had to be deployed in highly vulnerable and poorly protected posts in urban areas or isolated from immediate support. The recruiting, training, and equipping programs were gathering real momentum but did not, by themselves, produce combat units

Equipment: End of 2004 and Beginning of 2005

The US weekly status reports on Iraq no longer reported equipment deliveries in terms of total numbers delivered to date or relative to total requirement by the end of 2004. The MSTC-I did, however, report total equipment deliveries per month. It reported on December 5th that total deliveries for November 2004 included:

- 44 Panhard M3 armored personnel carriers, 4 T-55 heavy tanks, 19 MTLBs, and 4 Comp Air 7SL aircraft.
- More than 2 million RPK/PKM machine guns rounds, 1.2 million 9mm pistol rounds, 2.8 million AK-47 rounds, 450,000 12 gauge shotgun rounds, 999,000 5.6mm rounds, 48 shotguns, 1,000 9mm pistols, nearly 1,000 PKM and RPK machineguns, 1,150 smoke and riot grenades, 1,900 9mm Glock pistols, 5,400 AK-47 assault rifles, 20 Walther pistols, 78 rocket propelled grenade launchers, 16,000 sets of body armor, 7,400 helmets,
- Two 2-ton trucks, 14 ambulances, 10 GAZ heavy transport trucks, 15 Chevy trucks, 4 Dodge Durangos, 52 Chevy Lumina police sedans,
- 200 vehicle and handheld radios, 150 night vision goggles, some 11,000 field jackets, 3,000 cold weather jackets, 2,000 mattresses and beds, 40,000 desert combat uniforms, 11,000 pairs of running shoes, 300 kneepads, 600 tactical vests, 1,000 holsters, 9,500 t-shirts, 1,200 binoculars, 1,000 handcuff sets, 20 blunt trauma suits, 1,450 compasses, 132 GPS positioning systems, 800 “MAG” lights, 750 whistles, 4,150 hats, 344 first aid kits, 2,000 canteens, 1,500 police shirts, and 2,000 police uniforms.⁸⁶

If one looks at total deliveries between July 1 and December 1, 2004, they included more than 69 million rounds of ammunition with another 148 million rounds stored in twelve ammunition sites throughout Iraq. They also included 70,000 pistols, 49,000 AK-47s, 1,700 heavy PKM machine guns, 84,700 sets of body armor, 5,700 vehicles, 54,000 helmets, and 20,000 radios.⁸⁷

What Such Equipment Trend Data Mean

These figures show that a more rapid rate of delivery was taking place, and that the mix of equipment reflected a considerably better effort to meet the overall needs of Iraqi forces. The problem is that there is no way to relate such data to prior shortfalls, ongoing losses, or total current needs. It is also unclear whether equipment was being provided in the form that gave Iraqi the feeling they had what they needed to fight and survive, and that they would eventually get what they needed to operate as independent forces.

Some steps could be carried at very little cost while also boosting Iraqi security and military force confidence. One simple example was that of the ski mask. Providing security and military force members with a ski mask allowed them to obscure their identity from insurgents and their sympathizers or informers.⁸⁸ The insurgents were less likely to discover the identities of the policemen and soldiers, and insurgents found it harder intimidate and/or threaten their families, enhancing confidence and effectiveness of Iraqi forces. MNSTC-I reported that as of mid-2005, ski masks were issued to some forces.

Likewise, providing Iraqi forces with the tool needed to sight their aging AK-47s helped to improve their shooting accuracy and reduce instances of collateral damage.

On the other hand, this list of deliveries again reveals how lightly armed and equipped most Iraqi forces were as the end of 2004, and raises further questions about the level of equipment shortfalls tolerated during 2003 and the first half of 2004. Iraqi forces were still being created with little more than the most basic equipment.

Americans who evaluate the performance of Iraqi forces at this time, and the lessons for future training and support efforts, should remember that this was the same period when an even more intense US debate began over uparmoring Humvees and trucks, and providing heavy armor. Iraqi forces in the field were still being given little or no protection by US and Coalition equipment standards. It was already clear that if Iraqi forces were to stand on their own, demonstrate the true sovereignty and legitimacy of Iraq forces, and phase out Coalition forces, they must have the equipment to both operate with reasonable safety and decisively outgun and outmaneuver insurgents and terrorists.

The risk that weapons supplied to the Iraqi military could be used against Coalition forces, or by the factions in civil fighting if the Iraqi political process failed, was also a matter of growing concern. Divided sectarian and ethnic allegiances among military personnel, and the threat of civil war or military coup, has made the Pentagon uncertain about equipping the Iraqi military with heavy weaponry.

This concern was compounded by the continuing role of ethnic and sectarian militias inside and outside Iraqi forces, the existence of police, and increasing insurgent efforts to provoke full-scale civil war.

Facilities at the End of 2004

The US Department of State reported on the number of reconstruction projects that were underway as of December 2, 2004. The report listed 88 border posts, 17 police stations, and 16 military bases for the Iraqi security and military forces that are being built.⁸⁹ Like

most US reporting, however, it is impossible to know the extent to which such claims of progress relate to the requirement, how many survive the insurgency, and how many are really adequate once completed. Project reporting that is not related to valid objectives and requirements, and where there is no evaluation of the value of what is delivered, is essentially meaningless.

This is important because so many facilities for the police and security forces had been grossly inadequate and under-equipped in the past, and many were still extremely vulnerable to insurgent attack and impossible to isolate or protect in the densely populated areas where they are located.

Once again, Iraqi forces suffered from a dual standard. Many were still being deployed without anything approaching the physical security of their Coalition allies. However, regular Army and IIF facilities were becoming better protected, as were many ING and police locations. Some ING were also co-located on Coalition forward operating bases. Police stations were often difficult to harden due to their physical location relative to other structures and roads in the area, but US experts report that efforts to provide better force protection to police stations were well underway.

Spending at the End of 2004

The Department of Defense weekly status report still showed relatively low levels of FY2004 aid spending on security forces as of December 8, 2004. The total apportionment for security and law enforcement was shown as \$5,045 million. A total of \$4,278 million was committed, \$2,930 million was obligated, and \$961 million had been spent. This was less than 20 percent of the total apportionment months after the FY2004 year ended.⁹⁰

Part of the problem was the way the money was appropriated and allocated. A total of \$1,800 million of the \$5,045 million was not appropriated until October 2004. MNSTC-I reports that several hundred million of that amount had to be spent in FY2005 because it was designated for the INL police trainers and advisors. As a result, the amount obligated was adequate relative to the money actually available, and the amount spent was actually 30 percent of the \$3,200 billion set aside in the IRRF.⁹¹

Operational Readiness at the End of 2004

The new Iraqi forces still lacked operational readiness, and there were many occasions on which Iraqi forces failed to perform their missions. These failures were the almost inevitable result of insurgent attacks, a lack of leadership and integrity on the part of some Iraqi officers, and a lack of experience and dedication on the part of Iraqi enlisted men.

As might be expected, various insurgent groups made Iraqi forces more and more of a target as Iraqi forces increased in strength and came to play a larger role in securing Iraq. It is all too clear that insurgents sought to prevent and break up the successful development of Iraqi military, security, and police forces.

The new and inexperienced Iraqi forces were often vulnerable and lacked the experience to be effective. Military forces do not simply need training and equipment, they need leadership and experience at the unit level and to develop a sense of identity, mutual

trust, and unit integrity. This can take years in normal military practice, and US and Western military history is filled with examples of problems that occurred when new units were created without large cadres of proven leaders and other ranks.

The failure of the Iraqi police forces in Mosul during and after the battle of Fallujah in November 2004, was one example of such problems.⁹² Nearly 75 percent of some 4,000 Iraqi forces deserted when insurgents attacked on November 12, 2004, in the midst of the US-Iraqi attack on insurgents in Fallujah. The ranks of Iraqi National Guard units dropped from 1,100 to 300 men in a matter of hours, and two companies – some 200 men – abandoned all of their equipment. The 106th Iraqi National Guard Battalion did well, but another battalion virtually disintegrated.⁹³

MNSTC-I reported that their commander Brigadier General Mohammed Keri Barhawi was wounded twice, attacked many times while serving as the police chief in Mosul, and that his forces only disintegrated after repeated attacks, intimidation, and, at times, lack of Coalition support. A senior observer commented as follows:

Opening up two fronts in April 2004 against insurgents in Fallujah and then Moqtada Militia in Baghdad simultaneously was very unfortunate. The new Iraqi Army either fled or rebelled and almost disintegrated overnight – we were far too optimistic and when you look at how their deployment was managed you can only wince. To then allow an inconclusive ending to Fallujah and the obvious festering implications to coalesce which included the ability of insurgents in Fallujah to sustain the overall insurgency campaign was another major error.

There were Iraqi failures to deal with this situation at the command level. Gen. Babakir Shawkat Zebari, the top Iraqi general, refused to admit the scope of the problem at Fallujah. On December 26, 2004, he stated, “Not a single soldier ran away from the battlefield [in Fallujah]. It was not a difficult battle. Fallujah was cleaned and the number of our martyrs [or fatalities] was only seven.”⁹⁴ To not recognize problems and setbacks within the Iraqi security and military forces compounds the problem by failing to learn from past mistakes.

Somewhat similar failures occurred in Samarra, although at a lower level. Some 2,000 Iraqi troops did join the US forces fighting to retake the city in October 2004, but only after some 300 men out of a 750-man battalion deserted before the fighting even began.⁹⁵

Progress In Spite of Setbacks

At the same time, two senior US officers made statements about the level of progress Iraqi forces had achieved by the end of 2004 that help put these problems in a more balanced perspective. In a December 6, 2004 interview, Lieutenant-General David Petraeus, the Commander of MNSTC-I, was questioned about problems in training the Iraqi security and military forces. When pressed as to whether the problem with the security forces was low morale, infiltration, cowardice, leadership, or intimidation, Petraeus replied, “It’s probably all of the above.”⁹⁶

Petraeus made it clear, however, that he felt Iraqi security forces were improving despite setbacks like the dissolution of the Mosul police force in late November. He stated:

This is a rollercoaster that we are riding. You have to realize that every day there are going to be bumps, sometimes explosions, sometimes real plunges and the idea is to make darn sure you have

got your eye on the horizon and you are still climbing with the rollercoaster over time. And I think that's the case.⁹⁷

US General John Abizaid, the Commander, U.S. Central Command, gave a press conference on December 6, 2004, and highlighted what he considered the achievements and problems within the Iraqi security and military forces.

He expressed concern over the level of militant activity and the apparent dissolution of the police force in Mosul. When asked whether the Iraqi forces could assume more of the security missions by the Iraqi national election date, Abizaid replied:

Iraqi security forces aren't as mature as they need to be for the security environment that's going to exist in the next several months. That doesn't mean that they are not fighting and dying—they are. I think the mid-level chain of command has got to be developed at brigade and division levels in order for the armed forces to develop firmly.

Over time, they will get better. Their equipment is coming in; their organization is developing. I think the Army and National Guard units are going to be challenged over the next several months by an awful lot of fighting. They know it. We know it and what we've got to do is not risk their development by committing them at the wrong time to combat operations.

In places where there is lots of intimidation like Mosul, it's clear that the police are not holding together to the degree we would like them to, so, all these things taken into account make it pretty clear to me that it's a good move for commanders in Iraq to get additional forces to get through the election period. This is the single most important political event that's going to take place in Iraq since [sic] its liberation.⁹⁸

General Abizaid's comments came five days after Iraqi National Security Minister Dr. Qassim Dawood stated that security of the polling centers during the election would be the responsibility of the Iraqi security forces, and of Iraqi society more broadly, and that the US forces would only be called on if the centers faced a major attack.⁹⁹ The US Department of Defense indicated that US troop levels would rise to 150,000 in Iraq to help provide security for the national election.

Abizaid was, however, positive about the progress in creating Iraqi forces, and the impact they would have in taking over from US and other Coalition forces:

"It's an intangible action that I'm not so sure I can predict. When do you reach the tipping point where Iraqi security forces are capable of standing alone without our backup? It will be awhile. I wouldn't want to make a prediction on when that's going to be."

"If Iraqi forces are capable of conducting more combat operations independently, the same levels of U.S. forces won't be necessary."

"You come to a point where the combat multinational portion of the force becomes secondary to the training effort."¹⁰⁰

When Gen. Abizaid was asked about the post-election environment in Iraq, he stated, "...If the circumstances are such that, as in Afghanistan, the political process leads to better security...and if the Iraqi security forces start to gel in terms of leadership and seasoning in important areas around the country – which I think will happen – then we can talk about reshaping [US] forces."¹⁰¹

Abizaid made it clear that the goal for US forces would be to take on the training of Iraqi security forces as their main mission with providing general security as a secondary mission, one to be undertaken on a lesser scale and when the Iraqis ask for assistance. He

also commented that if Iraqi force developed moved to the point where training became the primary mission of the US forces in Iraq, the US might use less conventional forces and utilize “embedded” trainers and more special operations troops.

The operational chronology: Fall 2003 to Spring 2004:

- **May 23, 2003**—Paul Bremer issues Order No. 2, The Dissolution of Entities, dissolving the old Iraqi armed forces.
- **September 12, 2003**—US troops of the 82nd Airborne Division accidentally kill ten Iraqi policemen in the city of Fallujah. Fallujah’s residents promise a wave of violence against US troops.
- **October 2003**—Estimates indicate that the Iraqi security forces will number some 170,000.
- **October 9, 2003**—A car laden with explosives slams into a Baghdad police station. Ten Iraqis are killed.
- **October 27, 2003**—The headquarters of the Red Crescent and three Baghdad police stations are hit in the same day by four coordinated suicide bombs. 43 die and more than 200 wounded in the bloodiest day since the fall of Hussein’s government.
- **November 2003**—Estimates for the necessary manning of the Civil Defense Corps rise from 25,000 to 40,000 troops. Estimates for the necessary manning of the Border Police rise from 11,800 to 25,700.
- **November 4, 2003**—US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states that over 100,000 Iraqi security forces have been trained.
- **December 14, 2003**—17 Iraqis are killed when a suicide car bomber runs into a police station near Baghdad.
- **January 25, 2004**—Iraqi policemen in Ramadi are attacked on two separate occasions. Seven Iraqi police die.
- **January 31, 2004**—9 Iraqis are killed and 43 others wounded when a suicide bomber runs his car into a police station in Mosul.
- **February 10, 2004**—55 Iraqis are killed and approximately 65 are wounded when a car bomb explodes outside a police station in Iskandariya. Many of the dead were applying for jobs as policemen. When the Iraqi police chief, Ahmed Ibrahim, arrives, the gathered crowd nearly riots while chanting anti-American slogans.
- **February 11, 2004**—A gathering of Iraqi Army recruits are attacked in central Baghdad by a suicide car bomber. 47 are killed and at least 50 more wounded.
- **February 14, 2004**—Approximately 70 insurgents stage a daring raid on the headquarters of both the police and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps in Fallujah in a bid to free many of their cohorts. Up to 70 prisoners escape and a number were seen fleeing with the insurgents. 15 policemen and four Lebanese and Iranian insurgents were killed.
- **February 23, 2004**—A car bomb detonates outside of a Kirkuk police station, killing at least ten and wounding more than 35 Iraqis.
- **March 9, 2004**—Two American CPA officials and their Iraqi translator are killed intentionally by Iraqi policemen 70 miles south of Baghdad. These are the first American civilian deaths in Iraq.
- **March 23, 2004**—In Kirkuk and Hilla, 11 Iraqi policemen are shot and killed in two separate attacks.
- **April 2004**—Available Iraqi Army forces drop from 5,600 to 2,400. The available Civil Defense Forces drop from 34,700 to 23,100.

- **April 5, 2004**—US Marines lay siege to Fallujah following the murder and desecration of four American security contractors in the city. Several Iraqi battalions refuse to fight in either Fallujah or Sadr City.
- **April 21, 2004**—Several suicide bombs explode outside of a number of police facilities in the area of Basra. Crowds assault the Coalition forces trying to reach the wounded with stones. At least 68 are killed by the bombs.
- **April 30, 2004**—The siege of Fallujah ends at the urging of Iraqi politicians. The Fallujah Brigade, a cobbled-together militia led by former Iraqi army officers, is formed to rid the city of foreign fighters.
- **May 7, 2004**—Four Iraqi police officers are killed when their squad car is ambushed by insurgents in Mosul.
- **June 6, 2004**—A police station and military base around Baghdad are bombed—21 Iraqis are killed in the attacks.
- **June 10, 2004**—Moqtada al-Sadr's Mehdi Army takes control of a Najaf police station in direct violation of the ceasefire agreement between Sadr and the US. Sadr's forces free the prisoners and loot the station.
- **June 14, 2004**—Multiple suicide bombings aimed at Iraqi police kill dozens of civilians in Baghdad.
- **June 17, 2004**—41 are killed and approximately 142 are injured when suicide car bombers detonate outside a military recruitment center and a city council building in Baghdad.
- **June 24, 2004**—Sunni insurgents launch a series of coordinated attacks on Iraqi security forces in Fallujah, Baghdad, Mosul, Ramadi, and Baquba. At least 70 Iraqis are killed.
- **July 2004**—The Civil Defense Corps disbands and is replaced by the National Guard. The Intervention Force is established with an end manning goal of 6,600. The Special Operations Force is established with an end manning goal of 1,600 troops. The Coastal Defense Force is established with an end manning goal of 400 as is the Air Corps, with an end manning goal of 500.
- **July 16, 2004**—Australia deploys the Iraqi Army Training Team consisting of 50 soldiers with the task of training a full brigade of Iraqi soldiers.
- **July 28, 2004**—A car bomb kills 70 Iraqis outside of a police recruiting center in Baquba.
- **August 2004**—US marines arrest the Al Anbar Province's police chief, on charges of corruption.
- **August 3, 2004**—Insurgent attacks in Baquba, Baghdad, and the Al Anbar Province kill six US troops and approximately three Iraqi National Guardsmen.
- **September 2004**—Prime Minister Allawi and President Bush both state that there are 100,000 fully trained and equipped Iraqis providing security in Iraq. NATO ambassadors agree to send 200 trainers to help rebuild the Iraqi army. The First Infantry Division arrests a senior commander of the Diyala Province's Iraqi National Guard, alleging that he maintained ties to insurgents. The end manning goal of the Iraqi National Guard increases from 41,000 to 61,900 as does the end manning goal for Border Enforcement, from 16,300 to 32,000. The end manning goal for the Iraqi police increases from 90,000 to 135,000.
- **September 6, 2004**—7 US soldiers and three Iraqi soldiers are killed by a car bomb outside of Fallujah.
- **September 10, 2004**—The Fallujah Brigade disbands without having secured the city. A small riot breaks out as people leave a mosque. Iraqi police fire into the crowd killing two people and injuring five. Aides to al-Sadr claim that the dead and injured were unarmed.
- **September 14, 2004**—12 policemen are killed in Baquba by a drive by shooter. 47 Iraqis are killed and 114 are wounded by a car bomb outside a military recruitment area. The recruits were forced to stand outside blast absorbing concrete barriers. The ensuing crowd curses the US and blames US warplanes for the attack. Elements associated with Abu Musab Zarqawi claim credit for both attacks.

- **September 17, 2004**—13 are killed by a suicide car bomb near a police checkpoint in Baghdad.
- **September 18, 2004**—A suicide car bomb kills 19 and wounds 67 more in Kirkuk. The bomber targeted a crowd of young men seeking employment with the Iraqi National Guard.
- **September 19, 2004**—A car bomb aimed at a joint Iraqi-US patrol near Samarra kills one Iraqi soldier, one Iraqi civilian, and wounds seven others.
- **September 21, 2004**—An insurgent abandons a car loaded with explosives near the Iraqi National Guard recruiting center in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad. No one was hurt.
- **September 22, 2004**—The Iraqi National Guard center in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad is hit by a suicide car bomb that kills at least 11 and wounded an unknown number. Recruits had gathered around the center and were apparently the target.
- **September 23, 2004**—Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld testifies that since May 1, 2003, 721 Iraqi personnel have died providing their country with security.
- **September 25, 2004**—Seven Iraqi National Guard applicants die in the Jamiya neighborhood of western Baghdad at the hands of insurgents. A US army soldier faces 25 years in jail for his part in the death of an Iraqi National Guardsman in Adwar in May. An Iraqi police captain, Salman Turki al-Shamani, is killed by insurgents near Baquba.
- **September 26, 2004**—Two suicide car bombers try to drive into a base used by US Marines and Iraqi National Guardsmen in Karma, near Fallujah. When challenged, they detonate the cars. No injuries are reported.
- **October 2004**—The Highway Patrol and the Dignitary Protection service are established with end manning goals of 1,500 and 500 men each.
- **October 1, 2004**—3,000 US and 2,000 Iraqi forces launch an assault on the approximately 500 militants controlling the city of Samarra, an area 60 miles north of Fallujah. Estimates now indicate that the Iraqi security forces will need to number some 346,700 men, double the estimate from October 2003.
- **October 4, 2004**—General James Jones, NATO's commander, announces that up to 3,000 NATO troops could be involved in the training of Iraqi security forces. US and Iraqi forces take Samarra, killing 100 militants. Iraqi units fight with distinction and capture 24 suspected foreign fighters. Three car bombs, two in Baghdad and one in the west, kill at least 26 people and wound more than 100 others. Iraqi security forces fight a gun battle in downtown Baghdad after one of the blasts. One of the suicide bombers rams a recruiting center for Iraqi plainclothes policemen.
- **October 5, 2004**—An estimated 3,000 US and Iraqi troops begin a campaign designed to wrest control of insurgent-held areas of the Babil Province. Iraqi Special Forces play a prominent role in the subsequent raids.
- **October 6, 2004**—A suicide bomber drives an explosives-laden vehicle into an Iraqi checkpoint at the Iraqi national guard encampment near Anah, 160 miles northwest of Baghdad. Approximately 1,200 members of the 202nd Iraqi National Guard, 7th Army Battalion, and 1st Ministry of Interior commando battalion are designated to stay in Samarra. The governor pledges to send 1,500 additional police officers.
- **October 9, 2004**—11 Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and six others injured during an insurgent attack on the National Guard compound located in Karabilah, near the Syrian border. NATO declares its commitment to sending 300 military trainers to Iraq after stiff resistance, especially from France. The program is unlikely to be in place until the end of the year.
- **October 10, 2004**—Iraqi National Guardsmen assist in a border operation that results in the deaths of two insurgents or smugglers. At least 10 Iraqis die in explosions near the oil ministry and police academy.

- **October 12, 2004**—In Ramadi, a joint force of US and Iraqi troops arrests a Sunni cleric, Sheik Abdul Aleem Saidy, and his son. Iraqi police in Sadr City continue buying heavy weapons from al-Sadr's militia forces.
- **October 15, 2004**—A suicide car bomber narrowly misses a unit of Iraqi police on patrol, killing 10 bystanders.
- **October 19, 2004**—Four Iraqi national guardsmen are killed and 80 are injured in a mortar attack 80 miles north of Baghdad. Insurgents unsuccessfully try to assassinate Col. Mohamed Essa Baher, the commander of the 507th Iraqi National Guard Battalion. Baher had identified a financier allegedly a part of the Zarqawi terror network the day before the attack.
- **October 23, 2004**—Three minibuses filled with 49 Iraqi recruits for the 16th Iraqi Army Battalion, 7th Army Brigade are ambushed by insurgents dressed as Iraqi police. All 49, as well as 3 accompanying civilians, are killed. The ambush takes place as the recruits leave a training base in Kirkush, 15 miles from the Iranian border and northeast of Baghdad. This is the singlemost deadly insurgent ambush to date. Several Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed by a car bomb at a checkpoint south of Samarra. At least four are killed. Another car bomb kills between 10 and 16 Iraqi policemen at a checkpoint outside of the Marine base in Al Asad in the Anbar Province.
- **October 25, 2004**—An Iraqi national security aide declares that up to 5% of Iraq's security forces are most likely infiltrated by insurgents.
- **October 26, 2004**—Prime Minister Allawi blames the US and its Coalition allies for the massacre of the 49 Iraqi army recruits. Iraq's interior minister, Falah al-Naqib, announces a new campaign to rid the police force of corrupt and ineffective members. The militant group, the Army of Ansar al-Sunna, claims responsibility for the murder of 11 Iraqi National Guardsmen it had captured on the road between Hilla and Baghdad.
- **October 28, 2004**—Two senior Iraqi police officers are killed near Latifiya, south of Baghdad, allegedly by the Army of Ansar al-Sunna.
- **October 30, 2004**—Iraqi police officers allegedly fired indiscriminately on civilians after an attack on an American convoy south of Baghdad. Reportedly, the police direct their fire on three minibuses and three vans, killing 14 and wounding 10.
- **November 2, 2004**—A car bomb intended for an Iraqi security convoy kills four Iraqi civilians and wounds 12 Iraqi National Guardsmen in Mosul. NATO begins its first eight-week training course for security personnel at its Joint Warfare Centre in Norway. 19 mid to high-level officials from the Iraqi military, Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of the Interior attend.
- **November 3, 2004**—Three decapitated bodies of Iraqi National Guardsmen are found underneath the 14th of July Bridge in Baghdad. A group calling itself the Brigades of the Iraqi Honorables claims responsibility for killing the three men. Ansar al-Sunna posts pictures of another decapitation on the Internet, claiming that the victim is Maj. Hussein Shanoun, an officer in the new Iraqi army.
- **November 6, 2004**—More than 15 Iraqi police officers are killed by a series of closely coordinated assaults against police stations in Samarra. In addition, an Iraqi National Guard Commander, Abdel Razeq Shaker Garmali, is among those killed in Samarra.
- **November 7, 2004**—Insurgents launch an attack against a police station in the town of Haditha, taking 21 policemen hostage. The insurgents kill all of them execution-style. In another attack on a police station in the town of Haqlaniya, insurgents kill the head of security in western Iraq, Brigadier Shaher al-Jughaiifi. Unknown gunmen kill Iraqi police Col. Abdul Adim Abed in the Mualmeen neighborhood of Baquba. The director of security in Sulaimaniyah, Brigadier Sarkout Hassan Jalal, claims that Islamic militants regularly smuggle recruits from Iran into Iraq and on to Fallujah and other "hotspots." The Iraqi government declares a state of emergency for 60 days with the exception of the northern Kurdish regions. The declaration coincides with the beginning stages of an assault on the restive city of Fallujah. Iraqi commandos from the 36th Iraqi Commando Battalion supported by US Marines take control of Fallujah's main hospital just prior to the declaration.

- **November 8, 2004**—The battle for Fallujah begins. Approximately 10,000 US troops and 2,000 Iraqi forces confront 3,000 to 5,000 insurgents. Iraqi commandos seize a hospital and a railway station. The hospital was the focal point of erroneous casualty reports following the first assault on Fallujah.
- **November 9, 2004**—Two police stations in Baquba are attacked. One police officer is killed and eight are wounded. Reportedly, the police stand their ground and fight well. Elsewhere, a suicide car bomb strikes an Iraqi National Guard base north of Kirkuk, killing at least three. Prime Minister Allawi visits Camp Fallujah and gives a speech in front of the assembled Iraqi forces. The prime minister's speech is met with praise and cheers.
- **November 10, 2004**—Insurgents loot and strip an Iraqi National Guard base in the town of Hammam al-Alil. The National Guard battalion stationed there falls apart when attacked, leaving the base, armory and all, to the militants. Two members of the Iraqi security forces are reported killed in action in Fallujah. Prime Minister Ayad Allawi places Maj. Gen. Abdul Qader Mohammed Jassim, the Iraqi ground forces commander in Fallujah, in control of the Western Anbar province until a civilian authority can be appointed. In Fallujah, the 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force begins operations against the insurgents in Fallujah on its own and controls one part of the city by itself. The 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade aids US forces in bringing the Hydra Mosque under control. The 4th Battalion, 1st Brigade, and the Iraqi Police Service's Emergency Response Unit see action. The 5th Battalion, 3rd Brigade helps US forces subdue insurgents in the Al Tawfiq Mosque. The 6th Battalion, 3rd Brigade mans vehicle checkpoints with US forces in the heart of Fallujah.
- **November 11, 2004**—An Iraqi police vehicle and an American convoy are attacked by a suicide car bomber in central Baghdad. Nineteen people are killed. In Mosul, reports indicate that insurgents openly roam the streets and repeatedly attack police stations and government facilities. The insurgents, numbering between 400 and 500, split into groups of 15-20 to carry out attacks. Several police stations are burned to the ground despite pleas from imams via mosque loudspeakers. Insurgents seize control of six to seven police stations for the better part of an hour. When they are repelled, the fighters seize vehicles, weapons, body armor, radios, and uniforms. One senior police officer, the brother of Mosul's police chief, is shot dead in his front yard. Fighters attack the Iraq Media Network. Brigadier General Carter Ham, commander of Task Force Olympia, states that he has never seen the level of command and control exhibited by the insurgents prior to today. Ten Iraqi National Guard troops die in the fighting. In response, US soldiers and members of the Iraqi National Guard raid southern portions of the city. In Fallujah, US and Iraqi forces seize control of 70% of the city. A total of nine Iraqi security force members are wounded.
- **November 12, 2004**—The 1st battalion of the new Iraqi army encounters stiff resistance in the Jolan section of Fallujah. Brigadier Abdul Hussain Mahmoud Badar arrives in the Maysan province to take command of the Iraqi National Guard 73rd Brigade. Badar flees the same day, having been verbally threatened by individuals who claimed to be actively involved in the insurgency.
- **November 13, 2004**—Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Allawi declares Fallujah liberated. Insurgents launch two attacks on an Iraqi National Guard base near Mosul, killing two guardsmen and wounding 21.
- **November 14, 2004**—A total of six Iraqi military personnel are reported killed and more than 40 wounded in the fighting in Fallujah. Reports indicate that Iraqis are taking over the screening process for police recruits and are firing thousands for incompetence or inaction. Iraqi sources state that such competence or corruption in the police led to the death of the 49 recruits last month. Reports indicate the firing of the police chiefs in both Samarra and Mosul following waves of insurgent attacks. The same reports state that Iraqi military officials have raised the recruiting age from 17 to 20, require a letter of approval from a local community council for each recruit, require that recruits must have a family member in the service to be eligible, and that committees will be sent to recruits' neighborhoods to investigate their morality.
- **November 15, 2004**—Insurgents attack two police stations in Baquba. Elements are believed to have belonged to Saddam Hussein's intelligence apparatus. It appears that there are a few foreign fighters, mostly Syrians, mixed in. Fighting continues in Mosul. The Iraqi Interior Minister reports that in one unidentified Iraqi city, a wounded Iraqi police officer was taken from his bed, dismembered, and that his remains were strung up in the city square.

- **November 16, 2004**—Militants fight with National Guardsmen from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan in the northern Mosul neighborhood of al-Ta'mim. Three guardsmen are hurt and at least two insurgents are killed. US officials state that between 1,000 and 2,000 insurgents have been killed in Fallujah, with an additional 1,000 detained.
- **November 17, 2004**—Brig. Gen. Carter Ham states that Mosul is back under US and Iraqi control. Insurgents fire mortar rounds on the al-Ahrar police station within the city. The Iraqi Interior Ministry states that it is investigating reports that 31 security force recruits may have been kidnapped in Rutbah. The Iraqi police in Karbala indicated that they believed that they may have been taken. NATO unanimously agrees to increase the number of military trainers in Iraq from 65 to approximately 400. These trainers require around 1,600 supporting staff and will not serve in a combat role. Reports indicate that new personnel will be in place in the next six weeks.
- **November 18, 2004**—Militants detonate a car bomb in Baghdad outside the emergency Yarmouk police station in the west of the city. Two civilians die. Reports indicate that insurgents in Baghdad are lining one particular street with police uniforms in an effort to intimidate future recruits. Shelling and sporadic fighting continues in the southern outskirts of Fallujah. In Mosul, a mortar attack in the western portion of the city wounds five Iraqi soldiers. Iraqi commandos, backed by US troops, prepare to storm rebel-held parts of the city. Two Iraqi National Guard officers are publicly beheaded in the city by a group claiming allegiance to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.
- **November 19, 2004**—A suicide car bomber rams an Iraqi police checkpoint in Maysalon Square in east Baghdad. The attack kills five police officers and wounds four others. Elsewhere in Baghdad, worshippers outside a mosque protest the assault on Fallujah. Some of the protestors fire on Iraqi National Guardsmen who subsequently return fire. A police convoy traveling through the city is hit by a suicide car bomber, killing one policeman and a bystander and wounds five others. In Fallujah, the commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force states that the assault had "broken the back of the insurgents" in the city. He reports that 51 US troops and eight Iraqi troops had been killed and that an additional 425 US troops and 43 Iraqi troops were wounded. He states that approximately 1,200 insurgents were killed, 25-30 civilians were being treated for injuries, and that he knew of no civilian deaths caused by the fighting. Insurgents attack a police station in Muqddidiya with mortars, killing a police officer. In Mosul, reports indicate that residents are growing uneasy with the presence of Kurdish National Guardsmen in the city.
- **November 20, 2004**—Unidentified assailants kill an Iraqi National Guard recruit in a drive by shooting near Baquba. He was on his way to a training center when he was attacked. Iraqis find the bodies of eight Iraqi policemen some 15 miles west of Mosul. US forces reportedly detain three Iraqi National Guardsmen who were working for the insurgency. Reports indicate that approximately 15 Iraqi Army troops were killed in the last 24-36 hours.
- **November 21, 2004**—Militants attack a convoy ferrying Iraqi National Guardsmen in Ramadi. The insurgents kill nine guardsmen and wound an additional 17. In Mosul, US troops discover the bodies of nine Iraqi soldiers who had been shot execution style. Attackers kill the police chief and his driver in the town of Khalis. An Internet statement from a group purportedly affiliated with Abu Musab Zarqawi appears claiming that the group had killed 17 Iraqi National Guardsmen from Kisik.
- **November 23, 2004**—Approximately 5,000 US, British, and Iraqi troops launch an offensive dubbed Plymouth Rock in locales south of Baghdad in an effort to pacify the restive area. Reports indicate that the main elements involved are Iraqi SWAT forces supported by the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit. The campaign begins with early morning raids in the town of Jabella in the Babil province which net 32 suspected militants. Elsewhere, interim defense minister Hazem Sha'alan tells reporters that he cannot provide safety for voters in candidates in the upcoming election. He states that Iraqis don't understand elections and that they are not aware of the candidates. Sh'alan accuses a "vile coalition" within interim Prime Minister Allawi's government of obstructing the flow of funds to former soldiers' pensions and to the new Iraqi army. In Baghdad, insurgents attack the deputy chief of Baghdad's Major Crime Unit, Col. Ziyaa Hamed's, car. In Baquba, gunmen attack a convoy carrying Iraqi security forces, killing three of them. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld states in a press briefing that, though Iraqi forces took part in a supporting role, they performed well in recent operations in Fallujah.
- **November 24, 2004**—Iraqi interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi attends the graduation of 2,500 troops of the Iraqi Intervention Force at the Numaniyah military base near Kut, south east of Baghdad. The

graduates will form the 2nd Brigade of the Iraqi Intervention Force and are specially trained in counterinsurgency tactics. US Lt-Gen. David Petraeus states that they will be operational within two weeks and that the 3rd Brigade should be ready by the end of December. In Mosul, militants attack Iraqi Gen. Rashid Flaih, the head of the Iraqi commando unit in the city. Flaih is unhurt.

- **November 25, 2004**—US troops and Iraqi National Guardsmen launch raids on suspect buildings in the west side of Mosul. Reports indicate that some 11 dead Iraqi soldiers were found in and around Mosul. They were bound and shot in the back of the head. Iraqi Minister of State, Qasim Dawood, states in a press conference that Colonel Fawas Armoot was chosen as Ramadi's police chief. Dawood declares that soldiers in Fallujah have discovered a rudimentary chemical and biological weapon facility that was being run by insurgents. The minister states that Iraqi police have captured five foreign terrorists, Libyan, Tunisian, and Syrian, trying to cross the border into Iraq.
- **November 26, 2004**—US troops and Iraqi National Guardsmen continue to conduct operations in Mosul. The forces raid one mosque run by an imam who is suspected of being an insurgent leader. The Iraqis perform well though they encounter no enemy fire. Two executed Iraqi soldiers are dumped at a busy traffic circle in downtown Mosul. US forces believe that soldiers are being kidnapped at taxi stands when they return home on leave.
- **November 27, 2004**—Three Iraqi police officers die in a bombing attack. The location of the attack remains unclear.
- **November 28, 2004**—Iraqi police detain two men and a vehicle packed with explosives in the Al-Jadriya neighborhood of Baghdad. In Baquba, militants fire mortars at the Al-Wahda police station, wounding a police officer. Militants storm a police station in Samarra, stealing several police vehicles and looting the armory. Iraqi police fail to confront them. US and Iraqi forces launch land and amphibious raids to the south of Baghdad, killing 17 militants and capturing 32. In Basra, British and Iraqi troops surround the headquarters of the southern regional Iraq National Guard after Brigadier General Diaa al-Kadhimi refused to step down as commander in favor of Salah al-Maliki.
- **November 29, 2004**—A car bomb near Ramadi explodes, killing four Iraqi police officers and wounding three others. Three Iraqi National Guardsmen are injured as well. In a separate attack in Baghdadi, 120 miles northwest of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates his car at a police checkpoint, killing seven Iraqi police and National Guardsmen. The blast injures an additional nine security personnel. Brig. Gen. Kadhimi continues his standoff in Basra. Reports indicate that at least 50 pro interim government or security force personnel have been killed in Mosul in the last 10 days. The police chief states that no police are on active patrol because the city remains too dangerous. The US and Iraqi National Guard strike a deal with Mosul police to move back in to several of the police stations that were seized or looted during the beginning of the Fallujah campaign. The police agree to man some of the more dangerous stations by mid-December. Reports indicate that Iraqi security forces have abandoned Tal Afar. The governor of Najaf, Adnan al-Zurufi, announces that his security chief has been arrested by police in connection with a plot to assassinate the governor and several other top regional officials.
- **November 30, 2004**—In the Babil Province south of Baghdad, Iraqi and US forces captures 14 suspected militants and discovers three arms caches. Near Iskandariyah, the Iraqi SWAT team and the Iraqi Specialized Special Forces capture several high value suspects in separate operations. In Najaf, the 11th US MEU commander declares that Iraqi security forces have formally assumed control of the entire province and have the ability to conduct limited operations on their own.
- **December 2, 2004**—Iraqi National Security minister Dr. Qassim Dawood states that securing the polling centers for the Iraqi election will be left to the Iraqi security forces and Iraqi society as a whole. He declares that the US forces will only be called upon if a polling center faces a major insurgent attack.
- **December 3, 2004**—Gunmen shoot and kill sixteen Shi'ite Iraqi police officers, laying siege to a police station in the Baghdad neighborhood of Saydiya. Sources believe that the area harbors militants who fled Fallujah prior to the US and Iraqi attack on the city. In a separate attack at the other end of the city, insurgents ram a suicide car bomb into a crowd outside of a Shi'ite mosque, close to a nearby police station. 14 die and a gun battle ensues between the Iraqi police and the insurgents who fire on the police station. In Mosul, three police stations are attacked, though no immediate casualty reports are available. An Iraqi National Guard captain is assassinated in Karbala.

- **December 4, 2004**—A suicide car bomber kills at least 18 Kurdish militiamen when he rams his car into their bus in Mosul. More than 16 are wounded. Another suicide bomber rams a police station in Baghdad near the Green Zone. The attack kills eight officers and wounds more than 38. Gunmen attack a police station in the Ghazaliya neighborhood in Baghdad. Another police station is attacked by militants in Samarra. Both attacks are repulsed, with two officers wounded in Samarra.
- **December 5, 2004**—Insurgents ram a suicide car bomb into an Iraqi National Guard checkpoint near Baiji and follow the explosion up with small arms fire. Three Guardsmen are killed and 18 are wounded. In Samarra, gunmen attack an Iraqi army patrol, killing one soldier and wounding four more. Two Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and four are wounded in Latifiyah in an insurgent attack.
- **December 6, 2004**—A statement from the US Customs and Border Protection officers and their Iraqi counterparts indicates that they caught more than 40 terrorists arming insurgents within Iraq. The statement reveals that the officers, working closely with Iraqis, broke up an Iraqi smuggling ring.
- **December 7, 2004**—A roadside bomb explodes south of Baghdad, killing three Iraqi National Guardsmen and wounding an additional 11. General John Abizaid, commander of US CENTCOM, declares that the Iraqi security and military forces are behind schedule in their training. He states that the indigenous forces will not be able to secure the country for the January election and that more US troops will temporarily be needed. He suggested that there would be more embedded US trainers and that more special operations forces might need to be created.
- **December 8, 2004**—The police chief of Samarra's home is attacked by insurgents. Reportedly, the police chief resigned following the attack. Unconfirmed reports state that a police station within the city was overrun by insurgents. In Ramadi, militants detonate a bomb near a police station. No injuries are reported. One Iraqi policeman claimed that half of Ramadi's policemen had failed to report for duty because of threats and intimidation.
- **December 9, 2004**—NATO formally agrees to increase its training staff in Baghdad from 60 officers to 300. Poland, Hungary, and the Netherlands agree to contribute forces. France, Germany, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Luxembourg refuse. The German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, states adamantly that no Germans will go to Iraq. A US-backed Iraqi National Guard patrol is ambushed in Mosul. The casualties are uncertain though it is believed that at least one Guardsman is killed.
- **December 10, 2004**—Militants try to attack an Iraqi National Guard patrol in Samarra with mortars. The attack leaves the Guardsmen unscathed but kills two civilians. In Baquba, four Iraqi national Guardsmen are injured when a roadside bomb explodes by their patrol car. Insurgents attack them with small arms after the explosion.
- **December 11, 2004**—Insurgents ambush a police patrol car on a road between Baiji and Tikrit. Two officers die and three are wounded. One of those killed is reportedly Brig. Gen. Razzaq Karim Mahmud, a senior police commander. In the town of Hit, militants attack a minibus carrying a contingent of Iraqi National Guardsmen. Seven Guardsmen are killed.
- **December 12, 2004**—Reports indicate that more than 160 bodies, many members of the Iraqi National Guard, have been found in and around Mosul since November 12th. South of Baghdad, 72 suspected militants are seized by US Marines and Iraqi security forces near the Euphrates River. Insurgents attack a police station near Mahmudiya. Iraqi National Guardsmen and Iraqi police successfully repel the attackers and suffer no losses. They uncover a car bomb across the street from the station and US forces detonate it. Officials attribute recent success by Iraqi forces in the area to the removal of a senior National Guard officer in November who, it was discovered, had been supplying insurgents with information. He was directly implicated in the murders of 12 Iraqi National Guardsmen.
- **December 14, 2004**—In central Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates a bomb at an entrance to the Green Zone. Three Iraqi National Guardsmen die and 12 people are wounded. The bombing is the second attack on the same entrance in two days and comes a day and a year after Saddam Hussein's capture. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's Al-Qaeda in Iraq group claims responsibility for both attacks. US and Iraqi forces continue to fight insurgents in northern Mosul and in the western Anbar province. Two Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed and five wounded in a battle with insurgents near Dijail. In Samarra, Iraqi police report that three children were killed in the crossfire during a firefight between US forces and Iraqi forces and insurgents.

- **December 16, 2004**—A roadside bomb explodes in western Baghdad, killing three Iraqi National Guardsmen. The Iraqi Minister of Defense, Hazim Al-Shaalan, orders the Iraqi forces to secure the churches and places of worship for the coming holiday.
- **December 18, 2004**—Militants in Samarra fire mortar rounds at an election office located in a youth center. One Iraqi dies and eight others are evacuated to a hospital by members of the Iraqi National Guard who respond to the attack. Elsewhere in Samarra, Iraqi commandos seize bomb-making material and take into custody three insurgents during a raid. In Mosul, Iraqi National Guardsmen engage militants in a gun battle in the western part of the city, killing three insurgents.
- **December 20, 2004**—A driver throws a hand grenade at a police station in Karbala. No injuries are reported and the driver is arrested.
- **December 21, 2004**—A suicide bomber detonates his explosives at a U.S. military base mess tent near Mosul, killing 22 and wounding 72 more. The attack hits a dining hall where US soldiers, Iraqi National Guardsmen, and Iraqi civilians are having lunch. 3 Iraqi security forces personnel are killed. The suicide bomber is believed to be a Saudi allied with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi named Abu Omar al-Mosuli, and apparently he had acquired an Iraqi military uniform. After the attack, indigenous insurgent groups claim that the suicide bomber was not affiliated with Zarqawi and was a native Iraqi. Najaf's police chief, Ghaleb al-Jazaeri, states that an Iraqi in custody confessed to having received training in a camp in Syria under the supervision of a Syrian military officer. The Iraqi reportedly took part in a bombing in Najaf in early December which killed 54 people. Syria denies having trained any insurgents.
- **December 23, 2004**—141 Iraqi police officers graduate from six specialty training courses given at the Adnan Training Center. The one to two week courses are designed to bolster the regular eight week training courses and focus particularly on basic criminal investigation, supervision, executive leadership, and kidnapping/hostage rescue.
- **December 25, 2004**—In Mosul, a roadside bomb explodes, destroying an Iraqi National Guard bus. Five Guardsmen die and three are wounded. Reportedly, Iraqi civilians threw rocks at the burning vehicle after the attack.
- **December 26, 2004**—Col. Yassin Ibrahim Jawad, a high-ranking police officer, is killed in southern Baghdad. Gen. Babakir Shawkat Zebari states that the bombing of the mess tent in Mosul was not perpetrated by a member of the Iraqi military or security forces. He further states that President Bush's criticisms of Iraqi forces, primarily that some would not fight and that some had deserted, were erroneous.
- **December 28, 2004**—Insurgents attack and destroy the Um Kashifa police station near Tikrit. 12 Iraqi police officers are killed. In a separate attack near Tikrit, militants attack a police checkpoint killing one officer and wounding two others. Police checkpoints south of Tikrit are attacked, killing five Iraqi police officers and wounding three more. 13 Iraqi police officers are shot execution-style at one of the stations. US Maj. Neal O'Brien, spokesman for the 1st Infantry Division, states that despite the attack, the Iraqi security forces in Tikrit are performing quite well. One soldier cites nearly 2 ½ months of relative quiet in the city as proof. An Iraqi employed at the city hall states that 25 members of the Iraqi National Guard resigned after the attacks. An elaborate ambush on Iraqi National Guard troops takes place south of Baquba. It starts with a roadside bomb that wounds three Iraqi National Guardsmen near the Maffrak traffic circle in the Mualemeen neighborhood. A second roadside bomb is found and a disposal team comes to remove it. A suicide car bomber then drives through the security cordon, killing a civilian and 26 others. Insurgents in Baghdad detonate a car bomb near the home of Maj. Gen. Moudher al-Mula, an Iraqi National Guard commander, in an assassination attempt. He escapes unhurt, though several bystanders are killed. In a separate attack in the western Baghdad district of Ghaziliya, insurgents lure Iraqi police officers into an explosive-laden home and then blow up the house, killing seven police officers and wounding two others. In Mosul, militants fire from a mosque at a joint US-Iraqi military patrol, wounding one Iraqi National Guardsman. Near Samarra, five Ministry of the Interior commandos are wounded by an IED.
- **December 29, 2004**—Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim Al-Shaalan announces that the Iraqi National Guard will be incorporated into the Iraqi Army on the anniversary of Army Day on January 6, 2005. He states that forces totaling a division in size will all be graduating on that day. An Iraqi official states that

Iraqi security forces have captured a key member of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's organization in the city of Mosul. Abu Marwan allegedly directed attacks in the city and was responsible for purchasing weapons and training the various terrorist cells.

- **December 31, 2004**—Five Iraqi National Guardsmen are wounded near Baiji when a car bomb explodes near their patrol vehicle. Two civilians are killed.

Progress in Other Areas

The behavior of Iraqi forces did show that they became more effective when they were given the proper leadership, organization, training, equipment, facilities, and when they had effective backup from the Coalition or other Iraqi security forces. Some fought well in demanding battles and engagements, and even less combat-capable forces like the police seemed to be taking hold in the areas where insurgent and terrorist attacks were less frequent.

The same chronologies in the Operational Readiness section, and various reports from the media and MNSTC-I, reflect significant successes and progress in a number of areas between September and December 2004:

- The MNSTC-I began deploying five mobile training teams to each of the MNF's six subordinate commands on November 28, to assist in training Iraqi brigade and division senior staff officers. All trainers were formerly instructors at the US Army Command and General Staff College or Combined Arms Service Staff School.
- The Iraqi Army's 1st Mechanized Brigade received another six T-55 heavy tanks and 27 multi-purpose armored vehicles (MTLBs), which are personnel carriers with heavy machine guns, at the Taji Military Training Base north of Baghdad on December 6, 2004. It now has 10 T-55s and 37 MTLBs, and will be steadily expanded to include refurbished T-72s, which will replace the current T-55s. The brigade is scheduled to be operational by the summer of 2005. The brigade is being built up in three phases of roughly 1,000 men each, drawing on the manpower in Iraqi armored and mechanized units before the invasion. It will have all the capabilities of a full mechanized brigade, including infantry, armor, artillery, engineers, and logistics and support. The first phase is due to be complete before the end of 2004, the second by February 2005, and the final phase by May or June 2005.
- UAE donated Panhard M-3 armored vehicles to the Iraqi Army (Jordan had previously donated over 80 APCs earlier in the year).
- As of December, MNSTC-I announced the mechanized brigade could grow to a full division. The present force development plans call for three infantry divisions plus various support battalions.
- The Iraqi Army began company level training with the Egyptian Army's 3rd Division, Northern Command at the Mubarak City training facility near Alexandria.
- Two battalions from the Iraqi Intervention Force conducted operations in Najaf. These same two battalions plus another conducted effective combat operations in Fallujah together with two regular battalions, an Army Commando Battalion, a Police Emergency Response Unit, and Shewani Special Forces trained by 1st MEF. These forces constituted 2,700 Iraqis at their peak.
- Iraqi security forces formally assumed local control of security operations in Najaf Province on November 30, 2004.
- The Army had a total of 18 battalions (Regular Army and Intervention Force) that had completed initial training. Although most of these were not at full strength, many soldiers in

these units had fought effectively and were “combat ready,” with many being “combat proven.” The Ministry of Defense had developed a “direct recruiting” program, whereby it was recruiting and training former soldiers with plans to integrate them into existing units to address manning shortfalls.

- Sixteen National Guard battalions conducted operations effectively at the company level or above, with a number conducting operations effectively at the battalion level. Many Iraqi National Guard (ING) units conducted combat operations. Current plans are to expand the National Guard from its previous authorized strength of 45 battalions and six brigades to 6 Division HQs, 21 Brigade Commanders, and 65 battalions.
- National Guard units were slated to begin advanced training in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in January 2005, with the goal of creating 10 trained companies of 50 men each by the end of 2005.
- 72 men in the special Counterterrorism Task Force of the Special Forces graduated from a 12-week training course on December 3, 2004.
- Over 34,000 former police had been trained in the three-week Transition Integration Program. Over 18,000 police had been trained in the 8-week Academy program of instruction. Capacity at the 8-week academies in Jordan, Baghdad, and other regional academies was graduating nearly 3,000 new police per month and was poised to graduate over 4,000 per month by early March. The 8-week program was being taught at five different locations.
- The Iraqi Police Service graduated 1,423 officers from the eight-week course at the Basic Police Training course at the International Police Training Center in Amman, Jordan, on December 16, 2004, and 140 officers from four advanced courses at the Adnan Training facility on December 9th. (Prior service officers attend a three-week course.)
- The 8-week police curriculum had been revised so training would better prepare students for the environment in which they would operate, with increased training on survival skills in an insurgency environment, force protection, combatives, and shooting AK-47s as well as pistols. In addition, police stations were being hardened and additional equipment was being issued to police to make them more capable in their operating environment.
- The border forces also began to play a more active role. The numbers of trained border enforcement personnel reflect training done by major subordinate commands (divisions). Capabilities among border enforcement personnel varied widely. However, MNSTC-I established a centralized program of instruction for border personnel, presently at the Jordanian Police Academy with Dept. of Homeland Security instructors. They will move this instruction to Iraq in the near future. In addition, MNSTC-I has started to train some border personnel as units, and has deployed a small number of these to the border to conduct operations as units.
- By the end of December, the Coalition had trained and equipped six Public Order Battalions and three Special Police Battalions trained to operate with mechanized (wheeled) vehicles.

- MNSTC-I had also helped the Ministry of Interior (MoI) equip and employ Police Commando Brigades. These newly formed commando units are designed to provide a high-end police and counterinsurgency capability. These battalions successfully conducted offensive operations in Baghdad, Fallujah, Samarra, Mosul, North Babil, and other areas with favorable outcomes. The Coalition had provided equipment to one full Brigade and in mid-December was in the process of equipping a second full brigade, while a battalion of a planned third brigade was being formed. These forces have proved of great significance as have the newly trained Public Order Battalions, three of which had begun operations, and several emergency response units operating effectively at the provincial level.
- The Coalition had also trained, equipped, and helped to employ a small national-level Emergency Response Unit capable of conducting offensive counterinsurgency operations.
- MNSTC-I also began training and equipping provincial level SWAT Teams that will be capable of providing backup support to police when under attack.

Like the previous chronologies, these events show that progress was slow and anything but steady. They are further warning that force development is inevitably slower and more difficult than commanders and policymakers want. Nevertheless, there was progress.

VIII. The Run Up to the January 2005 Elections

As might be expected, basic force numbers did not change radically between December and January 2005. Iraq did, however, take major steps to restructure its forces like merging the National Guard into the Army. Equally significant, this was the period in which Iraq held its first true legislative election in decades. During months leading up to the election, insurgents had made repeated efforts to keep Iraqis from going to the polls and voting. They failed – some 58 percent of registered Iraqis voted on January 30, 2005. This election turnout gave a sense of legitimacy to the Iraqi government, and a combination of a large and visible Iraqi security presence and relative security of most polling places reinforces this position.

An estimated 130,000 Iraqi Security forces deployed on election day, January 30, 2005. While it was 150,000 Coalition troops that provided the core of the security effort, Iraqi forces did provide the inner two rings of security for over 5,200 polling sites. Not a single polling site was penetrated, and several Iraqi Security Force (ISF) members gave their lives while stopping suicide bombers on election day.

The performance of ISF forces was particularly striking since there was no approved election security plan until 10 days prior to the election. In fact, if some local ISF commanders had not acted to create plans on their own initiative, the operation could not have been nearly so successful.¹⁰²

This lack of violence did, however, lead some US and Iraqi officials and officers to be overoptimistic about the political and military impact of the elections. General John P. Abizaid, commander of US forces in the region, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 1, 2005. Abizaid rhetorically asked “Why didn’t [the insurgents] put more people in the field [on election day]? They threw their whole force at us, and yet they were unable to disturb the elections. I think that the voting in Iraq, the political process that’s going on ... have driven those numbers [of insurgents] down.”¹⁰³

It was easy to forget that elections are merely the prelude to governance, and that all of Iraq’s important political problems were still ahead of the new government. It was also easy to forget that part of the reason was that Coalition forces shut down much of the road traffic and movement on election day and made security measures more effective. Furthermore, a short-term decline in activity after a surge in such activity before the elections did not mean the insurgents were defeated, and the insurgents soon developed new tactics.

Manning Levels in January 2005

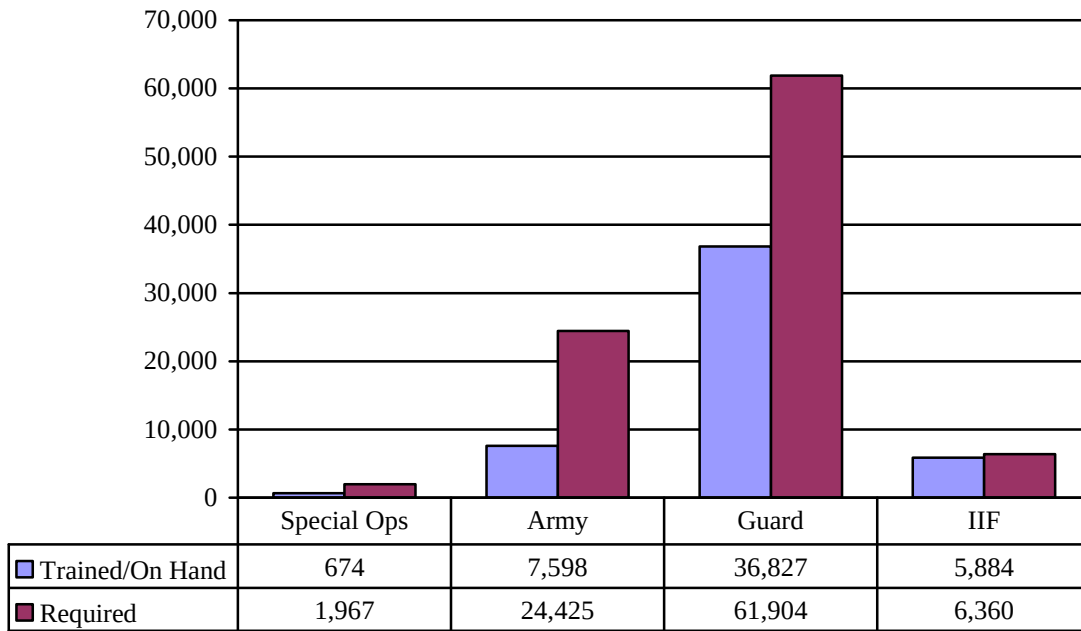
Figures 15 through 18 illustrate the status of the Iraqi security and military forces as of January 19, 2005. These graphs are based on the Iraq Weekly Status Reports made available by the State Department since September.

- Figure 15 shows the numbers of National Guard, army, Intervention Force, and special operations forces that are trained or on hand compared to the numbers that are required. Between December 1, 2004 and January 19, 2005, the National Guard suffered fairly substantial manpower losses. That being said, the Intervention Force has exceeded its goal

end strength and its numbers increased significantly during the same time period. The first significant troop increase in the new year was the graduation of 670 Iraqi intervention Force soldiers from the Taji Military Training Base on January 18, 2005. The army experienced moderate growth.

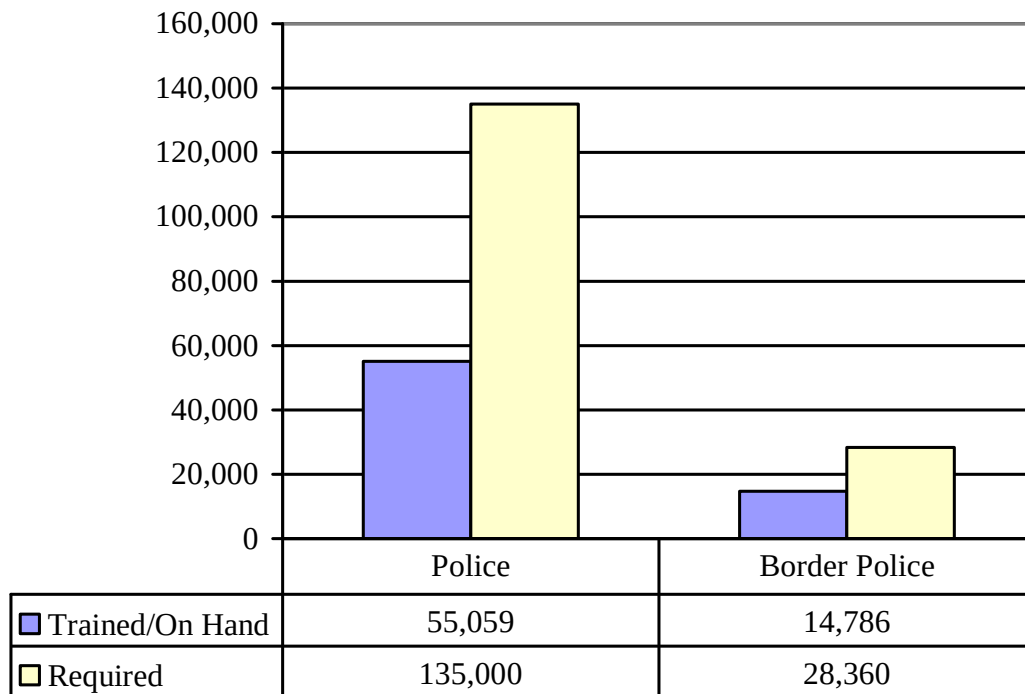
- Figure 16 shows the number of police and Border Enforcement personnel that are trained or on hand compared to the numbers that are required. It is important to note that those troops listed as trained/on hand are not all fully trained or equipped. Both the police and the Border Enforcement personnel have been slowly increasing.
- Figures 17 and 18 show the composition of the Iraqi military and security forces as of January 19, 2005. The military is still overwhelmingly dominated by National Guardsmen while police make up the largest proportion of the security forces. There has been a fairly significant rise in the number of Iraqi Intervention Force troops.

Figure 15
Iraqi Military Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 1/19/05



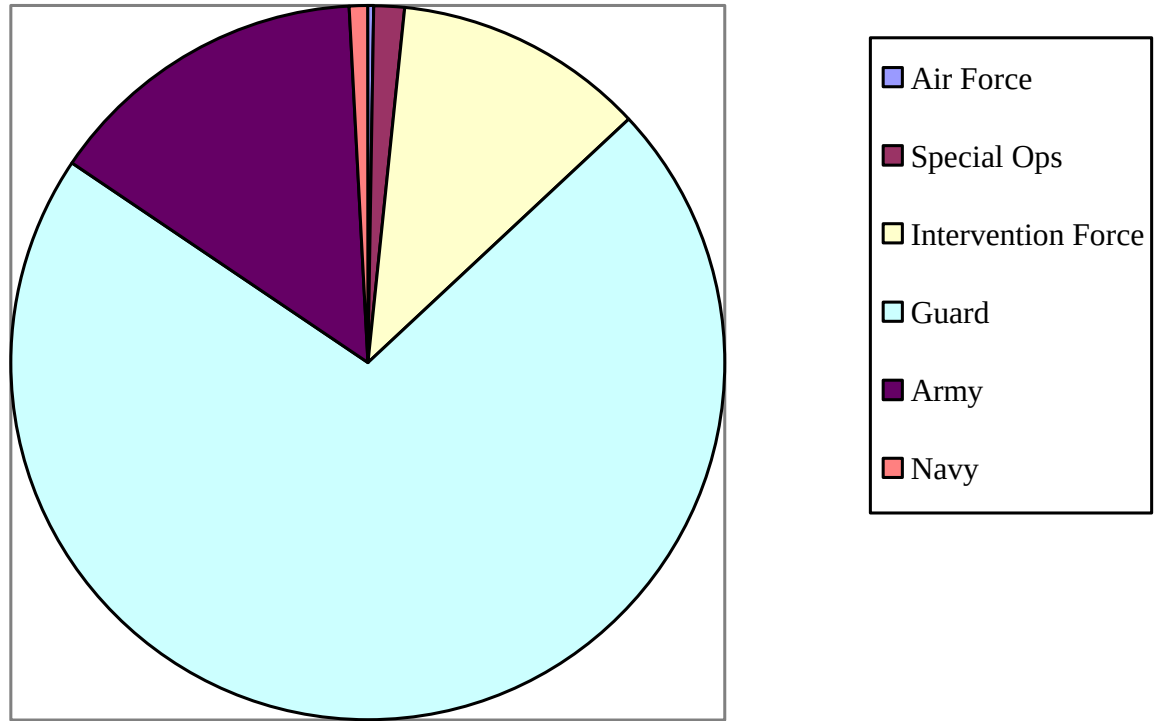
Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil. "IIF" stands for the Iraqi Intervention Force.

Figure 16
Iraqi Security Forces Trained/On Hand vs. Required as of 1/19/05



Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil.

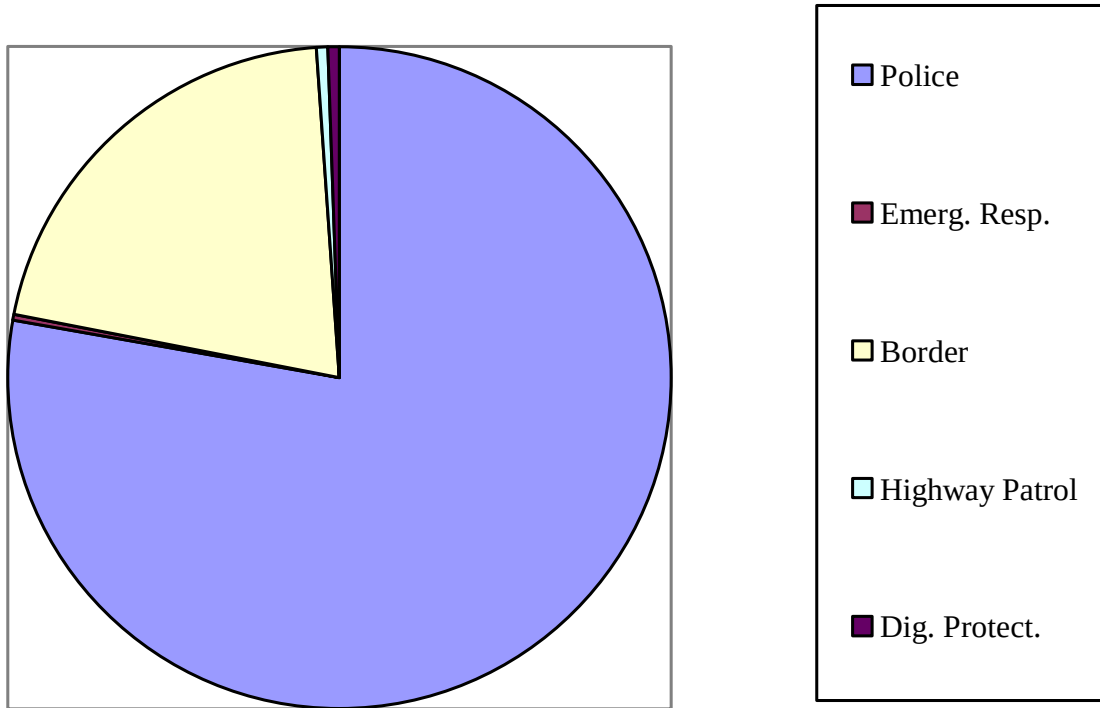
Figure 17
Iraqi Military Forces by Force Element as of 1/19/05



Air Force	Special Ops	Intervention Force	Guard	Army	Navy
145	674	5,884	36,827	7,598	495

Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil.

Figure 18
Iraqi Security Forces by Force Element as of 1/19/05



Police	Emergency Response	Border Patrol	Highway Patrol	Dignitary Protection
55,059	205	14,786	354	484

Source: 19 January 2005 Iraq Weekly Status Report available at www.defendamerica.mil. 'Emerg. Resp.' stands for Emergency Response Unit. 'Dig. Protect' stands for the Dignitary Protection Service.

Total Iraqi Manpower: Debate Over Total Numbers

Total Iraqi manning levels became an area of considerable political controversy during this period, and a key focus of the Senate confirmation hearings for Condoleezza Rice's nomination as Secretary of State. On January 18, Rice stated that there were 120,000 trained Iraqi troops.¹⁰⁴ Several senators questioned that number, with one Democrat – Senator Biden – saying that he believed that the number of trained Iraqis was much closer to 4,000.

The truth lay in between, and had little to do with total manpower numbers of any kind. There were certainly far more than 4,000 trained troops equipped for some form of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism mission. The army and the Intervention Force accounted for more than double that figure. The only way to arrive at an estimate near 4,000 was to only count the Iraqi Army, which had a total of 4,159 men as of January 11, 2005.¹⁰⁵ The Civil Intervention Force had another 2,862 men, the Emergency Response Unit had 205, the Bureau of Dignitary Protection had 484, the Intervention Force had 9,159, and the Special Operations Force had 674. This was a total of 17,000 men and did not count any of the 40,063 men in the National Guard. While the Guard was just being integrated into the Army – January 6, 2005 – it did have a total of nearly 45 battalions and some had moderate effectiveness.

Moreover, even the least trained and lightest Iraqi forces had *some* value in terms of local security, and many could replace Coalition forces in areas like checkpoint duty. The ability to operate directly and independently against insurgent and terrorist forces is only one measure of whether a force is well-enough trained and equipped to play a useful role.

That said, it still was disingenuous to state that there were 120,000 adequately trained and equipped Iraqi troops. If one looks at the numbers provided by the State Department in the Iraq Weekly Status Reports, one can determine that that figure could only have been arrived at if all of the Iraqi police were considered “troops.” That in itself would be an inaccurate designation as many police received only three weeks of training that did not approach the level of training the army receives.

Even if the police *were* counted as “troops,” an estimate of 120,000 trained troops failed to take into account the fact that the National Guard had fought erratically at best and been unreliable at worst. MNSTC-I reported that several units in Baghdad, north of Baghdad, and in the Ninewa Province performed well. By the end of 2004, there may not even have been the equivalent of 12,000 reliable, well-trained, well-equipped Iraqi troops that could engage serious insurgent resistance. There were only one or two battalions with any track record of operating on their own without extensive US support, and Iraq's first mechanized battalion did not become operational until mid-January 2005.¹⁰⁶

Some reporting coming out of the military provided equally misleading data on the Iraqi order of battle. According to some US military assessments, there were approximately 69 Iraqi army battalions operating in the country at the end of the year, and the US military hoped to have 130,000 Iraqi forces – not just soldiers, but army, Guard, police, etc.– by the January 30th election date.¹⁰⁷

The Embassy report on the end of the year status of Iraqi forces showed, however, that these “army” battalions were largely low grade National Guard Battalions. In fact, the Army had a total of 21 battalions, many of which were inexperienced and lacking in combat effectiveness, and it did not plan to deploy more than six more battalions before the elections. The Army – as distinguished from the National Guard – only built up to around 4,700 men by the end January 2005, and even if the National Guard was counted in the total for the Army, the total would be around 45,000 men.¹⁰⁸

Equipment at the Beginning of 2005

As of January 21, 2005, MNSTC-I reported that individual elements of Iraqi military forces had the following major combat equipment, and it is again interesting to note substantial progress having been made in comparison to the progress achieved in early December:¹⁰⁹

- The Iraqi Navy had five 100 ft patrol craft and 34 smaller boats.
- The Iraqi Air Force maintained three squadrons with nine reconnaissance aircraft and three US-supplied C-130 transport planes. At least two of the reconnaissance planes are Seabird SB71-360 Seeker aircraft. There is a fourth squadron made up of two UH-1 helicopters. The squadron will receive 14 more UH-1s as well as 4 Bell Jet Ranger helicopters, and should be operational by the end of January.
- There now was one mechanized battalion with a tank company and transportation battalion. The tanks seem to be T-55s and T-72s. The battalion is listed as operational and the necessary equipment and training to form a full-mechanized brigade will be provided by summer 2005.
- Iraq’s Mechanized Police Brigade was on patrol with 50 BTR-94 armored vehicles.

These developments reflected further progress towards the heavier forces needed to deal with a serious insurgency, but scarcely the kind of progress that could as yet produce the kind of Iraqi forces capable of independent operations and replacing Coalition forces.

Moreover, Iraqi forces by now had cost some \$1.71 billion out of the \$1.91 billion in ongoing funding for security forces – a high price for such lightly equipped units. (At the same time, only \$1,208 million in US FY2004 IRRF II aid for security and law enforcement had so far been dispersed out of a total of \$5,045 billion that had been apportioned, although the MNSTC-I reports that disbursement rates were accelerating and that approximately \$300 million was disbursed between December 2004 and January 2005.)¹¹⁰

Problems with Equipment Procurement within the Iraqi Ministry of Defense

The integrity of the Iraqi Defense Ministry also came into question in two separate incidents.

- One incident revolved around the death of two US contractors and questions over the involved contract. Dale Stoffel, a consultant with CLI USA Inc., had negotiated an agreement with Iraqi officials to repair and renovate a number of Soviet-era armored vehicles including tanks and APCs. Stoffel became concerned that the officials would not honor the contract nor

pay him for work already completed. He raised his concerns with the US Department of Defense and the Pennsylvania congressional delegation.¹¹¹

Six days after returning to Iraq, Stoffel and Joseph Wemple were found shot to death ten miles outside of a US military base in Taj. Photos of their possessions were posted on an insurgent website.

The US Department of Defense launched an investigation and the Iraqi government denied complicity in the deaths of the two contractors. Whether elements within the Ministry of Defense were involved or not, the story gathered wide US attention and may have discouraged some companies from bidding for contracts in Iraq. Nevertheless, it did not paralyze Iraqi MOD procurement activity. In January 2005, Deputy Defense Minister Ziad Cattani signed a \$20 million arms deal with the Polish state-owned weapons manufacturer Bumar PHZ.¹¹²

- In the second incident, the issue was a sizeable transfer of funds from the Iraqi Central Bank by the Ministry of Defense. Reportedly, \$300 million in US currency was removed from the bank and put aboard a plane bound for Lebanon.

Mishal Sarraf, and aide to Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim al-Shalaan, asserted that the money was used to buy armored vehicles for Iraqi personnel, including tanks and APCs. There was no public bidding for the contracts and the entire Iraqi cabinet did not vote on the deal. Sarraf stated that the arms deal had been approved by the defense minister and by three other senior Iraqi officials, one of whom was Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. The aide further stated that the arms dealers could not be named because it would endanger their lives and that the deal was concluded quickly so as to rush the vehicles to Iraqi forces as quickly as possible.¹¹³

Critics challenged this explanation and leveled charges of corruption. Mowaffak al-Rubaie, then the Iraqi national security adviser, said he was unaware of the deal. He stated, "I am sorry to say that the corruption here is worse now than in the Saddam Hussein era."¹¹⁴ The director of the Iraq Revenue Watch, Isam al-Khafaji, stated, "That's the tragedy of Iraq: Everyone runs their business like a private fiefdom."¹¹⁵

It should be noted that no wrongdoings were confirmed and that the Iraqi government flatly denies any charges of corruption. One of the leading critics of the Defense Ministry, with regard to the arms deal, was Ahmed Chalabi, a controversial member of the Iraqi National Congress who was running for a seat in the Iraqi parliament. Chalabi and Shalaan were enemies, and it is possible that the charges are politically motivated. Shalaan vowed to arrest Chalabi and turn him over to Interpol, although nothing actually happened.¹¹⁶

Some Iraqi soldiers in the field also complained about the level of funding and equipment that they received from the Ministry of Defense. One Iraqi colonel with the Iraqi Army's 305th "Tiger" Battalion--a unit given control of parts of Baghdad by the US--stated that the ministry was so disorganized that it did not even know what parts of the city the unit controlled. Furthermore, the colonel stated, his unit received approximately \$133 a month, not enough to even supply the unit with paper.¹¹⁷ How widespread the colonel's complaints about the ministry were among the Iraqi forces was unclear.

Facilities

The Coalition reported that there was roughly \$1.91 billion in ongoing construction and reconstruction projects for Iraqi Security Forces as of January 19, 2005; and over \$1.71 billion of that money has already been committed. The projects included four multi-brigade installations, hundreds of police stations and border forts, numerous headquarters and barracks, a number of training centers, and many operating bases.

Such plans did, however, present the problem that Iraqi forces were being constantly redeployed to meet changing requirements. There often was little notice of future deployment and facility needs and in some cases, MNSTC-1 would get requirements for deployment of a unit like a 1,200 Special Police Command with something like a week's notice.¹¹⁸

Operational Readiness

As the following chronology shows, Iraqi forces continued to perform erratically and to have operational problems in spite of their performance during the election. Some units had massive desertions, or broke under pressure, and this led to further debates in the US and elsewhere over their current and potential effectiveness. USCENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid addressed these ongoing concerns about the Iraqi forces in an interview in late January 2005:

There's this debate, obviously, in Washington going on right now about the failure of Iraqi security forces, and I would say they're far from failure. It's a generational effort. It's not one that's going to happen within the next month.... I see failure in some places, but more successes than failures. So they'll ultimately be successful.¹¹⁹

The Iraqi army commander, General Babaker Shawkat Zebari, echoed Abizaid's outlook on the progress of Iraqi units in training. He stated:

God willing, during this year, our units will be fully armed, trained and have enough soldiers. After all this is finished, I am very optimistic that the Iraqi army will be able to protect the territories and border. [If the forces continue to improve] We will be able to protect Iraqi cities and villages within six months.¹²⁰

General Babaker also stated at that time that he expected Iraqi forces to number around 150,000 by summer of 2005. He expected that the US would withdraw its troops from the cities and withdraw to one or two major bases by the end of 2005.¹²¹ Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi was more cautious, but stated that he had been speaking with US officials in Baghdad about ways to speed up the training and equipping of Iraqi soldiers. He said that such acceleration would allow the Coalition forces to slowly leave, but he reiterated that he would adhere to a "conditions-based withdrawal" as opposed to a "calendar-based withdrawal."¹²²

US military officials reported that there were 129,000 Iraqi military and security personnel working with 140,000 election workers and 7,000 candidates to secure the polls during the vote.¹²³ Though insurgents mounted over 200 attacks and killed 44 Iraqis during the elections, Iraqi forces are widely regarded as having performed admirably and 8 million voters were able to cast their ballots. In at least one case, an Iraqi guarding a polling station wrestled a suicide bomber away from the site at the cost of his own life.

The Iraqi Minister of the Interior gave a press conference following the election detailing the reported successes of the Iraqi forces. Three terrorists were captured in Baghdad, 3 in Kirkuk, 7 in Thi Qar, 7 in Wasit, 129 in Saladen and 39 in Nineveh. The minister acknowledged that there were 7 attacks by insurgents during the election that directly targeted Iraqi police.

In any case, the Iraqi order of battle that could be deployed in independent operations, or in intense clashes, remained a small number of battalions. Even these units generally lacked service support and logistic capabilities, had light weapons and few – if any – armored or heavily protected vehicles. The issue was not one of total manpower, or even how many Iraqi forces could serve some purpose in undemanding duties, it was rather that the functioning order of battle – meaningful units active in the field -- still remained small. The following chronology records operational progress, and setbacks for the Iraqi security forces:

- **January 1, 2005**—Militants claiming loyalty to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi release a video showing the execution of five Iraqis believed to be Iraqi border guards. The insurgents warn that the same fate will befall any Iraqis who join the military and security services.
- **January 2, 2005**—22 Iraqi National Guardsmen die north of Baghdad in the city of Balad when their bus is hit with a car bomb. Four Iraqi police officers die in an ambush in Samarra and another is wounded. Insurgents shoot and kill the police chief in the town of Jebala. Reports indicate more than 1,000 Iraqi military and security force members have died since September.
- **January 3, 2005**—A car bomb detonates outside Iraqi Interim Prime Minister Allawi's political party headquarters, killing three police officers. Four Iraqi National Guardsmen die in a suicide car bomb explosion in Dijail, near the site of the bombing of the Iraqi National Guard bus the day before. In Tall Afar, one Iraqi police officer dies and two are injured when an explosion occurs while they investigate a decapitated body. Insurgents had booby-trapped the body with explosives. Six Iraqi National Guardsmen die in Tikrit when two roadside bombs explode. In Baiji, insurgents kill a police major and captain in a drive-by shooting.
- **January 4, 2005**—Iraqi police backed by US forces conduct a large raid in Diali. Iraq forces claim to have captured "an important terrorist." Some suggest that it is Abu Musab al-Zarqawi but US forces fervently deny this. In Baghdad, a suicide truck bomb explodes, killing eight Iraqi police commandos while wounding at least 60 other people. Near Baquba, three Iraqi National Guardsmen die in a bomb attack.
- **January 5, 2005**—At least two newly-graduated Iraqi police are killed when a suicide car bomber rams his vehicle into a crowd of people. At least eight other people are killed and 44 wounded. Insurgents kill Col. Khalefeh Ali Hassan, security chief for Iraq's Independent Election Commission, in a drive-by shooting in Diyala Province. A suicide car bomber tries to strike a joint US-Iraqi military convoy in western Baghdad but succeeds only in killing Iraqi civilians.
- **January 6, 2005**—Iraq celebrates Army Day, the 84th anniversary of the founding of the army in 1921.
- **January 8, 2005**—In Ramadi, Col. Jassim al-Kharbeet, a member of the police force, is killed by gunmen. In the Anbar province, Brig. Abid Ahmed al-Assafi is assassinated by militants.
- **January 10, 2005**—Gen. Amer Nayef, the deputy police chief of Baghdad, and his son, Lt. Khaled Amer, are assassinated by insurgents in the al Dora neighborhood of southern Baghdad. Also in the southern part of the city, a suicide bomber rams his vehicle into the main gate of the al-Mada'en police station, killing three Iraqi police officers. Reports indicate that the attacker's car was painted to resemble a police car or might have in fact been a stolen one. In Samarra, the city's deputy police chief, Brig. Mohammed Mudhafar Al-Badri, is killed in a drive-by shooting. A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle in front of the entrance to an Iraqi security forces base in Rubai'a, 105 miles northwest of Mosul. Four Iraqi security personnel die. In Basra, a suicide bomber attacks a police station. In a coordinated attack, another bomber targets a police internal affairs office in Basra. The ensuing blasts kill only the bombers.
- **January 11, 2005**—Insurgents detonate a car bomb near a police station in Tikrit. Six Iraqi policemen die. In Mosul, insurgents attack a US-Iraqi convoy delivering heaters and supplies to a nearby school. The attackers detonate a car bomb close to the convoy and fire weapons from a mosque. Three Iraqi soldiers die and six are wounded.

- **January 12, 2005**—In Mosul, militants detonate a car bomb next to an Iraqi National Guard patrol. The attack kills two Guardsmen and wounds two more. An Iraqi soldier discovers a weapons cache in Kadasia while on joint patrol with US soldiers. The uncovered munitions would have provided enough explosives for 35 IEDs.
- **January 13, 2005**—Insurgents in Baqubah detonate a roadside bomb as an Iraqi police patrol passes. Six officers are wounded and one dies. Militants kill an Iraqi National Guard captain in Qaim.
- **January 14, 2005**—38 Iraqi prisoners escape from the Abu Ghraib prison. Iraqi guards almost immediately recapture 10 of the detainees. The prisoners managed to loosen their bonds and overpower the nearby police and guards, fatally shooting one police officer. The Iraqi authorities set up checkpoints in the Sa'alam neighborhood of western Baghdad to try and apprehend the prisoners. It is believed that two Egyptians are among the escaped. Reportedly, Iraqi police officers may have facilitated their escape as the prisoners were moved at night and with little security—conditions that are extremely unusual. Three Kurdish troops die fighting against insurgents alongside Iraqi National Guard forces in Mosul. Militants detonate a car bomb outside a Shi'ite mosque in Khan Bani Saad. Four Iraqi policemen die in the blast along with three civilians. A bus carrying 15 Iraqi National Guardsmen on their way to a US base is ambushed near the western city of Hit. The Guardsmen are abducted by unknown assailants and the bus is burned. Iraqi soldiers and multinational forces arrest two suspected insurgents and uncover a bomb making plant during a raid in Duluiyah. The raid uncovers 500 kilograms of ammonium nitrate and 55 gallons of diesel fuel, ingredients used in the powerful car bombs made by insurgents.
- **January 16, 2005**—Gunmen assassinate an Iraqi police captain and two government auditors in Kut. Militants dressed in Iraqi police uniforms open fire on Shiite political candidate Salama Khafaji's car in central Baghdad. She is unharmed and the attackers flee. The Iraqi Defense Ministry releases a statement declaring that Iraqi forces killed 35 insurgents near Fallujah over the weekend. An Iraqi National Guard commander in Baquba states that a majority of the city will go to the poles to vote in the January 30th elections. Approximately 900 Iraqi soldiers assigned to the 8th Brigade, 3rd Division graduate from basic military training. The soldiers were trained at the Al Kasik Military Training Base and will join the 3rd Division in pre-election patrols in the Ninewa Province.
- **January 17, 2005**—Insurgents ambush a bus in Buhruz carrying Iraqi soldiers with rifles and rocket-propelled grenades, killing at least seven soldiers. In Baiji, a suicide car bomber rams a checkpoint. Seven Iraqi police officers die. Reportedly, guerillas attack Iraqi police stations in Sharqat and Dawr. A spokesman for Interim Prime Minister Allawi states that a man, Izz al-Din Al-Majid, captured in early December by Iraqi security forces was trying to unify Ansar Al-Sunna, Jaysh Muhammad, and the Islamic Resistance Army, three insurgent groups.
- **January 18, 2005**—Four suicide car bombs explode in Baghdad within 90 minutes. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for all four bombs. One bomber detonates is vehicle near the al-Alahi hospital in central Baghdad, killing five Iraqi policemen. Another bomber targets a control point south of the Baghdad International Airport. Two Iraqi security guards die and three are wounded. Reportedly, another bomb was headed for an army garrison and the final bomb was destined for a bank where police officers tend to congregate. Col. Mike Murray, commander of the US 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry states that all four bombers failed to reach their intended targets because of the efforts of the Iraqi military and security forces. 12 miles north of Hilla, insurgents detonate a car bomb, killing one Iraqi policeman and wounding two others. In Tikrit, militants launch several attacks which kill five Iraqi policemen and wound four others. Another Iraqi policeman dies near Baqubah and three more are wounded during a mortar attack on a police station. The 204th Iraqi army battalion conducts several raids that net Hashum Mehdi Hussein Al Tai and Ahsan Abd Ali Khadhim Al Obaydi in Khalis. Reportedly, the two men were the primary leaders of the Khalis insurgency. 670 Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers graduate from training at the Taji Military Training Base. Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi states that he has been talking to US commanders in the field about ways to speed up the training and equipping of Iraqi soldiers. In her confirmation testimony before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, former National Security Adviser and future Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice states that there are 120,000 fully trained and equipped Iraqi soldiers.
- **January 20, 2005**—An Iraqi police official estimates that 250 suicide attackers with 150 car bombs are prepared to strike during the Iraqi elections. His estimate was based on a series of interrogations of

captured insurgents. Militants try to seize the Al Salam Hospital in Mosul, but Iraqi forces prevent them from doing so. Hospital workers and patients flee the scene.

- **January 21, 2005**—Insurgents lob grenades at an Iraqi police river patrol in northern Baghdad. Four officers are injured. In Hit, 15 militants storm a police station, order the Iraqi policemen out, steal their equipment and two police cars, and then blow up the building. No officers are injured. Iraqi Intervention Force soldiers repel insurgent attacks on the Mosul train station. Reports indicate that \$300 million in American currency was taken from Iraq's Central Bank and put on a plane for Lebanon earlier in January. Critics claim that there is no indication why this money was sent and for what purpose. Aides to Iraqi Defense Minister Hazim al-Shalaan state that the money was rushed to arms dealers in an effort to quickly supply Iraqi forces with the equipment needed to fight the insurgency. The aides refuse to list the names of the dealers, citing concerns for the dealers' safety. Iraq's national security adviser was unaware of the transfer and it is unclear whether the money came from Iraqi or American sources.
- **January 22, 2005**—Gunmen ambush and kill Muwthana Salman, an Iraqi intelligence officer, in Baqubah. US military and Iraqi police forces arrest one of the top insurgent suspects. Retired four-star Army general Gary E. Luck, sent by the Pentagon two weeks ago to assess the training efforts in Iraq, states that the US must speed up the training process while bolstering the Iraqi security and military forces.
- **January 23, 2005**—An insurgent group led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi posts a video on the Internet showing an Iraqi National Guard colonel being shot in the head. The colonel had been kidnapped in Mosul. Reports indicate that the US may be attempting to bring back much of Saddam's former army in an effort to bolster the fledgling Iraqi military and security forces.
- **January 24, 2005**—The Iraqi Ministry of the Interior announces that it has made several significant arrests of insurgents in and around Ramadi. Among them is Abu Omar Al Kurdi, the man Iraqi government officials claim was behind 75% of the car bombs in Baghdad in 2003. The Iraqi government states that he is a top bomb maker and recruiter, and was one of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's top men in the Baghdad area. General Babakir, head of the Iraqi military, states that he foresees Iraqi military and security forces numbering 150,000 by summer 2005. Additionally, he foresees US troops pulling out of the cities and operating only one or two major bases by the end of 2005.
- **January 25, 2005**—Four Iraqi policemen from the Muthana station are gunned down in the Rashad neighborhood of Baghdad by insurgents. Reportedly, the gunmen pointedly ask if the individuals are police before they start firing. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a police colonel and his 5-year-old daughter are shot to death while driving. In the southeastern portion of the city, gun battles between insurgents and Iraqi police kills three officers.
- **January 26, 2005**—Two car bombs target Iraqi security and military forces. One bomb explodes outside of a police station in the town of Riyadh, killing three Iraqi police. Insurgents detonate the second bomb outside of the mayor's office in the same town. Two Iraqi soldiers die. In Baquba, militants launch assaults on the offices of the Kurdish Democratic Party and the Iraqi Patriotic Gathering Alliance. The resulting battle kills one Iraqi policeman.
- **January 27, 2005**—In Sinjar, 17 miles southwest of Mosul, a suicide tractor bomber detonates his vehicle outside of the offices of the Kurdish Democratic Party. Four Iraqi soldiers and a guard die in the explosion. Nine soldiers and three guards are wounded. In Baquba, a suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle as an Iraqi police convoy passes by the Diyala provincial governor's office. An Iraqi police lieutenant dies in the attack and three other officers are wounded. The bombing takes place at the same time the governor was expected to arrive for a Peace Day meeting. The meeting was aimed at bringing together Ba'ath figures, insurgents, and interim political figures to discuss options for making the elections peaceful and successful. The governor is unhurt. Militants launch rockets at the home of Deputy Interior Minister for Police Affairs, Maj. Gen. Hikmat Moussa. No one is hurt by the attack. Insurgents detonate a roadside bomb targeting Iraqi police on patrol near the Al-Shaab Stadium in the eastern part of Baghdad. The explosion fails to injure anyone. Commander of the Iraqi Army, Gen. Babaker Shawat Zebari, states that if the Iraqi military and security forces continue to improve, he believes that they will be able to protect major Iraqi urban areas in six months.
- **January 28, 2005**—A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle outside of the al-Dora police station in southern Baghdad, killing four people and wounding two more.

- **January 30, 2005**—The Iraqi elections take place. 44 people are killed in insurgent attacks, but the number of casualties and attacks is far below the expected number. One Iraqi policeman, Abdul Amir, is killed in Baghdad when a suicide bomber walks up to him outside of a polling station and detonates his explosives. Reportedly, Amir wrapped his arms around the bomber and dragged him away from the polling station before he could utilize his explosives.
- **January 31, 2005**—Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih announces that the Iraqi government has arrested Anab Mohammed Hamid al-Qas, reportedly an Iraqi military adviser to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi who ranked third in his organization and who helped finance attacks in Baghdad.
- **February 1, 2005**—The US deploys another Customs and Border Protection team in Iraq to help secure its borders
- **February 2, 2005**—Militants stop a convoy of Iraqi army recruits near Kirkuk and force 12 of them to lie in the street. The gunmen shoot the recruits and then run their bodies over.
- **February 3, 2005**—Five police and one National Guardsman are killed in an insurgent attack on a road south of Baghdad. Chairman of the joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard B. Myers, states that 40,000 of the reported 136,000 Iraqi security forces are adequately trained and equipped to go almost anywhere and confront almost any threat. The rest, he stated, were only fit for policing the calmer parts of southern Iraq. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul D. Wolfowitz, testifies that Iraqi units experience up to 40% absenteeism and that 1,342 Iraqi police and soldiers had died since June 2004.
- **February 5, 2005**—In Basra, a roadside bomb explodes, killing four Iraqi National Guardsmen on patrol. Two Iraqi soldiers die in an explosion in Samarra. An insurgent group posts a video on the Internet depicting the murder of seven Iraqi National Guardsmen.
- **February 6, 2005**—Gunmen attack a police station in Mahawil. 14 insurgents, 5 Iraqi National Guardsmen, and 17 Iraqi police die. Iraqi security forces announce that they had captured Khamis Masin Farhan, a former Iraqi general, on December 20th in Baiji. Iraqi officials maintain that he assisted in a number of insurgent attacks.
- **February 7, 2005**—Iraqi police officers and National Guardsmen note an increase in tips from the general public concerning the insurgency in the week following the election.
- **February 8, 2005**—In Baquba, a car bomb explodes outside of the provincial police headquarters, killing 15 recruits and wounding 17 more. In Mosul, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives inside the grounds of the Jumhuri Teaching Hospital. 12 Iraqi policemen die and four others are wounded. Witnesses say the bomber called police over to him prior to detonating his explosives. A group affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for the hospital bombing.
- **February 9, 2005**—A suicide bomber in Baghdad detonates his explosives in the middle of a crowd outside of the Iraqi National Guard headquarters at the Muthana airfield. 22 people die and 30 are wounded. Three police officers die in Baghdad during a firefight in the Ghazaliya neighborhood. Iraqi security forces claim that they have captured a militant involved in beheadings in and around Mosul.
- **February 10, 2005**—Four Iraqi policemen die in Samarra when a roadside bomb explodes. A police colonel, Riad Al-Yawi, attached to the Oil Ministry is abducted by gunmen loyal to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in southern Baghdad. Police and insurgents wage a fierce battle in the town of Salman Pak, southeast of Baghdad. 10 policemen and 20 insurgents are killed. At least 65 policemen are wounded. Police capture two Saudis and three Iranians. An Iraqi army driver is shot dead in Balad.
- **February 11, 2005**—Four bodies, believed to be Iraqi policemen, are found in Haswa, south of Baghdad. In Baquba, a police officer dies in a drive-by shooting.
- **February 12, 2005**—A suicide car bomb targeting an Iraqi National Guard patrol detonates, killing 13 and wounding 40 in Balad Ruz. It fails to injure any Guardsmen. A group affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for the attack. In Mosul, the bodies of six Iraqi National Guardsmen and six Kurdish security Guards are dumped in separate parts of the city.

- **February 13, 2005**—Iraqi troops recover the bodies of three US servicemen killed in a Humvee accident at the Isaki Canal. They weld a tool themselves to recover the bodies and brave freezing water temperatures.
- **February 14, 2005**—Reportedly, 10,000 Iraqis arrive at one military base looking to enlist. Half pass the recruiting test.
- **February 15, 2005**—Iraqi officials state that Iraqi security forces had captured two brothers who served as Iraqi intelligence agents in the Hussein regime. Sabah Nouri Milhim and Riyah Nouri Milhim were captured sometime in January and are suspected of training, supplying, and financing insurgents in Fallujah and Baghdad. It is believed that they had a large role in the countless attacks on Iraqi security forces in Baghdad.
- **February 17, 2005**—In Samarra, four Iraqi police officers die in two separate attacks. One attack was reportedly an unsuccessful assassination attempt on a police captain. In Baghdad, a suicide bomber kills an Iraqi National Guardsman. In a later attack, Guardsmen shoot and kill another would-be suicide bomber before he can detonate his explosive vest. The attacks occurred in the Mansour district. Elsewhere in Baghdad, Ghazi Houshi, an Interior Ministry intelligence officer, is gunned down in the Dawra neighborhood. In Baquba, gunmen fire on an Iraqi police patrol, killing one officer. Two insurgents die in the fight. In Mosul, a police station is fired upon, wounding the commander and killing his driver.
- **February 18, 2005**—Gunmen in Diyala assassinate an Iraqi National Guard officer and four civilians. Najaf city police chief, a visible opponent of the insurgency, Ghalib Jazaeri states that his two sons, members of the police force, had been kidnapped and murdered in Karbala. He states that he is worried that his force has been infiltrated by insurgents. The responsibility for providing security in several parts of Baghdad is turned over to the Iraqi 305th “Tiger” unit.
- **February 19, 2005**—In Baquba, a car bomb detonates at the National Guard headquarters, killing one Guardsman.
- **February 20, 2005**—US and Iraqi security forces launch simultaneous raids and set up checkpoints in the cities of Ramadi, Hit, and Haditha. The Iraqi National Guard reports that nine men were arrested for connections to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. A US Marine Corps spokesman states that while some of the insurgents in Ramadi had come from Fallujah prior to the assault on the city, most were common criminals. US soldiers and Iraqi police detain 17 suspected insurgents and seize weapons in a raid in Baghdad. The Iraqi interim government reports that an Iraqi battalion had captured Jaffa Sadaq Fette, the leader of a 100-man cell who profited by transporting Iraqis out of the country for insurgency training and then transporting them back in. He was captured February 3rd in Balad. 267 Iraqi police begin patrols in Samarra to try and quell the restive city.
- **February 21, 2005**—A suicide bomber drive his vehicle into a crowd of people gathered outside the Interior Ministry’s Rangers Battalion headquarters in the Qadisiriyyah neighborhood of Baghdad. Trainees and volunteers finish a drill as he strikes. At least two die and seven are wounded. Iraqis say that it is the third or fourth time that crowds have been targeted outside the complex.
- **February 22, 2005**—In western Baghdad, Iraqi police shoot and kill an insurgent attempting to plant an IED near a Shi’ite Mosque. The incident occurs in the Ghazaliya neighborhood.
- **February 24, 2005**—Insurgents detonate a suicide car bomb at the police headquarters in Tikrit. 10 Iraqis are killed and 35 more are injured. The bomber wore a police uniform, indicating either that it was stolen, sold on the black market, or that the bomber had infiltrated the force. In Qaim, four Iraqi National Guardsmen are killed by two roadside bombs. In Kirkuk, a roadside bomb kills two policemen and injures three. Khattab Omar Arif, the leader of the city’s emergency police, states that the bomb was intended for him and instead killed the men guarding him.
- **February 26, 2005**—In Nibai, one Iraqi army soldier is shot dead and an Iraqi policeman is killed in Baquba.
- **February 27, 2005**—In the Musayyib district, insurgents try and disrupt an Iraqi army raid with a car bomb. One Iraqi soldier is killed and three are wounded. 12 suspects are captured.

- **February 28, 2005**—Insurgents launch the single deadliest attack to date, detonating a suicide car bomb outside of a Hilla city government office where police recruits were waiting to get physicals. The explosion kills at least 127 and wounds more than 150. A separate car bomb explodes in Musayyib—no details are available. In Mosul, a firefight between insurgents and Iraqi commandoes leaves four civilians dead and a group of insurgents blow themselves up after they are chased down and surrounded by Kurdish forces and Iraqi police. In Baghdad, Iraqi soldiers fight a contingent of Sudanese militants following an attack on an army convoy. The battle takes place in the al-Battaween district. 22 militants are detained and at least two are killed.
- **March 2, 2005**—A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle near an army recruiting center in the Salihiya neighborhood of Baghdad. Six soldiers die and 28 are wounded by the blast. This is the third time the center has been targeted in a year. The third attack produced the fewest casualties and it is believed that the blast walls were successful in protecting the site. A second car bomb explodes two hours later in the Jadriya neighborhood of the city. The second blast targeted an Iraqi military convoy, killing seven and injuring two.
- **March 3, 2005**—Col. Mou'ness Saeed, chief of the al-Mouqdad station in Kirkuk, narrowly dodges an assassination attempt. Gunmen target him in a drive-by shooting, but he escapes unharmed. Insurgents detonate two car bombs near the Ministry of the Interior in Baghdad, killing five police officers and wounding seven others. In Baquba, a suicide car bomber targets the chief of the emergency police in the Diyala province, Mudhafar Shahab Jiburi. The bomber detonates his vehicle outside the headquarters of the Iraqi emergency police, killing one person and wounding 12 others. Jiburi escapes unharmed. A previously unheard of Iraqi insurgent group, the Saladin Al Ayobi Brigades of the Islamic Front of Iraqi Resistance (JAME) pledges to stop targeting Iraqi security forces and civilians and to concentrate on US forces.
- **March 4, 2005**—Col. Ghaib Hadab Zarib, the al-Budair police chief, is shot to death outside his home by gunmen. US Army officials announce that Cpl. Dustin Berg, an Indiana National Guardsman, will be court-martialed for the November 2003 murder of Iraqi police officer Hussein Kamel Hadi Dawood Dubeidi. 15 decapitated bodies are found in an old military base between Latifiya and Karbala. The dead include women and children. It is believed that the men were part of a group of Iraqi soldiers kidnapped some time ago.
- **March 6, 2005**—Reports indicate that most of the violent neighborhoods in Baghdad, including the Adhamiya neighborhood and Haifa Street, have been turned over to Iraqi forces in the weeks following the election. A reported ten neighborhoods are in the care of the Iraqi Army's 40th Brigade. The Iraqi forces hope to control all of the city by December 2005.
- **March 7, 2005**—Militants bomb Mohammed Jasim's, a major in the Iraqi National Guard, house in Balad, killing his family. Jasim claimed credit for capturing or killing most of the insurgents that had been neutralized in the area. Two Sudanese men were taken into custody for questioning in connection with the attack. In Baqubah, insurgents launch an elaborate attack on an Iraqi Army checkpoint. Eight cars pull over and 50 masked militants leap out and open fire on the checkpoint. The attackers withdrew and the Iraqi forces took their comrades to the hospital. On the way, an explosion, believed to be a suicide bomber, rocks the hospital convoy. Officials believe that the attacks were coordinated. Six soldiers, two policemen, two civilians are killed and 23 people are wounded. A group affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit for the attacks.
- **March 9, 2005**—Insurgents park a garbage truck packed with explosives close to the Sadr Hotel in central Baghdad. A firefight breaks out between the hotel's armed guards and the insurgents minutes before the truck is detonated. An Iraqi police officer is killed and more than 40 other people are wounded. A group affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims credit. In Basra, insurgents detonate a roadside bomb while an Iraqi police convoy passes. Two police officers are killed and five more wounded in the attack. In Habbaniya, a town within the Sunni Triangle, a suicide bomber drives his car into an Iraqi Army base. The driver is believed to be Sudanese. The bomb kills two officers, a civilian, and wounds 15 people. 20 bodies are found near Qaim, close to the Syrian border. It is unclear if the men were Iraqi soldiers or policemen. Investigators believe the killings occurred on March 5, toward the end of the Marine-led Operation River Blitz which focused on the towns of Ramadi, Hit, Hadita, and Qaim. In al-Habbaniya, a suicide car bomber attacks a joint US-Iraqi checkpoint on the road to a US military base. No casualties were confirmed. Shoqayer Fareed Sheet, a former Iraqi police lieutenant, confessed to a special Iraqi antiterrorism unit, al-Theeb, or "the wolf," that he had tortured and killed

113 Iraqi police officers, Iraqi soldiers, and Iraqi civilians and had provided Iraqi Sunni insurgents with information.

- **March 10, 2005**—In southeastern Baghdad, gunmen attack and critically wound Iraqi Interior Ministry police official Gen. Abdul Karim Raheem while he is in his car. Col. Aiyad Abdul Razaq, who was driving to work in the same general part of Baghdad, is shot to death. He was the chief deputy of the Jisdiala police station. In central Baghdad, the chief of the al-Salihiya police station, Col. Hamad Ubeyis is shot to death in his squad car. Shoqayer Fareed Sheet leads al-Theeb to a mass grave at the Wadi Egab Cemetery where 31 bodies, believed to be members of the Iraqi security forces, are found. In Baghdad, gunmen kill top police official Lt. Col. Ahmed Obais who was being driven to work by a driver and his bodyguard.
- **March 12, 2005**—Militants ambush three Iraqi policemen in Mosul's Sukar district. The officers were driving to a friend's funeral. All three were shot to death.
- **March 14, 2005**—Ramzi Hashim, a Mosul man, is arrested by the Najaf police. Police chief Ghalib al-Jazairi states that they captured him in a hotel plotting a major attack. The police believe that he was involved in the August 2003 bombing at the Imam Ali Mosque that killed SCIRI head Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim. Iraqi officials announce that they have in their custody Marwan Taher Abdulrasheed and Abdulla Maher Abdulrasheed. The two men were arrested in Tikrit on February 8th. Marwan is a former Saddam bodyguard and officials believe that Abdulla was helping to fund the insurgency.
- **March 15, 2005**—A car bomb in Baghdad wounds an Iraqi policeman. There are no further details reported.
- **March 16, 2005**—In Baquba, a car bomb is detonated by insurgents at a checkpoint manned by Iraqi Army soldiers, killing two soldiers and wounding five more.
- **March 20, 2005**—A suicide bomber walks into police headquarters in Mosul and detonates his explosives. Two people are killed, including Walid Kashmoula, the chief of Mosul's anti-corruption operations. Three Iraqi police officers are wounded when a roadside bomb explodes in Kirkuk. In Baquba, gunmen open fire on a police station, killing four Iraqi officers and wounding two others.
- **March 21, 2005**—Insurgents try to assassinate Mosul's provincial police chief. The attack is a failure and 17 militants die. No Iraqi security force casualties are reported.
- **March 22, 2005**—Iraqi officials state that 85 insurgents died earlier in the day when Iraqi commandos, assisted by US air and ground support, overran an insurgent training camp located in swamps near Tharthar Lake in the Sunni Triangle. The commandos were part of the 1st Police Commando Battalion. The 85 killed insurgents were the most killed in any one battle since the offensive against Fallujah. Among the dead insurgents were Iraqis, Sudanese, Algerians, Moroccans and others. Seven Iraqi commandos were killed and five were wounded. Reportedly, the camp was part of the Islamic Army of Tikrit which, in an unusual act, distributed leaflets announcing that they had sustained 11 casualties in the assault in the swamps. Insurgents attack Iraqi soldiers in Kirkuk, but, according to Iraqi officials, they fight them off. No casualties are reported.
- **March 23, 2005**—US and Iraqi forces conduct raids south of Mosul near Tal Afar. Iraqi officials announce that Iraqi security forces had disrupted a plot to attack the National Assembly the previous week during its meeting in the Green Zone.
- **March 24, 2005**—11 Iraqi policemen of the 2nd Iraqi Special Police Commando unit are killed when a suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle at a checkpoint in Ramadi. In Mosul, Iraqi police mistake three Iraqi army officers and two Iraqi police officers for insurgents. They open fire, killing all five men. US and Iraqi forces continue raids near Tal Afar, seizing 13 suspected insurgents and several weapons. Militants shoot and kill the commander of an Iraqi Army brigade in Basra, Maj. Gen. Salman Muhammad, as he drives from a friend's funeral in Baghdad.
- **March 25, 2005**—Reports cast doubt on the Iraqi claim that police commandos killed 85 insurgents in March 22nd's major raid. Exact casualties remain unknown, but US and Iraqi officials assert that the Iraqis, in their first major lead operation, performed well. A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle in Iskandariya close to an Iraqi Army convoy. Four soldiers die and nine soldiers and civilians are

wounded. In Fallujah, US and Iraqi forces impose a curfew after an Iraqi policeman is shot to death. Reports today indicate that Iraqi commandos admitted that the attack on the terrorist training camp in the swamps on March 22nd was not as successful as it first seemed. Most of the insurgent casualties reported were caused by American helicopter gunships. Iraqi commandos confirmed that the dead insurgents were mostly foreign Arabs. A Filipino and an Algerian were found among the dead, allegedly along with Chechens, Saudis, and Afghans.

- **March 27, 2005**—A militant group claiming to be Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's Al Qaeda in Iraq releases a video depicting the apparent shooting death of an alleged employee of the Ministry of the Interior. The murdered man identifies himself as Col. Ryadh Katie Olyway just before he dies. An Iraqi Ministry official confirms that a Col. Olyway worked for both the Ministry of the Interior and the Oil Ministry, but could not verify the identity of the man in the video. Guards outside of the Ministry of Science and Technology in Baghdad open fire on protesters who were demanding better pay. One protester is killed.
- **March 28, 2005**—Militants detonate a roadside bomb near an Iraqi police patrol in southwestern Baghdad. Three police are wounded and one is killed. The chief of the Balat al-Shouhada police station in southeastern Baghdad, Col. Abdul Kahrin Fahad, is gunned down while being driven to work.
- **March 31, 2005**—Joint Iraqi and US raids in Mosul and Tal Afar begin. In Tuz Khurmatu, insurgents detonate a car bomb at an Iraqi Army checkpoint designed to protect visitors to a Shi'ite shrine. Several civilians die and eight Iraqi soldiers are wounded.
- **April 1, 2005**—In Balad Ruz, an Interior Ministry commando is killed during a raid in the Daniya section of the city. Elsewhere in the city, police chief Col. Hatem Rashid Mohammed is killed by insurgents while getting into his vehicle. Joint Iraqi and US raids continue in Mosul and Tal Afar. Raids have netted eight insurgent suspects and multiple weapons. At a Baghdad mosque, a group of 64 Sunni Arab imams and religious scholars issue an edict encouraging Sunni Arabs to join the Iraqi army and police. The edict was signed by Ahmed Hassan al-Taha, an imam who has been a strong critic of the occupation, but not Harith al-Dari, the leader of the association of Muslim Scholars.
- **April 2, 2005**—In a bold attack, between 40 and 60 insurgents launch an attack on Abu Ghraib prison from all sides, utilizing car bombs, mortars, RPGs, and small arms. The insurgents attack the part of the prison controlled by the Iraqi security forces in an apparent attempt to free an unknown quantity of prisoners. US forces call in reinforcements and repel the attack which lasts for approximately 45 minutes. In Khan Bani Saad, insurgents detonate a car bomb at a police station, killing five, including three policemen, and wound three more Iraqi police.
- **April 3, 2005**—The body of a Kurdish police officer who had been shot to death is found in Mosul.
- **April 4, 2005**—During a joint search operation, Iraqi forces are attacked by insurgents in Diyala province. US air and ground assets from the US Army's 42 Infantry Division move in to help once they are attacked. One Iraqi soldier is killed during the hour-long battle.
- **April 5, 2005**—General Jalal Mohammed Salah, the commander of an Interior Ministry mechanized armored brigade, is kidnapped in Baghdad. In Amiriya on Baghdad's western outskirts, insurgents detonate a car bomb as an Iraqi military convoy passes by. No military casualties are reported, but several civilians are hurt. In Tal Afar, a bus filled with around 50 Iraqi soldiers is hit by an explosion from a roadside bomb. 3 Iraqi soldiers are killed and more than 44 are wounded. The soldiers were on their way to distribute pay to their families. Reportedly, Iraqi soldiers believe that the attackers knew they were coming. Several trucks with mounted machine guns were protecting the bus before the explosion.
- **April 7, 2005**—Iraq's president, Jalal Talabani, takes office and offers an amnesty to insurgents, possibly even insurgents who have killed Iraqi security force members. The amnesty is seen as much broader than the one posed by the former interim prime minister, Ayad Allawi. In Mosul, insurgents launch a bomb attack on an Iraqi army patrol. Three soldiers are killed and 20 more wounded. The patrol issues a statement claiming to have captured 7 attackers. In Basra, Maj. Mahmoud Hassan al-Yassiri, and Iraqi army officer, is killed when gunmen burst into a restaurant where he is eating with a colleague and shoot him in the head.
- **April 9, 2005**—In Mosul, an insurgent car bomb kills two Iraqi policemen. Press reports indicate that claims of abuse had been lodged against members of Iraq's security forces by other Iraqis.

- **April 11, 2005**—US soldiers and approximately 500 Iraqi soldiers conduct sweeps dubbed Operation Vanguard Tempest in the Al-Rasheed district in Baghdad. The sweeps net some 65 suspected militants. The district is suspected to be a hub of insurgent activity.
- **April 12, 2005**—The Iraqi government claims that it has captured Fadhil Ibrahim Mahmud al-Mashadani. Mashadani, reportedly, aided insurgent attacks and was a high ranking Ba'athist in the Saddam Hussein regime. The Iraqi government had posted a \$200,000 reward for information leading to his capture. In Baghdad, Maj. Gen. Tareq al-Baldawi, the deputy interior minister, is attacked in the Hay al-Adel district. He escapes unhurt. US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld visits Iraq and states that the US will not leave until the Iraqi security forces are capable assuming full control of the country.
- **April 13, 2005**—Insurgents in Kirkuk detonate a bomb close to 12 Iraqi security force members who are defusing a roadside bomb. All 12 are killed. In Baghdad, gunmen attack Col. Naji Hussein, a Ministry of the Interior official, as he drives through the al-Dora district. Hussein is wounded by small arms fire.
- **April 14, 2005**—US soldiers and Iraqi soldiers arrest 17 suspected insurgents in western Baghdad and seize weapons, US currency, and bomb-making materials. Insurgents detonate two car bombs nearly simultaneously near an Iraqi police convoy. Most of the casualties are civilians. The exact number of hurt or killed Iraqi police is unknown. Approximately two hours later, US and Iraqi forces destroy a follow-on car bomb near the same site. Elsewhere in the city, gunmen kill 1st Lt. Firas Hussein while on his way in to work. Hussein was reportedly working for Iraq's intelligence service. In Mahaweel, a suicide bomber detonates a briefcase full of explosives in a market. Four Iraqi policemen die and several civilians are wounded. In Kirkuk, militants assault the Al-Adala police station, killing three Iraqi policemen and wounding two others. In Baquba, Iraqi forces take into custody 27 suspected militants.
- **April 15, 2005**—Insurgents attack an Iraqi military convoy in Baghdad. Exact casualties are unknown. In the city's Talbiya district, a roadside bomb detonates near an Iraqi army convoy, killing one civilian and wounding three others. Reports indicate that 50 Shi'ite prisoners may have been taken by Sunni militants demanding that all Shi'ites evacuate the town of Madain. Civilians are reported fleeing the area.
- **April 16, 2005**—Reports indicate that the kidnapping in Madain may be a response to an earlier kidnapping of 20 Sunnis from a nearby town. In Baquba, insurgents bomb a restaurant. 10 police officers are killed. In Kirkuk, militants shoot and kill a policeman and an Iraqi army officer. Near Hilla, a suicide car bomber plows into an Iraqi police patrol, killing four officers.
- **April 18, 2005**—Iraqi security forces, numbering some 2,000 police and soldiers and reinforced by US helicopters, receive a tip that leads them to a weapons cache. The arrest several suspected militants and uncover a bomb-making plant and a firing range. 10 insurgents wearing Iraqi military uniforms appear at Lt. Gen. Adnan Qaragholi's home. When invited inside, the shoot and kill Qaragholi, an advisor to the interim defense minister, and his son, Iraqi army Capt. Alaa al-Din. The insurgents left their uniforms at the scene of the shooting. The public information officer for the Iraqi police in Mosul, Brig. Gen. Younis Mohammad Sulaiman, is killed by gunmen on his way to work. Iraqi security forces take control of Madain City, finding no Shi'ite hostages or prisoners. They arrest ten suspects and seize an unknown quantity of weapons. The Shi'ite bloc that forms the majority in the new Iraqi government announces plans to pursue a drastic purge of Ba'athists in the Iraqi security and military forces. US and Iraqi officials state that this policy could do much to damage the forces that have been created and send many of the best intelligence and military officers over to the insurgency.
- **April 19, 2005**—A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle, a green Kia minibus, near a group of Iraqi security forces and recruits at the Adhamiya Palace in Baghdad. Two Iraqi army soldiers and two recruits are killed. Eight soldiers are wounded and approximately 30 recruits were hurt. Maj. Gen. Adnan Thabet reportedly suggests that the incident in Madain had more to do with local tribal politics than anything else. He suggests further that the media and several political parties turned the incident into a crisis. In Basra, two Iraqi policemen are killed and six hurt by the detonation of a roadside bomb.
- **April 20, 2005**—50 bodies are found in the Tigris River. Some Iraqis believe that these bodies are the hostages that were reported taken in Madain, yet Riyadh Sakhi, a policeman, states that it appeared as though several of the victims, which included two school girls, had been in the water for weeks and may have washed up as a result of the spring thaw. Reportedly, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani claims to have

the names of both the kidnapped and those who committed the crime in Madain. Reports indicate that the bodies of 19 Iraqi National Guardsmen are found in a soccer stadium in Haditha. The men were part of a six minibus convoy headed to Haditha on the 19th to check reports of armed militants. When ambushed, four buses managed to escape but two were left behind. The Iraqis that escaped returned to the site with US reinforcements but found nothing. Reportedly, the Iraqis in the six minibuses were badly outgunned by the insurgents who were armed with grenade launchers. The Guardsmen that were left behind were taken hostage and then executed. In Ramadi, two suicide car bombers detonate their vehicles in the center of the city, close to an Iraqi checkpoint. The attackers failed to injure anyone. In Sadr city, militants kill policeman Ali Talib in a drive by shooting. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a roadside bomb kills an Iraqi policeman and injures two others.

- **April 22, 2005**—The prison director for the Nineveh Province, Col. Khalid Najim Abdallah, is killed in Mosul by insurgents who stop his car.
- **April 23, 2005**—Reportedly, insurgents detonate a car bomb near and Iraqi National Guard convoy as it passes the village of Zaydan, close to Abu Ghraib prison. Nine soldiers are killed, and 20 more are injured. 314 Iraqi Army soldiers graduate in Tikrit. In an attack on a joint US-Iraqi convoy traveling a street close to the road to Baghdad International Airport, a suicide bomber wounds seven Iraqi soldiers and three US soldiers. A roadside bomb in Yusufiyah kills an Iraq National Guardsman. Three Iraqi soldiers are wounded by an IED that strikes their convoy in Mosul.
- **April 24, 2005**—Militants detonate two car bombs at the checkpoint entrance to the Iraqi Police Academy in Tikrit. Six police are killed with an additional 35 wounded. Most of the wounded were Iraqi police.
- **April 25, 2005**—Joint Iraqi and US sweeps around Baghdad net 41 insurgents and an unspecified quantity of weapons. 10 of the militants are suspects in the shooting down of a civilian MI-8 helicopter.
- **April 26, 2005**—The Staff Judge Advocate team from the US 3rd Infantry Division begins providing human rights training to the 1st Iraqi Army Brigade.
- **April 28, 2005**—In Basra, Iraqi soldiers apprehend six insurgents armed with explosives and various sundry weapons. Militants detonate a bomb in a heavily populated part of east Baghdad as police officers in two pickup trucks drove by. Two officers die and two more are wounded. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a Ministry of the Interior official, Lt. Col. Alaa Khalil Ibrahim, is shot dead on his way into work. Militants detonate a bomb near a joint US-Iraqi convoy, killing two Iraqi soldiers and wounding 12 others.
- **April 29, 2005**—Iraqi police successfully prevent three suicide bomber attacks near Salman Pak. One police officer is killed and five others are wounded. In the Al Dora district of Baghdad, Iraqi officers safely detonate an IED near the Al Dora police station. In Baghdad, four suicide car bombers strike in the Azamiyah section of the city. 15 Iraqi soldiers die and 30 are wounded in attacks on an Iraqi army patrol, on a police patrol, and two on barricades close to the headquarters for the Interior Ministry's special forces. All told, more than 10 car bombs explode in Iraq today, yet reports indicate that most of the bombers were unable to reach their intended targets. In a separate attack in the city, militants shoot at a police patrol, wounding one officer. Not far from Basra, an IED detonates near an Iraqi border guard patrol, killing one Iraq soldier and wounding two others.
- **April 30, 2005**—Militants shoot at an Iraqi police patrol in Mosul, wounding two officers.
- **May 1, 2005**—Following a suicide bomb targeting the funeral gathering of Kurdish Democratic Party official Sayid Ahmed Wahab in Tal Afar, US and Iraqi forces clash with insurgents. No casualties are reported. In the Nahrwan area of Baghdad, six Iraqi policemen are killed in an insurgent ambush on their checkpoint. Several of the 18 militants are killed as well.
- **May 2, 2005**—Insurgents target an Iraqi commando convoy in the al-Huriyah neighborhood of Baghdad. Two commandos are wounded and the commander of Baghdad's commandos, Maj. Gen. Rasheed Aflayeh, escapes unharmed. In the Zayouna neighborhood, a car bomb explodes close to an Iraqi police patrol, killing two officers. Insurgents detonate a car bomb near an Iraqi army convoy in the al-Tarmiyah portion of the city, wounding an Iraqi soldier and a police officer. In the southeastern Baghdad neighborhood of al-Rustumiya, 30 insurgents attack an Iraqi police checkpoint. Five police

officers die and an unknown number of insurgents. A suicide bomber detonates his truck at a checkpoint south of the city. The blast kills eight soldiers and wounds 20 more.

- **May 3, 2005**—An Iraqi soldier and policeman die in firefights in Baghdad. In the western portion of the city, three roadside bombs explode close to Iraqi police patrols, hurting four officers. In Ramadi, a joint Iraqi-US checkpoint comes under fire from insurgents. 12 militants are killed and two Iraqi soldiers are wounded. In Samarra, militants shoot and kill three Iraqi policemen following a series of police raids on suspected insurgent-held areas. In Shurgat, an Iraqi soldier is killed. No details are released.
- **May 4, 2005**—The Army of Ansar al-Sunna claims credit for a suicide bombing in Erbil that targets an office of the KDP political party where more than 300 people were waiting to get approval to apply for Iraqi security jobs. More than 60 are killed and more than 150 injured by the blast. Reports indicate that the suicide bomber seems to have mingled among the recruits before detonating his explosives. Ansar al-Sunna had struck recruits previously in Erbil in February 2004. In Baghdad, a car bomb explodes in the Dora area, killing nine Iraqi soldiers and wounding three others.
- **May 5, 2005**—Nine Iraqi police officers die in insurgent ambushes on what appears to have been a convoy. Six die in the Sayidiya district and three close to Sayidiya Square. A suicide bomber detonates his vehicle outside of the frequently attacked army recruiting station outside the Al-Muthana Airfield in Baghdad. 13 Iraqi soldiers die and seven are wounded. Maj. Gen. Salman Hikmat Moussa, an Interior Ministry official, escapes a suicide bomber who detonates his vehicle outside of his home in western Baghdad. One Iraqi police officer dies in the attack and six others are wounded. Reports released today indicate that Iraqi security forces had captured Ayman Sabawi, an alleged supporter of the insurgency and half brother of Saddam Hussein in Tikrit.
- **May 6, 2005**—In northeastern Tikrit, a suicide bomber rams a 45-person bus carrying Iraqi police officers to work. Seven officers die and three are wounded. Lt. Gen. Naiser Abadi, deputy chief of staff for Iraq's armed forces, states that he doubts the rumors that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi was injured and recovering in a Ramadi hospital are true. US forces reportedly were investigating the rumors.
- **May 8, 2005**—In the Rawa area, US and Iraqi forces capture 54 militants and kill six more in a firefight after information gleaned from a captured Zarqawi aide, Ghassan Muhammad Amin Husayn al-Rawi, directs them to the region. They seize bomb making material and two large stashes of weapons. The US military reports that Iraqi forces captured Ammar al-Zubaydi, an alleged aide to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, on May 5th. Reportedly, Zubaydi is responsible for multiple bombing attacks, including a number of attacks in Baghdad on April 29th and the April attack on the Abu Ghraib prison. Those attacks killed 23 Iraqi troops and wounded 31. Press releases state that he was planning to assassinate a senior Iraqi official, that he had stolen hundreds of rockets and cases of ammunition from facilities in Yusifiya in 2003, and that he had helped Abu Omar al-Kurdi, another suspected Zarqawi aide captured in December.
- **May 9, 2005**—Two Iraqi policemen are killed and six are wounded when a suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle at a police checkpoint in southern Baghdad. Reports state that militants had detonated 135 car bombs in April, more than any other month since the invasion. The same reports indicate that Iraqi police had seized 10 vehicles in 10 days packed with explosives that were to be used in bombings.
- **May 11, 2005**—In Hawija, a suicide bomber detonates his explosive vest amongst a crowd that had lined up to join the Iraqi army. The suicide bomber managed to slip by security. 20 are killed and another 30 are wounded. In Baghdad, insurgents detonate a car bomb outside of a police station in the al-Dora neighborhood, killing civilians and wounding eight Iraqi police officers. In a separate car bomb attack on an emergency police patrol, four police officers are injured. The attack occurs at Jordan Square in the Yarmuk area of the city. In Jamiya, insurgents attack an Iraqi army patrol, killing three Iraqi soldiers. A suicide bomber detonates his vehicle near a police station in the Dawra area, killing civilians but no Iraqi policemen. In the Mansour district, militants gun down two police officers.
- **May 12, 2005**—Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Ayad Imad Mahdi is shot to death by gunmen as he drives to work in western Baghdad. An Iraqi Interior Ministry employee, Col. Jamal Ahmed Hussein, is killed on his way to work in the al-Amin neighborhood. Reportedly, Polish and Iraqi soldiers seize a cache of weapons and arrest 29 suspected militants in the Wasit province in a mission dubbed 'Operation Cobweb.'

- **May 13, 2005**—Reports released by the Iraqi government state that Iraqi forces had captured Saif Aldin Mustafa Nuaimi and Abdul Qadir Ashur Jaburi, two men allegedly affiliated with Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's organization, on April 15th. Jaburi, Nuaimi's father, is accused of raising money for Zarqawi's group while Nuaimi is an alleged bomb maker. In Baghdad's Adil district, gunmen open fire on an Iraqi police patrol, killing two policemen and wounding three more. In Baquba, insurgents detonate a car bomb, killing two Iraqi National Guardsmen and wounding five more.
- **May 14, 2005**—The bodies of 10 Iraqi soldiers are found in western Ramadi. Two Iraqi police officers are killed in a clash in Samarra. Iraqi Army soldiers detained 58 suspects in Miqdadiya.
- **May 15, 2005**—In Iskandariya, Iraqi police find 11 bodies, four of which had been beheaded. At least three of the dead are Iraqi soldiers. A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle next to an Iraqi police patrol in Baghdad, killing four people. It is not clear how many officers are killed/wounded. Militants throw grenades at an Iraqi police convoy in the western part of the city, killing one officer.
- **May 16, 2005**—In Baghdad, an unidentified Iraqi general working for the Defense Ministry escapes an assassination attempt when his guards open fire on a car that pulls up next to his. The vehicle was flush with weaponry. Elsewhere in the city, Defense Minister Sadoun Dulaimi announces that, due to complaints over Iraqi security force raids by Iraqi citizens, Iraqi forces would no longer be able to raid mosques and places of worship. Insurgents detonate a car bomb in a market within the city. When Iraqi troops investigate, militants detonate a follow-on car bomb, killing nine Iraqi soldiers. Unidentified Iraqis dressed as Iraqi Army soldiers bind, blindfold, and shoot eight civilians in the Al-Sha'ab area of Baghdad. Four more are found in the Ur neighborhood close to a mosque. In Baquba, insurgents detonate a roadside bomb, killing five Iraqi soldiers and wounding seven more. Iraqi officials announce that they captured a Mosul-based bomb maker, Salim Yussef Ghafif Huseyn, last week.
- **May 17, 2005**—An Interior Ministry official, Brig. Gen. Ibrahim Khammas, head of criminal intelligence, is killed by gunmen in a drive-by shooting as he leaves for work.
- **May 18, 2005**—A US military official states that 126 car bombs had been detonated or disarmed since February 27, 2005. Iraqi forces are attacked in central Baghdad. They return fire, killing four militants. Further details are unavailable.
- **May 19, 2005**—Reports indicate that the US 1st Cavalry Division had received over 100 allegations of abuse by Iraqi military forces by the time they left Iraq in February, spanning back six months.
- **May 21, 2005**—Reports indicate that at least three Iraqi policemen are killed overnight.
- **May 22, 2005**—Iraqi Army and Interior forces, in conjunction with Coalition troops, conduct a series of raids in the Abu Ghraib district, termed 'Operation Squeeze Play,' capturing a number of suspected insurgents. The Iraqi units involved include two battalions from the 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, two battalions from the 1st Brigade 1st Iraqi Intervention Force, and three battalions from the 2nd Brigade Special Police Commandos.
- **May 23, 2005**—In Mosul, a member of the Iraqi security forces dies when the bomb he was attempting to diffuse detonates. Operation Squeeze Play continues, with Iraqi and Coalition forces having netted some 400 suspects. Militants detonate a car bomb in north Baghdad next to a café popular with Iraqi police. Five people are killed, though it was not immediately clear if any were police officers. Maj. Gen. Wael Rubaei, an Iraqi security official, is shot to death as he drives into work in Baghdad. In the largest combined action to date, Iraqi and US troops sweep the area near Abu Ghraib prison and the road to Baghdad's airport. 300 people are detained. A famous Iraqi police commando, Abdul Waleed, appears on Iraqi state television in a music video and threatens to cut off the arms of insurgents.
- **May 25, 2005**—1,000 Iraqi and US troops begin an offensive as a follow up to Operation Matador in the Anbar province. This Operation New Market uncovers a weapons cache and a clash between US Marines and insurgents. Iraqi Defense Ministry officials announce the capture of an associate of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Baquba. Captured on the 24th, Iraqi forces describe him as Zarqawi's 'secretary.' In the Baghdad neighborhood of al-Dora, insurgents detonate a car bomb that kills eight police commandos.
- **May 26, 2005**—Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr announces that insurgent leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi had been wounded in an assault. Jabr announces that 40,000 Iraqi security forces will be

stationed in Baghdad to help root out insurgents. In Western Baghdad, a suicide taxi bomber kills two police officers.

- **May 28, 2005**—Two suicide car bombers detonate their vehicles at a checkpoint in the city of Sinjar. Four Iraqi soldiers die and 35 people are wounded.
- **May 29, 2005**—Operation New Market ends. A total of 12 insurgents were killed and 30 were detained. Numerous weapons were seized, including 300 82mm high explosive mortars. Operation Lightning, a sweep against insurgents in Baghdad using between 13,000 and 20,000 Iraq forces and 7,000 US forces, begins.
- **May 30, 2005**—In Hilla, police commandos demonstrate in front of the Interior Ministry. The ministry discovered that the units had formed unofficially and then had forged documents in an attempt to appear government sanctioned. During the demonstration, a suicide bomber mingles with the crowd and then detonates his explosives. When the crowd begins to run, a second bomber runs with them and then detonates his explosives. 31 are killed and 108 wounded. A provincial police chief, Maj. Gen. Qais Hamza, vows revenge for the bombings. An Iraqi Air Force plane crashes in the Diyala province, killing an Iraqi aviator and a US pilot.
- **May 31, 2005**—Operation Lightning captures 65 suspected insurgents and kills 12.

For all the weakness that still existed in Iraqi forces, no element of the Iraqi security forces had been overrun since the elections although more than 175 were killed per month in combat by the late spring. More broadly, major shifts were taking place in the scale of the training and equipment effort, and gathering momentum in the deployment of Iraqi forces. Moreover, once it finally took shape, the new Shi'ite and Kurdish-dominated government approached the problem of the insurgency and Iraqi force development with more realism than many initially feared.

Key figures like President Jalal Talibani, Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari, Defense Minister Sadun al-Dulaimi, and Interior Minister Bayan Baqir Jabr Sulagh al-Zubaydi made it clear that they were committed to taking a strong stand to deal with the insurgency and to creating effective Iraqi forces. The new Ministers of Defense and Interior may have lacked experience, but were more committed to practical solutions than most of their predecessors, and accepted the need to give Iraqi force building the time necessary to develop effective and *inclusive* forces. As Ali Dabbagh, a Shi'ite member of the new National Assembly, put it, "It is true the Iraqi security forces are not qualified enough to face these waves of terrorism, but with the cooperation of the multinational forces, the security situation will improve...and we can see it improving now."¹²⁴

Other Force Developments

There were other force developments worth noting. A Department of Defense analysis of the state of Iraqi Security Forces, current as of January 21, 2004, stated that:

- **Operations**
 - In 2004, Iraqi forces fought alongside Coalition forces in Najaf, Samarra, Fallujah, Baghdad, North Babil, Mosul, and a host of other locations. In Fallujah alone, Iraqi forces had lost eight of their members and had more than 40 wounded. Well over a thousand others had now lost their lives.
 - Although Iraqi forces had endured casualties in many of their operations, had been attacked multiple times each day, and had suffered losses through brutal intimidation attacks, there was no shortage of volunteers; in fact, basic training courses are ongoing

for more than 4,400 former soldiers to bring under strength Iraqi Regular Army and Intervention units additional forces.

○ **Ministry of Defense**

- Before the election. The IIG Minister of the Interior In January 2005, the Minister of Interior laid out his vision for a 'regular police' force of 79,000. These regular police would be supplemented by the specialized police force (i.e., Public Order Battalions (POB) and Special Police Commando Units) of 50,000, plus a mechanized brigade of 6,000. Altogether, these forces would total 135,000. In contrast, MNF-I regarded the POB, Commandos, and the mechanized brigade to be additional to the Coalition-proposed regular IPS force of 135,000.¹²⁵
- In less than a year, Iraqi Regular Army and Intervention Forces had grown from one operational battalion to 21 battalions, with six more scheduled to become operational over the next month. With the incorporation of the Iraqi National Guard into the Army on Army Day, 6 January, the total number of battalions conducting operations was now 68.
- Iraq's Muthanna Brigade, originally organized and trained by the Iraqis to provide local security, now had three battalions in operations, including one each in Baghdad, Fallujah, and North Babil, and one more in training.
- Iraq's Navy was now operational, with five 100-foot patrol craft, 34 smaller vessels, and a naval infantry regiment that had recently completed training.
- Iraq's Air Force had three operational squadrons equipped with nine reconnaissance aircraft that operated day and night, and three US C-130 transport aircraft. One more squadron, comprised of two UH-1 helicopters (to be followed by 14 more and by 4 Bell Jet Rangers from the UAE), was standing up.
- Iraq's Special Operations Forces now included a Counter-Terrorist Force and a Commando Battalion, each of which has conducted dozens of successful operations.
- Iraq's first mechanized battalion became operational in mid-January, along with a tank company and a transportation battalion.
- Iraq's two Military Academies reopened in mid-October and each graduated a pilot course of new lieutenants, 91 total, in early January 2005.

○ **Ministry of Interior**

- The Iraqi Police Service had over 55,000 trained and equipped police officers, up from 26,000 six months ago.
- Five basic police academies were now operational; together, they produced over 3,500 new police officers from the 8-week course each month, a course recently modified to better prepare the new police officers for the challenging environment in which some may serve.
- Iraq's Mechanized Police Brigade recently completed training and began operations in mid-January, using fifty BTR-94 wheeled, armored vehicles.
- Seven Police Commando battalions were now operational, with one more in training and additional battalions planned.
- Six Public Order Battalions were operational, with six more planned.
- Iraq's National Police Emergency Response Unit was now operational.

- Iraq's First Special Border Force Battalion was operating on the Syrian border in western Anbar Province.
- Five provincial SWAT teams had been trained and fifteen more were scheduled for training over the next six months.

This list of developments reflects the growing impact of MNSTC-I's growing emphasis on mission capability, leadership, and the creation of effective unit elements with a matching emphasis on unit integrity during the course of 2004. Force totals are debatable in terms of numbers, and misleading as a comprehensive picture of developments in force quality. It is clear from this list of "end of year" accomplishments, however, that Iraqi forces had come a long way since the end of 2003.

IX. Iraqi Military and Security Forces: Spring and Summer 2005

Iraqi force development remained very much a work in progress during the first eight months of 2005, and events showed how much success interacted with the course of the insurgency and Iraqi politics. The course of the fighting was far less reassuring from April on than during the period immediately after January 30th. The seeming pause in insurgent and terrorist activity after the election was followed by a sharp increase in violence, particularly in major bombings and suicide attacks by Sunni insurgent groups that were clearly targeted at trying to prevent Iraqi Sunnis from joining the government and government forces, and at dividing Sunni, Shi'ite, and Kurd.

In some cases, this triggered new problems in Iraqi forces and new desertions. By May, Arab Sunni Islamist insurgent attacks had driven sectarian and ethnic tensions to new highs, and created a growing risk that the struggle between the Arab Sunnis, and the Arab Shi'ites, Kurds, and other Iraqi minorities could become a broader form of civil war.

There were serious problems in Iraqi politics and governance that affected the force development effort. The new Iraqi government took nearly two months to agree on a Presidency Council and Prime Minister, and took from February 1st to May 8th to fully select a cabinet and choose a defense minister. The 55 members of the new committee to draft a constitution were not named until May 10th and then included only one Sunni.¹²⁶

Iraq's already weak governance deteriorated in some areas at both the central and local levels during this interregnum. Tensions grew between the largely excluded Sunnis and the now dominant Shi'ites and Kurds, and there was a surge in the infiltration by foreign Islamist extremists.

New problems arose as some of the supporters of the incoming government called for major new purges of the government and the Iraqi security forces to eliminate all "Ba'athists," including many whose only "crime" had been to go along with Saddam Hussein's regime to survive. These problems were exacerbated by the fact that some of the most effective Iraqi units were largely Shi'ite and Kurd in character, including special police and security units in the Ministry of Interior. These units could sometimes be as ruthless as they were effective, and compounded Sunni fears and resentments. The good news was that they helped lead some Sunni clerics and politicians to call for Sunnis to join the armed forces and police. The bad news was that Sunnis began to accuse government forces of excessive force, targeted killings and disappearances, and deliberately attacking Sunni targets.

Top US officials like Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld were concerned enough to come to Iraq to warn against such purges and the risk of broadening ethnic and sectarian conflict, and to stress the need for effective governance. Senior US officers like General George Casey, the US Commander in Iraq, warned of the need for effective governance and for inclusion of as many Sunnis as possible. US Commanders also made it clear that they felt the insurgency would continue to last for several more years, that developing

effective Iraqi forces would take over a year, and that MNF forces would probably be needed in significant numbers through 2006.¹²⁷

Nevertheless, the Iraqi force building effort still slowly gathered momentum in spite of the problems in governance and the new surge of terrorist and insurgent activity.

The Manning Levels of Iraqi Military and Security Forces Following the Election

The manpower data on Iraqi forces shows considerable progress, although such data are not easy to analyze. They do not provide a basis for assessing how many forces were largely Shi'ite or Kurdish and how many were more broadly "national" in character. The reporting format used in the Iraq Weekly Status Report changed again in early 2005, and eliminated reporting on the 12 individual military and security force branches in favor of six more general categories. The impact of this new reporting system is shown in Figure 19, which compares the resulting manpower totals to the two previous systems used by the CPA and MNF.

MNSTC-I stated that public reporting continued to evolve to properly reflect the focus of the mission at a given time, and explained the shifts shown in Figure 20 as follows:

Numbers of "trained and equipped" Iraqi Security Forces have been reported since last August [2004]. This metric represents an evolution in itself. In the early days of ISF reporting, numbers of forces "on duty" were reported, often without regard for the training or equipment status of that force. At the time, just getting some police visibly onto the streets was deemed critical to public order. After it became apparent that the number of forces on duty wasn't really indicative of their capability, subsequent reports added the training status. In late summer 2004, MNSTC-I started reporting on how many soldiers are both trained and equipped. Then – as now – that is a valuable metric, but must be considered within a broader context. Focus now is shifting to numbers and capabilities of units. Standing by themselves, the number of units similarly doesn't tell the whole story of ISF capability. The transition readiness assessment system will help in more accurately defining the capability of the ISF. Transition Teams (assigned to all battalions) will provide solid overall capability assessments of the units already fielded. For security reasons, though, that data – like U.S. readiness reports – will not be publicly provided.

Given this background, the data in Figure 20 are important for several reasons:

- They show the problems in the earlier reporting systems, which focused on quantity rather than quality, and produced exaggerated expectations as well as major credibility problems for the CPA and MNF.
- They show a sharp rise in manpower that did have meaningful training and equipment between from under 96,000 in August 2004, to 186,000 in June 2005, and over 172,000 in early August 2005.
- They show the impact of the Eikenberry, MNSTC-I, and Luck assessments in improving the approach to training and equipment Iraqi forces.
- They show a clear plan did exist for expanding the Iraqi manpower pool through July 2006, and from 168,000 men in June 2005, to 200,000 in September, 230,000 in December, and 270,000 in July 2006.
- They show the importance of merging the regular military and National Guard in giving Iraqi military forces the total strength they needed, and need, to be effective.

- They reflect a balanced emphasis on police and security forces that was becoming significantly more effective than the sheer manpower numbers indicate because many low quality men were being dropped or retired, while higher quality manpower was being recruited and trained.
- They exclude a major amount of additional manpower with some value in light security missions such as the Facilities Protection Force, Oil Security Service, and Electricity Security Service.

One has only to contrast the figures for “trained and equipped” manpower against the kind of manpower data described in earlier chapters to see that the Iraqi force development program made serious progress just between the beginning of 2005 and the middle of the year. At the same time, Figure 20 makes it equally clear that Iraqi forces still had a long way to go, and that much would depend on taking a consistent approach to executing Iraqi force development plans.

Equipment: Summer of 2005

US-funded contracts began to flow into Iraq during mid-to-late 2004. As of July 20, 2005, a DOD report showed that the Iraqi Army was at 60 percent of its total authorized equipment, including more than 100 percent of AK-47 requirements. The Iraqi Security Forces Fund (ISFF), as provided for by Public Law 109-13, is meant to further enable MNF-I to meet critical requirements.

The summer of 2005 brought some initial progress in terms of equipping the new Iraqi army with armored personnel carriers and tanks:¹²⁸

On 29 July 2005 the Swiss government approved the sale of 180 M113 armored personnel carriers to the United Arab Emirates. The UAE planned to transfer the 180 APCs, from a Swiss army surplus, to Iraq as a gift. This requires an end-user certificate from the Iraqi government stating that the vehicles are actually bound for Iraq. The RUAG armaments group must submit the certificate to the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO). The Swiss military equipment law prohibits the export of arms to war zones. As the APC's country of origin, the USA must also confirm that it approves of the deal.

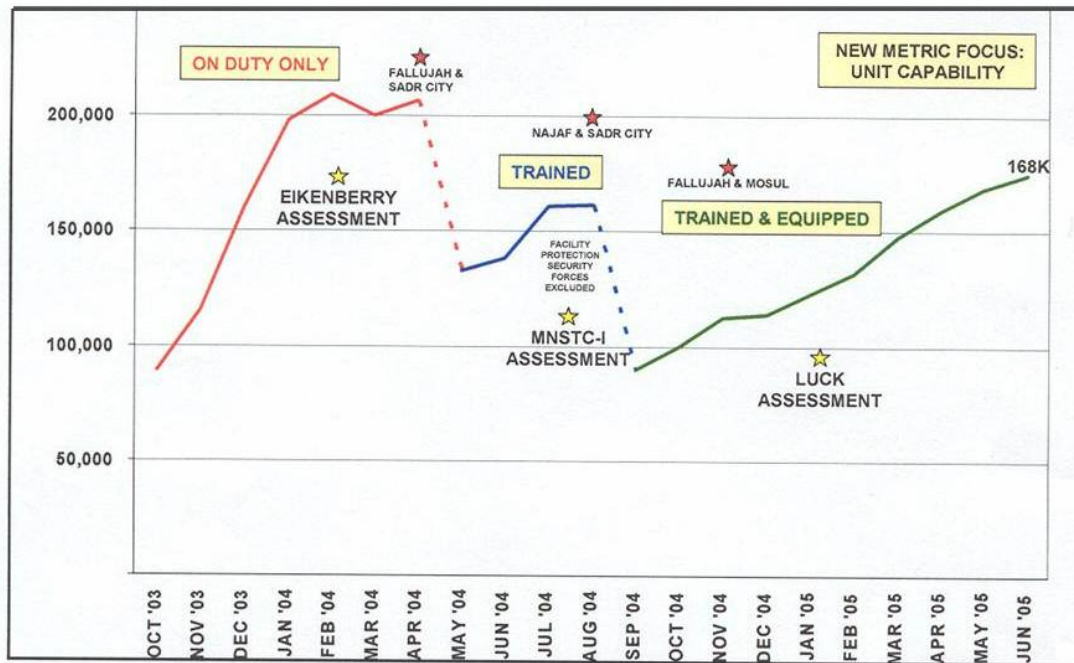
The M113A1 is a lightly armored full tracked air transportable personnel carrier designed to carry personnel and certain types of cargo. The M113-family was developed from the M59 and M75 which were designed by FMC (Food Machinery Corp.) in the late 1950's. The vehicle is capable of: amphibious operations in streams and lakes; extended cross country travel over rough terrain; and high speed operation on improved roads and highways.

By August 2005 Iraq's first armored brigade was trained and in the field, with 77 Soviet-designed T-72 tanks donated to Iraq by Hungary expected to arrive in Iraq soon. Defense Solutions announced 27 July 2005 that it would deliver the first five rebuilt T-72 Main Battle Tanks to the Iraqi Army. Iraqi Staff Major General Mahmood Ayoub Bashar accepted these tanks on behalf of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense during his attendance at program review meetings held at the HM Currus Combat Vehicle Technique Company (Currus), Gödöllő, Hungary.

Currus participated in the refurbishment project under a subcontract to Defense Solutions. These tanks were part of the total of 77 T-72s being rebuilt under a contract between Defense Solutions and the Iraqi Ministry of Defense. The T-72 tanks were originally donated to Iraq by the Government of Hungary. Defense Solutions performed this work under a US State Department license.

The T-72s will be the main combat power of a new Iraqi Armor Division being created with the assistance of the U.S. Army.

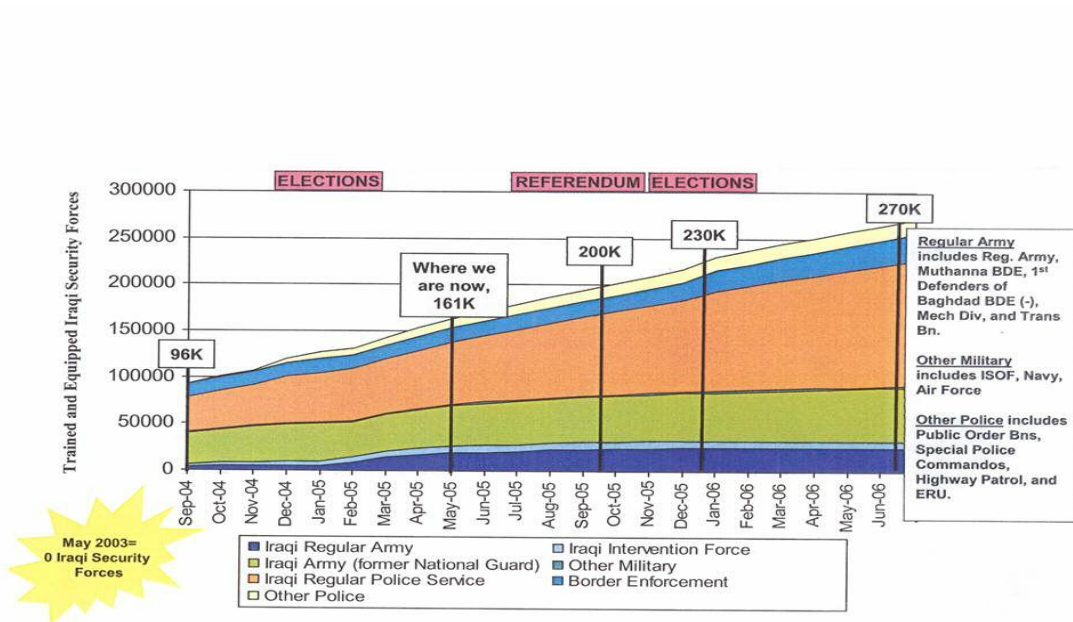
Figure 19
The Development of Trained and Equipped Iraqi Security Forces: Part One –
Historical Perspective



Source: MNSTC-I

Figure 20

**The Development of Trained and Equipped Iraqi Security Forces: Part Two –
Trained and Equipped Iraqi Security Forces**



Source: MNSTC-I

Detailed Manpower Trends

The manpower strength of Iraqi forces in the spring of 2005 are shown in more detail in Figure 21, along with the growing strength of Iraqi combat battalions. It should be stressed that the force goals listed as authorized strength represented a moving target, and had to change to respond to developments in the insurgency and the actual level of success achieved in creating Iraqi force. The various totals for “trained and equipped” for different force elements include personnel with very different levels of training and equipment, and the figures for authorized manpower represent the personnel authorized in May 2005, rather than a stable end goal.¹²⁹ That said, any careful reading of these data, and comparison with the force developments described in previous chapters, shows that they reflect massive progress over the previous year.

Ministry of Defense reporting in May 2005 noted the following progress in developing more effective forces.

- The data on the Iraqi Army show regular force strength of over 28,000 men and 34 battalions by May 2005, versus one operational battalion in July 2004.
- The Iraqi National Guard was being merged into the Army in a way that would eventually double its force strength and lay the ground work for creating a national army that could defend the country as well as fight insurgents.
- Mechanized forces were active and expanding.
- Special operations forces were rapidly reaching strength of 3 battalions, and nearly 2,000 men. These forces were being trained by MNF Special Forces and at elite elements, with many of the same training programs being used in the West.
- The Iraqi army was beginning to get the mix of combat support, service support, logistics, and training it needed to operate independently and as a self-sustaining force.
- The Iraqi air force was still in formation but expanding to strength of six squadrons.
- The Iraqi navy was awaiting decisions on procuring major patrol boats, and becoming more than a token force.

Similar trends affected the size of Ministry of Interior forces. The security and Special Police Forces – some of the most effective Iraqi units in Iraqi forces – continued to gather strength. At the same time, a trained regular police force was slowly beginning to emerge, along with the mix of supporting elements necessary to deal with an ongoing insurgency:

- The core “trained and equipped” manpower in the police was now up to over 57,000 out of 98,881 on-hand and rapidly expanding.
- The civil intervention force now had almost all of the manpower trained needed for its Public Order Brigades, and was rapidly developing a light mechanized brigade that could deal with insurgent attacks.
- Similar progress was taking place in creating the Special Police Command brigades and Emergency Response (ERU) units.
- Progress was being made in creating effective border forces.

- The full Dignitary Protection force was trained, equipped, and active.

Furthermore, Iraqi manpower and force strength continued to improve through the late spring and summer. By early August, the total number of Iraqi military, regular police, and police units that could honestly be described as “trained and equipped” had risen from 96,000 in September 2004, to over 172,000 in early August 2005. The Ministry of Defense forces portion of this total had reached 78,500 men, with 77,700 in the army, 100 in the Air Force, and 700 in the Navy. The Ministry of Interior forces totaled 93,800, with 63,500 in the police and Highway Patrol, and 30,300 in security units and other forces.¹³⁰

Iraqi and MNF-I plans called for total Iraqi manpower to rise to 230,000 forces by the end of December of 2005, and 270,000 by mid-2006.¹³¹ This involved maintaining a good balance of military, regular police, and police units. Plans called for about 85,000 military in the MOD by December, and 145,000 special police and police in the MOI.

The 85,000 in the military was to include about 83,000 in the Army (including the “national” forces originally envisioned, along with the former National Guard; also including combat support, service support and training units). The remaining manpower was to include the Special Operations Forces and the Air Force and Navy. About 100,000 of the personnel in the MOI were to be station/traffic/patrol police; in addition, nearly 20,000 more will be in the Special Police and the Emergency Response Unit. The rest included the Border Forces, the Highway Patrol and Dignitary Protection.

By June 2006, the total number of men in Iraqi Security Forces (military, regular police and police units) was planned to reach approximately 270,000. The MOD was to have about 90,000, and the MOI about 180,000 – provided that there was no change in the currently planned level of regular police.

These manpower increases were to be matched by continuing increases in the number of combat battalions. If one looks at the overall force strengths in Figure 21, Iraq had a combined total of 100 operational battalions as of May 2005 – 80 in the Army and National Guard and 20 in the Police – plus the Army counterterrorist force and the Police Emergency Response Unit. In July 2004, just after the Iraqi resumption of sovereignty, neither the Iraqi military nor the Iraqi police had any battalions that could be deployed nationally. The plans current in early August 2005, however, called for the numbers of combat battalions in the MOD to total 106 by December 2005, with slightly under 30 additional battalion equivalents in the MOI. In addition, Iraq was to have 35 brigade and ten division headquarters providing command and control of MOD forces.

Much of the Iraqi force generation effort was then to shift to giving Iraqi combat forces the combat support and combat service support units they need. By December 2006, plans then called for Iraq to field four Motorized Transportation Regiments (with a goal of one per division). Iraq also planned to generate six bomb disposal companies (with the goal of one per division). In addition, nearly 70 Headquarters and Service Companies were to have been generated (although some equipment shortages will remain). The goal for these Headquarters and Service Companies is one per battalion.

By June 2006, the number of MOD battalions was planned to reach 114. The number of the MOI battalions was to remain unchanged, although their training will have been improved through recently initiated advanced programs.

Figure 21
Iraqi Active Manning and Force Development Plans in May 2005

Ministry of Defense

Force Element/Component	Operational as of <u>May 2, 2005</u>		<u>Authorized</u>		Expected 100% Operational <u>Date</u>
	<u>Manpower</u>	<u>Battalions/ Squadrons</u>	<u>Manpower</u>	<u>Battalions/ Squadrons</u>	
Iraqi Army (Combat)					
Regular & IIF	28,215	34	36,315	?	?
Former ING	39,961	44/-	56,727	62	?
Mechanized/Armor	1,237	1+/-	1,679	3	?
Total	69,114	79/-	94,721	104/-	Sept 05
Special Operations					
Combat Support, Service Support, and Training Units	3,091	2/-	5,367	4/-	June 05
Iraqi Air Force	183	-/3	453	-/6	Nov 05
Iraqi Navy	521	-/2	582	-/3	TBD
Total	74,159	83/5	103,390	111/9	Nov 05

Ministry of the Interior

	<u>On Duty As of May 2, 2005</u>	<u>Trained & Equipped</u>	<u>Trained & Equipped As of July 31, 2005</u>	<u>Total Authorized</u>	<u>Expected 100% Operational Date</u>
Police	98,881	57,135	67,500	135,000	Nov 06
Civil Intervention Force					
Public Order Brigades	5,455	4,181	5,774	4,800	July 05
8 th Mechanized Brigade	955	955	1,320	1,320	July 05
Total					
Special Police Commando Battalions	11,845	8,131	TBD	9,000	Mar 05
Emergency Response Units	216	212	350	401	Dec 05
Border Enforcement	18,779	15,583	19,156	28,360	Aug 06
Highway Patrol	1,464	1,089	2000	6,300	July 06
Dignitary Protection	500	500	500	500	May 05
Total	138,085	87,786	96,600	176,881	Aug 06

Source: US Embassy Baghdad

The Meaning of a Constant Stream of Volunteers

Manpower quality was improving, although questions still existed about motivation and loyalty. Recruiting and retention standards were being raised, as were the standards for promotion. Vetting was being improved overall, although reliable personnel data were often lacking in a war-torn society. In cases like the police, screening examinations adapted from Western police vetting and testing methods were also being applied for the first time in Iraq's history.

Recruiting did not become a problem in spite of daily insurgent attacks on Iraqi forces. Insurgents stepped up their attacks on the military and security forces after the election, and singled out Shi'ites for attack in events like the religious festivities surrounding the Shi'ite holiday of Ashura. Even so, the US Department of Defense issued an update on February 16, 2005 that stated that between 8,000 and 10,000 Iraqis had shown up at an airfield in southern Iraq to join the army in *one day*.

Both Iraqi and US experts agree that the January 2005 elections also increased the number of Shi'ite and Kurdish recruits that actually supported the new government. Many of the Iraqis who joined the military, security, and police forces did so because they believed in Iraq's new political process and that Iraqi forces should take over from the Coalition.

Yet, economics was also a motive. Serious nationwide unemployment problems continued to exist, and pay also continued to be a major factor driving such enlistments. Privates in the Iraqi army earned about \$333 a month while corporals could earn approximately \$543.¹³² These were large salaries for an average Iraqi.

It was also not clear how strong the ties of many volunteers were to given sects and ethnic groups versus to a belief in a unified Iraq. No breakouts are available by sect and ethnic origin, but Kurdish volunteers were often motivated more to defend "Kurdistan" than Iraq, and Shi'ites to defend Shi'ite power. The number of ex-ethnic and sectarian militia Shi'ite and Kurdish who joined some branch of the military, security, and police forces raised serious questions about the ultimate loyalty of such volunteers.

The fact that Sunni clerics and politicians began to call for Sunnis to join the Iraqi security forces following the election did help make Iraqi forces somewhat more national in terms of ethnic and sectarian composition, but many Sunnis who joined the ISF did so in an effort to counterbalance Shi'ite and Kurdish power. Sunni volunteers seemed to be even more motivated by money than Shi'ite and Kurdish volunteers, and at least some Sunnis left or deserted after getting training and became insurgents.

Yet, there was some progress moves towards creating truly national forces. In the late spring of 2005, three of Iraq's army divisions had a Shi'ite commander, three a Sunni, one a Turcoman, and three a Sunni Kurd. The number of Sunnis volunteering had increased, and officer and NCO training was having some success in creating a leadership core trained as "national" forces.

Equipment Levels in the fall of 2005

Unclassified US government reporting on the status of plans to equip Iraqi forces continued to be erratic during 2005. The Iraq Weekly Status Reports continued to lack the detailed breakouts of the equipment effort that were a part of the earlier reporting efforts, and there was no way to relate the data MNSTC-I provided on deliveries to total requirements or requirement by force element.

Reports of Equipment Problems and Corruption

At the same time, the Iraqi government had a tendency to create new units that were not part of the regular army force structure, such as the Al Muthana Brigade or “Defenders of Baghdad,” and change the equipment mix.

The regular police still had little equipment standardization and often had serious equipment shortfalls at least through April 2005. Unlike the Army and elite security services, the regular police also lacked an efficient system for securing equipment and weapons and tracking actual equipment holdings -- including weapons, ammunition, and explosives.¹³³

Since there was no force plan agreed to by both the Iraqi government and MNSTC-I, there was no way to hold the Iraqis accountable for adhering to a given force mix.¹³⁴ Other MNSTC-I reporting indicated that some 30,000 of the police and security forces in Figure 21 were not actually trained, but were waiting to be trained.

There were continuing reports of inadequate equipment and facilities. For example, Chief of Staff, General Richard Myers was told at one police training site in the Jordanian desert during a visit that some recruits use water bottles as simulated weapons during exercises because actual weapons were in short supply.¹³⁵ Iraqis often complained about the flow of equipment during a visit in June 2005, and press reports continued to surface that equipment was being stolen and diverted.

In July 2005, Iraqi MOD and US military officials confirmed that they had uncovered a massive scheme to provide Iraqi security forces with substandard equipment that wasted some \$300 million over the course of more than a year. According to these officials, at the heart of the scheme was former CPA appointed weapons buyer and former exile Ziad Tareq Cattán. Cattán was supposed to have flown across the globe dispensing money to furnish Iraq's forces with weapons with little oversight.

Reports indicate that Cattán frequently charged a 10 percent ‘finder's fee’ for each contract he negotiated and dispersed kickbacks to Iraqi MOD buyers, even though the various helicopters, armored personnel carriers, and machine guns he acquired were defective, cheap imitations, or extremely worn. Cattán maintained his innocence and asserted that the Coalition so closely monitored the program that such a high level of corruption would be impossible.¹³⁶

US officials do concede that problems arose because the MNF-I often bought equipment without consulting the Iraqi government, or informing it of the details of such purchases. This allowed MOD officials to claim that they made purchases out of ignorance, although in most cases such purchase clearly involved serious corruption. Several of the Coalition

officials interviewed, however, indicate that the Secretary General of the MoD in the Interim Iraqi Government tolerated high levels of corruption and inefficiency, and that it was not until the new government took office in April 2005 that serious efforts were made to eliminate gross inefficiency and corruption in areas like military equipment purchases. One example they cited was that the MoD staff deliberately sabotaged the air conditioning in the Ministry to get kick backs from the service workers that repaired the equipment.

The Growing Pace of Equipment Deliveries

Nevertheless, the flow of equipment had begun to reach the point where most of the previous shortfalls in basic equipment had been overcome, and some units were getting advanced weapons and equipment. MNSTC reporting does provide useful data on total equipment deliveries during the period, as well as weekly reports that show shorter-term deliveries for part of the period.

Figure 21 shows major equipment deliveries between July 2004 and May 2005. Figure 22 summarizes the unclassified data available on weekly deliveries. Both Figures show that most weekly equipment deliveries were relatively light weapons and unarmored vehicles, although Iraqi forces now had extensive communications gear and were getting steadily more sophisticated equipment such as sniper rifles, night vision goggles, GPS systems, and X-ray vans.

This progress continued into the summer. A report by the Department of Defense in late July described the Iraqi army equipment effort as follows:¹³⁷

Equipment shortages have been reduced as equipment procured with U.S.-funded contracts began to flow into Iraq during mid-to-late 2004. The Iraqi Army now has 60 percent of its total authorized equipment, including more than 100 percent of AK-47 requirements. The Iraqi Security Forces Fund (ISFF), as provided for by Public Law 109-13, will further enable MNF-I to meet critical requirements. Furthermore, although there is variance in the rate of absenteeism, AWOL, attrition, and desertion among the Iraqi Army, rates have diminished significantly and are now around one percent for some divisions. Still, units that are conducting operations and units that relocate elsewhere in Iraq experience a surge in absenteeism.

U.S.-funded procurement has equipped infantry units primarily with former Warsaw Pact weapons and vehicles. The MOD, using its funds, has also sought U.S.-standard vehicles such as HMMWVs and M-113 armored personnel carriers. Mechanized forces are being trained using T-55 and T-72 tanks, BMP-1s and MTLBs. The ISOF is currently equipped with M4 carbines, M9 pistols, night-vision devices, M24 sniper systems, M240 machine guns, 12 gauge shotguns, 50-caliber machine guns, global positioning systems equipment, and surveillance equipment.

... The Iraqi Navy currently has approximately 500 trained sailors on duty. It is equipped with five Predator Class Patrol Boats (PB), 24 Fast Aluminum Boats (Duel Outboard Engines), 10 rigid-hull inflatable boats, and various small arms and night vision devices. The Iraqi Navy will further equip themselves with six Al Faw Class Patrol Boats (the first of which was delivered in July 2005) and two Off-Shore Support Vessels. With some exceptions, the responsibility for logistical support of the Iraqi Navy has been handed over to the Umm Qasr Base Support Unit (BSU). Maritime and Riverine Advisory Support Team (M&R AST) members provide advice and assistance to both the BSU and the Iraqi Navy Logistics Department in order to cultivate a cooperative working relationship.

... The Air Force currently has over 100 personnel and has a fleet of 9 helicopters (4 UH-1H and 5

Jet Ranger), 3 C-130s, and 8 single-engine propeller-driven observation airplanes (6 CompAir turboprop aircraft and 2 Seeker piston aircraft).

... The IPS uses a variety of equipment, including Chevy Luv and Nissan pick-up trucks, mid-size SUVs, AK 47s, PKC machine guns, Glock pistols, HF radios, and body armor. The goal is for each police officer and station to be equipped with mission-essential equipment.

The Quality of Equipment Deliveries

Opinions differ of the adequacy of this equipment in giving Iraqi forces the equipment they needed to stand on their own against the best armed insurgents and insurgent ambushes. A number of US advisors, Iraqis, and outside observers feel that the Coalition was far too slow to provide the kind of armor and protected vehicles that Coalition forces had found to be vital for their survival. In fact, Iraqi forces felt so strongly about the need for added armor that some army, National Guard, and elite police elements started reconditioning abandoned armor in various weapons depots, or “requisitioned” armor taken from the Iranian exile forces in the Iranian People’s Mujahideen.

The MNSTC-I was seeking armor from a variety of sources, including other Arab countries and Eastern European countries that operated the same kinds of Soviet bloc weapons the Iraqis were familiar with and could maintain and sustain. For example, deliveries of Hungarian T-72s were underway to the army, and armored Land Rovers were being delivered to the police.

At the same time, some MNSTC-I experts argue that the lighter equipment shown in Figure 22 was what the Iraqis needed for most counterinsurgency and counterterrorist missions, and can actually maintain and support. One MNSTC-I expert put it this way:

... light forces are often more versatile and essential in a counter-insurgency (assuming they have the right weapons, body armor, Kevlar helmets, etc.), but would also point out that we are providing heavy forces to the Iraqis. A mechanized division is already in the military force structure plan and an additional motorized division is being considered. The Iraqi Army already has one armored and one mechanized battalion in operation; another mechanized battalion is in training. The police forces have two mechanized battalions operating under a brigade headquarters; a third battalion is in training. The latter, in fact, will be provided U.S.-made Armored Security Vehicles, superb wheeled armored vehicles made by Cadillac Gage and used by our own Military Police. In addition, numerous APCs are now on hand. Up-armored HMMWVs are on order and other wheeled armored vehicles are either on hand or on order.

A heavier force, whether for force protection or for defense against invasion, also costs more. The Iraqis can’t really afford to purchase, operate and maintain such a force – even with the multiple billions of dollars we are providing. Given fiscal constraints that will last for several years, Iraq has to consider opportunity costs before committing to the addition of more heavy forces. The Iraqis might decide that the additional motorized division being considered might better be traded for less-expensive light forces. They could instead decide to spend that money on much-needed infrastructure protection forces, which may be even more important strategically.

It should not be expected that the Iraqi military will eventually look like the American military nor that an American-like military will be needed to defeat the insurgency.

These views have some validity and recognize the fact that Iraqi forces did need protected vehicles. At the same time, they do not refute the fact that providing nothing but light firepower, and protection in the form of body armor, has presented significant operating problems for Iraqis that have come up against well-armed insurgents.

Figure 22 also contains a highly diverse mix of civilian vehicles that is likely to create future maintenance problems. Certainly, many Iraqi officers feel their equipment is too light and too vulnerable, and see a dual standard in the Coalition's steady uparmoring of its equipment. This helps explain why some Iraqi units have taken armor and weapons seized from People's Mujahideen (MEK) forces, and others have reconditioned abandoned armor taken from equipment dumps.

It should also be noted that the quality of the facilities for security force trainees and fully graduated soldiers remained erratic. While some Iraqi bases and forts were decently furnished, others remained in an appalling state of disrepair. For instance, in July 2005 the 5th Brigade of the Iraqi Army, the unit tapped to guard the Green Zone, was stationed in a filthy hangar at the Muthana airfield with insufficient water supplies for showering, a nonexistent sewage system, and only occasional electricity. Garbage heaps were abundant and the conditions had eroded morale, with some Iraqis considering quitting. Other soldiers could not understand why the US could not seem to fix what seemed to be simple problems and viewed the conditions as a sign of disrespect. Fortunately, air conditioned tents and a row of showers were under construction at the end of July 2005.¹³⁸

As of October 2005, deliveries of up-armored vehicles to the ISF remained very limited. To date, the US Army only had one contractor up-armoring Humvees. Priority has been given to supplying vehicles to American troops, with back-orders extending to the early months of the war. Multi-National Security Transition Command initiative to deliver 1,500 armored Humvees to the Iraqis was not even slated to start until December, and most would be built in the summer of 2006.

As Figure 22 shows, Iraqis were better equipped with smaller items such as grenade launchers and machine guns. Yet Iraqi troops in some of the most dangerous areas of the country were still manning posts without flak jackets, sometimes sharing vests with other soldiers on somewhat of a timeshare basis. And Iraqi troops continued to patrol heavily booby-trapped streets in pickup and flatbed trucks.¹³⁹

Beginning to Create Logistics and Support Capabilities

Iraqi forces were beginning to develop the capability to support, maintain, and sustain their equipment. MNF-I and Iraqi forces had created plans to develop base support units or BSU to support the equipment Iraqi forces were getting, and the creation of motorized transport units to provide the necessary supplies with both transport assets and the firepower to protect themselves. The latter units -- such as the 3rd Motor Transportation Regiment -- were beginning to become active in the spring of 2005, and the plans for BSUs can be summarized as follows:

- Three major BSUs were to be created to cover the entire country, each to support forces within a 200-kilometer radius. These include one at Kasik in the North (turnover date of August 2005), Taji in the center (turnover date of September 2005), and Tallil in the south (turnover date of June 2005).
- Smaller standard BSUs were to be created throughout the country to support operations within a 65-kilometer radius. These included facilities at Kirkuk (turnover date of June 2005), KMTB (turnover date of July 2005), Habbaniyah (turnover date of November 2005),

Rustamiyah (turnover date of July 2005), Biap (turnover date of September 2005), Numaniyah (turnover date of May 2005), and Umm Qasr (turnover date of March 2005).

Iraqi forces still had a long way to go before they could provide their combat units or “teeth,” with the proper mix of combat and service support, major combat unit structures and headquarters, logistics, and other facilities. They still tended to be all “teeth” and no “tail.” They had, however, now begun the journey and one that offered real hope that they might be able take over much or most of the combat mission from Coalition forces within a few years.

Figure 22
Total Equipment Deliveries to Iraqi Forces: July 2004-May 2005

(As of 1 June 2005)

<u>Type</u>		Ministry of Defense <u>Forces</u> **	Ministry of Interior <u>Forces</u>	Issued in <u>Late Week</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Vehicles	5,665	(1,434)	4,874	114	10,539
Radios	10,537	(6,933)	13,514	0	24,051
PKM Machine Guns	6,595	(2,706)	487	0	7,082
AK-47s	87,740	(36,718)	67,294	3,070	155,034
Pistols	15,160	(6,721)	125,139	6,240	140,239
Ammunition	193,983,724*	(23,431,226)	111,690,813*	3,567,880	305,587,537
Uniforms	280,267	(92,521)	281,301	4,700	561,568
Helmets	87,250	(45,7272)	5,633	40	92,883
Body Armor	80,761	(40,903)	87,343	7,410	168,104

* Includes 100 million rounds of ammunition pre-positioned in 11 sites in Iraq.

** Figures in parenthesis show amounts delivered to National Guard before merger with the army.

Source: US Embassy, Baghdad.

Figure 22 - Part One
Typical Weekly Flows of Equipment Deliveries to All Iraqi Forces in 2005

Type	Week Ending					
	<u>Jan. 8</u>	<u>Jan. 15</u>	<u>Jan. 22</u>	<u>Jan. 29</u>	<u>March 19</u>	<u>March 26</u>
AK-47	2,770	3,459	870	3,310	320	200
RPKs	-	-	-	-	-	-
PKM Machine Guns	153	168	-	331	-	-
Sniper rifles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pistols/handguns	1,500	1,140	437	320	-	330
Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	-
Body armor	3,742	1,000	2,000	5,839	1,250	2,400
Helmets	10,957	3,659	-	1,213	-	-
A-Back Scatter	-	-	-	-	-	-
X-Ray Vans	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ashok Leylands	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy Luminas	-	-	-	-	40	16
Chevy Trailblazers	-	-	-	-	32	62
Chevy LUV trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
Up-Armored Humvees	-	-	-	-	10	-
BMPs	-	-	-	-	28	-
Landcruisers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan pickup trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan Cabstars	-	-	-	-	34	8
5-ton trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 ½ ton trucks	-	-	-	-	19	31
Ambulances	-	-	-	-	-	-
Water trailers	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Recovery Vehicles	-	-	-	-	1	-
Vehicles (Unspecified)	64	61	50	90	-	-
Mobile generators	-	-	-	-	-	-
Explosive Detector Systems	-	-	-	-	2	-
Night vision goggles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Global Positioning Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ammunition (million rounds)	9.5	2.8	3.1	3.1	4.7	.42

Source: Adapted from various editions of the MNSTC-I, Advisor; data provided by MNSTC-I J-4.

Note: Reports did not indicate supplies delivered between February 5 and March 12, 2005.

Figure 22 – Part Two
Typical Weekly Flows of Equipment Deliveries to All Iraqi Forces in 2005

Type	Week Ending						
	April 2	April 9	April 16	April 23	April 30	May 7	May 14
AK-47	2,610	-	7,272	5,724	1,250	3,400	3,900
RPKs	-	54	118	-	50	-	-
PKM Machine Guns	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sniper rifles	-	-	-	-	648	4	-
Pistols/handguns	-	500	11,600	5,760	-	-	-
Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	7,512	4,480
Body armor	7,963	6,460	2,200	5,402	1,799	3,860	2,750
Helmets	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Global Positioning Systems	-	-301	-	-	-	-	-
A-Back Scatter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
X-Ray Vans	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Ashok Leylands	-	-	-	18	4	91	15
Chevy Lumina	-	-	126	344	90	33	-
Chevy Trailblazers	26	212	146	250	-	-	50
Chevy LUV trucks	31	523	400	411	240	-	-
Up-Armored Humvees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Recovery Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BMPs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles (unspecified)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Landcruisers	-	-	-	56	-	-	-
Nissan pickup trucks	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan Cabstars	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-ton trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
2 ½ ton trucks	-	-	-	-	57	4	-
Ambulances	-	-	-	-	20	-	-
Water trailers	-	-	-	12	-	-	-
Mobile generators	-	-	-	-	-	4	-
Night vision goggles	-	600	12	-	-	-	-
Explosive Detector Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ammunition (million rounds)	0.53	0.48	2.5	6.6	21.4	2.9	13.3

Source: Adapted from various editions of the MNSTC-I, Advisor; data provided by MNSTC-I J-4.

Figure 22 – Part Three
Typical Weekly Flows of Equipment Deliveries to All Iraqi Forces in 2005

<u>Type</u>	<u>Week Ending</u>						
	<u>May 21</u>	<u>May 28</u>	<u>June 4</u>	<u>June 11</u>	<u>June 18</u>	<u>June 25</u>	<u>July 9</u>
AK-47	-	-	-	1,615	13,253	12,410	1,930
RPKs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PKM Machine Guns	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sniper rifles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pistols/handguns	-	-	-	5,094	2,320	14,110	5,611
Grenades	-	-	-	-	1,264	-	-
Smoke Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	-	72
Rocket-Propelled Grenades	-	-	-	4,000	-	375	-
Weapons (unspecified)	6,717	11,417	12,180	-	-	-	-
Body armor	3,537	7,867	6,060	2,657	750	11,070	-
Helmets	1700	700	-	-	-	-	-
A-Back Scatter	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
X-Ray Vans	-	-	-	-	12	-	-
Ashook Leylands	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy Luminas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy Trailblazers	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
Chevy LUV trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-	341
LUV Trucks/ Landcruisers	-	-	-	-	-	2,000	-
T-55 Recovery Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Tanks	-	-	10	-	-	-	-
BMPs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan pickup trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan Cabstars	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Up-Armored Humvees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-ton trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 ½ ton trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-	27
UAZ Jeeps	-	-	-	6	36	-	44
GP Mediums	-	-	-	-	169	-	-
Ambulances	-	-	-	-	19	-	-
Water trailers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heavy Trailers	-	-	-	-	15	-	-
Vehicles (unspecified)	596	608	-	-	-	-	-
Mobile generators	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Night vision goggles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Global Positioning Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Explosive Detector Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ammunition (million rounds)	3.23	3.3	3.04	1.1	5.4	2.7	2

Source: Adapted from various editions of the MNSTC-I, Advisor; data provided by MNSTC-I J-4.

Figure 22 – Part Four
Typical Weekly Flows of Equipment Deliveries to All Iraqi Forces in 2005

Type	Week Ending					
	<u>July 16</u>	<u>July 23</u>	<u>July 30</u>	<u>Aug. 6</u>	<u>Aug. 13</u>	<u>Aug. 20</u>
AK-47	8,100	-	-	150	-	4,690
RPKs	-	-	-	-	-	-
PKM Machine Guns	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sniper rifles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pistols/handguns	1,400	-	-	-	150	6,236
Grenades	-	-	-	6,400	-	1,900
Smoke Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rocket-Propelled Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weapons (unspecified)	-	-	5,787	-	-	-
Body armor	-	1,035	2,700	40	4,800	5,430
Helmets	-	1,726	3,099	-	-	-
A-Back Scatter	-	-	-	-	-	-
Z-Back Scatter Vans	-	-	-	-	2	-
X-Ray Vans	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ashook Leylands	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy Luminas	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy Trailblazers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy LUV trucks	20	-	-	-	-	-
LUV trucks	-	-	-	327	564	404
Landcruisers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan pickup trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan Cabstars	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-ton trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 ½ ton trucks	-	-	-	-	26	62
Up-Armored Humvees	-	-	-	-	-	-
Armored Personnel Carriers	-	-	-	3	7	1
BMPs	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Recovery Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Tanks	-	-	-	-	-	-
UAZ Jeeps	71	-	-	64	77	131
Armored Jeeps	-	-	-	11	33	-
GP Mediums	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ambulances	27	-	-	39	60	29
Water trailers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heavy Trailers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles (unspecified)	-	230	1,008	-	-	-
Mobile generators	-	-	-	-	-	-
Explosive Detector Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-
Night vision goggles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Global Positioning Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-
Computers	-	-	-	54	-	-
Ammunition (million rounds)	1.9	0.56	3.5	4.2	3.7	1.9

Source: Adapted from various editions of the MNSTC-I, Advisor; data provided by MNSTC-I J-4.

Figure 22 – Part Five
Typical Weekly Flows of Equipment Deliveries to All Iraqi Forces in 2005

Type	Week Ending					
	<u>Aug. 27</u>	<u>Sept. 3</u>	<u>Sept. 10</u>	<u>Sept. 17</u>	<u>Oct. 1</u>	<u>Oct. 8</u>
AK-47	-	480	480	-	-	-
Light Machine Guns	3,712	-	-	-	-	-
RPKs	-	-	-	-	-	-
PKM Machine Guns	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sniper rifles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pistols/handguns	5,128	288	-	-	-	-
Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rocket-Propelled Grenades	-	-	-	-	-	-
Weapons (unspecified)	-	-	-	592	3,259	1,239
Body armor	1,296	1,700	2,240	250	-	-
Helmets	-	-	-	-	-	-
A-Back Scatter	-	-	-	-	-	-
X-Ray Vans	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ashok Leylands	-	-	149	-	-	-
GMC Blazers	50	25	-	-	-	-
Chevy Luminas	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy Trailblazers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chevy LUV trucks	-	74	124	-	-	-
BMPs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Landcruisers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan pickup trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nissan Cabstars	-	-	-	-	-	-
5-ton trucks	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 ½ ton trucks	-	-	-	31	-	-
Cargo trucks	30	18	-	-	-	-
Excavators	-	11	-	-	-	-
UAZ Jeeps	118	-	-	-	-	-
GP Mediums	9	-	-	-	-	-
Up-Armored Humvees	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Recovery Vehicles	-	-	-	-	-	-
T-55 Tanks	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ambulances	-	-	28	40	-	-
Water trailers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heavy Trailers	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vehicles (Unspecified)	-	-	-	-	200	481
Generators	-	-	3	-	-	-
Night vision goggles	-	-	-	-	-	-
Explosive Detector Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-
Global Positioning Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-
Computers	-	225	225	-	-	-
Radios	-	225	225	-	-	1,850
Ammunition (million rounds)	0.16	-	1.5	1.6	0.12	0.91

Source: Adapted from various editions of the MNSTC-I, Advisor; data provided by MNSTC-I J-4.

Vetting and Training in the Summer and Fall of 2005

Iraqi forces got steadily better vetting and training in 2005. It is unclear exactly how men and women had as yet been screened the improved vetting process, but MNSTC-I indicated that it could do a better job of checking Iraqi recruits against Ba'ath and other political party records. Iraqis now checked the criminal record of the recruit as well. Yet there remained work to be done. On September 20, 2005, Iraqi National Security Adviser Dr. Mouwafak al-Rubaie admitted that security forces continued to be infiltrated by terrorist elements: "Our Iraqi security forces in general, police in particular, in many parts of Iraq, I have to admit, have been penetrated by some of the insurgents, some of the terrorists as well." He went on, however, to assure that "We are putting in place a very scrupulous, very meticulous vetting procedure in the process of recruiting a new batch of police and Iraqi army, which will, if you like, clean our security forces as well as stop any penetration in future from the insurgents and terrorists."¹⁴⁰

MNSTC-I sources reported that all Iraqis in the military now underwent basic training, and the author's visits to the various training centers involved showed that Iraqis were now doing much of the training and were developing their own training curricula. There was still some corruption and favoritism in selection of recruits, but much of the problem occurred before actual selection, and the vetting and screening process was becoming more professional once recruits were selected. Military and police units had begun to get serious screening and police recruits had to pass written screening tests modified from those used by US police forces. MNSTC-I stated:¹⁴¹

Training – of all forces, but especially police forces – undergoes constant analysis in light of operational experience. The course length and curriculum of the Transition Integration Program has been standardized in all of the Iraqi police academies. The length of basic training for police recruits has been increased by 25 percent by adding two weeks of regional training on threats and other conditions in the new policeman's area of responsibility. Training at all police schools is now much more likely to be led by an Iraqi and to be "hands on" training instead of simple academic instruction.

MNSTC-I had personnel training the staffs of brigades and divisions as well as Iraqis involved in reconnaissance and surveillance activity. It was deeply engaged in a variety of mentoring programs within ministries and had programs in place for the navy and air force. MNSTC-I was directly involved in training the SWAT Teams and other specialized counterinsurgency and protection forces for each province and now offered a variety of police training courses ranging from case management to forensics.

The progress taking place is illustrated by the following milestones:

- 4,516 Iraqi police officers graduated in May from basic courses in Al Kut, Sulaymaniyah, Al Hillah, Jordan, and Baghdad.
- 157 Iraqi officers graduated in May from advanced and specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility.
- The first 213 recruits for the Iraqi Navy's Direct Recruit Replacement program (DRR) began training for anti-terrorist operations and oil terminal security at the end of May.

- 121 Iraqi police officers graduated in June from advanced and specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility. 58 graduated from a Basic criminal investigation course, 29 from a Critical Incident Management course, 18 from a course on Counterterrorism Investigations, and 16 from Executive Leadership courses.
- As of early June 2005, 32,500 police recruits had completed the eight week new recruit training program and 36,000 police with previous training had completed the three week Transitional Integration Program.
- The command of the Kirkuk Military Training base was transferred from MNSTC-I to Iraqi Brig. Gen. Abd Zaid.

More generally, the systematic creation of formal training programs for each of the individual elements of Iraqi forces is summarized in Figure 23. By now, the training programs had become large enough in scale, and sufficiently institutionalized to have real impact. As Figure 24 shows, these basic training programs were now supplemented by specialized training programs for each element of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior forces.

Creating an Officer Corps

Most officer training had initially been conducted primarily in Iraq and in neighboring Jordan. There now were officer exchange programs to military colleges in the US, Italy, the UK, and Australia. The NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) was helping to build the Iraqi Security Forces with training and advisory support to middle- and senior-level leaders at locations such as the National Joint Operations Center, Ministry of Defense Headquarters Joint Operations Center, and the Iraqi Staff College.

- March 11, 2004 – The Iraqi Civil Defense Force graduated 116 noncommissioned officers from the first Primary Leadership Development Course conducted at Camp Muleskinner. Fifteen U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command drill sergeants from Fort Sill, Okla. led the trainees through a 113-hour program of instruction that focused on leadership, communication skills, maintenance, professional skills, military training and military studies. Fifteen U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command drill sergeants from Fort Sill, Okla. led the trainees through a 113-hour program of instruction that focused on leadership, communication skills, maintenance, professional skills, military training and military studies.
- June 18, 2004 – More than 400 Iraqi army senior non-commissioned officers graduated from the Kurkush Military Training Base's NCO Academy Senior NCO course at the Iraqi army training base 70 miles east of Baghdad, according to Office of Security Transition officials. The 421 graduates represent the fourth class to graduate.
- February 2005 – All 26 NATO Allies agreed to contribute to NATO's training of the ISF, either in Iraq, outside of Iraq, through financial contributions, and/or by donations of equipment. NATO has declared that the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) has reached initial operating capability.
- July 2005 – NTM-I completed instructor training for 24 Iraqis in July 2005. The class included nine Iraqi colonels and 15 lieutenant colonels. Eighty-eight Iraqi students started pilot Joint Staff College courses on September 25.
- September 27, 2005 – NATO inaugurated an officer academy on the outskirts of Baghdad on Tuesday, boosting its share in training Iraqi security forces. The 26-member alliance will shift the bulk of its training mission in Baghdad's heavily fortified international zone to the academy in the suburb of Rustamiya some 20 km (13 miles) south. Rustamiya was due to be operational around the start of 2005 but suffered from shortfalls in staff and funds.

The noncommissioned officer corps is often referred to as the “backbone” of any army. Efforts to create this backbone in the ISF were now underway, with both Coalition and other actors from the international community playing a role. Lt. Gen. Petraeus emphasized the importance of developing an NCO class that would operate with a sense of professionalism and leadership. Competitive pay, the recruitment of an all-volunteer force, and the institution of a merit-based system of promotion are all steps to achieving this end. MNF-I incorporated Iraqi officers at various levels of operational and tactical command in order to assist in the creation of organic, hands-on leadership capabilities.

Ministry of Defense Training

By the summer of 2005, CMATT had all of the advisors it was authorized, and was broadening its missions to help the Iraqis make the eventual transfer to Iraqi funding, and deal with issues like plans, providing intelligence, and add the necessary sustainment and support capabilities. Ministry of Defense Forces received both general and specialized training: Iraqi Army recruits underwent four weeks of cadre training and eight weeks of basic training.

The MNF-1 summarized this progress as follows in July 2005:¹⁴²

Training for the individual soldier is divided into two areas: training for new recruits and training for former soldiers. Training for new recruits takes a total of nine weeks and has usually been conducted at the Iraqi Training Brigade (ITB) in Kirkush. Training for former soldiers lasts three to four weeks and has usually been conducted in divisional locations with graduates generally being assigned to the division that trains them. All personnel receive standard infantry-style training; selected soldiers receive specialized training in Army Military Occupational Specialties, such as Signal, Administration, Supply, Armor, Transport, Maintenance and Military Police.

Membership in the Iraqi Special Forces Brigade requires additional training. All Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) soldiers undergo a three-week Assessment and Selection course. Iraqi Counter Terrorist Forces (ICTF) soldiers receive 12 weeks of training in Jordan on Close Quarters Battle (CQB), Planning, and Leadership before they conduct Direct Action missions. ISOF soldiers undergo rigorous training emphasizing small unit tactics, counterterrorism, and unit self-reliance. Improved qualification and vetting standards minimize absenteeism and the risk of insurgent infiltration. The Brigade’s chain of command and officer cadre are assessed as being very effective. ISOF elements have been conducting operations for the past year. They have played crucial roles in major combat operations along side of, and sometimes independently of, Coalition forces.

A small number of Army personnel attend advanced training with NATO and U.S. Army schools.

MNF-I has also implemented, in partnership with the MOD, a program to embed Military Transition Teams at the battalion, brigade, and division level. These teams provide Transition Readiness Assessments (TRAs) to MNC-I identifying areas of progress and shortcomings, ultimately leading to those individual units being ready to assume independent control of their area of responsibility. These assessments take into account a variety of criteria similar to but not identical to what the U.S. Army uses to evaluate its units’ operational readiness focused on personnel, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipment, and leadership.

It is useful to place these readiness assessments in perspective. The first Iraqi Army infantry battalions finished basic training in early 2004 and were immediately required in combat without complete equipment. They had inadequate time to develop unit cohesiveness, staff proficiency, and a leadership chain of command that is fundamental to a military unit. Ministry of Defense forces did not perform well in Fallujah—several battalions collapsed. Absent-without-leave (AWOL) rates among regular army units were in double digits and remained so for the rest of the

year.

Although such problems have not been entirely solved, they have been addressed in large measure because of the ability to put to good use the security sector funding from the Iraq Reconstruction and Relief Fund (IRRF) as provided for by Public Law 108-106. Equipment shortages have been reduced as equipment procured with U.S.-funded contracts began to flow into Iraq during mid-to-late 2004

The Iraqi Intervention Force received the same training as the Iraqi Army, with an additional five weeks of Urban Operations training. Former soldiers who sought enlistment in the army of IIF underwent three weeks of Direct Replacement Training, followed by unit training. The Iraqi National Guard (ING) had previously been trained largely by the major subordinate commands (MSC) and the training of the ING varied by unit, but now was being integrated into the army training program.¹⁴³

The Iraqi Special Operations Force was divided into the Commando Battalion and the Counter Terrorist Task Force. The Commando Battalion was trained in small unit tactics and experiences other training similar to US Rangers'. This training was administered by US Special Forces and included advanced training in facilities like "shoot rooms." The Counter Terrorist Task Force was specially selected and assessed and then subjected to a 13 week Special Operator Course. Air Force training varied by specialty anywhere from 1-6 months. Some of this training (the C-130 crews) was done in the US. The Navy recruits underwent eight weeks of basic training and were then relocated to Umm Qasr for specialized training.¹⁴⁴

MNSTC-I's overall training concept had advanced to the point where it could stress "total force development" for the leadership of the Iraqi armed forces, with a clear career path for training both officers and NCO.

- Basic officer training took place in a 12 month program at the Iraqi Military Academy at Zahko, using a program Iraqi officers had adapted from the one British forces used at Sandhurst. Promotion led to training at a company commander's course, which was to go into operation in October 2005. The next promotion meant attending a Junior Staff College that was to open in September, and then attendance at a Senior Staff College that was to open that same month. Promotion to top ranks meant attending a National Defense College, which was to open in 2006.
- The NCO training program was in development, but former Iraqi NCOs underwent a three week general training course, followed by 3-6 weeks of branch training. Promotion then involved a 4 week squad leader course, and a platoon sergeant course that was to open in August 2005. A 8-12 week first sergeant's course was to open in 2006, followed by a 4-8 week warrant officer and sergeant major course at a new academy scheduled to open in March 2006.

These programs would still take years to fully train the leadership of Iraqi forces, and many officers and NCOs would serve for sometime without such training, however, the very fact such a program had started to operate showed significant progress.

Ministry of Interior Training

The vetting and training of the Iraqi Police Force (IPS) continued to lag behind that of the military, in part because of a slower start and more constant changes, and in part because of a lag of resources. In spite of efforts to strengthen CPATT, it only had about 70 percent

of the advisors it was authorized in June 2005, and had staffing problems in getting civilian and other experts in key areas like intelligence, budgeting, manpower, and plans.

A report by the Inspector General of the Department of State and of the Department of Defense, found the following continuing problems in the vetting and training effort as of end-April 2005. While such problems are scarcely unexpected given the heritage of Saddam Hussein and the mistakes made by the CPA, they provide an import set of insights in to the practical problems that occur in trying simultaneously create a force and fight a war, and the lessons that should be learned for the future:¹⁴⁵

Much of the planning and execution of the IPS training program has been done by Coalition military leaders without sufficient input from Iraqi officials. One high-ranking official in CPATT told the IG Team that “. . . until recently, Iraqi views were given absolutely no consideration. They (the Iraqis) still do not have a deciding vote.” Another stated, “We are not learning our lessons. We still develop great ideas and plans, and then lay them on Iraqis.”

During the time of the CPA, such an approach was both inevitable and, perhaps, appropriate. In the wake of the collapse of the Saddam Hussein regime, no Iraqi policy makers were in a position to make authoritative decisions.

...Overall, there is little consensus on how to train Iraqi police. One exception is the universal agreement that the eight weeks devoted to the basic course is insufficient time to produce a capable policeman. Thus, there is tacit consensus that the training program to date has not created an effective IPS. (There is no consensus on how long a time would be required to achieve the desired results.)

...The eight-week training course yields a maximum 320 hours of training time. To accommodate an increase in the hours spent on counter-insurgency training and self-defense skills without increasing overall course length, some class room subjects were eliminated, while other subjects were reduced. Courses on democratic policing principles are critically important to the mission and should not be eliminated or reduced.

Currently, the basic course does not include night training. As the Coalition adapts its training plan to deal with the insurgency, it must prepare the IPS to conduct operations in the dark. The enemy is using the cover of darkness to plant improvised explosive devices and conduct other night time operations. Experts agree that police tactics, patrolling, and intelligence gathering activities during day light hours are markedly different than the tactics employed at night.

The Team observed a lack of discipline among the basic recruits at several of the training sites. This was not the case at those facilities conducting specialized training for the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) and the Public Order Brigades (POB). As practiced in the specialized training programs, the use of properly trained Iraqi drill instructors would facilitate discipline and help to create a sense of esprit-de-corps among the cadets. While it is recognized that Iraqis are family and tribal oriented, the training programs must foster a sense of esprit-de-corps and teach teamwork.

...As this assessment was being conducted, MNSTC-I and CPATT leaders were planning to lengthen the basic training course to 10 weeks... At the outset of the CPA effort to build IPS capacity, the assumption—even to some extent, the reality—was that training could be molded within a rapidly stabilizing political and security environment. The unexpected virulence and scope of subsequent terrorism and insurgency induced changes in the program, but such modifications have lagged the ‘street reality’ in Iraq.

Adjustments in the training course have been and are being made. During this assessment, the JIPTC staff completed a CPATT-directed revision of the basic curriculum to include more ‘hands on,’ self-protection exercises. Other IPS in-country academies are adopting these changes. IP personnel and MOI officials strongly support the adjustments and the shift in emphasis.

...trainees allegedly have been selected more on a basis of favoritism than on capability or potential.

...In the Baghdad area, applicants learn of recruitment via word of mouth. In light of the relatively good pay prospects, this simple system attracts more than enough applicants. Many simply show up at police stations or at the Baghdad Police College (BPC). The IG Team observed recruiting and selection (a sequentially seamless process) at the BPC. After passing through elemental security screening, aspirants are admitted into the walled facility on a first-come, first-served basis. If, as frequently is the case, more show up than can be processed on a given day, identifying data is taken on those who are turned away. They are given numbers (again, in order of their place in the line) and told when to return to be among those first admitted.

Once admitted to the facility, the process is very basic. On entry into a classroom setting, each applicant is given an identifying number that corresponds to his or her file. The first step is a timed written test, designed and administered by an American contractor. Iraqis proctor the test. Results are machine graded in the presence of an IPS official. Since responding to questions involves understanding the written material, the test presumably establishes basic literacy of the person being examined. Applicants who do not achieve the minimal threshold score are called forward by number, courteously escorted off the premises, and dismissed.

A second stage in the process consists of an interview¹⁹ and physical examination. At BPC, the processing observed by the IG Team covered all of the minimum standards prescribed by the CPA.

The physical exam appears especially cursory. At the time of the IG Team's observation, most applicants appeared to be in their late teens to early 20's and fully functional without any physical handicaps. However, a physician stated he did not have sufficient time to complete a thorough medical examination of so many applicants in such a short time (70 students on the day in question). Consequently, the examination consisted of completing a medical history questionnaire, checking applicants' eyes for squinting, and verifying a steady pulse. The doctor then pronounced the applicant fit or unfit. There was no testing to determine physical stamina, dental review, or body checks for even readily detectable identification marks such as scars or tattoos. The doctor also told the IG Team that a considerable number of students appeared to suffer some form of mental problems, hard to diagnose during the interview process. Elsewhere in the country, MSCs recruit and select candidates to fill available training slots as directed in a monthly "fragmentary order" (FRAGO). The MSCs use various recruiting tools including recommendations from the command's recruiting unit, IPLOs, serving IPS personnel, and from other reliable sources in a given community. These Coalition recruiters are encouraged to accept all recruits who are sponsored by local officials.

Despite the written test, attrition statistics show that illiterates make it into basic training. Less frequent are cases of those with easily detectable physical or mental impairment. Some cadets clearly are older than the established age limits...Occasionally, trainees are separated when information is revealed about past criminal behavior or allegations of involvement with the insurgency. Other common causes for dismissal from training are infractions of discipline, illness or inability to adjust (normally homesickness). The team was advised at JIPTC that a surprising number of students arrive with drugs that are confiscated during in-processing. These instances support a widely shared perception that screening of IP candidates is at best superficial, sometimes inconsistent.

To date, all those going to JIPTC for basic training have been recruited and selected by the MSCs. Even though the processes used by the MSCs theoretically are the same as those used by the Iraqi recruiters, the MOI apparently does not have a sense of commitment to those trainees who enter training via the MSC route.

... Many police chiefs and their deputies are accustomed to the IPS culture that prevailed during the Saddam Hussein era. Old habits and methods (e.g., reliance on forced confessions, taking the

initiative only when directed, and rigid delineation of responsibilities) work against effective and efficient policing.

The need for attention to these aspects is self-evident. In instances where good leadership is present (often provided by Coalition military personnel or International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs), IPs perform satisfactorily and stand their ground in the face of attacks. The absence of such leaders correlates closely with instances in which IP stations have been overrun, often with shocking casualties among ill-prepared and ill-led policemen.

Senior IP officers interviewed by the IG Team were outspoken in identifying insufficient numbers (and quality) of officers as a major weakness within the IPS. They urged restoration of the former 'police college' system, preferably with a three-year curriculum, such as that at the Baghdad Police College (BPC) that predated the Saddam Hussein era. MNSTC-I and CPATT are moving ahead to restart officer training at the BPC, although present plans are for a six-month course rather than the more extended course favored by the Iraqis. In a free-form discussion with the Chargé d'Affaires, IPLOs were equally vocal in identifying leadership development as a major weakness in the present training program.

...Critics within CPATT and among some instructors assert that the MOI's selection of Candidates (for advanced training) appears to be based more on cronyism and loyalties than on merit. For some attendees, the courses are regarded as a reward, not as a serious professional commitment. The IPS major general at Adnan Palace is among those who urge incorporation of more rigorous testing as courses progress. He believes that is the only way to get and keep the students' attention.

...Inducting criminals into the IPS is a continual concern. Even more troubling is infiltration by intending terrorists or insurgents. There is sufficient evidence to conclude that such persons indeed are among the ranks of the IPS. This underscores the need for the most rigorous possible review of each applicant's records. To gain an understanding of the vetting process, the IG Team met with Iraqi police cadets and instructors, International Police Trainers (IPT) at various police training academies, officials of the MOI and Coalition authorities. All Iraqis interviewed suggested that vetting performed by Coalition forces is not as thorough as what could be done by the MOI. The IG Team was told that, especially early in 2003, only a cursory background check, if even that, was conducted before policemen were trained or entered the force.

In terms of policy, several IPS interviewees expressed reservations about aspects of Coalition vetting. For example, they contended that no Iraqi would recruit or employ a candidate who had tattoos. In their culture body tattoos are indicative of a person who has a criminal record or at least a propensity to violate societal norms. Likewise, the longer-term prospects for female members of the IP are problematic. In some areas, notably in Kurdistan, women are accepted members in both the police and military. In most other regions, it is likely that female IPs will be relegated to supporting roles, at best as administrative staff.

It is widely contended that the vetting process is stymied by the lack or inaccessibility of personnel or police records. As with recruiting and selection of trainees, vetting is especially difficult if carried out by non-Iraqis. Indeed, the Coalition's ability to conduct thorough background checks on IPS personnel is severely limited. Use of polygraph techniques is impracticable, given the numbers of candidates to be processed. Effective communications across language and cultural barriers is an issue too.

...The problem starts with a relative shortage of mid-level leaders and managers. Many police chiefs and their deputies are accustomed to the IPS culture that prevailed during the Saddam Hussein era. Old habits and methods (e.g., reliance on forced confessions, taking the initiative only when directed, and rigid delineation of responsibilities) work against effective and efficient policing.

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(IPLOs), IPs perform satisfactorily and stand their ground in the face of attacks. The absence of such leaders correlates closely with instances in which IP stations have been overrun, often with shocking casualties among ill-prepared and ill-led policemen.

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The negative aspects of these comments must be kept in perspective. The report also found that real progress was being made, that Iraqi forces were becoming more effective, and that the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior was taking over more and more of the burden of planning and managing the development and training of the Iraqi police and security services it also found that the CPATT now was strong enough to have a major impact, and was working closely with the new Minister of the Interior and his staff.

Large numbers of Ministry of the Interior forces now had serious training: While the program still had defects, Iraqi Police Service did give new eight weeks of serious training at the Police Academy, and the program involved significant counterinsurgency training. Those officers who served and continue to serve received specialized training and sustainment training. Advanced police training took place at the Adnan Palace Complex, where specialized police training had been taking place since mid-2004, and is administered by a wide range of US law enforcement agencies.

There were over 500 individuals from the Coalition training Iraqi police officers. A little less than half of these trainers worked from the JIPTC in Amman, Jordan, while the rest operated directly in Iraq. Civil Intervention Force recruits underwent five weeks of specialized training, while the Special Police Commandos got three weeks of specialized training.

Moreover, as the report by the Inspector General's notes, a major effort was underway to train those Iraqi police officers with past service that had been retained by the new government:¹⁴⁶

One of the challenges of building a viable police force was to retain the veteran policemen who served during the Saddam Hussein era. This group must be retrained with the objective of instilling modern police techniques, respect for human rights, and democratic policing principles. To achieve this goal, CPATT implemented an in-service training program called the Transition Integration Program (TIP). The program also incorporates attention to applicable Iraqi criminal law and procedures to be observed for arrest and detention. Additionally, the TIP was designed to accomplish several other key tasks:

- Identify existing IPS personnel who were academically, intellectually, or morally unsuitable;
- Identify potential leaders within the IPS; and
- Identify potential IPS instructors and field training officers.

TIP training takes place at Coalition forward operating bases (FOBs) and at some of the regional academies. The course is three weeks long and covers 126 hours of instruction. Course subjects include: (1) the philosophy and role of the IPS, (2) prohibitions against torture, (3) police ethics and values, and (4) the code of conduct. About one third of the course time is devoted to firearms instruction on 9mm and AK-47 weaponry.

As of late April this year, 35,526 IPS veterans had completed the TIP program. The program, however, is not without its critics. For example, the Chief of Police at al-Hillah would like to replace the three week TIP course with a longer in-service course that would encompass map reading, hostage rescue, night tactics, etc. As in the case of basic training, the argument is for hands-on training as opposed to the more theoretical approach of the present TIP program.

... the TIP program is a worthwhile and value-added endeavor. By definition, TIP training is for in-service IPs, and satisfies one of the MOI's objectives. Many policemen who have attended the course appear to be well motivated and dedicated to the concept of a rule of law regime at the service of Iraqi citizens. The TIP training imparts skills directly relevant to those objectives...

Members of the Emergency Response Unit got eight weeks of specialized training with follow-on mentoring by Coalition advisors. The recruits for the Department of Border Enforcement received four weeks training at the Academy along with specialized training. The Highway Patrol officers underwent three weeks of TIP training and eight weeks of Academy training. Lastly, the Bureau of Dignitary Protection's training program consisted of three weeks of initial training, 2-3 weeks of advanced training, and final follow-on mentoring by US contractors and Navy SEALs.¹⁴⁷

Figure 25 shows the overall pattern of these efforts as of the end of May 2005. There is no doubt that they did not approach the level of training in Western security and police forces, that many training programs would have been longer if the police was not under so much pressure from the insurgency, and that gaps still remained in the effort. At the same time, it is clear that CPATT had made massive progress since the spring of 2004 and done so in the face of considerable obstacles, and many of the problems the Inspector General of the Department of State and of the Department of Defense had found in April 2005 were already being addressed at that time, and substantial further improvement had been made by the summer of 2005.¹⁴⁸

The MNF-I summarized the level of police and security force vetting and training as follows in late July,¹⁴⁹

Training – of all forces, but especially police forces – undergoes constant analysis in light of operational experience. The course length and curriculum of the Transition Integration Program has been standardized in all of the Iraqi police academies. The length of basic training for police recruits has been increased by 25 percent by adding two weeks of regional training on threats and other conditions in the new policeman's area of responsibility. Training at all police schools is now much more likely to be led by an Iraqi and to be "hands on" training instead of simple academic instruction.

...Some 62,000 trained police were on duty as of late June 2005. To date, over 35,000 police recruits have completed the 8-week basic police classroom training, and more than 35,500 veteran police have received the 3-week Transition Integration Program (TIP) training. Over 13,500 police personnel have completed specialized training, such as fingerprinting, explosive ordnance disposal, investigations, and counterterrorism. New police academy graduates do not receive the originally envisioned field training by International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) due to the current security situation, so new police receive informal mentoring from veteran Iraqi police.

Police are recruited through a combination of methods depending on the stability of the province in which they live. In stable provinces, recruiting is done by MOI, community leaders, IPLOs, and Multinational Force Major Subordinate Commands (MSCs). In areas where insurgents are more active, the MSCs play a larger role in recruitment. The Iraqi police advertise for recruits via radio, posters, police stations, and employment centers. Most recruiting is done from the local population, with the goal of matching the ethnic composition of the local area; however, all police must commit to serving anywhere in the nation if necessary.

Police recruits undergo a physical fitness test, medical examination and background check; increasingly, more sophisticated vetting tools are being developed and employed. Vetting is performed by the MSCs and, on a more limited basis, by an assessment tool developed by an MNSTC-I contractor that screens for literacy, cognitive, and suitability characteristics.

MSCs have increasingly engaged Iraqi Police Service Chiefs in the review of the police candidate rosters. The MOI and MNSTC-I's Coalition Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) are working closely together to conduct training and deploy IPS in-processing teams (vetting teams). These in-processing teams will deploy to Al Kut, Basrah, Al Hillah, and Mosul police academies. This process should be complete by November 2005, and thereafter police candidates will be vetted by MOI. The MOI Qualifying Committee has received information on 120,000 MOI employees, and a final screening process has been completed on 90,000 of them. The work of the Qualifying Committee to weed out "ghost employees" (who are being paid but not working) and other police who do not meet minimal standards is ongoing.

The rate of absenteeism, AWOL, attrition, and desertion in the IPS varies by province. Most police units have experienced a decrease in absenteeism as the number of trained police has increased. The exact extent of insurgent infiltration is unknown. Effectiveness of the Iraqi police officer cadres and the chain of command varies by province and the experience level of the chain of command. The P3 teams are focusing their efforts on developing capability at the provincial police headquarters and MOI in a top-down approach.

Embedded Advisory Teams in Military Units: The Importance of the Luck Mission

An equally important advance in training took once Iraqi forces were deployed. The US began to embed large training teams in each Iraqi unit until it demonstrated it could stand on its own. This reform seems to have been at least partly a result of the review of US strategy and operations in Iraq made by retired four-star General Gary Luck had made in January 2005.

The Department of Defense stated at the time that the purpose of General Luck's mission was "to provide some assessment of how we're doing" in training and fielding Iraqi security units.¹⁵⁰ Other reports have suggested that Luck's mandate may have been far more wide-ranging, extending to an evaluation of the entire US strategy in Iraq. Other reports indicate that by late 2004, the US was also seeking to find some way to largely extract US forces from the counterinsurgency mission by the end of 2005 or early 2006, but the Defense Department has denied this.¹⁵¹

In her Senate confirmation testimony, Condoleezza Rice described General Luck's mission and the progress of Iraqi security forces as follows:

We think that, among those people, there clearly continue to be questions about on-duty time, that is, people who don't report for duty. And so this is being looked at. We are trying to provide for some of these units mentors who can help, trying to provide leadership from the Iraqis themselves that can help these people. But this is the reason Gary Luck has gone out, at Secretary Rumsfeld's

direction, to take a hard look at the training program to see what General Petraeus...what he's been able to achieve; to work with the Iraqis to address some of these problems of leadership and morale and desertion in the armed forces and in the police forces; and to look at some of the equipping of the police forces.¹⁵²

The full results of the Luck mission were not been made public. Reports and interviews indicate, however, that Gen. Luck was satisfied with the progress Lt. Gen. Petraeus had made, and his report focused on providing teams of Coalition advisors to train and fight with new Iraqi units as they deployed. One unattributed defense official was quoted as saying, "Luck's assessment in general is that he feels the commanders have a plan, Petraeus is having an impact, and these forces have a good crack at becoming more and more capable over time."¹⁵³

An early report on the Luck mission in the New York Times summarized its conclusions as follows:¹⁵⁴

Luck... endorses a plan by American commanders in Iraq to shift the military's main mission after the Jan. 30 elections from fighting the insurgency to training Iraq's military and police forces to take over those security and combat duties and become more self-reliant, eventually allowing American forces to withdraw...The aim would be to double or even triple the number of trainers now at work with Iraqi security forces, up to as many as 8,000 or 10,000, though General Luck has not mentioned a specific number. A senior defense official who has been briefed on General Luck's initial conclusions and recommendations said the plan would draw on a mix of officers and senior enlisted troops from Army and Marine units already in Iraq.

Many commanders say that providing more trainers is meant to bolster the Iraqi will to fight, help train officers who would lead, curb desertion and provide Iraqi forces with the confidence that American units would back them up - in some cases fighting alongside them if needed, military and Pentagon officials said. Two American advisers have died fighting with Iraqi units. But the training would follow a step-by-step approach that would take months if not years, proceeding at different paces in different parts of the country, depending on the troops' performance. American forces would work closely with Iraqis in the most dangerous parts of the country, but would still take the lead combat role there.

It is clear that the Luck mission emphasized the need to go beyond formal training and equipment programs, and to put an Iraqi face on the security and military missions, and to embed US training elements in the new Iraqi forces to help them as they built up the leadership experience and unity integrity necessary to operate effectively on their own.

The result was a plan for utilizing embedded US troops as "advisors," as opposed to having entire US units jointly patrolling with Iraqi troops is likely to lower the US profile and quell a degree of the anti-American sentiment. At the same time, such advisers would have the ability to call for US air support and backup forces and would have access to US intelligence.

The new program began awkwardly. The Iraqis were not consulted when MNF-1 and MNSTC-I came up with advisory teams and requested forces in December and January. When they did discuss the program with the Iraqi Minister of Defense and Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Defense accepted the program, but the Minister of the Interior initially balked. It took some persuasion to get him to agree to a test case with four police stations.¹⁵⁵

One problem was finding enough advisors. An Army Reserve Unit from Rochester, New York, the 98th Training Division, had been the main body from which advisors have been drawn.¹⁵⁶ Reportedly, as of February 24, 2005, there were 45 training teams assisting Iraqi units and advising their leaders.¹⁵⁷ The actual quality of the training, however, has differed significantly by trainer and adviser. According to some reports, Iraqi units trained by the Vinnell Corporation and the US National Guard have been less effective than forces trained by the US Army Special Forces. However, US sources reported in mid-April 2005, that there already were some 2,000 US military advisors working directly with Iraqi forces.¹⁵⁸

In March 2005, US officials were still engaged in determining the number of embedded American advisers needed to improve Iraqi leadership and overall capabilities. General Abizaid stated that that decision lay with Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld. Referring to the numbers of advisers needed in Iraq, Abizaid commented, "We're trying to figure out how much augmentation will be required."¹⁵⁹

After that time, however, the number of advisors steadily increased, and this led to changes in the way Coalition managed the advisory effort. In March 2005, the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I, the operational HQs under Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I)) became responsible for all operations, and all Iraqi Army units were placed under their tactical control. In addition, the Coalition transition (advisory) teams that worked with those units were almost all placed under Corps control as well. This was always the case with former ING units, but now the transition teams in regular army and intervention force units were largely placed under the control of Corps.

The MNSTC-I essentially became an assistant, albeit a very major one, to the Iraqi Joint HQs and Ministry of Defense for fulfilling the role of "force provider." Its function became to recruit, train, equip, base, and sustain. As a result, it did not get operational reports on the units once they have completed their training and start to conduct operations, or closely track when and where they are assuming battle space. That was MNC-I's responsibility. It did receive information from MNC-I on their manning, equipment, and basing status in order to assist the JHQ in addressing the needs of these units.

MNF-1 and MNSTC-I worked together with the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of the interior to implement the program at all levels of Iraqi force development. They came to use a system where MNSTC-I shaped the training effort and creation of new unit elements and then transferred them to MNF-I operational command. Once the units became active they got embedded Coalition advisory teams that stayed until the unit demonstrated it had effective leadership and could maintain unit cohesion while actually performing its mission. The desired training levels before and at the time of this transition are shown in Figure 26.

By the early summer of 2005, virtually all Iraqi army units and MOI special security force units had at least 10-man teams of Coalition advisors. There were still serious shortages in the number of advisors assigned to support units and headquarters units, and to Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior officials at every level down, but combat

and major support units not only had the training teams they needed, but a partner unit of Coalition forces to work with until they were capable of independent operations.¹⁶⁰

New Iraqi units were being deployed into the field with stronger cadres of Coalition advisors, including teams that average at least ten men per battalion, brigade and division headquarters, special force elements, and combat support, service support, and logistic units. Such advisory teams stay until such units demonstrate they have the leadership and committed manpower to operate on their own.

Military commanders called this a development “a sea change in methods.”¹⁶¹ They stated that it built on the lessons learned in Afghanistan and addressed the problems caused by the lack of mid-level Iraqi leadership in Iraq’s forces, the lack of a history of unit integrity and morale, and the lack of experience at all levels in creating an effective team and fighting force.¹⁶² Gen. John Abizaid indicated in an interview in late January 2005 that he felt that close relationships between US forces and indigenous troops made efforts in Afghanistan more successful than those in Iraq. He commented that embedded advisers could foster a similar relationship, likely improving efforts to strengthen Iraq forces.

Embedded Advisory Teams: Much Slower Progress with the Police

In contrast, efforts to provide such teams for regular police force units lagged in spite of major efforts by CPATT, largely due to a lack of resources and problems in support from agencies in the US like the Department of Homeland Security, but many regular police units either had such teams or were acquiring them. Once again, the report by the Inspector General of the State Department and Inspector General of the Department of Defense provides important insights into the level of progress in April 2005 that are supported by interviews with CPATT advisors and others who served in Iraq:

A strong mentoring program is integral to the concept of training Iraqi police. Initially, this was to be the function of IPLO field training officers, each working closely with a small number of policemen who had received basic training. This concept would mirror a model that worked satisfactorily in Bosnia and Kosovo. INL contracted with DynCorp to provide the IPLOs. The first 24-member contingent arrived in Iraq during November 2003. Most IPLOs are retired policemen. By March 2005, this number had risen to about 500. INL has proposed funding for an additional 400 IPLOs. In actuality, the mentoring program in Iraq has not materialized as planned. The security situation is so precarious that any post-training mentoring is, at best, intermittent. There have been periods during which the IPLOs were unable to move beyond the confines of their quarters. Consequently, IPLO interaction with Iraqi policemen is largely with instructors/supervisors at the BPC and regional academies or during periodic visits to police stations.

To accomplish the latter, the IPLOs must rely on Coalition military forces for transportation and security. The military police (MP), who provide that logistical assistance, act as additional mentors once on site. As the security situation has evolved, so has the work of the IPLOs. IPLOs now devote much of their time and attention to assessing police stations and units. There, the IPLOs gather data on equipment status and availability, discipline problems, and reports of incidents involving the IPS. This is documented in Police Station Monthly Reports (PSMR), which are derived from the Facility Assessment Forms prepared by MPs and IPLOs. In theory, this information will enable the MOI to more effectively manage both personnel and material resources of the IPS.

Lines of authority and responsibility for mentoring are not well defined. As the contract administrator, INL has administrative responsibility for the IPLO program. This includes providing life support (e.g., food and lodging, basic security, etc.). CPATT provides operational control. However, Coalition military officials tend to rely on MPs for the mentoring function. Consequently, the IPLOs are sometimes underutilized.¹⁶³

It is unclear how much progress had been made by the summer of 2005, but the Department of Defense described the process in these areas as follows in late July 2005:¹⁶⁴

Police Partnership Program (P3) teams are partnered at the provincial levels with the police to help identify areas of progress and shortcomings to determine when these forces will be able to assume independent control of their area of responsibility. In lieu of the TRA, police partnership assessments look at factors that are more tailored to the tasks of a police force. More than half of provincial police headquarters currently are assessed to have control in their province.

The problems involved in embedding sufficient advisors in the police units are illustrated by the fact the number of IPLOs assigned by district to each region as of May 1, 2005. Region I - Baghdad (98), Region II – Tikrit (94), Region III – Mosul (30), Region IV – Ramadi (34), Region V – Babylon (43), Region VI – Basrah (24), with the CPATT command staff (9), National Assets Bureau (75), Administrative Bureau (26) and various other areas (63).

It is also important to note that the IPLOs ran even higher risks than the advisors embedded in regular Iraqi Army and security units. For example, on March 9, 2005, a massive suicide truck bomb targeted the al-Sadeer Hotel in Baghdad. Thirty-five IPLOs were injured; the most serious casualty with the loss of an eye.¹⁶⁵

More generally, this focus on embedding advisory cadres to develop effective leadership and unit integrity formal training is a key lesson of the MNF-I and MNSTC-I effort. It reflects an underlying reality of military history that transcends cultures and the conditions of particular wars. Soldiers, security personnel, and police are not cars or transistor radios. They cannot be turned out of training centers like a product. They must either be transitioned into effective and proven units, or transitioned into some structure that can substitute for that leadership and experience.

Regardless of the quality of training and equipment, and the political and ideological conditions shaping a war, men who are thrust into combat or high risk operations only function well if they have proven leaders they feel that they can trust. Their primary motivation also ultimately comes to be how they feel about the other men in their units, how important the approval of their peers is in crisis and combat, and how confident they are that their unit will do everything possible to support and protect them.

Figure 23
MNSTC-I Training Program for Iraqi Forces by Force Element

Component	Training
Iraqi Police Service	Former Academy Graduates: 3 Week Transition Integration Program New Recruits: 8 Week Academy; 2 Week Integration Training Mid-Careers: Specialized Training
Public Order and Mechanized Police	5 Week Specialized Training
Special Police Commandos	3 Week Specialized Training
Emergency Response Unit	4 Week Basic; 4 Week Advanced Specialized Training
Dept. of Border Enforcement	4 Week Academy and Specialized Training
Highway Patrol	3 Week TIP Training, and 8 Week Academy Training
Bureau of Dignitary Protection	3 Week Initial Training, 2-3 Week Advanced Training Follow-on Mentoring by US Contractors and Navy SEALs
Iraq Regular Army	Cadre: 4 Weeks; Basic & Small Unit Training: 8 Weeks, Additional Skill and Collective Training varies
Iraqi National Guard	Basic Training: 3 Weeks; Collective Training: 4 Weeks
Iraqi Intervention Force	Cadre: 4 Weeks; Basic/Collective Training: 8 Weeks Urban Operations Training: 5 Weeks
Iraqi Regular Army and Intervention Force	Direct Recruit Replacement Training: 3 weeks for former soldiers
Iraqi Special Ops Force Commando Battalion Counter Terrorist Task Force	Field Training Provided by US Special Forces (Small Unit Tactics and Ranger-type training) 13-week Special Operator Course
Air Force	Varies by specialty: 1-6 months
Navy	8 Week Basic Followed by Specialized Training at Umm Qasr

Source MNSTC-I, June 2005.

Figure 24
Specialty Training Courses

Professional Development and Education	
Joint Staff College Instructors	24*
Military Academy Graduates	91
Military Cadets	296*
Contracting Capacity Course	40

Combat Support Courses	
Intelligence	425
Engineers	85
Signal	20
MPs	85
Combat Service Support Courses	
Bomb Disposal	192*
Transportation	813
Maintenance	147
Supply	136
Logistics Officer	50
Medical	20
Administration	20
Instructor Training	301
Air Traffic Controllers	4**

Special Police Course (Thru 31 May)	
Basic Criminal Investigation	1,712
Internal Controls	667
Violent Crimes and Kidnapping	648
Junior, Mid-Level, and Senior Management and Leadership	937
Organized Crime, Drug Enforcement and Criminal Intelligence	450
Interviews and Interrogations	371
Explosive Hazard Awareness and Post Blast Investigation	262
Interrogation Techniques	22*
Counter Terrorism Investigations	136
Critical Incident Management and Incident Command System	470
SWAT (13 of 20 Teams)	360
Dignitary Protection, Motorcade Escorts, and Site Security	1,067

*In Training **OJT

Source: MNSTC-I, June 2005

Figure 25**Training at Police Academies as of 5/29/05**

8-Week Academies	Total Trained
Baghdad Police College	12,391
Jordan Int'l Police Training Center	17,138
Sulaymaniyah	1,571
Al Kut	334
Al Asad	127
Kirkuk	0
Al Hillah	517
Basrah	452
Mosul	2,457
Total	34,987

TIP Academies	Total Trained
MND-Baghdad (Karada)	1,609
MND-CS (Karbala/Babil/Al Hillah/Babylon)	6,301
MND-SE (Basrah/Diwaniyah)	7,465
MNF-W (Al Quadisiyah)	4,868
MNF-W	4,268
MND-CN (Kirkuk/Tikrit/As Sulaymaniyah)	11,291
Total	35,802

Source MNSTC-I, CPATT June 2005.

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Figure 26
Transition Team Training Model

CONUS	Kuwait	Taji	Camp Victory	Link-up with MSCs & Iraqi Units
<u>10-45 days + travel</u>	<u>10 days + travel</u>	<u>10 days</u>	<u>2-5 days</u>	<u>First 24 Hours:</u>
Individual Tasks: Weapons Commo HMMWV Combat Lifesaver	Live-Fire Training: Convoy TCP/ECP	General Officer and senior Iraqi briefings	Warlock installation and training	Specific tactical situation
Team Building	Individual Equipment Issue	Situation briefings	Make-up training	Security measures and support procedures
Iraqi METL Tasks: MOUT ECP/TCP	Acclimatization	Interaction with Iraqi units and Transition Teams in the field	Team planning & prep	Status of Iraqi unit
Cultural Orientation	Cultural Orientation	Linkup with sponsors, interpreters		<u>First week:</u> Joint training plan
		Cultural Orientation		
		Draw, test, prepare team equipment		

Source: MNSTC-I, CMATT, June 2005.

Force Developments

Many of the more detailed aspects of Iraqi force development showed an increased rate of progress. The MNSTC-I reported on the status of Iraqi force developments as of March 12, 2005 noted that,

On 1 July 2004, for example, there was one “deployable” or “national” battalion available to the Iraqi Ministries of Interior and Defense (i.e., a unit that could be moved to a trouble spot anywhere in the country). Now there are 52 such battalions and 96 battalions conducting operations in total, in addition to regular police, border guards, and other security force elements. All told, there are more than 142,000 trained and equipped Iraqi police, soldiers, sailors, and airmen.

A large portion of these 52 battalions did consist of National Guard units that had been merged into the Army in January, and which had originally been formed for the local mission of supporting the police within a given province. These units now had a national mission as part of the army and the early results were mixed. When National Guard units had previously told they were going to Fallujah in November 2004, AWOL rates then climbed to 70 percent in some units.¹⁶⁶

Nevertheless, the increase in trained and equipped manpower continued at a rapid rate throughout the rest of the spring and summer. By the end of July 2005, the number had risen to 172,300: With 78,500 military and 93,800 police and security forces. The military now included 77,700 Army, 100 Air Force, and 700 Navy. The regular police and highway patrol totaled 63,500, and the security forces totaled 30,300.¹⁶⁷

Ongoing Force Developments

The MNC submitted a report to the UN on April 10, 2005, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1546. This report provided data submitted by MNSTC-I as of May 14, 2005.¹⁶⁸ Coupled to other reports from the Iraqi government MNSTC-I, Iraqi force developments had reached the following status as of early August 2005:

- *Operations:*
 - *Iraq was now operating its own joint command centers, and was bringing modern computerized operations centers into operation in areas like Baghdad.* The Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior developed and operated a joint command center during Operation Lightning.
- *Ministry of Defense:*
 - *Command and staff structure:* Iraqi forces now operated a full command and staff structure. The Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Armed Forces was a four star officer, General Babakir. He had a three star deputy: Lt. General Abadi. There were three joint commands: Training Command, Support Command, and Special Operations Command, headed by Brigadier General Najh Hashim. There were also three single service commands: Army Commander (Lt. General Abdul Qadr), Navy Commander (Commander Jawad), and Air Force Commander (Major General Kamal). The Joint staff include Personnel (M1), Intelligence (M2), Operations (M3) Logistics (M4), Plans (M5), Communications (M6), Training (M7), and Comptroller (M8). There were two major Special Staff divisions: Staff Judge Advocate and Surgeon General.

- *The Iraqi Ground Forces Headquarters* was opened in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Baghdad on May 15, 2005 by General Abdul Qadir Jassim, Iraqi Ground Forces commander.
- *Iraqi Regular Army and Intervention Forces:* With the incorporation of the Iraqi National Guard into the Army, the total number of battalions conducting operations was now 80. The Iraqi army had gone from one battalion in July 2004 to 27 battalions of infantry in January, which included nine special Iraqi Intervention Force battalions and three transportation battalions. The total rose to 37 battalions in June, with four more in formation. In addition, 43 National Guard battalions were being merged into the army, and these forces were undergoing a major upgrading in terms of vetting and retention, training, and equipment.
- As is discussed in Figure 26, Iraqi military forces now had a detailed order of battle with clear force goals. The merger of the Army and National Guard had created a 10 division order of battle, and as is shown in this figure, overall manning of the combat elements of this force was now relatively high.
- *Creating a 10-division force:* As is discussed in Figure 27, Iraqi military forces now had a detailed order of battle with clear force goals. The merger of the Army and National Guard had created a 10 division order of battle, and as is shown in this figure, overall manning of the combat elements of this force was now relatively high.
- The final brigade of the three Division Regular Army graduated on April 20th, and brought the number of operational combat brigades to 99.
- *Iraq's first mechanized battalion* became operational in mid-January, along with a tank company and a transportation battalion; the remaining elements of a mechanized brigade were being trained and equipped by the summer. The 1st Mechanized battalion, 1st Iraqi Army Brigade began operations in the Abu Ghraib area south of Baghdad, and an Iraqi mechanized unit began joint duty with US armored forces in provided security for movement through insurgent areas, in late April 2005.
- *MNSTC-I was working to complete the 2nd mechanized infantry battalion of the 1st mechanized brigade, which was to be equipped with BMPs, by the summer of 2005.* The rest of the armored division was projected to be trained and equipped by the end of 2005 and another mechanized division with wheeled armored vehicles was planned for 2006. Other units were acquiring light armored vehicles from the UAE, Jordan, Eastern Europe, and other services. The equipment confiscated from the MEK was being made available to Iraqi units, and some units were getting armor from the various equipment dumps left over from the war. Iraqi units had ceased to wait and had begun to improvise.
- *The Iraqi 7th Division was being readied for deployment in the West.* It was being deployed because the locally recruited National Guard units would or could not deal with the insurgency. The end result has been to disband all of the existing units in Al Anbar, make the former Defenders of Baghdad into the 1st Brigade, and create two new brigades for a force designed to deal with the most hostile area in Iraq.
- *The Iraqi Intervention Force was becoming the counter-insurgency wing of the Iraqi army.* It had been organized after the fighting in Fallujah and designed to defeat anti-Iraqi forces in Iraq with primary focus on urban areas, and to assist in the restoration of a secure and stable environment in which MOI security forces can maintain law and order. It was organized as the 1st division and was ultimately to be comprised of nine infantry battalions and three armored battalions, organized into three brigades, and to acquire a full range of support units. Its armored forces had BMPs taken from MEK units, and were to acquire some 77 refurbished T-72s provided by Hungary. The

division became operational in January, and had a total of 170 US advisors embedded by June.

- Its forces negotiated the standard eight-week basic training all Iraqi Soldiers go through learning basic soldiering skills such as weapons, drill and ceremony, Soldier discipline, and physical training skills. After graduation, IIF battalions spent several weeks and months in intensive “military operations in urban terrain” follow-on training – otherwise known as “MOUT” training. In this period, Soldiers worked through instruction in the art of street fighting and building clearing operations typical to anti-insurgent operations in cities and towns. Units worked in close coordination with other Iraqi Army battalions and were scheduled to a completely stood-up nine-battalion force during 2005.
- *Iraq’s Special Operations Forces included a Counter-Terrorist Force and a Commando Battalion*, each of which had conducted dozens of successful operations. The unit was formed based on a conversation between the Prime Minister Ayad Allawi and multinational force personnel to give the Iraqi Armed Forces a high-end strike force in its ongoing security mission against anti-Iraqi forces operating in the country.
- Special Forces soldiers were the army’s unconventional warfare experts, possessing a broad range of operational skills. The forces consisted of two trained battalions, including the 36th Commando Battalion – an infantry-type strike force – and the Iraqi Counterterrorism Battalion. The force had now been involved in many operations throughout the country fighting anti-Iraqi forces with great distinction while continuing the stand-up effort of the unit. The force was to add a third “support” battalion to its ranks in the coming months.
- The Iraqi Special Operations Force – the Iraqi Armed Forces’ high-end strike force resembling U.S. Special Forces units – continued training and operations in the country with multinational force assistance. Training was conducted at an undisclosed location. “Selection” for the force began in the Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi army units already operating in the country, much like typical multinational Special Forces’ recruiting efforts in their own countries. Outstanding recruits successfully negotiating the vetting process, including exhaustive background checks, skill evaluations, and unit evaluations along with literacy, psychological, and physical tests, were run through various team-building and physical events meant to lean down the recruit pool. The selection process ran roughly 10 to 14 days.
- The Iraqi Special Forces underwent intense physical, land navigation, small-unit tactics, live-fire, unconventional warfare operations, direct action operations, airmobile operations, counterterrorism, survival, evasion, resistance, and escape training.
- *One Motorized Transport Regiment was already in service, and plans exist to create a Motorized Transport Regiment for each division.* This was part of an overall plan to fully staff divisional and brigade headquarters, add combat and service support units, and give Iraqi units the ability to operate independently in the field and end their dependence on base support and Coalition forces for such operations.
- *Other new forces completed their training and would be ready to assume full-time duty between the end of March and June 2005.*
 - Three more Iraqi Army battalions.
 - Several former Iraqi National Guard battalions.
- *Oil security battalions:* The Ministry of Defense was seeking to create 16 new infrastructures -- or oil security battalions -- with an authorized strength of 727 men each, the strength of other army battalions. These Strategic Infrastructure Battalions

(SIB) were being created to defend pipelines and other oil infrastructure at the direction of Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Chalabi. They were a response to the fact that the oil infrastructure in the Kirkuk-Bayji area alone had been struck 14 times between March and June 2005.

Four battalions already existed, but lacked manpower, training, and equipment. The others were to be formed by local/direct recruiting, and given suitable vehicles, AK-47s and light machine guns, GPS, night vision goggles, radios and other necessary equipment. Chalabi had approved a \$35 million, 3-month plan to train the necessary trainers, and equip the first four SIB battalions. Part of the plan was to bring the personnel into the military, but the \$35 million did not cover the same equipment as the regular Army. The plan called for training the first 4 battalions trained starting in mid-July and going on through October, and to assess funding needs for the remaining battalions.

- *Iraq's 600-man Navy operated* with five 100-foot patrol craft, 34 smaller vessels, and a naval infantry regiment that recently completed training. Boat crews learned the basics in seamanship before moving on to instruction in advanced seamanship, towing, gunnery, sea rescue, chart reading, navigation, anti-smuggling, operations, and rigid inflatable boat integration and small boat drill instruction. Training was put in the context of a democratically based maritime sea force.

Primary duties included protecting the country's roughly 50-mile coastline from smuggling and foreign fighter infiltration operations as well as the port assets at Umm Qasr in Southern Iraq and oil assets in the Persian Gulf. The force patrolled out to the 12-mile international water boundary in the Persian Gulf with five 27-meter long Chinese-made patrol boats and various other support craft.

The force also included a land-based Coastal Defense Regiment resembling western-type "Marine" infantry forces with an active strength of 100 men and building up to a strength of 300. Land and sea based forces negotiate IAF eight-week basic training courses before moving on to follow-on training and sea training for the boat crews.

The US Department of Defense described the Iraqi Navy's progress as follows in late July 2005:¹⁶⁹

The Iraqi Navy is currently executing operational missions that include border and waterway protection from smuggling and infiltration, and site protection of port and oil assets in the Persian Gulf. The force patrols out to the 12-mile international water boundary in the Persian Gulf using 27-meter patrol boats, rigid-hull inflatable boats, and other support vessels. The Iraqi Navy currently has approximately 500 trained sailors on duty. It is equipped with five Predator Class Patrol Boats (PB), 24 Fast Aluminum Boats (Duel Outboard Engines), 10 rigid-hull inflatable boats, and various small arms and night vision devices. The Iraqi Navy will further equip themselves with six Al Faw Class Patrol Boats (the first of which was delivered in July 2005) and two Off-Shore Support Vessels. With some exceptions, the responsibility for logistical support of the Iraqi Navy has been handed over to the Umm Qasr Base Support Unit (BSU). Maritime and Riverine Advisory Support Team (M&R AST) members provide advice and assistance to both the BSU and the Iraqi Navy Logistics Department in order to cultivate a cooperative working relationship. It is anticipated (based on progression along the CTF-58 assessment program) that the Iraqi Navy will assume point defense responsibilities of the oil terminals by September 30, 2005. Assumption of the waterside mission (the afloat defensive screen) is dependent on the acquisition and initial operational readiness of the six Al Faw class

The Iraqi Navy Training Department currently conducts all of its own training, assisted by the M&R AST. All members of the Iraqi Navy received their initial training in Kirkush. Following basic training, they were trained on mission-focused technical skill sets: ship handling, marlin spike seamanship, navigation, engineering, weapons handling, small boat operations, shipboard damage control, etc.

In June, the Iraqi Navy began interoperability training with their Predator patrol boats and an amphibious transport ship. The Iraqi Navy signed the Iraqi Navy Transition Roadmap on the USS Normandy. The roadmap lays out plans to develop the Iraqi Navy to defend its coastal waters, to give it the capability to perform integrated sea operations, shore support, boarding-and-search operations, point-of-defense of oil terminals, and an overall command and sustainment program.

- *Iraq's Air Force had three operational squadrons.* One additional squadron was stood up in late January-early February. It had nine reconnaissance aircraft, a helicopter squadron, and three C-130 transport aircraft.

All Iraqi Air Force pilots and maintenance personnel negotiated comprehensive one to four-month "conversion courses" largely comprised of familiarization instruction. The training brings air force recruits up to speed on current Iraqi Air Force aircraft as well as serving to augment prior skills.

The air force actively recruited from prior-service personnel pools in the country – officially sending personnel to training after the Iraqi Ministry of Defense's vetting and screening process clears recruits for duty. Training was almost entirely conducted in the United Arab Emirates and Jordan by multinational force partners. After "conversion course" training was completed, trainees went to assigned squadrons in Iraq for follow-on training comprised of advanced instruction and specific operational training.

The Iraqi Air Force was initially slated to be a six-squadron force of various-make light reconnaissance aircraft and various support aircraft including C-130 transport planes and other helicopter craft with operations mainly centered on supporting Iraqi Security Force operations on the ground, infrastructure reconnaissance, and border security missions. The majority of the force was scheduled to be operational by Fall 2005.

The US Department of Defense described the Iraqi Air Force's progress as follows in late July 2005:¹⁷⁰

Like the Army and the Navy, the Iraqi Air Force is conducting operational missions while equipping and training. The Iraqi Air Force's counterinsurgency missions focus on aerial observation /surveillance and air transportation. The Air Force currently has over 100 personnel and has a fleet of 9 helicopters (4 UH-1H and 5 Jet Ranger), 3 C-130s, and 8 single-engine propeller-driven observation airplanes (6 CompAir turboprop aircraft and 2 Seeker piston aircraft). There are 19 Iraqi C-130 personnel currently being trained in the United States. Language training and flight training are being conducted at Al Ali Air Base. Crews have previously trained in Jordan on the UH-1H and Seeker.

- *Command centers were being created for Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Interior, and joint operations.*
- *Iraq's two Military Academies* reopened in mid-October and each graduated a pilot course of new lieutenants, 91 total, in early January 2005. The new year-long military academy course was underway based on an Iraqi modification of the course at Sandhurst. Britain had taken the lead in shaping the program at the academy, and Italy

was taking the lead in creating staff colleges. A senior command defense college was being developed.

○ *Ministry of Interior*

- *Five basic police academies were operational*; together, they produced over 3,500 new police officers from the 8-week course each month, a course recently modified to better prepare the new police officers for the challenging environment in which some may serve. Several other regional academies were under construction.
- *Police operations were being steadily modified to deal with the insurgent threat.* Suicide bombings and other attacks had led to a steady rise in the number of AK-47s and PKM machine guns issued to the police, and increases in the issue of body armor.
- *Iraq's Mechanized Police Brigade* had completed training and began operations in mid-January, using fifty BTR-94 wheeled, armored vehicles. One additional Mechanized Police battalion was in training. The 8th Mechanized Police Brigade (MPB) was a paramilitary, counterinsurgency Iraqi police unit that would deploy to high risk areas using light armored personnel carriers. The MPB was planned to comprise three battalions.

The MPB was planned to be able to deploy as a company, battalion or even a brigade-level force. The brigade will be stationed in Central Iraq. The Russian made personnel carrier, known as "BTRs," were used to transport Iraqi Security Forces across Iraq. With a three man crew, each carrier was capable of transporting up to 10 officers. The BTR has twin 23mm cannons and a 7.62 machinegun.

The MPB could serve as outer cordon security for military and other strike missions. The BTRs provided the members of the 8th MPB safe transport to high risk areas with lethal fire power capability.

- *Iraqi police mechanized units were starting to receive delivery of armored security vehicles and began training with them in mid-March 2005.* Logistics units at the division level and a brigade each for logistics, signals, MPs, and engineering were scheduled to stand up by 2006.¹⁷¹ Vehicle plans included a battalion of Cadillac Gage ASD armored security vehicles, and two battalions of BTR-94s, and a range of additional procurements were under study. According to MNSTC-I, uparmored HMMWVs were on order as of summer 2005.
- *Civil Intervention Force (CIF).* As of July 2005, there were three main CIF elements: the ERU, the 8th Mechanized Police, and the Public Order Brigade (POB).

Each type of CIF received different training. The ERU personnel received a four-week basic and four-week advanced Crisis Response Training (CRT) course. Selected individuals went through a five-week Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training course. The 8th Mechanized Brigade received a six-week training course. Selected personnel attend an Operator and Maintenance course at Taji for the Armored Security Vehicles. Lastly, the POB receives a six-week training course at Numaniyah Training Base.

The CIF used a variety of equipment: Chevy Luv pick-up trucks, mid size SUVs, Nissan pick-up trucks, AK-47 assault rifles, PKC light machine guns, Glock pistols, HF radios, and body armor. The 8th Mechanized Brigade uses BTR armored personnel carriers with 23mm cannon. Each battalion and member is currently equipped with all mission-essential equipment.

The SPTTs embedded with the 8th Mechanized Brigade and the battalions of the Public Order Brigade submitted a TRA at least monthly on the same areas as do the Army Military Transition Teams. The SPTTs focused their efforts on mentoring the

cadres with the least experience. Most recruiting is done from the local population, with the goal of matching the ethnic composition of the unit with that of the area in which it is deployed.

The first three Public Order Battalions were brought into the ISF without CPATT-developed training. The 4th Public Order Battalion completed training last month. Each battalion was equipped with all mission-essential equipment. These units were to be fully trained and equipped by the fall of 2005. Notably, the ERU has a miniscule AWOL/attrition rate. The 8th Mechanized Brigade has a moderate rate, and the Public Order Battalions experience AWOL and attrition rates that are inversely proportional to their pay and training. Candidates for CIF are recruited from the surrounding police stations and provinces.

As with other police units, the exact extent of insurgent infiltration is unknown. A vetting process is used to screen out foreign elements. The effectiveness of the Iraqi police officer cadres and the chain of command varies by province and the experience level of the chain of command.

- *Nine Police Commando battalions were operational.* The Special Police Commando Battalions represented the Iraqi Ministry of Interior's strike-force capability similar to Special Forces units. The commandos were highly vetted Iraqi officers and rank-and-file servicemen largely made up of prior service Special Forces professionals and other skilled servicemen with specialty unit experience. While some reports stated that, "All members of the unit were chosen based on loyalty to Iraq and its new democratic model," it initially was largely Shi'ite and was often criticized for excessive force in dealing with Sunnis.

The police commando force was however, being expanded to develop a strength of 27 battalions, with 4 more battalions in training. The units focused primarily on building raid operations, counter-terrorist missions including anti-airplane hijacker, kidnapping and other similar missions. The force resembled a paramilitary army-type force complete with heavy weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, AK-47 assault rifles, mortars, and 9mm Glock pistols.

- *Nine Public Order Battalions were operational*, and three were commencing training.
- *Iraq's National Police Emergency Response Unit was operational*, and its elements had conducted operations in Baghdad, Fallujah, and Mosul. It was an elite 270-man team trained to respond to national-level law enforcement emergencies. The mission of the emergency response unit was to provide a national, high-end, rapid-response law enforcement tactical unit responsible for high-risk search, arrest, hostage-rescue and crisis response operations.

The \$64.5 million effort was part of a larger mission to create a national-level law enforcement investigative and special operations capability within the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to counter terrorism and large-scale civil disobedience and insurgencies throughout Iraq.

Its capabilities were to eventually include a Counterterrorism Investigative Unit and Special Operations Unit.

Volunteers for the force first had to complete the standard eight-week basic training course or three-week transition integration program course for prior service officers before entering the specialized emergency response unit training modeled after the U.S. State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms' training programs.

Of the total force, 235 eligible candidates received rigorous instruction based on the Anti-Terrorism Assistance Crisis Response Team training program while the balance

of 35 recruits are part of the Special Operations Explosive Ordinance Team, based on the State Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance Explosive Incident Countermeasures training course. Team members received instruction on terrorist incidents, kidnappings, hostage negotiations, explosive ordnance, high-risk searches, high-risk assets, weapons of mass destruction, and other national-level law enforcement emergencies. Officers also had an opportunity to receive supplementary training in hostage negotiation, emergency medical procedures, and counterterrorism task force coordination.

The emergency response unit was the predominant force for national-level incidents calling for a DELTA/SWAT capability and was only used in extreme situations by local and national authorities.

It is interesting to note that the report on the Iraqi police and security services by the Inspector General of the State Department and Inspector General of the Department of Defense provides a different view of this force from the MNF-I:¹⁷²

The ERU is a Coalition-initiated capability that has not been sanctioned or supported by the Iraqi government. As a result ERU members are not on the MOI payroll, nor do they have police credentials or weapons authorization cards. There are currently three ERU companies, with a fourth serving as a headquarters company. Despite non-sponsorship by the MOI, elements of the ERU have successfully participated in several high-level missions with remarkable results. Like the POBs, the ERU companies train and deploy as a unit. Camaraderie, morale, and esprit-de-corps are high, despite severe pay issues. Nevertheless, given the lack of sponsorship, attrition is a problem.

The ERU units have no element responsible for gathering, analyzing and disseminating intelligence. Students interviewed by the IG Team stated that the ERU relies on US Special Forces for operational intelligence. This intelligence data is filtered through the MOI, an unwieldy and time consuming process. Formal sponsorship and integration of the ERU within existing IPS structures would serve to alleviate this problem.

- *Iraq's First Special Border Force Battalion* was operating on the Syrian border in western Anbar Province; the Second Battalion completed training in early February and has begun its deployments, and a third completed training in March.
- *Five provincial SWAT teams had been trained and fifteen more were scheduled for training over the next six months. Provincial Special Weapons and Training (SWAT).* These Provincial SWAT teams have been formed by some governors and provincial police chiefs. In addition to standard police basic training, the provincial SWAT teams receive four weeks of training consisting of Human Relations and Police Conduct, Firearms Training (with AK-47 assault rifles and Glock pistols), Mechanical Breaching (e.g., multiple entry, multiple rooms), and Specialty Training – Sniper Training, Offensive Driving, Intelligence, and Surveillance. Recruits are drawn from existing IPS officers selected by IPLOs assigned to the province of origin. These forces mainly use Chevy Luv pickups, AK-47s and Glock pistols. These forces are first trained to a basic level and are receiving additional practical skills training. Currently, new SWAT personnel are recruited only as replacements for existing SWAT teams. An increase in specialized training is required. The Provincial SWAT team assessments are included with the Provincial Police TRAs.
- *The Provincial Emergency Battalion units* are formed by the local Chiefs of Police without Coalition Forces' involvement. To date, CPATT has not conducted training for these units and has not provided equipment or supplies. If these units join a recognized MOI unit, then they would receive full training and supplies.

- *Iraqi Highway Patrol (IHP):* The IHP had about 1,400 members trained and on duty in late July 2005. IHP officers attend a 21-day training program that covered basic policing, driving skills, convoy escort, and weapons qualification with pistol, rifle, and machine gun.

IHP officers used a variety of equipment: Chevy Luv pick-up trucks, mid size SUVs, Nissan pick-up trucks, AK-47 assault rifles, PKC machine guns, Glock pistols, HF radios, and body armor.

The IHP did not have a TRA at this time. The goal for recruiting was a minimum of 300 cadets monthly until a force of 6,300 was built. All IHP patrolpersons and officers graduated from the four-week IHP Academy. The equipment goal was for each patrolperson and station to be equipped with mission-essential equipment. The IHP began working with the U.S. Military Police Brigade in Baghdad in July 2005 to develop individual and squad skills and defined goals .

○ *Other:*

- Members of the NATO Training Mission-Iraq were now helping to advise and train the Iraqi staffs of the National Joint Operations Center, the Ministry of Defense Operations Center, and the Ministry of Interior Operations Center, as well as the Armed Forces Joint Headquarters and Ministry of Defense.
- NATO trainers were also assisting the cadre of the Iraqi Military Academy and NATO trainers will help Iraq reestablish its Staff College and War College in 2005. A number of NATO nations were already providing equipment for Iraqi Security Forces and of training opportunities in NATO countries, with many additional offers extant.
- The Bureau of Dignitary Protection's protected and safeguarded high level government officials and visiting dignitaries. The MOI does not recognize the BDP. As of April 2005, 395 candidates had completed training. There is no requirement for members of the BDP to be policemen or to have previously received basic police training. BDP agents have no arrest powers, nor do they carry police credentials or weapons' permits. Students undergoing BDP training generally are selected from the guarded dignitary's family and/or tribe. Based on this selection criterion many of the trained BDP personnel were replaced after the April 2005 change in government leadership. Incumbents to office selected their own trusted agents and relatives to serve in this capacity.¹⁷³

Near-Term Goals

For all this progress, no decisions had yet been taken about the longer-term structure of Iraqi forces, and how it should eventually be transformed from a counterinsurgency force to a national defense force. These include key decisions as to the extent to which is should establish more heavy armored forces, and a large air force or navy.

The Iraqi government and MNF-I, however, were now focusing on both creating the kind of balanced Iraqi forces that could stand on their own in fighting the insurgency and transitioning operations from Coalition to Iraqi forces. The command guidance that emerged out of these priorities was to build an army, not just combat battalions, with suitable logistics and institution training. It was to finish manning, training, equipping, and basing the 7th Division (2 brigades and a division headquarters), standard the various infantry battalions, create new forward operating bases in the west and northwest, add special forces as enablers, and fund infrastructure security requirements.

MNSTC-I experts cautioned against investing in heavier forces before it was clear they were needed. An MNSTC-I advisor put it this way:¹⁷⁴

A heavier force, whether for force protection or for defense against invasion, also costs more. The Iraqis can't really afford to purchase, operate, and maintain such a force – even with the multiple billions of dollars we are providing. Given fiscal constraints that will last for several years, Iraq has to consider opportunity costs before committing to the addition of more heavy forces. The Iraqis might decide that the additional motorized division being considered might better be traded for less-expensive light forces. They could instead decide to spend that money on much-needed infrastructure protection forces, which may be even more important strategically.

The new Minister of Defense agreed with many of these comments, and it was clear that the future financing of Iraq's forces had become a serious consideration in making such choices

In other areas, Iraq and the MNF-I set the following near term goals and priorities:¹⁷⁵

- Better intelligence,
- Improving the institutional capability of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of the Interior,
- Strengthening the police.
- Improving border defense and security,
- Creating an effective army command structure,
- Strengthening national counter-terrorist forces,
- Transitioning detainee operations to Iraq,
- Securing the national electrical and oil infrastructure,
- Integrating Iraqi counter-insurgency planning and execution,
- Force protection, and
- Establishing a process of continuous transition from Coalition to Iraq forces.

The Iraqi government and MNF-1 also sought to fund new reconnaissance aircraft, develop better support for the Emergency Response Units, man existing Public Order Battalions at 750 men each, and improve existing forces while new elements were being generated. Special emphasis was being put on improving combat service support functions by adding motorized transport regiments, and standardizing headquarters and service companies. Divisional signal companies were being developed, as were intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance (IS&R) capabilities.

A change that illustrated the growing role of the Iraqi government in shaping Iraqi force plans and force development was the creation of a new set of goals for the Iraqi police service – although such plans were scarcely without problems:¹⁷⁶

As Iraqi officials articulate positions on IPS issues, an emerging concept is the development of a 'third force'—a capability between orthodox police and internal security military units. Consistent with this objective, the MOI enthusiastically embraces the preparation of the Public Order Brigades (POB). An MOI initiative, Special Police Commando Units and an IPS mechanized brigade are now operative. CPATT conceived the POB program and is engaged in training the Special Police Commandos.

At the same time, the MOI has not claimed ownership of the CPATT-trained Emergency Response Unit (ERU), the Bureau of Dignitary Protection (BDP), or even the SWAT teams that have performed well in operations in Mosul and elsewhere. MOI attitudes relative to these units are reflected in frequent failure to pay IPs serving in those units. The IG Team concludes that, as the Iraqis eventually assume responsibility for IPS training, the status of these Coalition-conceived units may languish

Operational Readiness

As has been touched upon earlier, there was a slow increase in the level of Iraqi military, security, and elite police unit activity during the spring and summer of 2005, and improvements in areas like intelligence and counter-IED operations.¹⁷⁷ Many of these activities are listed in the chronology below. At the same time, there were still significant problems with the new combat elements of various forces, and readiness and desertions remained serious issues. The following chronology shows level of operational progress and setbacks that Iraqi forces experienced during this period:

- **June 1, 2005**—Near Buhriz, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives at a checkpoint, killing two Iraqi soldiers.
- **June 2, 2005**—Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr announces that Operation Lightning has brought control of all roads into and out of Baghdad under Iraqi control. Jabr states that 700 suspected insurgents had been detained and that 28 had been killed. The Interior Ministry releases figures that show that insurgents killed 20 Iraqi civilians a day on average over the past year and a half. Approximately 12,000 civilians were killed by insurgents over the time period. In Mosul, two motorcycles rigged with bombs explode next to a coffee shop that is known to be frequented by police officers and which is close to a police station. Five people die and it is not immediately apparent if any were police officers. A suicide car bomber detonates his explosives next to a convoy carrying deputy chief of the provincial council, Hussein Alwan al-Tamimi, in Baquba, killing him and wounding four police officers. Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia claims credit for the attack. In Mahmudiya, militants attack a police patrol, injuring one policeman. 121 police officers graduate from advanced specialty courses at the Adnan Training Facility. The courses included basic criminal investigations, critical incident management, counterterrorism investigations, and executive leadership. Command of the Kirkuk Military Training Base is formally transferred from MNSTC-I to Iraqi Brig. Gen Abd Zaid. The Iraqi Navy begins its Direct Recruitment Replacement Program.
- **June 4, 2005**—Iraqi and US forces arrest a man dubbed Mullah Mahdi in Mosul, along with his brother and three other men. Iraqi officials state that Mahdi had links to Ansar al-Sunnah and Syria's intelligence service. The same officials claim that he was responsible for all of the major attacks, assassinations, and beheadings of Iraqi security forces in the area.
- **June 6, 2005**—A suicide car bomber detonates his vehicle close to an Iraqi army checkpoint near al-Daira. Six Iraqi soldiers are wounded in the attack. In the Amil neighborhood, a suicide bomber drives his vehicle into a former factory that had been converted to an Iraqi security forces base. Lacking concrete barriers, the attacker managed to get inside the facility and kill approximately three police, though estimates varied.
- **June 7, 2005**—Iraqi army and US troops launch an offensive in the city of Tal Afar to eradicate insurgent activity in the area. 23 suspected insurgents are captured. Reportedly, the city is believed to house foreign fighters who have come across the close-by border with Syria. Reports differed over whether town elders requested the operation or whether the operation had been planned for some time. Three car bombs are detonated in and around Hawija within minutes of one another, killing eight Iraqi soldiers. Two Iraqi police officers are wounded by a car bomb in Baghdad. In a separate car bomb attack in the capital city, insurgents attempt to target a police convoy but kill mostly civilians. Once police officer dies. Police in Musayyab raid an insurgent hideout in Jurf al-Sakhr and seize a cache of weapons. US and Iraqi forces begin a joint assault in Tal Afar.

- **June 8, 2005**—Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari and President Jalal Talabani meet with the founder of the political party that founded the Badr Brigade. Both Talabani and Jafari hail the Badr Brigade and Kurdish Pesh Merga as indispensable and legitimate forces. In Baghdad, an Iraqi commando is killed and an Iraqi police officer wounded in two separate drive-by shootings.
- **June 12, 2005**—Al Qaeda in Iraq claims to have captured and then executed 21 Iraqi soldiers outside of Qaim. Though the bodies were found, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense denies that any soldiers were missing. Militants attack the home of Iraqi army Gen. Rashid Fleys, where the funeral for the mother of a top security official was being held in Baghdad. 13 people are wounded.
- **June 13, 2005**—In Tikrit, a suicide car bomber attacks and Iraqi police patrol, killing two officers and wounding four. Two Iraqi police officers die in Samarra when a suicide car bomber detonates close to a joint US-Iraqi military patrol. Three more die in the city when insurgents detonate two bombs close to their barracks, drawing them out, at which point they open fire on them.
- **June 14, 2005**—Militants launch a coordinated attack on a Kaanan police station using mortars and a car bomb. An unknown number of Iraqi police and soldiers are among the nine dead.
- **June 15, 2005**—More than 26 Iraqi soldiers die and many more are wounded when a suicide bomber, dressed in an Iraqi army uniform, detonates his explosives in a military mess tent in Khalis. Iraqi security forces announce the capture of Abid Dawoud Salman and his son, Salman a former Iraqi general and his son a former captain, in Khaldiyyah. According to Iraqi officials, Salman was an important military adviser to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.
- **June 16, 2005**—A suicide bomber rams an Iraqi police convoy on the road to Baghdad's airport, killing eight officers and wounding 25 more.
- **June 17, 2005**—Operation Spear begins in the Anbar province in an attempt to disrupt insurgent activity.
- **June 18, 2005**—Operation Daggar begins as a complement to Operation Spear in the Anbar province.
- **June 19, 2005**—A suicide bomber with an explosive vest targets a restaurant just outside of the Green Zone in Baghdad. The ensuing explosion kills between 2-7 Iraqi police officers. A group claiming fealty to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi claims responsibility on the Internet. In the northern part of the capital, a suicide car bomber sidles up to a police convoy and detonates his vehicle, wounding two people. In Tikrit, a suicide bomber wearing an Iraqi police uniform drives up to the gate of a US military base and detonates vehicle, killing two Iraqi soldiers.
- **June 20, 2005**—In Irbil, a suicide car bomber rams a group of traffic cops gathered for roll call outside of their headquarters. The ensuing explosion kills 20 traffic policemen and wounds 100. Insurgents launch a coordinated on a US military convoy and then an attack on the Baya police station in southwestern Baghdad, utilizing small arms, two suicide car bombs, RPGs, and mortars. Approximately eight policemen are killed and 23 are wounded. One Iraqi soldier dies. Operations Spear and Daggar have resulted in 60 insurgent deaths and the capture of approximately 100 militants. 1,000 US and Iraq soldiers are involved in the two operations. In the Mansour district, militants detonate a roadside bomb, killing four Iraqi police. A gunfight erupts between police and insurgents and one policeman dies. 15 are wounded. In Nisoor Square, two car bombs detonate close to a police commando station, but there are no casualties. Near Tuz Khurmatu, insurgents detonate a roadside bomb as an Iraqi army convoy passes, killing three soldiers and wounding two more.
- **June 21, 2005**—Iraqi and US troops begin pulling out of Karabilah, near the Syrian border, following the conclusion of Operation Spear. Several car bomb workshops were uncovered, one insurgent was captured, and an estimated 47 were killed. Insurgents had been harassing the town and had set up roadblocks. In Tuz Khormantu, Iraqi security forces reportedly prevent a suicide bomber from carrying out an attack, and the Defense Ministry announced that 11 weapons caches had been uncovered around the country. In Al Habibiya, citizens inform an Iraqi army patrol of a stockpile of arms in a nearby sewer. Iraqi security forces uncover RPGs and rounds.
- **June 22, 2005**—A suicide car bomber detonates his explosives next to an Iraqi army patrol in the Ameriyah neighborhood of western Baghdad. No Iraqi soldiers are killed, though the attack kills four

civilians. Militants detonate a roadside bomb close to an Iraqi police patrol and special operations unit. The attack near Madain kills two policemen and wounds two more officers.

- **June 23, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide bomber attacks an Iraqi police patrol near a gas station in the northern-central part of the city. Three police officers are killed. Three more are killed in a suicide bombing in the Karada area of the city near an old mall.
- **June 25, 2005**—In Samarra, five cars loaded with insurgents run interference for a suicide car bomber as he rams his vehicle into the wall outside of Lt. Muthana al-Shaker's home. Al-Shaker is a member of the police special forces in Samarra. The attack kills multiple civilians, but fails to injure al-Shaker. Two insurgents attempting to plant a follow-on bomb for emergency services and police outside of his home accidentally set the device off, killing themselves. In Kirkuk, insurgents strap an explosive belt to a dog and detonate it when the dog wanders near Iraqi security forces. One officer is injured.
- **June 26, 2005**—In Mosul, Iraqi security forces are targeted by Zarqawi's Al Qaida in Iraq group. One suicide truck bomber rams a police station, killing ten policemen. In the parking lot of an Iraqi army base on the fringe of the city, another suicide bomber detonates his explosives. 16 people are killed, most of them civilians, but reports indicate some security forces personnel are among the dead. A third Mosul suicide bomber walks into the Jumhuri Teaching Hospital, detonating his explosives in a room used by Iraqi policemen charged with guarding the hospital. Five policemen are killed, including several who were sleeping. A total of 16 policemen are wounded in the attacks. Minister of Defense Dulaimy states that it is necessary to open a dialogue with the armed insurgent groups who wish to join the political process. In Sadiyah, militants killed six Iraqi soldiers outside of their base. In Baghdad, Al Qaida in Iraq claims credit for the shooting death of police Col. Riyadh Abdul Karim, an assistant district police director of emergency services, in the eastern portion of the city. In the Amin neighborhood, Iraqi police seize 500 anti-personnel mines, 60 RPG rounds, several mortar rounds, and arrest seven suspected insurgents. Shortly after the raid, Iraqi police from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Iraqi Army Brigade discovered a car bomb and called in experts to diffuse it.
- **June 27, 2005**—In Mosul, insurgents detonate a car bomb near an Iraqi army patrol in the Al Wihda neighborhood, killing two people and wounding four. It is not clear whether the killed and wounded were soldiers or civilians. In Tal Afar, militants shoot at an Iraqi army convoy from a mosque. One Iraqi soldier and five militants die in the following gun battle. In Baghdad, insurgents detonate a roadside bomb close to an Iraqi police patrol. The attack in the northern Azamiyah neighborhood kills two Iraqis. It is not clear whether the killed were civilians or policemen.
- **June 28, 2005**—In Baquba, a suicide car bomb near the headquarters of the Iraqi security forces detonates, killing civilians. In Baghdad, militants shoot and kill two Iraqi policemen. The police chief of Kirkuk escapes a suicide car bombing attempt that kills a bodyguard and a civilian. A suicide bomber wearing an explosive belt detonates his charges in front of the main hospital in Musayyib. One policeman is killed and 17 others wounded.
- **June 29, 2005**—In Mosul, militants sporting Iraqi army uniforms shoot and kill an Iraqi police officer and two members of his family in the center of the city.
- **June 30, 2005**—Operation Sword, a sweep along the Euphrates River in the Anbar province, continues into its third day. More than 1,000 US forces and 100 Iraqi soldiers are deployed in an effort to sweep insurgents out of the western towns. According to Iraqi military officers, more than 2 tons of explosives were seized in the city of Hit and 45 suspected insurgents arrested.
- **July 1, 2005**—In the Mansour neighborhood of Baghdad, a car bomb detonates in front of the offices of Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari's Islamic Dawa Party shortly after the departure of Interior Ministry administrative affairs undersecretary police Maj. Gen. Adnan al-Assadi, killing one civilian and injuring at least 4 armed guards stationed at the compound. It is unclear whether al-Assadi was the primary target. Two policemen are also wounded after striking a roadside bomb at a checkpoint on the outskirts of Baghdad. A drive-by shooting results in the death of an Iraqi Defense Ministry civilian employee. A battalion of the Iraqi National Guard uncovers a huge weapons stockpile including hundreds of rockets and mortar shells buried in the desert south of Karbala. Residents directed Iraqi police to a location in Ramadi where the bodies of 3 men, described by the residents as a Saudi, a Jordanian, and a Kuwaiti who were members of al-Qaeda in Iraq, had been dumped the side of the road from a truck. US and Iraqi troops complete house searches and begin foot patrols under Operation Sword.

- **July 2, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide bomber kills 11 and injures 22 at a checkpoint near a base of the Interior Ministry's commando force headquarters, marking the third major attack on this location since October. Most of those killed were new recruits. In eastern Baghdad, a car bomb aimed for a police patrol unit kills 3 policemen and 8 others. An additional car bomb in Mahmudiyah results in one death and 3 wounded. A series of attacks from Duluiyah to Baiji targeting Iraqi police forces kills 13 including 6 civilians. In Mosul, an area where security forces have been frequently targeted, the Medical City hospital reports to have received 12 unidentified bodies in 24 hours, most of which were victims of gunshots to the head. In response to the recent violence, al-Jaafari requests that foreign troops continue their presence until Iraqi troops are able to handle insurgent violence on their own.
- **July 3, 2005**—Two policemen are killed by a bomb intended for the vehicle of Colonel Imad Nureddin, police chief of the town of Al-Ryad. Three suicide bombers targeting Iraqi security forces launch a total of two attacks—one in western Baghdad and one in Hilla—resulting in at least 20 deaths and 59 injuries. During a news conference, Laith Kubba acknowledges that some Iraqi troops have participated in the torture and abuse of prisoners.
- **July 4, 2005**—Operation Muthana Strike, a raid of insurgent safe houses near the western end of the Baghdad International Airport by 600 Iraqi army soldiers and 250 U.S. soldiers, is carried out in the early morning hours with the arrest of 100 suspected Iraqi insurgents and foreign fighters, including several Egyptian suspects. The intended outcome was to thwart future attacks through the seizure of weapons and the gathering of intelligence through a series of detainments.
- **July 5, 2005**—Twenty miles south of Kirkuk, a suicide car bomber detonates his explosives at a checkpoint, killing one Iraqi soldier and injuring 3 others.
- **July 6, 2005**—In west Baghdad, militants shoot and kill Captain Hazim Jabbar, member of the police special commando brigade and former bodyguard to a consultant for former interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. Three other police officers including 2 commandos are also killed in another neighborhood in western Baghdad. Nine other members of the police force, including a brigadier general, were injured in various locations around the city. Iraqi police reported the death of a member of the Badr Brigade, the largest Shiite militia, in an ambush in south Baghdad. An audiotape is found on the web with a statement that Iraqi troops and police are as much an enemy as the Americans and are equally legitimate targets for violent acts. The speaker claimed to be Al-Qaida in Iraq chief Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.
- **July 7, 2005**—Operation Lightning is nearly complete and will be followed by three additional projects, including one that will attempt to secure oil and electricity installations and another that will involve an intelligence mission that will transition into an undisclosed third operation, according to Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr. In a raid west of Baghdad in the village of Dihab Abyad, Iraqi security forces confiscate thousands of liters of oil that were designated for sale on the black market. In various other locations in Baghdad, 4 Iraqi police are killed and 9 wounded. On a road between Baghdad and Mahaweel, security forces kill 3 insurgents attempting to plant a roadside bomb. There were no reported casualties of the security forces from this incident. The "Omar Brigade," al-Zarqawi's supposed newly created group, is believed to be the most organized effort yet seen to combat the Badr Brigade, the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Al-Zarqawi is believed to be acerbating Sunni anger over the alleged torture and killing of several Sunni men by Iraqi police forces. According to a member of the Badr Brigade, recruits numbering in the hundreds from the Shiite group have entered the Iraqi security forces.
- **July 8, 2005**—In Fallujah, a suicide bomber crashes into a U.S.-Iraqi joint patrol approaching the eastern exit of the city at night, destroying 1 Iraqi personnel carrier and 1 American personnel carrier. After receiving a tip from a local citizen in eastern Baghdad, police in Baghdad discover a roadside bomb and disable it before it detonates with the aid of a coalition explosive ordnance disposal team. Elsewhere in eastern Baghdad, the Iraqi police successfully capture a weapons dealer in possession of a sniper rifle, a submachine gun and three AK-47 rifles.
- **July 9, 2005**—In the Yarmouk district of western Mosul, militants fatally shoot an Iraqi police officer in his car. Elsewhere in the city, Iraqi security forces kill 3 gunmen, and in another location find the bodies of 2 Iraqi soldiers. Gunmen in southwestern Baghdad kill Iraqi police officer Capt. Saad Muhsen Abdulamir. An explosion occurs as an Iraqi military patrol passes through Fallujah, causing a fire to ignite in a personnel carrier. Casualties are yet unknown. Interior Minister Jaber Solagh announces the

formation of the Lightning Force, a 3,000 troop strong group of specially trained and equipped anti-terrorist forces. In a desert region south of Baghdad, two suspected terrorists are arrested in booby-trapped cars and in a western area, 7 additional suspects are arrested. A further 8 suspects are taken into custody in near Mosul in Tellafar, as well as 5 others south of Baghdad in Alexandria. Operation Scimitar, the most recent offensive by U.S. Marines and Iraqi security forces in the Anbar province, is publicly announced though it officially began on Thursday 7 July. Operation Scimitar is the sixth major offensive in the province over the past several months, although its troop strength of 500 Marines and 100 Iraqi soldiers is smaller than the previous efforts which tended to employ approximately 1,000 troops.

- **July 10, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide bomber wearing a belt strung with explosives targets security force volunteers outside an army recruitment center at the former Muthana airport, killing 25 and wounding nearly 50. Most of those pronounced dead are believed to have been recruits. An additional suicide bomber in a pickup truck near Mosul pulls up next to a police convoy escorting an Iraqi brigadier general and detonates his ammunition, killing 5 policemen but leaving the brigadier general unharmed. In northern Baghdad, a mortar bomb falls on a police station, injuring 2 Iraqi police and demolishing 4 police cars. A joint Iraqi and U.S. patrol question a local citizen in the Ameriyah district after noticing a black BMW parked in front of a house that is normally uninhabited. Finding him suspicious, the soldiers search the house and uncover a cache of weapons, including a bag of raw C-4 plastic explosives, an AK-47, 20 hand grenades, a machine gun, a sniper rifle, a loaded 9 mm pistol with an attached silencer, approximately 500-700 rounds of ammunition, and 4 containers believed to encase explosives. An Iraqi army unit responds to a civilian call in Baghdad and finds a rocket on an improvised launcher which they successfully disarm without casualty. Nighttime clashes in Tal Afar between Iraqi security forces and insurgents resulted in 6 deaths and at least 22 wounded.
- **July 11, 2005**—Northeast of Baghdad in Khalis, insurgents stage an armed assault on a checkpoint, firing mortars, machine guns and semiautomatic weapons, and killing 8 Iraqi soldiers. Less than two hours later, 2 army troops are killed when their patrol passes a car bomb parked on the side of the road. Al-Qaeda in Iraq claims responsibility for both attacks in a statement released on the web, although its authenticity is unsubstantiated. The Iraqi government announces the detainment of 4 members of the Mujahedeen Brigade, 2 Egyptian nationals, and a cell leader by the Iraqi security forces as part of the ongoing Operation Lightning. The Association of Muslim Scholars, a Sunni group, accuses the Iraqi security forces of torturing and killing 10 Sunnis after a doctor confirmed the receipt of 9 bodies that showed signs of mistreatment.
- **July 12, 2005**—In Baghdad, militants fatally shoot police Colonel Amir Mirza in a market in the Wahda district and gunmen kill a police captain outside his flat. Elsewhere in Baghdad, gunmen open fire on security guards in front of a health clinic, resulting in the death of one policeman. North of Baghdad, in two separate attacks, an Iraqi policeman and Iraqi soldier are killed. A task force Iraqi soldier dies of injuries incurred from striking a landmine on 11 July, an incident that is currently under investigation. Members of the Iraqi army detonate approximately 3 metric tons of explosives including 1,282 mines, 628 mortar rounds and 825 artillery shells that were found near oil fields in southern Iraq by Oil Protection Services. The explosives are assumed to be remnants of a 1990 plot by Saddam Hussein to prevent US troops from taking the oil fields after the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. The Interior Ministry announced the launch of an independent investigation into the torture and death of the 10 Sunni Arabs protested by the Association of Muslim Scholars. Defense Minister Saadoun al-Duleimi announces the posthumous granting of army status to all recruits that were killed by the suicide bombing of the Baghdad recruitment center on 10 July.
- **July 13, 2005**—In western Baghdad, an Iraqi soldier is shot and killed while driving, and in a nearby neighborhood, militants kill a lieutenant and another Iraqi soldier during a firefight. Clashes in northern Mosul result in the death of one policeman and 4 suspected insurgents. An Iraqi soldier is killed and another wounded at a checkpoint near Fallujah after being fired upon by a U.S. soldier for failing to stop properly. An additional police officer was shot to death in Basra. In Kirkuk, an explosion occurs in an industrial district near passing pedestrians. Police on the scene are shot and 3 are wounded. As part of an ongoing investigation into the deaths of 10 Sunnis on 10 July, a senior Interior Ministry official acknowledges that the victims died by suffocation after being shut in a police car with its engine turned off during a day in which the temperature reached 115 degrees Fahrenheit. The official noted that the security forces responsible for the deaths would be tried accordingly. In an unrelated incident, 13 people including 12 Sunnis and one Shi'a were tortured and killed during a raid on a series of houses by the

Iraqi security forces, according to a complaint issued by the Association of Muslim Scholars. An official from the Interior Ministry announced the launch of an investigation into the matter.

- **July 14, 2005**—In Baghdad, 2 suicide bombings result in the wounding of 2 Iraqi police at a checkpoint to the Green Zone, where the government of Baghdad and center of U.S. operations are located. Police kill a suspected third bomber who ran after security forces noticed wires running out of his clothes. At a checkpoint in western Baghdad near the headquarters of the Iraqi Police Major Crimes Unit, militants shoot to death 2 police officers and wound 4. Operation Scimitar is completed after resulting in the seizure of 5 weapons caches and the arrest of 26 suspected insurgents, one of whom allegedly planned an April attack on the prison at Abu Ghraib.
- **July 15, 2005**—Twelve suicide bombers targeting Iraqi security forces and U.S. troops kill at least 33 people and wound 111 in various locations in Baghdad and northern Iraq. Among the casualties were nearly 15 Iraqi soldiers wounded at an Iraqi army checkpoint in Ash-shab, 5 soldiers wounded near Andalus Square during an assault on a convoy, 2 soldiers killed by a bomber who detonated his explosives while crashing his truck into the main gate of an army camp in Bab al-Moadham, 5 soldiers killed in a motorcycle bomb in Al-Bayaa, 2 soldiers killed by a bomber north of Baghdad in Balad, and 2 soldiers killed and 1 wounded at a checkpoint in Al-Sharqat.
- **July 16, 2005**—Ten miles south of Mosul, a suicide attacker detonates his explosives inside a police station, causing 6 police fatalities and 20 wounded. A suicide car bomb attack injures 4 Iraqi soldiers near an army convoy in Hawija. An additional suicide car bomber in the Baghdad neighborhood of Dora kills 3 commandos and injures 5 civilians. Northwest of Kirkuk, 3 Iraqi soldiers and 2 of their American counterparts are wounded during an attempt to disarm a bomb. Police successfully arrest a suicide bomber in Baghdad before he was able to detonate his explosives amidst a crowd of citizens mourning a large-scale suicide attack that occurred on 13 July. The detainee claimed Libyan descent.
- **July 17, 2005**—In the New Baghdad neighborhood in eastern Baghdad, a suicide bomber kills 2 policemen and injures 7 others. Three police commandos die in a second suicide car bombing approximately 1 hour later near the Bay'a bus station in southern Baghdad. At the eastern end of the Karradah peninsula, a vehicle-borne IED kills 3 Iraqi police officers and wounds 1. The blast from the device causes damage to power lines, a water main, and 15 houses in the vicinity.
- **July 18, 2005**—Operation Thunder, a security sweep on the west side of the Tigris River in Baghdad, expands in its second week after resulting in nearly 50 arrests in the initial few days. Combined troops uncover several weapons caches during operations over the past 48 hours in Mosul, Tal Afar, and Zagaytan. The Mosul cache was notably large, consisting of assembled roadside bombs and bomb-making equipment, anti-tank mines, 250 hand grenades, 1,500 blasting caps and more than 10,000 rounds of rifle ammunition, as well as mortars, artillery rounds, rockets, missiles. Militants kill at least 24 police officers, soldiers, and government workers in a series of small-scale attacks: in Khadra, eight Iraqi police officers die in a gun battle with insurgents; in Rawah, a car bomb intended for Iraqi and U.S. military troops results in the death of at least one civilian; in a series of attacks in various other locations around the city, militants kill 5 Iraqi police officers, including one colonel and three civilians working for the government. North of Baghdad, a shootout between security forces and insurgents resulted in the death of one police officer in Taji, a police colonel and 3 civilians were killed in a series of attacks in Samarra, and 2 Iraqi troops were gunned down in Mosul along with Abdul-Ghani Naimi, brother of a member of the Iraqi Parliament. Iraqi soldiers continue with Operation Veterans Forward by arresting several suspected terrorists and uncovering a variety of weaponry in Tal Afar.
- **July 19, 2005**—In the Ameriyah district and Al Dora neighborhood of Baghdad, joint operations by Iraqi police and coalition soldiers result in the arrest of four suspected terrorists, including an alleged mid-level cell leader who has ties to Ansar Al Sunna and was wanted for the sale of surface-to-air missiles.
- **July 21, 2005**—Two suicide bombings targeting Iraqi security forces kill at least 17 people. Thousands of Iraqis leave Tal Afar fearing an increased crackdown on militant action by joint U.S. and Iraqi security forces in the area. The Pentagon releases a report to Congress stating that the Iraqi security forces are not yet capable of defending their country without aid from the U.S. and coalition forces.
- **July 22, 2005**—In a wasteland area in eastern Baghdad, 2 police officer brothers are found dead with gunshot wounds to the head and chest after being abducted from their home on Thursday. Elsewhere in

eastern Baghdad, 3 policemen die after they are gunned down while directing traffic, and 7 others are killed in drive-by shootings around the city. A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army convoy on a highway near Latifiyah detonates, killing 2 civilians and damaging 3 civilian vehicles, but leaves the convoy intact. Militants open fire on a car in the Dora neighborhood in Baghdad carrying an Iraqi army captain Wissam Abdul-Wahab and his new wife, killing the bride and leaving the captain wounded. In Samarra, 1 soldier and 3 civilians die in a clash with insurgents.

- **July 23, 2005**—In western Samarra, a bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol detonates, killing 1 soldier and wounding 3 in the Al-Qal'ah area. Raids conducted by Iraqi police in Al-Yusufiyah and Al-Musayyib result in the arrest of 30 suspected insurgents, including 8 Egyptians. One policeman suffers minor injuries.
- **July 24, 2005**—Southeast of Baghdad in the Al-Mashtel neighborhood, a truck filled 500 pounds of explosives detonates in front of the Al-Rashid police station, killing up to 40 people and wounding 25, although reports of the death toll varied. Fires from the explosion spread to 22 cars, 10 shops and a nearby building. Elsewhere in Baghdad, 2 police lieutenant colonels are fatally shot while on their way to work, 1 in Baghdad, and 1 in Kirkuk. Seven additional police are killed around Baghdad, one by mortar fire and the rest in as a result of several clashes with insurgents.
- **July 25, 2005**—In Baghdad, Iraqi commandos open fire on a vehicle filled with explosives at a checkpoint near the Ministry of Interior compound, causing an explosion that kills 2 soldiers and injures 12. Joint U.S.-Iraqi forces conduct raids in Mosul and northwestern Tikrit, detaining 17 suspects and confiscating a variety of weaponry.
- **July 26, 2005**—In the Al-Risalah neighborhood of western Mosul, an armed clash between police forces and insurgents results in the deaths of 2 Iraqis and 8 others.
- **July 27, 2005**—In northern Baghdad, a suicide car bomber targeting an Iraqi army convoy kills 2 civilians and injures 10 others, including 5 soldiers. Another car bomb explodes in the Shurta al-Khamsa section of southwestern Baghdad near a group of Iraqi commandos, causing 1 death and 4 injuries. Members of the U.S. and Iraqi armies capture Ammar Abu Bara, who is also known as Amar Hussein Hasan, the alleged terror cell leader for Mosul and trusted aid to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.
- **July 28, 2005**—Joint U.S.-Iraqi forces announce that they have detained 49 suspected terrorists during operations over the past 2 days in Mosul, Tal Afar, and Rawa. A series of 4 coordinated attacks against Iraqi army checkpoints on a road between Baquba and Baghdad kills 6 soldiers and injures 3 soldiers, 4 police officers and a civilian.
- **July 29, 2005**—A suicide bomber detonates his belt of explosives amidst a crowd of Iraqi army trainees in the town of Rabia, near the Syrian border, killing 44 and injuring 57. Al-Qaeda in Iraq claims responsibility for the attack. In a village west of Haditha, Iraqi security forces and U.S. Marines raid safe houses and kill 9 militants, 5 of whom are allegedly Syrian nationals. Iraqi and U.S. soldiers are attacked in Cykla while conducting a security patrol. No casualties were reported.
- **July 30, 2005**— In the Karada district of central Baghdad, a car bomb explodes in front of a mobile police checkpoint near the Iraqi National Theater, causing 3 police fatalities and wounding 20 people, some of whom were policemen. Militants attack a convoy in Kufa carrying senior advisor to the Iraqi environment minister Ibrahim Issawi, resulting in the death of one of his security guards and the wounding of 3 others.
- **July 31, 2005**—In Latifiya, an insurgent attack on the convoy of Deputy Prime Minister Ahmed Chalabi kills one of his bodyguards and injures 3 others. Chalabi himself was not in the convoy. On a road between Haswa and Wahawil, a car bomb intended for the Iraqi police forces is remotely detonated, resulting in 5 deaths and 10 injuries. Militants kill an Iraqi soldier dressed in plainclothes in the Baghdad neighborhood of Iskan. Armed insurgents fire upon a group of cooks as they depart from a military base in Baquba, killing 1 and wounding 3.
- **August 1, 2005**—In the Baghdad neighborhood of Um Maalif, 22 bodies of Shiite Muslims are discovered, including one of a police colonel from Karbala. All died from apparent gunshot wounds and 2 had been beheaded, apparently by a gang of men dressed in Iraqi National Guard uniforms that raided the town during the night.

- **August 2, 2005**—In Baquba, a car bomb targeting a police patrol near Al-Haiyat hospital detonates, killing 1 policeman and 1 civilian, and wounding 7 policemen and 1 other. 4 people, 3 of them police officers, die in a suicide attack on a police checkpoint in Mosul. In northeastern Baghdad, 3 assailants ambush and kill Col. Mizhir Hamad Yousif, commander of Abu Ghraib police station, as he travels through the neighborhood of New Baghdad on his way to work.
- **August 3, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives at a checkpoint in Al-Isakhi, killing 5 Iraqi soldiers. Elsewhere in Baghdad, militants shoot and kill a police officer. Two other police officers are shot dead while driving in Baghdad. One Iraqi soldier dies in Balad when a bomber blows up a tractor. Militants attack a police patrol in Baquba and fatally shoot 2 policemen.
- **August 4, 2005**—North of Baghdad in Dujail, assailants stage an attack on an Iraqi army patrol, killing 4 troops. Iraqi security forces begin a month-long operation to protect the 544 voter registration centers nationwide that opened August 3rd in anticipation of a general election and constitutional referendum. Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari announces a new 12-point security plan that includes steps to protect infrastructure, improve intelligence, and secure borders against foreign fighters. A U.S. government liaison in Baghdad reports a new Iraqi plan to build a 10-kilometer-wide weapons-free “buffer zone” around the nation to prevent the illegal entrance of foreign fighters and weapons shipments. Iraqi security forces are arranging for the assumption of control of 5 southern cities, including Diwaniya, Karbala, Najaf, Nasseriya and Samawa. Iraqi army and Task Force Baghdad soldiers conduct 3 combat operations in southern, western and northern Baghdad, arresting 5 terrorist suspects. Iraqi army members detain 4 other suspects in Baghdad who are under suspicion of plotting government assassinations.
- **August 5, 2005**—In Baquba, Iraqi security forces neutralize 5 IEDs and detain 45 terrorist suspects under Operation Vanguard Thunder, an undertaking targeting 150-200 suspected insurgents. Iraqi security forces and U.S. soldiers conduct a raid in Sharmiyah, arresting 39 suspected insurgents. Approximately 1,000 Iraqi soldiers and U.S. Marines conduct a large-scale operation entitled Operation Quick Strike aimed at flushing out insurgents in the western Euphrates valley, focusing on the cities of Haditha, Haqliniyah and Barwanah.
- **August 6, 2005**—In Haqliniyah, Iraqi soldiers and U.S. Marines disable 3 car bombs and discover 2 weapons caches that including bomb-making materials. South of Baghdad, a suicide bomber drove his truck into a checkpoint, killing 1 Iraqi soldier and wounding another. Nearby, at an army post, Iraqi and coalition forces thwart an insurgent attack, killing 6 militants and capturing 12. Two other attacks on nearby locations are successfully countered by U.S. and Iraqi forces and result in no casualties.
- **August 7, 2005**—In Samawah, clashes between protestors and police result in 1 death and 44 injuries, including 14 members of the Iraqi security forces. Demonstrators set several cars on fire, including one police vehicle parked in front of the office of the mayor. A suicide tanker bomb detonated at the headquarters of the 2nd police battalion in Tikrit kills 2 people and wounds 10. In Baghdad, 3 Iraqi soldiers in civilian clothing are killed in drive by shooting. Elsewhere in Baghdad, another Iraqi soldier is injured in an attack in the Saydida neighborhood. Iraqi army soldiers and U.S. forces conduct a series of raids in Rawah, Fallujah, Mugdadiyah and Baghdad, locating a variety of weapons caches, IEDs and roadside bombs and capturing several suspected insurgents without casualties.
- **August 8, 2005**—Operation Quick Strike enters its second week as US and Iraqi forces discover 6 explosive-laden vehicles and 5 roadside bombs at two locations in Haqliniyah. The People’s Mujahedeen Organization of Iran, or Mujahedeen Khalq, releases a statement accusing the Iraqi security forces of kidnapping 2 of its members. The Iraqi Interior Ministry denies having any knowledge of such an incident.
- **August 9, 2005**—In the New Baghdad neighborhood of the Iraqi capital, armed assailants attack a police patrol and kill 5 policemen who had fallen asleep at their post. In the Dora neighborhood, gunmen shoot to death police Capt. Haidir Mizhir Salih and another policeman on their way to work in the morning. A third attack in the Zayouna neighborhood results in the death of 1 police officer and the wounding of another. Militants kill a police officer and wound 2 others in a drive-by shooting in the Shuaula district of Baghdad. Also in Baghdad, a car bomber strikes a police patrol and U.S. convoy, killing 3 policemen and wounding 42 people, many of them policemen, as well as destroying 16 vehicles. Iraqi security forces along with Polish and American troops uncover a large weapons cache in central southern Iraq.

- **August 10, 2005**—In Baghdad, a car bombing at a police patrol in the Ghazaliya district kills 2 police officers and 4 others, and wounds an additional 14 people including 2 policemen. 9 vehicles, 3 of them police vehicles, are destroyed as a result of the same explosion. Iraqi security forces search the RIA Novosti office in Baghdad, confiscate audio and video material and ask one translator to leave to undergo questioning. The seized material was returned later that day. Members of the Iraqi military discover a weapons cache and detain 3 suspects in Fallujah, while others uncover several IEDs during operations in Balad, Baquba, Tikrit, Hit and Rawah.
- **August 11, 2005**—In Basra, gunmen assassinate Ministry of Defense intelligence official Lt. Col. Ibrahim Khalil al-Ani while he was shopping in the Junaina neighborhood. Militants kill a police lieutenant in a drive-by shooting in the western part Baghdad. Iraqi security forces detain 3 suspected insurgents in Mosul and arrest 4 in Mosul, Rawah and Tal Afar.
- **August 12, 2005**—In Mosul, Iraqi security forces shoot and kill Mohammed Salah Sultan, also known as Abu Zubair, a lieutenant of Al-Qaeda in Iraq. He was strapped with explosives at the time of his death. A car bomb attack near a police patrol in the Dora district of Baghdad wounds 4 civilians, leaving the policemen unharmed.
- **August 14, 2005**—In Hilla, police discover 30 mutilated bodies in a mass grave that appears to be approximately six months old. After conducting a search in which one Iraqi suspect was killed, Iraqi forces arrest 13 individuals including an Egyptian and a Sudanese. At a checkpoint on the border of the Muthanna governorate, forces arrest 3 men including one Syrian for allegedly plotting to launch a suicide attack during a demonstration in Samawa against the provincial governor, Mohammad Ali Hassani. All three suspects were found wearing explosive belts and the Iraqis were found in possession of grenades. In Kirkuk, militants attack a police patrol, killing 1 policeman and wounding 3. Two police are found dead from gunshot wounds in Samarra. Also in Samarra, police elevated security and added several checkpoints due to backlash from the death of Najim Takhi, a well-known resident and alleged member of Al-Qaeda. Several placards have been posted in various locations around the area, such as one that promises the death of 1,000 policemen as retribution for the killing of Takhi.
- **August 15, 2005**—Gunmen stage an attack on a checkpoint, killing 4 Iraqi soldiers and injuring 3 near Bohruz. Another ambush by insurgents in the Al-Amiriyah neighborhood in eastern Baghdad results in the death of 1 soldier and the wounding of another. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a suicide attacker on a motorcycle rams into a restaurant in the Karada district, wounding 15 people, including 6 policemen. The restaurant is known to be frequented by police officers. Insurgents stage an attack on the convoy of Iraqi Vice President Aadel Abdul-Mahdi in the Dayala governorate of northeast Baghdad, killing 2 guards and injuring 3. The Vice President was not present at the time of the attack. A mortar shell injures 5 policemen and 3 civilians near the interior ministry. Four Iraqi soldiers conducting a patrol are fatally wounded when a roadside bomb explodes in Fallujah. Iraqi SWAT officers and American soldiers kill a suspected terrorist and arrest 16 others in joint operations conducted in Hilla. Six additional suspects are captured during similar operations in Mosul and Balad. The Iraqi army and U.S. soldiers uncover 2 weapons caches in Fallujah and detain 2 suspects.
- **August 16, 2005**—In the Sadr City area of Baghdad, gunmen fire upon a civil defense center, killing 2 police officers and injuring 2 others.
- **August 17, 2005**—In Baghdad, three consecutive car bombings within 30 minutes kill at least 43 and wound up to 90. Additional casualties include six members of the Iraqi security forces. Three suspects carrying remote controls were immediately arrested for suspicion of involvement. Near Kirkuk, six cousins and recent military graduates are shot and killed in an ambush. One policeman is shot to death in a bus station in Mosul. Six Iraqi soldiers guarding oil pipelines in northern Iraq die in a series of attacks by insurgents. Militants fatally shoot a police officer in Samarra.
- **August 18, 2005**—In Fallujah, 2 coordinated roadside bombs kill 3 Iraqi soldiers. Iraqi security forces discover IEDs in Mugdadiyah and Hawija.
- **August 20, 2005**—In western Baghdad, 2 soldiers are killed in a firefight with insurgents. Iraqi news sources report the wounding of Commander of the Iraqi Border Guards General Ali Hamdi al-Mousawi by U.S. soldiers, though the U.S. military denies this.

- **August 21, 2005**—In Samarra, a man wearing an Iraqi army uniform storms a house and kills 5 family members, missing only 1 family member, a young boy who hid when the attack began. Iraqi police officers confiscate 32 mortar rounds and 20 rockets in 2 locations in Baghdad.
- **August 22, 2005**—North of Baghdad in Tarmiyah, militants open fire on a bus carrying Iraqi policemen, killing 8 as well as 2 civilians and the bus driver. In Al-Sainiya, insurgents fire a mortar at a joint U.S.-Iraqi military base, resulting in the deaths of 5 Iraqi army soldiers. Two soldiers die and 3 are wounded as their patrol passes roadside bomb in Tulul al-Baj. Gunmen shoot and kill a senior police commando and his wife as they drove through Kirkuk. Armed insurgents kill 2 truck drivers and a guard with the special Facility Protection Security Force 50 kilometers north of Baquba.
- **August 23, 2005**—In Najaf, clashes between Iraqi security forces and supporters of Muqtada al-Sadr result in the deaths of 2 members of the Iraqi security forces and another Iraqi, as well as the wounding of 5 others. A suicide bomber in Baquba kills 1 police officer and 6 others at an emergency response coordination compound. However, conflicting reports announced that 3 additional police officers had died in the explosion and that 3 more were killed when they were mistakenly fired upon by American soldiers. Iraqi armed forces participating in Operation Hawk capture 5 insurgents in Ad-Dujayl, while 10 others are captured by Iraqi forces in Tikrit and Balad.
- **August 24, 2005**—In Baghdad, former members of Saddam Hussein's security apparatus kill 13 Iraqi police officers, 27 civilians and a member of the American security force. Elsewhere in Baghdad, more than 30 suspected Sunni insurgents ambush Iraqi security forces as they respond to a car bombing, killing at least 15 and wounding 59. Special forces from the Interior Ministry are deployed in Najaf as approximately 1,000 demonstrators clash with followers of Muqtada al-Sadr, resulting in the deaths of 7 people and the wounding of dozens. Four bodyguards of Deputy Justice Minister Bosho Ibrahim die when their convoy is attacked by militants in Baghdad.
- **August 25, 2005**—In Baghdad, 13 are killed as large groups of insurgents attack Iraqi police checkpoints with rocket-propelled grenades, ostensibly in response to the newly drafted constitution. In various locations around Baghdad, Iraqi police hunt down attackers, killing 3 and capturing 1. Police officers also find 14 artillery rounds near the Kirkuk traffic circle. Clashes in southern Iraq between the Mahdi Army and the SCIRI, two rival Shiite Muslim groups, fill the streets. Iraqi police are not targets in this particular incident, but have been instructed not to intervene. Iraqi security forces enforce a curfew in Najaf after approximately 1,000 participate in silent protests.
- **August 26, 2005**—In Barwannah, joint U.S. and Iraqi forces arrest 6 suspected terrorists and confiscate 2 weapons caches. Another cache of Russian and Chinese weapons is found in Tuz. In Mosul, 16 suspects have been captured over the past 48 hours and one was killed in a firefight with police.
- **August 27, 2005**—In a western suburb of Baghdad, Iraqi security forces detain 3 men who admitted to kidnapping and killing Egyptian diplomat Ihab al-Sherif in July.
- **August 28, 2005**—In Baghdad, 2 police are fatally shot during a patrol of the Al-Khadra neighborhood. Also in Baghdad, two other police are shot and killed in the Al-Jihad neighborhood. In a third Baghdad incident, 2 policemen die and 1 is wounded in after insurgents open fire on a patrol in the Al-Adil district. Gunmen ambush a checkpoint in Baquba, killing 2 policemen and wounding 1. The bodies of 3 policemen with fatal gunshot wounds are found near Fallujah in the town of Al-Therthar. Two additional policemen are found shot dead in Mosul.
- **August 29, 2005**—In eastern Baghdad district of Azamiyah, armed insurgents shoot and kill senior Interior Ministry police officer Brig. Gen. Numan Salman Thabit while he was driving near the al-Nedaa mosque.
- **August 30, 2005**—In western Baghdad, militants shoot and kill chief of Al-Ghazalia police station, Major Diya Hilal Taha. A lieutenant with the Iraqi special oil protection force, Mohammad Rashad, is fatally shot along with his bodyguard in Kirkuk. Two policemen are the casualties of a suicide car bomber in Samarra. 4 others were wounded.
- **August 31, 2005**—In Kirkuk, 1 Iraqi police officer dies and 4 are wounded from a roadside bomb. The motorcade of Lieutenant Colonel Ali Keza'al, a director of intelligence in the Diyala province, is fired upon, leaving one bodyguard seriously injured, but causing no harm to the Lieutenant. One policeman is shot to death in Kerbala as he travels to work.

- **September 1, 2005**—In Baquba, insurgents stage an ambush on a patrol, killing 2 policemen and wounding 2 others. Two mortar rounds fall on a police station but do not result in casualties.
- **September 2, 2005**—In Baiji, a roadside bomb strikes an Iraqi military vehicle, killing 5 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 9. Two police officers are found dead in Baghdad, 1 on Al-Qanat Street and 1 near the Souk Al-Thulathaa area of Al-Zayouna district. In the Al-Jadriya area, an explosive device detonates, but no casualties are reported. A roadside bomb explodes near a police patrol on its way to Mahaweel, killing 1 policeman and wounding another.
- **September 3, 2005**—In Baquba, insurgents kill 6 policemen in an ambush on a checkpoint. Four Iraqi soldiers die in a similar incident 30 miles north of Baquba in Adhaim. South of Baquba, 7 police officers and 2 soldiers are shot and killed. An additional 2 policemen are wounded. A firefight between Iraqi police and insurgents in Tal Afar results in one insurgent death but no police casualties.
- **September 4, 2005**—In Siniyah, 5 Iraqi soldiers are shot and killed in a surprise attack by insurgents. 1 police officer dies and 2 are wounded as a result of a car bomb in Iskandariyah. Militants kill an Iraqi army lieutenant in Kirkuk. U.S. and Iraqi soldiers close off the town of Tal Afar as insurgent violence continues to rage.
- **September 5, 2005**—As many as 30 gunmen in 10 cars open fire on the Iraqi Interior Ministry, resulting in the deaths of 2 policemen and the wounding of 5 others. Al Qaeda in Iraq claims responsibility in an internet statement. A raid conducted by joint U.S. and Iraqi security forces captures 50 suspected insurgents in Baghdad.
- **September 6, 2005**—Joint U.S. and Iraqi forces stage a raid near the Syrian border, killing 2 foreign suspected insurgents and arresting 3 others. The U.S. military transfers full control of its Najaf base to Iraqi security forces. A bomb explodes near an Iraqi army vehicle in Khalidiya, triggering a firefight between insurgents and Iraqi security forces that kills 4 soldiers and 3 civilians, and injures an additional 5 soldiers. In Dhuluiya, an Iraqi army officer is shot and killed on his way home from work.
- **September 7, 2005**—In Khalis, militants ambush an Iraqi army checkpoint, killing 4 Iraqi soldiers and 2 civilians. Iraqi security forces announce the capture of a leading insurgent in Latifiya. Defense Ministry official Maj. Gen. Hadi Hassan Omran is shot and killed in Baghdad's Doura neighborhood. A car bomber detonates his explosives outside a restaurant in Basra, killing 16 civilians and demolishing 2 police vehicles. In the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad, militants fatally shoot Interior Ministry commando Col. Ammar Ismail Arkan and wound 4 bodyguards.
- **September 8, 2005**—In an area west of Tikrit, 2 Iraqi soldiers guarding oil assets are the casualties of a roadside bomb. An additional 9 soldiers are wounded in the same attack. Iraqi soldiers announce the capture of 150 foreign suspected insurgents as well as 50 of their Iraqi counterparts as a result of military raids in Tal Afar. Search operations by the Iraqi security forces in Alexandria, Beiji, Mosul and Tal Afar root out 46 suspected terrorists and result in the confiscation an arms cache.
- **September 9, 2005**—In Rustamiyah, Iraqi security forces discover 6 unidentified bodies that had been tied up, shot, and dumped in the sewage system. Militants attack a police patrol in Baghdad, overturning one vehicle and burning another. One police officer dies and 3 are wounded in the overturned vehicle. A roadside bomb targeting a U.S. convoy kills 12 Iraqis, 7 of them policemen. In the Al-Alam neighborhood of central Baghdad, 3 police commandos and one other person die from another roadside bomb. A police colonel from the disbanded Iraqi army in Baiji is shot and killed while driving. In southwestern Baghdad, 2 guards from the government-run Facility Protection Service are critically injured after sustaining gunfire from insurgents. Elsewhere in Baghdad, 3 policemen are killed and 9 wounded from a roadside bombing in the Saydeyah district. Militants open fire on a police patrol in western Baghdad, killing 1 police officer and injuring 5. Insurgents target a separate police patrol with a roadside bomb between Yusufiya and Mahmudiya, resulting in the deaths of 2 civilians but no policemen. In Baquba, 2 special force policemen are shot and killed by militants in an open market.
- **September 10, 2005**—In Baquba, 4 Iraqis workers from a multi-national forces base are shot and killed on their way to work. In Khalis, an off-duty army officer is shot dead. Two off-duty police officers come under fire in Kirkuk, resulting in the death of 1 and the serious wounding of the other. Another policeman is seriously injured after being shot at while driving his superior's car. Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Al-Jaafari issues a decree sealing the border crossing into Syria and imposing a dusk till dawn

curfew as 5,000 Iraqi forces backed by 3,500 American soldiers swept into Tal Afar in an offensive on the insurgent stronghold. Maj. Gen. Adnan Abdul Rihman, the Interior Ministry's director of police training, is shot and killed in his home in western Baghdad as he waiting on a ride to work. The Iraqi Defense Minister announces that raids on Tal Afar will be extended to include Ramadi, Samarra, Rawa and Qa'im. Police in Kerbala discover and defuse a huge truck bomb before the start of a religious festival. A police officer approaches 2 small trucks in Mahawil and is subsequently killed as both trucks explode. Two Iraqi soldiers die from a bomb inside a house in Samarra. A car bomb targeting a police station in Al-Mashrou kills 4 and injures 11.

- **September 11, 2005**—An audiotape claimed by Al-Qaeda in Iraq is posted on the Internet telling insurgents to prepare for the “final battle.” Although the fighting has subsided in Tal Afar, U.S. and Iraqi soldiers continue raids, conducting a second day of house-to-house searches and battering down stone walls looking for insurgents and weapons. Joint forces worry that many insurgents have escaped through the tunnel system, which was discovered during the raids along with a bomb factory and 18 weapons caches. 90% of the population of Tal Afar fled the city before the raids and many are being housed in shelters while they wait for clashes to end. Police discover a large quantity of explosives in a truck headed for Kerbala. In Qa'im, 4 bodies, including one in an Iraqi army uniform, are discovered with their hands bound. Two policemen are wounded in Kirkuk as a bomb explodes near a police patrol guarding a main bus station.
- **September 12, 2005**—In downtown Kirkuk, a father and son police duo are killed and 3 civilians wounded by gunfire. A roadside bomb strikes a military convoy in Fallujah, killing or wounding at least 6 Iraqi soldiers. The U.S. and Iraqi crackdown on Tal Afar continues, with joint forces announcing the killing or capture of nearly 450 insurgents as well as the discovery of 24 weapons caches and 12 booby-trapped houses during the operation so far. One Iraqi soldier dies in clashes with the insurgents in Tal Arar.
- **September 13, 2005**—U.S. and Iraqi forces continue to battle insurgents in Tal Afar. In Baghdad, a suicide car bomber explodes as he approaches a police checkpoint, causing no casualties. A second suicide bomber at the same location is captured before his bomb is detonated.
- **September 14, 2005**—In the Azimiyah district of Baghdad, gunmen fatally shoot 2 top police officials and 2 other police officers while they were driving. As rescuers rushed to the scene, a suicide car bomb exploded, killing 3 Iraqi soldiers and 4 policemen. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a car bomb targeting a National Guard convoy kills 2 people in the Shula district. Another suicide car bomber attacks a U.S. convoy, injuring 14 Iraqi police officers. There was no report of American casualties. An Iraqi army officer is shot dead in the Dora district. A civilian is wounded in the same incident. In the Al-Amin district, a roadside bomb wounds 3 policemen. Militants stage an attack on 2 police stations in the Karada district, critically wounding 3 police officers. Three soldiers and 3 civilians die in when a car bomb targets an Iraqi military patrol in the western Adel district. In the Aadamiyah district, another car bomb aimed at a police patrol kills 2 policeman and wounds 1. Three Interior Ministry officials and 2 guards die in an attack on their convoy in the Waziriya district of northern Baghdad. 4 additional policemen who come to the scene as reinforcements are wounded by a suicide car bomber. An additional suicide car bomb attack injures 2 police officers near the Amiriyah district. Insurgents shoot and kill a policeman south of Baghdad in Rumatha. North of Baghdad in the village of Taji, gunmen dressed in military uniforms execute 17 people from the Tameem tribe. The rise in violence in Baghdad that killed at least 152 people and injured 542 in a total of 12 attacks is attributed to the ongoing battle between joint U.S. and Iraqi forces and insurgents in Tal Afar. Al Qaeda in Iraq claims responsibility for the attacks in an Internet statement. In Tal Afar, fierce fighting escalates in the Kadisiyah district. Elsewhere in Tal Afar, 2 Iraqi soldiers were seriously injured as they enter a booby-trapped house, triggering an explosion. Insurgents shoot and kill a policeman south of Baghdad in Rumatha. U.S. and Iraqi soldiers detain 8 people in Kirkuk accused of developing and setting up IEDs.
- **September 15, 2005**—In the Dora neighborhood of Baghdad, a series of bombings target Iraqi security forces. The first attack involves a suicide car bomber who kills 16 policemen and 5 civilians, and wounding 13 policemen. Shortly before noon, 2 additional suicide bombers detonate their explosives within a minute of each other and a half a mile apart, resulting in the deaths of 10 police officers and the wounding of 17. Elsewhere in Baghdad, another car bomber kills 4 police commandos and injures 12. In Kirkuk, a roadside bomb is detonated as a police patrol passes, killing 2 policemen and wounding 4, in addition to destroying the police vehicle. Gunmen open fire on U.S. and Iraqi soldiers in Ramadi, but no casualties are reported. One policeman dies and another is wounded during a firefight between

insurgents and paramilitary police in the Saydiya neighborhood of Baghdad. Police discover the bodies of 8 men with their hands bound and fatal gunshot wounds to the head scattered across various location in Baghdad. All are unidentified except one who was recognized to be a policeman and whose wrists were handcuffed. In Baquba, a series of attacks by insurgents using mortars and small-arms fire kills 1 policeman and injures 3. A police major is abducted from his home and shot dead by masked gunmen in Samarra.

- **September 16, 2005**—South of Baghdad in the suburb Al-Hashwe, a car bomb detonates near a police patrol, killing 3 policemen and injuring 6. Four Iraqi soldiers are killed when roadside bomb explodes as their patrol passes in Khalidiya. A large explosion occurs within the Green Zone; no casualties are reported. Although clashes continue in Tal Afar, an Iraqi officer says that 95% of the city is now secure.
- **September 17, 2005**—In Balad, Iraqi troops thwart a 4-car attack on an army checkpoint. Two gunmen die and 2 others are arrested in the incident. Iraqi police discover 9 people in 3 separate locations around Baghdad shot dead in the head and chest. In Baquba, a suicide car bomber targets an Iraqi army patrol. One civilian dies and 17 people are injured, 3 of them policemen.
- **September 18, 2005**—In Kirkuk, a roadside bomb detonates near an Iraqi Army patrol, killing 3 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 4. The Chief of Domiz police announces the arrest of 4 suspected Al Qaeda members with suspected ties to senior Al Qaeda leader Ayman Al-Thawahri, and who were carrying on their person documents proving their involvement in Kirkuk and Diyala insurgent attacks. Kirkuk police capture another suspected Al-Qaeda member in a separate incident, and Iraqi security forces in Baghdad dismantle a booby-trapped vehicle without casualties. In Khalidiya, Iraqi police uncover 4 blindfolded bodies dead from gunshot wounds. Two of the dead were wearing Iraqi army uniforms. North of Baghdad, 20 bodies are found dead of gunshot wounds with their hands bound in the Tigris River. They are believed to be Iraqi security forces, although their identities are yet unconfirmed. Iraqi army troops with Coalition forces find and clear a weapons cache in northern Fallujah.
- **September 19, 2005**—South of Baghdad, 2 suicide bombers stage attacks at 2 separate checkpoints in Mahmoudiya and Latifiya on a road between Baghdad and Karbala, at a time when thousands of pilgrims are traveling to Karbala to celebrate the 12th Shi'a imam. Ten people are killed, including 7 policemen and an Iraqi army member, and 12 are wounded. Reports indicate that 15 Iraqi soldiers have been taken hostage by unidentified militants west of Samara. A suicide bomber targets a joint U.S.-Iraqi patrol near Taji. Fourteen Iraqi soldiers die in the attack. South of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives, killing 5 policemen and 2 civilians, and wounding an additional 13 police officers and bystanders. A bomb targeting the north oil pipeline protection forces kills 2 Iraqi policemen. In Kirkuk, Iraqi police arrest a shoot and kill a man suspected of planning to detonate a suicide car bomb. British troops storm a Basra prison to rescue 2 British commandos accused of shooting Iraqi troops, and a firefight between British and Iraqi military members ensues.
- **September 21, 2005**—After Iraqi security forces raid a militant safehouse in the Mansour neighborhood of western Baghdad, a firefight breaks out between Iraqi police and army members, and rebels hiding in the house. One police officer and 2 soldiers die along with 5 gunmen; an additional 3 policemen and 2 soldiers are wounded. Iraqi police and civilians rally in Basra in a protest against the British. West of Balad, the bodies of 19 Iraqi border guards are discovered with their hands bound and fatal gunshot wounds to the head. 15 of the bodies are believed to be those of a group of border guards abducted on Sunday, September 18 near Samarra.
- **September 22, 2005**—Iraqi Gen Abdulaziz Mohammed announces the end to the 3-week joint U.S.-Iraqi operation in Tal Afar, noting that it has now moved into the final phase of reconstruction. On a highway between Baquba and Kanaan, militants kill a police colonel and his driver in drive-by shooting. Militants in the Zayouna area of Baghdad shoot and kill 3 Iraqi police officers and wound a fourth. A mortar attack on a police station in Samarra kills 1 police officer and injures 5. Heavy clashes between Iraqi security forces and insurgents result in the death of 1 civilian and the wounding of 3 additional civilians. There were no reports of security force casualties.
- **September 23, 2005**—Gunmen fatally shoot a policeman in Mosul. In southern Baghdad, a booby-trapped car driven by a suicide attacker explodes near a checkpoint, resulting in the death of 1 Iraqi soldier and the wounding of 4 others. Iraqi security forces arrest 10 suspected insurgents in a raid in Khalis.

- **September 24, 2005**— In Sinjar, a car bomb explodes near an Iraqi police checkpoint, killing 2 soldiers and wounding 2 policemen. An additional car bomber kills a child and wounds 2 policemen and 2 civilians at a checkpoint near Musayyib. A suicide car bomber detonates his explosives near an Iraqi army checkpoint in the Karrada district of Baghdad, killing 3 soldiers and 1 civilian, as well as wounding 3 soldiers and 2 civilians. In Beiji, 2 Iraqi soldiers and 4 civilians are wounded when an Iraqi army patrol comes under small arms fire. Gunmen ambush an Iraqi army patrol near al-Tooze, wounding 6 soldiers.
- **September 25, 2005**—In a slum in eastern Baghdad, a joint U.S.-Iraqi patrol engages in a firefight with militants loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr during which at least 8 Shiite gunmen are killed and 5 are wounded. Nineteen joint forces are also wounded, including 13 commandos. A suicide bomber targets an Interior Ministry convoy in Baghdad, killing 7 Iraqi police commandos and 2 civilians when his explosives are detonated. Gunmen clash with Iraqi police in Mosul, resulting in the deaths of 2 civilians and the wounding of 3 others. No police force casualties were reported.
- **September 26, 2005**—A suicide car bomber attacks an Iraqi police checkpoint guarding government ministries, killing 6 policemen and injuring 13 others—5 policemen and 8 government workers.
- **September 27, 2005**— The Iraqi Ministry of Defense announces the start of an Coalition offensive on the insurgent stronghold of Samarra, prompting the mass exodus of hundreds of Iraqi families from the city. In Baquba, a suicide bomber targets a police recruiting center, killing 12 Iraqi recruits and wounding 30. One policeman is killed and 3 others are wounded when gunmen open fire on a police patrol on a highway near the Green Zone. A roadside bomb detonates near a police patrol in Kirkuk, injuring 2 policemen and killing a civilian. Elsewhere in Kirkuk, gunmen assassinate police Major Fakhir Jalal Amin.
- **September 28, 2005**—In Tal Afar, the first Al Qaeda female suicide bomber dressed in men's clothing detonates her explosives outside an army recruiting center, killing at least 7 and wounding 37, many of whom were signing up to join the Iraqi army. A policeman on his way to work in northeastern Baghdad is shot dead by gunmen. In the Huriya district of Baghdad, several men dressed in commando uniforms detain 6 people, all of whom were later found dead from gunshot wounds in Baghdad's morgue. An explosion stemming from a roadside bomb on the Doura highway wounds 2 soldiers passing on patrol. In Baquba, a suicide car bomber targeting a security checkpoint kills 1 civilian and wounds 15 when his explosives are detonated. No police or military casualties were reported. Iraqi police seize a weapons cache in Mosul during a cordon-and-search operation.
- **September 29, 2005**—In the Jami'a neighborhood of western Baghdad, 2 high-ranking police officials from Balad are shot dead in a drive-by shooting. Elsewhere in western Baghdad, gunmen stage an attack on a police patrol in the Jihad neighborhood, killing 2 police officers and injuring 3. A roadside bomb explodes near the convoy of a police colonel in Kirkuk. The colonel escapes without injury but one of his bodyguards is wounded. In Khalis, gunmen fatally shoot a policeman and his brother. Militants kill 4 policemen and wound 1 in an ambush on a police convoy in Basra.
- **September 30, 2005**—In Kirkuk, police report the killing of a guard for the Housing and Reconstruction Ministry officials when gunmen attack their motorcade. Iraqi security forces arrest a woman in a Baghdad market strapped with explosives under her clothes.
- **October 1, 2005**—In the Shiite district of Sadr City, an Iraqi army officer is shot and killed in his car. A bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol in Kirkuk detonates, killing 3 policemen and wounding 4. Four civilians are killed and 10 are injured. One soldier and a bus driver are killed in Baquba when gunmen open fire on their vehicle. An additional 3 soldiers are wounded. One Iraqi policeman and another Iraqi are killed upon detonation of a bomb targeting an army patrol in Dujail. In Miqdadiya, 2 Iraqi soldiers are killed and 3 are injured when they are ambushed by gunmen on their way to work.
- **October 2, 2005**—In Baquba, militants stage an attack on a checkpoint, killing 3 Iraqi soldiers and injuring 3. Gunmen kill an Iraqi policeman in Ramadi. Iraqi police in Baquba arrest 17 suspected insurgents in a search-and-raid campaign.
- **October 3, 2005**—In Kirkuk, militants kill 2 Iraqi police officers in an ambush on their vehicle.
- **October 4, 2005**—A suicide bomber detonates his explosives at the main entrance of the Green Zone, killing two Iraqi police officers and a civilian, and wounding 4 Iraqi soldiers and 2 policemen. In

Yusufiya, 4 Iraqi police commandos die and 14 are wounded during a firefight with militants. Operation River Gate, a mission to root out insurgents in the Anbar province near the Syrian border, is launched. It includes hundreds of Iraqi troops, and marks the most involvement yet of Iraqi soldiers with the U.S. military.

- **October 5, 2005**—In Kirkuk, 6 security guards for the North Oil Company are critically wounded from a car bombing.
- **October 6, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives near a police patrol by the Iraqi Oil Ministry, killing 5 police officers and 4 civilians, and wounding 4 policemen and 5 civilians. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a suicide bomber strikes a private security convoy, killing 3 civilians. No guard casualties were reported. In a third incident in Baghdad, a police officer is shot dead by militants. Insurgents kill Salem Ayoub Sillo, a local prison chief, and his driver in the Noor district of Mosul. Gunmen ambush and subsequently kill a retired brigadier-general in Kirkuk. Five Oil Ministry security guards are killed and 3 are wounded while driving in the town of Uthaim, south of Kirkuk. The Iraqi army announces plans to assign 2 additional battalions to guard the oil installations in Kirkuk. The 3 battalions already protecting the oil installations have seen an escalation in attacks. A group of approximately 30 insurgents stage a series of attacks on police checkpoints along the Mohammed Al-Qassem Highway in Central Baghdad. No casualties have yet been reported.
- **October 7, 2005**—In an area near Al-Adheem, a roadside bomb explodes near a fuel tanker being driven by a group of security guards for a northern oil facility. When they step out of the vehicle to survey the damage, a group of armed militants stage an ambush, killing 3 guards and wounding 6. British troops seize 12 men, including several Iraqi policemen, during overnight raids in Basra. Many of those arrested include Sadr supporters and other members of militia groups. In the Ameriyah neighborhood of Baghdad, militants open fire on a taxi carrying Iraqi civil defense members, killing 2 of those members and wounding 2, as well as injuring the driver. Other separate shootings in Baghdad kill 3 policemen. Militants stage an attack on a police patrol in Kirkuk, killing 2 Iraqis and wounding 8, including 3 policemen. In Fallujah, a roadside bomb detonates by Iraqi troops and is immediately followed by an ambush by militants. Five Iraqi soldiers are killed. Operation Iron fist is completed, with an estimated total of over 50 insurgents killed. Operation Saratoga is underway in northern Iraq.
- **October 8, 2005**—In western Baghdad, a suicide car bomber targets a police patrol, killing 1 policeman and 6 civilians, and wounding 10 policemen and 6 civilians. Other reports claimed up to 5 police casualties resulted from the explosion. Elsewhere in Baghdad, 2 roadside bombs aimed at Iraqi police and army patrols injure 4 soldiers and 1 civilian. Five Iraqi soldiers are wounded in a drive-by shooting near Hillah. In an area east of Mosul, 2 Iraqi policemen suffer gunshot wounds. Iraqi security forces with Coalition forces discover a bomb-making factory and a house containing a large amount of Al Qaeda audio/visual equipment while conducting clearing operations in Haditha under Operation River Gate. Iraqi soldiers strike several targets simultaneously to detain a total of 12 suspected terrorists.
- **October 9, 2005**—In Samarra, insurgents disguised as policemen fatally shoot a teacher in front of students at a teacher training college. A video released by the Army of Ansar al-Sunna claims the group is responsible for the deaths of 2 Iraqi guards at an oil facility. In Saklawiya, a roadside bomb is detonated near an Iraqi army patrol. Human casualties are yet unknown. Gunmen open fire on a police vehicle in Baghdad, killing 2 police officers and wounding 1. In northern Mosul, militants shoot and kill the bodyguard of Iraqi Parliament member Hanin Mohammed al-Kadu while driving. Militants ambush a joint U.S.-Iraqi security rehearsal for next week's vote on the Iraqi Constitution, killing 2 Iraqi troops and 2 American troops. Reports indicate that 40 Iraqi police and Interior Ministry officials captured 22 men in the Iskan neighborhood of Baghdad. All of the detainees were later found bound, blindfolded, and dead in a desert nearly 70 miles away from where they were originally taken into custody. Two Iraqi soldiers were killed and 8 injured in an attack in al-Hawija. A joint U.S. and Iraqi police patrol detains a man and confiscates his 6 AK-47s and Russian sniper rifle in Taji.
- **October 10, 2005**—Two Iraqi soldiers are killed and 2 wounded in an insurgent attack on their patrol south of Kirkuk. In western Baghdad near Al-Nusur Square, militants kill 3 policemen and wound 3 civilians in an attack on an Iraqi police patrol. Elsewhere in western Baghdad, gunmen open fire on a convoy carrying members of the Arab League delegation, killing 3 police officers and wounding 4. In a series of separate incidents in Baghdad, militants kill 1 policeman and wound 9 police. Eight police officers are wounded from an insurgent attack on a police checkpoint in the Khadimiya district of Baghdad. A bomb targeting a checkpoint near the Green Zone in Baghdad kills an Iraqi soldier,

translator, and civilian, as well as a U.S. soldier. Also in Baghdad, police open fire on a suspected car bomber, causing the bomb to detonate prematurely. Four officers are wounded from the explosion. In continuing developments of Operation Saratoga, raids conducted in Kirkuk result in the arrest of 2 wanted insurgents and the confiscation of a small weapons cache.

- **October 11, 2005**—In Baghdad, U.S. troops and Iraqi commandos detain 57 suspected terrorists and kill 2 others. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a suicide car bomber targets an Iraqi army patrol in the Amiriyah district, killing more than 25 people. Early reports indicated that most of the casualties were soldiers. In Tikrit, a roadside bomb kills police Lt. Soud Abdul Kareem when it explodes near his house. Two policewomen are shot and killed while riding in a taxi in Doura.
- **October 12, 2005**—In Tal Afar, a suicide bomber targets an army recruitment center, killing 30 Iraqis and wounding 40, nearly all of whom were waiting in line for jobs. A suicide bomber in Baghdad detonates his explosives near the convoy of Iraqi Minister of Provincial Affairs Saad Naif al-Hardan, wounding 5 bodyguards and 5 civilians, but leaving the Minister unharmed. In Baquba, a suicide bomber targets an Iraqi army checkpoint, causing injuries to 7 soldiers and 2 civilians. In the Ghazaliya area of Baghdad, joint forces seize a car being driven by a Somali suicide bomber as well as another car directly behind it carrying video equipment to document the bombing. The campaign against insurgents in the Anbar province continues, with the Iraqi Army 1st Division, also called the Iraqi Intervention Force (IIF), leading operations in Fallujah, Ramadi, Rawah, and Khalidiyah.
- **October 13, 2005**-- Joint operations across Iraq involve raids of militant safehouses and enforcement of 10 p.m.-6 a.m. curfews ahead of this weekend's upcoming constitutional referendum. In Mosul, police institute a temporary ban on all civilian vehicles. A Defense Ministry press release notes the arrest of 19 insurgents and the seizure of weapons and explosives in operations by the Iraqi security forces across Tikrit, Dholoeya, and Balad. It also announces the seizure of car bombs in Karbala and Saqlawiya. A car bomb detonates in the city of Kirkuk, killing 2 policemen and wounding 2. U.S. and Iraqi forces announce that they are in the midst of Operation Sunrise II, an anti-insurgency effort launched September 15th that will continue through the referendum period in the Diyala province. Militants kidnap Said Ahmed said Kana'an Shakir, the secretary general of the Independent Turkmen Movement, and Hashim Ali, an official in the Turkmen Front, along with 9 of their bodyguards near Udaim. Gunmen shoot and kill a policeman from the Facility Protection Service in Baiji. Two mortar rounds land on the Aadamiyah police station in Baghdad, wounding 8 policemen, including Brigadier Khalid, director of the station.
- **October 14, 2005**—In Muthanna, a masked insurgent opens fire on a police patrol using an automatic weapon. One policeman is injured but no deaths are reported. A roadside bomb east of Baghdad on the road to Baquba explodes near a police patrol, killing 4 policemen and wounding 3. In Samerraa, gunmen ambush a polling station using RPGs and machine guns, injuring an undisclosed number of soldiers guarding the station. Two additional polling stations were fired upon in Baghdad. It is unknown whether the incidents resulted in human casualties. Two Iraqi soldiers and 1 policeman are wounded in a friendly fire incident in Kerbala. Reports indicate that the policemen opened fire on an army patrol when the patrol neglected to stop at a police checkpoint. A car bomb in Kirkuk injures 4 Northern Oil Company guards and 1 civilian. In Mosul, police arrest 15 insurgents as they prepare to launch an attack on polling stations.
- **October 15, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide car bomber drives his vehicle into a truck carrying Oil Ministry staff, killing at least 6 people and wounding 14. Two of those killed were policemen and most of the remaining victims were from the Oil Ministry. Unconfirmed incidents were also reported in Basra and Ramadi. A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi military convoy east of Baquba kills 3 soldiers and wounds 3. In Latifiyah, mortars land on a checkpoint overnight, killing 3 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 2. Two police units open fire on each other outside a polling station in the Amil district of Baghdad. Four civilians are wounded by the gunfire. In the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad, police injure 1 woman and 1 man in separate incidents in which police suspected insurgent activity. One policeman is wounded when 3 roadside bombs targeting a police patrol are detonated in the Amiriyah district of Baghdad. In Hilla, police defuse a car bomb with 12 mortar rounds. Joint U.S. and Iraqi troops engage in clashes with insurgents using mortars, rockets, and machine guns in the Ramadi province.

Concerns Over Iraqi Progress

Given this history, it is not surprising that there were still problems with morale and desertions. In testimony before the Senate on February 3, 2005, Deputy Defense Secretary Paul D. Wolfowitz acknowledged that many new Iraqi soldiers had failed to return to their posts after going home to deliver paychecks. He stated that Iraqi army units were experiencing absentee rates of up to 40 percent and that 1,342 Iraqi soldiers and police had died since June 2004.¹⁷⁸ The problem of recruits going home with their paychecks had not been anticipated in the original timelines in the training plan, and delayed some training timelines dramatically.¹⁷⁹

In the same hearing, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard Myers, estimated that approximately 40,000 of the reported 136,000 members of the Iraqi military and security forces were trained and equipped to 'go anywhere and take on any threat' in Iraq. The rest, he acknowledged, were not yet ready for duties beyond policing calm parts of southern Iraq.

General John Abizaid, commander of CENTCOM, highlighted a different concern over the Iraqi military leadership. He stated, "There's a shortage of trained officers that will respect the government, be loyal to the government and support the government over the long term."¹⁸⁰ Lt. Gen. Petraeus stated, "In an Iraqi unit, the leader is really of paramount importance. He sets the tone for an organization. There is really a premium on finding, investing in and strengthening good leaders."¹⁸¹

These warnings reflected the fact that some Iraqi unit leaders continued to be reluctant or unwilling to lead their unit into the field. In other cases, they deployed but acted like autocrats instead of leaders. Soldiers were sent on personal errands for the unit leader. Other Iraqi commanders take the view that the soldiers have to like the commander and be cajoled into accepting and completing missions. These views frustrated the US advisors and mentors that train these leaders.

The often rigid, hierarchical nature of the Iraqi chain of command presented another problem in creating effective leaders. Junior officers who exhibited promising initiative and leadership could be frustrated by the failure of higher-ups to delegate authority. Patrols and simple tasks could not be performed without the explicit order of the unit commander. US advisors worried that such an atmosphere would discourage the best soldiers and possible leaders from staying with the Iraqi military.¹⁸² They saw efforts to train junior officers in initiative and "leading forward" as critical, as well as efforts to create a Western-style force of well-trained and effective NCOs, but they worried about the scale and continuity of such Iraqi efforts to change the "culture" of Iraq's forces.

In spite of major Iraqi and Coalition efforts to create mixed or "national units," observers were concerned that much of the officer corps remained more loyal to region, tribe, religion, or ethnic group than to the country. This presented the risk of separatism in the case of the Kurds and dominance in the case of the Shi'ites.

Both US experts and senior policy officials were concerned that the Shi'ite majority would purge Iraqi forces, and the Ministries of Defense and Interior. One US official in Baghdad reported that Shi'ites were indeed "clearing out political undesirables from the

police and army.” To what degree this is happening and if it is widespread is unclear, but such actions would only push more armed men towards the insurgency.

The commander of MNF-I, General George W. Casey, highlighted four continuing problems in his testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on March 1, 2005. He pointed to the challenges of:¹⁸³

- Providing the training, equipment, and sustainability to Iraqi forces while their force structure is in the midst of serious changes.
- Developing Iraqi forces without a system that measures their capabilities
- Enhancing loyalty and developing effective leadership in the Iraqi chain of command
- Creating police that can do their job in a violent atmosphere while respecting the rule of law.

Despite these challenges, US CENTCOM commander Gen. John P. Abizaid expressed optimism about the ultimate success of the force building effort in March 2005. He stated that “They [Iraqi forces] will get better and I think in 2005 will take on the majority of the tasks.”¹⁸⁴

Increasing Deployment and Activity

The Ministry of Defense did gradually began to take shape as a functioning ministry, and with key staff elements like an inspector general. As has been shown earlier, most serious equipment problems had been corrected, although problems existed in the way the inventory was distributed. Iraqi forces continued to intensify their military raids, and the number of active Iraqi units actually deployed and fighting the insurgent forces slowly continued to grow. A combination of Coalition and Iraqi raids led to significant insurgent casualties and captures, and to the deaths or capture of many mid-level fighters and some high level insurgent leaders, although most of most wanted insurgents remained elusive.¹⁸⁵

HUMINT slowly improved, with growing support from Iraqi forces, and the capture of insurgents and terrorists helped provide additional information -- as did the capture of many of their records, diaries, and computers. US-run detention centers were nearing capacity. In January 2005, the number of captured insurgents reached the highest levels since March 2004. The US had roughly 7,900 “security detainees” in captivity in January 2005. The total then increased by another 20 percent to 11,350 by early May. Maj. Gen. William H. Bradenburg, commander of US detention operations in Iraq, declared that US and Iraqi forces were arresting an average of 50 suspected insurgents every day, with the 2005 average approaching 70 arrests per day.¹⁸⁶

Press sources on such developments are uncertain, and sometimes conflicting, but they report that responsibility for providing security in parts of Baghdad began to be turned over to Iraqi forces in late February 2005 and in earnest in March 2005. The 305th “Tiger” Brigade of the Iraqi Army appears to have been the first unit to assume security responsibilities in parts of Baghdad in February.

In March 2005, the Tiger Brigade was joined by the 40th Iraqi Army Brigade, bringing the total number of neighborhoods in Baghdad in Iraqi Army hands to 10, including the

violent Adhamiya neighborhood and Haifa Street. The commander of Iraqi forces in Baghdad, Gen. Mudhir Mawla, stated, "These operations now are being planned and conducted 100 percent by the Iraqi forces."¹⁸⁷ General Mawla recognized the significance of the gradual transfer, stating, "The plan depends on the success of the 40th Brigade in Baghdad. If we succeed in controlling Baghdad, then there will be no need for the presence of US forces. They will have bases outside of Baghdad."¹⁸⁸

The mixed character of Iraqi performance was indicated by the fact that the US could deploy a former Iraqi National Guard unit like the 302nd Battalion to the troubled, Sadr-dominated, Haifa Road area in Baghdad and plan to deploy a force of some 10,000 Iraqis in Baghdad by late 2005 in an effort to replace US troops. The 1,000 men in the 302nd had also taken 26 casualties in 15 months of fighting -- a higher rate than most US units.

The 302nd was also one of the units that now had a 25-75 man US advisory team embedded in the unit, and was a demonstration of the effectiveness of having US forces help Iraqi units make the transition to full combat effectiveness in the field -- a shift in US training efforts that took place early in 2005 and which is described in more detail in the final chapter of this analysis. One special feature of this effort was deploying a team of US Special Forces to train a 30-man strike platoon in raids, targeting reconnaissance, and undercover intelligence.¹⁸⁹

At the same time, another such unit -- the 305th battalion -- that was deployed to Baghdad in May 2005 had lost 50 percent of its original strength to desertions since being formed in late 2003, and lost dozens more as it moved toward deployment. Its marksmanship and fire discipline remained terrible (soldiers would "cook" an entire magazine in a single poorly aimed burst), and it tended to "huddle," rather than actively patrol.

The Iraqi Army deployed units to real missions in increasing numbers, and by April, it had two areas of operation (AORs) of its own in Mosul and the Haifa Road area in Baghdad. The units performed well in providing security before the elections and in Mosul afterwards, although Iraqi battalions operated in areas near US battalions. Even in this case, however, two battalion commanders had to be replaced in Mosul, and one company commander after he hid from an angry crowd on election day.¹⁹⁰

Iraq also began to conduct independent operations in moderate to high threat areas like the greater Baghdad area. The Iraqi Interior and Defense Ministries announced on May 26 that they had launched a joint action dubbed "Operation Lightning" involving more than 40,000 Iraqi security forces in Baghdad. The troops, who manned 675 mobile checkpoints and mounted sweeps throughout the city, moved to gain control of all of the roads in and out of the city.

The US military reported that Operation Lightning led to a 38 percent reduction in vehicle-borne bombs exploding and a 23 percent increase in such bombs being detected prior to detonation. The operation decreased Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detonations by 10 percent and the number of coordinated or elaborate attacks against Coalition and Iraqi forces fell by 18 percent.

Other major Iraqi operations included:

- Iraqi forces rehearsed, planned, and executed an infiltration and raid entirely on their own southeast of Mosul that yielded intelligence used to capture six insurgent suspects on May 26th.
- At the end of May, US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Richard Myers, stated on NBC's *Today Show* that Iraqi Security Forces were conducting five operations completely on their own and without Coalition support.
- Coalition forces and Iraqi Security Forces uncovered approximately 50 insurgent weapons and ammunition caches in 72 hours in the Al Anbar province in early June. North of Karmah, the joint operation uncovered a series of bunkers that contained weapons, ammunition, night vision goggles, uniforms, cell phones, and living quarters. Reportedly, detainees and local residents providing tips that led to the successful raids.
- In June, Iraqi and Coalition forces captured insurgent leader Mullah Mahdi in Mosul after a brief gun battle. Mahdi is believed to be linked to Ansar al-Sunna and to the Syrian intelligence service. According to Iraqi Maj. Gen. Khalil Ahmed al-Obeidi, "He [Mahdi] was wanted for almost all car bombs, assassinations of high officials, beheadings of Iraqi policemen and soldiers, and for launching attacks against multinational forces."¹⁹¹ Despite Obeidi's statements, the exact extent of Mahdi's role in the insurgency is unclear.

At the same time, the government made efforts to persuade Sunni insurgent groups to give up their support for the insurgency and join Iraq's new political process. The details of these talks are unclear. In a typical press report on such activity, Aiham Alsammarae - a former electricity minister under the interim government -- claimed that he had been in contact with the leaders of the insurgent groups the Islamic Army in Iraq and the Mujahideen Army. Alsammarae claimed that he had met with the groups' leaderships approximately 10 times in four months and that the leaders were ready to enter into negotiations with the Iraqi government and the US. The Iraqi government had not been contacted by Alsammarae and neither had the MNF-I forces.¹⁹² It is clear, however, that progress was slow and limited.

The New Force Evaluation Matrix

The fact that many active Iraqi units could take over some kind of useful mission by the summer of 2005 did not mean they had the readiness to take over most missions, or that more than a small portion could perform demanding missions. The vast majority of Iraqi military, security, and police units only had, the readiness to perform limited security missions.

Iraq's evolving structure was still a very mixed force. Some units performed well. Others were evolving the leadership and sense of unit cohesion and integrity needed to become effective -- although often only with a major stiffening of US advisors and by a replacement policy that constantly fed in new officers and other ranks until the unit actually held together. However, there were still many cases where new -- and sometimes previously effective -- police and other units refused to fight, huddled in defensive positions, or had serious desertion rates. Corruption, nepotism and political favoritism, false manpower reports, and false activity reports continued to be serious problems -- something that was inevitable in trying to develop security and police forces in a foreign culture and in a country that was governed in a corrupt manner for decades

Iraqi forces had, however, advanced to the point where readiness could be judged in terms of unit mission capability, and not broad factors like “trained and equipped.” The Iraqi Army and National Guard, security services, and police were now being rated at a battalion or other individual level by a new evaluation matrix developed by the MNSTC-I. This matrix was developed by a combination of Iraqi brigade and battalion commanders, and their US advisors, and looked at factors like manning levels, equipment levels, training, command and control, leadership, and logistics.

As has been touched upon earlier, this matrix was called the Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA). The assessment of operational units conducted through Multinational Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) Coalition Military Transition Teams embedded at the battalion, brigade, and division level units for the Iraqi Army; Special Police Transition Teams (SPTTs) with MOI’s Special Police Commando battalions and Civil Intervention Forces; and partnership at the provincial levels with the Iraqi police forces.¹⁹³

As Figure 27 shows, the TRAs rated Iraqi units as having one of four levels of mission capability. This ranking system different by force type and evolved over time. For example, in July 2005, the assessments of military units took into account a variety of criteria similar to -- but not identical to -- the criteria U.S. Army used to evaluate its units’ operational readiness. They focused on factors like personnel, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipment, and leadership. Overall, operational Iraqi Army units were categories assessed as follows:¹⁹⁴

- Level 1: Capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations independent of Coalition forces;
- Level 2: Capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations with Coalition enablers (Level 2); or
- Level 3: Capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations only when operating alongside Coalition units (Level 3).
- Level 4: Incapable of operations.

The results of this readiness system are classified because MNF-1 felt that too much detail would effectively target the less ready units for insurgent attack, and deprive them of some of their value as a deterrent and in performing less demanding missions. This was a major consideration since Level 1, 2, and 3 units could now perform some useful mission, even if most units cannot stand alone.

According to some press reports, the Iraqi Army and National Guard had a total of 81 battalions by late May 2005, but a new evaluation matrix developed by the MNSTC-I only rated three battalions at the top level of readiness and capability, and this did not mean they were capable of independent operations. Only one of 26 brigade headquarters had such a rating.

If one included all of the special police battalions, the press reported that the total force rose from 81 battalions to 101, but the number rated in the top category only rose from three to five. The US had concluded that it needed to make further major increases in the number of US advisory or “transition teams” embedded in Iraqi units and was seeking to rapidly deploy 2,500 more men by mid-June.¹⁹⁵

For reasons touched upon earlier, the new rating system found that Iraqi units were particularly weak in logistics, because they were being rushed into combat readiness, and lack support personnel like truck drivers, supply clerks, medics and engineers. Instead of the nearly 50-50 tooth-to-tail ratio in US forces, only 4,000 of the 75,800 men in rated units were performing support function. This can be attributed in some part to MNSTC-I's conscious decision to build a combat force first, rather than all the enablers that those forces would need to operate independently. Coalition forces were to be responsible for logistics and other enablers until that time when they would be fielded by the ISF.

Maintenance and support were provided largely by US forces. This helps explain why the Iraqi government and MNF-I planned to convert one out of five companies in each Iraqi battalion -- some 140 men each -- into service support units; to create separate transportation regiments and an brigade, and set up 10 maintenance and supply bases across Iraq.¹⁹⁶

MNSTC-I did provide an unclassified summary of the status of Iraqi forces in mid-June, where it indicated that: No special police units were rated "fully capable" and less than a handful of Army units. Some 40 percent of the special police units were rated "capable" and 20 percent of Army units. Some 40 percent of the special police units were rated "partially capable" and 45 percent of Army units. Less than 10 percent of the special police units were rated "incapable" and less than 20 percent of Army units.

Progress in reaching the highest levels of readiness continued to be slow through the fall of 2005, but more than 60 Army/National Guard combat battalions could perform some role as "partially capable" forces by early August 2005, and more than 20 combat battalions were "capable." In the case of special police forces -- which included the Public Order Battalions, Mechanized Battalions, Special Police Commando Battalions, and Emergency Response Units, there were roughly 28 battalion equivalents authorized and 21 actually operational. Some 10 each of these 21 battalions were "partially capable" or "fully capable." A long way from a perfect force, but a much longer way from the strength of a single active battalion in July 2004.

US Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Pace, described the ability of Iraqi security forces to conduct counterinsurgency operations as follows at a Senate Armed Services Committee Hearing in June 2005, Gen. Pace stated:¹⁹⁷

Only a small number of Iraqi Security Forces are taking on the insurgents and terrorists by themselves. Approximately one-third of their army battalions are capable of planning, executing and sustaining counterinsurgency operations with coalition support. Approximately two-thirds of their army battalions and one half of their police battalions are partially capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations in conjunction with coalition units. Approximately one half of their police battalions are forming and not yet capable of conducting operations. The majority of Iraqi Security Forces are engaged in operations against the insurgency with varying degrees of cooperation and support from coalition forces. Many of these units have performed superbly in conducting operations against the enemy, and their operational capability is continuing to improve.

The focus of Iraqi and MNF efforts had, however, clearly shifted from force formation to force effectiveness. By mid-2005, MNSTC-I's goal was to "graduate" most remaining units from basic/small unit training at Level 3 ("Fighting Alongside" coalition forces) by

the end of 2005 through mid-2006. Their progression to Level 2 or Level 1 will follow on varying timelines. Some “graduated” units may still be assessed as Level 4 (Forming), but they should be the exception. Figure 27 details the evaluation metrics used by MNF-I for qualifying ISF readiness levels, as of June 2005.

Figure 27
Iraqi Transition Readiness Assessment

Level 1	<u>Fully Capable:</u> A Level 1 unit is fully capable of planning, executing, and sustaining independent counterinsurgency operations.
Level 2	<u>Capable:</u> A Level 2 unit is capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counterinsurgency operations with Coalition support.
Level 3	<u>Partially Capable:</u> A Level 3 unit is partially capable of conducting counterinsurgency operations in conjunction with Coalition units.
Level 4	<u>Incapable:</u> A Level 4 unit is forming and/or incapable of conducting counterinsurgency operations.

Source: MNF-I, June 2005

The system was slower in ranking the regular police than the military and security forces. Only a small fraction of Iraq’s 940 police stations had been assessed using the new system as of May 1, 2005.¹⁹⁸ The new readiness system was, however, being steadily expanded to cover the police. MNF-I described the effort as follows in late July 2005.¹⁹⁹

MOI Civil Intervention Forces (CIF), Emergency Response Units (ERU), and Special Police Commando Battalions are evaluated using a Transition Readiness Assessments (TRAs) process that is similar to that used for MOD forces. MNC-I Special Police Transition Teams (SPTTs) are embedded with the MOI’s Special Police Commando battalions and CIF. The SPTT criteria are similar to those of the MOD forces. Police Partnership Program (P3) teams are partnered at the provincial levels with the police to help identify areas of progress and shortcomings to determine when these forces will be able to assume independent control of their area of responsibility. In lieu of the TRA, police partnership assessments look at factors that are more tailored to the tasks of a police force. More than half of provincial police headquarters currently are assessed to have control in their province.

Manpower Relative to Force Structure as Another Measure of the Readiness of Iraqi Forces

Other forms of MNF reporting provide additional insights into Iraqi progress in achieving readiness. Figure 28 shows the manpower in the Iraqi military force structure as of the end of June 2005. Three things are striking about the data in this figure. The first is the clear emergence of a 10-division Iraqi force structure in the Army, and of clearly defined

unit elements in the Air Force and Navy. Readiness is not simply a matter of unit capability; it is a matter of developing a force structure that is large enough to be effective.

The second is the high manning levels in many units. There were many battalion and other force elements still badly understrength, but other units were overmanned. Iraqi forces were slowly coming together.

Third, while some 10-20 percent of Iraqi manpower was still on leave/pass status, the percentages that were actually absent without leave (AWOL) were now relatively low. In short, the basic structure to bring Iraqi military forces to a higher level of readiness was now in place.

Figure 28

Iraqi Military Force Structure and Manpower Readiness

As of June 24, 2005

<u>Force/Unit Element and Location</u>	<u>Authorized</u>	<u>Actual Assigned</u>	<u>Manned</u>	<u>Percent AWOL</u>
I. Total Forces				
Iraqi Army				
Iraqi Intervention Force (IIF)	9819	9989	102	2
Regular Army (Does not include ING)	40783	42237	104	2
Iraqi Army (former Iraqi National Guard)	42547	31666	74	2
Iraqi Special Operations Force (ISOF)	1967	1031	52	3
Army: RA, IIF, IA	92074	81992	89	2
Army: RA, IIF, IA, ISOF	94041	83030	88	2
Iraqi Navy (IQN)	631	763	121	1
Iraqi Air Force (IQAF)	695	256	37	0
II. Iraqi Army				
Headquarters/Training/Trans				
Joint Forces Headquarters	505	292	58	0
Iraqi Military Academy Ar Rustamiyah (IMAR)	238	78	33	0
Zahko Military Academy	N/A	26	-	0
1 st Training Battalion (Taji)	240	763	318	0
1 st Transportation Regiment (Taji)	765	908	119	1
2 nd Transportation Regiment (An Numaniyah)	765	738	96	2
3 rd Transportation Regiment (Al Kasik)	765	510	67	0
1 st Engineer Regiment	184	181	98	1
Iraqi Army Force Structure				
<u>1st Division Total</u>	9645	9572	99	2
1 st Division (IIF) HQ (Baghdad-Taji)	225	963	428	1
1 st Div 1 BDE (IIF) (Baghdad-Al-Rustamiyah)	174	303	174	1
1 st Div 2 BDE (IIF) (Fallujah)	174	356	205	8
1 st Div 3 BDE (IIF) (Mosul-Ghabat)	174	319	183	1
1 st Div 4 BDE (IIF) (Fallujah)	174	398	229	9
<u>2nd Division Total</u>	9645	9875	102	1
2 nd Div HQ (Mosul-Al Kindi)	225	0	0	-
2 nd Div 1 BDE (Irbil-Kesenzan)	174	0	0	-
2 nd Div 2 BDE 1 BN (Mosul-Al Kindi)	727	1160	160	0

2 nd Div 3 BDE (Mosul-Al Kindi)	174	534	307	0
2 nd Div 4 BDE (Dahuk-fenfil camp)	174	941	541	4
<u>3rd Division Total</u>	7290	8078	111	5
3 rd Division HQ (Al Kisik)	225	371	165	0
3 rd Div 1 BDE (Tal Afar)	174	414	238	7
3 rd Div 2 BDE (Al-Kisik)	174	342	197	11
3 rd Div 3 BDE (Al-Kisik)	174	240	138	0
<u>4th Division Total</u>	8744	8089	93	1
4 Division HQ (Toahs Kharmato)	225	197	88	-
4 Div 1 BDE 1 BN (Tikrit)	727	574	79	0
4 Div 2 BDE (Kirkuk)	174	0	0	-
4 Div 3 BDE (Sulaymaniyah)	174	172	99	0
<u>5th Division Total</u>	8017	9168	114	2
5 Div HQ (Kirkush)	225	312	139	0
5 Div 1 BDE (Kirkush)	174	469	270	1
5 Div 2 BDE (Baqubah)	174	237	136	0
5 Div 3 BDE (an Numaniyah)	174	290	167	0
<u>6th Division Total</u>	15635	14436	92	3
6 Div HQ (Baghdad Protection Div)	225	652	290	1
6 Div 1 BDE (Baghdad)	174	190	109	0
6 Div 2 BDE (Baghdad)	174	204	117	0
6 Div 3 BDE (Baghdad)	174	211	121	0
6 Div 4 BDE (Baghdad)	174	211	121	0
6 Div 5 BDE (Baghdad)	174	0	0	-
<u>7th Division Total</u>	7290	2487	34	0
7 Div HQ	225	0	0	-
7 Div 1 BDE (Martyr Monument)	174	320	184	0
7 Div 2 BDE (Fallujah)	174	0	0	-
7 Div 3 BDE (Ramadi)	727	0	0	-
<u>8th Division Total</u>	6563	6751	103	1
8 Div HQ	225	176	78	0
8 Div 1 BDE (Diwaniyah)	174	105	60	0
8 Div 2 BDE (Hilla)	174	101	58	0
8 Div 3 BDE (Kut)	174	104	60	0
<u>9th Division Total</u>	4868	2524	52	2
9 Div (Tadji)	96	0	0	-
9 Div 1 st Mech BDE	96	345	359	0
9 Div 2 nd Armored BDE	96	0	0	-
9 Div 3 rd Mech BDE	96	0	0	-
<u>10th Division Total</u>	8191	5468	67	1
10 Div HQ (Basrah)	225	169	75	2
10 Div 1 BDE (Basrah)	174	345	198	1
10 Div 2 BDE (Al Samawah)	174	160	92	0
10 Div 3 BDE (Al Nasiriyah/Oor camp)	174	114	66	0
10 Div 4 BDE (Al Betairah Airport)	174	129	74	0
Iraqi Special Operations Forces				
SOF HQ	143	33	23	0
36 th Battalion	829	602	73	4
Iraqi C Task Force	451	290	64	0
Recce Company	190	49	26	0
SPT	354	64	53	3

III. Iraqi Navy

Iraqi Navy Force Structure

Iraqi Navy HQ	92	380	413	1
Iraqi Navy (Seamen)	231	191	83	0
Iraqi Navy (Infantry)	308	192	62	2

IV. Iraqi Air Force

Iraqi Air Force Structure	Air Force HQ	49	17	35	0
3 rd Squadron VIP	74	24	32	0	
23 rd Squadron Transport	144	113	78	0	
70 th Squadron Recce	84	36	43	0	
12 th Squadron Jet Ranger	66	13	20	0	
4 th Squadron Helo	97	0	0	-	
2 nd Squadron Helo	97	53	55	0	
96 th Squadron Recce	84	0	0	-	

Source: MNF-I

Problems and Progress in the Iraqi Special Security Forces

For reasons that have been discussed throughout this analysis, the progress of the Iraqi police continued to be considerably more mixed than that of the Iraqi Army and Security Forces. It varied sharply according to unit and the specific mission involved, and presented serious political problems. Although the special security forces in the Ministry of Interior became steadily more effective, many were recruited largely as Arab Shi'ite or Kutdishi forces, and some had large elements taken out of Arab Shi'ite or Kutdishi militias like the Badr Organization or Pesh Merga. These forces began to increasingly take reprisals against Arab Sunnis that went beyond actual terrorists and insurgents, and their very effectiveness made them a more serious political problem.

The largely Iraqi-created Special Police Commandos, for example, got high praise for their aggressiveness, effectiveness, and combat discipline. The 5,000-man force was formed by former Minister of Interior Falah al-Nqib, with the help of his senior US advisor, Steve Casteel, a former DEA official with extensive experience with narcoterrorism in Latin America. It was led by Adnan Thabit, a former "Ba'athist," and performed well in Mosul, Ramadi, Baghdad, and Samarra, and acquired a reputation for its toughness, although not for its gentleness and respect for human rights.²⁰⁰

In Baghdad, special police commandos under the command of Brig. Gen. Rashid Flaieh became embroiled in a controversy surrounding the deaths of 10 Sunni suspects in July 2005. Flaieh's commandos received fire from insurgents near Amariya. Though several of the commandos were injured, they returned fire and then pursued the fleeing gunmen. When General Flaieh took his wounded to the Noor Hospital, close to Abu Ghraib, an area known for its support of the insurgency, he was informed that several militants were being treated inside. According to General Flaieh, his men recognized 10 of those who had attacked them, restrained them, and put them into an "armored van."²⁰¹

It remains unclear whether the commandos were from the First Brigade as alleged by doctors or whether they were members of a paramilitary force called the Special Security force as General Flaieh maintains. The suspects were locked in the van for two hours according to the general, while witnesses said it was more like 12 hours. When the van was opened up, all 10 Sunnis, all members of the Zobaas and Dulaimi tribes known to be

involved in the insurgency, had suffocated. According to doctors who examined the bodies, the victims' bodies indicated that they had been subjected to electrical shock and cable beatings. General Flaieh denied that the suspects had been tortured and asserted that they had suffocated in the van due to a faulty air conditioner.²⁰² Virtually all of the details of the encounter were disputed by doctors, witnesses, and other policemen.

Doctors at the al Yarmouk hospital went on strike in July 2005 in protest over rough treatment at the hands of the Iraqi Army. According to medical staff, soldiers entered the hospital with their weapons, actions forbidden by a government order signed by Barham Saleh, pulled blankets off of women patients, and insulted the overnight doctor. The doctors demanded that the soldiers apologize to the doctor, that security be provided for all of the hospital's doctors, and that the MOD and MOI should rigidly enforce the prohibition of weapons in hospitals.

Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr responded to charges of detainee abuse by Iraqi soldiers in July by reiterating the fact that he had strengthened the office of the Inspector General. Jabr stated that he had empowered the Inspector General to investigate human rights abuses and allegations of corruption. The Inspector General was given the ability to bring charges against individuals involved in human rights abuses and instances of corruption. Lastly, the IG was instructed to inform the interior minister of all such cases. Jabr pointed out that the ministry had arrested individuals within the ministry who were found to have been involved in such instances.

In practice, however, Jabr tolerated ties between elements of his forces and groups like the Badr Organization that raised serious questions about the "national" character of these forces. They became increasingly linked to reports of attack on Sunni civilians, disappearances, and killings, and to abuses of Sunni detainees and prisoners. Reports also began to surface of Iranian advisors playing a covert role in such operations. The reports of killings and Iranian advisors were not confirmed by the end of 2005, but later in the year, it became all too clear that the MOI forces had played a major role in abusing and torturing Sunni detainees and prisoners.

The danger slowly increased that MOI and MOD forces, composed largely of Shi'ites would fail to attract Sunni support and be seen more as an instrument of oppression rather than an example of the rule of law. The goal is to create a force that reinforces the law and elicits respect from the Iraqi people, not an apparatus reminiscent of Saddam's police state.

Problems and Progress in the Iraqi Police

The police presented different problems. Training and equipping them generally had a lower priority than training and equipping either the Iraqi military or special security forces. It took much longer to embed Coalition training teams, and there were no Coalition units to pair police elements with. In most cases, the police had to be local and this presented serious problems in terms of ethnic, sectarian, and tribal loyalties. In Shi'ite areas, the police often formed alliances with Shi'ite militias and Shi'ite Islamist groups, sometimes tolerating or participating in the abuse of Sunnis. Kurdish police supported the Kurds. Sunni police tolerated or supported Sunni insurgents.

These problems were compounded by the fact that the central government trained and equipped police were often supplemented by large numbers of local police that were not reported in Coalition data, but played a major role on the ground. The situation was particularly bad in areas like Al Anbar where local police could not be trusted, and outside police were seen as occupiers or enemies in much the same way as the Coalition. The same was true in Shi'ite areas like Basra and Sadr city, where some police allied themselves with Shi'ite militias and others could not operate safely if they challenged the local religious groups or militias.

Corruption, passivity, and incompetence remained major problems in many areas, compounded by the lack of an effective national government presence, and working governance. Public opinion polls scarcely could accurately cover the country, but did warn that the police had considerably less public trust in some areas than the military, and gain trust of the dominant sect or ethnic group in others. Corruption and nepotism also remained serious problems in much of the police force in spite of MNSTC-I and Coalition efforts to change this part of the "culture" the police had developed under Saddam Hussein and previous governments.

General Abizaid and four other high ranking US officers gave briefings in late May 2005 that made it clear that they felt the police had fallen behind the regular military forces, and this meant Army units and elite units had to be used for security duties, rather than replacing Coalition forces in combat. They took an unusually public stance on the issue, and some warned that it would "take years" to make such Iraqi forces effective and deal with the insurgency.

They also stated that these problems with the police were a key reason why Iraqi forces could not participate actively in Operation Matador in April, the largest Marine offensive since Fallujah and a key effort to secure main routes in from Syria and the Syrian border area. They claimed the lack of troops was also a reason so many insurgents were able to disperse.²⁰³

At the same time, some of these problems had occurred because the police took the brunt of insurgent attacks, largely because they were more exposed and more vulnerable. According to Pentagon sources, the police took the vast majority of the 1,850 casualties in Iraqi forces that Department of Defense sources had counted as of mid-May 2005.²⁰⁴ Given the lack of training, equipment, facilities and leadership they began with, it is not surprising that there were many cases where police units had high desertion rates, huddled in their headquarters, or did not perform their duties. There were also cases where they performed actions like torturing three Shi'ite militiamen in their custody to death.²⁰⁵

Furthermore, the problems in the police were compounded by the lack of a retirement system under Saddam Hussein's government that meant older police, and even their widows, were carried as active to give them some income. Selection and promotion by favoritism, and bribe taking had become part of the police culture, as had passively waiting for complaints from victims, and then taking money from both the accused and complainant. The lack of a fully staffed financial management, manpower, and planning,

and financial control structure in the Minister of the Interior also added to these problems.

Improvements in Special Security and Police Readiness during the Summer and Fall of 2005

In spite of these problems, both the MOI security forces and police did continue to improve. Figures 23, 24, and 25 have already shown the improvement in training, and “trained and equipped” manpower exceed 91,000 in the early summer (including 58,764 police, 5,136 in the civil intervention force, 8131 police commando, 205 in the central Emergency Response Unit, 1,118 highway patrol, and 500 dignitary protection), and a tentative force goal of 135,000 men had been established. These figures did not include any men from the older Civil Defense Force, or any of the 74,400 men still assigned to the remnants of the relatively low grade Facilities Protection Service.

The Iraqi Special Police Force had made progress toward reaching a strength of some 56,000 men, although serious questions remained about how broadly-based its leadership and manpower were, and how many Sunnis were included:

- As of October 1, 2004, there were three Police Commando Battalions, no Public Order Battalions, and no Mechanized Police Battalions; this gave the Iraqi Special Police a total strength of only three battalions, none of which were rated as operational. All were deployed at Ar Rustamayiah in the greater Baghdad area. All were deployed at Ar Rustamayiah in the greater Baghdad area.
- As of May 30, 2004, the *operational strength* of the Iraqi Special police included nine Police Commando Battalions, 12 Public Order Battalions, 2 Mechanized Police Battalions and 4 Special Border Forces; this gave the Iraqi Special Police a total operational strength of 27 battalions. In addition, four more battalions were in training, including three Police Commando Battalions and 1 Mechanized Police Battalion. There were also 27 SWAT teams with an average of 27 men each. Forces were now deployed in the Mosul area, active in the greater Baghdad area, operating in Fallujah and Ar Ramadi, deployed at An Numaniyah and Scania, and beginning to deploy in the west in Al Anbar.

These efforts were backed by the same new “top down” approach to embedding trainers and partners in both the Ministry of the Interior and active regular police operations that was now being used in the military and special police. The previous training effort had been restructured to create both a Police Partnership Program (Ministry of the Interior), and an integrated Police Partnership Program (Provincial), called the P3(P), to work with the force in each province.

The MOI teams provided a core of trainers to help the Minister become more functional. The provincial or P3(P) teams were designed to give the police in each province a steadily higher degree of independence and eventually create the conditions for the disengagement of provincial Coalition forces. P3 teams with a nominal strength of ten men, covering the full range of necessary expertise in an integrated team, were being deployed to assist senior Iraqi police, and act as partners in staffing provincial headquarters. A total of 19 teams had been set up by June 2005, although the majority were still in the process of acquiring all the necessary manpower.

These teams operated from forward operating bases near the headquarters and helped police leaders to deal with key problems such as logistics, intelligence, financial accounting and contracts, budget planning and management, special police operations, counter-insurgency, and communications. By June 2005, there were over 480 such advisors active in the field. The goal was to maintain 500 posts and build toward 600, while developing an effective liaison between their efforts and the work of Coalition forces.²⁰⁶

This improvement in training was accompanied by some improvement in leadership. Much of the old order at the top was gone, and many new leaders were men who had come from the army and who had strongly opposed the old system. By June 2005, 17 of the 18 provincial chiefs were ex-military.

There were also reports of the slow rebuilding of Iraqi police units in Mosul, and in its approaches like the town of Qayyarah on the Tigris and along the main Mosul to Baghdad highway. The area had become a major trouble spot after insurgents fled the battle of Fallujah, and police in the area had suddenly deserted in numbers that cut their strength from 2,000 to 50. By April 2005, however, many units were up to strength and the police were actively patrolling the area.²⁰⁷

The Creation of Specialized Police Units

A major crimes unit was being established that actually investigated, rather than simply put people in jail. Police elements were slowly being rebuilt in cities like Fallujah, Mosul, Ramadi, and Bajji using manpower that was taken from outside the region and less subject to influence and intimidation. Efforts were underway to reduce favoritism, provide proper pay, eliminate corruption, and provide the kind of entry and lower level training that had been totally missing in the regular police force under Saddam Hussein. While illiteracy had not been eliminated, it was being reduced.

The Iraqi people were coming into stations in larger numbers, providing more intelligence, and using telephone tiplines. The result was a major improvement in regular police capabilities in 14 of Iraq's 18 provinces.

The CPATT and Ministry of Interior had also developed reporting systems designed to measure the readiness of the regular police, and their levels of manning and equipment, similar to those used for military units. These included detailed monthly police station reports, which covered manning, training, readiness, and equipment. Personnel quality was surveyed in depth, including activities like prisoner rights and human rights, and property accountability.

These were used to develop summaries of police activity by province. For example, the May report on police stations in Baghdad Province for May 2005 scored leadership at 51 percent, station manning at 72 percent, personnel status at 92 percent, training at 75 percent, effectiveness at 74 percent, force protection at 74 percent, equipment at 86 percent, and facilities at 86 percent. Detailed assessments were made within each category, and the reports include data on crime rates and detainees. There had been 86 insurgent attacks on stations in Baghdad Province in May; 102 police were killed in

action and 257 were wounded, and the stations held 689 detainees, 56 percent of which were rated as non-violent.²⁰⁸

These provincial reports include detailed equipment counts and comparisons against authorized holdings, analysis of force protection systems, percentage data on the adequacy of training by rank, analyses of intelligence capabilities, and analysis of financial management capabilities. There was also an independent assessment by the provincial chief of police. Each province was then rated according to the same four levels of readiness used for the military and special police units.²⁰⁹

This system was still in the process of implementation in the early summer of 2005, but it again showed that major progress had been made, and that a serious attempt to establish real-world readiness standards was underway.

The Iraqi Border Forces

The Iraqi Border Police were still a largely hollow force as of the early summer of 2005, but efforts were underway to increase their numbers, improve their training and equipments, give them better facilities, and create a new chain of forts along the Iraqi-Syrian border. A tentative force goal of some 40,000 men was shown on their organization charts, although the border enforcement forces only had 15,583 actives, and the Iraqi BDP only had 500 men assigned for an authorized strength of 2,760.²¹⁰

While Muhammed Sabr in the Iraqi Department of Border Enforcement called his men “desert wolves,” this scarcely seemed to be the case. Interviews and Press reports indicated their performance was weak on the Jordanian, Saudi, and Iranian borders, and very weak on the Syrian border. One press report indicated that some Border forts had lost some 80 percent of their manning, lacked weapons, furniture, and even uniforms. Some had been looted and others destroyed by insurgents. Of the 32 border forts originally planned for Al Anbar Province, many had not been completed, others abandoned, and many were badly understaffed. Trucks (and men) routinely entered Iraqi illegally for small bribes.²¹¹

The Department of Defense touched on some of these problems in its July 2005 reporting on the force:²¹²

To date, more than 15,500 Border Police have been trained. The Border Police receive training in small unit patrolling, vehicle search, personnel search, rights of the individual, life saving, Iraqi Border Law, handling of detainees, and weapons. Border police equipment includes Chevy Luv pick-up trucks, mid-size SUVs, Nissan pick-up trucks, AK 47s, PKC machine guns, Glock pistols, HF radios, and body armor.

Currently, the ISF do not have a system in place to track the Border Police’s readiness and capabilities. The goal is for each member and station to be equipped with mission-essential equipment. No estimate exists on the percentage of desertion and absenteeism, although we know that the Border Police has experienced a significant rate of attrition. The extent of insurgent infiltration varies by province. In some areas of the border, there appears to be a high level of insurgent infiltration.

The effectiveness of the Border Police officer cadres and the chain of command varies widely but is generally moderate to low. An effort has been ongoing to energize the Border Police leadership and recruit for the Border Police Academy.

Some border forces were, however, beginning to get the training they needed. Border forts and facilities were largely complete in the eastern border area with Iran, and facilities and equipment were being improved in the north and south. While any such plans had to be tentative, the strength of the Border Defense Force Battalions had already risen sharply and plans for further expansion were under way. These plans are shown in Figure 29. Iraq was increasing the number of regional headquarters from 5 to 8, and planned to establish 16 regional brigade headquarters to provide better coordination and direction. It had created a central headquarters and training academy and three regional training academies.²¹³

The MNC-I, MNSTC-I, and MOD were working to help Iraq regain control of its borders in the tough spots (primarily the border with Syria) as soon as possible. This effort was in its early stages, but reconstruction of the border forts in those areas, generation of additional border guards, generation of additional Iraqi Army units, and support for the Ports of Entry (where Department of Homeland Security Border Support Teams now provided some support) were all underway.

Iraq's First Special Border Force Battalion was operating on the Syrian border in western Anbar Province by the summer of 2005. The Second Battalion completed training in early February and has begun its deployments, and a third completed training in March. Construction on new facilities in the West was underway.

Border Transition Teams were to begin linking up with Iraqi Border Guard units in August and September, and were already in Iraq and completing their final preparations. This too was a large and complex effort, but was at least underway and may help reduce the number of foreign suicide bombers and movement of funds/leaders. It will also have an impact on smuggling, which saps some of Iraq's economic power. It will, however, require additional equipment and technology, such as backscatter X-ray machines (already finding contraband at the Ports of Entry) and the PISCES system (which requires significant database development to be effective in the mid-term).

In short, the border forces still had a long way to go, but the situation was getting better.

Figure 29**Iraq Border Defense Battalion Deployments**

Border Defense Battalions by Region	Actual	<u>Planned Additional Units</u>		
	<u>March 05</u>	<u>July 05</u>	<u>Jan 06</u>	<u>August 06</u>
Syrian Border	4-5	4	2	2
Jordanian Border	2	-	-	1
Saudi Border	7	-	1	1
Kuwaiti Border	2-3	-	-	1
Iranian Border	12-13	-	3	8
Turkish Border	7-8	-	-	1
Total Additional	NA	4	10	24
Total Active at Time Shown	36	40	46	60

The Issue of Financing

By the summer of 2005, Iraqi forces had grown to the point where financing was beginning to be a major issue, particularly to those Iraqi officials who were concerned with how the Iraq forces should be shaped and self-financed once the insurgency was largely over.

By mid-May of 2005, some \$6.21 billion had already been made available for Iraqi force development, of which only \$1.0 billion had come from Iraqi funding and \$5.21 billion from US appropriated funds. Some \$5.41 billion of this funding was to be executed in programs run by MNSTC-L. The accounting for these funds was anything but neat, but Figure 30 shows where the money went in broad terms and what the key priorities were during the initial stages of Iraqi force development.

In terms of ongoing funding priorities, money had to be allocated to projects like creating a standardized battalion table of organization and equipment (TO&E), fielding a mechanized division and motorized division, creating a fourth Special Police Commando brigade, and enabling Iraqi Army units to occupy uncovered Coalition bases. The MNF had also worked with the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior to identify some \$5.7 in proposed funding, including \$2.6 billion for the MOD, \$1.4 billion for the MOI, \$1.1 billion for construction, and \$180 million for quick reaction forces. In addition, \$409 million was to be diverted to such projects as the Jordan Training Center (\$99 million), improving Army operations and maintenance (\$210 million), and Tier 1 personal security detachments (\$100 million).

Key Ministry of Defense proposals included 39 projects. These included completing the 1st Mechanized Division, add a motorized division, adding sustainment including seven base units and a vehicle maintenance contract, buying more tactical communications equipment, and funding branch schools. They also included funding for more support units such as 3 division-level signal companies, 3 IS&R companies, 9 MP companies, and 5 motorized rifle regiments. It is notable that at this point funds were limited enough so that they could not buy five divisions worth of tactical communications equipment, support companies for some battalions, 18 oil security Battalions, and an additional Motor Transport Regiment.

Key Ministry of Defense proposals included 43 projects. These included life support systems, equipping and training 6 Police Commando Battalions, equipment and training for more personnel for Public Order Battalions, secure communications for major headquarters, training funding, and maintenance contracts for a variety of system. Funds were too limited to buy full equipment and training for the Department of Border Enforcement, an IT systems architecture for the Ministry, equipment to expand the Highway Patrol, equipment for two more Public Order Brigades, equipment and training for 15 Police Commando Battalions, UHF/HF radios, and expansion of the Mosul Academy. In addition, there were some 50 detailed construction projects for various elements of the military, security, and police forces.

At the same time, the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior still faced major problems in terms of planning and managing their resources. Both Ministries had several

problems in common. The overall structure of financial planning and management in each Ministry was weak, and the departments designed to control the flow of money had limited effectiveness. Coordination with the MNF-I and MNSTC-I was poor, and in critical areas like equipment purchases, there was little coordination. MNSTC-I could place one set of orders based on its force plans, and various elements of the MoD and MoI placed orders for different force plans on their own. The Ministry of Finance exercised little control, and there was little coordination of the Coalition aid effort and the Iraqi budget at the planning level and at any detailed level of fiscal control and responsibility.

The July 2005 report of the Inspector General of the Department of State and Department of Defense illustrates the practical impact of some of these problems on the Iraqi police services, but such problems affected both the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior, and every element of the Iraqi forces:²¹⁴

On the resource front, an immediate issue is the MOI budget. For FY05 (January 1–December 31, 2005), the MOI budget is adequate to fund salaries of 128,000 employees. Some time before this fieldwork, then IIG Prime Minister Allawi approved funding for 156,000. The Council of Ministers did not ratify this decision; hence, the Minister of Finance did not fund MOI's increased requirement. Meanwhile, present MOI personnel (both IPs and staff, the latter predominantly at MOI headquarters in Baghdad) number about 170,000. By training additional IPs, CPATT effectively exacerbates the budget shortfall.

A factor in the MOI's financial capability to sustain the growing IPS force is the considerable, though undetermined, number of 'ghost' employees on the ministry's roster. Although not productively engaged in the MOI's structure, these persons are, nonetheless, on the payroll. Some encumber sinecures for family or tribal members. Others are retired personnel who draw salaries in a socio-economic system without adequate—or any—pensions.

It is conceivable that the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) may allocate additional FY05 funds to the MOI. Absent such action, some Coalition officials opine that capital development funds could be shifted within the MOI budget to cover salary shortfalls, although the MOI Deputy Minister states categorically that shifting resources between funding 'chapters' is not possible. One senior Coalition official posits that, contingent on

Congressional approval of the DoD supplemental legislation and the requested \$5.7 billion additional training fund, the U.S. may be able to cover the prospective MOI budget deficit relative to IPS salaries. At best, this would be a stopgap measure. More importantly, the IG Team believes any such action would establish an unfortunate financial and political precedent.

...The Coalition IPS training program is capital intensive. Thus far, the U.S. Government has spent about \$190 million in building or renovating training facilities both at JIPTC and inside Iraq.¹³ By and large, the Coalition created the facilities. The MOI will inherit them. The Deputy Minister of Interior (Finance) told the IG Team that the "MOI has no funding in the Ministry's FY05 budget for police academies." Thus, the Coalition will bear the full cost of operating and maintaining these facilities. Yet to be determined are the costs for out-year operation and maintenance (O&M) and the MOI's determination and ability to shoulder those costs.

Corruption remained a major problem, particularly in the equipment and purchasing sections of the MoD, although the new government had made a major effort to clean up this aspect of the Ministry's operations and find more honest officials. The hiring of manpower within the services and the Ministries often far exceeded authorized levels, a problem compounded by phantom appointments, favoritism, and nepotism. In short, the progress in force development outpaced the ability to plan and allocate resources – a

problem that promised to be far more serious in the future as MoD and MoI expenditures put more and more strain on the budget, and the Coalition spent available aid funds.

It was also clear that these problems would create problems for the Iraqi government as it took over full responsibility from the MNF and MNSTC-I. The Iraqi government would have to exercise far tighter control over planning, costs, and expenditures to keep the cost of Iraqi forces within its budget. Aid would almost certainly diminish, while competing civil needs would take on higher priority as security improved. Iraq would also have to make hard choices in funding forces capable of defending its borders against potential foreign threat, as distinguished from forces focused on counterinsurgency. As was the case in virtually every aspect of Iraqi force development, “progress” was very different from “success” or “victory.”

Figure 30

Allocation of US Aid Funding to Iraqi Forces

(Millions of \$US Funded as of May 15, 2005)

<u>Category</u>	Initial IRRF: \$3.2 billion in <u>FY04 Supplemental</u>	IRRF Reallocation \$1.8 billion <u>In Reprogramming</u>
Iraqi Army Forces	1,600	-
Special Forces	-	67
Iraqi National Guard	241	84
Basing	-	320
Quick Reaction Force	-	80
Iraqi Police Service	1,040	-
Jordan Training, International Police Advisors	600	-
Specialized Police Training, Adnon Palace	200	-
Specialized Police infrastructure	-	50
Public training and facilities	161	81
BDP/ERU expansion; addition 45,000 IPS officers	-	500
Construction	-	166
Border Enforcement (DBE)	280	-
DBE Border Forts	-	64
Additional 20,000 DBE officers	-	127
Facilities Protection Service (FPS)	73	-

Source: MNSTC-I, Iraqi Security Forces Fund Requirements Review, May 15, 2005.

X. Iraqi Military and Security Forces after the October 15, 2005 Constitutional Referendum

The constitutional referendum on October 15, 2005 approved the draft constitution, and laid the ground work for an election of a permanent government on December 15, 2005. It scarcely, however, united the country. The new draft constitution had many gaps that would have to be filled by the new legislature, and the debate has constantly raised many divisive issues like the nature of federalism, control over taxes and revenues, the role of religion in government, and the future control of oil resources. It did not deprive the insurgency of popular support, unite the country, or create the kind of political conditions that bridged ethnic and sectarian differences. It was more a prelude to future political struggle than a turning point.

It was also clear that Iraqi forces were still far from being able to takeover the bulk of the security mission, and were experiencing some serious ethnic and sectarian divisions. While progress continued to be made in the effort to recruit, train, and equip Iraqi forces - by steps rather than leaps -- the effort to stand up a self-sufficient ISF remained very much a work in progress and it was clear it would take at least several years.

On October 31, 2005, Iraq asked the United Nations Security Council to let the US-led multinational force remain in Iraq for another year, acknowledging that Iraq's own troops could not yet assure national security. Just a day later, Donald Rumsfeld, speaking at a Pentagon briefing, did not rule out the possibility of increasing U.S. presence in Iraq as the December election drew near.²¹⁵

The Bush Administration Announces its Strategy for Victory in Iraq and Iraqi Force Development

Enough progress was made to provide increasing hope that Iraqi force development would be a key part of a successful overall strategy in Iraq. President Bush stressed this progress when he reacted to negative US public opinion polls by giving a series of four speeches on Iraq before and after the December 15th election.

The Three Phase Strategy for Iraq

President Bush summarized his strategy for dealing with Iraq as follows in his speech on December 18th,²¹⁶

Reconstruction efforts and the training of Iraqi Security Forces started more slowly than we hoped. We continue to see violence and suffering, caused by an enemy that is determined and brutal - unconstrained by conscience or the rules of war.

Some look at the challenges in Iraq, and conclude that the war is lost, and not worth another dime or another day. I don't believe that. Our military commanders do not believe that. Our troops in the field, who bear the burden and make the sacrifice, do not believe that America has lost. And not even the terrorists believe it. We know from their own communications that they feel a tightening noose - and fear the rise of a democratic Iraq.

The terrorists will continue to have the coward's power to plant roadside bombs and recruit suicide bombers. And you will continue to see the grim results on the evening news. This proves

that the war is difficult - it does not mean that we are losing. Behind the images of chaos that terrorists create for the cameras, we are making steady gains with a clear objective in view.

America, our Coalition, and Iraqi leaders are working toward the same goal - a democratic Iraq that can defend itself ... that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists ... and that will serve as a model of freedom for the Middle East.

We have put in place a strategy to achieve this goal - a strategy I have been discussing in detail over the last few weeks. This plan has three critical elements.

First, our Coalition will remain on the offense - finding and clearing out the enemy ... transferring control of more territory to Iraqi units ... and building up the Iraqi Security Forces so they can increasingly lead the fight. At this time last year, there were only a handful of Iraqi army and police battalions ready for combat. Now, there are more than 125 Iraqi combat battalions fighting the enemy ... more than 50 are taking the lead ... and we have transferred more than a dozen military bases to Iraqi control.

Second, we are helping the Iraqi government establish the institutions of a unified and lasting democracy, in which all of Iraq's peoples are included and represented. Here also, the news is encouraging. Three days ago, more than 10 million Iraqis went to the polls - including many Sunni Iraqis who had boycotted national elections last January. Iraqis of every background are recognizing that democracy is the future of the country they love - and they want their voices heard...

Third, after a number of setbacks, our Coalition is moving forward with a reconstruction plan to revive Iraq's economy and infrastructure - and to give Iraqis confidence that a free life will be a better life. Today in Iraq, seven in 10 Iraqis say their lives are going well - and nearly two-thirds expect things to improve even more in the year ahead. Despite the violence, Iraqis are optimistic - and that optimism is justified.

In all three aspects of our strategy - security, democracy, and reconstruction - we have learned from our experiences, and fixed what has not worked. We will continue to listen to honest criticism, and make every change that will help us complete the mission.

...My fellow citizens: Not only can we win the war in Iraq - we are winning the war in Iraq... We are approaching a New Year, and there are certain things all Americans can expect to see. We will see more sacrifice - from our military ... their families ... and the Iraqi people. We will see a concerted effort to improve Iraqi police forces and fight corruption. We will see the Iraqi military gaining strength and confidence, and the democratic process moving forward. As these achievements come, it should require fewer American troops to accomplish our mission. I will make decisions on troop levels based on the progress we see on the ground and the advice of our military leaders - not based on artificial timetables set by politicians in Washington. Our forces in Iraq are on the road to victory - and that is the road that will take them home.

These speeches provided the first detailed explanation of US strategy for nation-building, stability operations, and force development since the fall of Saddam Hussein more than two years earlier. While they were political, and inevitably exaggerated success and understated risks, they clearly reflected an attempt to correct the Administration's initial grand strategic mistakes in going to war, and to take advantage of the very real successes now taking place in Iraqi force development.

The Details of the Bush "Security Track"

The Bush Administration summarized its views of this progress, as well as the details of the security track of its strategy, in a formal report it issued on November 30th. While it again focused on success and understated problems and risks, the report provided an in-depth explanation of US military strategy, and goals for Iraqi force development, that

both supplemented the President's speeches and provided clear benchmarks for judging future success:²¹⁷

Strategic Summary: Clear, Hold, Build

The security track is based on six core assumptions:

- First, the terrorists, Saddamists, and rejectionists do not have the manpower or firepower to achieve a military victory over the Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces. They can win only if we surrender.
- Second, our own political will is steadfast and will allow America to keep troops in Iraq—to fight terrorists while training and mentoring Iraqi forces—until the mission is done, increasing or decreasing troop levels only as conditions warrant.
- Third, progress on the political front will improve the intelligence picture by helping distinguish those who can be won over to support the new Iraqi state from the terrorists and insurgents who must either be killed or captured, detained, and prosecuted.
- Fourth, the training, equipping, and mentoring of Iraqi Security Forces will produce an army and police force capable of independently providing security and maintaining public order in Iraq.
- Fifth, regional meddling and infiltrations can be contained and/or neutralized.
- Sixth, while we can help, assist, and train, Iraqis will ultimately be the ones to eliminate their security threats over the long term.

Strategic Logic Behind the Security Track

We are helping the Iraqi Security Forces and the Iraqi government take territory out of enemy control (clear); keep and consolidate the influence of the Iraqi government afterwards (hold); and establish new local institutions that advance civil society and the rule of law in areas formerly under enemy influence and control (build).

- Efforts on the security track include offensive operations against the enemy, protection of key communication and infrastructure nodes, post-conflict stabilization operations, and the training, equipping, and mentoring of Iraqi Security Forces. Coalition transition teams are embedded in all Iraqi Army battalions to provide assistance and guidance when needed.

The model that works is clear—it is resource intensive, requires commitment and resolve, and involves tools across the civilian and military spectrum, including:

- The right balance of Coalition and Iraqi forces conducting offensive operations;
- Preparation for such operations through contact and negotiation between local and federal Iraqi government officials;
- Adequate Iraqi forces to provide security for the population and guard against future intimidation;
- Cooperation with and support for local institutions to govern after Coalition forces leave;
- Prompt disbursement of aid for quick and visible reconstruction;
- Central government authorities who pay attention to local needs.

How will this help the Iraqis—with Coalition support—defeat the enemy and achieve our larger goals?

- Offensive operations disrupt enemy networks and deprive enemy elements of safe havens from which they can rest, train, rearm, and plan attacks against the Coalition, the Iraqi government, and Iraqi civilians.
- Localized post-conflict operations—providing security, economic assistance, and support to civilian institutions in newly cleared areas—further isolate enemy elements from the rest of the population and give Iraqis space to participate in a peaceful political process.
- Infrastructure protection helps ensure that the Iraqi government can collect revenues and provide basic services to the people, which is critical to building confidence in the government and weaning support away from insurgents.
- Putting capable Iraqis forward in the fight increases the overall effectiveness of U.S.-Iraqi operations, as Iraqis are better able to collect intelligence and identify threats in their neighborhoods.
- As Iraqi forces become more and more capable, our military posture will shift, leaving Coalition forces increasingly focused on specialized counter-terrorism missions to hunt, capture, and kill terrorist leaders and break up their funding and resource networks.

Progress on the Security Track

Our clear, hold, and build strategy is working:

- Significant progress has been made in wresting territory from enemy control. During much of 2004, major parts of Iraq and important urban centers were no-go areas for Iraqi and Coalition forces. Fallujah, Najaf, and Samara were under enemy control. Today, these cities are under Iraqi government control, and the political process is taking hold. Outside of major urban areas, Iraqi and Coalition forces are clearing out hard core enemy elements, maintaining a security presence, and building local institutions to advance local reconstruction and civil society.
- Actionable intelligence is improving. Due to greater confidence in the Iraqi state and growing frustration with the terrorists, Saddamists, and rejectionists, Iraqi citizens are providing more intelligence to Iraqis and Coalition forces. In March 2005, Iraqi and Coalition forces received more than 400 intelligence tips from Iraqi citizens; in August, they received 3,300, and in September more than 4,700.
- Iraqi forces are growing in number. As of November 2005, there were more than 212,000 trained and equipped Iraqi Security Forces, compared with 96,000 in September of last year. In August 2004, there were five Iraqi army battalions in the fight; now more than 120 Iraqi army and police battalions are in the fight. Of these battalions, more than 80 are fighting side-by-side with Coalition forces and more than 40 others are taking the lead in the fight. More battalions are being recruited, trained, and fielded. In July 2004 there were no operational Iraqi brigade or division headquarters; now there are seven division and more than 30 brigade headquarters in the Iraqi army. In June 2004, there were no Iraqi combat support or service support battalions; now there are a half dozen operational battalions supporting fielded Iraqi units.
- Iraqi forces are growing in capability. In June 2004, no Iraqi Security Force unit controlled territory. The Coalition provided most of the security in Iraq. Today, much of Baghdad province is under the control of Iraqi forces, the cities of Najaf and

Karbala are controlled by Iraqi forces, and other Iraqi battalions and brigades control hundreds of square miles of territory in other Iraqi provinces. A year ago, the Iraqi Air Force had no aircraft; today its three operational squadrons provide airlift and reconnaissance support and Iraqi pilots are training on newly arrived helicopters. A year ago during the operation to liberate Fallujah, five Iraqi battalions took part in the fight. For the most part, they fell in behind Coalition forces to help control territory already seized by Coalition units. No Iraqi units controlled their own battle space. In September 2005, during Operation Restoring Rights in Tal Afar, eleven Iraqi battalions participated, controlling their own battle space, and outnumbering Coalition forces for the first time in a major offensive operation. Over the last six months, the number of patrols being conducted independently by Iraqi forces has doubled, bringing the overall percentage to nearly a quarter of all patrols in theater.

- Iraqis are committed to building up their security establishment. Despite repeated and brutal attacks against Iraqi Security Forces, volunteers continue to outpace an already substantial demand. In the past several months alone, nearly 5,000 recruits have joined from Sunni areas. In the recently cleared Tal Afar, more than 200 local volunteers have begun police training before returning to help protect their city. In Anbar, Sunnis have lined up to join the Iraqi army and police, planning to return to their home province and help protect it from terrorists.
- Iraqis are taking on specialized missions central to overall success. Four Strategic Infrastructure Battalions, with more than 3,000 personnel, have completed training and will soon assume the specific mission of guarding vital infrastructure nodes from terrorist attack. A Special Police Unit highly trained for hostage rescue has almost 200 operators and is conducting operations almost every week in Baghdad and Mosul. In the past several months, hundreds of Iraqi soldiers have undergone intensive special operations training and are now in the fight, hunting, killing, and capturing the most-wanted terrorist leaders.
- Iraq is building an officer corps that will be loyal to the Iraqi government, not a particular group or tribe. The Iraqi army now has three officer academies training the next generation of junior officers for its army. In September, NATO inaugurated a new military staff college in Baghdad that will eventually train more than 1,000 senior Iraqi officers each year. Today, however, the vast majority of Iraqi police and army recruits are being taught by Iraqi instructors. By training the trainers, we are creating an institutional capability that will allow the Iraqi forces to continue to develop and grow long after Coalition forces have left Iraq.

Continued Challenges in the Security Sphere

Even with this progress, we and our Iraqi partners continue to face multiple challenges in the security sphere, including:

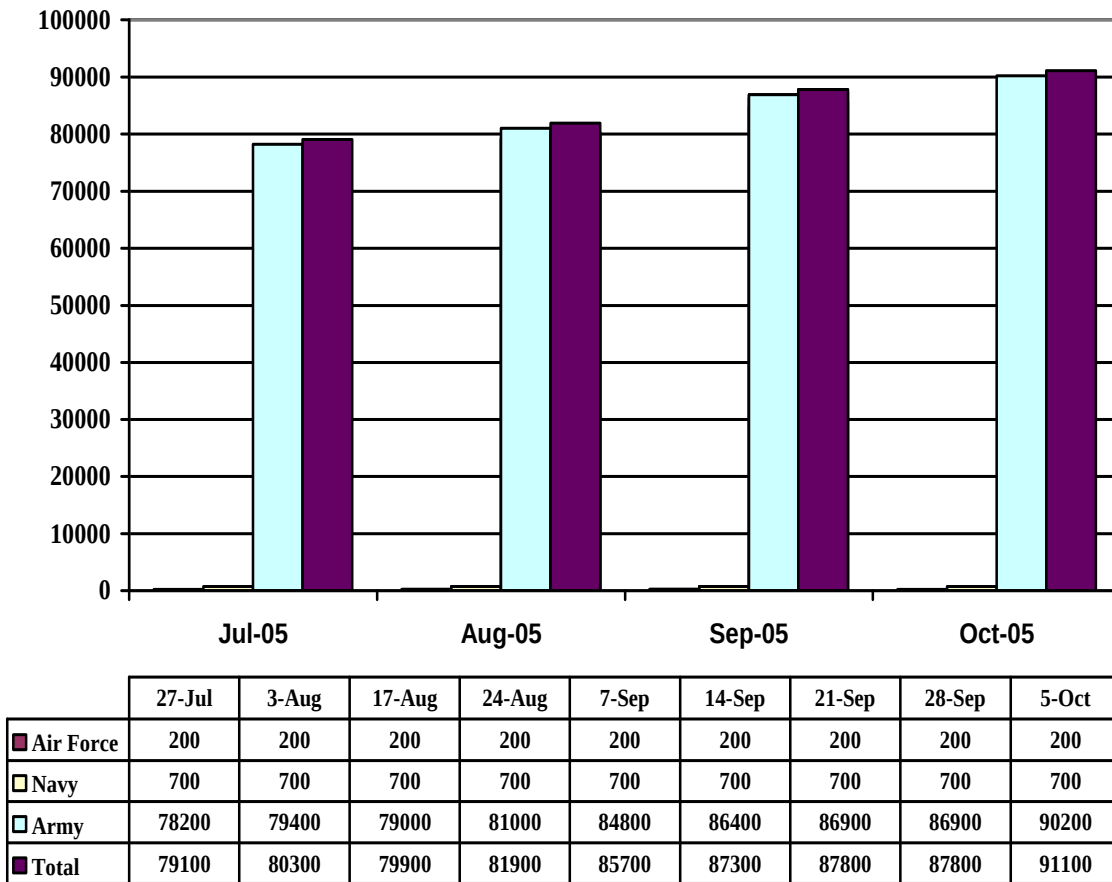
- Countering the intimidation and brutality of enemies whose tactics are not constrained by law or moral norms;
- Building representative Iraqi security forces and institutions while guarding against infiltration by elements whose first loyalties are to persons or institutions other than the Iraqi government;
- Neutralizing the actions of countries like Syria and Iran, which provide comfort and/or support to terrorists and the enemies of democracy in Iraq;
- Refining our understanding of the constantly changing nature of, and relationships between, terrorist groups, other enemy elements, and their networks;

- Addressing the militias and armed groups that are outside the formal security sector and central government command;
- Ensuring that the security ministries—as well as the fighting forces—have the capacity to sustain Iraq’s new army;
- Integrating political, economic, and security tools—and synchronizing them with Iraqi government efforts—to provide the best post-conflict operations possible.

Increasing Manning, Deployment Activity and Control of Battlespace

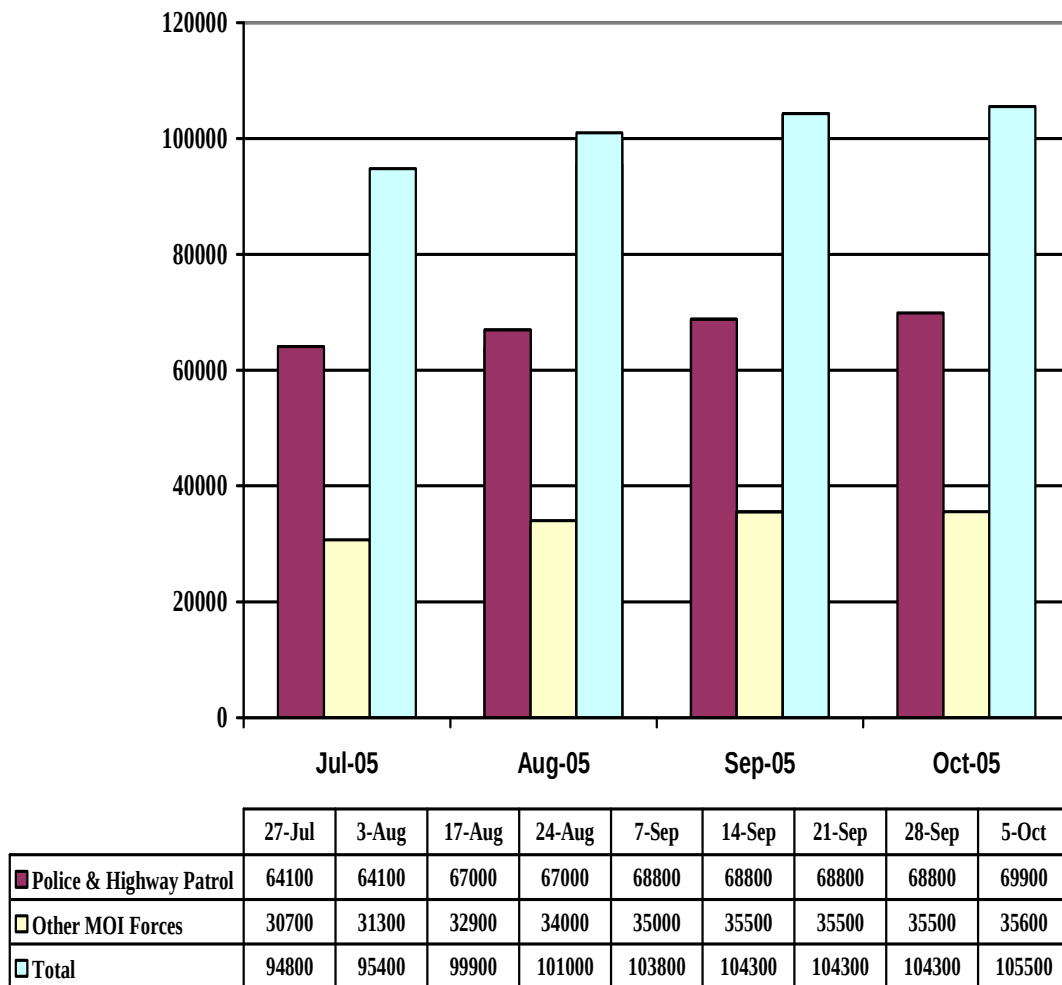
Whatever their omissions and understatements may have been, the President’s speeches and report were valid in claiming that there was continuing progress of some kind at virtually every level. The overall increases in force strength from 7/27/05 to 10/5/05 are shown in Figure 31 for the Ministry of Defense and Figure 32 for the Ministry of Interior. Both figures reflect a steady growth in total manpower strength, although the rate was slowing as the Iraqi and MNF-I effort was shifting from force creation to force development.

Figure 31:
Ministry of Defense Force Levels: 7/27/05 to 12/28/05



Source: Data drawn from Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Iraq Weekly Status Reports, US Department of State

Figure 32:
Ministry of Interior Force Levels: 7/27/05 to 12/28/05



Source: Data drawn from Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Iraq Weekly Status Reports, US Department of State.
 Note: Unauthorized absences personnel are included in these numbers

Progress in the Force Evaluation Matrix

At the same time, Iraqi units still fell short of Level 1 readiness; they all were rated either Level 2 or Level 3, and both US and Iraqi forces were conspicuously silent about the major differences in real world capability between the worst Level 3 and the best Level 3 forces. This lumping together of such forces provided some insight, because virtually all had *some* value. Many Level 3 units, however, had only very limited value, and some units seem to have been “rushed” into Level 3 status towards the end of the year so that President Bush and other US officials could claim as much success as possible during the speeches and statements issued in November and December 2005.²¹⁸

. During a September 30, 2005 press briefing, Gen. Casey explained that previous Coalition estimates that there were three Level 1 units actually counted one brigade with two battalions, and that these units failed to meet these re-adjusted standards upon re-evaluation. Upon re-evaluation, it was found that only one battalion out of 110 met standards for the top tier of readiness. In terms of troops, this means that no more than 750 troops out of some 200,000 were rated at Level 1.²¹⁹

Casey further explained, however, that a Level 1 readiness ranking was often a meaningless indicator for the effectiveness of combat battalions in all but the most demanding roles. Units that rated Level 2 and 3 were still functioning units, and that there was no fixed number of Level 1 units needed as a gauge for handing over the mission and withdrawing US troops. He cited the example of the September 2005 Tall Afar strike, which consisted of one US brigade, three Iraqi brigades, and an Iraqi infantry division.

Figure 33 shows that at the time of the Casey press briefing, slightly more than three dozen battalions were rated as capable of “taking the lead” in counterinsurgency operations, provided that the US providing advisory support, attacks helicopters, logistics and medical support, as well as combat troops.²²⁰ At the briefing, Donald Rumsfeld stressed that overall ISF growth was more important than trying to gauge success by shifting readiness assessments.

The effectiveness of battalions rated Levels 2 was significant in the vast majority of the missions Iraqi forces had to perform, and allowed Iraqi forces to become the more and more visible face Iraqis saw in day-to-day security operations -- a key factor in influence political perceptions and the feeling the new government was legitimate. At Level 2, battalions were capable of planning and successfully executing counterinsurgency operations, with minimal support of Coalition forces. Since 2004, the number of Army combat battalions had risen from zero to 88.

Casey also said that MNSTC-I was now focusing on building up combat enablers and logistic support within the regular forces, so as to increase the independence of MOD forces from Coalition assistance. Development of complementary combat support and combat service support continued at the tactical and operational levels. A multi-layered logistics system had been designed, was approved by the Multi-National Force-Iraq and the Ministry of Defense (MOD) in early 2005, and was being built. The system consisted of national-level supply contracts, regional and local base support units, motor transport

regiments in each division, and headquarters and services companies in each combat battalion. Because MOD does not yet have organic maintenance capability, MNSTC-I had implemented an interim national maintenance contract.²²¹

- Figure 33 shows the level at which MOD Iraqi battalions were participating in counterinsurgency operations as of 9/19/05.
- Figure 34 shows the estimated MOI special police force capabilities participating in counterinsurgency operations as of 9/19/05.
- Figure 35 shows MOD combat force capabilities by number of battalions taking the lead or operating independently in counterinsurgency operations.

Figure 35 shows a total of fully 36 were taking the lead in operations or fully independent by September, while 52 more were engaged in side-by-side fighting with Coalition forces. According to an October 2005 Executive report to Congress, their projected end strength was 131,000, with force generation to be completed by 2006.

It is not possible to provide an equally detailed breakout for the end of 2005, but the total number of battalions continued to rise quickly through the end of the year. President Bush gave a speech on December 18, 2005 stating that more than 125 Iraqi combat battalions fighting the enemy, and 50 were taking the lead. Ambassador Khalilzad stated that Iraqi forces had risen to 128 battalions by the end of December, with 75 fighting side-by side with coalition forces and 53 taking the lead in the fight.²²²

The President and Ambassador's totals present comparability problems because seem to have been the result of new assessment based on more optimistic assumptions than had been made in the past. Nevertheless, the number of MOD and MOI battalions capable of taking the lead by past Level 1-3 readiness standards still seemed to be around 50-55 by the end of 2005.

Figure 33
Estimated MOD Forces Capabilities as of 9/19/05

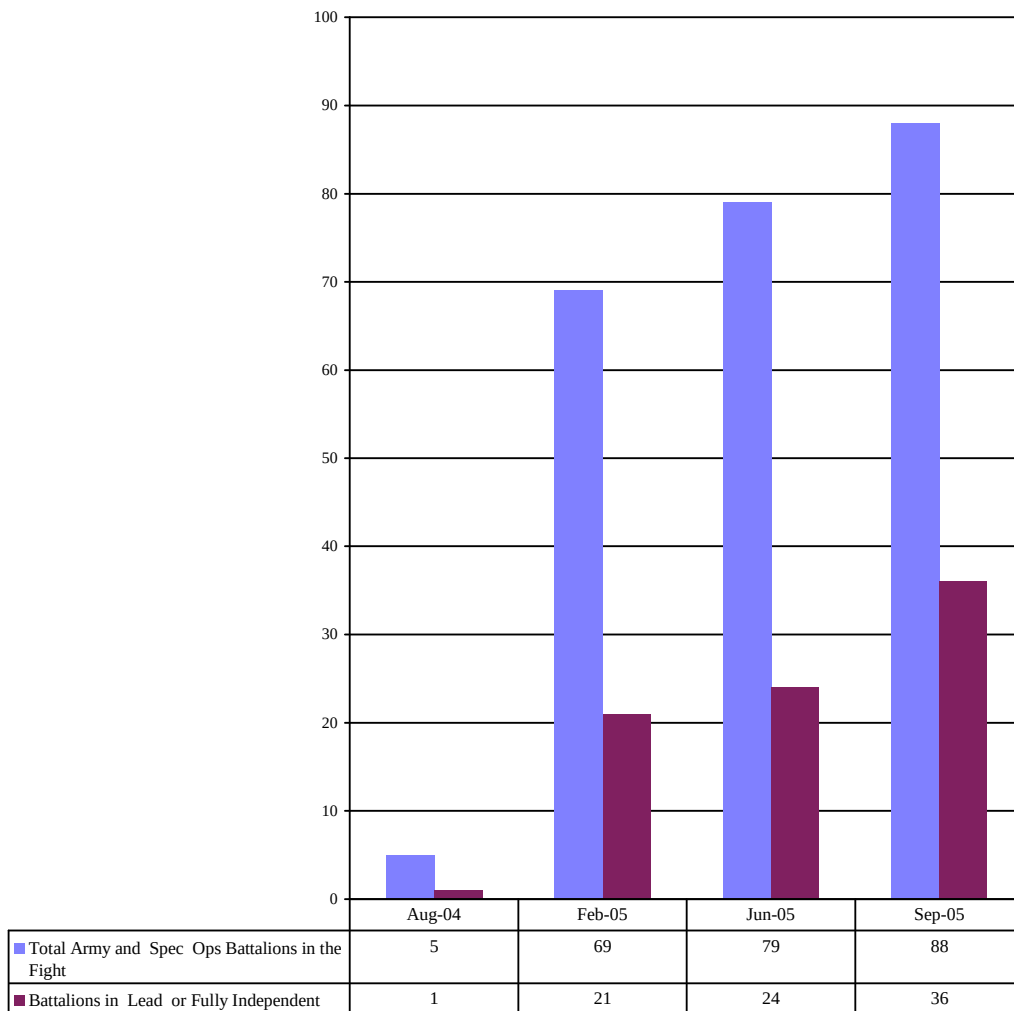
Component	Iraqi Units Actively Conducting Counterinsurgency Operations	
	Battalions Fighting Side by Side with Coalition Forces	Battalions in the Lead with Coalition Support or Fully Independent
Iraqi Army & Special Operation Combat Forces	52	36
	Iraqi Units Actively Supporting Counterinsurgency Operations	
Combat Support, Combat Service Support, and Training Units	2	3
Air Force	0	3
Navy	0	2

Source: Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, October 2005

Figure 34
Estimated MOI Special Police Forces Capabilities as of 9/19/05

Component	Iraqi Units Actively Conducting Counterinsurgency Operations	
	Battalions Fighting Side by Side with Coalition Forces	Battalions in the Lead with Coalition Support or Fully Independent
Public Order Battalions	12	0
Mechanized Battalions	2	1
Special Police Commando Battalions	12	0
Emergency Response Unit	0	1

Source: Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, October 2005. **Note: For conventional police forces, transition readiness has not yet been assessed.**

Figure 35**MOD Combat Forces Capability: Battalions in the Lead or Fully Independent**

NOTE: Includes Special Operations Forces but does not include combat support or combat service support units.
 Source: Adapted from "Measuring Stability in Iraq," October 2005, pp. 30 & 31

Growing Control of “Battlespace”

The rapid increase in the rate of Iraqi deployments was also reflected in reporting by General Casey. He noted that Iraqi Security Forces had conducted about 160 combined or independent operations at the company level and above in May 2005. By September, that number was up to 1,300. Casey further stated that some 60,000 to 70,000 more Iraqi forces would be available to provide security during the October 15 referendum than were available during the January 2005 elections, and that this number would increase to 100,000 more Iraqi security force personnel by the time of the next parliamentary election on December 15, 2005. The growth was so significant, he said, that he only had to ask for an additional 2,000 troops to help protect the October 2005 referendum and December election progress, compared to 12,000 in January for the first election.²²³

The Coalition continued to transfer more “battlespace” in relative secure areas to Iraqi forces. For example, the U.S.-led multinational force in Iraq officially handed over military control of parts of central Baghdad to the Iraqi Army’s Sixth Division in October 3, 2005. The move transferred control of security responsibilities for the Karkh and Rasafa districts. Figure 36 shows Iraqi National Force deployments by location between July 1, 2004 and October 19, 2005. This figure shows an increase in deployed battalion strength from 6 battalions in two cities in early July to 45 battalions in 11 cities in mid-October.

Once again, there are inconsistencies in some of the reporting on these developments. Ambassador Khalilzad described progress by the end of the year as “More than 30 battalions have assumed control of their own areas of responsibility, including about 60% of Baghdad, and significant zones in other parts of the country.”²²⁴ This total appears to be lower than that in Figure 36, but it clearly is a more selective figure. Other reporting of Iraqi control of battlespace showed a steady rise in the areas covered between October and end December.

During this time, MNSTC-I continued to help Iraq fill out the mix of force capabilities needed for battle management, combat and service support, and logistics and other aspects of sustainability as part of its effort to enable a fully independent ISF. One key to this effort was the creation of a competent officer corps with all the necessary specialized training, another was the creation of working combat support and combat service support capabilities, as well as the attendant specialize support and logistical training. Figure 37 provides data on the numbers of ISF personnel who had received or were receiving CS and CSS training as of November 2005.

Transfer of Bases Back to Iraqi Forces and Coalition Force Cuts

The Coalition continued to transfer control of its bases to Iraqi command. For example, the US Army handed over its base in Najaf, giving Iraqis full control of the city on September 6, 2005. On September 28, 2005, the US handed over its base in Karbala, south of Baghdad, giving Iraqis full control of the city.

President Bush stated on December 18, 2005 that, “we have transferred more than a dozen military bases to Iraqi control.” Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld stated in a press conference on December 23rd that the US had now transferred some 17 bases to Iraqi

forces, and that United States has not discussed basing American troops in Iraq, and would do so only following negotiations with the new Iraqi government. He stated that, "At the moment, there are no plans for long-term bases in the country."²²⁵

Secretary Rumsfeld said any discussion of such bases would take place with the permanent government, but that the US been working with successive transitional governments about the nature of American presence in the country. He also said that the US would base troops in the nation only if it would be mutually beneficial, and he did not know if the Iraqi people would even want American forces to remain after the mission is complete. If they were to want American forces to remain, he said still did not envision any permanent presence, and any such force would have to fit in to the overall US global basing strategy.

US officials continued to avoid the establishment of a timeline for withdrawal. Visiting with US troops in Iraq on December 23, Donald Rumsfeld announced adjustments in troop deployments that would reduce the number of forces in Iraq by the spring of 2006 to below the current high of 160,000. Rumsfeld said that troop levels would drop below the 138,000 baseline with further reductions to be considered in 2006. On the same day, the Pentagon announced that total US combat brigades deployed to Iraq would drop from 17 to 15.²²⁶ Neither Rumsfeld nor any other official set a goal or schedule for Coalition troop reductions during the rest of the year.

The public statements of Iraq and Arab officials continued to stress early Coalition withdrawals. At a reconciliation conference in Cairo on November 21st, sponsored by the Arab League, Iraq's political factions jointly called for a timetable for withdrawal of foreign forces. The conference was comprised of about 100 Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish leaders, many of whom were running in the December 15 election.

This statement, however, was seen more as a gesture by the Shiites to the Sunni population than a serious political move. While Sunni demands for rapid withdrawal had strong public support strong among Sunnis, Shiites had long favored milestones rather than timetables for withdrawal. The final text of the statement also did not specify when this proposed timetable for withdrawal should begin.²²⁷ With some notable exceptions like the Moqtada Al Sadr, most Shiite leaders continued to accept the idea that US withdrawal should only follow the establishment of an effective ISF.

Figure 36
Iraqi National Force Deployment: 1 July 2004 vs. 19 October 2005
(in Numbers of Combat and Support Battalions)

Location	1 July 2004	19 October 2005
Baghdad (Greater Area)	0	4
Baquba (CE)	0	4
Fallujah (CS)	0	6
Hillah (CS)	0	2
Al Kasik (NW)	0	6
KMTB (CE)	3	3
Mosul (NC)	0	1
Numaniyah (CS)	0	3
Ramdi (CW)	0	11
Taji (SC)	3	5
Tal Afar (NW)	0	3

Source: Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq" of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, October 2005

Figure 37
Number of ISF Personnel Who Received CS/CSS Training as of November 2005

Combat Support Courses	
Intelligence	795
Engineers	866
Signal	582
MPs	748
Combat Service Support Courses	
Bomb Disposal	207
Transportation	1971
Maintenance	790
Supply	667
Logistics Officer	250
Medical	498
Administration	369
Instructor Training	615

Source: MNSTC-I, November 2005

Ongoing Force Developments

The following major force developments were taking place in the different forces under the command of the two ministries.

- *Ministry of Defense*

- In September of 2005, the Ministry of Defense continued to take over more training functions from the Coalition, including three Regional Training Centers. By this time, the MOD was in charge of the Iraqi Army Service and Support Institute (formerly the Combat Service and Support School), the Military Intelligence School, the Military Police School, and the Engineering School. These Iraqi-led schools and training centers were meant to better enable Iraqis to continue improvements in their ability to provide tactical logistical support and combat enablers to the combat battalions.

- *Ministry of Interior*

- By the fall of 2005, that force had grown to nearly 10,000 commandos trained and equipped, with 2,000 coming online between July and September of 2005. This placed MNSTC-I ahead of its projection to train and equip 9,800 Commandos by the October 15 referendum. The Government of Iraq had authorized a total force of more than 11,800 Commandos, which MNSTC-I planned to train and equip by May 2006.²²⁸
- By September 2005, a total of 67,500 Iraqi Police Service IPS members had been trained and equipped, an increase of 5,500 since July 2005. This fell behind due course for 75,000 IPS trained and equipped by the time of the October 15, projected by MNSTC-I. However, MNSTC-I maintained that it would still reach its full-authorized complement of 135,000 IPS by February 2007.
- By September 2005 more than 44,400 police recruits had completed the eight-week basic police training at the Jordan International Police Training Center and the Baghdad Police College, as well as seven smaller regional academies. The police training curriculum was increased between July and September 2005, and new police academy graduates were receiving informal mentoring from veteran Iraqi police. Some IPS station commanders still question the adequacy of initial training, but they are continuing training at the station level.²²⁹
- As of September 2005, there were 28 Special Police Force battalions capable of combat operations, an increase of 13 since July 2005. Along with the Iraqi Army, the Special Police Commandos and the Public Order Police contributed to operations in Tal Afar, and the 1st Special Police Mechanized Brigade was assigned to provide route security to reduce the incident of insurgent attacks along the highway from the International Zone to Baghdad International Airport.²³⁰
- The Government of Iraq had authorized a total force of more than 28,300 Border Police, which MNSTC-I plans to train and equip by May 2006. These forces are organized into 36 battalions that will man the 258 border forts around Iraq. As of September 20, 152 forts had been completed, with a total of 250 projected to be reconstructed or renovated by November 30, 2005; all border fort construction is scheduled to be complete by January 2006. To stem the flow of foreign fighters from Syria, priority was given to work on the Iraqi-Syrian border in the summer of 2005.²³¹

- *Other*

- NTM-I completed instructor training for 24 Iraqis in July 2005. The class included nine Iraqi colonels and 15 lieutenant colonels. Eighty-eight Iraqi students started pilot Joint Staff College courses on September 25.²³²
- On September 27, 2005 Dr Ibrahim Jaafari, Prime Minister of Iraq, and Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO, opened a new staff college for the Iraqi army, in Rustimiyah in southeast Baghdad. They were accompanied by the Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jaber, the head of the Iraqi armed forces, Gen Babiker Zebari and the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, US Marine General James Jones. The College began courses that day for 90 trainees drawn from the rank of major and lieutenant colonel in the Iraqi army. The courses were being given by Iraqi trainers supported by NATO trainers.

Operational Developments and Chronology

The following chronology records operational progress and setbacks for the Iraqi security forces during this period:

- **October 15, 2005**—In Baghdad, a suicide car bomber drives his vehicle into a truck carrying Oil Ministry staff, killing at least 6 people and wounding 14. Two of those killed were policemen and most of the remaining victims were from the Oil Ministry. Unconfirmed incidents were also reported in Basra and Ramadi. A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi military convoy east of Baquba kills 3 soldiers and wounds 3. In Latifiyah, mortars land on a checkpoint overnight, killing 3 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 2. Two police units open fire on each other outside a polling station in the Amil district of Baghdad. Four civilians are wounded by the gunfire. In the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad, police injure 1 woman and 1 man in separate incidents in which police suspected insurgent activity. One policeman is wounded when 3 roadside bombs targeting a police patrol are detonated in the Amiriyah district of Baghdad. In Hilla, police defuse a car bomb with 12 mortar rounds. Joint U.S. and Iraqi troops engage in clashes with insurgents using mortars, rockets, and machine guns in the Ramadi province.
- **October 16, 2005**—In Fallujah, gunmen throw grenades into a market, resulting in the deaths of 2 Iraqi soldiers. Three additional soldiers are wounded by the attack. U.S. and Iraqi army troops conduct a joint operation in Mahmudiyah, killing 11 insurgents and arresting 57. Militants assassinate Colonel Saad Abbas Fahil, a security advisor at the Iraqi Interior Ministry, in front of his home in the Saydiya district of Baghdad. His son, who was also present at the time of the attack, was wounded.
- **October 17, 2005**—In Kirkuk, gunmen kill two Iraqi police officers. In Baiji, a roadside bomb strikes a joint U.S.-Iraqi army patrol, killing 2 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 7. Police discover the bodies of 8 men who appeared to have died from gunshot wounds to head. All of the men are believed to be Iraqi soldiers.
- **October 18, 2005**—In the al-Wasiti district of Kirkuk, militants ambush a group of Iraqi army soldiers, killing 1 soldier and wounding 3. Talib al-Dulaimi, Deputy Governor of the Anbar province, is killed along with his bodyguard in Ramadi.
- **October 19, 2005**: In Baghdad, militants kill Muhsin Chitheer, a former Iraqi Army lieutenant colonel under Saddam Hussein. Elsewhere in Baghdad, gunmen fire upon a police checkpoint near the Hai Al-Adil highway, killing 4 police officers and wounding 11. Differing reports on the same incident indicated that there had been 3 police deaths and 2 policemen wounded. A firefight lasting several hours ensued. In the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad, 2 Iraqi police commandos die and 3 are wounded in clashes between security forces and insurgents. A roadside bomb in Fallujah kills 2 Iraqi soldiers and injures 2. Iraqi security forces set up checkpoints in Dujail ahead of the trial of Saddam Hussein. A member of the Kurdish Peshmerga militia is wounded, along with 2 other unidentified individuals, by a car bomb in Kirkuk. Iraqi security forces arrest Yasser Sabawi Ibrahim, an ousted nephew of Saddam Hussein, on suspicion of helping to finance the insurgency in Iraq by channeling funds from family members abroad. The arrest comes several days after he was forced back into Iraq from Syria by Syrian authorities. Iraqi police arrest a car bomb maker in Kirkuk, after discovering a wired vehicle containing 2 mortar rounds, 2 Katusha rockets, and TNT.

Militants open fire on a joint U.S.-Iraqi patrol in Hit. Iraqi police subsequently arrest 9 men who all tested positive for explosives residue.

- **October 20, 2005:** In Baquba, a policeman is wounded when a suicide car bomb detonates his explosives in front of a government building. The incident also causes 3 civilian deaths and 13 injuries, as well as damage to the government building, 10 nearby shops, and a parked car. Elsewhere in Baquba, a second suicide bomber targets a police checkpoint; however, no casualties are reported. British Army chief General Sir Mike Jackson gives a statement to the BBC, indicating that militia elements have infiltrated the police force in Basra, and implicates some degree of involvement on the part of Iran. Gunmen shoot and kill 1 Iraqi soldier in Baiji. In the Dora district of Baghdad, insurgents kill an Iraqi intelligence officer on his way to work. Three of his guards are wounded. Also in Baghdad, a mortar round lands on a school, killing a child and 2 guards, and wounding 4 children. Armed men in Iraqi army uniforms kill a man and his 2 sons in an attack on a house in Iskandariya. Other gunmen dressed as policemen kidnap the head of a concrete company in the al-Mansour neighborhood of Baghdad. In Khalis, a suicide car bomber driving an old military fuel truck detonates his explosives near the base for Iraqi rapid reaction forces, killing 1 Iraqi police officer and wounding 8. Another suicide car bomber targets a coalition convoy in Diyala traveling to a nearby compound. Four Iraqi civilians die from the attack, and 13 Iraqis are wounded, including 3 policemen. Firefights between insurgents and Iraqi Army and U.S. forces break out in the streets of several different districts in Ramadi, killing at least 1 civilian and wounding 1. Militants kill 5 policemen in a drive-by shooting in Karmah. In Abayachi, an Iraqi Army patrol confiscates a roadside IED consisting of a 130 mm round with a radio-controlled ignition device.
- **October 21, 2005:** In northern Baghdad, gunmen open fire on a minibus, killing 3 Iraqi army soldiers and wounding 4 Iraqi police commandos.
- **October 22, 2005:** In southern Baghdad, a roadside bomb targets an Iraqi police patrol in the Al-Madaan area, killing 1 policeman. Also in southern Baghdad, a roadside bomb kills a second policeman in an unrelated attack. Mortar fire in the western Al-Yarmouk area of Baghdad injures a third Iraqi policeman. Ansar al-Sunna announces the slaying of 6 Iraqis, including 4 contractors working for the U.S. and 2 members of the National Guard—1 in Ramadi and 1 in Mosul. On Jaffa Street in central Baghdad, Iraqi security forces engage in a confrontation with militants, and subsequently arrest 6 of the insurgent fighters. Two Iraqi soldiers are wounded during the clash. Iraqi soldiers in Ramadi seize and detonate a car wired with bombs.
- **October 23, 2005:** In central Baghdad, a car bomb targets an Iraqi police patrol, killing 4 people, at least 2 of which were policemen, and injuring 13, including at least 1 policeman. In Tahrir Square in downtown Baghdad, a suicide bomber drives his vehicle into 2 police vehicles, killing 2 policemen and 2 civilians, and wounding 11 others. In Tikrit, a bomb kills a police colonel and his 4 children in front of their house. The explosion sparks a fire in nearby oil tanker, destroying the colonel's house as well. East of Tikrit, near Baquba, a series of drive-by shootings results in the deaths of 1 police colonel, 3 civilians, and a Shi'ite student-cleric. The Iraqi police find a potential IED in Al Bayaa. The device contained a 120 mm shell with TNT and small bottles of gas with nails.
- **October 24, 2005:** In the Al Shaab neighborhood of Baghdad, a car bomber targeting an Iraqi police patrol kills 2 Iraqis and wounds 5. Elsewhere in Baghdad, gunmen kill an Iraqi soldier and a girl standing in front of her nearby house in an attack on an Iraqi army checkpoint in the western part of the city. Two other Baghdad attacks include a drive-by shooting that kills a policeman, and a roadside bomb that fatally wounds 2 policemen. In Kirkuk, a roadside bomb detonates near the convoy of Ibrahim Zangana, a senior member of the Kurdish Democratic Party. The blast seriously wounds Zangana, as well as killing 1 of his bodyguards and injuring another. Also in Kirkuk, an Iraqi policeman dies after a car bomb explodes near his patrol. One policeman is fatally shot in a drive-by incident in Mosul. In eastern Baghdad, a car bomb targeting a police patrol destroys the targeted patrol car and wounds 5 Iraqis. A suicide car bomber detonates his explosives near a police checkpoint in Mussayyib. The blast wounds 1 police officer and 1 civilian. A triple bomb series in Baghdad targets the Palestine Hotel, which houses many foreign reporters. The attack was partially foiled by Iraqi security forces, as the drivers of the third car bomb did not make it all the way to the hotel before their explosives were detonated; however, several passers-by were killed. Police reported that all 3 explosions stemmed from car bombs, but a journalist claimed that the first 2 were rockets. Casualty reports also differed, with the U.S. announcing 6 civilian deaths and 15 wounded,

and Iraqi national security advisor Mouwafak al-Rubaie reporting at least 20 deaths (including 4 or 5 police officers) and 40 wounded. Al-Rubaie also announced his belief that the attack was an attempt to take over the hotel and claim hostages, although Deputy Interior Minister Hussein Kamal disputed this theory.

- **October 25, 2005:** In Baghdad, a policeman is killed in a drive-by shooting. This incident was the only one specifically described in Baghdad, although reports indicated that a series of 3 bombs and 5 shootings killed a total of 2 people (the policeman and a young boy) and wounded 34 Iraqis, most of whom were police officers. A drive-by shooting in Mosul results in the death of 1 policewoman. A suicide car bomber detonates his explosives in Sulaimaniyah near the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs. Six Peshmerga and 3 civilians are killed, 2 Peshmerga and 2 civilians are wounded. Elsewhere in Sulaimaniyah, a suicide car bomber crashes into the 7-car convoy of Mullah Bakhtiyar, a senior Kurdish official in President Talabani's Patriotic Union of Kurdistan party, killing 1 guard, wounding 2 guards, and damaging 2 cars in the convoy. A suicide car bomber targets an Iraqi army checkpoint in Baquba; however, the only deaths reported were those of the driver and a companion. A second companion of the driver was injured. In Ramadi, 3 dead bodies of Iraqi army soldiers in plainclothes are discovered. They all appeared to have died from gunshot wounds to the head. In the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad, 2 policemen are killed and 7 wounded when gunmen ambush a vehicle transferring prisoners. There were no reports of prisoner casualties. The Iraqi Prime Minister's office releases a statement announcing the capture of Monem Shakem al-Qubaisi, the alleged "main terrorist financier in Fallujah." Police announce the discovery of 8 corpses of Iraqi border guards near the Saudi border in western Iraq, 155 miles from Kerbala. All of the border guards were blindfolded with their hands tied behind their backs.
- **October 26, 2005:** In Fallujah, 3 Iraqi soldiers are killed and 2 wounded from a roadside bomb explosion. Four Iraqi soldiers are brought to a hospital in northeastern Haditha after being tied up, blindfolded, and shot by insurgents. Reports did not indicate the day in which these soldiers in Haditha were actually shot. Iraqi security forces conduct raids in Hurriya neighborhood of Baghdad and take into custody 20 suspected terrorists, along with quantities of ammunition. Elsewhere in Baghdad, gunmen open fire on several cars of guards for Financial Resources Minister Abdullatif Rasheed, although no casualties were reported. Two Iraqi policemen die in an insurgent attack on their police station in Ramadi. In Baghdad, gunmen kill Nabil Moussawi, an official at the Iraqi Ministry of Culture, and seriously wound one of his guards. Also in Baghdad, militants fire upon a convoy of guards for the Iraqi minister of water resources and subsequently wound 2 people. The Minister was not present at the time of the attack.
- **October 27, 2005:** Southeast of Baghdad in Nahrawan, clashes between the Shi'ite Mahdi Army and Sunni insurgents result in the deaths of 14 Mahdi Army militiamen and a policeman. Fourteen people were wounded, including 2 policemen and 12 members of the Shi'ite militia and civilians. Later reports varied considerably, saying that the clash occurred between villagers and policemen in civilian clothes, and that casualties included 25 police and 2 civilian deaths. Four villagers were arrested in the battle. Police Lt. Colonel Mahdi Hussein is killed in a drive-by shooting in Dora. In Kirkuk, a police Lt. Colonel Ardjman Abdullah dies from a drive-by shooting. Elsewhere in Kirkuk, 2 bombing target police patrols, killing 1 policeman and wounding 6. Insurgents fire a mortar round at the Iraqi Army headquarters in Fallujah, sparking return fire by Iraqi forces that mistakenly hit a car carrying teachers to a school. One teacher is killed and 2 are wounded. The bodies of 3 engineers working at an Iraqi army base are discovered in Baquba. Elsewhere in Baquba, 1 policeman is killed and 5 others are wounded in clashes between police and insurgents. Another policeman in Baquba is found dead in his car. Three Iraqi soldiers are killed and 4 soldiers and 7 civilians are wounded when insurgent throw a grenade at an Iraqi army checkpoint south of Baghdad in al-Madain. The body of police officer Ali Jassin is found in Tuz Khurmatu, following his abduction from Tikrit on Wednesday, October 26th. A remote control car bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol in Hawija kills 1 soldier and 3 other Iraqis. In a southern Baghdad district, gunmen shoot and kill a police major. Iraqi security forces and Task Force Baghdad troops detain 19 men in the Dora neighborhood of Baghdad following an explosion near the soldiers' location.
- **October 28, 2005:** In Fallujah, 1 Iraqi soldier is killed and 1 wounded from after a roadside bomb explodes near their patrol. Iraqi Rapid Reaction Forces kill 2 gunmen during an operation in Khamishli to free approximately 24 hostages. Five of the hostages are found dead of gunshot wounds. Iraqi security forces and Coalition forces discover a weapons cache at a mosque east of Al Asad. Iraqi Border Patrol forces detain 4 people suspected terrorists at a checkpoint near the Syrian border. Basra police confirm the seizure of evidence implicating the Iranian intelligence agency in

the recent violence in Basra, after Iraqi security forces conduct a raid on Yusif al-Musawi's Tha'rallah Movement in the city. Police note that documents confiscated prove Iran's involvement in plots to assassinate political officials, financial and logistical support, and participation in military and other armed operations. Majid al-Sari, Defense Advisor for the southern region confirms actions taken by the Iraqi security forces on the Iran-Iraq border to prevent infiltration by insurgents. He notes the arrest of an Afghani affiliated with Al Qaeda while he was attempting to cross the border. The Diyala Police Directorate confirms the 25 October arrest of 9 Iranians attempting to cross the border into Iraq and the confiscation of a quantity of drugs, which was in the possession of one of the detainees.

- **October 29, 2005:** Abu Mahmoud, a suspected member of Al Qaeda of Saudi Arabian descent who was believed to be planning attacks on Iraqi security forces and Coalition representatives is killed in U.S. air strikes in Huseiba. Iraqi police arrest 9 Iranians attempting to cross the border illegally. Reports indicate that Iraqi security forces in Basra have developed a new strategy for securing the border between Iraq and Iran. Iraqi troops arrest a suspected terrorist and seize a large cache of weapons and ammunition. Gunmen attack the northern Baghdad residence of a police colonel, killing the colonel and his bodyguard, and wounding his wife and nephew. Elsewhere in Baghdad, gunmen open fire on an Iraqi Army checkpoint, killing 3 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 7. Three militants are killed in return fire by Iraqi troops. In Kirkuk, 5 Iraqi policemen die from an explosion targeting an Iraqi police patrol. An Iraqi soldier and the brother of a policeman are shot and killed in Baghdad.
- **October 30, 2005:** In Fallujah, a roadside bomb kills 2 Iraqi soldiers. Other Iraqi soldiers retaliate with gunfire, and mistakenly kill a woman and boy who are passing by the scene. Gunmen open fire on the motorcade of Deputy Trade Minister Qais Dawoud Hassan, killing 2 of his bodyguards and wounding 6 bodyguards and a passerby. The minister himself was wounded in the shoulder. A roadside bomb targets an Iraqi police patrol in Mahmudiyah. There were no reports of police casualties; however, the attack kills 2 civilians and wounds 3. Sunni Arabs, including police and civilians, threaten to topple the government of Ninevah during protests following the removal of provincial police chief Ahmed Mohammed al-Jibouri. The protesters believe that the regional administration is dominated by Kurds, and that the dismissal of al-Jibouri was for political and ethnic reasons, rather than for the alleged charges of corruption.
- **October 31, 2005:** Northeast of Baghdad in Bani Saad, 2 soldiers are killed and 7 wounded after 2 mortar rounds strike an Iraqi Army base. Iraqi police uncover the bodies of 14 people buried in a shallow grave east of Tal Afar. The corpses appeared to have been dead 1-3 months. Fourteen people appeared to have been bound and shot in the head, while the remaining 2 had been decapitated. Two policemen are injured in a bomb attack on their patrol in Kirkuk. Iraqi police arrest 56 insurgents suspected of coordinating attacks in Saladin during a search campaign in the Al-Tein neighborhood near Tikrit University. Iraqi police report that they killed 2 insurgents and arrest 3 during clashes in Kerbala. Several mortars fall on the Iraqi Army headquarters in Baquba, killing 2 Iraqi soldiers and wounding 4. In Sinjar, a suicide bomber targets an Iraqi army checkpoint, killing 1 person and wounding 7. Reports did not distinguish between civilian and military casualties. Two Iraqi soldiers are killed and 4 are wounded following the detonation of a roadside bomb in Fallujah. A car bomb in northern Baghdad targets an Iraqi police patrol, killing 4 people and damaging 2 civilian cars after detonating prematurely. No police casualties were reported. Iraqi President Jalal Talabani criticizes the United States for not sufficiently coordinating its actions with Iraqi Army troops and police, citing this as a major reason that the recent upsurge in violence has not subsided. Ukrainian Army instructors have begun training 35 sappers for the Iraqi police teams in the Wasit province at the regional training center of the Iraqi security forces.
- **November 1, 2005:** In Baghdad, Iraqi police commandos mistakenly kill 1 civilian. Police in Balad discover 2 corpses, 1 of which was a police officer and was found in a river, and another which was unidentified and found in a nearby village. A police officer was abducted from his home near Samarra. A roadside bomb targets an Iraqi police commando patrol southbound on the Saydiya highway extending out of Baghdad. One civilian is wounded, but no police casualties were reported. A police patrol in the Jurf al-Nadaf region of Baghdad strikes a roadside bomb, killing 1 civilian and injuring 3 others, including 1 policeman. Gunmen open fire on a police patrol al-Qadssiyah highway, killing 1 policeman and 1 policewoman. Police arrest 2 suspects believed to be involved with the 31 October car bombing in a Basra marketplace, one of which was identified by authorities as a Sunni fundamentalist. A boy suicide bomber detonates his explosives in Kirkuk, injuring the city's police chief General Khattab Abdullah Areb and his driver. At least 3 policemen

are killed by a roadside bomb near Mahmudiyah. Iraqi and U.S. forces conduct a series of raids in Mosul, arresting 11 people suspected of terrorism. Iraqi police seize a weapons cache in Qayarrarh.

- **November 2, 2005:** In southeastern Baghdad, 9 Iraqi soldiers are killed and 9 more wounded in 2 separate attacks on their Army patrol. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol in the southern area of the city kills 5 Iraqi civilians. The Iraqi Defense Minister invites some officers of Saddam Hussein's former army to enlist in the new Iraqi security forces as part of an effort to reach out to Sunnis. One Iraqi soldier dies and 4 are wounded when a roadside bomb targets their patrol in Fallujah. Gunfire after the explosion kills 2 civilians. Militants fire upon an Iraqi police patrol in western Baghdad, wounding one policeman. Gunmen attack the Ninevah chief of police in northern Baghdad, wounding 2 of his guards but leaving the chief himself unharmed. Iraqi police drag a corpse from a river in Khasim, and identify the dead as a senior member of the city council of Khasim who had been abducted 3 days prior. Iraqi Army soldiers and U.S. troops engage in a gun battle with 15 armed insurgents northeast of Ramadi, and subsequently discover a cache of weapons and 3 Iraqi Army uniforms in the vicinity. Iraqi police detain 3 suspected terrorists in Jamessia.
- **November 3, 2005:** In southeastern Baghdad, police find 11 bodies, including some who died by gunshot wounds and others who had been beheaded. Iraqi police have been unable to identify the victims. Iraqi Army soldiers detain a suspected terrorist during a raid in eastern Mosul.
- **November 4, 2005:** In Baghdad, Sunni insurgents attack a police checkpoint, killing 6 Iraqi police officers. Insurgents fire mortar rounds at an Iraqi police checkpoint in Buhriz, and then 8 cars of insurgents arrive and open fire on the checkpoint. At least 6 policemen are killed and 10 wounded. Militants kill Tarijk Hasan, a former colonel in the Iraqi Air Force, while he was driving in Baghdad. In Tuz Khormato, a roadside bomb strikes an Iraqi convoy, killing 5 police commandoes with the Iraqi Interior Ministry, and wounding 4 others. Iraqi police detain 11 suspected terrorists in Tal Afar. Iraqi police and military police detain 9 suspected terrorists in Mosul.
- **November 5, 2005:** A total of 3,500 U.S. and Iraqi troops launch "Operation Steel Curtain," a joint attack on the insurgent-held town of Husaybah near the Syrian border. The stated aim of the mission is to secure the Syrian border region of the Anbar province ahead of the Parliamentary election scheduled for December 15. The new offensive is part of the wider Operation Hunter, which aims to secure the Euphrates River Valley region from terrorists and establish a permanent security presence along the Iraqi-Syrian border. Al Qaeda releases a statement claiming responsibility for the 3 November abduction and subsequent killing of 14 members of the Iraqi security forces. The authenticity of the statement was not confirmed. In northern Baghdad, a roadside bomb detonates, killing 5 Iraqi police commandos and wounding 3.
- **November 6, 2005:** A roadside bomb targets an Iraqi police patrol in Mahawil, killing 1 policeman and injuring 3. Iraqi police respond to a tip about an IED at a school in Adhamiyah that was found to be wired for detonation when the children exited the school. The police Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) team safely disposes of the grenade, as well as another found in the same area. Members of the Iraqi 3rd Public Order Brigade find a group of insurgents placing a bomb on a road east of Salman Pak. A firefight between police and militants ensues, ending in 1 insurgent death and another insurgent evading capture. Iraqi police safely dispose of the bomb.
- **November 7, 2005:** Operation Steel Curtain continues, with the U.S. military announcing that 36 suspected insurgents have been killed in the past 2 days, including 17 killed from air strikes. Neither the U.S. nor the Iraqi government has reported any civilian casualties, although Al Qaeda in Iraq has warned that it will increase insurgent violence unless the offensive is abandoned within 24 hours. The Al Qaeda statement threatened to destroy the homes of all Iraqi soldiers and government workers in retaliation for comments by the Iraqi Defense Minister that individuals who sheltered terrorists should consider their homes targeted by the offensive. Iraqi soldiers shoot and kill 3 suspected terrorists dressed in women's clothing and carrying weapons near the entrance to the safety zone for displaced persons. Iraqi troops identified them as foreign fighters. A car bomb attack at sundown targets a police patrol in the Doura district of Baghdad. Six police officers are killed as well as 3 civilians, and 10 people are injured, including a number of policemen. In Kirkuk, 2 soldiers are killed and 14 wounded when a suicide car bomber detonates his explosives near a checkpoint. Elsewhere in Kirkuk, a policeman is shot and killed by insurgents. At least 2 Iraqi soldiers are killed and 13 injured in a suicide car bombing targeting Iraqi soldiers guarding oil pipelines in Thibban.

- **November 8, 2005:** In Dali Abbas, a roadside bomb explodes near an Iraqi patrol car, killing 4 soldiers and critically injuring 1. Iraqi police uncover 5 decomposed corpses in Rustumiya. The identities of the dead are not yet clear. A roadside bomb targets an Iraqi police patrol south of Kirkuk in Daquq, killing 2 policemen and wounding 3. In southern Basra, a colonel in the Iraqi security forces is killed along with his brother when a roadside bomb strikes their vehicle as they are driving. Insurgents kill 1 policeman and injure 5 in an ambush on an Iraqi police patrol in Baquba. Gunmen attack an Iraqi army patrol in Ameriyat al-Fallujah, killing 2 soldiers and wounding 5. The U.S. military announces that Husaybah has been secured and that members of Al Qaeda have been neutralized there. The completed Operation Steel Curtain reportedly achieved in the arrest of 180 suspected insurgents—including some Africans and Asians—and the killing of 36 additional militants.
- **November 9, 2005:** In Baquba, a suicide bomber detonates his explosives near an Iraqi police patrol, killing 7 policemen and wounding 9 others, most of whom were civilians.
- **November 10, 2005:** In Baghdad, 2 suicide bombers target a restaurant frequented by Iraqi police, killing at least 35 people and injuring 25 upon detonation of their explosives. One report estimated that at least 7 of the dead were police officers, while the rest were civilians. Al Qaeda in Iraq claimed responsibility for the attack. Iraqi troops uncover 27 corpses near Jassan. All of the dead were blindfolded, had their hands bound, and appeared to have died from gunshot wounds. Gunmen fatally shoot 2 police officers in Mosul. In Tikrit, a car bomb detonates outside of an Army recruiting center, killing 10 people and wounding 20. A car bomb wounds 2 policemen after exploding near an Iraqi police patrol in eastern Baghdad. Militants ambush a group of policemen in southern Baghdad, injuring 4. Gunmen shoot and kill an intelligence officer in Basra. Iraqi officials announce the arrest of Hatem al-Hassani, the brother of Iraqi Parliament speaker Hajim al-Hassani, under suspicion that he is the emir of a terrorist group. This is in contrast to an earlier report by Iraqi police that Hatem al-Hassani had been kidnapped.
- **November 11, 2005:** Gunmen open fire on the Embassy of Oman in the Mansour district of western Baghdad, killing an Iraqi police officer and an embassy employee, and wounding 2 additional police officers. Elsewhere in Baghdad, clashes between insurgents and police in the Ghazaliya district end in 1 insurgent death and 1 police wounding. Hospital sources reported 5 police deaths from the incident. In central Baghdad, a makeshift bomb injures 3 Iraqi policemen after it explodes near their patrol. Militants ambush an Iraqi police vehicle near Baquba, and subsequently kill 3 Iraqi policemen and a baby. Insurgents target an Iraqi police patrol in Qamishli, killing 1 policeman and wounding 3. Joint U.S.-Iraqi forces discover 2 corpses that appeared to have died from gunshot wounds in the Ghazaliya district of Baghdad. Also in Baghdad, gunmen attack an Iraqi police patrol, killing 1 policeman and wounding another. The U.S. military announces that a new joint U.S.-Iraqi operation to root out terrorists in the town of Karabilah near the Syrian border was begun on 9 November. The offensive is an extension of Operation Steel Curtain, and is intended to target terrorists who escaped the Husaybah offensive.
- **November 12, 2005:** An Iraqi Red Crescent doctor reports to have found 54 bodies, some of women and children, in the rubble left in Husaybah by the U.S.-Iraqi Operation Steel Curtain. There was no immediate response from U.S. or Iraqi sources regarding the finding. In Kirkuk, 1 Iraqi policeman dies and another is seriously wounded after an insurgent attack on their patrol. Iraqi police detain 360 suspects in a major operation in the Diyala province. A judge and several politicians were among those arrested. Clashes between Iraqi police commandoes and insurgents end in 1 insurgent death.
- **November 13, 2005:** Iraqi forces discover 10 civilian corpses near the Iraq-Iran border close to Badra town. All of the bodies had been blindfolded and had their hands bound, showed signs of torture, and were riddled with bullet wounds. Iraqi police in Mosul find the dead body of Colonel Mohamed Sheit who appeared to have been shot multiple times in the head and chest. The colonel had originally been abducted on 11 November. In the Jarf El-Sakhr area south of Baghdad, Iraqi security forces kill a suspected insurgent and detain another after they were found planting a bomb. The militant was killed during an exchange of fire. A roadside bomb explodes near an Iraqi military patrol, wounding 5 soldiers. The Iraqi Ministry of Defense announces the donation of 77 tanks and 36 troop carriers by NATO and the Hungarian government. The Iraqi government is spending \$3 million to update and develop the tanks. A car bomb is detonated near a police station in the Dora district of Baghdad. No casualties were reported.

- **November 14, 2005:** A booby trapped car detonates near the entrance to the Green Zone in Baghdad, killing 1 Iraqi police officer, 2 South African contractors from Dyncorps and another foreign contractor, and 4 civilians. The attack appeared to target the contractors' convoy. An explosion in the Dora district of Baghdad causes the death of 1 Iraqi policeman. On the Al-Khayzaran road in western Baghdad, a bomb is detonated near the patrol of the Karkh emergency squad, killing 1 Iraqi and 3 others. Five hundred Iraqi troops and 1,500 American soldiers storm the town of Ubaydi, near the Syrian border, in a continuous effort to eradicate foreign fighters in the western Anbar province under Operation Steel Curtain. At least 1 Iraqi soldier is injured, along with 2 civilians. Throughout the day, more than 70 militants are killed and 100 detained as part of the offensive. Reports indicate that a roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi Army patrol killed 3 civilians and injured 4, although the location of the bombing was not immediately available. A roadside bomb strikes an Iraqi police commando patrol in the Sadiyah district of Baghdad, killing 1 commando and wounding 3. Elsewhere in Baghdad, a roadside bomb in the Camp Sarah area explodes after the passage of an Iraqi Army convoy. Three people are killed and 4 wounded, and a civilian car is destroyed.
- **November 15, 2005:** In eastern Kirkuk, gunmen kill 4 Iraqi police officers in an ambush. Elsewhere in Kirkuk, a roadside bomb detonates, killing 3 police officers and wounding 3. A car bomb planted near a restaurant in eastern Baghdad explodes, causing the deaths of 2 policemen. Six policemen were injured in the same incident. The Iraqi Defense Ministry announces that Iraqi forces have arrested 70 insurgents in a variety of operations throughout the day. Five of those arrested were suspected of planning to assassinate an unnamed ambassador in Iraq. A suicide car bomber detonates his explosives near an Iraqi Army checkpoint in Mahmudiyah, killing 3 soldiers and wounding 7 other people, 3 of whom were civilians. One policeman is killed in a clash between police and insurgents in Mosul. Seven others are injured during the firefight. Elsewhere in Mosul, 2 civilians and 4 policemen, including 1 ranking officer, die in another clash between a police patrol and militants. U.S. and Iraqi forces release Hatem al-Hassani, the brother of Iraqi Parliament speaker Hajim al-Hassani, after he was cleared of all charges against him.
- **November 16, 2005:** In Mikaithfa, Iraqi police discover 3 corpses, all of whom appeared to have died by gunshot wounds. Gunmen in Mosul kill 3 Iraqi policemen from the Facility Protection Service, a government-run security force. Elsewhere in Mosul, militants kill an Iraqi traffic policeman. A roadside bomb detonates near the motorcade of the head of police in Baiji, seriously wounding the officer along with 5 of his bodyguards.

While Iraqi performance in operations was becoming steadily more reassuring, it was also clear that it would be well into 2006, and probably well into 2007, before Iraq had all of the security capabilities it needs in these areas, and their effectiveness would continue to depend on both substantial Coalition support and upon the success and inclusiveness of Iraqi politics.

Developments in the Regular Military Forces

At the beginning of 2005, MNF-I estimates that the number of ISF forces needed to secure the country over the long-haul was 270,000 troops by 2006. In October 2005, however, military planners revised that number up to 325,000 by 2007. At the time that these revised estimates were formulated, , trained and equipped ISF troop levels were a little above of 200,000. This led to new debates over the the feasibility of near-term US troop level reductions in Iraq.²³³

On November 22, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told CNN that the number of Coalition forces in Iraq would come down, citing the progress being made in the build-up of the Iraqi Security Forces. This comment followed Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's comments a week earlier that he wanted to move the US commitment of troops in Iraq back to a baseline of 138,000 after the December 15th election.

Continuing Major Manpower Problems

While most of the progress in the regular military forces took place in the army and special operations forces, the other services improved as well. At the same time, a breakout of actual total Iraqi regular military manning versus requirement shows just how much progress Iraqi forces still had to make.

This breakout is shown in Figure 38, and if one looks at the force-wide totals in the “Big Roll-Up” in this figure, it is clear that Iraqi forces still had only 62% of their authorized officers, and 61% of their NCO, but were overmanned with enlisted manpower at 120%, much of which was still of limited quality and would have to be cut or allowed to desert, depending upon its performance in combat. The Iraqi regular military was at 92% of its authorized strength as of December 10, 2005.

As for the individual services:

- The army had 62% of its officers and 61% of its NCOs, and 121% of its enlisted manpower. Figure 38 also shows, however, that the AWOL rates were negligible for officers (.04%), very low for NCOs (1.6%), and low for overall manning (2%).
- The navy had 109% of its officers, 130% of its NCOs, and 126% of its enlisted manpower. This reflects a force very much in transition, and much of the manpower surplus was likely to be used in the future. The AWOL rates were so low as to be meaningless.
- The air force was still very much in formation and far from being manned at effective levels. It had only 55% of its officers, 32% of its NCOs, and 40% of its enlisted manpower. The AWOL rates were so low as to be meaningless.

Sectarian and Ethnic Composition of the ISF

The sectarian and ethnic composition of the ISF was also becoming a steadily more serious issue by the fall of 2005. The debate over federation in drafting the new constitution had raised the prospect of dividing the country along ethnic and sectarian lines. At the same time, the constant stream of bloody attacks on Shi'ites and Kurds, and horrific suicide bombings, led to increasing talk -- and sometimes action -- about revenge. The security services in the Ministry of Interior were increasingly found to either tolerate revenge attacks by Shi'ite militias like the Badr Organization, or to conduct them.

The new Iraqi army did not take such reprisals against Sunnis, but the issue of ethnic representation in the army was an increasing concern to the MNF-I, US commanders and officials, and the Iraqi leaders seeking to hold the country together. This prompted a major new recruiting drive targeting Sunni enlistment. Between August and October, 4,000 Sunnis were recruited, and were undergoing training by later October, according to one US military official in Baghdad.²³⁴

Political tensions continued to rise, however, as did Shi'ite and Kurdish anger at the ongoing suicide bombings and other attacks by Sunni Islamist insurgents, and such recruiting scarcely offset the fact that most army forces were Shi'ite and Kurdish. . As of late December 2005, some US commanders in Iraq claimed that the ranks of the Iraqi Army were roughly representative of the national population -- about 60 percent Shiite, 20 percent Sunni, and 15 to 20 percent Kurdish.

Few Iraqis, or US officers directly within their advisory effort, agreed with this assessment. Maj. Gen. Salih Sarhan, a Shiite, said that the majority of the soldiers were coming from the south, and were Shiite as of late December. Nearly all of the Iraqi army's recent recruits had come from southern Shiite cities, including highly religious cities like Karbala and Najaf, where unemployment was high. The 8th and 10th divisions, for example, were almost completely Shi'ite. Meanwhile, the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th divisions in the north were overwhelmingly Kurdish. Sarhan said that the two army divisions in Baghdad were more evenly split.²³⁵

The elections that came towards the end of the year also seemed to reflect Shi'ite and Kurdish dominance of Iraqi forces. In contrast to the surge in Sunni participation in the political process that led to a high Sunni vote in the December 15th parliamentary election, Sunni Arab representation in the ISF remained proportionately low.

A special tally that consisted mainly of ballots cast by security forces, but also included votes by hospital patients and prisoners, showed that only about 7 percent of votes were cast for the three main Sunni Arab party. Because Iraqis were overwhelmingly thought to have voted along sectarian lines, many officials believe that this vote reflected low representation of Sunnis in the ISF.

The Kurdish Pesh Merga militiamen seemed to have a disproportionately large representation in the Iraqi Security Forces. The special tally revealed that 30 percent of the votes cast went to the principal Shiite political alliance and 45 percent of the votes went to the main Kurdish slate of candidates. Lt. Col. Fred Wellman, a spokesman for the military command that oversaw training of Iraq forces, said that he did not have detailed estimates on the ethnic composition of the ISF, yet admitted that Arab Sunni representation was lagging.²³⁶

The problem of ethnicity in the ISF was further underlined in an incident in late December 2005/ The US sought to hand over a key area in Baghdad – the area containing the fortified Green Zone. This was prevented when the Shi'ite and Kurdish-dominate government rejected the Sunni officer the US had since August to take over the mission. Over strong US objections, the Iraqi government nominated an unnamed candidate from the mostly Shiite city of Kut to assume command of the 5th brigade, 6th division of the Iraqi Army, and take command of central Baghdad.

US officials worried that the move represented the sect-based rejection of a Sunni officer, Col. Muhammed Wasif Taha, who they considered to be the best qualified for the job. Taha was a 23-year veteran of the Iraqi Army. He denied claims that he was a member of Saddam Hussein's elite Special Republican Guard and a high-ranking member of the Ba'ath Party.

Figure 38
Iraq Armed Forces Manning – By Service: December 10, 2005

NAVY				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	118	129	0	109%
Enlisted	513	669	4	130%
Totals	631	798	4	126%
AIR FORCE				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	318	175	0	55%
Enlisted	581	187	1	32%
Totals	899	362	1	40%
ARMY ROLL-UP				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	8885	5509	24	62%
NCOs	42394	25784	410	61%
Enlisted	55808	67292	1731	121%
Totals	107087	98585	2165	92%
BIG ROLL-UP				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	9321	5813	24	62%
NCOs	42394	25784	410	61%
Enlisted	56902	68148	1736	120%
Totals	108617	99745	2170	92%

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, U.S. Department of State, December 10, 2005

The Army

As of September 2005, the Iraqi Army had 88 combat battalions conducting counterinsurgency operations. As is noted in Figure 40, 36 of these battalions were “in the lead” in operations by the fall of 2005, either with Coalition support or fully independent. Another 52 engaged in side-by-side fighting with Coalition forces. The 88 brigades present as of October 2005 were created in 18 months’ time. The battalions included almost 75,000 trained and equipped soldiers organized into nine infantry divisions and one mechanized division, with an additional 12,000 troops to provide support, training and special security functions.²³⁷

These totals rose even further by the end of the year. Total Army manpower was over 104,000. As has been noted earlier, President Bush gave a speech on December 18, 2005 stating that, “At this time last year, there were only a handful of Iraqi army and police battalions ready for combat. Now, there are more than 125 Iraqi combat battalions fighting the enemy ... more than 50 are taking the lead ... and we have transferred more than a dozen military bases to Iraqi control.”

Similarly, Ambassador Khalilzad stated that Iraqi forces had risen by the end of December from, “a mere handful (of battalions) to 128, with 75 fighting side-by side with coalition forces and 53 taking the lead in the fight. More than 30 battalions have assumed control of their own areas of responsibility, including about 60% of Baghdad, and significant zones in other parts of the country.”²³⁸

The President and Ambassador’s totals did include MOI security battalions, and seems to have been the result of a recount of battalions capable of “taking the lead” that seems to have made highly optimistic assumptions that had not been made in the past. Nevertheless, the number of army battalions capable of taking the lead by past Level 1-3 readiness standards still seemed to be around 45-50 by the end of 2005.

Transfer of Battlespace to Iraqi Army Forces

As the President and Ambassador made clear, Coalition forces were increasingly turning over key areas and cities to Iraqi Army control in the summer and fall of 2005. These transfers included such activities as:

- On June 1, the Multinational Force officially transferred full responsibility for security at a base in Dibbis to the Iraqi Army.
- On August 21, the Multinational Force turned over Camp Zulu in As Suwayrah, Iraq, in the Central South sector, to the Iraqi Army.
- On August 31, the Iraqi Base Support Unit assumed control of all perimeter force protection in a sector in Kirkuk.
- On September 6, the MNF handed over security responsibility in Najaf.
- Iraqi Army units continue to assume security responsibility in the western region. They currently are conducting independent security and offensive operations in Rawah and combined zone reconnaissance near the Syrian border.
- September 6, 2005 -- The U.S. Army handed over its base in Najaf, giving Iraqis full control of the city. Najaf, 100 miles south of Baghdad, is the holiest city in Iraq for Shiite

Muslims and was the scene of heavy fighting last year between the U.S. Army and the militia of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

- September 28, 2005 -- The US Army handed over its base in Karbala, south of Baghdad, giving Iraqis full control of the city.
- September 29, 2005 -- British forces handed over their main base in the city of Basra to the Iraqi military to allow it to take over the main security duties there.
- October 3, 2005 -- The U.S.-led multinational force in Iraq officially handed over military control of parts of central Baghdad to the Iraqi Army's Sixth Division. The move transferred control of security responsibilities for the Karkh and Rasafa districts.

These transfers did not always go smoothly, and the US sometimes had to quietly reassume the mission or reinforce the Iraqis. There were, however, real successes. The U.S. military pulled hundreds of troops out of the southern city of Najaf on September 6, 2005, the, transferring control to the Iraqi military. It did in spite of the fact that the city was the site of clashes between US forces and Moqtada al-Sadr's Shiite Mehdi Army in August 2004. And in August 2005, tensions surged again when clashes erupted between Sadr's men and Iraqi Interior Ministry forces seen as loyal to a rival Shiite bloc, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. Nineteen died in those battles. The Iraqi force replacing the departing US troops is composed primarily of Shiite Muslims.²³⁹

On September 15, 2005, Muaffak al-Rubbaie, who chairs the committee responsible for security transfers to Iraqi forces, said that Iraqi troops were soon expected to take control of Karbala, Samawa, and Nasiriyah as well. He further suggested that the gradual process of handing over such urban areas to Iraqi control would allow for US troops to begin exiting the country.²⁴⁰

In a White House press conference on September 28, 2005, President Bush praised the increasing effectiveness of the Iraqi Security Forces. Bush cited that increasingly Iraqi forces were being left behind to secure cities after Coalition assaults. Bush continued:

At this moment, more than a dozen Iraqi battalions have completed training and are conducting anti-terrorist operations in Ramadi and Fallujah. More than 20 battalions are operating in Baghdad. And some have taken the lead in operations in major sectors of the city.

In total, more than 100 battalions are operating throughout Iraq. Our commanders report that the Iraqi forces are operating with increasing effectiveness. As Iraqi forces show they're capable of keeping the terrorists out, they're earning the trust and confidence of the Iraqi people, which ensures the success of a free and democratic Iraq.²⁴¹

On October 12, 2005, an article on Jim Dunnigan's Strategypage.com described the efforts to turn the security mission over to Iraqi forces as follows:²⁴²

Despite the controversy over independent operations certification, that has been in the news recently, the Iraqi military has clearly been coming into their own. Iraqi combat divisions have taken over security work in several parts of the country. On October 3, the 6th Iraqi Division assumed formal authority over Baghdad's central and northern districts, where it has been operating for several months. Also operating in the Baghdad area is the Ninth Iraqi Division (Mechanized), which has been teamed up with the U.S. 1st Armor in raiding operations over the major road networks. The Iraqi 4th Division has been conducting raids and cordon and searches along the Tigris River Valley north of Baghdad, up to Tikrit. The Iraqi 2nd Division has been operating with good success in extending control in and around Mosul out to Tal Afar. A battalion

of the Iraqi 2nd Division was moved to Tal Afar at the end of August by the Iraqi 23rd Air Transport Squadron (operating C-130 airplanes). This was the first report of the new Iraqi Army supported by the new Iraqi Air Force.

The on-going Anbar (central Iraq) province campaign has been firmly anchored by the 1st Iraqi Division, which is also called the Iraqi Intervention Force (IIF). This Iraqi Division has and continues to conduct operations in and around the gateway cities of the Euphrates River Valley – Fallujah, Ar Ramadi, Rawah, and Al Khalidiyah. Units of this Division have a year or more of combat experience. The Division consists of 4 brigades (each with 3 battalions). The IIF has received intense training for urban operations including the art of street fighting and building clearing. In addition to the Intervention force, the Iraqi Army has two elite battalions. The Commando Battalion is a Ranger-type strike force. The Iraqi Counter-terrorism Battalion is trained for insertion and extraction to conduct hostage rescue or leadership raids. These elite forces are selected for experience and undergo extensive screening and background checks. The operations by their nature are more elusive to track.

The Iraqi 5th Iraqi Division has been undergoing training exercises in and near Kirkuk including raids and mass casualty training. The training includes actual operations. At the end of August, elements of the Iraqi 5th Iraqi Division performed six-day combined operations involving elite Iraqi Special Operations Forces. The 8th Iraqi Division operates and trains on the road network between the two rivers south of Baghdad. Several battalions of this Division have completed initial certification toward independent operations. The training is focused on counter-insurgency operations, cordon and search, check points, and patrolling. The training for independent brigade and division operations is continuing. Like all training beyond basic in the new Iraqi army, “live” action is involved, since Iraqi 8th Iraqi Division units have reportedly conducted over 100 operations capturing weapon’s caches and apprehending suspected terrorists.

US Army Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, commander of the 42nd Infantry Division and Task Force Liberty talked to reporters via teleconference from Baghdad on October 28. He told Pentagon reporters that the number of bases under his command had dropped from 27 to 17 during his tenure, due to transfer to Iraqi forces. Taluto was responsible for anti-insurgent operations in former Hussein strongholds such as Tikrit.²⁴³ As of late November, with 1,000 security operations per month throughout Iraq, the ISF leading about 25 percent of all operations around the country, compared to 13 percent in May 2005.²⁴⁴ On November 18, the DoD handed over its 28th base to Iraqi forces with the handover of FOB Danger in Tikrit.

On December 23, 2005, the US Embassy in Baghdad announced that there were now more than 216,000 trained and equipped Iraqi troops, up from 115,000 in November 2004. According to a factsheet issued by the US Embassy, there were more than 50 Iraqi battalions leading counterinsurgency operations at that time. Thirty-three Iraqi battalions were now “controlling battle space” throughout the country, with Iraqis controlling 30 of 110 forward operating bases. The release of this information coincided with statements from Donald Rumsfeld and the DoD the same day outlining plans to reduce US presence in Iraq in 2006, based upon the demonstrated improved size and capabilities of the ISF. The factsheet provided the following additional details:

- More than 125 Army and Special Police battalions are in the fight, with more than 50 battalions in the lead on counterinsurgency operations.
- ISF displayed improved performance during recent combat operations such as Tal Afar (In September 2005, About 5,000 Iraqi troops and 3,800 US troops stormed Tal Afar, arresting over 800 suspected Sunni insurgents and killing 300 more.)

- ISF displayed improved performance during recent combat operations in the Western Euphrates River Valley. (Joint force of 2,500 Americans and 1,000 Iraqis launched operation to root out militant enclaves near the Syrian border over the weekend of November 5.)
- Fifty percent of Baghdad Province under operational control of ISF.

Iraqi Army Combat Manning

These statements need to be kept in perspective. Much of the Iraqi army's combat unit structure still consisted primarily of combat battalions, rather than balanced forces, and that much of its division structure was still badly undermanned. Figure 39 shows both how different the authorized manning levels of Iraq's divisions were at the time, and just how badly key elements of many of Iraq's divisions still were in mid-December 2005.

Figure 39 also shows that some divisions appeared to have high or surplus manning, but actually had a major shortage of officers and NCOs:

- The 1st Division had an excess of enlisted manpower, but only about a third of its authorized officers and NCOs.
- The 2nd Division had an excess of enlisted manpower, but only about a third of its officers and NCOs.
- The 3rd Division had an excess of enlisted manpower and NCOs, but only about 82% of its officers.
- The 4th Division was critically imbalanced with 92% of its officers and 234% of its enlisted manpower, but virtually no NCOs.
- The 5th Division had 136% of its authorized enlisted manpower, but only about 75% of its officers and NCOs.
- The 6th Division had more than twice the authorized strength of Iraq's smallest division. It still, however, had 101% of enlisted manpower, and about 75% of its officers and NCOs.
- The 7th Division had 97% of its enlisted manpower, but less than half of its authorized officers and NCOs.
- The 8th Division had a massive excess of authorized enlisted manpower (159%), but only about 70% of its officers and NCOs.
- The 9th Division had most of its authorized enlisted manpower, 115% of its NCOs, but only about half of its officers.
- The 10th Division had 80% of enlisted manpower, but less than 60% of its officers and NCOs.

Figure 39
Iraq Army Combat Unit Manning by Division: December 10, 2005

1st Division TAJI				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	763	429	5	56%
NCOs	4044	1144	21	28%
Enlisted	5222	7016	366	134%
Totals	10029	8589	392	86%
2nd Division AL KINDI				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	763	624	0	82%
NCOs	4044	4492	83	111%
Enlisted	5222	6477	137	124%
Totals	10029	11593	220	116%
3rd Division AL KASIK				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	589	365	5	62%
NCOs	3060	1220	16	40%
Enlisted	3934	4610	69	117%
Totals	7583	6195	90	82%
4th Division TIKRIT				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	683	627	0	92%
NCOs	3670	0	0	0%

Enlisted	4748	11108	330	234%
Totals	9101	11735	330	129%
5th Division KIRKUSH				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	615	443	3	72%
NCOs	3474	2597	52	75%
Enlisted	3947	5363	124	136%
Totals	8036	8403	179	105%

6th Division BAGHDAD				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	1219	798	5	65%
NCOs	6858	5365	132	78%
Enlisted	8952	9012	225	101%
Totals	17029	15157	362	89%
7th Division RAMADI				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	589	269	1	46%
NCOs	3060	1446	39	47%
Enlisted	3934	3799	127	97%
Totals	7583	5514	167	73%
8th Division DIWANIYA				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	622	417	0	67%
NCOs	3129	2286	24	73%

Enlisted	4001	6349	181	159%
Totals	7752	9052	205	117%
9th Division TIJI				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	439	236	5	54%
NCOs	1216	1393	11	115%
Enlisted	3129	2953	51	94%
Totals	4784	4582	67	96%
10th Division BASRAH				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	669	365	0	55%
NCOs	3434	1991	5	58%
Enlisted	4408	3452	11	78%
Totals	8511	5808	5	68%

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, U.S. Department of State, December 10, 2005

Iraqi Army Support Manning

Iraqi manning and readiness was far more erratic in the case of its various support units, many of which were still in formation:

- Figure 40 shows that only a few Base Support Units (BSUs) approached the kind of manning levels that could make them effective. It should be noted, however, that many facilities had high levels of specialization and that higher percentages of officers and NCOs were sometimes necessary.
- Figure 41 shows that the high command structure, logistic command, training and doctrine command, and national depot were all still largely “paper units,” with no meaningful manpower.
- Figure 41 also shows the Ministry of Defense had all its authorized manpower. This report, however, is of uncertain validity. The Ministry was often overmanned, and had substantial numbers of personnel seconded to it.
- Figure 42 shows that engineering units, a key element of combat support, were making significant progress.

Figure 40

Iraqi Base Support Unit Manning: December 10, 2005

AL KASIK BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	72	13	0	18%
NCOs	374	60	0	16%
Enlisted	589	792	1	134%
Totals	1035	865	1	84%
AN NUMANIYA BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	67	54	0	81%
NCOs	311	302	0	97%
Enlisted	461	432	0	94%
Totals	839	788	0	94%
NEW AL MUTHANA BSU				

	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	42	22	0	52%
NCOs	174	23	0	13%
Enlisted	205	0	0	0%
Totals	421	45	0	11%
AR RUSTAMIYA BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	47	9	0	19%
NCOs	197	11	0	6%
Enlisted	306	3	0	1%
Totals	550	23	0	4%
HABANIYA BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	51	2	0	4%
NCOs	264	37	0	14%
Enlisted	461	290	59	63%
Totals	776	329	59	42%

KIRKUK BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	8	16	0	200%
NCOs	24	32	0	133%
Enlisted	48	0	0	0%
Totals	80	48	0	60%
KIRKUSH BSU				

	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	45	35	0	78%
NCOs	211	99	3	47%
Enlisted	333	442	12	133%
Totals	589	576	15	98%
TAJI BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	82	55	0	67%
NCOs	439	1523	0	347%
Enlisted	746	2	0	0%
Totals	1267	1580	0	125%
TALLIL BSU				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	50	29	0	58%
NCOs	0	0	0	0%
Enlisted	274	514	0	188%
Totals	324	543	0	168%
BSU ROLL-UP				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	464	135	0	51%
NCOs	1994	2087	3	105%
Enlisted	3423	2475	72	72%
Totals	5881	4797	75	82%

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, U.S. Department of State, December 10, 2005

Figure 41
Iraqi Army Command and Support Unit Manning: December 10, 2005

Iraqi Ground Forces Command				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	315	65	0	21%
NCOs	507	1	0	0%
Enlisted	298	0	0	0%
Totals	822	66	0	8%
Logistics Command				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	0	0	0	0%
NCOs	0	0	0	0%
Enlisted	0	0	0	0%
Totals	0	0	0	0%
Training and Doctrine Command				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	0	0	0	0%
NCOs	0	0	0	0%
Enlisted	0	0	0	0%
Totals	0	0	0	0%
National Depot				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	0	0	0	0%

NCOs	0	0	0	0%
Enlisted	0	0	0	0%
Totals	0	0	0	0%
Ministry of Defense				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	408	408	0	100%
NCOs	158	158	0	100%
Enlisted	51	51	0	100%
Totals	566	566	0	100%
SIBS				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	225	212	0	94%
NCOs	1575	984	0	62%
Enlisted	1835	2319	0	126%
Totals	3635	3515	0	97%

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, U.S. Department of State, December 10, 2005

Figure 42
Iraq Army Engineering Unit Manning: December 10, 2005

TAJI				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	41	32	0	78%
NCOs	140	59	0	118%
Enlisted	295	71	0	72%
Totals	573	162	0	85%

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, U.S. Department of State, December 10, 2005

Iraqi Special Operations Forces

Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) included approximately 1,300 trained and equipped soldiers organized into a single brigade with two battalion-sized operational units: the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Task Force and the Iraqi Commandos. A Special Operations Support Battalion and Special Operations training organization have also been activated. The latter two were assessed at “Initial Operating Capability,” providing only limited capabilities as of September of 2005.

The Commandos and the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Task Force conducted frequent reconnaissance and direct action missions including Operation Restoring Rights in Tall Afar in the fall of 2005, as well as several precision raids conducted in and around Baghdad. The ISOF operated primarily with U.S. equipment to enhance interoperability with U.S. Special Forces, sustainability, and the long-term bilateral working relationship.

This equipment included the M4 carbine, M240 machine gun, M2 .50 caliber heavy machine gun, and High Mobility Multi-purpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs). Fielding of individual equipment continued during the past quarter, as did fielding of eight M113 Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs). Although the ISOF is fully equipped for combat operations, they still lack the organic ground and air mobility assets necessary for rapid deployment throughout the country.²⁴⁵

Air Force

The Iraqi air force had been a formidable force by regional standards, but Iraqi air power crumbled under the strain of two Gulf wars, with its fighter inventory having been particularly decimated. Many fighters were destroyed on the ground or in the air by

Coalition forces, while more advanced types, such as MiG-29s were flown to Iran for safekeeping, most likely not to be returned.²⁴⁶

Figure 43 provides a more detailed look at the Iraqi air force inventory from 1990 to 2005. Data regarding Iraq's inventory before the start of major military operations in 2003 are not precise, as various intelligence figures differ. It is clear, however, that Saddam's air force assets were greatly reduced during Desert Storm. Iraq's air force played the following role before and during the Coalition invasion:²⁴⁷

By the summer of 1990, the IQAF constituted the sixth largest air force in the world, with 750 fighter, bomber, and armed trainer aircraft, supported by 200 miscellaneous types, including an Iraqi-built airborne early warning aircraft derived from the Soviet IL-76 transport. Iraq's air force included the modern MiG-29 Fulcrum interceptor and air superiority fighter, the MiG-27 Flogger strike fighter, the MiG-25 Foxbat interceptor, the MiG-23 Flogger fighter-bomber, the MiG-21 Fishbed fighter, the Sukhoi Su-25 Frogfoot ground attack airplane, the Sukhoi Su-24 Fencer strike aircraft, the Sukhoi Su -7, -20 and -22 Fitter family of fighter-bombers, and the Tupolev Tu-16 Badger and Tu-22 Blinder bombers. Additionally, it had Chinese-made H-6 and J-7 aircraft, the Czech L-39 armed trainer, and French Mirage F-1 fighters. These carried a variety of Soviet and European air-to-air missiles, bombs, bomblet dispensers, and smart weapons such as the French-built AS-30L laser-guided weapon...

During Operation Desert Storm the Iraqi Air Force did not seek to challenge Coalition air forces, and nearly half the Iraqi Air Force fled to Iran to escape destruction. Why the IQAF fled to Iran is not precisely known, and the answer may never be fully known. In any case, Iraqi fighters and support aircraft fled for the border -- more than 120 left. Over 200 aircraft were destroyed on Iraqi airfields, and hardened laser-guided bombs devastated Iraq's hardened aircraft shelters. Eventually day-and-night air strikes destroyed or seriously damaged 375 shelters out of a total of 594.

According to the US Department of Defense, Iraq lost 90 aircraft of all types [including helicopters] to coalition air forces during Operation Desert Storm. Of these, 39 were shot down in air-to-air combat [the details remain somewhat obscure, since a total of as many as 42 aircraft were claimed to have been destroyed in action]. Another six were lost in accidents and 16 were captured or destroyed by coalition ground forces. Additionally, another 122-137 were flown to Iran [estimates range from 115 to 140], bringing the total confirmed loss to at least 234 aircraft. In addition to confirmed losses, of Iraq's 594 hardened aircraft shelters, 375 were damaged or destroyed by coalition bombing. According to one estimate as many as 141 aircraft were destroyed in these shelters. By another estimate, 81 aircraft had been destroyed on the ground.

Following Desert Storm, by one estimate the Iraqi Air Force included:

- 15 MiG-29 ground-attack aircraft
- 30 Mirage F1 ground-attack aircraft
- 50 MiG-23 multi-role fighters
- 20 Su-25 ground-attack aircraft
- 30 Su-20/-22 ground-attack aircraft
- 7 Tu-16 and B-6D bombers
- 10 Tu-22 supersonic bombers

Iran retained the 15 Il-76, 40 Su-20/22, 24 Mirage F1, 7-12 MiG-23, seven MiG-25 and four MiG-29 combat aircraft that fled Iraq to escape the Coalition air campaign in 1991. As of early 2000 Iraq claimed it flew more than 100 military planes and 33 civilian airliners to Iran, though the Iranians said the numbers are lower.

Serious problems existed within the new Iraqi air force's existing assets. In early September 2005, the service grounded six of the eight surveillance aircraft that it acquired in September 2004. The planes were Jordan Aerospace Industries SAMA CH2000s, equipped with forward-looking infrared sensors. The squadron was left with just two FLIR-equipped Seeker aircraft, acquired in 2004 from Jordan-based Seabird Aviation. The grounding, according to a U.S. military adviser to the squadron, involves a contract dispute. While the adviser declined to give specifics on the nature of the dispute, the performance of the aircraft seemed to be in question, with an industry expert citing possible problems related to the CH2000's ability to operate effectively in the heat of the Iraqi summer.²⁴⁸

The disputed SAMA surveillance craft were purchased as part of a U.S. assistance package aimed at building up the Iraqi air force. In October 2005, Brig. Gen. Allen Peck, commander of Coalition air operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, spoke to increased efforts to stand up the Iraqi air force. Iraq now operates three Lockheed Martin C-130 transports donated from surplus U.S. stocks, plus small numbers of Aerocomp Comp Air 7SLs, Sama CH2000s, and Seabird SB7L-360 Seekers, Bell UH-1 Hueys, and 206 JetRangers. This inventory, however, only provided for basic airlift capabilities and surveillance, and the transport of government officials and other VIPs. Close air support and air attack capabilities are still provided by Coalition forces.

The planning staff at South Carolina-based Central Air Forces Command were assessing what the Iraqi air force would need to fill out its portfolio of air assets. According to Peck, an enhanced yet still-limited package would include counterinsurgency, intelligence, reconnaissance, and increased surveillance and airlift capabilities. A light attack aircraft such as the Raytheon T-6A/B Texan II had been discussed as one option.²⁴⁹

As Figure 44 shows, the air force was also badly short of manning for its dedicated combat, service, and logistic support units.

Figure 43
Iraqi Air Force Equipment: Historical Figures 1990 to 2005

Type	Week Ending				
	1990	1995	2000	2002	2005
Bomber	16	~6	~6	~6	-
Tu-22	8	4	4	4	-
Tu-16	4	-	-	-	-
H-6D (PRC)	4	2	2	2	-
Fighter/Attack	390	216	116	96	-
J-6 (PRC MiG-19)	30	30	-	-	-
MiG-23	90	70	40	20	-
Mirage F-1 EQ/BQ	94	55	45	45	-
Su-7	30	20	-	-	-
Su-20/Su22	70	45	15	15	-
Su-25	60	25	15	15	-
Su-24	25	1	1	1	-
Fighter	245	140	90	85	-
J-7 (PRC MiG-21)	40	35	35	35	-
MiG-21	150	75	40	40	-
MiG-25	25	15	5	5	-
MiG-29	30	15	10	5	-
RECON	~12	~5	~5	~5	16
CH2000	-	-	-	-	8
SB7L-260	-	-	-	-	2
Comp Air SL7	-	-	-	-	6
MiG-21	5	-	-	-	-
MiG-25	7	5	5	5	-
AEW					
II-76 Adnan	2	-	-	-	-
TANKER					
II-76	1	2	2	2	-
TRANSPORT					
C-130E	-	-	-	-	3
An-2	10	5	5	20	-
An-12	10	5	5	3	-
An-24	6	6	6	6	-
An-26	2	2	6	6	-
II-76	19	4	4	4	-
TRAINING					
AS-202	35	20	20	20	-
EMB-312	80	70	60	50	-
L-29	50	20	-	-	-
L-39	50	50	50	50	-
MB-233	16	8	-	-	-
PC-7	50	25	25	25	-
PC-9	30	30	15	12	-
Yak-11	10	-	-	-	-

*The figures for 1990 and 1995 reflect estimated total aircraft inventory, and during this timeframe most of these aircraft could be assumed to be operable. From 2000 on, the figures reflect operational aircraft only. Thus, the change from 1995 to 2000 reflects a reduction in the estimated number of operable aircraft, rather than the total number of extant airframes, which is probably largely unchanged. Data taken from GlobalSecurity.org, available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/air-force-equipment.htm>

Figure 44
Iraqi Navy and Air Transportation Unit Manning: December 10, 2005

NAVY				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	118	129	0	109
Enlisted	513	669	4	130
Totals	631	798	4	126
AIR FORCE				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	318	175	0	55
Enlisted	581	187	1	22
Totals	899	362	1	40

Source: Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office, December 10, 2005.

Navy/Coast Guard

The Iraqi Navy was still in the process of becoming an effective light coastal defense force in the fall of 2005. Its naval infantry battalion was being trained for point defense of oil platforms -- a key mission in securing oil exports. In a Defense Department Briefing on September 22, 2005, Vice Admiral David Nichols reported on the state of the Iraqi Navy. VADM Nichols was the Commander of US Naval Forces Central Command out of Bahrain:

The Iraqi navy, though small, is already integrated into our maritime security ops in the northern Gulf as well as Iraqi navy marines aboard the Iraqi oil platforms in the northern Gulf... the Iraqi navy, as I said, is fairly small -- about six patrol boats, a total of about 700 sailors, and there are around 400 marines or so. But they have pretty much continuous patrol boat presence in -- again, in our Northern Gulf Maritime Security Ops. Because the Iraqis know the lay of the land and understand what they're looking at out there a lot better than we do. They've been very helpful there. The Iraqi navy marines, as I mentioned, we have them aboard the oil platforms now. And in the not-too-distant future -- and I'm calling that about November -- most of the security effects aboard the oil platforms will be Iraqi navy marines.

So, on the one hand, there's good progress there by the Iraqi navy, as I think there is overall in Iraq in terms of building the security capability. On the other hand, there is plenty of work to be done there to continue to help the Iraqi navy build, particularly the sustainment, logistics support, other kind of capacity it's going to need to be operationally effective.

By September of 2005, the Iraqi Navy was operating five Predator Class Patrol Boats (PB), 24 Fast Aluminum Boats (Dual Outboard Engines), and ten Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats. The naval forces were further equipped with various small arms and Night Vision Devices. Plans called for the Iraqi Navy to be equipped with three al-Faw class patrol boats by December 2005 and with an additional three by September 2006. However, design deficiencies (e.g., seawater strainers below the waterline) and construction shortcomings (e.g., poor welding) of the one Al Faw boat delivered to date caused delays in fielding the patrol boats.²⁵⁰

Iraqi naval forces were also working with US forces in defending Iraq's two oil terminals in the Gulf -- the Al Basra Oil Terminal (ABOT) and the Khawr Al Amaya Oil Terminal (KAAOT). The oil exports through these terminals were generating nearly 80% of Iraq's revenue -- less aid -- in late 2005. Iraqi marines had taken full control of the defense of KAAOT, supported by Coalition ships and naval forces in the area. A total of some 50 Iraqi marines worked with a total of some 70 US sailors.²⁵¹

When asked about what platforms the Iraqi Navy would need in the future -- be that planes, ships, increased capabilities of whatever variety -- VADM Nichols replied as follows:²⁵²

Well, you know, I think there's good news there. One of the tendencies when you're -- is to go for big ships and big airplanes, kind of blue-water navy sort of capability. But the Iraqis, again, with the help of this U.K.-led team that's part of MNSTC-I -- the Multinational Security Transition Command -- I think they've got their requirements in the right quadrant. They know that they need things like small patrol boats that give them the ability to enforce sovereignty inside their territorial waters, and in the waterways Shatt al-Arab and Khor Abdullah, which are the key to the re-establishment of legitimate commercial activity in southern Iraq.

I would say the biggest -- the most important thing is not in terms of their requirements in terms of platforms. But again, I'll go back to my last point. It's about building the ability to sustain, and again, MNSTC-I and others, including us, are working hard with them to help them on that. I mean, it's going to be a gradual and an iterative process, and I believe that we're going to be involved in maritime security ops in the northern Gulf for a while.

As Figure 44 has shown, the navy was also badly short of manning for its dedicated combat, service, and logistic support units.

Creating an Officer Corps

New efforts were made to include Sunni and former Ba'athist officers and create truly national forces. At the end of major combat operations in 2003, some 400,000 to 500,000 Iraqi soldiers, who had served Saddam Hussein and his Ba'ath party, were relieved of their duties in the disbanding of the Iraqi Army. After more than two years of the insurgency that followed, the Iraqi Army invited former Ba'athists to return to the ranks. On November 2, 2005, the Iraqi Army invited junior Iraqi officers who had served under Saddam Hussein to serve in the ISF.

The move was meant to both help fill the officer corps, and to re-enfranchise the predominantly Sunni Arab cadre of soldiers who had been denied the opportunity of joining the new Iraqi Army in 2003. Recruits to the Iraqi Army had so far been largely Shi'ite or Kurdish, but fought primarily in Sunni areas. This made Iraqi forces appear to be sectarian and ethnic and led some Sunnis to reject participation in the new government and support or tolerate the insurgency.

Senior officers still were not invited back -- the rank of officers accepted into the new Iraqi forces could be no higher than major under the old regime -- although some former senior officers under Saddam had already been selectively recruited back to senior positions in the new Army. A statement by the Ministry of Defense indicated that all returning ex-Ba'athist soldiers would undergo a screening process, including interviews designed to screen out potential insurgent elements.²⁵³

Progress also occurred in the broader officer training effort. As of November 2005, MNSTC-I reported the following progress in terms of ISF personnel matriculating through professional development and education programs:

- Joint Staff College Instructors: 24
- Joint Staff College Students (Junior/Senior Courses): 88 in training
- Military Academy Graduates (IMAR and Zakho): 377
- Military Academy Cadets (IMAR and Zakho): 657 in training
- Squad Leader and Platoon Sergeant Courses: 441
- fContracting Capacity Course: 170

On December 25, in Al Kisik, the first batch of former Iraqi Army senior enlisted soldiers were inducted into the new Iraqi army after graduating from the noncommissioned Officer Academy. During their time at the NCO academy, the soldiers went through 23

days of training in marksmanship, close combat, map reading, mission preparedness, search and seizure, and squadron and platoon leadership development.²⁵⁴

Figure 45 details the numbers of officers, enlisted, and NCOs who had attended RTC, Academy, and ITB/Branch Schools through December 10, 2005. It shows a low fill level on many areas for both officers and NCOs, and an excess in enlisted ranks.

Figure 45
Iraq Armed Forces Personnel Details – Schools

RTC Schools				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	78	20	0	26
NCOs	411	94	5	23
Enlisted	30	60	9	200
Totals	519	174	14	34
Academy Schools				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	138	103	0	75
NCOs	140	69	0	49
Enlisted	295	202	0	68
Totals	573	374	0	65

ITB/Branch Schools				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	183	93	0	51
NCOs	280	196	0	70
Enlisted	211	178	0	84
Totals	674	467	0	69
Schools Roll-Up				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	216	123	0	57
NCOs	551	163	5	30
Enlisted	325	262	9	81
Totals	1092	548	14	50

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, US Department of State, December 10, 2005

Equipment

Supply problems continued to persist in the fall of 2005. These problems were reflected in the fact that:

- Iraqis continued to patrol in civilian pickup trucks that offer little protection against roadside bombs, while their US trainers ride alongside them in Humvees.
- Some Iraqi soldiers had new pistols but no bullets, while others had night vision goggles and no batteries with which to power them.
- Training teams continued to lack Arabic interpreters.

Some US and Iraqi soldiers blamed the supply problems on a corrupt Iraqi Defense Ministry, which had been reorganized by American authorities following the 2003 invasion, although some such charges seemed to be more the product of political differences than exceptional levels of corruption.

In October, Iraqi government officials issued an arrest warrant for former Defense Minister Hazim Shaalan and 27 other officials in the alleged disappearance of more than \$1 billion from the ministry that was intended for weapons to modernize the army.²⁵⁵ This followed on US military officials' claims in July 2005 that an elaborate Iraq MOD kickback scheme has led to the loss of \$300 million the preceding year, and to the delivery of substandard helicopters, armored personnel carriers, and machine guns.²⁵⁶

Iraqi forces were finally beginning to get significant armor. Under a \$5 million contract with Iraq's Ministry of Defense, Washington-based Defense Solutions was refurbishing 77 T-72M1 tanks and four BT-55 recovery vehicles to be delivered to the Iraq Army. The tanks had originally been built in Poland and the Czech Republic, and were mothballed in Hungary, one of the few countries authorized by the US government to do business in Iraq. The refurbishing is part of the effort to stand up the Iraqi Army's first armored division by December.

Designated the 9th Motorized Rifle Division, the new Iraqi heavy division was to be made up of two mechanized brigades comprising nine maneuver battalions, and will include two battalions of T-72 tanks, two of T-55 tanks, and five BMP-1 armored personnel carriers.²⁵⁷ Figure 46 shows equipment delivered to MOD and MOI since June 2004 through November 3, 2005.

Fact sheets provided by the MNSTC-I in December showed that the 220,000-strong Iraqi Security Forces, including the army and paramilitary police, had received about 600 armored vehicles, yet had a requirement for nearly 3,000 more, including more than 1,500 armored Humvee utility vehicles.²⁵⁸

Figure 46
Equipment Issued Since June 2004

(Includes US & Ministry purchases, and NATO deliveries, through November 3, 2005)

Item	Ministry of Defense Forces	Ministry of Interior Forces	Total
Uniforms	436,337	335,880	772,217
Helmets	119,532	27,020	146,552
Body Armor	95,153	132,232	227,385
Radios	15,868	14,513	30,381
AK-47s	94,883	95,874	190,707
Pistols	17,028	149,292	166,320
Machine Guns	8,310	2,190	10,500
Ammunition	203,265,978	137,462,093	340,728,071
Vehicles	12,123	8,306	20,429

Source: MNSTC-I, November 2005

Progress and Problems in the Iraqi Special Security Forces and Police

There was progress within the special security and police forces as well. A total of 67,500 Iraqi Police Service IPS members had been trained and equipped by September 2005, an increase of 5,500 since July 2005. This fell behind MNSTC-I's goal of 75,000 IPS trained and equipped by the time of the October 15, 2005. However, the total rose to 40,500 MOI forces and 77,500 police and highway police by end-December: a total of 118,000. The MNSTC-I seemed to have good reason to claim it could still reach its full-authorized complement of 135,000 IPS by February 2007.

The police training curriculum was increased between July and September 2005, and new police academy graduates were receiving informal mentoring from veteran Iraqi police. Some IPS station commanders still questioned the adequacy of initial training, but were continuing training at the station level.²⁵⁹

Nevertheless, the Special Security Forces and police remained a problem, and once again, the US and Coalition had to reorganize its effort to advise the Ministry of the Interior. As of October 1, 2005, MNSTC-I took operational control of the former Iraq Reconstruction Management Office (IRMO) MOI and MOD missions. Those two groups, formerly under the control of the US State Department, then became known as P3 MOI and MOD-AST, respectively.²⁶⁰

Three other major problems that affected MOI force development were:

- o Growing complaints that the special security forces served Sh'ite and Iranian interests and killed and abused Sunnis,
- o Reports of infiltration of special security and police forces by insurgents and,
- o Continuing equipment delivery shortfalls. Because the police were often recruited by local police chiefs with little Coalition oversight, infiltration tended to be somewhat higher in the police than in the military and paramilitary forces. As Figure 46 has already shown, efforts to fully equip MOI forces remained limited through the fall of 2005; the assets delivered through October 8, 2005 fell significantly short of requirement.

Growing Reports of Security Force and Police Abuses

The transfer of responsibility to Iraqi forces was creating problems as well as solutions. While it reduced the public profile of Coalition forces, and the perception they were "occupiers," it also exposed the deep ethnic divisions within them. This was particularly true of the special security and police forces in the Ministry of the Interior, and it became increasingly clear that the Minister tolerated abuses of Sunnis, and links between the security forces, police, and militias like the Badr Organization.

These problems were particularly apparent in the greater Baghdad area. When the US Army Haifa Street base became the first base in Baghdad to be handed over to Iraqi control in February 2005, the handover was hailed as a major success in the training effort and a step toward Iraqi control of the security mission. Yet the gradual handover of

security responsibilities in Baghdad had some setbacks, and more and more reports of brutality by the security forces began to emerge.

In late November 2005, Ayad Allawi -- Iraq's prime minister until April 2005 -- issued a public warning regarding the state of human rights in Iraq: "Iraq is the centrepiece of this region. If things go wrong, neither Europe nor the US will be safe." The remark came as part of a broader condemnation of the abuses taking place in Iraq, largely, he said, at the hands of fellow Shi'ites in the government. Allawi likened these abuses to the abuses of Saddam Husein's regime: "People are doing the same as [in] Saddam Hussein's time and worse," adding that the situation had become so bad that he had ordered his own security detail to fire on any police that attempted to approach his headquarters without prior notice.²⁶¹

Shi'ite and Kurdish elements within the special security forces, police, and other elements of the Ministry of Interior were acting as sectarian and ethnic forces in ways that were becoming an increasing problem. By late 2005, US officials and military sources were complaining that the MOI and Minister Bayan Jabr were not informing them of some MOI and police operations. They expressed particular concern about the actions of the MOI's Maghawir or Fearless Warrior special commando units, and that they were carrying out illegal raids and killings. This 12,000-man force had a number of Sunni officers and had originally been formed under the authority of former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi.

The MOI had recruited large numbers of new Shi'ite members after the new government was formed in April 2005, however, and its commander, General Rashid Flaih Mohammed was reported to have acknowledged that the unit had had some problems. Sunni police commanders like Brigadier General Mohammed Ezzawi Hussein Alwann, commander of the Farook Brigade, were also purged from the MOI forces, along with junior officers.²⁶²

The discovery on November 15, 2005 that some 169 Sunnis were held in unacceptably harsh conditions in a bunker in Baghdad at the Jadiyah prison near the Al Sama palace, raised further issues. Many were tortured, and the Special Investigative Unit carrying out the detentions was an MOI unit run by an MOI brigadier general and colonel. The colonel was an intelligence officer said to be reporting directly to Jabr.

There was little initial Iraqi follow-up to this discovery, although Prime Minister Jaffari and Minister of Interior Jabr promised an investigation and DVDs were found of some of the abuses and broadcast over satellite television. This lack of initial follow-up below Jaffari's level occurred in spite of intense pressure by the US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, State Department, and General Casey and others in the US Command in Baghdad. Moreover, the Inspector General of the MOI, Nori Nori, was fired without explanation on December 1st. In contrast, Faruq Mohsin Khalil, a spokesman for the Human Rights Ministry, called the allegations baseless.²⁶³

Yet, the validity of such charges was reinforced when a joint American-Iraqi raid on an MOI detention center early December discovered similar abuses. Some 625 more prisoners were found in the basement of the detention center, which was run by

commando units in the MOI. They were severely overcrowded, some appeared to be abused or tortured, and 13 had to be hospitalized.²⁶⁴

The situation was made still worse by charges that Iranian personnel had been present, and when Sami al-Anbaggi, the Director General of the MOI, contradicted the US officers present at the raid. He said that some of the prisoners had merely been slapped, and that the prisoners that were hospitalized were only suffering from headaches.²⁶⁵ In fact, US officers had found that 12 of the prisoners had had bones broken, fingernails pulled out, had been given electric shocks, and had been burned with cigarettes.²⁶⁶

On November 17, the United States expanded its existing probe of alleged prison abuses to include all Iraq-run detention sites. Law enforcement officials from the FBI, Justice Department, US Embassy, and US-led military forces would aid an Iraqi-appointed citizens group in the prison investigation. These abuses were so serious that US and Iraqi officials promised an inspection of all of the more than 1,000 detention centers being run in Iraq.²⁶⁷ There were, however, uncertainties surrounding some other charges. Sunni Islamic insurgents had every reason to try to implicate the security services. Some of the killings in late November involved key Sunni politicians like Ayad Alizi and Al Hussein, leading members of the Iraqi Islamic Party which was a member of the Sunni coalition competing in the December 15th elections. Shi'ites seemed to have little reason to strike at such targets.²⁶⁸

On December 27, the Bush administration suggested that the prisons where hundreds of detainees were abused were only "nominally" under the control of the central government in Baghdad. State Department spokesman Adam Ereli stated that "The problem has clearly not been solved and the problem is widespread."

These developments led to major changes in the advisory effort to both the special security forces and the regular police. While the details are discussed later, the Bush Administration took these problems so seriously that President Bush made the efforts to correct them a major part of his speech on the war to the Veterans of Foreign Wars on January 10, 2006, and made improvements in the security forces and police a major part of US strategy in Iraq.²⁶⁹

Our commanders tell me that the Iraqi army and police are increasingly able to take the lead in the fight. Yet the Iraqi police still lag behind the army in training and capabilities --and so one of our major goals in 2006 is to accelerate the training of the Iraqi police. We'll focus our efforts on improving the performance of three categories of the Iraqi police. First, we will work to improve the Special Police under the Ministry of Interior, who are fighting alongside the Iraqi army against the terrorists and Saddamists. Second, we will expand and strengthen the border police charged with securing Iraq's frontiers. And, third, we will increase our focus on training local station police, so they can protect their communities from the criminals and terrorists.

The Interior Ministry's Special Police are the most capable of the Iraqi police forces. There are now about 19,000 Iraqi Special Police trained and equipped -- which is near our goal for a complete force. Many of these Special Police forces are professional, they represent all aspects of society. But recently some have been accused of committing abuses against Iraqi civilians. That's unacceptable. That's unacceptable to the United States government; it's unacceptable to the Iraqi government, as well. And Iraqi leaders are committed to stopping these abuses. We must ensure that the police understand that their mission is to serve the cause of a free Iraq -- not to address old grievances by taking justice into their own hands.

To stop abuses and increase the professionalism of all the Iraqi Special Police units, we're making several adjustments in the way these forces are trained. We're working with the Iraqi government to increase the training Iraqi Special Police receive in human rights and the rule of law. We're establishing a new Police Ethics and Leadership Institute in Baghdad that will help train Iraqi officers in the role of the police in a democratic system -- and establish clear lesson plans in professional ethics for all nine Iraqi police academies. To improve their capability, we will soon begin implementing a program that has been effective with the Iraqi army -- and that is partnering U.S. battalions with Iraqi Special Police battalions. These U.S. forces will work with and train their Iraqi counterparts, helping them become more capable and professional, so they can serve and protect all the Iraqi's without discrimination.

Second, we're working to increase the number of border police that can defend Iraq's frontiers and stop foreign terrorists from crossing into that country. Iraqis now have 18,000 border police on the job, manning land and sea and air ports across the country. Our goal is to have a total of 28,000 Iraqi border police trained and equipped by the end of this year.

To better train Iraqi police, we've established a new customs academy in Basra. We're embedding border police transition teams with Iraqi units, made up of coalition soldiers and assisted by experts from our Department of Homeland Security. The Iraqi border police are growing increasingly capable and are taking on more responsibility. In November, these forces took the lead in protecting Iraq's Syrian border, with coalition forces playing a supporting role. In other words, they're beginning to take the lead and take responsibility for doing their duty to protect the new democracy. And as more skilled border police come on line, we're going to hand over primary responsibility for all of Iraq's borders to Iraqi border police later on this year.

Finally, we're helping Iraqis build the numbers and capabilities of the local station police. These are the Iraqi police forces that need the most work. There are now over 80,000 local police officers across Iraq -- a little more than halfway toward our goal of 135,000. To improve the capabilities of these local police, we're taking a concept that worked well in the Balkans and applying it to Iraq -- partnering local Iraqi police stations with teams of U.S. military police and international police liaison officers, including retired U.S. police officers.

These officers will work with provincial police chiefs across Iraq, and focus on improving local police forces in nine key cities that have seen intense fighting with the terrorists. By strengthening local police in these cities, we can help Iraqis provide security in areas cleared of enemy forces and make it harder for these thugs to return. And by strengthening Iraqi local police in these cities, we'll help them earn the confidence of the local population, which will make it easier for local leaders and residents to accelerate reconstruction and rebuild their lives.

The training of the Iraqi police is an enormous task and, frankly, it hasn't always gone smoothly. Yet we're making progress -- and our soldiers see the transformation up close. Army Staff Sergeant Dan MacDonald is a Philadelphia cop who helped train Iraqi police officers in Baghdad. He says this of his Iraqi comrades: "From where they were when we got here to where they are now, it's like two different groups of people. They're hyped-up, they look sharp, they're a lot better with their weapons. I'd take these guys out with me back home." If he's going to take them back home in Philadelphia, they must be improving. (Laughter and applause.)

As we bring more Iraqi police and soldiers online in the months ahead, we will increasingly shift our focus from generating new Iraqi forces to preparing Iraqis to take primary responsibility for the security of their own country. At this moment, more than 35 Iraqi battalions have assumed control of their own areas of responsibility -- including nearly half of the Baghdad province, and sectors of south-central Iraq, southeast Iraq, western Iraq, and north-central Iraq. And in the year ahead, we will continue handing more territory to Iraqi forces, with the goal of having the Iraqis in control of more territory than the coalition by the end of 2006.

As Iraqi forces take more responsibility, this will free up coalition forces to conduct specialized operations against the most dangerous terrorists, like Zarqawi and his associates, so we can defeat the terrorists in Iraq so we do not have to face them here at home. (Applause.) We will continue to

hand over territory to the Iraqis so they can defend their democracy, so they can do the hard work, and our troops will be able to come home with the honor they have earned.

I've said that our strategy in Iraq can be summed up this way: As the Iraqis stand up, we will stand down. And with more Iraqi forces demonstrating the capabilities needed to achieve victory, our commanders on the ground have determined that we can decrease our combat forces in Iraq from 17 to 15 brigades by the spring of 2006. That's what they've decided. And when they decide something, I listen to them. This adjustment will result in a net decrease of several thousand troops below the pre-election baseline of 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq. This decrease comes in addition to the reduction of about 20,000 troops who were in Iraq largely to assist with the security during the December elections.

The Problem of Ties to the Badr Organization and SCIRI

There were good reasons for these actions, and the other US and Iraqi government efforts described later in this analysis. It was all too clear that a number of MOI special security and police units had ties to various Shi'ite militias. Moreover, so many members of the Shi'ite and Kurdish militias had joined such units and the police, that the lines between them and the militias were often unclear.

Although the CPA had tried to establish legal barriers to maintaining militias by issuing Order 91 in April 2004, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the faction of Abdul Aziz al-Hakim still had large militia elements. These were forces that Sunni groups increasingly accused of committing atrocities against them since the spring of 2005. Al Dawa, the Badr Organization, and the Iraqi Hezbollah remained potential security problems, and Sunnis feel particularly threatened by the Badr Organization.

A provision in the Iraqi Constitution allowing for regional security forces complicated matters further. Article 9 of the August 28 draft of the constitution stated that that "Forming military militias outside the framework of the armed forces is banned." However, Article 18 established that "The regional government shall be in charge of all that's required for administering the region, especially establishing and regulating internal security forces for the region such as police, security and guards for the region."²⁷⁰

Leading Shi'ite politicians also showed how such forces might be used. In late November 2005, Abdul Aziz Hakim, leader of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, called for the United States to allow Iraqi militias to take a more active role against insurgents, saying that the insurgency would only be defeated should the US let Iraq get tough. Hakim was not an elected official, but was the overseer of the party's armed wing, the Badr Organization. He claimed the United States had quashed Iraqi plans that could have dealt with the insurgency more swiftly than the current progress. His calls for a tougher stance on the Sunni insurgency were also mixed with renewed calls for a massive federal region in the Shi'ite south during a more than hour-long conversation from his home and office in Baghdad, underlining the potential instability and divisiveness that SCIRI and the Badr Organization could foment.²⁷¹

It was clear that any regional forces could be a source of serious problems for both Iraq and the Coalition, and for the development of national and responsible Iraqi forces. One concern was that the light arms supplied to the security forces and police, and heavy

weaponry provided to the Iraqi National Army, might end up in the hands of these regional, ethnic, or sectarian forces – forces like the Badr Organization in the south. The stockpiling of U.S.-supplied arms by competing ethnic and sectarian forces would at a minimum add to sectarian tensions, and might be critical in any serious civil war.²⁷²

The Bush Administration summarized the risks posed by Shi'ite militias as follows in its October 13, 2005 report to the Congress on "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq":

More than a dozen militias have been documented in Iraq, varying in size from less than a hundred to tens of thousands of members. Some were organized in loose cellular structures, while others had a more conventional military organization. Some were concentrated around a single locale, while others had a more regional footprint. Some of them were wholly indigenous, while others received support such as training, equipment, and money from outside Iraq.

Typically, the militias were armed with light weapons and operated as cells or small units. Even if they do not take up arms against the government, militias can pose a long-term challenge to the authority and sovereignty of the central government. This was the driving force behind the creation of Coalition Provisional Authority Order 91 and the Transition and Re-Integration Committee. For the same reason, Article 27 of the Transitional Administrative Law and Article 9 of the draft Iraqi Constitution prohibit armed forces or militias that are not part of the Iraqi Armed Forces.

The realities of Iraq's political and security landscape work against completing the transition and re-integration of all Iraqi militias in the short-term. Provided the constitution is ratified in October, the government elected in December will have a four-year term of office, and it will have the task of executing the militia-control provisions of the constitution. Although it is often referred to as an Iraqi militia, the Jaysh al Mahdi (or "Mahdi Army") of radical Shia cleric Muqtada al Sadr fought Coalition Forces and Iraqi forces in April and August of 2004. The Peshmerga and the Badr Organization are viewed as militias by the Iraqigovernment and Coalition Forces, while the Mahdi Army is viewed as a potentially insurgent organization.

- Badr Organization. Officially known as the Badr Organization for the Reconstruction and Development, it is the militia of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iran (SCIRI), the largest Shi'ite party in Iraq. It is reported to have links with both Iranian and Iraqi intelligence services and provides protective security for many Shi'ite religious sites as well as religious and secular leaders. Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani is protected by the Badr militia. The Badr Organization has been implicated in the revenge killings of Ba'athists and has also been involved in combat and street fighting with Muqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army.
- Jaysh al Mahdi. The Mahdi Army of Muqtada al-Sadr engaged in open combat with Coalition and Iraqi forces in April and August of last year, most notably in the battles in and around Najaf. The Mahdi Army has continued to exist after an October 2004 ceasefire agreement, although the Iraqi government has made repeated calls for its disbandment. The exact size of the organization is unknown. There is evidence that they are supplied from sources outside of Iraq, most notably Iran.

These charges relating to Iran's role in the Badr Organization and MOI forces also became more serious towards the end of 2005.²⁷³ General Casey stated that, "They're putting millions of dollars into the south to influence the elections. Its funded primarily through their charity organizations and also Badr and some of these political parties. A lot of their guys (Badr) are going into the police and military...Its not infiltration. They're upfront about it (their militia affiliation) and day-to-day things are okay. But then there's a crisis. What you see happening is that people are signing up but their loyalties are more to a militia leader than the chief of police."

Casey also confirmed that the militias were responsible for the abuse or killing of Sunni Arabs, “I don’t know that it’s the Badr Corps that’s doing it...or the Mehdi that’s doing it, but I have no doubt that people who are associated with those groups are involved.”

General Munatzar Jassim al-Sammari, who had been in charge of Iraq’s special security forces until he was removed by Jabr and had left Iraq, made much more specific charges although these charges were not confirmed. The general claimed that a senior Iranian intelligence officer had been in charge of the detention facility the US raided in mid-December, that the officer was named Tahseer Nasr Lawandi, and worked directly under the Kurdish Deputy Minister of the MOI, General Hussein Kamel.²⁷⁴ Lawandi had been a Colonel in Iranian intelligence and had been given Iraqi citizenship on May 12, 2004.

Ironically, one of the leaders of the Badr Organization, Hadi al-Amari, was scarcely reassuring when he coupled his denial of any Iranian influence to the statement that, “Alawi receives money from America, from the CIA. All they talk about is our funding from Iran. We are funded by some Gulf countries and the Islamic Republic of Iran. We don’t hide it.”²⁷⁵

Reports also began to surface that the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) was separately recruiting young Iraqi Shi’ite men and sending them to Iran for training as either part of the Badr Organization or as separate operatives. Specific reference was made to training at the Khomeini training base near the Khavaran-Semman highway. These reports came from Iranian opposition sources with ties to terrorists, and could not be confirmed in depth, but Coalition and Iraqi officials gave them some credibility.²⁷⁶

This publicity, and pressure from the US government and senior Iraqi political figures did lead the Minister of Interior to take a more proactive role. In early January, Minister Jabr fired three top commanders of the special security services as well as a 136 man unit in the Basra area that was blocking the work of the MOI’s internal affairs office. The commanders who were dismissed included the heads of the 1st and 2nd Brigade of the Public Order Division and the head of the 2nd Commando Brigade. The 2nd Commando Brigade had been a major source of abuses by the security services and its name was also changed from the “Wolf Brigade” to the “Freedom Brigade.” The MOI also agreed to transfer all prisoners and detainees from the small facilities run by individual units to one of the central units within 48 hours, and place these facilities under the Ministry of Justice.²⁷⁷

The Special Problems Posed by Sadr’s Mehdi Militia

Coalition officials also stated on background that these risks would be far greater if weapons fell into the hands of anti-Coalition militias, or elements of the special security forces and police joined them. The Mehdi Militia of the Moqtada Al Sadr was of particular concern. His organization was increasingly accused of political assassinations and kidnappings in 2005. Sadr’s Mahdi Army also expanded its control over certain areas in cities like Basra and Sadr City, and created an environment of fear according to local accounts.²⁷⁸

Sadr's supporters sponsored demonstrations calling for US forces to leave Iraq in April 2005, and top Sadr aides in his Independent National Bloc issued warnings to Ibrahim Jafari, then the prime minister designate, that he must pay more attention to these demands or that the Sadr faction might leave the United Iraqi Alliance and become an active part of the opposition.²⁷⁹ The group also demanded the release of some 200 Sadr activists arrested during earlier fighting and that all criminal charges against Sadr be dropped.²⁸⁰

Sadr was able to exploit the political weakness and divisions of other Shi'ite movements in the south and their lack of ability to govern, as well as the fact other hard-line Islamist movements won significant numbers of seats in local governments in key areas like Basra.²⁸¹ In summer 2005, Sadr attempted to collect one million signatures on a petition that asked the Coalition to leave Iraq in what appeared to be his burgeoning attempts to recast himself as a major political force within Iraq. Sadr's Council for Vic and Virtue launched at least one attack on secular students in Basra for having a mixed picnic.²⁸²

Sadr revived the Mahdi Army, which was again beginning to be openly active in parts of Southern Iraq such as Basra, Amarah, and Nasiriyah, and still had cells in Najaf and Kut as well. While some US official sources stated the army was relatively weak, it began to hold parades again, and while only limited numbers of arms were displayed, it was clear that such weapons were still available in the places where they had been hidden during the fighting the previous year.²⁸³

Other signs pointed to the steadily rising influence of the Mahdi Army. In Baghdad's Sadr City, home to 2 million Shiites, by the fall of 2005 residents had begun to carry Mahdi-issued identification cards to assure safe passage into certain parts of the city, or into certain buildings. The cards are widely carried by the Mahdi Army, in open defiance of central government control and security in Sadr city, and even independent contractors operating in Baghdad had bought into the system in order to carry out business in the Shiite ghetto.²⁸⁴

By the late spring of 2005, the Mahdi Army seemed to be the largest independent force in Basra, played a major role in policing Amarah, and had effectively struck a bargain with the government police in Nasiriyah that allowed it to play a major role. By the late fall of 2005, some sources estimated that some 90% of the 35,000 police in Northeast Baghdad had ties to Sadr and the Mahdi forces. They were reported to be playing a major role in pushing Sunnis out of Shi'ite neighborhoods.²⁸⁵

Unlike most militias, the Mahdi Army had the active participation of Shi'ite clergy, mostly "activists" who strongly supported Sadr. One reason for their rebirth was the lack of effective action by the government. For example, the government police in Nasiriyah had 5,500 men, but was 2,500 men short of its goal.²⁸⁶ In August 2005, Basra police Chief Hassam Sawadi said that he had lost control over three-quarters of his police force, and that men in his ranks were using their power to assassinate opponents.²⁸⁷

Sadr remained publicly supportive of the political process in Iraq, and urged Shiites to avoid sectarian fighting with the Sunni population. Yet, while Sadr urged his followers not to be drawn into sectarian fighting, his organization was accused of a rash of political

assassinations and kidnappings in the Shiite south in the summer of 2005. On August 24, 2005, seven people died in an attack on Sadr's office in Najaf, which led to unrest among Shiite populations there and in other cities. Sadr's movement also began to publically reassert in the late in late summer of 2005, capitalizing on the release of Hazem Araj and other Sadr leaders from prison.

Sadr did continue to call for calm and continued his public support of non-reprisal. He sided with anti-federalist Sunni leaders during the drafting and review of the Iraqi constitution²⁸⁸ He supported continued Shiite political involvement in the new government, although many fear that he eventually wants to see a fundamentalist government appear.

Yey, his organization also staged several large demonstrations as a show of strength. In mid-September, militiamen from the Mahdi Army in Basra directly engaged in battles against US and British troops. Shootouts between supporters of Sadr and Coalition forces also erupted in Sadr City during the last week in September. On October 27, members of the Mahdi army clashed with Sunni gunmen outside of Baghdad. The fighting, which occurred in the village of Bismaya in the Nahrawan area south of Baghdad, claimed more than thirty lives.²⁸⁹ The militia battles in October proved to be the deadliest in months.

Sadr officials were quite open about the Mahdi Army's role in an October 27 gun battle in Nahrawan. The Shiite militia descended on a Sunni Arab kidnapping ring after the Sunnis had abducted and mutilated a Sadrist. Sadr officials distanced themselves that same month, however, from the kidnapping of "The Guardian" newspaper reporter Rory Carroll. A Sadr aid, Sheik Rubaie said that the Mahdi Army had nothing to do with the abduction, and that the militiamen were acting without approval of the organization.²⁹⁰ This denial, however, scarcely improved the situation. In late November, Sadr's militiamen ambushed a group of Sunni fighters on a plantation near Baghdad to avenge the deaths of one of their fellow Shiite militiamen. At least 21 bodies were left behind as Sadr's men left the scene.

As a sign of his enduring power, Sadr entered into a new political alliance with the two largest Shiite parties in the country on the very same day his forces battled militias in Bismaya. The alliance brought together Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari's Dawa Party, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, and Sadr's supporters. The move made Moqtada Sadr an even larger player in Iraqi politics. Because of the deal, Sadr-backed candidates would appear on the same ticket alongside members of the Shiite-led government in the December elections. Sadr had earlier pledged to support the elections but said he would not be supporting any particular list of candidates.

Although US officials were encouraged by Sadr's pledge to support the December 15 elections, they remained cautiously optimistic in the fall of 2005. Sadr has continuously refused to disband his militia, which continued to grow in power and influence in the fall of 2005. There were also reports that many Mahdi members have joined the police and other government security forces, contributing to the already fragmented nature of the Iraqi security forces.

Efforts to disband and disarm the remaining militias may at best be an administrative fiction until the Kurdish, Shi'ite, and Sunni groups involved become convinced that the new government is legitimate, will serve their interests, and can provide true security.

If these groups should agree to demobilize, the legal basis for such a program remains in place. Moreover, converting a substantial part of the Pesh Merga to a border security force might help deal with the most serious problem Iraq faces, which is to integrate the Kurds into a federal system where they are truly part of an Iraqi nation but still feel secure. Converting and disbanding the Shi'ite militias should also become progressively easier if the Iraqi government demonstrates that the Shi'ite majority has finally achieved a fair share of power and the nation's wealth.

The fact remains, however, that massive amounts of arms will almost certainly continue to be hidden or be readily available, given the number of arms already disbursed among Iraq's population. Moreover, reconstituting or creating new militias will be all too easy if ethnic and sectarian differences become violent, and Lebanon and the Balkans are clear warnings that "national" military, security, and police forces can suddenly fracture along partisan lines and become instruments of civil war.

The Pesh Merga Problem

The Kurdish Pesh merga militias have so far presented fewer problems than the Shi'ite militias, but former Pesh Merga militia are a major part of or dominate the manning in a number of ISF units, and the Pesh Merga effectively controls the regional security operations in the Kurdish dominated provinces in the north.

As alluded to previously, the high representation of Kurdish militiamen in the Iraqi Army had become a cause of growing concern in the effort to create a cohesive fighting force. According to some estimates, Kurdish leaders had inserted about 10,000 of their militia members into Iraqi Army divisions in Northern Iraq in order to lay the groundwork for gaining control of oil-rich Kirkuk, and perhaps a portion of Mosul, in an effort to secure the expanded borders of an independent Kurdistan.

A Kurdish soldier named Gabriel Mohammed, serving in the Iraqi army, remarked to a Knight Ridder reporter that "It doesn't matter if we have to fight Arabs in our own battalion...Kirkuk will be ours." In another anecdotal episode, Iraqi Army Col. Talib Naji, a Kurd, said that he would resist any efforts to dilute the Kurdish presence in his brigade: "The ministry of Defense recently sent me 150 Arab soldiers from the south. After two weeks of service, we sent them away. We did not accept them. We will not let them carry through with their plans to bring more Arab soldiers here."²⁹¹

There were Sunni complaints about Pesh Merga-dominated ISF units operating in Sunni Arab areas as well as about Shi'ite units. The Pesh Merga was accused of intimidating other Iraqi ethnic groups, and "soft" ethnic cleansing, in areas like Kirkuk and it was often difficult to be sure that Kurdish dominated security force and police units were not involved. There also were repeated charges by Turcoman groups that they are being abused by Kurdish dominated ISF and the Pesh Merga, as well as charges by the Kurdish political opponents of the PUK/KDP, the parties that dominate and control the Pesh Merga, that they have been subject to the same abuses.

The issue of Kirkuk was a growing concern as well. Capt. Greg Ford, intelligence officer for the First Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, estimated in December 2005 that 85,000 to 350,000 Kurds had moved back into the Kirkuk region since 2003. Coveted for its oil reserves, Kirkuk is the object of Kurdish ambitions to capture an ethnic majority in the city which Saddam Hussein had “Arabized” over decades of rule. While ethnic Turcomens have a similar claim to the city – as well as the Arab population, many of whom were moved to the region during Hussein’s reign – worries were heightening that Kurdish militia dominance in the region through the Pesh Merga forces was setting the stage for ethnic conflict.²⁹²

At a minimum, the interaction between the ISF and Pesh Merga presented a growing political and security problem and a further source of division within the country and Iraqi forces. In the worst case, it risked becoming another major fault line that could divide Iraqi forces along ethnic lines. At the same time, there was little practical short to medium-term alternative to the de facto preservation of Kurdish forces. The Kurds had little historical reasons to trust “national solutions” in an Arab-dominated nation. It seemed likely, therefore, that some form of Kurdish forces had to be preserved as part of any political compromise or solution reached by the new government elected on December 15th.

Training Efforts

Important qualitative changes were taking place in the MNSTC-I approach to training MOI forces, but the net impact sometimes did more to improve their effectiveness than to insure they truly serve Iraq’s needs as a nation, as distinguish from sectarian and ethnic interests. The initial approach to training had entailed a traditional Western-style classroom setting, with a curriculum focused on post-conflict environments and an emphasis on policing in a democracy. Seventy-five percent of the trainees’ time was spent in classroom lectures, and field training was conducted only with 9mm pistols. There were no Iraqi instructors.

MNSTC-I reported that a more hands-on approach had been developed in 2005, including five days of training in an anti-terrorism module, 15 days of training on practical survival skills and scenario-based training, and weapons training with 9mm and AK-47s. MNSTC-I also reported that by November, 41 Iraqi instructors were on staff, with expectations for that number to grow to 100.²⁹³

Figure 47 gives the MNSTC-I training definitions for MOI forces as of November 2005. By November, MNSTC-I said that 111,226 Iraqi MOI forces had been trained. The MOI following training academies were active in Iraq as of November 2005: ²⁹⁴

- Mosul Regional
- 1st Mechanized Academy (Tadji)
- Tadji IHP
- CMP Dublin DPS Academy (Baghdad)
- Special Police Commando Basic
- Al Hillah Regional

- Irbil Police College
- AS SULAYMANIAH DBE
- AS SULAYMANIAH Regional
- Baghdad Police College
- Numinayah POB Academy
- Al Kut Regional
- Al Kut DBE
- Basrah Regional
- Basrah DBE

Figure 47
MNSTC-I Training Definitions for MOI Forces as of November 2005

COMPONENT	TRAINING
Iraqi Police Service	New Recruits: 10-Week Training Serving, Academy Graduates: 3-Week Transition Integration Program; Specialized Training; Refresher Training
Public Order & Mechanized Police	6-Week and 5-Week Specialized Training
Special Police Commandos	6-Week Specialized Training
Emergency Response Unit	4-Week Basic; 4-Week Advanced Specialized Training
Dept. of Border Enforcement	4-Week Academy and Specialized Training
Highway Patrol	3-Week Academy Training
Bureau of Dignitary Protection	3-Week Initial Training, 2-3-Week Advanced Training; Follow-on Mentoring by US Contractors and Navy SEALs

Source: MNSTC-I, November 2005

Special Police Forces

These improvements in training were particularly important in improving the effectiveness of the Special Security Forces, and those forces that received the most Coalition vetting and training seemed to have fewer ethnic and sectarian abuses. There was, however, a complex mix of forces. The Ministry of Interior (MOI) forces now consisted of the Iraq Police Service (IPS), Special Police (Police Commandos, Public Order Police, and the Mechanized Police), the Emergency Response Unit, Border Forces, the Highway Patrol, and Dignitary Protection. According to an October 2005 Executive report to Congress project that MOI force generation was then planned be complete by August 2007. Projected end strength was set at approximately 195,000.

The Special Police included three separate organizations: the Special Police Commandos (providing light infantry for counter-insurgency operations), the Mechanized Police (providing light armor for counter-insurgency operations), and the Public Order Police (specializing in re-establishing order in high-risk environments). By the summer of 2005, the Special Police Forces had developed a clear command structure under Major General Adnan Thabit, and the mechanized battalions were being organized into the 8th Mechanized Police Brigade. Police training was now supported by regional academies in Iraq, in addition to the training center in Jordan. Regional academies now existed in Adnon, Mosul and Sulaymaniah in the north; As Asad, Taji, Baghdad, Hillah, and Kut in the Center, and Basrah in the south.

The readiness and deployments of these units has already been touched upon at the start of this chapter. As of September 2005, there were 28 Special Police Force battalions capable of combat operations, an increase of 13 since July 2005. Along with the Iraqi Army, the Special Police Commandos and the Public Order Police contributed to operations in Tal Afar, and the 1st Special Police Mechanized Brigade was assigned to provide route security to reduce the incident of insurgent attacks along the highway from the International Zone to Baghdad International Airport.²⁹⁵

New recruits to the Special Police Commandos, who were typically seasoned military veterans, underwent six weeks of intense training at the Special Police Commando academy in northern Baghdad. Each training cycle was designed to accommodate 300 to 500 students. The syllabus spans weapons qualification, urban patrolling techniques, unarmed combat apprehension, use of force, human rights and ethics in policing, introduction to Iraqi law, vehicle check points, and improvised explosive device characteristics and recognition.

By the fall of 2005, that force had grown to nearly 10,000 commandos trained and equipped, with 2,000 coming online between July and September of 2005. This placed MNSTC-I ahead of its projection to train and equip 9,800 Commandos by the October 15 referendum. The Government of Iraq had authorized a total force of more than 11,800 Commandos, which MNSTC-I planned to train and equip by May 2006.²⁹⁶

- Figure 48 shows Iraqi Special Police deployments between July 1, 2004 and October 19, 2005.
- Figure 49 provides numbers of Special Police personnel who had attended the various listed courses as of November 2005.

As has already been described, however, some of these forces used their new capabilities to serve the interests of Shi'ite groups like SCIRI, and Kurdish interests, and became involved in various abuses of Iraqi Sunnis. This led to the changes in the command of the Iraqi security forces described earlier. It also led the Coalition to change its approach to training such forces.²⁹⁷

In late December, the US military announced that it would pair American military units with Iraqi commando teams and other MOI special police units accused of abuse. The embed plan was to be based upon that used by the US military with the Iraqi Army. The planned transition teams were to consist of MPs and other military specialists, as well as international police liaison officers and international police trainers.²⁹⁸

On December 29, 2005, a senior US commander in Iraq said that the US was planning to significantly increase the number of US soldiers advising Iraqi police commando units in light of the recent spate of abuse findings and allegations. At the time, groups of about 40 American soldiers each were attached to seven of the nine special Iraqi police brigades. The new plan, to be put into effect in and around Baghdad, would entail all Iraqi units getting American advisers, with the total number of advisers increasing by several hundred.²⁹⁹

According to one senior US military official, the mentoring program was aimed specifically at former militia forces with the Ministry of Interior, which was dominated by the currently governing Shi'ite religious parties, and whose forces were made up largely of those parties' factional fighters.

In late December, Gen. William Webster, commander of Multinational Division Baghdad, echoed plans to increase the numbers of teams working with Iraqis in his command. He pointed out that Baghdad was 60 percent under Iraq control: 50 percent of Iraq controlled by the 6th Iraqi Army Division and 10 percent controlled by Iraqi special police.

Figure 48**Iraqi Special Police Deployments: 1 July 2004 vs. 19 October 2005**

(in Numbers of Combat and Support Battalions)

Location	1 July 2004	19 October 2005
Baghdad (Greater Area)	0	20
Fallujah	0	2
Habbaniyah (CS)	0	0
Hillah (CS)	0	1
Kaski (N)	0	0
Mosul	0	2
Numaniyah (CE)	0	0
Quaim	0	2
Ramadi	0	1
Rutbah area	0	2
Samarra	0	2
Tajir (CN)	0	0
Talil (SE)	0	0
Umm Qasr (SE)	0	0
Zahko (N)	0	0
Zubayr (SE)	0	0

Source: Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq" of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, October 2005

Figure 49
Special Police Courses/Personnel Attended as of November 2005

Special Police Courses	
Basic Criminal Investigation	2,678
Internal Controls	667
Violent Crimes and Kidnapping	1,114
Junior, Mid-Level, and Senior Management and Leadership	1,427
Organized Crime, Drug Enforcement, and Criminal Intelligence	859
Interviews and Interrogations	755
Explosive Hazard Awareness and Post-Blast Investigation	262
Counter-Terrorism Investigations	220
Critical Incident Management and Incident Command System	836
SWAT (28 Provincial Teams)	769
Dignitary Protection, Motorcade Escorts, and Site Security	1,578
Election Security	828

Source: MNSTC-I, November 2005

Developments in the Coalition Police Training Effort

As was the case with the special security forces, regular police presented problems throughout the country because many acted as local forces with sectarian, ethnic, and local loyalties. Others were far too passive, and either allow violence and crime to continue, or let militias and locally recruited police and security services perform much of the mission. Detainee and prisoner abuse was problem with some elements of the regular police, as well as the special security services, with reports of Shiite MOI personnel using their power to detain and torture Sunni adversaries.

The fact that President Bush made correcting these problems a major priority was striking in itself, but overall problems in the security and police forces were so serious by the end of 2005 that US civilian and military leaders highlighted the need for better training by saying that 2006 would be the “the year of the police.”³⁰⁰

In a joint statement in early January, Ambassador Khalilzad and General Casey both emphasized the importance of the police:³⁰¹

“Democratic countries depend on police forces that protect everyone and are well trained and equipped. Totalling more than 118,000 members, Iraq’s police force is moving forward towards living up to its full potential as the provider of security to Iraq’s neighborhoods and upholder of the rule of law in the nation.

As the insurgency is neutralized, the police will be the key instrument to deal with terrorists and criminals. For that reason together with the Iraqis, we are calling 2006 the year of the police. Police operating under the rule of law are also vital to the continued stability of the 14 provinces that are not grappling with an insurgency day to day and to preserving an environment conducive to international investment.

We are putting more resources into helping Iraq have effective police forces by reviewing the vetting process to avoid infiltration by militias, investing additional resources into the training and equipping program, bringing more than 100 additional trainers and putting more U.S. military advisors (Police Transition Teams) to work side-by-side with them. Iraqi Police already played a critical role in Iraq’s march toward becoming an independent and stable nation in the Middle East—January’s parliamentary election, October’s constitutional referendum and last month’s national election.

The United States is proud to be a part of the new Iraq. We continue to work with the Iraqi Police as this great country takes its rightful place.”

Ambassador Khalilzad went further, and made controlling the militias an equal priority,³⁰²

“Iraq’s leaders will need to work together to reform security institutions and eliminate a number of militias and other armed groups. They are a threat to Iraqi security and could produce future civil conflict and warlordism. The Iraqi constitution prohibits the formation of militias outside the “framework of the armed forces.”

As Iraqi security forces develop and as the political process moved forward, the Iraqi government with support from the international community needs to implement a comprehensive Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration plan. Such a plan has been developed since the fall of Saddam. It is time for it to be implemented.

In mid-January of 2006, the US Military announced that American commanders would be assigning more than 2,000 Army military police advisers to work side by side with

Iraqi police officers. The effort was to begin in Baghdad, expanding by the end of January to local stations and provincial and district headquarters in all 18 provinces. The initiative was set to greatly increase the size and scope of then-current field training by 500 international civilian police advisers and some military police units.

At the time, some 80,000 local police officers across Iraq were certified as trained and equipped, more than halfway toward the goal of 135,000 by early 2007. The Pentagon had budgeted more than \$1 billion to train, field and equip Iraqi Interior Ministry forces during 2006, of which the police were by far the largest component, according to a spokesperson for the military. Under their new assignment, military police who had been doing more general training of police officers would be working more directly with Iraqi police and civilian advisers in local stations, as well as at district and provincial headquarters.

Soldiers from the 49th Military Police Brigade, an Army National Guard unit with headquarters in Fairfield, Calif., were to be assigned to police stations in nine major Iraqi cities -- Baghdad, Ramadi, Falluja, Najaf, Babil, Kirkuk, Baquba, Samarra and Mosul -- as well as to dozens of provincial and district headquarters. Among their focuses would be helping the Iraqis process crime scenes, conducting joint patrols with Iraqi beat officers and emphasizing proper arrest and handcuffing techniques. Slightly more than two-thirds of the brigade's 3,000 soldiers -- military police drawn from a mix of active duty, National Guard and Army Reserve units -- were expected to participate in the program.³⁰³

The US military also sought to improve the police by expanding the work of "transition teams" within the MOI police force and step up civilian contractor involvement with local police across Iraq.³⁰⁴ Such efforts, however, presented serious problems. It was difficult to find expert transition teams to cover the army and special security services, and there was no way to provide such teams for most of the regular police elements scattered throughout the country. There were also many "police," militia elements, and tribal forces operating in Iraq that were not part of the official national police force "trained and equipped" by the Coalition and Iraqi government and neither the US military nor central government was in a position to try to take control of all of them, or provide either training or the kind of leadership they needed to act as "national" versus local forces serving sectarian and ethnic, or local parochial, interests.

There also was a legacy of tension between the US military advisors, who now had responsibility for all aspects of training the forces in the Ministry of Interior, and the civil advisors selected by the State Department. One ex-advisor made this tension clear in the following statement:

"I've been on the ground with the police mission for almost a full year now, and in no big way can point to anything that has been accomplished....The State Department has forced the civilian advisors on the military who in no way wants them involved. What little bit the advisors were able to accomplish in the past is quickly deteriorating as the military is taking their independent reporting abilities away.

The U.S. Army only plans to rubber stamp its way through the police stations. They want to hand out a few guns, some cheap uniforms, ballistic vests that in many cases aren't ballistic, then be done with it.

I thought after the IG report pointed out problems that some things might go forward. The military response is to turn and run in the opposite direction with its latest program. The mission has changed directions every sixty days for the last year, never staying the course on any project.

The Captains and Lieutenants out in the field run roughshod over programs that they have no clue about. I simply can't understand why they don't leave chasing down insurgents, and securing the borders to the military, and leave the civilian police program to the people they hired to do the job."

Insurgent infiltration of MOI forces remained another concern. On December 6, 2005, explosions from two suicide bombs ripped through Baghdad's main police academy, killing at least 36 police officers and wounding 72 other people. The attack was the deadliest in months in Baghdad, and underscored the continuing vulnerability of Iraqi police to insurgent pressure and attacks. According to Iraqi officials at the academy, each of the 838 cadets were meticulously searched each time upon entrance.

The fact that the suicide bombers were able to penetrate and strike insight the academy pointed to the continuing issue of insurgent penetration of personnel in police forces and respective academies. Al Qaeda in Mesopotamia, led by Sunni Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, claimed responsibility for the attack, and explained that the attack had been aimed specifically at officers recruited from the ranks of the Shiite Badr Organization.³⁰⁵ The incident highlighted continued sectarian strife being played out in the police and security forces, coming also on the heels of growing evidence of abuse of Sunnis by Shiite members of MOI forces.

All of these problems were further compounded by a lack of local governance, and the ability to support the Iraqi military, security forces, and police with civil efforts that demonstrated the government was in place as a functioning authority and could provide effective services. Many parts of Iraq, including key areas like Basra, acted as largely independent authorities. This was true in many of the areas favorable to Sunni insurgents, even ones "liberated" by the Coalition and Iraqi forces. In many cases, the Coalition provided most civil-military services, while the Iraqi government had little more than a token presence.

Iraq was making very real progress in many areas of force development, but there were good reasons to call for a "year of police." The effort was badly out of balance in terms of providing local security, "national" and inclusive forces, and police that served national rather than local, sectarian, and ethnic interests. Moreover, security was not yet supported by effective governance -- creating problems that interacted with the lack of any effective political compromises between Arab Sunni, Arab Shi'ite, and Kurd.

Training

The Iraqi police did, however, make progress in many aspects of its training. On December 29, the Iraqi Police Service Baghdad Police College graduated 173 police officers from advanced and specialty courses. The courses consisted of Basic Criminal Investigations with 50 graduates, Advanced Criminal Investigations with 17 graduates, Interview and Interrogations with 24 graduates, Violent Crime Investigation with 26 graduates, Critical Incident Management with 24 graduates, First Line Supervision with

eight graduates, Mid-Level Management with 12 graduates and Executive Leadership with 12 graduates.

These courses had the following content:

- The Basic Criminal Investigation course covered topics such as theft, burglary, arson, robbery, sexual offenses and homicide investigation. Participants also received instruction and hands-on training in fingerprinting, photography, tool marks and plaster casting techniques. To date, 2,936 police officers had previously completed the Basic Criminal Investigations course.
- The Advanced Criminal Investigation course provided participants with advanced investigative techniques used in a variety of situations, particularly in homicide, kidnapping, terrorism and bombing investigations. This course had graduated 175 students to date.
- The Interviews and Interrogations course covered advanced interview and interrogation techniques and includes instruction on the preservation and protection of human rights and the importance of ethical behavior during interviews and interrogations. Previously, 893 students had completed this course.
- The Violent Crime Investigation course introduced participants to investigative techniques used in a variety of situations, particularly in violent crimes against persons such as armed robbery, rape and murder. To date, 902 students had graduated from this course.
- Critical Incident Management was designed to provide participants with the understanding and application of skills for managing critical incidents. To date, 692 students had graduated from this course.
- The First-Line Supervision course focused on major leadership areas for front line supervisors including human rights training, ethics and corruption, policing in a democracy and interpersonal skills critical to effective leadership. To date, 540 students had graduated from this course.
- Mid-Level Management was a course designed for supervisors responsible for managing first-line supervisors and their assigned personnel. A total of 467 students had graduated from this course to date.
- Executive Leadership covered executive level concepts of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting. Other topics included visionary leadership, organizational values, interpersonal communication skills, motivational techniques and strategies, along with strategic planning. To date, 444 officers had graduated from this course.

The officers who participated in these courses had previously either completed an eight-week basic training course for new recruits or a three-week transitional integration program designed for prior-service officers. The newly graduated police officers were to immediately report for duty at their respective stations.³⁰⁶

On December 1, the Iraqi Police Service graduated another 248 police officers from basic training at the Mosul Police Academy. The 10-week training program was designed to provide fundamental and democratic policing skills based on international human rights standards. Emphasis was on tactical operations, and the curriculum had recently been modified to increase combat survival and police skills training while emphasizing teamwork and cohesion. By December, more than 51,600 Iraqi police officers had completed the basic training course, with an additional 37,000 having completed the

three-week Transitional Integration Program developed for police officers serving, but who have little or no basic training.³⁰⁷

Operational Police Activity

The impact of this training was reflected in successful police activity at a number of levels. For example, the Iraqi government began "Operation National Unity" on September 29, 2005. This effort included the Baghdad police, Public Order police, Special Police Commandos, and Mechanized police. The operation involved more than 20,000 police officers and 5,000 special police, and by early November had resulted in 83 suspected terrorists killed, 1,393 suspects and 39 stockpiles of weapons confiscated. Iraqi police forces had conducted 189 raids on suspected terrorist hideouts, 781 searches, and 10,330 roadside checkpoints throughout the Baghdad area.³⁰⁸

Other examples of Iraqi police activity include:

- October 30 – in Baghdad, Iraqi police forces with the 3rd Public Order Brigade raided a suspect terrorist hideout, detaining four men. One was suspected of playing a role in IED attacks as well as providing video of beheadings to Arab media.
- November 14 – joint raids with Iraqi police and soldiers resulted in the detainment of 23 suspected insurgents in Latifiyah, along with the seizure of several weapons.
- November 16 – Iraqi police and soldiers detained 15 men in a riad in Al Qamishly. The men were suspected of crimes ranging from IED attacks to operating death squads targeting Iraqi police.
- November 23 – Members of the 2nd Public Order Brigade and Baghdad police officers seized a stockpile of grenades and detonation cord while conducting search operations in Zafaraniya District. The cache included 58 grenades and more than 10 meters of detonation cord.
- December 12 – Iraqi police arrested five people transporting a bomb in their vehicle in An Najaf. The bomb consisted of a 60 mm mortar round, TNT, and plastic explosives. The detainees were turned over to the Najaf Police anti-crime unit for processing and further investigation.
- December 14 – Iraqi border police detained four individuals trying to smuggle 137 cases of cigarettes across the Iraqi border.
- December 15 – Iraqi police responded to a protest that temporarily closed a polling site 25 km northeast of Ad Dawr.

Iraqi Border Forces

By September of 2005, approximately 17,000 Border Police had been trained and equipped. This number lagged the projection of 21,000 border forces by the October 15 referendum.³⁰⁹ However, the Government of Iraq had now authorized a total force of more than 28,300 Border Police, which MNSTC-I plans to train and equip by May 2006. These forces were to be organized into 36 battalions that would man the 258 border forts around Iraq.

A total of 250 forts were projected to be reconstructed or renovated by November 30, 2005; all border fort construction was scheduled to be complete by January 2006. To stem the flow of foreign fighters from Syria, priority was given to work on the Iraqi-Syrian border in the summer of 2005.³¹⁰ Figure 5 shows the progress in Iraqi border fort development as of October 18, 2005.

The US Marines had also taken an unorthodox approach to training local forces in border patrol missions in the western desert. In the desert region near the Iraqi-Syrian border the Marines created a force of local tribesmen called the Desert Protection Force. Col. Russell Smith, Iraqi security forces coordinator for the 2nd Marine Division, described the utility of this local force during a November 2005 interview: “The Desert Protectors are tribesmen who know their areas like the back of their hand, and know where the foreign fighters and terrorists are and know who they are.”³¹¹ Ironically, a local Sunni militia was found to be necessary in dealing with Sunnis.

Figure 50

Iraqi Border Fort Development

(as of October 18, 2005)

	MND-NC Turkey & N. Iran	MND-CS Iran Cent	MND –SE Kuwait & S. Iran	MND-W Saudi	MND NW Syria & Jordan	Total
Complete	45	14	50	29	25	163
Under Construction	45	6	13	14	17	95
Total	90	20	63	43	42	258

Source: MNSTC-I, November 2005

Iraqi Intelligence Capabilities

Iraqi intelligence was also improving. An example of a success that was partly based on Iraqi intelligence was seen in the joint Coalition-Iraqi strike on Tall Afar in mid-September 2005. In a video-teleconference with reporters on September 13, Third Armored Cavalry Regiment Commander Col. H.R. McMasters told reporters that the involvement of Iraqi troops played a key role in the success of the operation. About 5,000 Iraqi security forces and around 3,500 U.S. troops participated in Tall Afar operations during the first two weeks of September, the colonel said.³¹²

McMasters credited the integration of Iraqi troops into operations for having been able to collect good intelligence on the whereabouts and identities of insurgents operating in and around the city. Coalition and Iraqi forces had killed 118 terrorists and captured 137, while suffering one US killed and 11 wounded and eight Iraqis killed and 19 wounded, according to McMasters.³¹³

At a September 29 hearing of the House Armed Services Committee, Donald Rumsfeld pointed to a sharp increase in tips coming into Coalition or Iraqi authorities, which he

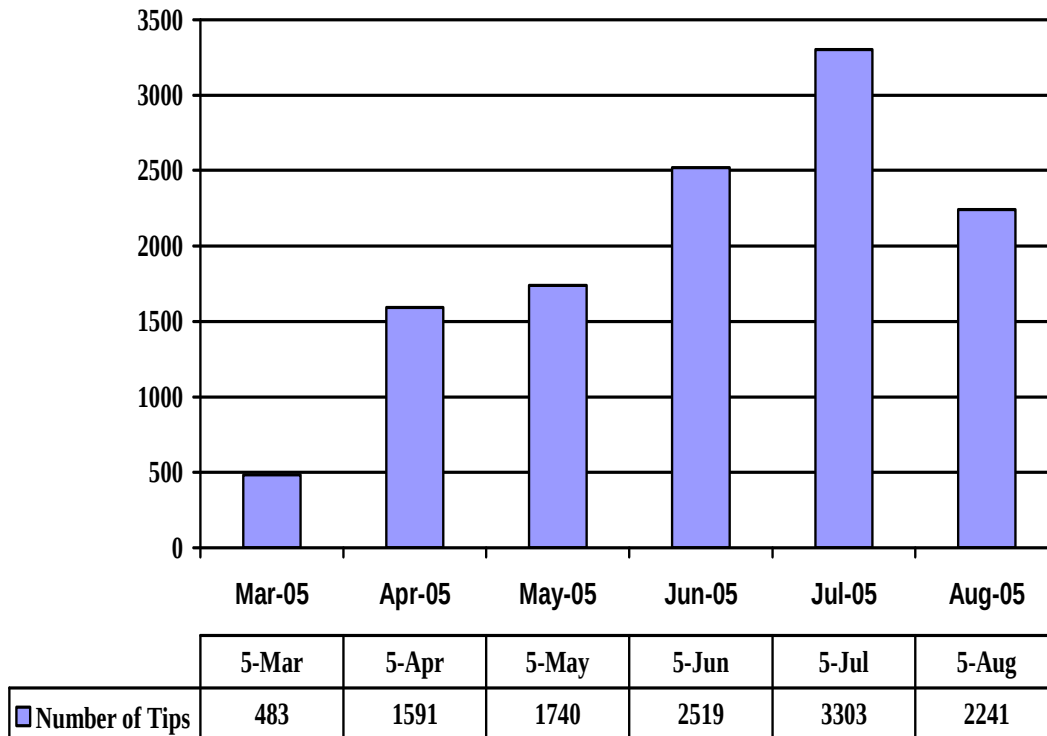
said had increased from 480 tips in March 2005 to over 3,300 in August 2005.³¹⁴ Figure 51 depicts the number of tips recorded from the Iraqi population from March 2005 through August 2005, as recorded by MNC-I.

On December 17, in Kirkuk, local residents caught and detained two men who were allegedly digging around a weapons cache on 12 mortar rounds. The citizens reported the incident to local authorities and turned the men over to the Iraqi army and Coalition forces who responded to the scene. Later, on December 21, Coalition forces raided a home in Baghdad and discovered 15 rocket launchers in the process of being built and one 57 mm rocket ready to be fired. The equipment was seized, but there were no inhabitants of the house present during the raid. The raid was the result of a tip from a local citizen in east Baghdad.³¹⁵

The kind of information provided is illustrated by the following examples of tips received by Iraqi and Coalition forces following the October 15, 2005 election:

- October 18 – An Iraqi citizen led Coalition forces from 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment to a weapons cache in west Baghdad. The cache consisted of 10 rocket-propelled grenade rounds and numerous 60mm mortar rounds.
- November 23 – in the Tissa Nissan district of Baghdad, a tip from a local resident led to the location of a weapons cache and resulted in the capture of bomb making materials.
- November 23 – in the Al Bawi region members of the 3rd Public Order Brigade detained three men after responding to a citizen's tip about a car laden with explosives. The group found three artillery shells rigged as roadside bombs.
- December 17 – in Kirkuk, local residents caught and detained two men who were allegedly digging around a weapons cache on 12 mortar rounds. The citizens reported the incident to local authorities and turned the men over to the Iraqi army and Coalition forces who responded to the scene.
- December 21 – Coalition forces raided a home in Baghdad and discovered 15 rocket launchers in the process of being built and one 57 mm rocket ready to be fired. The equipment was seized, but there were no inhabitants of the house present during the raid. The raid was the result of a tip from a local citizen in east Baghdad.³¹⁶

Figure 51
Number of Intelligence Tips Received from the Iraqi Population



Source: Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, October 2005. Data supplied by MNC-I (includes tips reported to multiple sources).

XI. Progress Following the December 15, 2005 Election

The December 15, 2005 election changed the political landscape of Iraq in ways whose impact is currently impossible to determine, but will play a critical role in determining the success or failure of the Iraqi force development effort. It may be the fall of 2006, before the full impact of the December 15, 2005 election in Iraq is clear. It will certainly be months before the full nature of the new political structure it has created has been negotiated and every element of the new government is in place. There is still some risk that significant numbers of Sunnis will not accept the result, or that some combination of the insurgency and tension between Sunni and Shi'ite may divide the country.

So far, the election has not unified Iraqis or defused the insurgency. Both Sunni Arab and secular political groups formed a united front to protest the results of the elections on December 12th. According to Reuters they demanded a rerun of the election. They made charges of massive fraud, and threatened to boycott the new parliament and cripple it. The meeting at which this decision was taken included former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, and secular Sunni leader Saleh al-Mutlak, and some 70-80 other politicians from the Iraqi Unified Front, Allawi's Iraqi National List, the Sunni Islamist-led Iraqi Accordance Front and several other groups. Those attending said they had formed committees and would take their complaints not only to the Electoral Commission but also the Arab League, European Union and United Nations.

There is a serious risk that Iraq will divide or experience a more intense and overt form of civil war. This could easily divided the new Iraqi forces, converting them into largely Shi'ite and Kurdish units, and pushing out Sunnis -- potentially as part of the insurgency. It has again exposed both the fact that Iraqi force development is totally dependent on Iraqi political success, and that successful force development must pay as much attention to internal politics and the political nature of an insurgency as to force effectiveness. It has also shown that any effort to develop effective military forces must be matched by an effort to develop effective security and police forces and ones that will not ally themselves with militias or other irregular forces that can divided the country.

The end result is that 2006 is a year that can see either successful political compromise, and major further progress in developing Iraqi forces, or the division of the country and Iraq's forces. Success can be relative. Virtually any form of compromise that most Shi'ites, Sunnis, Kurds, and other minorities can accept is good enough to be defined as "success." Any force development effort that avoids the division of the regular armed forces, ends most abuses in the Ministry of the Interior and security forces, makes the police more professional and neutral, and gradually limits the role of the militias will also be success. It is now even more clear that "victory" for the Coalition is the art of Iraqi compromise, and that the goal of "transforming" Iraq into some shining example to the region was always little more than a neoconservative fantasy.

The alternative is not victory for the insurgency -- the Sunni insurgents are a divided minority within a minority who have serious support from only a relatively small part of Iraq's population. It can, however, be national paralysis, civil war, or separation. There is no certain way to know the motives behind the bloody wave of new suicide attacks and

bombings that began in January 2006, but there are good reasons for such attacks as seen from the viewpoint of hard-line insurgents. One key insurgent objective has to block the creation of a stable coalition that includes Arab Sunnis, Arab Shi'ites, and Kurds, and any following efforts to make an inclusive coalition government successful.

Bloody attacks on Shi'ites and Kurds are a key way to do this. So is attempting to discredit the whole process of governance by exploiting political and economic vulnerabilities like the rise in fuel and gas prices in late 2005, and attacking/threatening refineries to make things worse. At least for the near term, the primary goal of hard-line insurgents is logically to disrupt coalition building and discredit the government.

This, however, is only part of the strategy hard-line Sunni Islamist insurgents will logically follow. They also need to maintain their Sunni base and attack/discredit Sunnis moving towards compromise. This did not make sense during the elections. Security was at an all time peak that US and Iraqi forces could not sustain.

Giving Arab Sunnis legislative power made sense to at least some Sunni insurgents as long as those elected used it to check Shi'ite power and limit coalition building. Zarqawi and Al Qa'ida still opposed the elections, but others were willing to wait and intimidate the Sunnis who gained office, exploit charges of election fraud, and make it clear that it was safe to oppose coalitions and compromise within the political system, but not to oppose the insurgency.

If one "red teams" insurgent motives at the start of 2006, there were also reasons for insurgents to be more optimistic about what they might accomplish during the coming year that might counter the successes in Iraqi politics and force development:

- The insurgents showed by early January that they still could mount large numbers of attacks. The Coalition forces stressed that the number of attacks has risen, but that successes had dropped. It was far from clear this is true if one considered the impact of the successful attacks, and such claims ignored the key point that the insurgents were still strong enough for the number of attacks to increase.
- Some key aspects of the fracture lines between Sunni and Shi'ite were still growing. The Arab Sunni vs. Arab Shi'ite and Kurd tensions in the security forces were gradually becoming more serious, although the US and UK were making major new efforts to control and ease them. Sectarian divisions within the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior continued to grow. The new army continued to become steadily more Shi'ite and there were still growing problems in promoting Sunni officers. The police remained divided along sectarian and ethnic lines.
- These problems were being increased by rushing new Iraqi units into the field, many in areas where they create sectarian friction. (There seems to have been some manipulation of readiness data to get the number of battalions with level 3 and level 2 readiness up to 50. Low quality units may have been added somewhat prematurely to the level 3 readiness total in spite of poor quality and experience.)
- The election was proving to be highly controversial among Sunnis, with all kinds of charges and conspiracy theories. Many who voted, voted against the constitution and as a check to the growth of Shi'ite and Kurdish power.
- It was clear than any new Iraqi coalition that did emerge would be inherently unstable even if it did include Sunni groups that were willing to compromise. The new Iraqi government faced

at least 6-8 months in which ongoing political debates had to occur over federation, control of oil resources and revenues, power of taxation, allocation of government funds, role of religion in government and law, and virtually every other “hot button” issue.

The tragedy of this strategy is that a failure by the new Iraqi government, and/or the division of the new Iraqi forces, almost certainly means that most Iraqi Sunnis will suffer more than the Shi'ites and Kurds. They will live in the area where the real fighting takes place, their economy will continue to deteriorate, and they will get little oil money and few government services. There is no charismatic Iraqi Sunni leader, radical insurgents like Zarqawi and Al Qa'ida -- can only disrupt the nation, not lead Iraq's Sunnis. The insurgents only has limited foreign support, the hard-line insurgents were a distinct minority within the Sunni majority, and most of the successes in building up the new Iraq forces are real enough so that alienating the Shi'ites and Kurds might well backfire if the country did divide into more serious civil conflict.

The tragedy for Iraq is that this simply may not matter to hard-line Sunni insurgents. At least some would welcome a divided Iraqi as a means to their broader goal of weakening moderate regimes throughout the region and polarizing its people in ways that push Sunnis toward Islamist extremists. In any case, the immediate goal of many insurgents is not to win, or to implement a given program (most such insurgents have no coherent practical program). It is rather to deny victory and success to the newly elected Iraqi government and push the US and Coalition out in a war of attrition. From a “red team” view, this goal must still seem all too possible and most insurgents seem to be acting on this strategy.

Iraqis Attitudes Before the Election

The election was one that most Iraqis welcomed. Iraqis have mixed feelings about the overall pace of events in Iraq. A new ABC-Time Oxford Research International poll released in the week before the election indicated that some 71% of Iraqis (although largely Shi'ite and Kurd) felt their own lives were going well. Only 44% saw similar progress for the country, but 69% expected situation to get better in the next year. (Only 35% saw a favorable future in Sunni provinces.)

Some 57% still saw security as the country's top priority, although 60% now felt secure in their own neighborhoods, versus 60% in June 2004, and 61% said local security was now good versus 49% in February 2004.

Nevertheless, Iraqis went into the election with considerable optimism. ABC reported that “Three-quarters of Iraqis express confidence in the national elections being held this week, 70 percent approve of the new constitution, and 70 percent — including most people in Sunni and Shiite areas alike — want Iraq to remain a unified country.”

The number of Iraqis that preferred democracy as a political system had risen from 49% in February 2004 to 57% in December 2005, while the number preferring an Islamic state had dropped from 21% to 14% and the number calling for a single strong leader for life had dropped from 28% to 26%.

Iraqis – at least Arab Shi'ites and Kurds – also showed growing confidence in the Iraqi forces and more confidence than they did in the national government. The ABC analysis of “Where Things Stand” in Iraq issued in mid-December noted that,

“Today, faith in the electoral process runs high (with the exception of the disaffected Sunnis) and confidence in public institutions has risen. This is particularly true for the Iraqi Army — up from 39 percent to 67 percent, and the police — up from 45 percent to 69 percent.

“A smaller majority says they are confident in their local and national leaders — but ... basic interest in politics has soared. The percentage of Iraqis reporting such an interest has gone from 39 (November 2003) to 69 today. Asked what sort of government they wish for, 57 percent of Iraqis told us they would prefer a democratic state; 26 percent answered “strong leader”; only 14 percent expressed a preference for an Islamic state.

“... While a slim majority nationwide (51 percent) approve of their local government, sectarian differences are obvious. Iraq's Shiites and Kurds — two populations widely persecuted under Saddam Hussein — are not surprisingly filled with hope and high expectations for the country's current and future political leaders. By large margins, Shiites and Kurds approve of the recently adopted constitution and are confident that the elections will bring positive change. They also give the young Iraqi government generally good marks.

Voting on Ethnic or Sectarian Lines Without a Clear Agenda for the Future

The full official results of the election will not be certified until mid-January 2006, but it was clear long before the actual voting that this would be an election where most Iraqis would vote for the few names they knew at the top of a ticket -- and make a choice between key national, ethnic, and sectarian parties -- without really knowing what a given party ticket or leader really stood for in any detail.

Most Iraqis never saw the candidate lists in full before they went to the polls. The number of candidates also vastly exceeded the number of offices. Not only were most of the major parties mixes of very different voices and beliefs, but there were 7,655 candidates on 996 candidate lists, 307 political entities (single candidates and political parties), and 19 coalitions. In Baghdad, for example, the ballot paper had 106 candidate lists with 2,161 candidates for 59 seats in the Council of Representatives. There were 212 political contestants on the national ballot.

In spite of this diversity, it was clear that the election would center around a few key parties:

--*United Iraqi Alliance or Unified Iraqi Coalition, #555*: Shi'ite. Led by Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim. This mixed Hakim's Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the Moqtada Sadr's group, Al Dawa, and the group led by then Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari.

--*Iraqi Front for National Dialogue or Hewan National Iraqi Front*: Salih al-Mutlaq heads this list and split the Iraqi Dialogue Council because he opposed the constitution. The list includes five such political groups.

--*Iraqi Accordance Front or Tawfoq Iraqi Front, #618*: Sunni. Led by Adnan al-Dulaymi and Tariq al-Hashimi. Included three Sunni parties that boycotted the January 30, 2005 election: National Dialogue Council, Iraq Islamic Party (Hashimi), and Iraqi People's Conference. Supported amending constitution, weakening federalism, eliminating Shi'ite and Kurdish dominated Iraq forces, liberalizing admission of former Ba'athists to political process.

--*Iraqi National List or National Iraqi List, #731*: Shi'ite & Sunni. Led by Iyad Allawi (Prime Minister is previous government.) Includes Independent Democrats Grouping, National Democratic Party, and Communist Party.

--*Kurdistan Coalition List or Kurdistan Gathering, # 730*: Kurdish. Led by Mas'ud Barzani and Jalal Tababani (then President). Combined the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). Smaller Kurdish, Turcoman, and Chaldean Christian elements.

--*National Congress Coalition, #569*: Largely Shi'ite but some Sunnis. Led by Ahmad Chalabi (then a Deputy Prime Minister. Includes Constitutional Monarchy Movement. Mix of religious and secular voices.

The Full Meaning of the Preliminary Results Remains Uncertain

It was almost inevitable that years of sectarian and ethnic tension and violence would polarize the electorate. It was equally apparent that no election held in mid-insurgency could be perfect, and that tensions were so high that some abuses were inevitable, and there would be charges of corruption and violence – even if some were invalid or exaggerated. Furthermore, since the Sunnis were almost certain to emerge as a minority with far less political power than in the past, and the more secular nationalist were likely to be weak relative to sectarian and ethnic parties, it was likely that they would be the key sources of complaint.

Voting by Governorate, Not Nationwide

This time, however, the vote was by area and not nation-wide, and did allow much better representation by ethnic and sectarian group. Each of Iraq's 18 provinces was considered a separate voting district; the number of parliamentary seats allotted to each district was based on the population of the province. There were 275 seats in the National Assembly, and 230 were distributed amongst the 18 governorates according to the number of registered voters in each governorate. Baghdad Province, the largest Province, had 59 of the 230 seats in the Council.

The remaining 45 seats out of the 275 were distributed as compensatory seats to political entities whose proportion of the vote received nationally was lower than the number of seats they obtain. Political entities won seats in a governorate in proportion to the share of votes they receive in the election in that governorate.

The official results will not be out until mid-January, and some 690 formal complaints and thousands of additional complaints had already been made about the way in which the election was conducted by December 20th – with reports of 1,000s of additional complaints in process. There were at least 20 of these 690 complaints that the Iraqi Election commission already regarded as serious. Nevertheless, the preliminary results showed that some 11 million ballots had been cast in all 18 provinces, and reported on a count of some 7 million votes.

Anbar was the only governorate with a relatively low percentage, and even that was 55%. The others ranged from 62% to 87% and the national average was 70%. What was particularly important was that preliminary estimates showed the Sunni vote in a critical Sunni province like Al Anbar went from a total of 2% of the registered voters in January

2005, to 32% in the October referendum over the Constitution and may have exceeded 60% in the December election.

This initial count covered some 89-99% of the vote in 11 out of 18 provinces. The Shi'ite Coalition, the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) seemed to dominate the Shi'ite vote, while the Sunni dominated Iraqi Consensus Front (ICF) dominated the Sunni vote. The UIA won 86.9% of the vote in a Shi'ite dominated province like Maysan. As might be expected, the Kurdish coalition party dominated the Kurdish provinces, winning 95.1% of the preliminary count in Erbil (Irbil).

In Baghdad Province, the largest and most mixed province, the UIA won 1.4 million votes, or 59%. The ICF won 14%, and the more secular and nationalist list of Ayad Allawi won 13.7%. The Shi'ite list of Ahmed Chalabi won only about 0.5%. It was not clear from the preliminary results that any one party could win a majority.

Voting by Major Party Grouping

A more detailed count is shown in Figure 52. It shows just how polarized the vote was by sect and ethnic group by province. At the same time, it is a warning about just how hard it could be to divide much of Iraq by sect and ethnic group without civil war or ethnic cleansing, and the similar difficulties in creating functional federations on the same basis.

Figure 52**Iraqi Election: Uncertified Partial Results – Parties Garnering 5% of Vote or More, by Province**

PROVINCE	RELIGION/SECT	VOTES	PERCENT%
ANBAR (TOTAL OF 9 SEATS)	SUNNI		
TAWAFOQ IRAQI FRONT		272707	73.75%
HEWAR NATIONAL IRAQI FRONT		66322	17.94%
BABIL (TOTAL OF 11 SEATS)	SHI'ITE, SOME SUNNI		
UNITED IRAQI COALITION		418919	75.74%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		48593	8.79%
BAGHDAD (TOTAL OF 59 SEATS)	SHI'ITE & SUNNI		
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		1398778	58.46%
TAWAFOQ IRAQI FRONT		454107	18.98%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		330082	13.80%
BASRAH (TOTAL OF 16 SEATS)	SHI'ITE, SOME MIXED		
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		615255	77.46%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		87538	11.02%
DIYALA (TOTAL OF 10 SEATS)	KURD, SUNNI,		
TAWAFOQ IRAQI FRONT	SHI'ITE ARAB	182223	36.77%
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		110285	22.26%
KURDISTANI GATHERING		66508	13.42%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		52624	10.62%
HEWAR NATIONAL IRAQI FRONT		50971	10.29%

DOHUK (TOTAL OF 7 SEATS)	KURD, MINORITY	SOME		
KURDISTANI GATHERING			355084	89.97%
ISLAMIC UNION OF KURDISTAN			28957	7.34%
ERBIL (TOTAL OF 13 SEATS)	KURD			
KURDISTANI GATHERING			628181	95.15%
KARBALA (TOTAL OF 6 SEATS)	SHI'ITE, SOME SUNNI			
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION			230211	76.02%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST			35502	11.72%
TAMIM/KIRKUK (TOTAL OF 9 SEATS)	MIXED KURD, SUNNI,			
KURDISTANI GATHERING	SHI'ITE, TURCOMAN,	266737		51.89%
HEWAR NATIONAL IRAQI FRONT	MINORITY			14.24%
IRAQI TURKUMAN FRONT				11.62%
TAWAFOQ IRAQI FRONT				6.17%
MISSAN/MAYSAN (TOTAL OF 7 SEATS)				
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION	SHI'ITE	275505		86.86%
MUTHANA (TOTAL OF 5 SEATS)	SHI'ITE, SMALL SUNNI			
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		176222		86.42%
NAJAF (TOTAL OF 8 SEATS)	SHI'ITE			
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		302573		82.03%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		28777		7.80%
NINEWA/NINEVEH (TOTAL OF 19 SEATS)	SUNNI, KURD,			
TAWAFOQ IRAQI FRONT	SHI'ITE, SOME	302518		36.88%

KURDISTANI GATHERING	MINORITY	157476	19.20%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		91661	11.17%
HEWAR NATIONAL IRAQI FRONT		82976	10.11%
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		61038	7.44%
QADISIYYAH (TOTAL OF 8 SEATS)	SHI'ITE, SOME SUNNI		
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		269609	81.38%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		28296	8.54%
SALAHADDIN (TOTAL OF 8 SEATS)	SUNNI, SOME SHI'ITE		
TAWAFOQ IRAQI FRONT		164116	33.67%
HEWAR NATIONAL IRAQI FRONT		94180	19.32%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		52116	10.69%
LIBERATION AND RECONCILIATION GATHERING		45490	9.33%
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		35951	7.38%
SULAYMANIYA (TOTAL OF 15 SEATS)	KURD		
KURDISTANI GATHERING		685900	87.13%
ISLAMIC UNION OF KURDISTAN		85145	10.82%
THEQAR/DHI QAR (TOTAL OF 12 SEATS)	SHI'ITE		
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		499582	86.63%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		29028	5.03%
WASIT (TOTAL OF 8 SEATS)	SHI'ITE/SUNNI		
UNIFIED IRAQI COALITION		279616	80.68%
NATIONAL IRAQI LIST		28053	8.09%

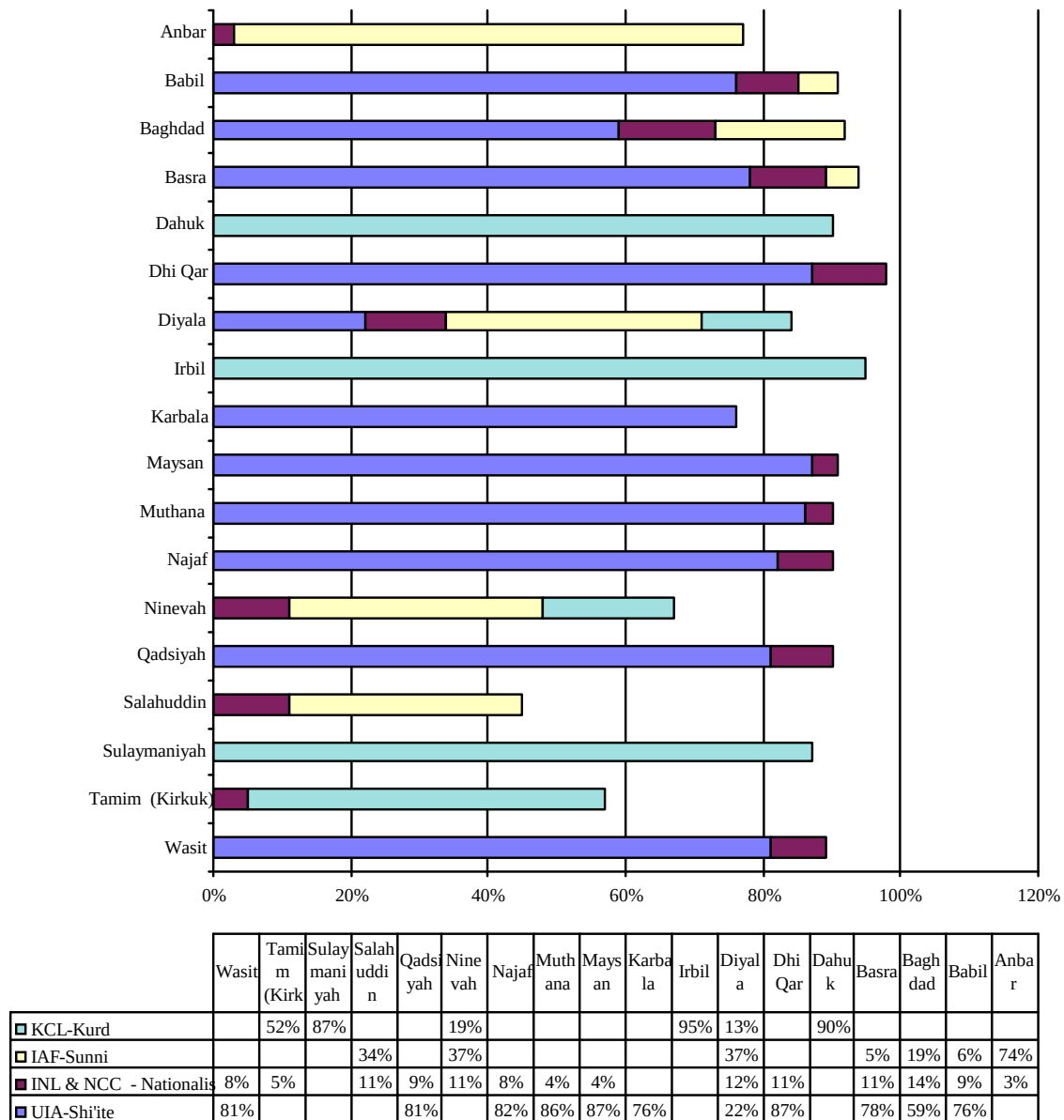
Note: Kurds are mixed, but largely Sunni. Sunni in this table equals Sunni Arab; Shi'ite equals Shi'ite Arab. Source: Adapted from Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq website, December 20, 2005, available at: http://www.ieciraq.org/English/Frameset_english.htm

Figure 52 shows the results were highly polarized and in ways that provided few signs of corruption or falsifying the results in ways that would have a major impact on the most probable result:

- o The Shi'ites dominated the south, and had a majority in nine provinces, with a total of 81 seats, as well as in Baghdad, which has a total of 59 seats.
- o The Sunni had a majority in four provinces, which had a total of 46 seats
- o The Kurds had a majority in four provinces which had a total of 44 seats
- o The secular or nationalist parties did not have a majority in a single province.

At the same time, Figure 53 also shows that the vote was mixed in many governorates, and the dangers of assuming that Iraq can easily be divided into federations, or separated along sectarian and ethnic lines. There also was a significant secular or nationalist voice in many Shi'ite provinces. At least five governorates emerged as so mixed that any division by sect or ethnicity might well trigger ethnic cleansing or civil war, and they had a total of 115 seats – half of those elected by governorate.

Figure 53
Preliminary Results of the Iraq Election by Sect, Ethnicity, or “Nationalism”



Note: Only counts major parties: KCL=Kurdistan Coalition List; INL=Iraqi National List (Ayad Allawi), NCC=National Congress Coalition (Ahmed Chalabi), IAF=Iraqi Accordance Front, UIA=United Iraqi Alliance.

Source: Adapted from the Washington Post, December 21, 2005, p. A23 based on Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq results as of December 20, 2005.

Shaping the Nature of Iraqi Politics as Iraqi Forces Come On-Line

The very fact Iraq held a real election for a sovereign government with a legislature with a four-year tenure was an important achievement. In spite of complaints by some of the leading parties, the election seems to have only had a limited number of major glitches, and only limited violence occurred. Sunnis did participate in large numbers, and the overall turn out was relatively high.

Everything depends, however, on whether this success can be turned into a more lasting political process. Voting takes only a matter of minutes, but creating an effective government and functioning political system takes months to begin, and years to complete. The Iraqi election can only be successful if Iraqi politics and governance are successful, and move towards unifying the country and ending support for the insurgency. It may be months before a new government is in place, and it must then come to grips with completing a new constitution and dealing with virtually every major issue that defines the role of government and the new Iraqi state.

Iraq also faces the need to simultaneously expand the role of Iraqi military, special security, and police forces. These are the key to both defeating the insurgents and maintaining national unity. They are critical to the legitimacy of the new government, which must show that its forces can replace most Coalition forces, and that its police can establish local security and a rule of law.

In any case, the final results of the election are only one factor that counts in determining of how political power evolves over the months to come, or exactly which parties get a given number of representatives in the new national assembly. It is rather how well Iraqis can play "let's make a deal." The election did not resolve any major issue confronting the Iraqi people. It was not a "turning point," but a "trigger." It started a political process that will determine during the course of 2006 whether Iraq has a solid chance of emerging out of its present turmoil with stability, as well as the success or failure of the Coalition in Iraq

The election s created the following schedule for political action:³¹⁷

- Final voting results expected in first week of January

- 15 days after the final election results are announced, the newly elected Council of Representatives (National Assembly in the old government) meets for the first time. Is supposed to elect a speaker.

- The Council of Representatives must then negotiate among its members, without a clear deadline, to elect a Presidential Council with a president and two deputy presidents. They must be approved by two-thirds of the Council of Representatives. (This allows a Sunni, Shi'ite, and Kurd to share the presidency, but this is not required.)

- Fifteen days after the Council of Representatives approves the Presidential Council, it is supposed to agree on a prime minister (in practice, chosen by the major parties). The Presidential Council must unanimously approve the choice.

- No more than 30 days later, the new Prime Minister is to announce his cabinet.

- The Council of Representatives must then begin a four-month review of the constitution.

- The Council of Representatives must approve any amendments by a majority. (Goes up to two-thirds after four months.)
- Two months later, the nation votes on a revised constitution.

During the next six to ten months, those elected must create a new government, transform vaguely defined political parties and coalitions into specific courses of action, allocate power by ethnic or sectarian faction, and come to grips with all of the issues raised by the constitution. If they succeed in creating an inclusive structure in virtually any peaceful form, Iraq succeeds. If they fail, the Coalition fails almost regardless of its military success, and that of the new Iraqi forces, and Iraq will move towards division, paralysis, civil conflict and/or a new strongman.

What the Elections Did and Did Not Show About the Prospects for Iraqi Political Unity

The election results do provide some important indicators, but most of its results are ambiguous and the election results do not reveal several key aspects of Iraqi politics. They also do not indicate whether Sunnis, and others who object to the results, will actually participate in the new government and/or support a peaceful political process. Furthermore, they strongly indicate that any government that did not act as a national unity coalition, or emphasize unity and inclusion, could trigger serious ethnic cleansing or civil war.

Indicators: Voting in the four most troubled provinces where the insurgency has the most support (Anbar, Salahuddin, Nineveh, and Diyala)

To some extent, the results showed the relative strength of the more centrist Sunnis, and more “nationalist” Sunni insurgent movements, versus the strength of the hard-line neo-Salafi religious extremist movements who opposed voting. Voting levels were relatively high, particularly compared to past Sunni participation.

It should be noted, however, that some insurgent organizations and many Sunni leaders opposed to federation and the constitution in its current form did call for participation. Voters can remain opponents and insurgents.

- (i) Some Insurgents and pro-insurgents voted simply to create a counterweight to the Shi'ites and Kurds. One can still support violence and vote.
- (ii) Voting pro-Sunni did not mean willingness to accommodate the new government; that will depend on the efforts over the months that follow to define the constitution and the way in which the new government operates.
- (iii) Such voting did not mean support for the US or Coalition. The December 2005 ABC-Time-Oxford Research International poll showed Iraqi Sunnis still decisively reject a US and Coalition role in Iraq. It also reveals they have serious mistrust about the new Iraqi government and armed forces.

Moreover, the ABC analysis of the December 2005 ABC-Time-Oxford Research International poll found that Sunnis saw a steady deterioration in their provinces when they were asked about whether conditions were good.

Figure 54
Are Local Conditions Good? Change in Results from 2004 to 2005
(In Percent, by Province)

Area Polled	All	Shi'ite	Sunni	Mixed	Kurdish
Overall conditions of life	+1	+21`	-26	+6	-4
Crime Protection	+13	+7	-22	+45	+13
Security	+12	+22	-19	+29	+14
Jobs	+12	+31	-12	+16	+9

Source: ABC News Poll: Where Things Stand, "Poll Finds Broad Optimism in Iraq, But Also Deep Divisions Among Groups," ABC News, December 23, 2005.

Only 27% of Sunnis approved the constitution versus 82% for Shi'ites. And, only 37% of Sunnis were confident in the Army versus 87% for Shi'ites. These figures are striking because the poll could not fully sample the Sunni areas where support for the insurgency was strongest.

Sunni attitudes were particularly polarized in Al Anbar, the western province where the insurgency is strongest. Only 1% of those polled felt the US invasion was a good thing, and no respondent placed any faith in US or Coalition forces. Nearly 50% of those polled in Al Anbar called instability their greatest problem. This was more than 17% more than in the other Sunni provinces. Only 13% said their local security situation was good, and only 28% expected it to improve. Only 20% of those polled approved of the new constitution, although 60% did believe the December 15, 2005 elections would produce a more stable government.

Sunni Islamist Extremist Opposition to the Elections and Their Results

While many mainstream Iraqi Sunnis, and their political and religious leaders advocated participation in the elections and government, and an effort to work with the system -- at least to the point of blocking Shi'ite and Kurdish power and amending the constitution -- the more radical Sunni movements strongly opposed such participation and threatened any Sunnis in their areas of influence who voted.

A coalition of five Jihadi Salaphist groups in Iraq (the Qa'ida organization in Iraq; the Victorious Army; Abu Baker Brigades; the Islamic Jihad Brigade; the Brigade of Propagation of Virtue and Prohibition of Vice) met and issued the following statement on December 12, 2005:

"What is going on in Iraq and the conspiracy being weaved against jihad and Mujahideen headed by the crusaders and those who agree with them on what is called the political process. This

process is like other previous process, they are the satanic projects which aim to degrade the Mujahideen and the creed.

“It is swearing to God the new conspiracy of (Dayton) coming back again, those bad people are trying to get us sit to negotiate with them, and with the infidels and with those who violate the credence of our mosques and homes, the honor of our women for the sake of national unity.

“In the mid of all these bad situations that Moslem are going through including the killing and the detaining of the Sunnis, the role played by the apostates trying not to have Islamic state in Iraq formed.

“...They have reached a solution concerning the political process, coming as follows:

- we reject the political process to God and that we are free from any relations with, or those who have ties with the apostate government of what is so called the political process.
- To join the what so called the political process is religiously forbidden, and it contradicts the legitimate policy of God which is the holy Quran.
- To pursue with Jihad, fighting for the word of God, and to establish an Islamic state.”

Sunni Insecurity versus Shi'ite and Kurdish Security

Given this background, it is not surprising that Sunnis felt more threatened than other Iraqis, although this perception can be by insurgents and criminals, and not simply by a loss of power or Shi'ite dominated forces and militias. ABC summarized its polling on Sunni attitudes on security versus those of other ethnic and sectarian groups as follows:

“Sixty-one percent of Iraqis now say they feel security is better than it was before the war; that represents a 12 percent increase since we last asked, and a fairly startling counterweight to the prevalent view in the press. Having said that, these numbers are driven almost entirely by Shiites and Kurds who were treated so brutally under Saddam Hussein.

“...By contrast, among Iraq's Sunnis — for whom “security” was almost ironclad under Saddam — a whopping 90 percent report their security is worse today. In 2005, the majority of insurgent attacks have been concentrated in four of Iraq's 18 provinces, which are home to roughly 45 percent of the country's population: Ninevah, Al Anbar, Baghdad and Salah ah Din. Attacks have focused primarily on members of the Iraqi Security Forces, members of the Multinational Forces, Iraqi civilians and government officials — as well as foreign diplomatic and media personnel.”

Sunni faith in the Iraqi Army fell by 13% between mid-2004 and the winter of 2005, while Shi'ite faith increased by 22%. In December 2005, Sunnis were 50% less confident in the army than Shi'ites and 23% less confident in the police.

Indicators: Broader Sunni Strength and Attitudes Towards the Government

Many Sunnis almost certainly voted largely to assert a Sunni voice in government as a counterbalance to being excluded, not because they believe that they will be treated fairly, that the political process is working, or that all forms of armed resistance are illegitimate.

The ABC analysis of the December 2005 ABC-Time-Oxford Research International polling results found that Iraqi Arab Sunnis had very different attitudes from Arab Shi'ites. Only 43% of Sunnis described life as good versus 86% for Shi'ites. Only 9% of Sunnis felt things in Iraq were going well versus 53% for Shi'ites. Only 7% of Sunnis felt

the US had a right to invade versus 59% for Shi'ites. Only 11% of Sunnis said they felt "very safe" versus 80% for Shi'ites.³¹⁸

Sunni attitudes were generally far less favorable towards the government and the elections than Shi'ites and Kurds. The poll found that, "The contrast among Sunnis is stark: Only 27 percent approve of the constitution; 48 percent say they are confident regarding the elections; and only 12 percent believe the government has done a good job." It also found that Sunni confidence in the elections was just 48% versus 80% elsewhere.

When Sunnis were asked their current preference for a type of government, only 38% favored democracy versus 57% for all Iraqis, 75% in mixed areas like Baghdad, 63% in Kurdish areas, and 45% in Shi'ite areas. As the table below shows, the poll found that Sunnis had a more favorable attitude towards democracy when they looked five years into the future. It also found, however, that Sunnis were still much more likely to prefer a strong leader for life over democracy than other Iraqis.

It also seems likely that those Sunnis who favored democracy sometimes did so more because they opposed an Islamic state they felt would be dominated by Shi'ites than because of any basic faith in democracy. Some 88% in Sunni governorates also favor a unified Iraq versus only 56% in Shi'ite provinces, but this again seems likely to reflect a fear of the loss of oil wealth, power, and isolation as well as a deep belief in national unity.

Figure 55

Preferred System of Government: Sunni, Shi'ite, and Kurd

(In Percent, by Province)

What Iraq Needs in Five Years	All	Shi'ite	Sunni	Mixed	Kurdish
Democracy	64%	59%	55%	74%	61%
Islamic State	12%	24%	4%	8%	14%
Stronger Leader	18%	11%	34%	11%	17%

Source: ABC News Poll: Where Things Stand, "Poll Finds Broad Optimism in Iraq, But Also Deep Divisions Among Groups," ABC News, December 23, 2005.

Sunni Political Parties

The election results to date did not indicate that Sunnis were deprived of large numbers of votes, and the Sunni parties should get roughly the same number of seats as the Kurds. It seems unlikely that the Shi'ites and Kurds can get the 184 seats they would need to have the two-thirds majority they need to form a new government, or to ignore the Sunnis in any case. Nevertheless, the initial Sunni reaction has been to dispute the election results, make a host of charges (some 700 complaints by late December 21, 2005), and call for new elections.

It is far from clear how serious these calls are, but the previous issues and attitudes explain why the Sunnis are hostile to Shi'ite and Kurdish control and how sensitive the

political situation is. There is a serious risk of division or paralysis in the process of political inclusion, although political negotiations are obviously underway, and compromise may well be possible.

If the Sunni parties do chose to participate in the new government, the fact remains that they are divided and unproven, and have leaders and candidates whose behavior may be very different when it comes to forming a coalition, serving in the legislature, or taking office.

The key Sunni parties included two very different coalitions:

- o **Iraqi Accord(ance) Front, Iraqi Consensus Front, or Tawafoq Iraqi Front:** This list led by Adnan al-Dulaymi has three predominantly Sunni parties and largely supports the constitution:
 - | General Conference of the People of Iraq (GCPI), led by Adnan al-Dulaymi
 - | Iraqi Islamic Party, led by Tariq al-Hashimi
 - | National Dialogue Council led by Khalaf al-Ulawayyan.
- o **Iraqi Front for National Dialogue or Hewar National Iraqi Front:** Salih al-Mutlaq heads this list and split the Iraqi Dialogue Council because he opposed the constitution. The list includes the following political groups:
 - | Christian Democratic Party led by Minas al-Yusufi
 - | Arab Democratic Front led by Fahrhan al-Sudayd
 - | National Front for a Free and United Iraq led by Hasan Zaydan
 - | United Sons of Iraq Movement led by Ali al-Suhayri.
 - | Iraqi National Front

The Iraqi Islamic Party supported the constitutional referendum divided key elements of the nascent Sunni political structure long before the election. Adnan al-Dulaymi's General Conference of the People of Iraq and the NDC agreed to merge with the Islamic Party to form the Iraqi Accord Front, Al-Mutlaq split with the National Dialogue Council (NDC) and some smaller parties under the name the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue. The Association of Muslim Scholars refused to participate on the grounds that multinational forces should first announce a timetable for withdrawal.

The preliminary results showed that there were many mixed sectarian and ethnic areas in Iraq. The voting for Iraqi Accord(ance) Front or Tawafoq Iraqi Front seems to have gotten some 19% of the total national vote to date. This was particularly important since the key party in this group was one of the few Sunni parties to openly endorse the constitution while the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue or Hewar National Iraqi Front was more hostile to it.

If one compares the vote for these two parties by governorate, the results were mixed. The Iraqi Accord(ance) Front or Tawafoq Iraqi Front got 74% of the preliminary vote in Anbar, 19% in Baghdad, 37% in Diyala, 6% in Kirkuk, 37% in Nineveh, and 34% in Salahiddin, The Iraqi Front for National Dialogue or Hewar National Iraqi Front got 18% of the preliminary vote in Anbar, 10% in Diyala, 14% in Kirkuk, 10% in Nineveh, and 19% in Salahiddin,

Indicators: Nationalist versus Sectarian and Ethnic Parties

The preliminary results showed that Iyad Allawi and the Iraqi National List or National Iraqi List, #731 got a relatively limited level of support: 9% in Babil, 14% in Baghdad, 11% in Dyala, 12% in Karbala, 8% in Najaf, 11% in Nineveh, 9% in Qadisyyah, 11% in Salahaddin, 5% in Theqar and 8% in Wasit. This was not a bad result in national terms, but scarcely the result that makes the party the key power broker some of its leaders hoped.

The end result was that Allawi's party made complaints about the electoral process similar to the Sunnis. Many of the expectations this group might do well, however, were based on the attitudes of elites in the Baghdad area, and not on the realities of a divided Iraq.

The results were also tainted by personal attacks on Allawi. The campaign led to an increasingly bitter set of exchanges between Allawi and leading Shi'ite politicians in the UIA, and even to threats by the Badr Organization to overthrow any Allawi government that emerged out of the election. Allawi had received money from the CIA during his opposition to Saddam Hussein, and he was attacked during the campaign as a tool of the US.

Moreover, as has been touched upon earlier, many Iraqis saw a need to vote an ethnic or sectarian ticket in this election rather than risk "wasting" their vote on a minority party. They did so even though the new ABC-Time Oxford Research International poll did not show strong support for religious government. ABC reported that, "Preference for a democratic political structure has advanced, to 57 percent of Iraqis, while support for an Islamic state has lost ground, to 14 percent (the rest, 26 percent, chiefly in Sunni Arab areas, favor a 'single strong leader.')

Indicators: Voting in the Kurdish Areas

The results provided a strong indication of Kurdish strength, and the two main Kurdish political parties in the ruling Coalition of Barzani and Talibani -- the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) -- seem likely to emerge with around 20 percent of the vote. They also succeeded in dominating the Kurdish vote in the election and keeping smaller parties like Islamic Union from winning a meaningful number of seats.

The voting did not reveal how many Kurds still wanted independence, the level of tension in the Kurdish dominated areas over issues like oil and Kirkuk, the level of tension between the Barzani and Talibani factions, or the level of tension with other ethnic groups like the Turcomans.

Accordingly, the results did not serve as a prediction of how the Kurds will behave, and be treated, in the very different government that must emerge out of the elections. Even before the election, Jalal Talibani said the presidency would be a hollow part of the new government structure. Arab Shi'ites may become more interested in compromise with Arab Sunnis than with the Kurds.

The flow of money that previously kept the KDP and PUK unified to the extent there have only been minor armed clashes is also uncertain. The Kurds face serious revenue issues as oil for food and aid phase down. They already lost most of their revenue from smuggling shortly after Saddam fell when the CPA virtually abolished most Iraqi tariffs.

Non-Indicators: Shi'ite Intentions and Unity

The vote for the Shi'ite coalition ticket showed that the UIA was clearly the dominant party and might get some 120 or more seats. Ahmed Chalabi did not succeed in capturing a large part of the Shi'ite vote or convincing other groups he stood for an effective secular or national program. His new party only captured a token vote in most areas.

At the same time, the results did not provide a picture of how flexible or inclusive the main Shi'ite parties will be, or how the Shi'ite parties will behave after the Coalition.

The present Prime Minister, Ibrahim Jafari, was seen as both popular and weak, but no clear alternative has as yet emerged. Many feel that Deputy President Adel Abdul Mahdi has emerged as a strong potential leader, but much depends on how the election results for the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) are translated into actual decisions about its leadership and how it will behave.

As has been discussed earlier, national polls before the election showed less support for a religious type of government, and local reporting shows some dissatisfaction with local religious governments. However, hard-line Shi'ite factions control Basra and a significant part of Baghdad, and even if the national leaders have cohesive positions, it is not clear how well they will speak for local government and politics in the Shi'ite dominated provinces.

The United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) was clearly the key Shi'ite party and will probably remain an umbrella coalition of Shi'ite parties after the election. Its status, however, is much more uncertain than in the January 2005 election. The key parties still in the UIA are the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) and the Islamic Al-Da'wah or Dawa Party; members of cleric Moqtada al-Sadr's movement and these parties have many internal tensions. For example, one Sadr supporter, Fattah al-Shaykh, seems to have dropped out because of Sadr failure to adopt a decisive stand "on participation in the elections." A number of former UIA participants have left to form or join other parties and coalitions.

Key UIA leaders like the Moqtada Al-Sadr and Abdul Aziz Al Hakim differed sharply over critical issues like federation. Sadr strongly opposes it, and Hakim strongly favors it. Sadr is always an explosive political uncertainty, and has reasserted himself as a major political voice in Baghdad, Basra, and elsewhere as well as a major anti-US voice. Hakim's post election political role could be particularly critical because he is the leader of the Shi'ite Islamist Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), and plays a major role in the actions of the Badr Organization, which is blamed for many of the Shi'ite attacks on Sunnis. He also has ties to the present Minister of the Interior, who is blamed for tolerating some of the abuses by government prisons and the special security units.

Ahmad al-Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress and the Constitutional Monarchy Movement were part of the UIA in the last election but left to form the National Congress Coalition. It is too soon to count out the ever-ambiguous Ahmad Chalabi, but he did not do well in any area in Iraq, and could not win a personnel seat in the election in the Baghdad governorate.

Another uncertainty is the future role of the most important unelected figure in Iraq, the Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani. Sistani's role may be particularly critical in deciding how seriously Shi'ites pursue separatism under the guise of federation, versus inclusive politics and national unity.

Non-Indicators: The Lack of Support for the US and Coalition Forces

Iraqi public opinion did reveal how unpopular US and Coalition forces were, but the election was not really fought on the role of such forces or how long the US and Coalition forces should stay. The mid-December ABC-Time Oxford Research International poll provided a strong warning that voting will not mean an endorsement of the US and Coalition, regardless of what faction Iraqis vote for.

ABC summarized the results as follows:

"...half of Iraqis now say it was wrong for U.S.-led forces to invade in spring 2003, up from 39 percent in 2004.

"The number of Iraqis who say things are going well in their country overall is just 44 percent, far fewer than the 71 percent who say their own lives are going well. Fifty-two percent instead say the country is doing badly.

"There's other evidence of the United States' increasing unpopularity: Two-thirds now oppose the presence of U.S. and Coalition forces in Iraq, 14 points higher than in February 2004. Nearly six in 10 disapprove of how the United States has operated in Iraq since the war, and most of them disapprove strongly. And nearly half of Iraqis would like to see U.S. forces leave soon.

"Specifically, 26 percent of Iraqis say U.S. and other Coalition forces should "leave now" and another 19 percent say they should go after the government chosen in this week's election takes office; that adds to 45 percent. Roughly the other half says coalition forces should remain until security is restored (31 percent), until Iraqi security forces can operate independently (16 percent), or longer (5 percent)."

Fear of the US Forces as a Security Threat

Polls also provided important insights about how Iraqis viewed security and the need for Iraqi forces. A total of 37% said that a lack of security, chaos, civil war, internal trouble, or division of the country was the worst thing that could happen to Iraq in the next year. An additional 12% cited terrorism. The third ranking fear -- some 9% of Iraqis polled -- said that the worst thing would be for Coalition forces **not** to leave the country.

A total of 49% of all Iraqis polled still said they felt unsafe, and cited terrorism as the main reason. However, when they were asked what they did to feel more safe, 67% said they avoided US forces, 52% said they avoided checkpoints, 47% said they avoided the police and government buildings, and 43% said they were careful about what they said.

Another ABC report on the situation in Iraq in mid-December noted that,

“Iraqis who do not feel safe tell us they take a variety of measures to protect themselves. Sixty-seven percent say they avoid U.S. forces; one in two stays clear of checkpoints if possible; and 43 percent are careful about what they say in public. Again, these are figures for Iraqis who say they feel less safe than before.

“The impact of security shortfalls remains significant. Violence has hampered reconstruction, in western and central Iraq in particular, and it has meant that badly needed funds for electricity, clean water, education and salaries for health care professionals are spent instead on security. In one stunning measure of “Where Things Stand” in Iraq we found that as of October 2005, approximately \$5 billion of the \$18.4 billion appropriated by the U.S. Congress for reconstruction in Iraq had been diverted to security needs.

“Many parents have become more afraid to allow their children, girls in particular, to attend school, and some Iraqis are too frightened even to visit the doctor when sick.

“... a strange calm pervades some cities where local militias have seized power. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Karbala, a major city in southern Iraq where such militia appear to have infiltrated the police and security forces. It’s a development that outsiders, and some locals, view with fear and dismay — how, after all, can the true authorities hold power and garner respect when bands of armed men outside the government set up checkpoints and rule the streets? Yet many locals — in Karbala at least — report that these militias have improved security. An “iron hand” may be at work, and it may be a fleeting calm, but for the moment it is noticed and appreciated.”

A recent Zogby poll showed that some of the sentiments behind these results went far beyond Iraq. The poll found that 84% of Egyptians polled said their attitudes towards the US have grown worse over the last year, 62% of Jordanian, 49% of Lebanese, 72% of Moroccans, 82% of Saudis, and 58% of those in the UAE. These results tracked in many ways with polling done by the Pew Trust, and it is interesting to note the causes. When Zogby asked what the most important factor in determining Arab attitudes towards the US were, he got the following results (Figure 56):

Figure 56
Most Important Factor in Determining Attitude Towards US in 2005

Factor	Egypt	Jordan	Lebanon	Morocco	Saudi Arabia	UAE
War in Iraq	57	48	34	45	49	31
President Bush's Promotion of Democracy and Reform	4	6	16	2	9	9
Developments in Arab-Israeli Front	8	13	19	8	8	7
American Treatment of Arabs And Muslims	28	28	22	40	32	41
Other	0	3	4	2	0	5

Source: Zogby International, *Attitudes of Arabs: 2005*, December 7, 2005, p. 14.

Lack of Support and Gratitude for the US Aid Effort

There was negligible support or gratitude for the US aid effort: Only 18% percent of the Iraqis polled described the post war construction efforts in their area as “very effective.” At total of 52% said they were ineffective or had never occurred at all. Only 6% saw the US as playing a main role in the reconstruction process and only 12% gave credit to the government.

Non-Indicators: Support for the Current Government and Political Process

The voting did not show how many Iraqis voted primarily because they feared other ethnic and sectarian groups and were seeking to strengthen their own. It certainly did not reflect faith in the government elected in January. Many Shi'ites saw Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari as weak and ineffective – some for being too Shi'ite and some for not-being Shi'ite enough. This is of more than passing importance because Jafari remains the leader of both Al Dawa (a key Shi'ite political faction) and the Shi'ite coalition – the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA).

The Importance of Security

Once again, the ABC-Time Oxford Research International poll provided useful results. ABC reported that,

“Surprisingly, given the insurgents’ attacks on Iraqi civilians, more than six in 10 Iraqis feel very safe in their own neighborhoods, up sharply from just 40 percent in a poll in June 2004. And 61 percent say local security is good — up from 49 percent in the first ABC News poll in Iraq in February 2004.

“Nonetheless, nationally, security is seen as the most pressing problem by far; 57 percent identify it as the country’s top priority. Economic improvements are helping the public mood. Other views, moreover, are more negative: Fewer than half, 46 percent, say the country is better off now than it

was before the war...The number of Iraqis who say things are going well in their country overall is just 44 percent, far fewer than the 71 percent who say their own lives are going well. Fifty-two percent instead say the country is doing badly.”

These comments need to be put in context. They do not break out the results by province or ethnic/sectarian group. The Shi’ites and Kurds living in the relatively safe provinces have every reason to be far more optimistic about security and life than other Iraqis. Nation-wide results disguise more than they reveal in describing an insurgency that is driven by a Sunni minority that cannot be more than 20% of the total population and which is scarcely united around the insurgents.

Sunni versus Shi’ite Differences

The ABC report on “Where Things Stand” indicates there were major differences between Sunni and Shi’ite:

“Virtually all signs of optimism vanish when one is interviewing Iraq’s Sunni Muslims. There’s more on this in the Local Government section of the report; suffice for now to cite a pair of poll results. While 54 percent of Shia Muslims believe the country is in better shape than it was before the war, only 7 percent of Sunnis believe the same. Optimism about security — 80 percent of Shias and 94 percent of Kurds say they feel safer — is absent among Sunnis. Only 11 percent of Iraq’s Sunni Muslims say they feel safer than they did under Saddam.

“Overall, there is a Rorschach-test quality to all this. One could easily sift through the research and field reporting and conclude that Iraq is in danger of collapse; one could almost as easily glean from the same data that there is great cause for optimism.

“At the heart of the “collapse” scenario is a litany of dashed hopes. Many Iraqis cannot understand why — two-and-a-half years after the Americans arrived — electricity and sewage are not more reliable, why more reconstruction projects have not reached their neighborhoods, why corruption remains so prevalent and why their local (and in many cases democratically elected) officials have not changed things for the better.

“Yet there are ample reasons for optimism: The burgeoning commerce that now touches nearly all corners of the country; an economy growing, thanks in part to the high price of oil; per-capita income up 60 percent, to \$263 per month; improvements in health care and education; and the widely held belief that next week’s elections will make a positive difference. Seventy-six percent of Iraqis told us they were “confident” the elections would produce a “stable government” — and despite the sectarian divisions, few Iraqis express concern about civil war.”

A Real-World Economic Crisis, Not Progress

Ironically, this latter statement illustrates the dilemmas and contradictions in reporting on Iraq and Iraqi attitudes. The rise in per capita income is a national average based on dividing the total population into the total GNP measured in ppp terms. It is driven as much by a flood of wartime income and aid as oil revenue, and the distribution is unquestionably far less equitable than at the time of Saddam Hussein.

As ABC reported in its mid December poll,

“Unemployment overall is difficult to gauge. There is a growing ‘informal economy,’ and many Iraqis have taken second jobs. A U.N. survey published in May 2005 put unemployment at 18.4 percent; this is almost certainly a low-end figure...nationwide unemployment currently hovers between 27 percent and 40 percent.

“...The work rolls remain decimated because of the purging of the old army and much of the old Ba’athist apparatus. Whatever the political benefits or costs of that much-debated policy, there is

no question that it put a great many Iraqi men out of work. Further, the Iraqi government no longer finds it practical or feasible to employ the sprawling work force that existed during the rule of Saddam Hussein.”

The Issues that Must Be Resolved following the Elections

Both Iraqi and US officials caution that it may take up to several months after the results to agree on a new government. Even if the period is much shorter, simply dividing up titles in the executive, legislature, and government will not necessarily indicate who actually has power or the capability to use it.

Post-Election Coalitions will be More Important than the Election Results

The coalitions of Sunni, Shi'ite, Kurdish, and nationalist factions that emerge during this process may tell far more about the future than actual voting strength or numbers of legislators. Even then, however, coalitions may shift from issue to issue, and may take on a very different form once the government is actually formed and begins to operate.

One key issue will be how close the UIA and Kurds come to winning a simple majority – a key issue in the election. If not, the diverse coalitions described earlier must find some way to agree on a national unity government. The choice of a Presidency Council, Prime Minister, and of the key Ministers – Defense, Interior, Oil and Finance – may well do more to define power in practice than the elections. So, however, may the kind of legislative alliances that define how the Constitution is completed, amended and interpreted.

Critical areas for political decision-making and the choice of leaders will be:

- (i) The requirement that two-thirds of the newly elected national assembly has to agree on the “Presidential council” and the president and two vice presidents who must nominate a prime minister for approval by the assembly. This not only adds a major new political issue to selection of a prime minister, it raises real issues about the real world aftermath. The presidential council seems weak on paper, but could bargain and in any case will be much stronger if the prime minister is not strong and his coalition is weak.
- (ii) Whether the Ministry of Defense continues under Sunni leadership, and to emphasize a truly national army and one that is sensitive to Sunni concerns.
- (iii) Whether the Ministry of Interior is brought under control, moves away from its recent tendency to tolerate or carry out Shi'ite revanchism, and becomes effective in creating truly national special security and police forces.
- (iv) Whether the Oil Ministry has professional leadership and moves forward decisively to renovate oil and gas facilities, and carry out exploration and development of a kind that will ease the tension between factions. There have so far been far too many studies, and far too few tangible actions and results.
- (v) Whether the Ministry of Finance gets leadership that can actually manage resources and the budget, bring overspending in other ministries under control, and deal with the necessary compromises over how to handle oil and other state revenues and taxation.

As a result, the period following the election is much more likely to be an exercise in political power than one in the rule of law – particularly because it is Iraqi politicians

who will decide the way that efforts to change the constitution are implemented and not lawyers.

If power is exercised in a moderate and inclusive way, Iraq may well move forward as a unified state. If power becomes polarized, or is used at the expense of Sunnis or “nationalists,” the result can be paralysis, division, or civil war.

Post-Election Timing and Political Dynamics: Politics versus Force

The political dynamics are demanding. The debate over the constitutional referendum, and the constitution, opened up virtually every key issue in Iraqi politics, and created a process where the constitution needs to be completed and can only be amended by simple majority for a relatively short time. The new government will also inherit a budget deficit, the need to take over management of more of the aid process, and immediate issues over the control of oil revenues.

More importantly, the new government will inherit an ongoing insurgency and a climate where suicide attacks on Shi'ites and Kurds have been increasingly mixed with Shi'ite military and Special Iraqi Security forces attacks on Sunnis. Even if some or many of the more “moderate” or nationalist Sunni insurgents do come over to the government side, the more extreme and Islamist insurgents face the fact that this is a critical time window in which they must do everything possible to provoke the Shi'ites and Kurds, prevent compromise, and move towards a civil war or at least paralysis and disintegration of the political process.

This also, however, is the time when Shi'ites who want federalism or to dominate Iraq must act politically or through their own efforts at violence, and Kurds who want nationhood must act.

The good news is that many more Iraqi forces will come on line at the same time, and that a successful political process will probably be supported by a successful military and police effort. The two do, however, go in tandem, and a failed or non-inclusive political process could divide the Iraqi armed forces or polarize them against the Sunnis.

Key Post-Election Issues

There is no reason to assume that Iraq's new government must solve every issue at once, or that it must find all such answers soon after the new government is formed. Compromise, delay, and deferral are excellent political solutions; so are half-measures and cosmetic actions. Governments muddle through because political realities force them to, and because “muddling” is far more stable and uniting than acting with clarity and efficiency.

Nevertheless, anyone attempting to interpret the election results must be aware just how many critical issues the last few years, and the debate over the constitution, have unleashed. The new government must deal directly or indirectly with the following practical issues – none of which have been addressed with meaningful clarity by the political parties running in the election.

Finishing and Amending the Constitution

Finishing the constitution left many areas unfinished or ambiguous (some 35-50 laws have to be passed to complete it) and pushed most of the controversial issues off on the new government. This government will have many members of the new assembly – particularly Sunni -- who ran on tickets calling for amendments to the constitution and sometimes opposing it. The government also faces pressure to act during the four-month period where the national assembly can amend it by a simple majority.

The assembly will probably have to agree on a general and inclusive document at this time in order to present all of its amendments in a single referendum, but – as the discussion below details -- many issues affecting the constitution affect the most controversial political issues affecting Iraq and the new government. There may well be more passion than reason.

The final amendments to the constitution before the October 15th referendum called for the following process:

--First: The House of Representatives shall form at the beginning of its work a committee from its members to represent the key components of the Iraqi society. The mission of the committee is to present a report within four months including the recommendations of the necessary amendments to the constitution. The committee will be dissolved after presents its suggestion.

--Second: The amendments will be submitted to the Council of Representative for voting and it considered approved if it obtains the majority of the votes.

--Third: The amended articles approved by the Council of Representative (as indicated in item 2 above) will be presented to the people for vote in a public referendum within two months from the date of the approval of the amendments by the Council of Representatives.

--Fourth: The amendment will be agreed upon if it obtains the majority of votes and not rejected by two thirds of voters in 3 Governorates.

--Fifth: Suspension of Article 122 (related to the amendment of the constitution). The article will return to effect after the changes are made.

Some reporting still says the Assembly needs a two-thirds majority to pass amendments, while some senior Iraqi politicians have talked as if the assembly vote alone would be enough. Any package of amendments would be subject to the same terms as the October 15th referendum, and it will be equally difficult for any one political grouping to impose their will on the constitutional text as was last summer (though the Kurdish and Shia parties will no doubt be informed by the knowledge a Sunni Arab vote would probably not be able to defeat a joint proposed amendment from their camps.³¹⁹

This means that the election can only be a prelude to a much more intense effort to include Sunnis in the political process, convince them that participation is more rewarding than violence and insurrection, and find compromises over revenues, power, control of the Iraqi forces, and other issues.

Sunni politics will also have to evolve. The current parties are more self-selected than legitimate, and there is little unity over issues like the role of religion in the state, the definition of nationalism, how Sunni rights can and should be preserved, etc. The fact

Sunni parties lag more than two years behind Shi'ite and Kurdish parties will be a serious issue.

The Kurds will also have to define their role in a new Iraq where they do not get preferential financing, oil for food money, or major smuggling revenues. They need to define both their own level of unity and how they will really relate to the rest of Iraq. Issues like control of oil revenues and divided ethnic areas like Kirkuk are already time sensitive. So is the political role Kurds will play at the national level in the new government.

Other Key Issues

The Iraqi political process must also deal with all of the other issues shown in Figure 57

Figure 57

The Post Election Political Challenges the New Government Must Meet

The Problem of Federalism

The Iraqi constitution leaves the definition and practice of federalism so ambiguous that it can border on confederation, autonomy, or separatism. Some form of near-autonomy is vital in resolving the Kurdish question but could tear the Arab portion of the country apart, trigger sectarian separatism and soft ethnic cleansing, and create impossible problems in terms of revenues, oil, control of the Iraqi forces, etc.

The acid test may be the choices Shi'ites make for nationalism over federalism.

National, governorate, and local power

At a different level, the constitution and political processes to date combine to leave major uncertainties over the de facto power of the central government to control given governorates and particularly over the level of independence of local authorities in cities like Baghdad and Basra. These are key practical day-to-day issues of governance versus ethnic and sectarian divisions and federalism, but all interact and affect critical issues like money, power, religion, and control of security forces.

At the same time, the new legislature must come to grips with allocating senior positions at the national level, and defining the relative strength of the prime minister, presidency, ministers, etc. Defining the practical allocation of power at the top often has little to do with electoral results or party leadership. Iraq will have to find its own approach to doing this under a new political system and constitution.

Control of the Military, Security Forces, and Police and Shaping the Role of the Militias

The Coalition has brought Iraqi forces to the point where they should allow significant reductions of Coalition forces in 2006, and Iraqi forces to take over most visible security missions on the ground. If the process is well managed and sustained, it can be a prelude to the withdrawal of all Coalition forces over time, although an advisory role and some enabling and support forces may be necessary through 2010.

Everything will depend, however, on the political dimension, and the effort to bring unity and inclusion. It will depend on creating truly national military and special security forces, and police who are both effective and serve the cause of unity and human rights – not simply local authority.

Control over (Sharing of) Oil

Oil is the practical symbol of wealth and power. Control over oil revenues is control over some 85% of state earnings, and control over the exploration and development of new and existing oil

reserves is already a critical political issue. The constitution leaves this issue ambiguous; political pressure will almost certainly force the issue over the first six months the new government is in session.

These near-term problems are further complicated by pipeline and export route politics; the integration of important aspects of the oil and gas infrastructure on a national level; the lack of refinery capacity and gross overdependence on product imports; and unsustainable subsidized prices for gasoline, cooking fuel, heating oil, etc.

Control of Taxation and Revenues

Money, taxation, and duties will be key issues that extend far beyond the control of oil export revenues, and again help shape the debates over federalism and central versus local authority.

“Balancing” the Budget, Aid, Debt, and Reparations

Iraq does not need to truly balance its budget, but it needs much better fiscal management. The new government inherits a fiscal mess disguised as an annual budget and plan. It will need to show it can take over much of the aid process in terms of management and execution, and find ways to distribute it more equitably.

The government will almost certainly have to appeal to the US and the world for another major aid effort at a difficult time, and must follow up on the effort to achieve forgiveness of debt and reparations.

Investment Policy

The same issues that can either polarize or unify Iraqi politics are critical to the climate shaping domestic and foreign investment, and suitable laws and regulations still need to be drafted or confirmed.

Defining the Rule of Law

The constitution leaves many ambiguities, as does actual Iraqi practice to date. The issue is compounded by permeating corruption, inefficiency and delay, and a major debate over the role of religion and Sharia in shaping the rule of law. Striking practical differences in interpretation and enforcement now exist at the local level.

Defining the Practical Nature of Human Rights

Like the rule of law, the constitution leaves as many open areas as it closes. In any case, it is practice, not the letter of the law, that counts. Some issues can be deferred and Iraqi standards are not those of the US and EU.

The basic security of the individual, and human rights as they apply to protection of different ethnic and sectarian groups, are issues that cannot be deferred. Soft ethnic cleansing, enforcement of religious practices, and police and security force abuses are also issues requiring early action.

Defining the Role of Religion in the State

Once again, the debate over the constitution almost forces the government to find early solutions and compromises. So does the nature of the political campaign, and Shi'ite and Sunni politics. Inclusive and moderate Islamic solutions will not be a problem. Hard-line efforts, particularly the kind of Shi'ite-dominated efforts like the “555” campaign could be intensely divisive.

Defining the Role of the Coalition and Coalition Forces

Most top Iraqi political figures are aware of how much they need Coalition forces and support. It is clear, however, that this is usually a matter of necessity, not friendship or love. The Iraqi people clearly want the Coalition out; the debate is over. Many new legislators have also campaigned on at least an indirectly anti-Coalition ticket.

The new government will have to come to grips with debates over deadlines for withdrawal, limits on Coalition actions, status of forces agreements, and a host of other issues relating to Coalition forces and influence. It will do so in a largely hostile political environment with new Sunni voices.

Prognosis

This list of problems and issues, and post-election tasks present many real challenges that Iraq must meet at the political level for Iraqi force development to be successful and have lasting meaning. Sunni inclusiveness also remains uncertain. Yet, there are few real deadlines and many areas where muddling through and ambiguity will work or buy time. With good political leadership, finding workable approaches should not be daunting, much less impossible. Iraqi public opinion polls also indicate that Iraqis will not insist on final solutions, only ask for a good beginning.

There are still serious problems in creating the kind of police forces Iraqis need to defeat the insurgents and provide security. There also have been growing problems with Shi'ite elements in the Ministry of Interior special security units that have treated Sunnis unfairly and may have attacked and killed Sunnis in political and revenge attacks. There is ongoing progress in both areas, however, and the election takes place at a time when significant overall improvements are taking place in Iraqi forces.

As of early December, Iraqi forces already totaled some 214,000 personnel. These included 102,000 in the armed forces under the Ministry of Defense: 101,000 army, some 200 air force, and some 800 navy. They included 112,000 in the police and security forces under the Ministry of Interior: 75,000 police and highway patrol, and 37,000 other MOI forces.

A total of some 130 army and special police battalions, with some 500-800 men each, were fighting in the insurgency. This was 7 battalions more than in late October. A total of 45 were at level 1-3 readiness and "in the lead" in early December. Some 33 battalions were in charge of their own battle space versus only 24 in late October.

Yet, the key to giving these force developments meaning will be political pragmatism, inclusiveness, and compromise. As such, it will be far more important for the new government to avoid divisive mistakes than have dramatic successes. Post-election Iraq will be a "close run thing," and everything will depend on the quality of Iraq's new leaders. The odds of success, however, are at least even -- if success is defined as a government that can preserve the core of the nation, reach critical compromise, and move forward in ways that steadily diminish both the insurgency and Shi'ite and Kurdish pressures to divide the nation.

Any such success will unite the country and reduce or end the threat of serious civil war. Success will not, however, bring an early peace. Hard-line insurgents will have every possible incentive to strike at successful political leaders and a successful political process. Those who believe in ethnic and sectarian division also face a critical six- to eight-month time window in which to push their causes at the expense of efforts at national unity. At least for much of 2006, neither Iraqi political success nor a steadily more effective set of Iraqi forces is likely to put an end to a stream of violent acts of

terrorism. Politics will often be brutal and anything but pretty. This, however, is not a sign of failure, and it may well be a sign of success.

XII. Iraqi Force Development in Early 2006

Iraqi forces continued to make significant progress during the first half of 2006, but they did so in the face of major political obstacles. The Iraqi government never had effective leadership under Prime Minister Ibrahim al Jafari, who had proved over time to be an incompetent and divisive leader. The Jafari government became a “lame duck” by the time Iraqi politics focused on the constitutional referendum in the fall of 2005, and even more when serious campaigning began for the election of a new Iraqi government.

The period between the actual election on December 15, 2005, and the formation of an Iraqi government on May 20, 2006 left Iraq in political turmoil for nearly half a year. Even then, it was not until June 8th that the newly elected government could agree on a Minister of Defense, Minister of the Interior, and National Security Advisor.

The actual election on December 15, 2005 did have a high turnout of registered voters, and was broadly honest and fair. It took weeks to establish this, however, and it then took nearly half a year to agree on a new government. Throughout this period, insurgents attacked the sectarian and ethnic fault lines in Iraqi politics and society, successfully provoking steadily rising Shi’ite and Kurdish tension, and growing violence, including disappearances, kidnappings, and action by various death squads.

A Half Year of Deteriorating Security

Civil fighting between Sunni and Shi’ite reached levels that threatened to replace terrorism and insurgency as the main threat to Iraqi stability and political progress. It also changed the mission for both Iraqi and Coalition forces. Militias, rogue elements in Iraqi forces, local security forces and police, Ministerial and private security guards and forces, criminals, and neighborhood forces all combined to create much broader threats in virtually every area of Iraq with mixed populations, and between hard-line Islamist Shi’ites in cities like Basra and more moderate Shi’ites and other Iraqi factions.

Civil Fight Rivals the Insurgency in Importance

Low-level ethnic conflict became common. The victories against terrorist and insurgent elements in Baghdad in 2004 and 2005 were largely offset by the polarization of many neighborhoods along ethnic lines and local fighting. For all intensive purposes, the “red zones” in Baghdad became as bad as in the worst periods in 2004, with a new resurgence of the Sadr militia in Sadr City.

Mosul was less violent, but increasingly divided. Kirkuk became steadily more tense, as both Kurdish and Shi’ite militias strengthened their presence, deploying significant outside Arab militia forces into the city for the first time. The British “soft” approach to Basra had essentially lost the city to Shi’ite extremist elements with the local elections in 2004, and the British found it harder and harder to maintain a presence or bring any real control -- effectively facing large “no go” areas where they could not operate.

Nearly half the population of Iraq lived in the “greater” urban areas of Baghdad, Basra, Kirkuk, Mosul and other divided cities. The problem extended into other cities, however, as the hard-line Sunni Islamist extremists targeted Shi’ite shrines and targets in cities like

Karbala, and Sunni moderates and supporters of the government in cities like Samarra and Tal Afar.

The regular armed forces, and most of the security forces under the Ministry of Interior, largely continued to serve the nation and the central government, not sectarian or ethnic factions -- although some elements committed prison and other human rights abuses and were found to have participated in attacks on Sunnis.

The good news was that Iraqi forces were able to score some significant victories against the hardline Sunni Islamist extremist insurgents, and some elements became less dependent on US advisors, partner units and other outside support. These Iraqi successes were reinforced by US attacks, and by improving human and other intelligence, much of it coming from Sunni civilians who increasingly saw the hardliners as a threat to progress, security, and national unity.

Iraqi Forces Face a Different Mix of Missions with Uncertain Capability

The bad news was that the lack of an effective government meant there was no cohesive Iraqi effort to take charge. The voting did not produce unity. Secular parties got only a small part of the vote, and most Iraqis voted for their sect or ethnicity. The insurgents exploited this division by stepping up attacks on Shi'ites and Kurds; Iraqi forces and officials; those Sunnis who supported the government; and businessmen and professionals. They sought to provoke more intense civil conflict, and they succeeded to the point where Shi'ite militias and members of the Iraqi forces increased their revenge killings.

Efforts to increase the Sunni percentage of the regular forces and internal security forces slowed. Iraqi forces were increasingly confronted with the fact they no longer could concentrate on attacking insurgents, but often had to try to create local security in the face of sectarian and ethnic divisions where there was no clear enemy and any action tended to make the armed forces seem the enemy to some local factions as well as put a strain on the regular military to avoid taking sides.

The situation steadily deteriorated more quickly than Iraqi forces could be brought on-line. Ethnic and sectarian fighting vastly broadened that area where security was a major problem. The fact that civil conflict became a dominant threat in many areas meant that most of the regular forces and MOI internal security forces had to deal with civil violence they were not really trained to deal with -- and which threatened (or did) to divide them along sectarian and ethnic lines. The fact that the development of the police, criminal justice system, effective central government presence, and meaningful facilities protection forces lagged behind the development of the regular Iraqi forces also became more important.

These issues were not addressed in Coalition and Iraqi reporting. Claims that Iraqi forces could take control of large areas of battlespace in Iraq had never been honest or realistic. The Iraqi forces involved were almost invariably far too small to control the amount of space shown on MNF-I and Iraqi maps. Performance was so mixed that US forces had to constantly intervene, embedded advisors were often critical to Iraqi success, and Iraqi

forces remained heavily dependent on US combat aircraft, tactical lift, artillery, armor, support, logistics, and/or intelligence. Such claims became largely meaningless, however, once sectarian and ethnic fighting reached the level where local security was the dominant issue, and not defeating the core insurgency.

MOI Forces and Militias Are Perceived as Part of the “Threat”

The Ministry of Interior forces continued to lack strong leadership from Bayan Jabr, who was now an interim minister with less authority than before, and who became a symbol of government support for attacks on Sunnis -- and the use of MOI forces in such attacks -- to many in Iraq's Sunni community. While important changes did take place in several key command positions in the MOI forces, and some of the units with the worst record of abuses and attacks on Sunnis were reorganized and given new unity identities, the Ministry of Interior was still seen by most Sunnis as at best suspect, and as a key source of Shi'ite and Kurdish attacks on Sunni civilians.

In spite of an influx of Coalition advisors, the police remained a major problem. Efforts to make 2006 the “year of the police” were limited by the lack of a government and any clear program for action as long as no new Prime Minister or Minister of Interior were in office. The US found it difficult to recruit and deploy the number of qualified advisors it needed to embed in the police command and local police forces to give them on-the-job training and ensure their effectiveness and discipline. In many cases, equipment and facilities remained a problem, desertions and inaction were common, and corruption was the rule rather than the exception. There was little effort to deal with the nearly 150,000 men in the various facilities protection forces, which were far more ineffective, corrupt, and divided than the police.

Iraqi force development was further complicated by the fact that the facilities protection forces, the various militias, and local self-protection forces came to play a steadily more negative role as the scale of sectarian and ethnic violence increased. The police became more divided, and such divisions were reinforced by the fact that many police were not part of the trained and equipped forces developed by the MNF-I.

Iraq's militias had lost the cohesion they had at the time of the invasion in 2003. They now often consisted of local elements with limited central party control and loyalty, operating on their own and often using force, threats, and extortion to achieve their goals. The relatively well-organized Shi'ite militias created during the time Saddam was in power, and trained and armed by Iran, were now splintered. Many were involved in Iraqi politics or already in the Iraqi security forces. The remainder were often the “losers” in their own organizational politics, Shi'ite Islamist hardliners, and new local recruits.

The Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Militia was poorly organized and disciplined, and often operated at the local level as religious “enforcers.” The remaining Kurdish militias and forces that were not part of Iraq's forces increasingly consisted of Kurds with local agendas and goals to “take back Kurdish territory.” Some 150,000 additional Iraqis in government and private security forces played a role in such violence, as did criminals -- who often built up sectarian alliances or ties to the police.

The constant flood of deserters, and the fact police and military uniforms, IDs, weapons, and some vehicles were available in the markets, made it easy to impersonate Iraqi forces in carrying out sectarian and ethnic attacks and killings. The use of masks, “silent” raids and seizures, and random killings compounded the problem, as did the fact Iraqi forces were sometimes guilty of such attacks. Identification of Friend and Foe became a major problem, and every uniform and official vehicle became suspect.

This forced many Iraqi neighborhoods to create neighborhood forces. Some were mixed and “nationalist” in character, but most divided sharply on sectarian and ethnic lines, and became a further force adding to sectarian and ethnic conflict. Things were made worse when they cooperated with criminal elements against minority factions, linked their operations to one of the militias, or sought to expand their territory at the expense of other factions.

Political Delay and a Leadership Vacuum

The ultimate success of Iraqi force development was always dependent upon six key outside elements: The nature of Iraqi political leadership and the ability to create a new basis for Iraqi political unity, the ability to develop political consensus and stability at the local level, the quality of Iraqi government presence and governance at every level from the national to the local; the ability to establish civil order and an effective criminal justice system and method of screening and trying detainees, success in creating economic development and employment; and the quality and level of outside aid and support.

The weak interim government could make little progress in any of these areas after the December 15 election, and the problems were compounded by major failures in the US economic aid effort and problems in staffing some aspects of the MNF-I advisory effort for the police. The problems were also compounded by reports that some elements of US forces had committed unprovoked attacks and killings of Iraqi civilians -- casting the integrity of the US presence and advisory effort into doubt and giving credence to a host of charges and conspiracy theories that almost certainly had no justification.

Five Months of Delay and Weak Leadership

Once it was clear that the election did not involve serious fraud, Iraqi politics devolved into months of awkward political bargaining that was further complicated when the Moqtada al-Sadr used the seats he had been granted in the new assembly, and the threat of withdrawing from the Shi'ite coalition, to help force the nomination of Ibrahim al Jafari as the Shi'ite candidate for Prime Minister.

The political struggles to keep Jafari in office presented critical problems both in achieving some degree of national unity and in giving Iraq's new government effective leadership. Jafari was widely felt to be an incompetent leader who could not work effectively with his ministers, negotiate with other factions, and administer his office. He tended to speak in clichés and homilies, and was rejected by both the Kurdish and Sunni parties in the newly elected assemblies as well as distrusted by many fellow Shi'ites. Sadr seemed to be motivated largely by his rivalry with SCIRI, which led him to support Jafari

in order to block the selection of Adel Abdul Mahdi, who was almost universally regarded as a more competent candidate.

The political struggles over Jafari affected the US position as an advisor to Iraqi forces as well as Iraq's internal politics and ability to govern. US frustration with al-Jafari's reluctance to rein in Shi'ite militias became increasingly vocal and in return, so did Shi'ite accusations of political bullying on the part of the US. This tension was worsened by allegations that US and Iraqi military forces raided a mosque, killing worshippers loyal to al-Sadr. In late March, Ambassador Khalilzad stated that President Bush "doesn't want, doesn't support, doesn't accept" al-Jafari as the next prime minister. Although US officials in Baghdad did not elaborate on the statement, they did not dispute its authenticity.³²⁰

Representatives from al-Jafari's office immediately condemned the remark. "How can they do this?" Hadier al-Ubady, a spokesman for al-Jafari asked. "An ambassador telling a sovereign country what to do is unacceptable."³²¹

The divisions within the United Iraqi Alliance over al-Jafari, and increasing US pressure to form a government, began to cause members of the Shi'ite coalition to withdraw their support from the prime minister. In April, a senior Shi'ite politician, Kassim Daoud, called for al-Jafari to step down.³²² One day later, Sheikh Jalaladeen al-Sagheir, a deputy to SCIRI's leader Abul-Aziz al-Hakim, declared that he was officially suggesting another candidate to replace al-Jafari.³²³ Even Iraqi Vice President Adel Abdul Mahdi, considered by some to be his primary inter-party rival for the position, publicly called for al-Jafari to quit.³²⁴ Grand Ayatollah Sistani however urged the Shi'ite political parties to form a government quickly but also to support al-Jafari and maintain their unity.³²⁵ During the same time, Kurdish leaders officially informed the UIA that they had decided to reject al-Jafari as their nomination for prime minister.³²⁶

A surprise visit by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw designed to impress upon Iraqi politicians the urgency of forming an inclusive government may have had the effect of further hardening al-Jafari's insistence that he remain in office. Their visit came at a time when the US had become increasingly vocal in its preference for another prime minister. This, and the fact that both Rice and Straw seemed to have a more amicable meeting with Adel Abdul Mehdi, likely caused al-Jafari to view their visit as an indirect attempt to influence Iraqi leaders and unseat him from his position.

In fact, al-Jafari's top advisor, Haider al-Abadi, reflected these exact sentiments saying, "pressure from outside is not helping to speed up any solution...all it's doing is hardening the position of people who are supporting Jafari." Specifically addressing the US-British diplomatic envoy he said, "They shouldn't have come to Baghdad."³²⁷ Al-Jafari himself said, "There is a decision that was reached by a democratic mechanism, and I stand with it."³²⁸

Given increasing US displeasure with al-Jafari's role as Prime Minister and his inability to reign in Shi'ite militias, some postulated that the US might have a new ally in Iraq's Sunnis. During Rice's visit she dined with several Sunni political leaders in Baghdad,

some who had boycotted the January 2005 elections and formerly supported the insurgency. Tariq al-Hashimi, the secretary general of the Sunni-dominated Iraqi Islamic Party recounted his time with Secretary Rice: "I looked Condi in the eye and told her, 'Your ambassador shows tremendous courage and is doing a hell of a good job in Iraq'." During her brief trip, Rice praised the maturation of the Sunni political body and their participation in Iraq's democratic process.³²⁹

It is unclear how enduring these trends in US-Sunni relations will be. In addition, the US likely still understands that as the majority sect, it will have to deal with the Shi'ites in any representative government.³³⁰

The UIA attempted to break the deadlock on April 10 by sending a three-member delegation to persuade Sunni and Kurdish political groups to support al-Jafari's nomination. These efforts failed and the groups continued to press for another candidate, saying they would not join a new government under al-Jafari's leadership.³³¹

Two days later, Adnan Pachachi, the acting parliament speaker and a Sunni, announced that he would convene the legislature the following week to continue with the democratic process and force the parties to decide on a prime minister. Pachachi added that he was told by Shi'ite politicians that they hoped to resolve the issue before the parliament meets.³³²

Fearing that this meeting could create open divisions within the Shi'ite alliance, thereby dissolving its power as the most dominant bloc, the UIA countered that the names of those nominated for the top posts in government must be agreed upon beforehand. Shi'ite political leaders justified this move by asserting that convening a parliamentary session would be of little use if individuals were not already selected to hold positions within a government.

This tactic of insisting on approval of the nominations to important government posts before a legislative meeting could shift the burden of agreement back to Sunnis and Kurds. Shi'ite politicians requested that representatives from each main political bloc meet that Sunday, the day prior to the parliamentary meeting, to discuss possible nominations.³³³

That weekend both secular leaders from Iyad Allawi's party as well as top Shi'ite clerics attempted to broker last minute agreements. Allawi announced on Iraqi television that politicians might have to create an "emergency government" in order to save Iraq from "its current deadly crises."³³⁴

Adnan Pachachi, the speaker of the parliament and a member of Allawi's party who had previously announced his intentions to convene the body on Monday regardless of whether disputes could be settled beforehand, proposed that this emergency government include parties that didn't win seats in the election and be based on a new arrangement rather than the constitution. Pachachi called this a "genuine, effective partnership" between political groups rather than election results "which we do not think reflected the voters' will, anyway."³³⁵

Whether this was a genuine attempt to form a coalition government or not, if implemented, it would have given a disproportionate voice to secular parties such as

Allawi's who, although favored by the US, did not receive significant votes compared to secular and ethnic based parties in December.³³⁶

Worried that a resolution to the current impasse could divide the UIA, top Sh'ite clerics met in Najaf to discuss potential solutions that would allow the bloc to hold onto power and debated more forceful intervention by the clergy. The week prior, the son of Grand Ayatollah Sistani, Mohammed Ridha Sistani, received a guarantee from al-Sadr that he would not object if the UIA replaced al-Jafari with another candidate.³³⁷

Nonetheless, when Monday arrived the meeting of the parliament was postponed as Sh'ite politicians still worked to put together a list of nominations to the top positions including prime minister. An advisor to al-Jafari indicated that one of the leading candidates to replace the Prime Minister was Ali al-Adeeb, who was also from the al-Dawa party. The aide, Adnan Ali al-Kadhimi, also said that Talabani would likely remain as President and that Iyad Allawi, Adnan al-Dulaimi, and Saleh al-Mutlak were being considered for the two deputy president positions. Talabani is a Kurd, Allawi a secular Shi'ite, and al-Dulaimi and al-Mutlak both Sunnis. The Iraqi ambassador to the US, Samir Sumaidaie, also mentioned al-Adeeb's as a potential candidate on a CNN Sunday talk show.³³⁸

Despite the fact that these names were being considered by all parties, many leaders, seemingly disillusioned with the process, predicted the negotiations to form a government would go on for weeks or months. Al-Mutlak, who acknowledged he was running for deputy president, said that he believed negotiations would wear on for weeks. He called al-Adeeb, the possible candidate for Prime Minister "an Iranian," and said that regardless of what candidates the UIA puts forward, "all of them are the same."³³⁹ Similarly, Zafir al-Ani, a spokesman for the Iraqi Accordance Front, predicted that a government would not be formed for another month because of the differences between the parties.³⁴⁰

As sectarian conflict continued and efforts were stalled over forming a unity government in spring 2006, it was reported in April that intelligence officials from Arab states including Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey had met to discuss the strategic and regional implications of an Iraqi civil war and Iran's ongoing role in the country. The revelation of this meeting came on the heels of blunt remarks by Egyptian President Mubarak that "Most of the Shi'ites are loyal to Iran and not to the countries they are living in," and suggested that "Iraq is almost close to destruction." These suggestions were quickly denounced by Shi'ite, Sunni and Kurdish leaders. Al-Jafari expressed astonishment "that Egypt identifies Iraq's security problems as a civil war."³⁴¹

One day after Mubarak made these comments, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud al-Faisal said that since the definition of a civil war is people fighting each other within a country, then Iraq is in a civil war. In addition, he suggested that the Arab League undertake an effort to help address the ongoing civil conflict. He added, however, that only "Iraqis themselves can stop this fighting."³⁴²

At a British-Saudi conference, Prince Saud al-Faisal emphasized the danger posed to countries in the region by a civil war in Iraq. "The threat of break-up in Iraq is a huge

problem for the countries of the region, especially if the fighting is on a sectarian basis. This type of fighting sucks in other countries,” Prince Saud said.³⁴³

A New Government Begins to Emerge in May and June

Al-Jafari gradually gave way to the growing pressure to keep him out of office, but resisted to the last. He sent mixed messages as to whether he would voluntarily step down or allow himself to be replaced by consensus.

On April 19, he announced in a nationally televised news conference that stepping down would be “out of the question.”³⁴⁴ In a complete reversal, the very next day he signaled that he would allow leaders of the UIA to withdraw his nomination. Shi’ite legislators planned to meet that Saturday to conclude whether al-Jafari would remain, or a new candidate would be nominated in his place. Bassem Sharif, a UIA lawmaker indicated that the party was leaning toward the latter, saying, “The majority opinion is in favor of this [changing the nomination].” Although the legislature would still convene on Thursday, parliament members indicated that it would be brief, and that a formal session would be put off until Sunday after Shi’ite leaders had settled the future of al-Jafari.³⁴⁵

The Core of the New Government

The election of Nuri Maliki as the next Prime Minister on April 21 broke the major, but hardly the only, impasse in forming a new government. The US and others hoped that because he was not as closely associated with al-Sadr as al-Jafari was, that he would have a freer hand in reigning in the militias, creating an ethnically and sectarian balanced military and police forces with a national spirit. His selection was also the key to the selection of several other top officials:³⁴⁶

- *President Jalal Talabani*: Talabani remained president of Iraq, while Barzani remained President of Kurdistan. Talabani had started as a lawyer, but founded the PUK after breaking with Barzani’s KDP. He had created his own guerrilla force to resist Saddam, and his forces clashed with Barzani in 1990, but Talabani had played a nationalist and unifying role after becoming President in the earlier election, and the PUK and KDP agreed on an intergraded government in the Kurdish zone in May 2006.
- *Vice President Adel Abdul Mahdi*: Mahdi was senior leader in SCIRI and would have become prime minister if Sadr had not opposed him. He was widely seen as a competent leader and had been effective as the former finance minister. Mahdi was a French-trained economist who had originally been a Marxist before becoming active in SCIRI and an economic pragmatist.
- *Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi*: Hashemi was new to government, but had been a successful businessman. He was the head of Iraqi Islamist Party, which had emerged as the largest Sunni Arab party in the December 15, 2005 election. He was seen as a Sunni leader who could help bring former supporters of Saddam Hussein back into the political process and split the Sunni insurgency.
- *Speaker of Parliament Mahmoud al-Mashhadni*: A Sunni Islamic that Saddam’s regime had sentenced to death for secretly joining illegal Sunni Islamist groups,

and who was seen as a Sunni sectarian. Selected in part to broaden the inclusion of Sunnis and lay the ground work for compromise with moderate insurgents.

The Fight to Create a Cabinet

At the same time, Maliki faced a new set of political problems. He had 30 days to get agreement on a cabinet -- and the struggle for cabinet positions triggered a whole new round of sectarian and ethnic political infighting. The resulting negotiations between parties and sectarian and ethnic factions went down to the limit.

The new cabinet was only announced on May 20th -- some three days before Maliki's 30 day mandate expired. Even then, it was short key ministers, including the Minister of the Interior and Minister of Defense, and Maliki left the post of National Security Advisor open. Iraqi forces remained without the top leadership they badly needed, and the two ministries remained uncertain "lame duck" operations.

This did not, however, mean that Maliki failed to act in several areas with a major impact on Iraqi force development. In late April, Maliki pledged that his government would begin the process of funneling the militias into Iraq's security forces. This pledge was supported by a statement by the usually reticent Grand Ayatollah Sistani in which he declared, "Weapons must be in the hands of government security forces that should not be tied to political parties but to the nation."³⁴⁷ He added further, that Iraqi Security Forces must be formed "on sound, patriotic bases so that their allegiance shall be to the homeland alone, not to any other political or other groups."³⁴⁸

In Maliki's first meeting with al-Sadr as Iraq's new Prime Minister, he broached the issue of disbanding the militias, gently saying, "Merging the militias into the military is not to disrespect them but to reward them for their role in the struggle against dictatorship." He also said it was a "solution to the problem of having weapons outside the government."³⁴⁹ Yet during a news conference after the meeting, the young cleric did not address the issue of disbanding the Mahdi Army, but rather focused his comments on the Rice-Rumsfeld visit to the region and the presence of US troops.³⁵⁰

Early on in his tenure, Maliki also warned Iraq's neighbors that while he was appreciative of their efforts to shelter anti-Saddam factions throughout the duration of his regime, Iraq would not tolerate "security interference," or foreign involvement in "certain movements inside Iraq."³⁵¹

During the ongoing political negotiations, sectarian violence did not relent and still pushed Iraqis towards a more intense form of civil war. Iraqi health and interior ministries statistics indicated that 686 civilians were killed in April in addition to 190 insurgents, 54 policemen, and 22 Iraqi soldiers.³⁵² For the same month, the Baghdad morgue reported that it had received 1,091 bodies.³⁵³ In reality, the death toll was probably higher.

Iraqi President Jalal Talabani acknowledged this risk in an emotional call for peace: "If we add to that the number of bodies which are not found, or similar crimes in other provinces, then the total number of calls for deep concern and rage." He continued, "Behind every so-called unidentified body there is traumatized mother, an orphan child, a devastated father, and an unfortunate wife. Each drop of blood spilt is watering the fields of evil and is growing the seeds of division."³⁵⁴ He similarly called for unanimous and unequivocal condemnation of the acts by all of Iraq's political parties and clerical leaders.³⁵⁵

Nevertheless, Maliki made progress in forming a new Iraqi cabinet and government, and in forging more compromises between Iraq's factions. In mid-May it was reported by Sheikh Khaled al-Attieh, the Shi'ite deputy speaker of the parliament, that the Defense Ministry would be given to a Sunni from Iyad Allawi's secular list. He also stated that the Shi'ites would remain

in control of the Interior Ministry, a contentious post as it controlled many of the internal security forces said to be infiltrated by Shi'ite militias and death squads. The Kurdish Alliance would head the ministries of Foreign Affairs, Housing and Construction, Water and Irrigation, Industry, and Human Rights. Al-Attieh also implied that the leader of the Oil Ministry was all but decided upon. Hussein Shahrastani, a well-respected and impartial Shi'ite nuclear scientist, would control the post.³⁵⁶

In spite of these efforts, delays continued, as did more assertions that an official announcement of the cabinet was at hand. As the constitutionally mandated deadline of Monday, May 22 approached, US and Iraqi officials claimed that the cabinet would be announced ahead of the deadline. One Sunni politician, Dhafir al-Ani, claimed on May 18 that the decision would be made within 48 hours. Spokesmen for Maliki similarly asserted that the process was almost complete and that of those who take up new positions in the cabinet, four would be women.³⁵⁷

Iraq's New Political Line-Up

The government came close to succeeding. On May 20, 2006, it announced most of the cabinet, although two key minister had not been agreed upon. It had to make Maliki the acting Minister of the Interior and one of the new Deputy Prime Ministers, Salam al Zobaie, acting Minister of Defense. It had the following key members:³⁵⁸

- *Prime Minister Nuri Al Maliki:* A graduate in Arabic letters and leading figure in Al Dawa. Maliki was a Shi'ite Islamist, and had been an exile for many years and had been sentenced to death by Saddam's courts. He had been a strong advocate of hardline "debaathification," but had been a key negotiator in dealing with the Kurds, where he had shown flexibility over issues like Kirkuk, and in offering compromises to the Sunnis and promises to abolish the militias and negotiate with the less extreme Sunni insurgents. He was not an experienced leader or administrator, but had acquired a reputation for frankness, honesty, and a willingness to carry out meaningful negotiations.
- *Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih:* A former prime minister of the autonomous Kurdish area, closely tied to President Jalal Talabani and the PUK, Salih was given special responsibility for the economy and its reconstruction.
- *Deputy Prime Minister Salam al Zobaie:* A new figure from the main Sunni party, the Accordance Front, the main Sunni Arab grouping. His background was more tribal than religious. He was given special responsibility for oversight of the security forces.
- *Finance Minister Bayan Jabr:* Jabr was a senior leader of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the strongest component of the Shi'ite alliance. He had previously been Minister of the Interior, but had come to be seen as tolerating police death squads and giving men from the Badr Organization, SCIRI's armed wing, positions in the police. As Minister of the Interior, he had overspent his budget.
- *Oil Minister Hussain al Shahrastani:* Shahrastani had a technical background, as a physicist he had been jailed and tortured when he would not work on Saddam Hussein's nuclear weapons program. He had no petroleum background, and no

practical background in managing large-scale industrial systems. His political experience was as ex-deputy parliamentary speaker.

- *Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari*: Zebari had already been foreign minister since 2003. He was a Kurd and former spokesman for the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) during the time of Saddam Hussein.

It was also clear that three other major figures continued to play the same major political role in shaping the conditions for developing Iraq politics without joining the government:

- *Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani*: Sistani remained the most senior and revered Shi'ite cleric. He retained vast political influence, and had played a major role in making the Shi'ite alliance compromise to choose Maliki, resist pressures for sectarian conflict, and seek compromises to keep Iraq unified, although he sometimes seemed to support federation.
- *Abdul Aziz al-Hakim*: The leader of SCIRI and a key leader in the Shi'ite Alliance. Hakim had replaced his brother, the Ayatollah Mohammed Baqer al-Hakim, as leader when the latter was killed in a bombing in August 2003. Hakim had been a spokesman for national unity and negotiations with the Shi'ites, but was also closely associated with the Badr Organization. Some felt he had ties to Iran and militia attacks on Sunnis.
- *Moqtada al-Sadr*: Sadr remained the most activist Shi'ite religious leader, although he was still a relatively low ranking cleric. A charismatic preacher, he continued to call for Coalition withdrawal, and advocate a strongly religious Iraqi state. His "Mahdi Army" had made a major recovery from its defeat in two failed revolts in 2004, and his supporter had been given some 30 votes in the new assembly to keep him in the Shi'ite alliance. Several Sadr supporters had been made ministers.

Even if the formation of a new cabinet adhered to the timeline laid out by the constitution, it was not clear that this would have any discernable affect on the level of sectarian violence that plagued Iraq. Even with ministerial posts agreed upon, numerous issues abounded -- such as federalism, Kurdish autonomy, and oil revenues -- that could prove equally contentious. One secular politician, Ayad Jamal al-Din, warned that a new inclusive government would not be a panacea to the many problems facing Iraq. "I think that things will not calm down easily, even after the formation of a government, but in general there is progress in the political situation," he said. Still, he feared that with the results of the elections, sectarianism had been enshrined in Iraq's political landscape, saying, "The democracy has become a democracy of sects."³⁵⁹

Maliki's New Program

Maliki announced a 30-point program for Iraq's future government on the day the new cabinet was announced. He repeated his call to end the role of the militias and announced the following program to unify the country:³⁶⁰

- Form a national unity government from all communities
- Abide by the constitution and any amendments

- Pursue national dialogue to build a free, pluralistic, united and democratic Iraq
- *Renounce violence and crack down on terrorism*
- *Preserve Iraqi sovereignty and deal with the foreign forces on its soil within U.N. Security Council Resolution 1546*
- *Establish state institutions and the rule of law*
- Prevent dictatorship, sectarianism and racism
- Encourage women to take an active role in society and state
- Give young people a healthy environment to develop in
- Protect and develop holy sites and encourage pilgrimage
- Observe the independence of science faculties
- Ensure the independence of the media
- Submit a comprehensive plan for construction and repairs
- *Encourage reconstruction, with priority for deprived areas*
- Accelerate renovation in the electricity industry
- *Regulate the oil and gas industry, giving a role to regions*
- Promote domestic investment and attract foreign capital
- Give priority attention to industry and agriculture
- *Organize links between central and local government to enhance the federal structure of the state*
- *Build friendly relations with neighboring countries*
- *Enhance the role of regions and hold provincial elections*
- *Apply constitutional Article 140 to settle disputes over the status of Kirkuk, including holding a census and referendum*
- *Commit to tackling security issues*
- Observe principles of balance and efficiency in governance
- *Establish budgetary audits and address corruption*
- Develop welfare systems against poverty and ignorance
- Develop higher education and scientific research
- Review the workings and promote independent panels like the Debaathification Commission and the anti-corruption board
- Review the electoral law and the Electoral Commission
- *Control international borders and crossing points*
- *Put an end to people being forced to flee their homes*

- Promote the acquisition of scientific qualifications
- Review detention cases and release the innocent immediately

Maliki paid special attention to a number of key security issues, and did so with far more directness and integrity than Jafari.

A key move in late spring 2006 came when Maliki declared a state of emergency in Basra on May 31, 2006 in response to the growing unrest in that region. To support the declaration, Maliki visited Basra on the same day, vowing to crack down on sectarian gangs operating in the region. The move came as an attempt to assert his authority in the southern Shi'ite area of the country -- which had fallen subject to heavy influence by Shi'ite militias -- as well as to assert better central control from Baghdad over the restive province.

Maliki described the state of emergency as a "broad security mobilization," in a region where the growing influence of Shi'ite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr had stirred up considerable violence after a period of relative calm following the US invasion in 2003.

The state of emergency was declared after some of the most violent months in Basra following the invasion. More than 140 civilians were killed in May, and the British army, which controlled Basra, saw its highest casualty rate since 2003. The Iraqi government said the Iraqi 10th Division would be deployed in the city of Basra around the clock and would set up checkpoints, impose curfews, and increase weapons searches.³⁶¹

The Appointment of New Ministers of Defense and Interior, and a New National Security Advisor in June

In June 2006, al-Maliki announced the appointments to the ministries of Defense, Interior and National Security, approved by the Iraqi legislature. The new Defense Minister was Iraqi Army Gen. Abdul-Qader Mohammed Jassim al-Mifarji, a Sunni; the Interior Minister was Jawad al-Bolani, a Shi'ite; and the National Security Minister was Sherwan al-Waili, a Shi'ite.³⁶² Coming on the heels of the death of al-Zarqawi, the long delayed agreement by Iraq's political factions on these contentious posts created at least a short-term optimism in Washington and Baghdad.

Al-Mifarji was not a member of any political party and when speaking to the parliament after his confirmation told of how he was removed from Saddam's military and sentenced to seven years in prison after he opposed the invasion of Kuwait. "As a defense minister I will work for all Iraqis and will not work according to my tribal, religious and ethnic background," al-Mifarji said.³⁶³

Al-Bolani, the Minister of the Interior, was born in Baghdad and had a career as an engineer in the Iraqi Air Force. He became involved in politics as a member of the United Iraqi Alliance in Nasiriyah in 2003 and then worked for the national government as the undersecretary for public works.³⁶⁴

The National Security Minister, al-Waili survived Saddam's crackdown of the Shi'ite uprising in the south that followed the Gulf War. He was head of the Basra City Council and a member of the Iraqi Governing Council. He belonged to the Iraqi Dawa Party (different from the Islamic Dawa Party) and graduated with a law degree from Basra University. He said that his first orders of business under the new post would be to tackle border and regional security.³⁶⁵

The appointment of these ministers potentially offered the first opportunity in nearly half a year to provide real direction to ministries that had serious problems in terms of corruption,

unqualified appointments, overstaffing in some areas and a lack of staffing in others -- and serious sectarian and ethnic tensions in their staffs.

It also marked a further potential advance in that Maliki seemed willing to work with his ministers, and able to exert authority. The previous Prime Minister, Jafarri, had proven to be incompetent in virtually every possible respect. From an Iraqi force development perspective, however, one key area of his incompetence was his inability to work with his ministers and give Iraq's national security council any meaning.

A Step Towards What?

The new Iraqi political structure and program that emerged in June thus had real promise, and this promise was reinforced by steadily more effective attacks on Al-Qa'ida. These were symbolized by the killing of Zarqawi on June 7, 2006, which was part of a wide range of successful earlier and follow up attacks on Al-Qa'ida. They were also reinforced by a meeting between President Bush and his senior officials at Camp David, which was convened June 9, 2006, and followed by a surprise visit by President Bush to Baghdad the next day to show America's continuing support and pledge that the US would maintain military support until Iraqi forces were ready to replace them.

Mid-2006 thus offered the prospect of ending more than half a year of drift and restructuring the creation of Iraqi forces to deal with the new, critical threat of civil violence. It was far too soon, however, to predict an end to the lack of political direction in Iraq. Iraq had begun to acquire a new group of leaders nearly half a year after the election that gave them a mandate, but the new government faced what was still a wartime environment, and one with a serious risk of civil war. Many leaders were still politically inexperienced and divided, and most had to take over weak ministries with their own tensions and divisions -- with little or no previous experience in administering anything on the scale they now had to deal with.

The Ministries Defense, Interior, Petroleum, and Finance all remained administrative nightmares requiring immediate leadership and organization. The Ministry of Interior, in particular, still had elements linked to Shi'ite militias. Reforms of the security forces and militias had begun, but basic steps like reforming Iraq's prisons and detainee centers had made only limited progress. The central government had yet to show it could exert control over the police and security forces in many areas outside Baghdad, create a workable criminal justice and court system to bring broader security and establish a rule of law, and establish the kind of local presence and government-provided services that would give it real credibility and legitimacy.

Iraqi forces clearly needed tighter control and more unity, and the new government faced major problems in terms of fiscal resources, cuts in the flow of foreign aid funding, and in securing and expanding oil exports. The government also faced the need to cope with appointing a new Constitutional advisory group, with a four month deadline to clarify virtually every controversial issue in Iraqi politics and governance -- including a provision calling for abolishing militias.

It faced debates on federalism and local autonomy that could have a major impact on central government powers, its control over national funds and Iraqi forces, and

especially over police functions and the very nature of local legal systems and law enforcement. If this went well, and the new assembly approved the new revisions to the constitution, it faced a 60-day period in which to campaign for a popular referendum to vote on the result. While the new government had been elected for a four year term of office, it potentially faced major changes in its role and powers in late 2006 or early 2007, and the fourth major shake up in the Iraqi government in two years.

The same new government that now had responsibility for shaping Iraqi forces and winning a war had to wait until December-March before it could actually begin to govern with a full constitutional mandate and legal base -- provided that it could hold the nation together, there was no division into federalism, and Iraqi society could rebuild some of the bridges across its recent sectarian and ethnic divisions. It also faced the certainty that the insurgency would continue to strike at every fault line in the interim. It had to restore civil order and deal with the militias, and make the "Year of the Police" a reality that could create a truly national police.

At a more immediate level, practical questions also arose as to how well the new members of the government could actually work together, how well they would bridge over their sectarian and ethnic backgrounds, and who would actually exert power. One example was that Mowaffak al-Rubaie, the former National Security Advisor, attempted to stay in his position, stating he had a five year term dating back to the time of the CPA transitional government at the time. Rubaie had previously been asked to step down by Alawi, and he declined.

The National Reconciliation Plan

As has been discussed earlier, one of Prime Minister al-Maliki's main objectives upon forming a new government was to weaken the predominantly Sunni insurgency by presenting a reconciliation plan that included an amnesty for those willing to renounce violent resistance, as well as a review of de-Ba'athification policies that had alienated many Sunnis.³⁶⁶ Maliki officially presented his plan before parliament on June 25, approximately ten days after the beginning of a major security operation intended to secure Baghdad. The plan's 24 points remained somewhat vague, but included the pardon of prisoners "who were not involved in crimes, war crimes, and crimes against humanity" and an amnesty for insurgents who hadn't killed Iraqis. The plan appeared to have strong parliamentary support in principle, but soon proved to be extremely difficult to implement.³⁶⁷

Growing Regional Threats and Involvement

Iraqi force development faced other problems, and ones that raised new questions about the need to create forces that could deter and defend against foreign threats as well as deal with the insurgency. By May 2006, Iran and Turkey had begun to play a more active role in putting pressure on Iraq's Kurdish population. Iran shelled the town of Razqa, Iraq in May as a part of its long-running struggle against Kurdish separatist groups operating in the mountainous region along Iraq's border with Iran.

Meanwhile, Turkey sent tens of thousands of fresh soldiers to beef up its force in its southern Kurdish-populated area near the Iraqi border. Turkish Foreign Minister

Abdullah Gul stated that Turkey “would not hesitate to take every kind of measure when our security is at stake,” hinting that the possibility of Turkish incursions into Iraqi territory remained at least tacitly on the table.³⁶⁸

Coalition officials also continued to charge that Iran was playing an active role in training and equipping various Shi’ite militias, shipping in new arms and devices for IEDs, and playing a role in encouraging anti-Sunni attacks by various elements of the Ministry of Interior security forces and police. In comments to the House Armed Services Committee on February 8, 2006, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that Iraqis were aware of and sensitive to Iranian influence in Iraq. However, he went on to say that it would be the duty of the Iraqi security forces to see that Iranian influence in Iraqi affairs is “kept to a dull roar,” and that it was his impression that the Shi’a in Iraq “are more Iraqi than they are oriented toward Iranian Shi’a. They see themselves as Iraqi.”³⁶⁹

The “First Threat:” Insurgent Attacks on ISF

The most serious direct threat to Iraqi force development, however, still came from the insurgents. The hardline Sunni Islamist groups not only struck at sectarian and ethnic fault lines, they focused on police recruits and Iraqi forces as “soft” targets. In late January 2006, for example, 31 Iraqi men were massacred by insurgents as they returned home after being turned down from the Baghdad police academy. The hired bus transporting the rejected recruits was forced off the road by six carloads of gunmen near Taji after being diverted from its intended route by a Coalition checkpoint. Upon finding applications for the police forces among the men’s’ belongings, the insurgents drove them to an abandoned area and shot them. This incident occurred just two weeks after a suicide bombing in Ramadi killed over 70 police recruits.³⁷⁰

In early March, Maj. Gen. Mubdar Hatim Hayza al-Dulaimi, the top Iraqi commander in Baghdad was shot in the back of the head after his car was sprayed by bullets in a drive by shooting. Al-Dulaimi, who led the 5th Brigade, was revered by both Iraqi and US soldiers and according to US officials embodied the type of Iraqi forces the Coalition was trying to construct. Col. Ahmed Saddam Khalifah said of al-Dulaimi, “He made it clear that our job is to make Baghdad safe from the terrorists, but it is just as important not to make new enemies.” Other officers talked of how he took care of his soldiers, making sure they were fed well and took a personal interest in keeping their morale high. Lt. Col. Mohammed Ali said, “He told us it was important to make the people see us as people who understand them and want to protect them.”³⁷¹

On one day in late April, a string of car bombings killed over 40 Iraqi civilians and police recruits. The bodies of 15 MOI special police recruits were found shot dead in the back of pickup trucks in Abu Ghraib. Iraqi officials also reported that a similar case, in which 17 recruits were found killed in the same fashion, occurred west of Ramadi.³⁷²

On May 7, two separate car bombings targeted Iraqi forces. In Adhamiyah, a car bomb detonated near an Iraqi army checkpoint killing six soldiers and three civilians. Also in Northern Baghdad, a suicide bomber targeting a police patrol blew himself up outside of an Iraqi newspaper, al-Sabah, killing one civilian and wounding six. On the same day in Kirkuk, gunmen abducted Col. Sherzad Abdullah, an Iraqi army officer as he left for work.³⁷³

Although Iraqi recruits are “soft” targets, when attacked, armed and trained Iraqi units were able to fight back, often times with success. In late April in Baqubah, a police station and five checkpoints came under simultaneous attack with mortar rounds, rocket-propelled grenades, and

small arms fire. Iraqi police forces responded killing 17 gunmen and capturing 28. In the process, one Iraqi soldier was killed, two were wounded, and four police were wounded.³⁷⁴

In Dali Abbas, an Iraqi Army headquarters was attacked by 100 gunmen with combined arms fire. The soldiers killed four insurgents and detained 15. Six Iraqi soldiers were killed and eight were wounded.³⁷⁵

In mid April, confusion and miscommunication between US and Iraqi soldiers caused an Iraqi convoy to attempt to travel from Taji to Najaf at night -- a dangerous journey. Although a US escort preceded the Iraqi convoy, the distance was great enough for the insurgents to allow the US group to pass, and then ambush the Iraqis. At least nine Iraqis were killed, 18 wounded and several vehicles destroyed.³⁷⁶

Stories differed as to why the Iraqi units had attempted to make the trip at night. Both US and Iraqi officials maintained that the original plan was for the Iraqi units to stay overnight at the American base in Taji, and then continue to Najaf the following day. Yet agreements broke down over what transpired that night. Gen. Abbas Maadal, the chief of police in Najaf, said that the police had gone to Taji to pick up 10 vehicles and that their request to stay overnight had been denied by US officers there. US spokesman for the base however seemed to imply that the Iraqis left suddenly or without warning. Major Stover said, "They were supposed to stay overnight. Why they left, I don't know."³⁷⁷

In any case, upon hearing the gunfire from the ambush, the US convoy ahead of the Iraqis contacted the base at Taji which then dispatched a force of Humvees and Apache helicopters to aide and back up the Iraqi forces. US forces killed one insurgent and captured five more. By the evening of the following day, only 57 of the 109 Iraqi policemen had returned to the base.³⁷⁸

Violence toward the police also remained a serious issue in late spring, with at least 547 slain in 2006 by May -- a figure roughly equal to the combined number of American and Iraqi soldiers slain in 2006.³⁷⁹

Sectarian Cleansing and Internal Displacement

There is no easy way to quantify the extent to which the mission of Iraqi forces changed during the first half of 2006 to focus on the prevention of full-scale civil war. The data on sectarian and ethnic conflict are uncertain, and much of the evidence is based on anecdotal reporting. It is clear the situation generally grew worse, but even Iraqis differed sharply on how much worse things were than in the last half of 2005.

There was some evidence that the sheer extremism of Sunni Islamists pushed more moderate Iraqi Sunnis away from supporting the insurgency and made them more willing to compromise or participate in the political process. Some Iraqis also reacted on national rather than sectarian and ethnic lines. The Maliki government sought to exploit the ideological split amongst the Sunni insurgents, co-opting more moderate Iraqi Sunni opposition and isolating the extremist foreign Islamists, exemplified by al-Qa'ida in Iraq. Progress was slow, although Iraqi legislators announced in July 2006 that they were studying a request from certain Iraqi insurgent groups to be armed by the government so they could "turn on the heavily armed [al-Qa'ida] foreign fighters who were once their allies." Despite difficulty in ascertaining the authenticity of the suggestion, this request may have been a significant indication of increasing divisions among the Sunni resistance.³⁸⁰

The Uncertain Scale of Ethnic Cleansing, Violence, and Displacement

In some mixed Shi'ite-Sunni communities the February 22 bombing of the Askariya shrine had a unifying effect. In these instances, Shi'ites and Sunnis organized armed patrols to protect their neighborhoods from sectarian violence.³⁸¹ For example, in Baghdad's Al-Amal district, every night at 9 pm, Sunni and Shi'ite residents placed old palm tree trunks and barrels as barriers on city streets and communicated events from their positions by hand-held radio.³⁸² US forces meddled little in the affairs of such watch groups, as they were not a direct threat to them, but merely a defensive outgrowth of the lack of security in the capital.

Increased sectarian and ethnic tension and violence was far more common, however, and often involved intrafactional struggles as well as intensifying clashes between sectarian and ethnic factions. Tensions between Arab and Kurd steadily increased in the Kirkuk and other mixed areas, and both Kurdish and Shi'ite militias were deployed into the Kirkuk area as tensions rose.

In some largely Shi'ite cities like Basra, hardline Shi'ite Islamists not only drove out Sunnis and Christians, but more secular and moderate Shi'ites, while Britain effectively abandoned missions in much of the city in the face of Islamist hostility. In some Sunni cities like Ramadi, as well as in rural and tribal areas, hardline Sunni Islamists clashed with more moderate Sunnis, effectively creating "no go" areas for moderate Sunnis -- as well as Iraqi and US forces -- in some supposedly "liberated" areas.

Estimates of Cleansing and Displacement

Sectarian and ethnic cleansing and displacement became a steadily more serious problem as Sunni and Shi'ite families left mixed neighborhoods for areas where their sect was the majority. The UN-affiliated International Organization for Migration estimated that by the end of March as many as 25,000 Iraqi's had been displaced since the Askariya bombing. The Iraqi Ministry of Displacement and Migration put the number even higher at 32,000.³⁸³

Although numbers differed, it was estimated that of these families, between 220 and 761 were Shi'ites that had fled from the Sunni dominated al-Anbar province to Baghdad. In turn, 50 Sunni families had reportedly relocated from Baghdad to Fallujah. It is also believed that 1,250 Shi'ite families fled Baghdad and central Iraq and settled in Najaf.³⁸⁴ In Fallujah, another city that is predominately Sunni, only 37 Shi'ite families remained according to the organization.³⁸⁵ By mid-April, the Ministry of Displacement Migration put the number at 60,000 people.³⁸⁶ A spokesman for the for the ministry estimated that every day 1,000 Iraqi's were being forced to flee their homes.³⁸⁷ Much of the displacement occurred in and around the capital, traditionally a mixed city.

Between March 22 and April 15 the number of displaced Iraqis tripled from 23,000 to almost 70,000 people. By April 19, the total number of Iraqis displaced from sectarian violence was estimated to be 80,000 by the President of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, Said Hakki. This included over 7,000 Shi'ite families and about 2,800 Sunni families.³⁸⁸ This total steadily climbed and by mid-May, Iraqi immigration officials said that between 90,000 and 100,000 individuals had been displaced, or 15,000 families.³⁸⁹

In the Shi'ite city of Najaf, an abandoned hotel was turned into a shelter for incoming families, and in Nasiriyah, arriving families began setting up tents on the outskirts of the city.³⁹⁰ Similarly, an amusement park in the predominately Shi'ite town of al-Kut was converted into a makeshift refugee camp.³⁹¹ Iraqi officials worried that this massive relocation would cause food and water shortages.³⁹² In April, there were reports that dysentery was spreading and conditions were expected to worsen with the coming summer.³⁹³

Mr. Hakki said that camps had been established in 14 provinces, with the majority of refugees flooding to those in Samarra, Fallujah, Basra, Najaf and neighborhoods within Baghdad. The Red Crescent, the prime minister's office, and the ministries of Health, Migration and Displacement, Interior, and Defense were working to alleviate health concerns associated with the displacement and provide clean water, latrines, food and bedding.³⁹⁴

In addition to the fear of disease, Mr. Hakki also worried that these secularly segregated refugee camps would become easy targets for terrorists seeking mass casualty attacks.³⁹⁵

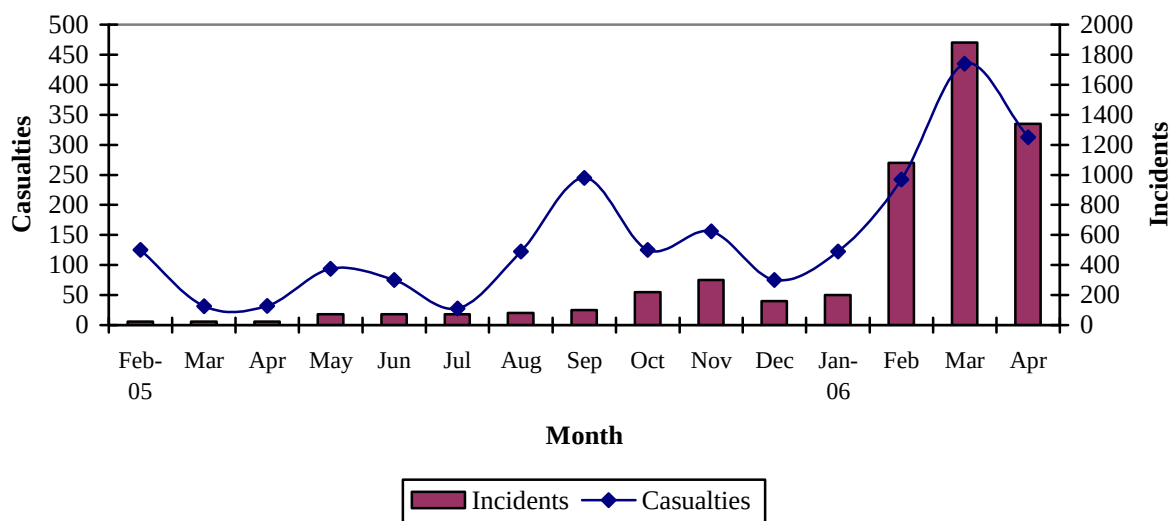
Spokesman for MNF-I, Lt. Col. Barry Johnson said that US officials were aware of the problem and were working to address it with the Iraqi government. "The key issue," Lt. Col. Johnson continued, "is to continue to develop the Iraqi security forces and peoples' confidence in their ability."³⁹⁶

This internal displacement, while often the result of direct threats by either Sunni insurgents or Shi'ite militias, was also due to the general deterioration of security and increase in sectarian tensions following the attack on the shrine. Families, who often felt secure among their long-time neighbors of the opposite sect, were now facing abductions and killings perpetrated in broad daylight by masked gunmen. For example, when carloads of gunmen grabbed Mohannad al-Azawi, a Sunni, from his pet store in Baghdad and a Shi'ite friend attempted to intervene, witnesses said the men pointed a pistol to his head and asked, "You want us to blow your brains out too?"³⁹⁷

Uncertain Levels of Sectarian Violence

The UN Assistance Mission for Iraq detailed these occurrences in a report issued in April noting that "a number of Sunni and Shi'a families living in mixed neighborhoods were forcibly evicted from their homes or left voluntarily because of threats of violence from militias, insurgents and other armed groups."³⁹⁸ Figure 58 provides a graphic depiction of the rise of what the DOD termed as "sectarian incidents" from February 2005 to April 2006. These figures may seriously understate the actual increase in violence since the DOD did not define how it calculated incidents and casualties, and many low-level incidents, woundings, kidnappings, and attacks on property seem to be excluded, along with incidents where the cause was unclear (e.g. possible crimes).

Figure 58
Sectarian Incidents



Note: Plotted data fall within ± 4 standard deviations of their value. Source: Adapted from "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq," Report to Congress, May 2006, p. 40.

It was far from clear how methodical these targeted secular evictions were. Because they were perpetrated by a combination of gangs, insurgents and militias, and targeted both Sunnis and Shi'ites, it seemed unlikely that a concerted effort by a single or even a few organizations was at work. However, Mr. Hakki noted that in most cases, the threats were coming from groups based outside of the neighborhoods. "They are highly organized," he said, "It is not happening in a haphazard way."³⁹⁹ However, the story told by one auto-parts store owner in Baghdad was perhaps more illustrative of the way Iraqis viewed the violence. Once a month gunmen came to his business to collect \$300 in "protection money." "They say they're with the insurgency and that they're protecting me from worse things. Who knows the truth...I just pay. We all pay."⁴⁰⁰

Creating a "New Afghanistan"?

Experts differ sharply over the extent to which Zarqawi, Al Qa'ida in Mesopotamia, and other Islamist insurgent movements saw creating sectarian and ethnic disorder and chaos in Iraq as a means of both driving the Coalition out of Iraq and giving Islamists the same kind of opportunity that had allowed the Taliban to come to power in Afghanistan. There was no doubt, however, that the insurgency not only made Iraqi forces a prime target, but continued to make civil war a strategic goal.

According to a memo attributed to al-Qa'ida in May 2006, it appeared that the displacement of Shi'ites was a new element of the terrorist organization's strategy in Iraq. The memo, found in an al-Qa'ida "hide out" in Yousifiya by US forces, calls on

followers to “displace the Shi’ites and displace their shops and businesses from our areas.”⁴⁰¹

The stories told by individual Iraqis were often similar. One individual, Bassam Fariq Daash, a 34-year old Shi’ite fled from his predominately Sunni village of Awad to nearby Shoula after numerous death threats from insurgents. Reportedly, he was one of 147 Shi’ite families that had come to that town since the February 22 attack on the Askariya shrine.⁴⁰² In a similar instance, a Sunni man who lived in Samarra was beaten by black-clad militia men, his mother was shot and he was told by the gunmen that they would kill him and “everybody [he knows]” if he did not leave the city immediately.⁴⁰³ Hussein Alawan, a Shi’ite, was driven out of the mixed city of Latifiyah: “They told me that I should leave within 24 hours or we will all get killed. So we left everything there and took only the bare things we need to live.”⁴⁰⁴

A Sunni family, the Ubaidis, had just finished lunch in their mixed neighborhood of Shaab, in Baghdad, when masked gunmen knocked at their door and demanded to speak with Ziad, 21 and his father, Tariq. Both were shoved into the trunk of a car, their bodies discovered four days later dumped in a town near Baghdad. Muazzaz, Tariq’s wife, who had lived in the neighborhood for 19 years said, “In a while, this area will be 100% Shi’ite...It’s definitely sectarian cleansing.”⁴⁰⁵

Mahadiya Mushin, a Shi’ite residing in the suburb of Abu Ghraib, found her name on a death list together with the names of 31 other Shi’ite families that was distributed by Sunni Mujahideen. As she was preparing to leave, she watched gunmen drag her neighbor from his house, torture and shoot him, and then light his house on fire as a warning to those who refused to comply.⁴⁰⁶

According to one Sunni man, Abu Omar, members of the Mahdi Army burst into his home one night searching for his son. When they could not find him, they left but not before telling the man that they would kill his son when they found him. Although the man and his son had committed no offense, the Mahdi members said that they were killing all young men named Omar and Bakar, popular Sunni names. When Abu Omar called the police the next day for protection they told him that because of his proximity to Sadr City, “there’s nothing they could do for a Sunni” in that area. He and other Sunni families subsequently fled the neighborhood to the Sunni-dominated area west of the Tigris.⁴⁰⁷

In the mixed al-Amel district, some Sunni families received envelopes containing a single bullet and a letter telling them to leave the neighborhood immediately.⁴⁰⁸ A Sunni shop owner, Dhafir Sadoun, left his long time residence in Sadr City saying “We did not fear the Mahdi Army because we’ve lived in Sadr City for 20 years, and everyone knows us and knows how we love the Shi’ites. But the Interior Ministry commandos arrest any Sunni. They don’t just arrest them; they kill them.”⁴⁰⁹ The displacement caused by this sectarian violence was also being exploited for financial gain in some instances. There were reports that an estate agent in Adamiyah, a Sunni suburb in Baghdad, had paid teenagers to distribute fliers to Shi’ite households warning them to leave with the intention of buying up the property at low prices.⁴¹⁰

Similar tactics were often employed. Leaflets were frequently distributed by gunmen or even by children. In some instances, those who had fled did so after hearing their names on a list of “enemies” read out at a Sunni mosque. It was also reported that “religious vigilantes” would paint black crosses, referred to as “the mark of death,” on the doors of those it sought to drive out. Young children were sometimes abducted for several hours and then returned to their families with a warning that if they did not leave, next time their children would be killed.⁴¹¹

This displacement already began to affect local governance in the spring of 2006. In Musayyib, a traditionally mixed district, the city council was run by 17 Shi’ites, most of whom were al-Sadr supporters, and included two non-voting Sunni members. There were also reports that members of the Mahdi Army had slowly began policing the neighborhoods, implementing strict punishments for the violation of Islamic law in the area. In one instance a woman was doused in acid for having her ankles exposed.⁴¹²

Cross-border displacement also became a growing issue. In 2004, 258 Iraqis registered as refugees with the UNHCR in Egypt. Between 2005 and March 2006, that number increased to 828. Although Iraqi embassies in Egypt, Syria, and Jordan confirmed that there had been an increase in Iraqi refugees to those countries, they did not have exact numbers. In addition, although the UNHCR numbers are not in and of themselves alarming, they nearly doubled in a little over a year. It is also safe to say as well that most Iraqi refugees did not bother registering with the UN.⁴¹³

Many began to worry that the constant level of violence, and its damaging effects on reconstruction and the rehabilitation of the economy, were forcing many of Iraq’s “best and brightest” to leave Iraq, making recovery from this cycle all the more difficult. For example, Ban Istafan, a woman biologist and teacher, fled with her Christian family to Amman after receiving a threatening letter.

The Acceleration and Effects of Sectarian Violence in Summer 2006

By July 2006, the rising level of casualties was impossible to ignore. Despite the installation of the national unity government, the death of al-Qa’ida in Iraq leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and the presentation of a national reconciliation plan, the rate of killings had accelerated to “more than 100 Iraqi civilians a day” in the month of June.⁴¹⁴

According to the Baghdad morgue, a total of 1,595 Iraqis were killed in or near Baghdad that month.⁴¹⁵ A UN report released on July 18 stated:⁴¹⁶

Insurgent, militia, and terrorist attacks continued unabated in many parts of Iraq, especially in Baghdad and in the central and western regions, with an increasingly sectarian connotation. A total of 5,818 civilians were reportedly killed and at least 5,762 wounded during May and June 2006. Killings, kidnappings, and torture remain widespread. Fear resulting from these and other crimes continued to increase internal displacement and outflows of Iraqis to neighboring countries. The negative effect of violence on professional categories, targeted by sectarian and criminal violence or displaced as a result, coupled with inadequate provision of basic services, also affected the level of education and health care received by the population. Women, children, and vulnerable groups, such as minorities, internally displaced, and disabled persons continue to be directly affected by the violence and the ongoing impunity for human rights violations.

July brought no relief. The Associated Press stated “at least 695 Iraqis were killed in sectarian or insurgent-related violence” in the first 18 days of the month.⁴¹⁷ The Baghdad

central morgue's count was even higher, at around 1,000 deaths for the same period of time.⁴¹⁸ Media attention centered on a wave of spectacularly brutal and indiscriminate attacks against civilians in mid-July. Around midday on July 9, 41 people were killed when Shi'ite gunmen, possibly affiliated with the Mahdi militia, invaded Baghdad's al-Jihad neighbourhood, dragged Sunni residents from their cars and homes and killed them in the streets.⁴¹⁹ On July 17, a large group of Sunni insurgents drove into the predominantly Shi'ite town of Mahmudiya south of Baghdad and killed over 40 unarmed civilians in a crowded market, "hurling grenades to blow up merchants at their counters and shooting down mothers as they fled with their children" in an attack that lasted 30 minutes.⁴²⁰

The next day, 53 Shi'ite civilians were killed by a suicide bomber in a van in Kufa.⁴²¹ As Reuters reported at the time:⁴²²

Four of the bloodiest incidents this year have taken place this month—two al-Qaeda car bombings of Shi'ite markets in Baghdad and Kufa and two gun attacks blamed on Shi'ite militias.

Those four alone, two of them just this week, claimed some 220 lives. But as the United Nations said this week, that is a fraction of some 100 civilians a day who are dying in violence.

The immediate effect of such violence was to send people fleeing from homes in mixed neighborhoods to more secure locations in segregated sectarian strongholds. The Iraqi government released figures on July 20 indicating that "1,117 families abandoned mixed areas for Shi'ite or Sunni strongholds in the last week alone," and that "nearly 27,000 families, about 162,000 people, had registered for relocation aid since the bombing of a Shi'ite shrine in Samarra on Feb. 22, which set off waves of killings, kidnappings and reprisals." People moved to areas where their sect was an overwhelming majority, as in the case of Falluja.⁴²³

For Sunnis, Falluja has become a preferred safe haven. Officials there describe the majority Sunni city as a swelling metropolis, with hundreds if not thousands of families moving in every week, crowding homes and seeking identification cards with Falluja addresses to ensure that they are not mistaken for Shi'ites.

Baghdad became increasingly divided, with Iraqi officials saying "the Tigris river is already looking like the Beirut 'Green Line,' dividing Sunni west Baghdad, known by its ancient name of Karkh, from the mainly Shi'ite east, or Rusafa." The violence had become so overwhelming that some Iraqi leaders had "all but given up on holding the country together" and spoke privately about "pre-empting the worst bloodshed by agreeing to an east-west division of Baghdad into Shi'ite and Sunni Muslim zones."⁴²⁴ A civil war mentality seemed to have taken hold, particularly in the capital city.

Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, said it was necessary for neighborhoods to form "defense committees" to defend themselves—signaling the widespread distrust and lack of confidence in government security forces.⁴²⁵ Some Iraqis apparently swapped houses with friends of different sects in order to keep from being a minority in a given neighborhood as Iraqi government forces struggled to keep track of the large-scale population movements. US and Iraqi officials were insistent that a significant portion of the sectarian threat was exaggerated "rumor-mongering."⁴²⁶ Yet between July 20 and July 31, some 20,000 more Iraqis fled

their homes, raising the total number of displaced people to 182,154, including 27,744 from Baghdad, since the February 22 bombing of a Shi'ite shrine in Samarra "sparked a new phase of killing by Shi'ites and minority Sunni groups."⁴²⁷

US Army Col. Brian Jones, commanding a unit in the Diyala province, said that the civilian population, rather than US troops, had become the primary targets of most of the violence, with "anywhere from 20 to 30 deaths an evening" in his area of operations since the beginning of the summer. "Some of it is certainly tribal. Some of it is political. And some, of course, is sectarian. But it's very difficult to separate those, even days after the fact."⁴²⁸ Some 60 percent of attacks in the Diyala province during the summer of 2006 were directed against civilians. Another American officer, describing the escalating sectarian violence in the provinces, said, "We see the challenges of Baghdad being exported."⁴²⁹

Sectarian violence in Baghdad continued unabated, generating increasing debate over whether Iraq had already fallen into civil war. In August 2006 testimony before Congress, US CENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid said "the violence was as bad as he had seen it and the country risked sliding into civil war unless conditions in the capital were brought under control." More US troops were deployed to Baghdad early that month to try to stabilize the security situation and enable the government to "kick-start efforts toward reconciliation."⁴³⁰

US and Iraqi troops on the ground in Iraq said that civil war had already begun in Baghdad, describing neighborhoods turning into "open battlefields," streets as "dividing lines," entire villages "cleared out," and bodies "dropped in canals and left on the side of the road." A 4th Infantry Division battalion commander summed up the goal of the militant factions as "trying to force Shi'ites into Shi'ite areas and Sunnis into Sunni areas" and compared Iraq to 1994 Rwanda.⁴³¹ A BBC correspondent reported that "Baghdad is increasingly becoming a patchwork of Shia and Sunni enclaves looking nervously out across barricades."⁴³² The Baghdad morgue reported that it had handled 1,815 bodies in the month of July. About 85% of them had suffered violent deaths, the "biggest cause" of which were gunshot wounds to the head "execution style," a method associated with "sectarian death squads."⁴³³ Some Sunnis in Baghdad took to impersonating Shi'ites to avoid becoming targets of death squads. A Sunni organization's website displayed "tips on being Shia" such as "memorize the names of the 12 imams," "have an ID with a different name," and "keep a poster in your house of Imam Hussein."⁴³⁴

Overall 3,438 civilians were killed in Iraq in July, an average of over 110 Iraqis daily, a nine percent increase over the previous month, and "nearly double the toll in January." Those figures were released by the Iraqi Health Ministry that outside analysts said "almost certainly reflect severe undercounting."⁴³⁵

The growing "self-segregation" or "soft ethnic cleansing" of Sunni and Shi'ite communities led to increasingly loud public calls for dividing the country as a solution to sectarian violence. Abdel Aziz al-Hakim, leader of the major Shi'ite political faction called the Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq, began "aggressively promoting a radical plan to partition the country a way of separating the warring sects:"

Shi'ites have long advocated some sort of autonomy in the south, similar to the Kurds' 15-year-old enclave in the north, with its own defense forces and control over oil exploration. And the new constitution does allow provinces to team up into federal regions. But the latest effort, promulgated by Cabinet ministers, clerics, and columnists, marks the first time they have advocated regional partition as a way of stemming violence.

"Federalism will cut off all the parts of the country that are incubating terrorism from those that are upgrading and improving," said Khudair Khuzai, the Shi'ite education minister. "We will do it just like Kurdistan. We will put soldiers along the frontiers."

The growing clamor for partition illustrates how dire the country's security, economic, and political problems have come to seem to many Iraqis: Until recently, the idea of redrawing the 8 ½ decade-old map of Iraq was considered seditious.

Sunni political leaders condemned the suggestion as an oil grab, which would leave the Shi'ite south and Kurdish north regions in control nearly all of Iraq's natural resources. Yet the idea of "splitting the capital along the Tigris, which roughly divides the city between a mostly Shi'ite east and a mostly Sunni west," had broader appeal as a means of possibly reducing the rampant sectarian strife.⁴³⁶

The increasing risk of civil war made stopping so-called "death squads" and militias responsible for sectarian killing became the primary mission for security forces.⁴³⁷ In early August, US military leaders were reporting that "more people in Baghdad are being killed by Shi'ite death squads than by al-Qaeda and Sunni insurgents, who had been the main focus of US and Iraqi forces in the capital" previously.

General George Casey, the top US commander in Iraq, reported that 60% of Baghdad killings at the time were attributable to Shi'ite death squads and declared that security forces would "dismantle all death squads, regardless of affiliation. 'We're going after people who are actively murdering other Iraqis,' Casey said in an interview." But it would be easier said than done. Not only were some of the militias better equipped than Iraqi forces, but the connections between the militias and certain Iraqi Shi'ite political leaders made targeting "death squads" responsible for sectarian violence a sensitive issue.⁴³⁸

The lack of progress in curbing violence was demonstrable and led to recriminations between US and Iraqi leaders. Throughout Iraq, attacks "mounted with each US-declared step of progress:"

When L. Paul Bremer, then the top US representative in Iraq, appointed an Iraqi Governing Council in July 2003, insurgent attacks averaged 16 daily. When Saddam Hussein was captured that December, the average was 19. When Bremer signed the handover of sovereignty in June 2004, it was 45 attacks daily. When Iraq held its elections for a transitional government in January 2005, it was 61. When Iraqis voted last December for a permanent government, it was 75. When US forces killed terrorist mastermind Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in June, it was up to 90.

Iraqi political leaders accused the US of not grasping the reality of the problems facing the country and worried "that the rosy views are preventing the creation of effective strategies against the escalating violence." "The American policy has failed both in terms of politics and security, but the big problem is that they will not confess or admit that," said Mahmoud Othman, a Kurdish member of Parliament. "All the American policies have failed because the American analysis of the situation is wrong; it is not

related to reality,' [Shi'ite parliament member Jalaladin] Saghir said." Some American soldiers on the ground privately shared that view and were concerned that top officials did not understand what was going on beyond the Green Zone, let alone how to handle it.⁴³⁹

Insurgent Infiltration and the Intelligence Problem: Growing Instability in Each Governorate

The end result was that it became almost meaningless to talk about secure and insecure provinces and governorates. Iraqi forces did still face a major insurgent threat in only four of eighteen provinces, but the threat of civil disorder and conflict permeated the country. Baghdad and Mosul alone included more than 30% of the population and Kirkuk and Basra had become flashpoints for reasons that had little to do with the insurgency.

A combination of insurgent action, and sectarian and ethnic violence came to threaten virtually every governorate. This broadened both the mission of Iraqi forces and changed other aspects of their mission, such as intelligence. In April 2006, for example, Lt. Col. Chris Lauchner, who trained Iraqi special forces as part of a joint US-Iraqi special operations headquarters, said that the greatest need for the Iraqi security forces was an intelligence-coordinating body that could collect information on the insurgency and distribute it on the ground.

Virtually all such intelligence functions in Iraq were still being carried out by American intelligence agencies. Due to evidence of insurgent infiltration of Iraqi MOD and MOI forces, not all intelligence information was being shared with the two ministries, creating a sometimes tenuous working relationship between them and the Americans.⁴⁴⁰

Like patrol and security activity, intelligence had increasingly become a problem affecting virtually every part of Iraq, and one where intelligence on sectarian and ethnic divisions, and forces like the militias, became as important as intelligence on the insurgents. Figure 59 shows just how weak the rule of law and security had become, by province, as of January 31, 2006. This situation deteriorated in every province during the following months, as well as in key cities like Baghdad, Basra, Mosul, and Kirkuk:

Figure 59
Provincial Stability Assessment: January 31, 2006

Part 1

Region/Province	Governance	Security
Muthana Province	Rule of law weak due to inadequate prison facilities. Understanding of roles within govt. structure needs emphasis. Very dominant governor, but provincial council (PC) able to function effectively.	ISF operates in a relatively permissive environment.
Maysan Province	Governance capacity is improving with DFID assistance; however, rule of law hindered due to a lack of adequate prison facilities.	Large number of experienced local militia present. Camp Abu Naji experiences frequent IDF attacks and British patrols are frequently subject to harassing fire.
Kurdish Region	Stable government with close coordination between government and security forces. Rule of law established and functioning.	No significant AIF activity. Local security forces restraining crime and terrorism within the established legal system.
Ninawa Province	Governor is overshadowed by strong Kurdish vice-governor. Outdated laws hinder performance of PC, and members are unsure of their responsibility to their constituents.	Inter-ethnic violence and AIF activity remain high.
Tamim Province	Governor unofficially accountable to Kurdish political parties. PC members have not fully grasped duties and responsibilities.	Inter-ethnic violence and suspicions and post-election tensions remain high.
Salah ad Din Province	Provincial govt. functioning but weak in providing essential services.	Ongoing tribal conflict adds to relatively high level of tension within the province. AIF attacks against ISF remain a concern.
Diyala Province	Top provincial offices divided up among Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Kurds, leading to consistent in-fighting. Governor makes decisions without consulting PC, but is accountable to them for the decisions he makes. Rule of law requires continued emphasis.	Attacks of intimidation and assassinations continue nearly unabated, targeting ISF, PC and civilians.
Baghdad Province	Strong and growing influence of SCIRI party on the PC.	Assassinations and intimidation of public officials, ISF and civilians occur frequently. Criminal activity is a major contributor to the overall level of violence.

Source: Adapted from "Provincial Stability Assessment" briefing, US Department of State, January 31, 2006.

Part 2

Region/Province	Governance	Security
Anbar Province	Governor is the dominant figure in all decision making and governance functions. PC has minimal control over governor's actions. IPS and courts system incapable of adequately supporting the rule of law. Significant intimidation of provincial council members.	Insurgent activity against ISF increasing; security situation is negatively impacting redevelopment efforts.
Babil Province	Little transparency and accountability of provincial government. Governor very dominant in dealings with other members of PC. Strong Iranian influence apparent w/in PC. PC attempting to place party loyalist in police chief position.	Ethnic conflicts in North Babil. The PC no longer claims responsibility for this area, claiming to have ceded it to Baghdad Province. Crime is a major factor within the province.
Najaf Province	Iranian influence on provincial government a concern. However, government is capable of maintaining stability within the province and providing for the needs of its populace.	AIF activity reduced to a level that ISF can control without CF assistance. There is growing tension between Madia [sic] Militia and Badr Corps that could escalate. Recent targeting of CF resulted in 5 US deaths.
Karbala Province	Governance is functioning and improving. However, it appears to be increasing association with the Iranian government. Local population is cognizant of the large presence of Iranians in Karbala and are concerned about their growing influence.	AIF activity reduced to a level that ISF can control without CF assistance. Suicide attacks are infrequent, but have occurred within past 30 days, killing over 70 people in one event.
Qadisiyah Province	PC ineffective at providing essential services; dominant governor meddles in all areas of government; rule of law corrupted and bureaucratic.	Security situation is manageable by local ISF with some support from CF.
Wasit Province	Governor is weak and appears more interested in furthering his own and the DAVA party's interest than improving local government's responsiveness to the people.	Manageable, but with high level of smuggling activity and tensions between Badr Corps and JAM could lead to a worsening situation.
Basra Province	Slowly getting started, the PC often attempts to assert its influence beyond its authority.	High level of militia activity including infiltration of local security forces. Smuggling and criminal activity continues unabated. Intimidation attacks and assassinations are common.
Dhi Qar Province	Sound governance processes and interaction among political parties. Require strengthening of lines of communication among various entities of provincial government.	Strong JAM and OMS presence, but few significant attacks. CF experienced occasional harassing attacks.

Source: Adapted from "Provincial Stability Assessment" briefing, US Department of State, January 31, 2006.

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Operational Developments

Yet, severe as these problems were, they scarcely paralyzed Iraqi force development. Iraqi forces continued to expand their operations against the hard-line Sunni insurgents, and increase their presence in troubled areas. They also began to make a fundamental shift in their mission from a counterinsurgency role to one that included a counter-civil war mission, which included controlling activity from various Shi'ite and Kurdish militias and armed groups, as well as sectarian and ethnic activity by the police -- including locally appointed police -- and various security forces.

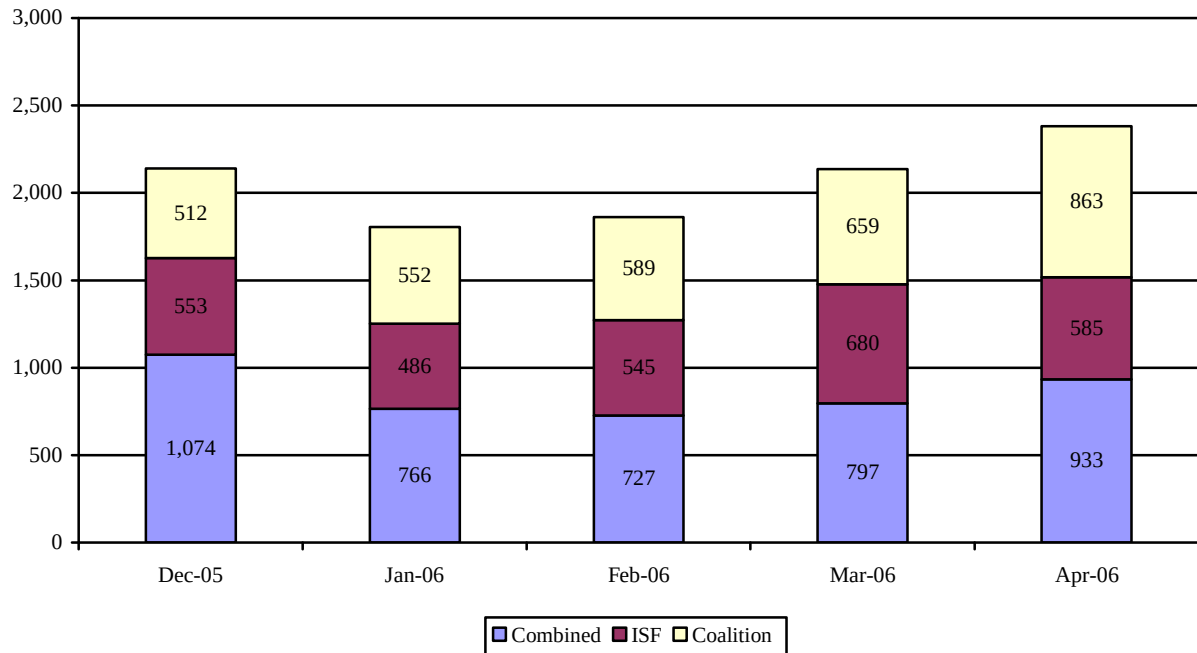
Figure 60 depicts the number of combat operations carried out between December 2006 and April 2006. Details are provided and compared for ISF, Coalition, and Combined operations. These data do have serious problems in terms of definition and categorization, because the level of the Iraqi role is hard to define. The graph is probably broadly correct, however, in showing a cumulative increase of ISF operations from December 2005 to March 2006, with a sharper increase from March 2006 to April 2006.

These operations were not really independent, since even the best Iraqi forces remained dependent on Coalition advisors, partner units, intelligence, and support. In many cases, they also needed Coalition armor, artillery, airpower, tactical mobility, and reserves. This raised long-term questions about the lack of any clear plan for Iraqi force development that would really eliminate Iraqi dependence on Coalition forces for counter insurgency, and give Iraqi forces enough heavy weapons, tactical lift, and other equipment to deter and defend against foreign threats.

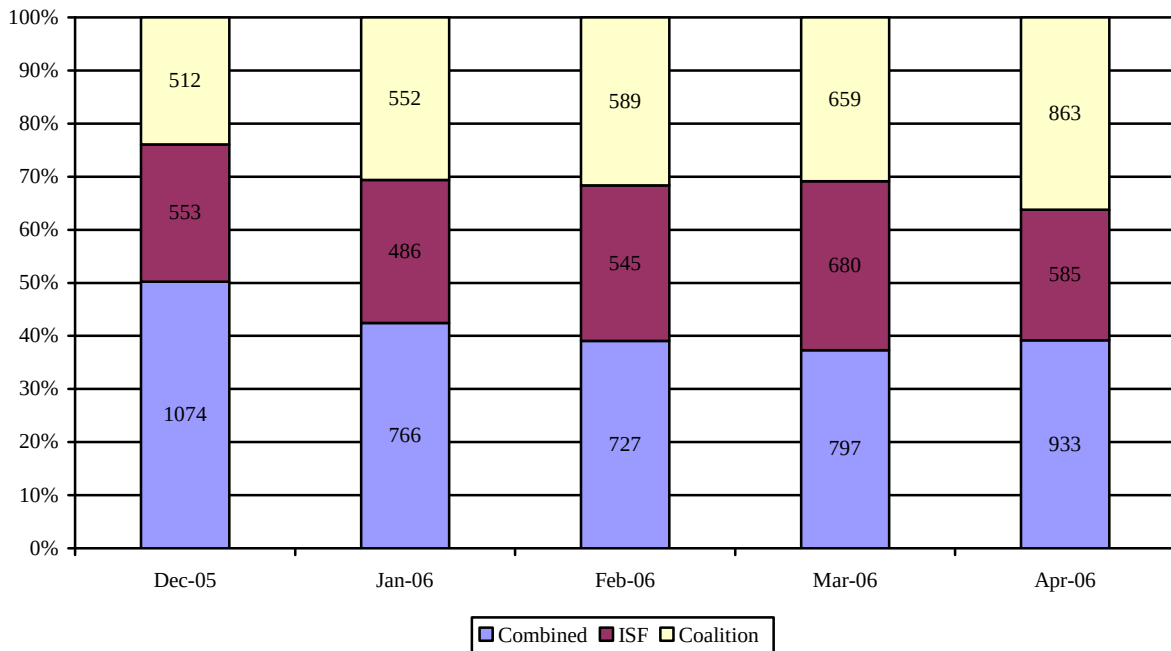
At the same time, the immediate test of Iraqi effectiveness had little to do with whether Iraqi forces could operate entirely on their own -- a development which events had made clear could generally only come in 2007 at the earliest. It was whether they were steadily becoming more effective, and served the nation rather than a sect or ethnic group. Judged by these real-world goals, Iraqi combat forces had made real-world progress, and were obviously continuing to do so.

Figure 60
Combat Operations (Company level and above*)

Number of Operations



Iraqi Role by Percentage of Total Operations



* Includes MOD and National Police units; data includes only those ISF independent operations that were reported to the Coalition. Source: Adapted from "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq," Report to Congress, May 2006, p. 48.

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Adding a New Mission: Counter-Civil War

Despite the widespread sectarian violence that followed the February 22 bombing of the Shi'ite Aksariya shrine, the Iraqi forces were also able to take on some aspects of the mission of preventing civil war. Their performance was far more mixed than the Iraqi government and MNF-I liked to admit. There were problems with MOI security forces and police that acted as Shi'ite or Kurdish forces, rather than as national forces. There also were incidents in which local Sunni and other security forces had serious clashes with the police and security services.

In many cases, however, Iraqi police and security units, not US soldiers, were able to restore order -- at least on a local and temporary basis. Iraqi Security Forces were put on alert after the attack, and manned checkpoints, guarded mosques, increased patrols, and protected peaceful demonstrators. Public Order Brigades were deployed to areas where violence was reported and in the first two weeks of March, ISF conducted more than 200 independent operations.⁴⁴¹

In one instance, Iraqi police responded to an armed Shi'ite crowd outside a Sunni mosque. The brigade, predominately Shi'ite, was able to disperse the crowd without incident after a two hour standoff and remained overnight to protect the mosque.⁴⁴²

In all, the Iraqi army deployed over 100,000 soldiers to prevent the spread of violence, or 47 battalions drawn from 10 divisions. US forces largely acted as embedded advisors or as a backup. In addition, the conduct of Iraqi units in the face of sectarian violence remained calm and restrained and reportedly not one civilian was killed by an Iraqi officer.

The commander of Iraq's ground forces, Lt. Gen. Abdul Qadir, praised the success and the cohesiveness of the regular army forces saying, "Not one unit had sectarian difficulties...And when we canceled all leaves after the mosque bombing -- we expected trouble of course -- our soldiers returned promptly to their units. Now it is as you see for yourself: Iraqis are proud of their own soldiers."⁴⁴³

Observers differed sharply over just how serious a step the attack was in pushing the country towards civil war. US State Department Spokesman Adam Ereli asserted that the violence, and Iraq's reaction to it, was an "affirmation" of a successful US policy in Iraq. "You've got political leadership acting together on behalf of the common good, and you've got security forces demonstrating that capability and a responsibility as a national entity that we've been working to develop and that has now been put to the test and, I think, is proving successful."⁴⁴⁴

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch echoed these sentiments saying, "We're not seeing civil war ignited in Iraq...We're seeing a competent, capable Iraqi government using their security forces to calm the storm."⁴⁴⁵ On the Sunday morning talk show "Face the Nation," National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley said that Iraq's had "stared into the abyss a bit, and I think they've all concluded that further violence...is not in their interest."⁴⁴⁶

These views contrasted sharply with views like those of Tariq al-Hashimi, the leader of the Sunni dominated Iraqi Accordance Front who called the reaction of the governments

security forces “miserable and ashamed” and said that “as usual [they were] either audience or participant.”⁴⁴⁷ Other reports similarly noted that ISF were either unable, or unwilling to stop attacks by militias.⁴⁴⁸

Major Operations in the Fight Against the Insurgents

One thing was clear: insurgent efforts to increase sectarian divisions and provoke civil war did not stop Iraqi and Coalition forces from improving their operations against the insurgents, and Al Qa’ida in particular. At a press briefing from Baghdad March 23, 2006, Army Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch said that to counter terrorist efforts in Iraq, the Coalition had launched a series of three ongoing counterinsurgency operations, in coordination with Iraqi authorities and security forces:⁴⁴⁹

- Operation Scales of Justice -- Iraqi and coalition forces brought in 26,000 Iraqi army and police and 10,000 Coalition forces to increase security on the streets of Baghdad with 300 patrols per day and more than 100 checkpoints to reduce insurgent sectarian attacks. The operation was to continue until the new government was formed.
- Operation Northern Lights -- Iraqi and Coalition forces conducted a series of offensive operations to capture or kill insurgents, seize weapons and explosives, and stop sectarian violence. At the briefing, Lynch reported the capture of 18 insurgents and the seizure of eight caches of weapons and explosives since the operation began.
- Operation Swarmer -- An Iraqi-led operation conducted the week on March 12 that captured 95 insurgents and seized 24 weapons caches, containing hundreds of mortar rounds, rockets, surface-to-air missiles, bomb-making equipment and terrorist training manuals.

Many of these operations were conducted with Iraqi units taking the lead in local raids and strikes, providing human intelligence, and providing area security.

US-Iraqi Campaigns in Early 2006

In “Operation Scales of Justice,” a force of 26,000 Iraqi army and police -- together with 10,000 Coalition forces -- conducted 150 patrols on the streets of Baghdad per day in an effort to increase general security. This operation included more than 100 checkpoints established throughout the city and was scheduled to continue until a new Iraqi government was formed.⁴⁵⁰ According to Maj. Gen. James Thurman, this operation resulted in increased local trust in Iraqi forces and over 3,000 anonymous tips regarding insurgent activity. He also indicated that these ongoing operations had caused a 58% reduction in attacks in the city in the past 90 days.⁴⁵¹

“Operation Northern Lights” was an Iraqi-led operation that consisted of a series of offensive raids to capture or kill insurgents, seize weapons and explosive material and halt sectarian attacks. In the initial stages of the operation, 18 insurgents were captured and 8 weapons caches were discovered.⁴⁵²

On March 17, the US launched “Operation Swarmer” near Samarra.⁴⁵³ This joint US-Iraqi operation, led by the 101st airborne division, was described as the largest air assault since the 2003 invasion. According to US military officials, 1,500 Coalition and Iraqi troops participated and more than 50 aircraft and 200 tactical vehicles were used.⁴⁵⁴ Four battalions were used from the 101st airborne were used and about 60% of the troops involved were Iraqi according to Lt. Col. Edward Loomis.⁴⁵⁵

The operation focused on a 10 square mile area northeast of the city that had been a concentration of sectarian attacks in the weeks prior and also reportedly harbored Al-Qa'ida insurgents.⁴⁵⁶ At least 40 suspected insurgents were apprehended on the first day and several weapons caches were discovered that contained artillery shells, explosives, roadside bomb making materials and military uniforms.⁴⁵⁷ There were no reports of casualties or resistance by insurgents.⁴⁵⁸

The second day of the assault only netted 10 more detainees and 17 from the day prior were released. In addition, no new weapons caches were found. American command even began to send some troops back to their bases.⁴⁵⁹

By the third day of the operation, Lt. Col. Loomis stated that about 80 suspected insurgents had been detained since Thursday, the first day of the assault. Six of those individuals were allegedly involved in the killing of an Iraqi television station director and his driver several days earlier.⁴⁶⁰ The operation concluded March 22 with no casualties and resulted in the detention of 104 suspected insurgents and the discovery of 24 weapons caches.⁴⁶¹

Less overtly, the US also used special task forces, working with Iraqi forces, to conduct a series of well targeted raids against key insurgent leaders, particularly Al-Qa'ida. These eventually hunted down Al-Qa'ida's leader, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, in early June. Before that time, more than 10 senior Al-Qa'ida leaders had been killed or captured in a whole series of raids in the first six months of 2006, at least some with significant help from Iraqi human intelligence sources. The raids in April and May were particularly successful, and Zarqawi's death was followed up with 17 immediate raids in Baghdad, and more than 120 in all of Iraq.⁴⁶²

The Al-Moustafa Husayniyah "Mosque" Controversy

The step up in Iraqi operations almost inevitably made some operations a source of political controversy. On the evening of March 26, US and Iraqi forces conducted a joint operation to disrupt a terrorist cell in northeast Baghdad. The events that followed however were sharply disputed by US and Iraqi officials.⁴⁶³

According to military spokesman for the US, the raid resulted in 16 insurgents killed, 15 captured, one hostage freed and the discovery of weapons and bomb-making equipment. While some reports indicated that the operation was aimed at Shi'ite militiamen loyal to al-Sadr who were using the center for interrogation and torture, others claimed that it was against a Sunni-led element.⁴⁶⁴

Iraqi officials however told a different account. According to them, US and Iraqi forces descended on the mosque surrounding it with armed vehicles and sealed off all exits. When soldiers attempted to enter the mosque, they took fire resulting in an hour-long gun battle. The Interior Ministry said that 17 people were killed, including the mosque's 80-year-old imam. Those that were killed supposedly worked for al-Sadr and were engaged in evening prayer at the mosque when the raid began.⁴⁶⁵ Muhammad Ridha, who worked at the complex, said, "There was no resistance at all from the mosque. There were no weapons during prayers...The purpose of the raid was to kill Shi'ites."⁴⁶⁶

Aides to al-Sadr alleged that 25 people were killed and that US troops shot the guards outside the mosques before storming the facility and killing all those inside.⁴⁶⁷ One witness, a policeman, said that the mosque appeared to have been hit by a rocket.⁴⁶⁸

US officials continued to deny that they had entered a mosque.⁴⁶⁹ In fact, Lt. Gen. Peter Chiarelli said that it was an Iraqi led operation backed up by 25 US advisors. He added that the Iraqi units “told us point blank that this was not a mosque” and that “there’s been huge misinformation” on the part of those who had suggested otherwise.⁴⁷⁰ Mission debriefs and photos largely confirmed these accounts with hard evidence that the charges Iraqi and US forces had attacked legitimate religious activity were totally false, as did the supporting intelligence that led to the mission in the first place.

Yet footage aired on Iraqi news channels showed at least a dozen unarmed corpses, including one elderly man, in what appeared to be a prayer room.⁴⁷¹ In a Pentagon briefing, Gen. Peter Pace stated that there was a minaret and prayer room inside the compound but could not verify whether people were killed in the prayer room.⁴⁷²

US Army photos showed dead men with weapons in a room that lacked prayer rugs.⁴⁷³ It was possible that militia members staged the scene after US and Iraqi forces departed. In the past, insurgents have demonstrated a capability to manipulate public opinion by forcing Coalition forces to attack holy sites, or make it appear that they did, as part of informational warfare.

The controversy was further complicated by the fact that the “mosque” was marked on the outside by a sign that read “Al-Moustafa Husayniyah.” “Husayniyah” is a Shi’ite term for a religious center or a community center that may also house offices for political purposes. Thus, although the complex did not have many of the traditional characteristics of a “mosque,” it was considered to be one by the Shi’ites nonetheless.⁴⁷⁴

Regardless of whether the facility was a mosque, a prayer room, or neither, the operation had damaging political effects. Prime Minister al-Jafari secured a promise from Gen. George Casey that he would conduct an investigation into the allegations.⁴⁷⁵ Shi’ite political leaders condemned the raid and al-Sadr used the event as another opportunity to condemn the American presence in Iraq and call for Shi’ite solidarity. Said one Mahdi member guarding a roadblock to Sadr City, “We are ready to resist the Americans and strike their bases...The Sunnis have nothing to do with this, and we shouldn’t accuse them of everything that’s going on.”⁴⁷⁶

From a tactical and operational perspective, however, the operation was a success and demonstrated the increasing ability of Iraqi forces to plan and execute missions. The events, detailed by Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch in a Coalition press briefing, began with intelligence obtained by Iraqi Special Operations Forces that a group of kidnappers were holding up in a compound in Baghdad. Fifty members of this special operations team and 25 US advisors then surveyed the area, in the process identifying the nearest mosque as six blocks away. While approaching the compound, the Iraqi forces exchanged gunfire with those inside, killing 16 and capturing 18 more.⁴⁷⁷

Operation Cobra Strike and Other ISF Activity

During this same time, Iraqi forces scored another success when they arrested Abu Ayman, Saddam's former aide to the Chief of Staff of Intelligence. He had been the leader of the Secret Islamic Army insurgent group in the Babil province. Tracking Ayman was a joint effort by both US and Iraqi intelligence agencies.⁴⁷⁸

"Operation Cobra Strike" was another joint US-Iraqi operation launched in April. Its goal was to locate the suspected leader and financier of a terrorist cell working in the area. The cell was suspected of several murders, kidnappings and roadside bombings in Haswah and Iskandariyah. Although this same Iraqi-US team had been conducting joint operations since December 2005, this was the first mission orchestrated solely by Iraqi soldiers.⁴⁷⁹

A series of raids conducted by US and Iraqi forces during the same month in and around Youssifiyah killed 20 foreign insurgents, many of whom were wearing suicide vests at the time. Officials claimed that insurgents were using the city as a refuge to plan and coordinate attacks to be carried out in Baghdad.⁴⁸⁰

In May, Iraqi soldiers operating independently of US forces in Adhamiyah captured an al-Qa'ida cell leader and two other suspects during a raid that seized 17 full AK-47 magazines, 20 rolls of TNT, three pistols, two belts of 7.62mm ammunition and eight boxes of pistol ammunition. After interrogating the al-Qa'ida operative, US and Iraqi forces conducted a second raid where five suspects were detained and an assortment of time switches, detonators, rockets and other IED equipment was found.⁴⁸¹

The results of these military operations against insurgent "strongholds" were mixed at best. Even as Iraqi forces came on line and began taking the lead in joint operations, many of the same limits remained. While there have been success stories, insurgents were consistently able to disperse and re-emerge at another location. Lack of a permanent security presence in many areas permitted the insurgents and criminals to return. Perhaps most importantly, despite the fact that these operations and raids were often operational successes -- they were able to net insurgent groups and weapons caches -- the number of attacks had not abated and it was increasingly the case that Iraqis are the target.

In any case, it was clear by the early months of 2006 that the Sunni insurgency was now only one of several threats to Iraqi force development and Iraqi unity and security. US and Iraqi officials both cited sectarian violence and the risk of civil war as increasing areas of concern. US military officials in particular noted the danger that Shi'ite militias posed to Iraqi security.⁴⁸²

Nonetheless, there were talks within the Department of Defense in April 2006 to orchestrate a "second liberation of Baghdad," once a new Iraqi government was formed. Operationally, it was designed to have Iraqi forces in the lead supported by US air power, special operations, intelligence, and back-up troops. The ground assault would supposedly be complemented by attack helicopters such as the AH-6 "Little Birds" armed with rocket launchers and machine guns, ideal for urban combat.⁴⁸³

As Iraqi and US forces went through each neighborhood, they would leave behind “Sweat” teams (Sewage, Water, Electricity and Trash) to improve local conditions and facilities. This new battle was to offer the citizens of the capital protection from sectarian violence in exchange for their assistance in identifying and capturing or killing insurgent and terrorist groups.⁴⁸⁴

Symbolically, it was to be an effort to show that the Iraqi government was capable of “taking back the streets.”⁴⁸⁵ The goal was to conduct the operation during the summer, once the government had settled in and then begin withdrawing US troops toward the end of the year.⁴⁸⁶

Seeking to Exploit the Divisions within the Insurgency

US and Iraqi officials made other attempts to ease the strain on Iraqi forces. One way was to try to take advantage of divisions in the insurgency. The actions of the hardline insurgents were too extreme and divisive for many, if not most Sunnis. The insurgents often alienated Sunnis in the areas where they had most influence and control by seeking to impose their own version of Islam or attacking local leaders. Sheer exhaustion played a role after three years of war, and some Sunnis saw the insurgency as simply isolating them as a minority from the nation’s wealth and power.

In spite of the lack of clear political leadership in the central government, Iraqi officials continued efforts to barter the release of prisoners, aid, and positions in the army and police for the allegiance of Sunni insurgents. The move was an attempt to lure Sunni Iraqis away from Al-Qa’ida and into the Iraqi military apparatus. The move was an attempt to capitalize on recent clashes between Iraqi Sunnis and Sunni foreign fighters in the restive Anbar province.⁴⁸⁷

On April 30, 2006, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani announced an initiative seeking an agreement with seven armed groups to lay down their arms and join the political process. While Talabani refused to identify the groups, he did say that they were not Saddam Hussein loyalists, nor Al-Qa’ida.⁴⁸⁸

What was more threatening was that some Sunni Arabs sought to form their own militia at the national level to counter Shi’ite and Kurdish forces. While some of these were informal “neighborhood watch” groups, others had full-time members and names for their organizations. In early February, a force called the “Anbar Revolutionaries” emerged which opposed the more extreme elements of the insurgency like Al-Qa’ida, but also was created to help secure Arab Sunnis against Arab Shi’ite and Kurdish pressure and attacks. According to press reports, this force was composed largely of former Ba’ath loyalists, Saddam supporters, Moderate Iraqi Sunni Islamists and other Arab Sunni nationalists. It was organized partly to resist pressure from Arab Sunni Islamist extremists, but its main purpose was to deal with the threat from the Shi’ite Badr Brigades.

One Sunni Arab official involved said that, “The Anbar Revolutionaries are here to stay, we need them to protect the people...Sunnis do not have the Shi’ite Badr (Brigades) or the Kurdish Peshmerga. In these times when sectarian tension is high, such a force is needed.” Another was quoted as saying, “It is our right to defend ourselves.”

Hazem Naimi, a political science professor, said, "Tribal leaders and political figures found that al-Qa'ida's program is harming the political efforts and progress the Sunni political leaders are making, because Al-Qa'ida rejects all politics...Sunnis feel that the Shi'ites have taken over the government and now it is their state...The Badr Brigades are in the Interior Ministry and under the Interior Ministry's name they go to towns, kill and arrest."

During the spring of 2006, popular sentiment towards the army was changing in the Anbar region and local leaders increasingly sought to "reform" the army by adding more Sunni members, rather than violently opposing it. Some of this change was due to an increase in attacks such as suicide bombings on Iraqi recruits. This occurred as Sunnis on balance began to participate in the political process, and in some cases even turn against Islamist groups such as al-Qa'ida that were perceived as foreign-led.

For example, in the Syrian border town of Husaybah located in the al-Qaem region, US forces had convinced local sheikhs to denounce Islamist insurgents and in turn generate cooperation between the Coalition and the local population. By mid-2005, the flood of foreign fighters in the area caused localized Sunni insurgents to form the Hamza brigades in an attempt to drive them out.

Acting on the dictum, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend," more than 2,500 marines and 1,000 Iraqis using intelligence provided by the Hamza brigades conducted offensives in Husaybah and Karabila to route out Islamist insurgents. Afterwards, US troop presence was increased in the area to ensure stability, and softer tactics used by Coalition forces among the local population combined with the cooperation engendered by an operational success against insurgents created conditions which caused Lt. Col. Nick Morano to remark, "I've heard several local sheikhs speak of the insurgency in the past tense [as though] it was defeated."⁴⁸⁹

In some cases, the Coalition and new Iraqi government benefited from creating or supporting local militias who opposed the insurgents without creating added sectarian and ethnic tension. In the border area and part of Western Iraq, for example, MNF-I and the Iraqi government found it was cheaper and more effective to buy the loyalty of local tribal militias than fight the insurgents -- particularly in those areas where outside insurgents had alienated the local residents. These developments led US Army Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch to go so far as to say that "The local insurgents have become part of the solution and not part of the problem."⁴⁹⁰

The Iraqi Minister of Defense, Saadoun Dulaymi, encouraged these developments, and MNF-I provided funds, weapons, and some training. US officers and Ambassador Khalilzad met with key leaders. In some Sunni urban areas and towns, police forces were created that came close to being local militias, at least in terms of their recruiting base. In other areas, Sunnis were organized at the tribal or local level in an effort to protect key facilities and projects, like oil pipelines. These efforts were given further incentive when a bombing by Zarqawi forces killed some 70 Arab Sunnis at a recruiting station in Ramadi in January 2006.⁴⁹¹

In February, Iraqi and US officials issued new offers and discussed deals for prisoner release, additional aid, and senior positions in the army and police for the support of

Sunni “nationalist insurgents.”⁴⁹² These efforts included a meeting between General George W. Casey, Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari, and high-ranking members of Iraq’s security and intelligence agencies with some Iraq’s largest Sunni Muslim Arab tribes.

Mowaffak Rubaie, the Iraqi government’s national security advisor, said that al-Jafari promised to recruit more Sunni Arabs into the army and police forces and to send more economic aid to Anbar. Rubaie and Sunni tribal leaders at the meeting also said that al-Jafari pledged to release at least 140 prisoners in coming weeks, and that more releases would be forthcoming.

In Ramadi, local sheiks, some regretful over allowing these extremists organizations to operate out of their city, encouraged Sunni men to join the Iraqi army. Sheik Anwar abd al-Razak al-Kharbit, a Sunni leader of the provincial security council in Ramadi said it had been a mistake to allow “terrorists into our areas.” In January of 2006, 761 men were recruited from the city.⁴⁹³

The meeting also showed, however, that some tribal leaders wanted to create their own militias to police their cities -- a move opposed by the central government.

For example, Sheik Osama Jadan said his Al Anbar community had already formed an armed group, similar to the Shi’ite militias, to fight insurgents. “We started our operations three weeks ago, and they have been fruitful,” he said. “We caught one of [guerrilla leader Abu Musab] Zarqawi’s assistants, and after an investigation of him ... we handed him over to the Iraqi army and joint intelligence.”

Sheikh Anwar also demanded, by way of a local petition, that all US troops leave Anbar and be replaced with 12,000 “sons of Anbar.” This all-Sunni division, Sheikh Anwar said, would be composed of local recruits as well as resistance fighters that, after training and arming by the Iraqi Army, would return to route out the Islamist insurgents. Although Gen. Casey did not flatly reject the offer, he stated that an all-Sunni division would be out of the question.⁴⁹⁴

In Jubba, an area in the Sunni-dominated western Iraq near the Syrian border, Col. Shaaban Barzan al-Ubaidi, who led the local police force, claimed to have the support of 41 local sheikhs to “wage jihad” against the “criminal, terrorist, Saddamist, [and] Zarqawist.” He said that that he took up his job after more than 42 of his relatives were killed after trying to join the Iraqi army and police. Unlike others in his position who disliked both the insurgents and the Coalition, al-Ubaidi praised US efforts.⁴⁹⁵

The same trend emerged in major cities like Baghdad. As soft sectarian cleansing and abductions increased in mixed neighborhoods, some Sunnis began forming their own militias. As Ismael Zayer, editor for the Iraqi newspaper Al Sabah Al Jadid said, “At the end of the day, if nobody will protect them and the government won’t intervene, then they have to protect themselves.” Adnan Abbas Allawi, a middle-aged manager echoed these feelings, “This decision was forced on us. We don’t want to do this, but it’s not possible to see our mosques burned and insulted. Patience has its limits.”

Sunni mosques sometimes served as places for such organizations, as well as a source of inspiration, for such groups. Preachers issued fatwas instructing their members to purchase guns and form a collective defense against further acts of violence by Shi’ites. Fares Mahmoud, deputy preacher of the El Koudiri Mosque said, “We’ve made an

agreement with the neighbors that if we have another attack, they'll pick up their weapons and fight the invaders.”⁴⁹⁶ He continued, “We are depending on the soul of the people to protect us.”

Things did not always go as well. It is far from clear what official agreement, if any, was reached between local and tribal leaders in Anbar Province and Iraqi and US officials regarding the recruitment of Sunni members into the army and police in return for their cooperation against Islamists. Yet in May a small protest broke out during a graduation ceremony of nearly 1,000 new Iraqi Army soldiers, most of them Sunnis from Anbar. After learning that day that they would be assigned outside of their home towns such as Ramadi, dozens of the newly sworn in soldiers tore off their uniforms throwing them on the ground and yelling and shaking their fists toward the camera.⁴⁹⁷

While this was hardly more than a small disturbance, the decision by Iraqi military leaders to deploy the troops outside their province demonstrated that the US and Iraqi military officials were still hesitant to station an almost all Sunni battalion in their native province for fear they would join forces with local insurgents. Still, Iraqi Brig. Salah Khalil al-Ani, a mediator, indicated that the soldiers were under the impression they would be assigned to the Anbar region because of an alleged agreement between tribal and religious leaders in the Sunni province and Defense Ministry officers.⁴⁹⁸

In any case, one recruit clearly relayed the reasons behind why it was important for the soldiers to serve in their home towns and provinces: “We had volunteered to serve our cities and communities, particularly our families in Ramadi and Fallujah, who have been mistreated by the present soldiers of the Iraqi army, who come in large part from Shi’ite areas.” Another recruit had a less altruistic but no less rational logic behind his decision: “We are afraid of the Shi’ite death squads which are found inside the Iraqi army, and who might kill us if we serve outside our province.”⁴⁹⁹

The Insurgent Response: Attacks on Iraqi Forces versus Counterinsurgency and Counter-Civil War Operations

The following chronology provides a timeline of additional operational developments from January through spring that illustrates both the growing capabilities of Iraqi forces, and the level of insurgent activity against them. For all the problems in Iraqi politics, it is clear that Iraqi forces were anything but passive, and that they persevered in the face of almost constant attack:

- **January 1, 2006:** One Iraqi soldier was killed and three were wounded when their patrol hit a roadside bomb in Ishaki district near Balad, 90 km (55 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. In Fallujah, a roadside bomb struck an Iraqi army patrol killing four soldiers, witnesses and medical sources said. A suicide bomber rushed his explosive-packed minibus into an Iraqi army base on the main road between Samarra, 120 km north of Baghdad, and Balad, 80 km north of the capital, killing a soldier and wounding two others, said a source from the Iraqi-US liaison office.
- **January 2, 2006:** A bus filled with new police recruits was struck by a suicide car bomber on a road near Baquba, 65 km northeast of Baghdad, killing 7 recruits and wounding 13 others. Two Iraqi soldiers died when their patrol was hit by a roadside bomb near Dujail, north of Baghdad. Another soldier was killed and an officer wounded in a drive-by shooting on the road between Baiji and Tikrit. A policeman was killed by a car bomb blast in Tikrit. In the western Ghazaliyah

district of Baghdad, two policemen were killed in an exchange of gunfire with. The body of a policeman shot in the head was also found in western Baghdad.

- **January 3, 2006:** Three Iraqi policemen were killed and 14 others were wounded when a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle-borne IED alongside a bus in Baquba, 65 km northeast of Baghdad. Five Iraqi policemen were wounded when a makeshift bomb went off near their patrol in Samarra, 100 km (62 miles) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **January 4, 2006:** A car bomb in northern Baghdad killed a policeman and 4 civilians and wounded 15 others, said Maj. Mosa Abdelkareem. In western Baghdad, two police commandos were killed and nine others were wounded when mortar rounds landed on their checkpoint, a hospital source said. In Aziziyah, 35 miles southeast of Baghdad, gunmen fired on a police patrol, killing one policeman, Hadi al-Itabi of the Kut morgue said. An Iraqi soldier was killed and two wounded when a bomb went off near their patrol in Latifiya, in an area dubbed the "Triangle of Death" south of Baghdad, an army source said.
- **January 5, 2006:** Four policemen were killed and four wounded when rebels attacked two patrols with small arms fire just outside Baquba, 60 kilometres (35 miles) northeast of Baghdad. A suicide bomber detonated a car near a bridge in central Baghdad, killing an Iraqi soldier and a civilian and wounding three other people. Suicide bombers hit a police recruiting station in Ramadi, an insurgent stronghold 70 miles west of Baghdad, killing 80 people and wounding dozens, according to a US Marine news release.
- **January 6, 2006:** A suicide car bomber struck a police patrol in Baghdad, killing one officer, Col. Noori Ashur said. Demonstrations in the Iraqi town of Nasiriyah turned violent Friday leaving two dead and two dozen injured.
- **January 7, 2006:** Nine Iraqis were injured, including five policemen, in a car bomb explosion targeting an Iraqi police patrol in the New Baghdad district of the capital.
- **January 8, 2006:** One Iraqi policeman was killed and 13 wounded during clashes with gunmen in the Adil district of Baghdad, police said.
- **January 9, 2006:** Two suicide bombers disguised as police infiltrated the heavily fortified Interior Ministry compound in Baghdad and blew themselves up during celebrations of National Police Day, killing 29 and wounding 25, mostly policemen. Gunmen also killed an Iraqi intelligence officer in western Baghdad, said police Capt. Qassim Hussein.
- **January 10, 2006:** Iraqis around the country celebrated the opening of the four-day festival of Eid, during which sheep are slaughtered in the memory of deceased relatives and children are given money for sweets.
- **January 11, 2006:** A roadside bomb exploded next to a police patrol outside Samarra, about 60 miles north of Baghdad, killing two policemen, police Capt. Laith Mohammed said.
- **January 12, 2006:** Iraqi police conducted a controlled detonation of a car bomb at the park of the Interior Ministry in Baghdad, a ministry source said.
- **January 13, 2006:** Two policemen were killed and five wounded when a car bomb struck their patrol in Baquba, 65 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. In Iskandariya, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, a police patrol found the body of a policeman blindfolded and with his hands tied behind his back; he had been shot in the head, police said.
- **January 14, 2006:** In Baghdad's Al-Masjhtal neighborhood, a roadside bomb exploded near an Iraqi police patrol killing two officers and wounding four other policemen and six civilians. In Kirkuk, an insurgent sniper shot a policeman at 10:00 AM while he was standing at the gate of his house killing him immediately, police said. An Iraqi soldier was killed and another wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in the city of Balad, 90 km (55 miles) north of

Baghdad, police said. In the oil refinery city of Baiji, gunmen shot dead a police colonel, the local authorities said. Nine Iraqi coastguardmen were captured by an Iranian Naval vessel during a skirmish in the Gulf near the southern Iraqi city of Basra, Basra Gov. Bohammed al-Waeli told AP. The clash happened after an Iraqi Navy ship spotted a suspicious merchant vessel flying an Iraqi flag. Gov. Al-Waeli claimed the merchant ship radioed Iranian forces for help and an Iranian Navy ship attacked the Iraqi patrol, detaining nine, including three officers.

- **January 15, 2006:** Gunmen shot dead a police lieutenant in Baquba, 60 km (40 miles) north of Baghdad, police said. In the village of Ulwiya near Hawija, 70 km (43 miles) southwest of Kirkuk, gunmen shot and killed a police brigadier and major after abducting them on January 14th, police said. Gunmen in Baghdad killed five civilians, two police and a former Iraqi army officer in separate incidents. Col Hussein Shiaa, commander of the 2nd Battalion of the Iraqi Army's 4th Brigade, and his brother were abducted when leaving their base in Mahmoudiya, 20 miles (32 km) south of Baghdad, said army intelligence officer Capt Ibrahim Abdullah. They were later found dead in western Baghdad's dangerous al-Baiyaa district riddled with bullet wounds.
- **January 16, 2006:** Gunmen opened fire a police convoy in Muqdadiya, 60 miles (96 km) north of Baghdad, killing 5 policemen and a 6-year-old child and wounding 16 civilians and 3 policemen. A roadside bomb detonated and killed 20 Iraqi national guards in the Al Wihda area, 19 miles (30 km) south of Baghdad. In Baghdad, two policemen were shot dead by unknown insurgents separately in the northern district of Aadhamiyah and in the northwestern district of Shula, Captain Ahmed Abdullah said.
- **January 17, 2006:** The Iraqi government said that nine Iraqi coastguards were taken prisoner by Iran after an incident involving a suspected oil smuggling ship in the Gulf on January 14th. "Eight men from the Coast Guard and an officer were taken prisoner by Iranian coastguards," said a spokeswoman in the prime minister's office.
- **January 18, 2006:** Fifteen people were killed and, at least, 46 were wounded when a suicide bomber targeted a police patrol near the Baghdad home of Shi'ite politician Abdul Aziz al-Hakim. Three policemen were among the dead. A roadside bomb struck a patrol in Saadiya, 80 miles north of Baghdad, killing three Iraqi police and an Iraqi civilian and wounding four other police officers, according to a spokesman for the Diyala provincial police. In Iskandariyah, about 30 miles south of Baghdad, a group of gunmen attacked a police station killing two officers and wounding four others in the ensuing firefight, said Capt. Muthanna Ahmed, a spokesman for the Babil provincial police force. Police found the bodies of 11 men shot to death and wearing civilian clothes with Iraqi army and police commando ID cards on a farm in Dujail, 50 miles north of Baghdad, said police Capt. Ali al Hashmawi.
- **January 19, 2006:** In Baghdad, a car bomb hit a police patrol and, simultaneously, a suicide bomber walked into a coffee shop next to the patrol and blew himself up. Three policemen and five civilians were killed and 15 wounded, police said.
- **January 20, 2006:** Four bombs hit security patrols in Baghdad as the city was all but sealed off ahead of the announcement of final election results and forces hunted kidnappers who are threatening to kill an American journalist, Jill Carol. In Karbala, 68 miles (110 km) southwest of Baghdad, a police commandos lieutenant was gunned down in front of his house. In Miqdadia, north of Baghdad, one policeman was killed and four wounded when their patrol was struck by a roadside bomb.
- **January 21, 2006:** In Qadisiyah, 30 miles (48 km) south of Tikrit, Iraqi army Maj. Maamoun Younis Abdullah and Staff Sgt. Salim Athab were killed in a brazen drive-by shooting as they headed to work, police Capt. Hakim al-Azawi said. Two of Abdullah's sons were also wounded in the attack. In Baquba, 40 miles (60 km) north of Baghdad, a car bomb killed two police officers and wounded eight police officers and civilians, an official with Diyala province's Joint Coordination Center said. Police found the bullet-riddled body of Iraqi commando officer Ali

Hussein in an open field and former Baath Party member Abdun Hamid in a playground near Karbala, said police Capt. Qais al-Azawi. During the night, US troops opened fire at civilian cars on the main road between Tikrit and Baiji, killing three people and wounding four others, all of whom turned out to be US-trained Iraqi army soldiers, a source from the Iraqi-US liaison office in Tikrit said.

- **January 22, 2006:** Four Iraqi policemen were killed and another nine injured when a bomb exploded near their vehicle in Baquba, 40 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, an Iraqi police source said.
- **January 23, 2006:** Iraqi police said a suicide car bomber in Baghdad targeted police near the Iranian Embassy, in the Green Zone, killing two policemen and wounding five others. In the southern Dura district of the capital, two policemen were killed and three wounded when a car bomb exploded. In eastern Mosul, an Iraqi army soldier was killed and another wounded when their patrol was struck by a roadside bomb. Two bombs in Kirkuk killed one policeman and injured eight people including two civilian bystanders.
- **January 24, 2006:** In Baghdad, gunmen killed two policemen and wounded four in separate ambushes. In the Iraqi industrial town of Baiji, unidentified gunmen killed a policeman, police said.
- **January 25, 2006:** In Baghdad's Sadr City, gunmen shot dead a police sergeant as he drove to work, said police Lt. Laith Abdul-Aal. In the Ishaki area on the Baghdad-Mosul highway, about 62 miles (100 km) north of Baghdad, five Iraqi soldiers were killed and two wounded by a roadside bomb, police Lt. Amir al-Ahbabi said.
- **January 26, 2006:** Gunmen killed a policeman and wounded three civilians in southern Baghdad, police said.
- **January 27, 2006:** Two Iraqi Army Soldiers died and four were wounded when an IED exploded in Tal Afar, 32 miles (50 km) west of Mosul.
- **January 28, 2006:** US Marines and Iraqi Army soldiers ended an almost two-week military operation after destroying 45 weapons caches and detaining 20 suspected insurgents in western Iraq. Operation Wadi Aljundi started Jan. 15 north of the town of Hit, 85 miles (140 km) west of Baghdad, and ended Jan. 27. No US or Iraqi casualties were sustained, said a statement released by the Marines. In Baghdad's southern Dora neighborhood, a soldier from the Iraqi Army's Lion Brigade was also killed and another wounded in a gun fight with, said police Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razzaq. Two policemen were killed and three wounded when a roadside bomb struck their patrol in Falluja, 32 miles (50 km) west of Baghdad, police said. In Oweija, 6 miles (10 km) south of Tikrit, four Iraqi National Guards were killed and five wounded when a car bomb exploded next to their patrol, police said.
- **January 29, 2006:** Iraq's top Sunni Arab political leader accused Shi'ite-dominated security forces of pursuing a strategy of sectarian "cleansing" in Baghdad and said he opposed giving key Cabinet posts to Shi'ites -- a stance likely to further inflame sectarian tensions. Violence continued as a roadside bomb in Baghdad's volatile southern Dora neighborhood killed one policeman and wounded another, police said. A car bomb blast killed a policeman in Baghdad's western Amariyah district, while two policemen were gunned down while leaving work following the end of their shift in the same area. Drive-by gunmen killed two more policemen as they left the Khadra police station, also in western Baghdad, after finishing work, police said. An Iraqi medic also was killed after leaving work at western Baghdad's Yarmouk Hospital, said Dr. Muhannad Jawad from the hospital. In Beiji, 155 miles (249 km) north of Baghdad, gunmen shot dead a police captain, while an ambush at a checkpoint in Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) north of Baghdad, killed one policeman and wounded four others, police said. A massive car bombing killed four Iraqi soldiers and wounded six more in Saddam's birthplace of Uja, about 75 miles (121 km) north of Baghdad,

army Capt. Ahmed al-Azawi said. In the restive town of Fallujah, a policeman was killed and another wounded in a roadside bomb attack, police said.

- **January 30, 2006:** Two policemen were killed and 20 people were wounded when a suicide bomber in a car attacked a barracks in the southern city of Nassiriya, 233 miles (375 km) south of Baghdad, police said. In Kirkuk, three Iraqi soldiers tasked with securing oil facilities were killed by unknown gunmen, police said.
- **January 31, 2006:** Four Iraqi soldiers were killed and one injured in exchange of fire between the army and insurgents in Buhriz, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad.
- **February 1, 2006:** A mortar barrage killed two Iraqi soldiers in the northwestern city of Tal Afar, officials said. American commanders said an entire Iraqi brigade, about 2,500 troops, had taken over parts of the nearby city of Khaldiya and an adjacent agrarian area from US troops. But US military advisers who mentor the Iraqi unit said just over half those assigned Iraqi soldiers were actually present. The Iraqi brigade already was short several hundred soldiers before they deployed to Anbar province from the northern city of Mosul, the advisers said, and about 500 more deserted when they arrived in late August and faced their first insurgent attacks.
- **February 2, 2006:** A roadside bomb blast killed three Iraqi army soldiers in eastern Baghdad's Ghazaliyah neighborhood, said army Maj. Moussa Abdul Karim. In the northern city of Mosul, a policeman was killed and five wounded when a roadside bomb hit their patrol, police said.
- **February 3, 2006:** Iraqi police and soldiers rounded up nearly 60 people yesterday in security crackdowns in Baghdad and the southern city of Basra. At least 22 people were detained and weapons were seized in raids launched before dawn yesterday in Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, the Iraqi army said. An additional 37 people -- including five Palestinians and a Syrian -- were arrested in pre-dawn raids in Baghdad's Dora district, the Interior Ministry said. Thousands of Iraqis protested publication of caricatures of Islam's Prophet Muhammad. The caricatures, first published in Denmark and printed elsewhere in a demonstration of press freedom, have enraged many Muslims and prompted calls to boycott products from Denmark and other countries whose media reprint the pictures.
- **February 4, 2006:** US commanders have identified the lack of an effective supply chain as a major weakness of Iraq's military, and until one is in place, the United States and its coalition partners cannot fully hand over security responsibilities. The US command has periodically alluded to such concerns. Lt. Gen. John R. Vines, formerly the second-highest ranking general in Iraq, said progress would hinge on whether government ministries could supply the military and cut out corruption. Overall, the US military has deemed only one Iraqi battalion, about 700 men, of being capable of resupplying itself and carrying out independent operations without any US assistance.
- **February 5, 2006:** Iraqi authorities set up new checkpoints and warned innkeepers to watch for suspicious people, all part of security measures to protect Shi'ites marking the holiest day of their calendar this week. The measures were put in place ahead of the feast of Ashoura to prevent a repeat of suicide bombings by al-Qaida in Iraq that killed at least 230 people during the past two years' ceremonies. An Iraqi soldier was killed and two others wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near their patrol in the city of Falluja, 25 miles (50 km) west of Baghdad, police said. Two policemen were killed and seven people wounded, including two other policemen, when a car bomb exploded near a police checkpoint in Salman Pak, about 40 miles (65 km) southeast of Baghdad, police said. Gunmen killed an Iraqi policeman near the oil refinery city of Baiji, 112 miles (180 km) north of Baghdad, police said. In the northern city of Kirkuk, three gunmen shot dead two policemen.
- **February 6, 2006:** One Iraqi policeman was killed and his brother, also a policeman, was wounded in an attack by armed men firing from a speeding car in the northern city of Kirkuk, said police Capt. Firhad Talabani. At Latifiya, 25 miles (40 km) south of Baghdad, two Iraqi soldiers

were killed and another four wounded when insurgents lobbed a mortar on their guard checkpoint, an Iraqi army source said. An Iraqi policeman, Hussein Ali Lazem, was killed when an armed group opened fire on his house in the Sayf Saad neighborhood of Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said. The US military said that Iraqi forces launched an air assault on insurgent hideouts in the vicinity Bit Shaitin village, near Salman Pak south of Baghdad. Approximately 100 Iraqi soldiers, supported by Coalition Forces, participated in the combined operation designed to disrupt and capture wanted terrorists who were reportedly operating a terrorist training camp and planning to launch attacks against Ashura Pilgrims traveling toward Karbala, the statement added.

- **February 7, 2006:** Two successive bomb blasts near Tahrir Square in the bosom of Baghdad killed one policeman and one civilian and injured 5 other policemen and 15 civilians. In Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, a policeman was killed and four by-standing civilians wounded in an exchange of fire with insurgents.
- **February 8, 2006:** Gen. George Casey Jr., said the US command has declared 2006 as the “year of the police,” a tacit acknowledgment that the more than 80,000-strong Iraqi force has been hobbled by incompetence, corruption, sectarianism and low morale. The US military wants more than 130,000 police operating by 2007 as part of the strategy to shift security responsibility to the Iraqis so that American and other international troops can begin to head home. To improve police skills, up to 3,000 US and international personnel are being assigned to Iraqi police units throughout the country. In some of the more peaceful parts of Iraq, plans call for police rather than the Iraqi army to assume the lead role in ensuring security later this year. In other news, a suicide car bomb blew up at a checkpoint in New Obeidi, about 12 miles (20 km) from the Syrian border, killing two Iraqi soldiers and three civilians and wounding three others, including a two Iraqi soldiers and a US marine, the US military said. Iraqi Minister of Higher Education Sami al-Mudhafar survived an assassination when a car bomb blew up near his convoy in central Baghdad killing one policeman and wounding three civilians, an Interior Ministry source said.
- **February 9, 2006:** Three members of the National Guards were killed and two others were wounded in a bomb blast that targeted a military patrol in the Al-Mshahedah district of the capital, a security source said.
- **February 10, 2006:** A policewoman, Nidthal Mohammad, was killed by gunmen wearing Iraqi army uniforms who broke into her house in Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said. Also in Baquba, gunmen ambushed two policemen, killing one and wounding another as they headed to work, police said. In a separate incident, also in Baquba, one Iraqi soldier was killed and another was wounded when gunmen in a car opened fire on them, police said. In the southeastern Jisr Diyala area of Baghdad, armed men killed police Sgt. Bassem al-Rikabi while he was on patrol, police said.
- **February 11, 2006:** In Baghdad’s southern Dora neighborhood, gunmen killed traffic policeman Ahmed Majeed Obaid as he left his home at midday, Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razzaq said. In Fallujah 40 miles (64 km) west of Baghdad, gunmen in a red sedan shot dead a policeman as he was heading to work, police said. Iraqi army spokesman Capt. Makram al-Abbasi was killed in a hail of gunfire from a civilian car accompanied by a police vehicle in Basra, army Capt. Firas al-Tamimi said. Gunmen killed two policemen in Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said. The attackers approached their car and shot them in the head. An army officer was killed by a roadside bomb in Dujail, north of Baghdad, police said.
- **February 12, 2006:** Ibrahim Jafari, the soft-spoken Shi’ite Muslim doctor, won his coalition’s nomination for the post of prime minister by a single vote, putting him on course to head the country’s first full term government since the fall of Saddam Hussein. Three police commandos and a civilian were killed and four commandos wounded when a suicide bomber wearing an explosive belt blew himself up near a check point in southern Baghdad, police said. Gunmen killed four policemen while they were driving in a civilian car in the main road between Kirkuk

- and Tikrit, 110 miles (175 km) north of Baghdad, police said. A police colonel and a brigadier were killed by gunmen in separate incidents in the volatile city of Ramadi, 68 miles (110 km) west of Baghdad, police said. Two policemen were killed and one was wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in Iskandariya, 25 miles (40 km) south of Baghdad, police said. Two policemen were killed and another wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in Hilla, 62 miles (100 km) south of Baghdad, police said. A policeman was killed and two others wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in Tuz Khurmatu, police said.
- **February 13, 2006:** Gunmen shot dead an Iraqi policeman protecting electricity generating facilities near a hospital in eastern Baghdad's Sadr City, police said. Four policemen were gunned down on their way home from work outside the northern oil refinery town of Baiji.
 - **February 14, 2006:** According to Col. James Greer, chief of staff for the US military command responsible for training Iraqi troops, 40 of Iraq's 102 battalions have taken over security in the areas where they operate. Armed militants in a red pick-up, opened fire on another car on Al-Abasiya road, which led to the death of a policeman and the injury of two civilians, a Kirkuk police source said. An Iraqi army major and his son were killed when they were fired on by gunmen in the Taji area north of Baghdad, US military said.
 - **February 15, 2006:** A parked car bomb exploded as a police patrol passed by, killing four policemen and wounding two civilians in northern Baghdad, Lt. Nadhim Nasser said. Gunmen firing from two cars shot and killed a police captain and his driver, also a policeman, in Baghdad's southern Sadiyah neighborhood, said police Lt. Aqil Fadel. In the area of Shatt Al-Arab, east of Basra, three Iraqis were killed and two others were wounded by the explosion of an old mortar shell left behind from the dissolved army.
 - **February 16, 2006:** The 4th Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division held its official relocation ceremony at Forward Operating Base Summerall in Baiji. Iraq's Interior Ministry opened an investigation into claims that its officers are operating death squads targeting Sunni Arab men, a senior Iraqi official said. The investigation came after months of reports that Sunni Arabs had been abducted by men in police uniforms only to be found dead days or weeks later, handcuffed and shot in the head. A car bomb exploded as an Iraqi patrol passed in Baghdad's Karradah neighborhood, killing one policeman and wounding three bystanders, police said. Gunmen killed two more policemen and two civilians -- one Iraqi and the other Egyptian -- in an attack on a vehicle in west Baghdad's Amariyah district, and another policeman was shot dead in the Amil area, police said. In the northern city of Kirkuk, gunmen killed an Iraqi Army captain and his driver as they were heading to work, said police Capt. Firhad Talabani.
 - **February 17, 2006:** A policeman was killed and two were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near their car in Al-Yousifiya, 9 miles (15 km) south of Baghdad, police said.
 - **February 18, 2006:** The new Iraqi army forces completed preparations to receive over the next few weeks the security responsibilities from the Multi-National Forces (MNF-I) in the provinces of Missan and Al-Mathna in southern Iraq, a security official said. An Iraqi police major was assassinated by drive-by gunmen in the insurgent stronghold of Ramadi, west of Baghdad. A roadside bomb exploded on an eastern Baghdad highway and killed two Iraqi policemen guarding an oil tanker, Lt. Bilal Ali Majid said. Three other police were wounded and the tanker was not damaged.
 - **February 19, 2006:** A police general, Hatim Khalaf al-Obaidi, and two of his guards were killed in a roadside bombing outside Iraq's northern city of Kirkuk.
 - **February 20, 2006:** In the northern city of Mosul, a bomb planted inside a restaurant killed four civilians and one policeman, police said.
 - **February 21, 2006:** Two police commandos were killed and four people were wounded, including a civilian, when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in southern Baghdad, police

said. A policeman was killed when a roadside bomb went off near his patrol in western Baghdad, police said. In Kirkuk, an Iraqi Army officer and soldier were killed and two soldiers were wounded when they came under attack by unknown gunmen, said Chief of Aqdheya Police Brigadier Sarhad Qader.

- **February 22, 2006:** In Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, two police officers were killed in a drive-by shooting. A Shi'ite police officer guarding a Sunni mosque in Diwaniya, 110 miles (180 km) south of Baghdad, was shot down when gunmen opened fire, police said.
- **February 23, 2006:** The Interior Ministry canceled all leave for the police and army and placed them on the highest alert as the death toll mounted on in sectarian violence that swept the country after bombs wrecked a major Shi'ite shrine. In Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, a powerful roadside bomb killed 8 Iraqi army soldiers and 4 civilians and wounded 20 other people. One policeman was killed and four wounded by a road side bomb in Iskandariya, 25 miles (40 km) south of Baghdad, police said.
- **February 24, 2006:** The Pentagon downgraded the only Iraqi battalion capable of fighting without US support (level one status) to a level requiring them to fight with US troops backing them up (level two status). According to the congressionally mandated Iraqi security report, there are 53 Iraqi battalions at level two status, up from 36 in October. There are 45 battalions at level three -- where troops must fight alongside US forces -- according to the report. Underscoring fears of an all-out religious civil war, Iraq's government ordered a daytime curfew in Baghdad and nearby provinces. In Samarra, a roadside bomb targeting a police patrol killed two officers 10 minutes after the daytime curfew expired.
- **February 25, 2006:** The bodies of 14 police commandos were found near the Qubaisy mosque in Baghdad following a series of clashes with gunmen overnight, police said. In Samarra, a car bomb ripped through an Iraqi military patrol that was escorting mourners returning from the funeral of an Al Arabiya journalist. Two soldiers and one police commando were killed in the mayhem, police and army officials said. Six people, including civilians, were injured. Unidentified gunmen opened fire that immediately killed a policeman at Al-Khadra suburb, Mosul, an Iraqi police source said. The body of a police officer with gunshot wounds was found near his home east of Tikrit, police said. In a bizarre incident, two police constables posted at the Iraq embassy in south Delhi were found dead after one of them allegedly shot the other and then killed himself, police said.
- **February 26, 2006:** Brig. Gen. Hatim Khalaf, head of the operations room of the Kirkuk police, died along with his driver in the blast about 20 miles (35 km) southwest of Kirkuk, according to Capt. Farhad Talabani. A roadside blast killed a police officer and injured two others in Madain, about 14 miles (23 km) southeast of Baghdad, police Lt. Bilal Ali Majid said.
- **February 27, 2006:** Police commandos said they killed five suspected Sunni insurgents and captured 25 in an evening battle southeast of the city that also left eight police dead and six wounded
- **February 28, 2006:** Gunmen in Mosul, 224 miles (360 km) northwest of Baghdad, killed four police and a doctor, Dr. Bahaa al-Bakri of the city general hospital said. In northeast Baghdad, a roadside bomb targeting the convoy of a defense ministry adviser killed five soldiers and wounded seven others, ministry spokesman Mohammed al-Askari said. The adviser, Lt. Gen. Daham Radhi al-Assal, was not injured. In Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, gunmen killed two police officers and wounded two civilians in separate attacks, authorities said. Four policemen were killed when their patrol was ambushed by gunmen near Khalis, 40 miles (60 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **March 1, 2006:** At least four police officers were killed and eight wounded when gunmen attacked a police convoy of 50 officers on its way to Tikrit from the Kurdish city of Sulaimaniya. Some 22 officers were seized by the gunmen but later released, and another 16 officers fled at the

- time of the incident and made their own way to safety, police said. Six Iraqi soldiers and three policemen were killed when gunmen attacked their checkpoint in Dawr, near Tikrit, 110 miles (175 km) north of Baghdad, the U.S military and Iraqi officials said. In Riyadh, 40 miles (60 km) southwest of the northern oil city of Kirkuk, three policemen were killed and five wounded when their patrol was ambushed by gunmen, police Colonel Sarhat Khadir said.
- **March 2, 2006:** The 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division assumed battle space responsibility of an area covering western Baghdad and eastern Abu Ghraib from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division. Soldiers from the 6th and 9th Iraqi Army Divisions, supported by Coalition Soldiers, conducted one of the largest operations of the past six months and took control of the terrorist stronghold town of Sadr-Yusufiyah, south of Baghdad. During the one-week of Operation Glory Light, Iraqi and Coalition soldiers uncovered 15 weapons caches, 26 roadside bombs, and two vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices. In the al-Jihad neighborhood of southwestern Baghdad, an Iraqi police commando was killed and two other commandos wounded in a roadside bomb attack on their patrol. Gunmen attacked a checkpoint in al Dour, about 90 miles (145 km) north of Baghdad, killing 10 Iraqi security forces -- six Iraqi soldiers and four police, an official with the Salaheddin Joint Coordination Center said. In Mosul, 225 miles (360 km) north of Baghdad, gunmen attacked an Iraqi police patrol around midday, killing four officers in the city's al-Suker neighborhood. Local police said a roadside bomb killed one police commando and seriously wounded another in the town of Salman Pak, southeast of Baghdad. In western Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, insurgents gunned down police Lieutenant Abbas Jaleel while he was traveling in his car, a police source said.
 - **March 3, 2006:** One Iraqi soldier was killed in the northern city of Kirkuk, while two policemen from the same city were found shot to death after being kidnapped yesterday evening while traveling 30 miles (50 km) further south, security officials said.
 - **March 4, 2006:** Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jabr Solagh said that the Iraqi government is implementing a plan to dissolve militias. Militias have been banned in Iraq except in the northern Kurdish enclave since June 2003 by Paul Bremer, the then head of US authorities in Iraq. But violence and insecurity led the militias to stay put.
 - **March 5, 2006:** At least four people -- a policeman, a taxi driver and two electricity workers -- were killed in scattered gunfire in Baghdad and south of the capital, police said. Two Iraqi soldiers were killed when gunmen fired on their vehicle in Tikrit.
 - **March 6, 2006:** Snipers assassinated Maj. Gen. Mibder Hatim al-Dulaimi, the Sunni Arab in charge of Iraqi forces protecting the capital. In eastern Baghdad, a suicide car bomber struck a police patrol near al-Mustansiriyah University, killing two policemen and wounding three, said police Capt. Ahmed Qassim. Another bomb exploded as a police patrol drove through Baghdad's northern Azamiyah neighborhood, killing a policeman and a civilian bystander and wounding three others including another policeman, said Interior Ministry official Maj. Falah al-Mohammedawi. A car bomb exploded in the Jadriya neighborhood of central Baghdad, killing one policeman and injuring three others, police said.
 - **March 7, 2006:** The new Iraqi air force opened the gates of its first air base and announced the "stand-up" of its first operational C-130 transport squadron at the New Al Muthana Air Base at Baghdad International Airport. The entire Iraqi air force comprises between 700 and 800 personnel, including pilots, flight crews, maintenance crews and other personnel, according to Air Force Lt. Col. Frank Smolinsky, a spokesman for US Central Command Air Force -- Forward. Three policemen were killed and four were wounded when gunmen attacked their patrol in the oil refinery city of Baiji, 110 miles (180 km) north of Baghdad, police said. A policeman was killed and another wounded in a drive-by shooting on the Kirkuk-Hawija highway, 40 miles (60 km) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.

- **March 8, 2006:** A bomb hidden under a parked car near the University of Technology exploded as police from the interior minister's protection force were driving through central Baghdad, killing two officers and injuring another, police Major Abbas Mohammed Salman said. Another bomb hit a police patrol in the northern Bab al-Muadam area, killing two officers and injuring four others, said police captain Muhanand al-Bahadili.
- **March 9, 2006:** Iraq hanged 13 insurgents, marking the first time militants have been executed in the country since the US-led invasion ousted Saddam Hussein nearly three years ago, the government said.
- **March 10, 2006:** A car bomb went off in the Radhwaniyah area of southwestern Baghdad near an Iraqi army patrol, killing a soldier and wounding three others, an Interior Ministry source said. Two policemen were killed and three wounded when a roadside bomb exploded in the town of Tikrit, 110 miles (175 km) north of Baghdad, a police source said. A suicide truck bomb struck a checkpoint manned by US soldiers and Iraqi security forces in the former Sunni stronghold of Falluja, killing at least 11, including five police, police said.
- **March 11, 2006:** When pressed to explain how the US intended to respond should Iraq descend wholesale into internecine strife, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld told the Senate Appropriations Committee that "The plan is to prevent a civil war, and to the extent one were to occur, to have the . . . Iraqi security forces deal with it to the extent they're able to." Three civilians, one Iraqi soldier and a US soldier were killed when a suicide car bomb detonated near the western city of Falluja, the US military said.
- **March 12, 2006:** Gunmen killed two police officers in separate incidents in Baghdad, police said. A roadside bomb exploded in a busy west Baghdad street of in the mostly Sunni Qadissiyah neighborhood, killing at least six people, including 3 policeman, and inuring 12, said police Lt Thayer Mahmoud. Two soldiers were killed and four wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in central Baghdad, police said. Gunmen killed two army officers who worked in the Joint Coordination Centre in Dhuluiya, 25 miles (40 km) north of Baghdad, the Joint Coordination Centre of Dhuluiya said. In Mahmoudiya, about 20 miles (32 km) south of Baghdad, gunmen ambushed and killed a police major as he headed to work, police said. A roadside bomb hit a police convoy in Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, killing one patrolman and wounding four others, police said.
- **March 13, 2006:** Four policemen and six civilians were wounded when a roadside bomb hit a police patrol in central Baghdad, police said. A roadside bomb exploded as police responded to a false report of bodies inside a store in Tikrit, Saddam's ancestral hometown. Five policemen were killed and 18 injured in the blast, police Capt. Hakim al-Azawi said. A civilian bystander was also killed. Two police officers were killed and four wounded in two separate car bomb attacks targeting police patrols in Kurdish areas of Kirkuk, the oil capital of northern Iraq, police said. Police officer Major Abdulrahman Bader was killed when gunmen shot him at Al-Zaafaraniya south Baghdad wounding him seriously. He later died in hospital.
- **March 14, 2006:** Unknown gunmen killed intelligence police Captain Mohammed Fadhil in Al-Amirya west Baghdad, the source said.
- **March 15, 2006:** A police lieutenant was killed when a roadside bomb exploded near his patrol in Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said.
- **March 16, 2006:** Iraqi Security Forces and their Coalition partners launched Operation Swarmer in southern Salah Ad Din province to clear a suspected insurgent operating area northeast of Samarra. In the largest air assault operation since Operation Iraqi Freedom I, soldiers from the Iraqi Army's 1st Brigade, 4th Division, the 101st Airborne Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team and the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade conducted a combined air and ground assault to isolate the objective area. More than 1,500 Iraqi and Coalition troops, over 200 tactical vehicles, and more than 50 aircraft participated in the operation. Initial reports from the objective area indicated that a

number of enemy weapons caches were captured, containing artillery shells, explosives, IED-making materials, and military uniforms.

- **March 17, 2006:** One policeman was killed and two wounded when a roadside bomb struck a police patrol near Latifiya 32 miles (50 km) south of Baghdad, police said.
- **March 18, 2006:** One policeman was killed and a civilian was wounded when gunmen in a speeding car with an unidentified license plate opened fire at the old military recruitment office in the middle of center of Kirkuk in Northern Iraq. A police officer and his brother were killed by gunmen in Baiji, 112 miles (180 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **March 19, 2006:** The bodies of two Iraqi soldiers were found beheaded near a school in al Huwaija town, 43 miles (65 km) west of the northern Iraqi city of Kirkuk, Iraqi police announced. Gunmen shot dead four people, including two policemen in civilian clothes, and wounded another policeman in the northern city of Mosul, 240 (390 km) north of Baghdad, police and hospital sources said. A policeman was killed and 12 people were wounded when two roadside bombs exploded in quick succession targeting a police patrol in the city of Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) north of Baghdad, police said. One of the wounded was a police colonel, police added. Gunmen killed a policeman and wounded four civilians when they were driving a civilian car in Latifiya, in an area dubbed the 'Triangle of death' south of Baghdad, police said. The policeman was wearing civilian clothes.
- **March 20, 2006:** A roadside bomb exploded in central Baghdad near an Interior Ministry lockup, killing at least three Iraqi police commandos and a prisoner, police Lt. Col. Falah al-Mohammedawi said. Four policeman and two prisoners were also wounded in the attack. A policeman in a joint American-Iraqi patrol was killed in Baghdad during fighting with insurgents, police said. A roadside bomb in a farming area in the so-called Triangle of Death, south of Baghdad, killed four policemen, police Capt. Muthana Khalid Ali reported. Gunmen killed two security force members protecting oil facilities in Jarf al-Sakkhar, 50 miles (80 km) south of Baghdad. A car bomb targeting a police checkpoint exploded in Baqouba, 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, killing one policeman and wounding two others, authorities said. In the northern city of Mosul, gunmen killed a policeman and an oil ministry official, police said. A car bomb wounded two policemen in Gayara, near Mosul, police said.
- **March 21, 2006:** As many as 100 insurgents stormed a jail about dawn in the Sunni Muslim city of Muqadiyah, 62 miles (100 km) northeast of Baghdad, killing at least 18 policemen and a courthouse guard. Authorities said all 33 prisoners in the lockup were freed and 10 attackers were killed in the battle.
- **March 22, 2006:** A combined operation involving Iraqi soldiers, Iraqi Police Commandos and Coalition forces concluded with the capture of 104 suspected insurgents and the discovery and seizure of 24 caches northeast of Samarra. The mission began March 16 as Operation Swarmer with the helicopter transport of approximately 1,500 Iraqi and Coalition Soldiers and Iraqi Police Commandos into a 10 square-mile area. Iraqi Army and Coalition forces numbering approximately 1,400 personnel, kicked off Operation Northern Lights to disrupt anti-Iraqi forces and to find and destroy terrorist caches in the Abu Ghraib area west of Baghdad. Rebels blasted an Iraqi police station with grenade and mortar fire before dawn, killing a police commander and three policemen and wounding six in Madaen, 25 miles (40 km) southwest of Baghdad, police said. The body of a man wearing an Iraqi military uniform was delivered to a morgue in the southern city of Kut, a morgue official said. The man had been killed outside Madain, he said. Two policemen were killed and one wounded when gunmen ambushed their patrol in western Baghdad, police said.
- **March 23, 2006:** The Iraqi 1st Motorized Truck Regiment completed its first supply delivery mission to the 6th Iraqi Army Division independent of the 4th Sustainment Brigade, its de facto American higher headquarters. A suicide bomber rammed the entrance of the Iraqi Interior

Ministry's major crimes unit in the central Baghdad district of Karradah killing 25 people including 10 policemen and wounding 35 others, mostly policemen, the Interior Ministry said. On al-Maghrib street, in the north of the capital, at least three policemen were killed and six people wounded in a remote-detonated car bomb explosion. A suicide car bomber attacked an Iraqi army patrol near the US Al Asad air base and killed nine soldiers in Baghdady near the town of Haditha, 125 miles (200 km) west of Baghdad. A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol exploded in western Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, killing four policemen, a police source said. One policeman was killed and another three injured when their patrol was struck by a roadside bomb in Iskandariya, 40 km (25 miles) south of Baghdad, police said. Police said that one Iraqi army soldier was killed and another wounded when a roadside bomb was detonated near their patrol on a road between Latifiya and Iskandariya, south of Baghdad.

- **March 24, 2006:** Soldiers of the 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, with assistance from soldiers from 1st Brigade combat Team, Bastogne, 101st Airborne Division, detained 52 suspected insurgents during Operation Scorpion, a sequential cordon and search of eight villages in and around Hawijah. Suspected insurgents killed three policemen and wounded another in a drive-by shooting in west Baghdad, police said. A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol in south Baghdad's Saydiyah neighborhood killed one policeman, police 1st Lt. Akeel Fadhil said. The bodies of two Iraqi soldiers who were killed by gunmen were found in Baiji, 110 miles (180 km) north of Baghdad, said a source at a US-Iraqi military coordination center.
- **March 25, 2006:** Gunmen killed a traffic policeman in central Baghdad then placed a bomb inside his booth which killed four civilians in a minibus and wounded four, police said.
- **March 26, 2006:** American and Iraqi government forces clashed with Shi'ite militiamen in Baghdad in the most serious confrontation in months, and Iraqi security officials said 17 people were killed in a mosque, including its 80-year-old imam. Gunmen killed two policemen in Wajihya, a small town east of Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said. Three guards of the mayor of Wajihya were wounded by a roadside bomb as they headed to the scene of the attack, police added.
- **March 27, 2006:** The first Iraqi army recruiting drive in Sunni-dominated Ramadi yielded only 31 recruits. At least 40 people were killed and 20 others wounded when a suicide bomber blew himself up in the midst of candidates waiting at an army recruitment centre in northwest Iraq, an interior ministry official said.
- **March 29, 2006:** Gunmen attacked a highway police patrol in west Baghdad, killing one policeman and wounding four others, including a civilian, police said. In south Baghdad, a sniper killed a policeman on patrol in the Dora neighborhood, police Lt. Maitham Abdul-Razzaq said. One Iraqi army soldier was killed and another two wounded when their patrol was struck by a roadside bomb near Abu Ghraib prison, west of Baghdad, a police source said. Three soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb in Hawija, 40 miles (70 km) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.
- **March 30, 2006:** A group of 278 policemen graduated from the six-month Officer Candidate Program at Baghdad Police College. A suicide car bomber rammed a police convoy in west Baghdad's Yarmouk neighborhood, killing one police commando and wounding three others. Two civilians also were hurt. A policeman was killed and three others wounded when a roadside bomb hit their patrol in the northern oil city of Kirkuk, 150 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **March 31, 2006:** Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and 2nd Battalion, 502 Infantry Regiment discovered a large weapons cache consisting of in southwestern Baghdad. A policeman was killed when gunmen fired on his patrol in Falluja 30 miles (50 km) west of Baghdad, police said.

- **April 1, 2006:** An Iraqi army sergeant major and four militants were killed in fighting when an army patrol stopped several men trying to steal a truck south of Baquba 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, the US military said.
- **April 2, 2006:** In Baghdad's Sunni neighborhood of Khadra, a policeman was shot dead by unknown gunmen. Three soldiers were killed and another was wounded in the explosion of a roadside bomb planted on the Huweijah-Riyadh road, west of Kirkuk. A second explosion targeted an Iraqi army convoy escorting a group of Iraqi contractors on the Kirkuk-Biji road southwest of Kirkuk. One soldier was killed and five others were wounded in this explosion.
- **April 3, 2006:** The 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division began the first phase of assuming responsibility for security operations in Salah ad Din Province. The Iraqi 1st Brigade now has the authority to delegate missions to their battalions independent of Coalition forces. Two soldiers were killed and three wounded when gunmen attacked their patrol near Baiji, 112 miles (180 km) north of Baghdad, police said. A policeman was killed and two others wounded when gunmen attacked their patrol in Baiji, police said.
- **April 4, 2006:** A policeman who works at a morgue was gunned down as he headed to his Dora home in southern Baghdad. In southern Iraq, gunmen killed a policeman and wounded another as the two were driving in the city of Basra, police said.
- **April 5, 2006:** A policeman was killed by gunmen while he was heading to work in Hawija, 45 miles (70 km) southwest of Kirkuk, police said. One traffic policeman was shot dead on in Kirkuk, 155 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, a police source said.
- **April 6, 2006:** A roadside bomb struck an Iraqi army patrol in the AbuKhazeer area in Baquba, killing an army captain and wounding five soldiers, a local police source said. A suicide car bomb exploded near a joint patrol of Iraqi army and US troops in the Amiriyat al-Falluja area southwest of Falluja, killing seven, one of them an Iraqi policeman, the Iraqi army said. Gunmen seriously wounded a Kurdish captain in the Iraqi army in the eastern part of Kirkuk, 155 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **April 7, 2006:** In the town of al-Suwaira, south of Baghdad, police discovered the bodies of three members of the security forces, including an Iraqi soldier and a lieutenant-colonel. The bodies were found with their hands cut off. The decapitated body of man wearing a military uniform was found in the town of al-Shahaimiya, 75 miles (120 km) south of Baghdad.
- **April 8, 2006:** The number of Iraqi soldiers in the joint forces of the Iraqi army and the Multi-National-Forces exceeded 115,000 ground, airforce and navy troops, who are stationed across Iraq, the Iraqi Interior Ministry said. Police found the bodies of four Iraqi soldiers shot in the head with signs of torture dumped at the side of a road near the Himreen mountains 175 miles (120 km) south of the northern oil city of Kirkuk, police said. Six policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb detonated near their patrol in Riyadh, 40 miles (60 km) southwest of Kirkuk, police said. Gunmen ambushed and killed Iraqi army Lieutenant-Colonel Mohammed Abdullah Jasim with his bodyguard in Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said. Four policemen and four civilians were wounded when gunmen ambushed a police patrol in Baquba, police said. Two Iraqi soldiers were killed and three others wounded in a fierce battle between insurgents and Iraqi security forces in the Nazzal neighborhood in southern Falluja, witnesses said.
- **April 9, 2006:** Despite a long-standing commitment to disarm and disband sectarian militias, the Iraqi government quietly dropped plans to take action -- at least until a new Cabinet is appointed. Gunmen killed a soldier in the town of Dhuluiya, 25 miles (40 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **April 10, 2006:** Two policemen were killed and several wounded in clashes with gunmen at a checkpoint in Amariyah. Armed insurgents and government forces engaged in fighting in the town of Falluja, west of Baghdad, killing at least 10 people, including six Iraqi soldiers, an Interior Ministry source said.

- **April 11, 2006:** A car bomb exploded near a Baghdad restaurant frequented by police killing at least five people, including three policemen, Interior Ministry sources said. The blast also wounded 13 people, including one policeman, the sources said. On the outskirts of Karbala, 50 miles (80 km) south of Baghdad, gunmen killed a policeman on his way to work. The bodies of four Iraqi soldiers who were beheaded were found in Jurf al-Sahkar, 50 miles (80 km) south of Baghdad, police said. Three Iraqi army recruits were killed after coming under fire in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. Two policemen were killed and four others wounded by a roadside bomb in Tuz Khurmatu, 45 miles (70 km) south of Kirkuk, the Joint Co-ordination Centre said. Three Iraqi soldiers were killed during a firefight with insurgents in Ramadi that ended when US troops stepped in and imposed a curfew on the western Iraqi city.
- **April 12, 2006:** Four people, including a policeman, were killed and three policemen wounded in Baghdad's northern Al Waziriya neighborhood when a roadside bomb struck a passing police patrol, a security official said. In a separate incident in the capital, 11 people were wounded, including six policemen, when roadside bombs struck two police patrols in the Al Dura neighborhood. A policeman was also shot dead in Baghdad. Gunmen shot dead two Iraqi army soldiers and wounded another while they were traveling in a civilian car in central Baiji, 112 miles (180 km) north of Baghdad, US and Iraqi military officials said.
- **April 13, 2006:** Sixty-three Iraqi recruits graduated from the Lulymania Training Center and earned the right to be called police officers following a morning ceremony. In the northern city of Mosul, gunmen killed a policeman who was driving his sons to school. One of the sons was also killed, and the other seriously wounded, police said. Gunmen ambushed an Iraqi convoy of around 10 police vehicles on the road from Taji to Najaf. At least 9 officers were killed, and at least 30 were missing.
- **April 14, 2006:** Unknown gunmen opened fire on Lieutenant Marwan Yousef on a road between Kirkuk and Tikrit killing him instantly, Chief of Aqdhiya Police, Brigadier Sahrad Qader said.
- **April 15, 2006:** Three Iraqi army soldiers were killed and eight wounded when the convoy in which they were travelling was hit by a roadside bomb in Baghdad's dangerous Dora neighborhood. In Basra, four gunmen killed the director of traffic police as he was driving to work, police said.
- **April 16, 2006:** One policeman was killed and three others wounded, including two policemen, when gunmen opened fire on two police stations in Baghdad's Sadr City. Another policeman was killed in similar shoot-out in Al-Sulekh neighborhood in northern Baghdad. In Mosul, an Iraqi soldier was gunned down in his car with his two sons. Police found the body of an Iraqi soldier in Hillah, 60 miles (97 km) south of the capital in Babil province.
- **April 17, 2006:** Gunmen killed a soldier while he was heading to work in Hawija, 43 miles (70 km) southwest of Kirkuk. Gunmen killed a policeman and wounded two others in Tikrit, 110 miles (175 km) north of Baghdad, local officials said. The body of a Basra policeman kidnapped three days earlier was found near the Iranian border, Basra police Capt. Mushtaq Khazim said.
- **April 18, 2006:** A bomb exploded at a Baghdad cafe frequented by policemen, killing at least seven people, including three policemen, and wounding more than 20, said police Capt. Ali al-Obeidi. In Basra, a policeman was gunned down in a drive-by shooting. In Irbil, an Iraqi policeman was gunned down and six civilians were wounded in a drive-by shooting.
- **April 19, 2006:** A police officer was shot dead in Baquba.
- **April 20, 2006:** Two policemen were killed in a roadside bombing against a passing patrol in Al-Khalis, 60 miles (80 km) northeast of Baghdad. One policeman was killed and two others wounded in a similar roadside bombing also against a police patrol in the restive city of Baquba, 36 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad. Two policemen were killed and four others wounded

when a roadside bomb hit their patrol in Tal Afar, about 260 miles (420 km) northwest of Baghdad, a medical source said.

- **April 21, 2006:** Shi'ite politicians agreed to nominate Nuri al-Maliki as prime minister, replacing the incumbent Ibrahim al-Jafari, in a bid to clear the way for a long-delayed new government, two Shi'ite officials said. In Khalis, 50 miles (80 km) north of Baghdad, a drive-by shooting killed a policeman walking on a street of the city, police said. In Baquba, 35 miles (60 km) northeast of the capital, a policeman was shot dead as he was on his way home. In Mosul, 225 miles (360 km) northwest of the capital, four policemen were killed and three others were wounded including a civilian when a patrol hit a roadside bomb, police said. In Tikrit, five police commandos, dressed in civilian clothes, were ambushed and shot dead by gunmen who opened fire on their car, police said. Six off-duty Iraqi soldiers were captured and shot execution-style outside a restaurant in Beiji in northern Iraq, said police Capt. Arkan Ali.
- **April 22, 2006:** Iraq's parliament elected incumbent President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, for a second term as politicians began putting together a national unity government after four months of deadlock. In Baghdad's northern district of Azamiyah, unidentified gunmen shot up a police patrol, killing one officer.
- **April 23, 2006:** The Iraqi National Police graduated 1,143 recruits from the Public Order Division Numaniyah Police Academy. An Iraqi soldier was killed and two others wounded when a roadside bomb hit their patrol on the main road between Latifiya and Iskandariya, 25 miles (40 km) south of Baghdad, police said. A roadside bomb targeting a convoy carrying a provincial police commander missed him but killed two policemen and wounded another near Beiji, prompting local officials to impose a curfew.
- **April 24, 2006:** Five police officers and 10 other Iraqis died in a car bombing outside a restaurant in the Bab al-Muadham neighborhood of central Baghdad, according to police Col. Salam Muhsin. Thirty-two bodies of Iraqi police and security forces recruits from Ramadi were discovered in two areas of Baghdad, Interior Ministry sources said. Gunmen killed two Iraqi soldiers near Balad, 50 miles (80 km) north of Baghdad, the military said. Four policemen and two insurgents were killed in clashes at a checkpoint between in Tal Qasir, 125 miles (200 km) north of Baghdad on the road between Tikrit and Tuz, an officer said. Gunmen killed a soldier working in the Oil Facility Protection Service on the main road between Tikrit and Kirkuk, police said.
- **April 25, 2006:** Gunmen shot dead two soldiers and a policeman who were off duty near Kirkuk, 155 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **April 26, 2006:** For only the second time at the Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah, a class of 158 newly commissioned lieutenants graduated the 12-month Officer Basic Course. Gunmen stormed the house of and killed an Iraqi Army officer in Baghdad. US forces killed four Iraqi police commandos by mistake in Samarra, 62 miles (100 km) north of Baghdad, a joint US and Iraqi military center said.
- **April 27, 2006:** A roadside bomb in Baghdad hit an Iraqi Army patrol killing one soldier, police said. At least seven Iraqi policemen and a civilian were killed and at least six police and two civilians were wounded in a series of attacks on police checkpoints in Baquba, 35 miles (56 km) northeast of Baghdad, police said. In Ramadi, 70 miles (113 km) west of Baghdad, an Iraqi soldier was killed in a firefight with insurgents.
- **April 28, 2006:** A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol exploded in southwestern Baghdad killing one policeman and wounding two others, said police Capt. Jamil Hussein. In Fallujah, two policemen were killed by a roadside bomb targeting their patrol.
- **April 29, 2006:** Attackers grabbed a Sunni Arab policeman and his brother and shot both of them dead outside their home to the south of Baghdad. One police commando was killed and three others wounded by a roadside bomb targeting their patrol in northwestern Baghdad's Al-Ghazalia

neighborhood. Two Iraqi army soldiers were killed and six others wounded when insurgents opened fire on their convoy in Suwera, southeast of Baghdad, an interior ministry official said. Two Iraqi police officers were killed, when a roadside bomb hit a convoy carrying the police chief of the northern oil town of Baiji, police said.

- **April 30, 2006:** A policeman was shot on his way to work in the northern town of Samarra. In Ramadi, 70 miles (113 km) west of Baghdad, gunmen attacked three policemen traveling in a car carrying the salaries of police in Fallujah, killing one, wounding another, and kidnapping the third with the bag of money, police said.
- **May 2, 2006:** Bastogne Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division turned over responsibility for much of Kirkuk's battlespace to the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, Nisser Battalion. The bodies of four Iraqi soldiers from Fallujah who graduated from basic training as part of the first all-Sunni class on April 30 were found in Ramadi, officials said.
- **May 3, 2006:** Iraqi lawmakers convened the first working session of parliament since it was elected in December. The Iraqi Ground Forces Command -- the operational fighting headquarters for the Iraqi Army -- opened a new, state-of-the-art Joint Operations Center at Camp Victory. Nearly 1,500 Iraqi soldiers and police officers team together to conduct Operation Lion's Hunt. The goal of the operation was to introduce a strong Iraqi Security Force presence in Tikrit and to clean out pockets of terrorists hiding among the residents. Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division assumed the lead in security operations in and around Sinjar in Western Ninevah Province. In Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, a police officer was killed and three wounded as they were disarming a bomb when a second bomb exploded nearby in an apparent ambush, police said. Also in Baquba, gunmen attacked a police checkpoint killing a police officer, police said. Police found the bodies of three soldiers from Fallujah who had been shot and dumped in Khaldiya, a city west of their hometown, said Dr. Rafie Mahmoud. A suicide bomber blew himself up while standing in a line of recruits outside Fallujah's police headquarters, killing 15 people and wounding 30, said police 1st Lt. Omar Ahmed. Thirteen of the dead were recruits and two were policemen, Ahmed said. In Yusufiya, 9 miles (15 km) south of Baghdad, a policeman was killed and two others wounded, including a civilian, when a roadside bomb hit their patrol, police said. Gunmen killed an Iraqi soldier near Tikrit, 175 km (110 miles) north of Baghdad, said the Joint Coordination Centre run by the US and Iraqi militaries.
- **May 4, 2006:** Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division along with 4th Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 506th Infantry Regiment's Military Transition Team, detained an al-Qa'ida in Iraq cell leader and sever other anti-Iraqi forces in two different raids in the Adhamiyah area. In Baghdad, Brigadier General Mohammed Raza Abdellatiff, who was in charge of logistics for the Iraqi army in Baghdad, was shot dead as he was driving to work. Gunmen killed Muhammed Ridha, a brigadier in the Defence Ministry, in the capital's Yarmouk district, police said. A police major was killed by gunmen near his house in Diwaniya, 110 miles (180 km) south of Baghdad, police said. Two Iraqi soldiers were killed by gunmen near Balad, 50 miles (80 km) north of Baghdad, police said. A policeman and a civilian were killed when they tried to rescue a leading businessman in Tikrit, 110 miles (175 km) north of Baghdad, from unidentified gunmen kidnappers.
- **May 5, 2006:** In Kadimiyah, a Shi'ite neighborhood of north Baghdad, gunmen killed an Iraqi army major, an Interior Ministry official said. North of the capital, two policemen were killed when their vehicle was hit by a roadside bomb in the town of Mugdadiyah, police said.
- **May 6, 2006:** Iraqi National Police from 5th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division and US soldiers conducted Operation United Front in an effort to capture anti-Iraqi forces and seize weapons caches in the neighborhood of Ameriya, in western Baghdad. A suicide bomber wearing an Iraqi army uniform blew himself up on an Iraqi military base in Tikrit, killing at least three Iraqi officers, said Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Abdul-Aziz Mohammed Jassim. Roadside

- bombs hit two Iraqi police patrol in Baghdad, killing one officer and wounding two policemen six civilians, police said. Two policemen were killed when a roadside bomb struck their vehicle in Samarra, 78 miles (125 km) north of Baghdad. Fighting between an Iraqi military patrol and insurgents killed two soldiers and three militants in Youssifiyah, 12 miles (19 km) south of Baghdad. A bomb in a parked car exploded, killing two policemen and an Iraqi soldier and wounding four civilians about 30 miles (48 km) north of Baquba, police said.
- **May 7, 2006:** Nearly 250 Kurdish guards graduated from a Kurdish Correctional Officers Course, completing their first step toward assuming day-to-day operations at the Fort Suse Theater Internment Facility. Authorities in Baghdad said the bodies of at least 28 people, including six policemen, were found in and around the capital as victims of sectarian strife. Many were found tied up, shot and dumped in various neighborhoods. A police sergeant was shot dead as he left home in Baghdad's mainly Shi'ite neighborhood of Kamaliya. A roadside bomb hit a police patrol in eastern Mosul, killing three policemen and wounding another, said police Maj. Gen. Wathiq Mohammed Abdul-Qadir.
 - **May 8, 2006:** Two policemen died when a car bomb exploded near a police patrol in the northern part of Baghdad. Three Iraqi police commandos kidnapped as they drove to work on May 5th were found shot to death south of Baghdad, Iraqi police said.
 - **May 9, 2006:** A roadside bomb hit a police car in Baghdad, killing one officer and wounding two. Gunmen killed four police officers while they were driving out of police headquarters in the city of Ramadi, 68 miles (110 km) west of Baghdad, police said. Gunmen killed an Iraqi soldier and wounded two others on the main road between Tikrit and Kirkuk, 155 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
 - **May 10, 2006:** Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, along with elements of 6th Brigade, 2nd National Police Division, found a large weapons cache in eastern Baghdad. Gunmen killed Lieutenant Colonel Kanan Hasan, an aide to the head of Baquba's Criminal Intelligence Directorate, along with two body guards, while he was heading to work, police said. In Yarmouk, unknown gunmen shot dead two traffic policemen, including a first lieutenant. A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol near the central neighborhood of Karrada killed one soldier.
 - **May 11, 2006:** In Kirkuk, gunmen ambushed and killed a police lieutenant colonel. South of Baghdad, police found the body of a policeman with his hands bound, signs of torture and shot in the head. In the north, two Iraqi soldiers were killed and four wounded when a roadside bomb went off near an army patrol.
 - **May 12, 2006:** The bodies of four people in military uniform, two of them beheaded, were found in Khan Bani Saad, near Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad. An Iraqi soldier was shot dead in Al-Adel district, eastern Baghdad, after being attacked by militants. Four Iraqi soldiers were killed and seven civilians were wounded in clashes between the Iraqi army and insurgents in the town of Dhuluiya, 25 miles (40 km) north of Baghdad, police said. Clashes erupted between two Iraqi army units following a roadside bombing near Duluiyah, about 45 miles (72 km) north of the capital, and Iraqi police said a Shi'ite soldier was killed in an exchange of fire with a Kurdish unit.
 - **May 13, 2006:** Gunmen ambushed and killed two policemen and wounded two others in the city of Mosul, 240 miles (390 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
 - **May 14, 2006:** Three policemen were killed when their patrol was targeted by a bomb in the traditional Sunni neighbourhood of Adhamiyah in north Baghdad. Ten civilians and three other police officers were injured.
 - **May 15, 2006:** Members of the Garamsha tribe killed three policemen in an attack near Basra, 342 miles (550 km) south of Baghdad, a local official said. Five other policemen went missing. The attack came after a tribal leader was shot dead near Basra. In Mosul, one policeman was killed and

two were wounded when a bomb exploded near a house where gunmen earlier killed six members of the same family, police said. The body of Emad al-Massoudi, a policeman who was abducted by gunmen two days ago, was found with gunshot wounds, bearing signs of torture, on the outskirts of Kerbala, 68 miles (110 km) southwest of Baghdad, police said.

- **May 16, 2006:** Iraqi police discovered four corpses in different areas of Baghdad, including the body of a police officer who had been reported kidnapped on May 15th. Gunmen in eastern Baghdad killed police 1st Sgt. Latif Abdullah, who worked in Interior Ministry intelligence. In Kirkuk, two brothers, both of them police officers, were killed by gunmen as they drove to work.
- **May 17, 2006:** In Baquba, insurgents killed one man and wounded another at a bakery and subsequently bombed the site killing three policemen and wounding five others. An Iraqi officer was killed and two others injured in an explosion as their patrol vehicle was passing by the Al-Malemeen area in Diyali province, northeast Baghdad, Iraqi police said. Two policemen were killed in a drive-by shooting in the northern city of Mosul, police said. One Iraqi soldier was killed and four wounded when a roadside bomb struck their convoy in Kirkuk, police said.
- **May 18, 2006:** In northern Baghdad, seven people, including four policemen, were killed and four other people wounded when a car bomb targeting a police patrol exploded, police said. A policeman was killed and three wounded when a roadside bomb went off near a convoy of US military and Iraqi police vehicles near the Shi'ite city of Najaf, 99 miles (160 km) south of Baghdad, police said. In Fallujah, four policemen were killed in clashes with insurgents, said Dr. Mohammed Ismail of the the western town's hospital.
- **May 19, 2006:** One policeman was killed and seven others wounded in three separate attacks on police in the city of Najaf, 100 miles (160 km) south of Baghdad, police said.
- **May 20, 2006:** Shi'ite Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki pledged to rein in violence and heal Iraq's sectarian wounds after his unity government was inaugurated in parliament. In the town of Qaim, near the Syrian border, a suicide bomber detonated his explosive-packed vest inside a police station killing five policemen and wounding 10, police said. An Iraqi army captain and his wife were shot dead in their car by unknown gunmen in Baquba, 37 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad. Police said the couple's three children were wounded. Police found the body of a policeman who had been kidnapped hours earlier near Falluja, 31 miles (50 km) west of Baghdad, police said.
- **May 21, 2006:** An Iraqi soldier was killed and 10 wounded when gunmen attacked checkpoints around their army base in Dhuluiya, 40 miles (60 km) north of Baghdad, Iraqi officers said. Local police, describing the army unit as made up largely of ethnic Kurds, put the army's casualty toll higher. One Iraqi policeman and one insurgent died in clashes that erupted near the town of Iskandariya, south of Baghdad, when insurgents tried to blow up a pipeline feeding a power station, police said. Gunmen killed two policemen working in the Oil Protection Facilities in the town of Riyadh, 40 miles (60 km) southwest of Kirkuk, police said.
- **May 22, 2006:** Four policemen were killed when a roadside bomb went off near a joint US forces/Iraqi police patrol in Jurf al-Sakhar, about 53 miles (85 km) south of Baghdad, police said. One policeman died in hospital after gunmen shot at him in central Hawija, 43 miles (70 km) southwest of Kirkuk, police said. Police Lieutenant Nazem Al-Obaidi, chief of the citizenship and passports department in Kirkuk was gunned dead by a group of unidentified gunmen on the Baghdad road near Al-Mansour Mosque, a senior official at the Kirkuk Police Department said. Gunmen killed Colonel Basheer Qadoori from Samarra police in a drive-by shooting in central Samarra, 62 miles (100 km) north of Baghdad, police said.
- **May 23, 2006:** A policeman was gunned down as he was walking to work in the restive Baghdad neighborhood of Amiriya. A roadside bomb went off alongside an Iraqi police patrol that was winding its way through a shopping district in the New Baghdad area of the capital. The blast killed three people, including one policeman, and wounded six.

- **May 24, 2006:** In Baghdad, a police officer was killed by unknown assailants in a drive-by shooting, police said. Gunmen shot dead General Ahmed Dawod, a deputy chief of Baghdad municipality's protection units, hospital and municipal officials said. Unidentified gunmen opened fire on an Iraqi military highway checkpoint near the US military base north of Baghdad killing one soldier and wounding two, said Iraqi Army Lt. Abbas Kamil. Four gunmen and two members of the Iraqi security forces were killed in clashes that erupted during a raid and search operation by army and police in the town of Yusufiya, 9 miles (15 km) south of Baghdad, police said. Thirty-eight gunmen were detained in the two-day operation.
- **May 25, 2006:** Twenty-two Iraqi soldiers graduated from a three-week training course in managing medical logistics systems at the Iraqi Army Services and Support Institute at Taji Military Training Base. Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division arrested two bomb-makers and seized their cache of supplies after getting a tip from civilians. Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition troops found and recovered two caches while on patrol.
- **May 26, 2006:** Soldiers from the 4th Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division and Bayji police officers detained 17 suspected terrorists in cordon and search operations west of Bayji. Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 7th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition troops arrested 14 suspected insurgents and seized on cache. A roadside bomb hit a police patrol in the northern city of Kirkuk, killing one policeman and wounding four others, police Brig. Khatab Omar said. Employees abducted from the local Diyala Television station in Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) northeast of Baghdad, watched gunmen execute two policemen held with them before being released, one of the hostages said.
- **May 27, 2006:** In Baghdad, one police officer was killed and three others wounded when a bomb was set off against their patrol in the upscale Mansur district, an Interior Ministry source said. Two Iraqi army soldiers were killed and three wounded in an attack on an army checkpoint near Dujail, north of Baghdad, police said. Two police officers were shot dead in separate incidents in Tikrit. Police Colonel Qahtan al-Bawi and his bodyguard were killed when gunmen ambushed their car near the city of Baquba, 40 miles (65 km) north of Baghdad, police said. Two other bodyguards were seriously wounded in the attack. An Iraqi army major was killed and three soldiers were wounded when gunmen in a car blocked their patrol and opened fire on a main road, 25 miles (40 km) south of Kirkuk, police said.
- **May 28, 2006:** In Baghdad's upscale Karrada neighborhood, a policeman and two civilians were killed in a twin bomb attack. The attack wounded 22 civilians. Police found six beheaded corpses wearing military uniforms in the small towns of Numaniya, Suwayra and Shihaimiya near Kut, 106 miles (170 km) southeast of Baghdad, police said. It was not clear if the three incidents were linked. A roadside bomb aimed at a convoy of local officials exploded on a road in Diyala province, north of Baghdad, killing two policemen escorting them, police said.
- **May 29, 2006:** US and Iraqi forces scuttled 32 boats to prevent insurgents from using them to move men and supplies across the River Tigris near the city of Dhuluiya, scene of recent clashes, the US military said. A roadside bomb killed two police officers and wounded three others in downtown Baghdad's Karradah district. In western Baghdad, gunmen attacked a convoy killing two police officers. Gunmen shot at a police patrol in the Yarmouk district of west-central Baghdad, killing three policemen, a police source said. One policeman was killed and two others were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in central Baghdad, police said. In Amarah, 180 miles (290 km) southeast of Baghdad, insurgents killed two police officers, identified as former Baathists. A roadside bomb killed a policemen and wounded two soldiers near Falluja, police said.
- **May 30, 2006:** A roadside bomb in southern Baghdad killed one police officer and wounded four. Gunmen killed two police officers in two different incidents in Tikrit, 109 miles (175 km) north of

Baghdad, police said. Gunmen shot dead down Colonel Ziad Tareq, deputy commander of a protection unit in Kirkuk, 155 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, an army source said.

- **May 31, 2006:** The Iraqi National Police took responsibility for Forward Operating Base “Charlie” in the city of Al Hillah. The transition ceremony marked the first transfer of authority to the National Police. The 3rd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Iraqi Army Division assumed responsibility for the city of Tal Afar, taking over from the 1st Brigade, 1st Armored Division in a ceremony at For Tal Afar. A parked car packed with explosives exploded near a police patrol in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul, killing at least five policemen and wounding 14, including a senior officer. An Iraqi soldier was killed and four others were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in Khalidiya, 53 miles (85 km) west of Baghdad, police said. Gunmen gunned down a policeman on in the Shi’ite holy city of Kerbala, 68 miles (110 km) southwest of Baghdad, police said.
- **June 1, 2006:** Iraqi police and army forces launched new Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki’s “iron fist” security crackdown in Basra against gangs and feuding Shi’ite factions threatening vital oil exports.
- **June 2, 2006:** One Iraqi soldier was killed and four wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near their patrol in the western Mansoor district of Baghdad, police sources said.
- **June 3, 2006:** Seven Iraqi policemen were killed and up to 10 other people were wounded when insurgents attacked the al-Razi police checkpoint near Baquba, 35 miles (60 km) northeast of Baghdad, with rocket-propelled and hand grenades and small arms fire, police say.
- **June 4, 2006:** A parliament session in which new defense and interior ministers were expected to be chosen was postponed “until further notice”, the deputy speaker said. Khaled al-Attiya did not give reasons for the postponement but government sources said the powerful Shi’ite Alliance is deadlocked on a nominee for the Interior Ministry post. In Kirkuk, 155 miles (250 km) north of Baghdad, one policeman was killed and two wounded when a roadside bomb struck their patrol, police said. In Mosul, unidentified militants killed six policemen in a civilian car wearing civilian clothes in the Al-Mothana district in the city’s center, police said.
- **June 5, 2006:** In the northern oil city of Kirkuk, a roadside bomb killed an off-duty policeman. In Mosul, armed men on a motorcycle opened fire on a gathering of police, killing one and wounding another four.

The Killing of Zarqawi

The most striking of all such developments during the first half of 2006 was the killing of Al-Qa’ida’s leader in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, in early June. The Iraqi government and US forces in Iraq scored a major political and propaganda victory by killing Zarqawi. The militant leader was located with the assistance of Jordanian intelligence, which used human intelligence, as well as the background landscape in one of the videos Zarqawi released to the media, to determine Zarqawi’s location. On June 7, Zarqawi was positively identified in a house near the village of Hibhib, west of Baquba. He died after US F-16s attacked the building with 500-pound bombs.⁵⁰⁰ The fact that this coincided with a new government increased the impact of this victory, and Prime Minister Maliki sought to exploit the resulting window of opportunity by taking a range of actions that affected Iraqi force development:

- **Appointing Ministers of Defense and Interior:** The appointment of ministers to head ministries that had seen a year of non-leadership was a key development. The task still remained to convince Sunnis that the Ministry of Interior and its forces would no longer support attacks on Sunnis, and yet to still reassure Shi’ites and Kurds. The new Ministers cannot be successful overnight, but

simply appointing them was an important first step. Following up with real action would have a lasting value.

- ***Freeing Detainees and Bringing Sunnis and Ba'athists Back into Government and the Iraqi Forces:*** Maliki has already taken a vital step by freeing some detainees and the eventual total could be much higher. He has talked about bringing more Sunnis into office and the Iraqi forces, as well as more Ba'athists. This latter step is critical because so many leading secular Iraqis joined the Ba'ath simply to survive, and are innocent of any of Saddam's abuses.
- ***Investigating American "Abuses":*** An Iraqi investigation may seem critical of the US, but it is absolutely essential that both the Iraqi government and the US make it clear who is really guilty of what, punish the guilty, and identify the innocent. Only such Iraqi action can show the government is truly sovereign and provide a basis for showing there is no cover up or concealment. It is vital to establishing the fact that many of the charges being piled on the US military are almost certainly exaggerated or false, and to rebuild Iraqi-US trust and confidence.
- ***Reaching out to Sunnis:*** Maliki has already shown he is actively seeking to include Sunnis in the political process -- and Sunnis who supported the insurgency for political reasons, not out of loyalty to Saddam or religious extremism. Many of these Sunnis have every reason to fear or hate the more extreme insurgents, and Zarqawi's death may convince them to move back towards the center.
- ***Cleaning Up the Ministry of Interior, Security Forces, Police Forces, and Guards:*** Maliki has talked about a sweeping clean up and reorganization, with new uniforms and badges, tighter controls and discipline, and backed by a MNSTC-I advisory effort that gives the "year of the police" real meaning. There already has been considerable progress in the MOI, prison system, and several key MOI security units associated with "death squads." If a broader effort can even be seen to begin to take hold, this could have a major impact.
- ***Dealing with the Militias and Irregulars:*** Maliki already delivered key messages calling for an end to militia operations, and gave one in Basra -- showing he will deal with Shi'ite militias in even the most trouble areas. Making good on his words will be difficult, dangerous, and time consuming. Once again, however, even a real start would have a major impact.
- ***Cleaning Up Baghdad:*** Plans have been underway for months for joint Iraqi-US action to try to take back the parts of Baghdad that have come back under Shi'ite militias (Sadr) and insurgent control. A major sweep, led by Iraqi forces with a real Iraqi government, can't win back the whole city, but could be a critical start. If other actions take place in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Basra, the move toward reestablishing security in the most important areas in the country could offset much of the problems created by more than half a year of political turmoil.
- ***Appointing the Group to Review the Constitution:*** Finally, Sunnis, Shi'ites, Kurds, and others will be far more willing to believe in the new government if they see a body appointed to deal with the 55 areas in the constitution that must be reviewed to finish a draft that is national and representative.

It was clear that Zarqawi's death would have at least a positive short-term impact regardless of how seriously the government follows-up on these steps. At the same time, this list of measures illustrates the fact that that neither Iraqi force development nor tactical victories against insurgents can produce lasting victories or stability without sustained political progress, moves towards rebuilding the economy, and without providing critical government services and a functioning infrastructure throughout the country. From the start, dollars have been as important as bullets, and creating jobs has been as important as Iraqi combat units.

Although US spokesmen claimed that the killing of Zarqawi “forced the terrorists to reshuffle their leadership, dislodging them from their quarters leading into the capital,” a successor to lead al-Qa’ida was named within days. The name announced on militant websites, Abu Hamza al-Muhajir, was determined by the US to be an alias for Abu Ayyub al-Masri, an Egyptian explosives specialist associated with Ayman al-Zawahiri’s Islamic Jihad movement since 1982.⁵⁰¹ The US promptly offered a \$5 million bounty for information leading to al-Masri’s capture.⁵⁰²

Efforts to Secure Baghdad in Summer 2006

On June 14, 2006, one day after President Bush visited Iraq to express confidence in the new government, a major security operation dubbed “Operation Forward Together” ordered by Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki commenced in Baghdad. The operation was to involve tens of thousands of US-backed Iraqi security personnel taking to Baghdad’s streets to enforce a curfew, weapons ban, and a vehicle ban around the time of Friday prayers.

The exact number of personnel participating in the action was not disclosed, but was initially estimated to be as high as 75,000.⁵⁰³ The actual number was eventually determined to be 42,500 Iraqi troops and 7,200 Americans.⁵⁰⁴ In late August, it was reported as 52,000 and increasing.⁵⁰⁵ Forward Together was to be a dramatic first initiative to curb violence in the capital and comprised a substantial increase in standard security measures such as patrols, checkpoints, and curfews.⁵⁰⁶

The effectiveness of the Baghdad security crackdown was initially mixed. Few incidents of insurgent violence occurred in the city in the first two days of the operation. The checkpoints caused massive traffic jams and inconveniences, but much of the population outside of the Sunni-majority districts seemed supportive of government action.⁵⁰⁷ On June 17, however, the calm was broken by seven separate attacks in Baghdad: “one suicide bombing, a mortar attack, three car bombings and the explosions of a bomb placed under a pushcart and a bomb placed inside a minibus. Thirty-eight Iraqis were killed and 75 wounded, the Interior Ministry said.”⁵⁰⁸

The attacks increased in scale and audacity in spite of Operation Forward Together. On June 21, approximately 50 gunmen wearing police uniforms abducted as many as 100 factory workers in broad daylight in the northeastern Baghdad zone of Taji, home to a major US base.⁵⁰⁹ On June 23, the government extended the curfew to afternoon hours following a major shootout involving Sunni insurgents, Shi’ite militiamen, and Iraqi and US security forces.⁵¹⁰ Two major incidents occurred on July 1. A suicide car bomb blasted a crowded market in the Shi’ite Sadr City district, killing over 60 people and wounding twice as many. Media reports noted that US and Iraqi soldiers who arrived to the emergency site were pelted with rocks by Iraqi children and jeered by civilians. Meanwhile, Tayseer Najah al-Mashhadani, a female Sunni member of the Iraqi parliament, and her eight bodyguards were abducted at gunpoint on the city’s northern outskirts.⁵¹¹

These events in Baghdad prompted the Iraqi government to announce a “comprehensive review” of the security operation. US officials “admitted that the plan has produced so

far only a slight dip in the violence, and nothing like the results that had been hoped for.”⁵¹²

Insurgent and sectarian violence remained prevalent. Baghdad’s central morgue reported receiving 1,595 bodies in June 2006, a sixteen percent increase from the previous month, indicating that the pace of killing since Zarqawi’s death and the imposition of the Baghdad security plan had not slowed at all. US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad told the BBC that “killing Zarqawi had not made Iraq any safer.”⁵¹³ In one example, on July 9, a “mob of gunmen went on a brazen daylight rampage through a predominantly Sunni Arab district of western Baghdad...pulling people from their cars and homes and killing them.” The number of dead from this incident alone was in the dozens, and the suspected perpetrators were Shi’ite militiamen.⁵¹⁴ This incident marked the beginning of an upsurge in sectarian killings in the Baghdad area. On July 17, another group of gunmen, presumably Sunni, massacred over 40 Shi’ite civilians at a marketplace in Mahmudiyah, a town just south of Baghdad.⁵¹⁵

The mass killings of civilians began to have serious political consequences in the fledgling Iraqi government as Shi’ite and Sunni lawmakers traded accusations and the security forces were alternately blamed for not doing enough to quell the violence and for aiding sectarian militants.

Top US officials attempted to paint the best possible portrait of Iraqi security force “progress,” as Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice asserted on July 10, “I’m quite certain that the combination of a strong government and the security forces that are now engaged in the security plan for Baghdad will be able to bring this situation under control.”⁵¹⁶ The words, however, seemed to ring hollow as events on the ground unfolded. Coalition spokesman Maj. Gen. William Caldwell “announced no great accomplishments as the Baghdad crackdown involving 50,000 security forces—42,000 Iraqi and 8,000 American—approached the 30-day point.”⁵¹⁷ On July 11, “frustrated by the lack of results, Iraqi lawmakers called on the country’s Defense and Interior ministers to explain why the security operation hasn’t led to a decline in violence.”⁵¹⁸

By July, the initial phases of the security operation had clearly failed to reduce the violence. In fact, violence continued to increase: “in the 101 days before the crackdown, an average of 23.8 attacks occurred daily. In the first 35 days of the operation, the average was 25.2 attacks a day.”⁵¹⁹ US military figures released July 20 “showed that the number of daily attacks recorded by the police and allied forces in Baghdad jumped to an average of 34 this month [July 2006] from 24 in June.”

Caldwell reported, “We have not witnessed the reduction in violence one would have hoped for in a perfect world.”⁵²⁰ Attacks had occurred in seven of Baghdad’s ten districts, although according to Caldwell, “a few neighbourhoods” were accounting for 41% of the killings in the city. According to the US military, the toll on Iraqi forces was 92 Iraqi soldiers and police dead and 444 wounded.⁵²¹

Operation Forward Together revealed that Iraqi security forces as they were remained incapable of bringing a complete halt to violent disorder in the capital. CENTCOM commander General John Abizaid acknowledged on July 21, “The situation with

sectarian violence in Baghdad is very serious” and noted that more Iraqi and American troops would be redeployed to the capital to try re-establish some semblance of order. “The country can deal with the insurgency better than it can deal with the sectarian violence, and it needs to move decisively against the sectarian violence now,” the general said.⁵²²

These developments forced the Iraqi government and MNF-I to react. While in London for talks on July 24, Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki announced a plan to reinforce the security forces in Baghdad with some 4,000 additional troops, including a US brigade, while taking control of neighborhoods prone to experience sectarian violence and “cordon[ing] off the city to prevent armed men and explosives from getting in.”⁵²³ US President Bush agreed, noting that additional forces being sent to Baghdad would “be pulled from areas in Iraq that are deemed relatively free of violence” and that final numbers would be decided by military commanders.⁵²⁴ Another aspect of the strategy discussed by Maliki and Bush in their July 25 meeting was the embedding of more US military police with Iraqi police units.⁵²⁵

The plan agreed to by the two leaders involved boosting force levels in Baghdad by a total of 8,000, of which half would be Iraqi and half American. The US contribution included “units equipped with Stryker armoured vehicles, military police and, essentially, what is left of the American military’s reserve in Kuwait.” The plan also focused on a new strategy to “concentrate on specific neighbourhoods rather than distribute the forces throughout the city, control movement in and out of sectors of the capital and try to sweep them of insurgents and violent militias.

American officials admitted some risk in diverting additional forces, particularly the military police intended to help build up Iraqi police capabilities, earmarked for other areas of the country to Baghdad, but US spokesman Maj. Gen. Caldwell insisted, “Baghdad is truly a must-win...We have to win in Baghdad. We don’t have an option.”⁵²⁶ The US units redeployed to Baghdad included four military police companies and the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team.⁵²⁷

Lt. General Peter W. Chiarelli, “commander of day-to-day US military operations in Iraq,” revealed another aspect of the revamped security plan in an interview. As US and Iraqi troops secured neighborhoods in force, unemployed Iraqis living in those areas would be offered jobs on local public works projects, like digging water and sewer lines. “When [Chiarelli] commanded the 1st Cavalry Division in Baghdad from March 2004 to March 2005, he reduced the violence in the Shi’ite neighborhood of Sadr City by putting many of the fighting age men to work digging a sewer system.” With a budget of \$75 million to \$100 million, Chiarelli planned to adopt that approach on a city-wide scale. Yet he admitted the troubles the US military was having in learning how to deal with the situation it faced in Baghdad, remarking, “Quite frankly, in 33 years in the United States Army, I never trained to stop a sectarian fight. This is something new.”⁵²⁸

The US reinforcements from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team began arriving in Baghdad on August 6, “patrolling predominantly Sunni areas of the west of the city.” A BBC correspondent reported that more US troops than initially thought, perhaps up to 7,000, could be sent to secure Baghdad.⁵²⁹

On August 7, Gen. George Casey, the top US commander in Iraq, described the new plan to secure Baghdad, saying, “What you will see are Iraqi security forces, supported by the coalition, clearing out areas where there are terrorists and death squads, and the establishing the security presence to protect the people.” The new goal was to “restore security to the capital by the end of September,” when the Muslim holy month of Ramadan was expected to begin.⁵³⁰

Early on August 7, US and Iraqi troops set out to apprehend members of a suspected “death squad” in Sadr City. The raid turned into a two-hour shootout with gunmen that resulted in civilians killed and injured. The operation was the beginning of the reinforced Baghdad security effort to clamp down on sectarian violence associated with militias, but many Iraqis, including those in leadership positions, perceived the tactics as “heavy-handed” and careless with regard to civilian lives.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki condemned the August 7 raid as damaging to his national reconciliation efforts, highlighting differences with US leaders on security policy.⁵³¹ Spokesman William Caldwell reported that Iraqi and US forces had carried out “operations against 10 death squads throughout Baghdad” and found 222 roadside bombs in the first week of the revamped security plan.⁵³²

US military leaders were reporting that “more people in Baghdad are being killed by Shi’ite death squads than by al-Qaeda and Sunni insurgents, who had been the main focus of US and Iraqi forces in the capital” previously. General George Casey, the top US commander in Iraq, reported that 60% of Baghdad killings at the time were attributable to Shi’ite death squads and declared that security forces would “dismantle all death squads, regardless of affiliation.” But it would be easier said than done. Not only were some of the militias better equipped than Iraqi forces, but the connections between the militias and certain Iraqi Shi’ite political leaders made targeting “death squads” responsible for sectarian violence a sensitive issue.⁵³³ Parliament speaker Mahmoud al-Mashhadani said, “Disbanding the militias means disbanding the Interior and Defense Ministries and disbanding the sides funding the militias in the Interior and Defense ministries.”⁵³⁴

On August 10, a combined force of 5,000 US and Iraqi troops sealed off the southern Baghdad district of Dora. Dora had been one of the most violent neighborhoods in the capital, with a murder rate peaking at 20 per day. House-to-house searches yielded some weapons caches and 36 arrests. Yet the operation in Dora also included new measures to attempt to win the support of the Iraqi civilians living there. Security forces patrolled specific beats to develop the trust of local residents and trash and rubble was cleared from the streets. “If successful, the military could use the operation as a model for similar operations in the rest of Baghdad” to stabilize the security situation.⁵³⁵

On August 13, Iraqi and US forces entered and cordoned off the Shula and Amiriyah neighbourhoods of western Baghdad. Thousands of homes and businesses were searched in operations that included the 1st and 5th Brigades of the 6th Iraqi Army Division the 5th Brigade of the 2nd Iraqi National Police Division.⁵³⁶ The tactics used in these neighbourhoods were very similar to those used in Dora:

In their struggle to quell the sectarian violence gripping the capital, thousands of US troops and their Iraqi counterparts are fanning out into Baghdad's most violent neighbourhoods, a mission that is part security sweep, part public relations.

Even as they hunt for insurgents and weapons, they are cleaning streets, reopening shops, medical clinics, and gas stations, and fixing electricity lines. In areas like Amiriyah, where insurgents melt easily into the population and sectarian distrust runs deep, success is measured not in arrests or arms confiscated, but in perceptions.

US troops accompanied Iraqi units on door-to-door searches of homes and mosques, behaving politely to build up the local residents' trust in Iraqi forces. It was a difficult process, because many Iraqi citizens felt that insurgents were simply lying low or hiding outside the secured neighbourhoods until after US troops left.⁵³⁷

Securing Baghdad was clearly the primary objective of Iraqi and Coalition efforts during the summer of 2006, and it proved to be an elusive goal. The "first phase" of Operation Forward Together was simplistic in its approach, relying on a show of strength with more Iraqi security forces on the streets manning more checkpoints. It was a relatively passive operation that spread the participating units across the city, attempting to handle the entire capital at once with no preponderance of force in any area. The plan did not anticipate the acceleration of sectarian violence and was unable to cope with the cycle of retaliatory attacks and spiralling death toll.

"Phase two" of Operation Forward Together, formulated in late July well after the failure to slow the violence was apparent, demonstrated Coalition leaders' recognition that a more coherent plan was necessary to provide security to Baghdad. It incorporated more elements of counterinsurgency warfare, specifically the "oil spot" strategy of creating secured areas one by one and the attempt to win the confidence of Iraqi civilians through more sensitive and subtle search operations and efforts to clean up battle-scarred neighbourhoods. By the end of August, US and Iraqi forces had searched more than 33,000 buildings, including 25 mosques. However, their operations yielded only 70 detained suspects and the seizure of ca. 700 weapons and 19 arms caches.⁵³⁸ The average homicide rate dropped 46% and attacks in Baghdad province fell to an average of about 23 per day, according to a US military spokesman.⁵³⁹ The introduction of more US troops in this phase was also something of an admission that Iraqi forces alone could not be counted on to handle security responsibilities. During one operation, a US company operating in western Baghdad was accompanied by only three Iraqi soldiers, often as observers.⁵⁴⁰ "Phase two" of Operation Forward Together may have been a better plan, but its true test will be when secured areas are returned to the control of Iraqi military and police units.

Part of the plan was to also subject each Iraqi brigade to a three-day reassessment.⁵⁴¹

Efforts to Secure Ramadi in Summer 2006

Ramadi, capital city of the restive Anbar province, became the focus of renewed joint US-Iraqi efforts to bring the insurgency to heel. A group of 400 American and Iraqi troops moved into the city's ruined downtown area from the west on the night of June 25, occupying houses to establish a makeshift base. US commanders adopted a more subtle strategy in retaking Ramadi than had been used in Fallujah in 2004, opting to surround

the city with bases and clear one neighborhood at a time. The plan was based on providing more permanent stabilizing forces to secure the city:⁵⁴²

Instead of leaving after the shooting stops -- as the Americans have been forced to do in other Iraqi cities -- the Americans plan to leave behind garrisons of American and Iraqi troops at various points throughout the city. For the first time, they say, they believe they have the manpower to make the strategy work. The combat outpost the Americans and Iraqis started building on Monday morning was the fifth one to go up [during June 2006] on the southern edge of the city.

Central to the strategy, American commanders say, is the decision to commit significant numbers of Iraqi troops who can hold the neighborhoods after the Americans do most of the work of pacification. That, the American commanders hope, will make the city safe enough for its shattered economy to renew itself and for Iraqi police officers to feel secure enough to start showing up for work.

Iraqi troops, however, did not always prove to be reliable allies. For example, Lt. Col. Raad Niaf Haroosh, commander of a mostly Sunni Iraqi army battalion, found himself leading only 145 men, while some 500 more refused to deploy to Ramadi. The unwillingness of security forces to fight other Iraqis, especially those of the same sect, proved to be a significant factor.⁵⁴³ An American commander reported that “out of 750 Iraqi soldiers assigned to work in Ramadi, 600 quit. ‘They didn’t want to come to Ramadi,’ he said.”⁵⁴⁴

US and Iraqi troops carried out raids in Ramadi to clear out known insurgent operating areas, most notably a local mosque and the hospital, which had been used as a major insurgent command center. The city’s “government complex, home to municipal and provincial government offices, was subjected to relentless insurgent attacks.”⁵⁴⁵ The facility was under such frequent attack that a Marine plan called for demolishing several of the surrounding buildings to create an open “Green Zone” to deny insurgents places to seek cover while attacking.⁵⁴⁶ US military commanders insisted their approach was “paying dividends as normal daily activity slowly return[ed] to the secured sections of the city” and said that rapid change could not be expected but Iraqi security force improvements were translating into better security in Ramadi.⁵⁴⁷ Still, controlling Ramadi and Anbar province were major challenges for the Iraqi government and caused Iraqi Brigadier General Jaleel Khalf to suggest that Iraqi troops would not be ready to assume control of the area for another year “under the best of circumstances,” a view backed by US commanders in the province.⁵⁴⁸

Persistent manning problems continued to seriously undermine the ability of Iraqi forces to establish security in Anbar province. US military figures show that “the two Iraqi divisions in Anbar Province are about 5,000 short of their authorized strength, while some 660 soldiers are currently AWOL.” A battalion in Haditha had 700 soldiers in the fall of 2005, but by August of 2006 had only 400. Iraqi divisions countrywide were manned at “85 to 90 percent” of authorized strength, with frequent leaves for volunteer soldiers dropping them to “65 to 70 percent strength.” In Anbar, however, with long leaves and desertions due to pay problems, the 7th and 1st Iraqi Divisions operated at 35 percent and 50 percent strength, respectively.⁵⁴⁹

The Transfer of Security Responsibilities

At the same time, the Coalition and the Iraqi government embarked on a plan to transfer provincial security responsibilities in phases. The Muthanna province, a predominantly Shi'ite area of southern Iraq bordering Saudi Arabia, became the first Iraqi province to be handed over by Coalition troops to the full control of the Iraqi government and security forces on July 13. The quiescent territory had formerly been secured by British, Australian, and Japanese troops.⁵⁵⁰ The pre-planned handover was lauded by US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and Gen. George W. Casey as "a milestone in the successful development of Iraq's capability to govern and protect itself as a sovereign and democratic nation."⁵⁵¹ It was a step in Prime Minister al-Maliki's plan to have security responsibilities transferred to Iraqi security forces province-by-province in an 18-month process.⁵⁵²

Media reports reflected a lingering MNF-I concern over the ability of the Iraqi forces to maintain order by themselves after the territorial security responsibilities were handed over. US commanders lauded the number of Iraqi troops coming on-line, which enabled them to perform a "number" of missions that US forces lacked the "combat power" to carry out. Air Force Brig. Gen. Kurt Cichowski, head of strategy and planning for US command in Iraq, noted that "troop reductions and the transfer of Iraqi security control are mutually exclusive."

Yet, complaints about the Iraqi forces from their fellow citizens ranged from accusations of corruption to complicity in sectarian attacks, suggesting a need for the continued presence of US troops. Iraqi officers insisted that they had the support of Iraqi civilians and "unconventional tactics" were a necessary part of counterinsurgency. "When [the insurgents] are fighting us, they use gangster rules," one officer noted. "We fight them using the same rules."⁵⁵³

Moreover, increasing the numbers of Iraqi forces often did no lead to better security. The fact that violence was on the increase in summer 2006 seemed to be "challenging a central assumption behind the US strategy: Training more Iraqi security forces will allow American troops to start going home." In actuality, attacks and fatalities were on the rise, especially in Baghdad. As a July report by the Government Accountability Office stated, "Even as the number of Iraqi security forces have increased, security conditions have deteriorated."⁵⁵⁴ On August 2, however, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani asserted his view that Iraqi forces could assume responsibility for security nationwide by the end of 2006, in contrast to the far less optimistic assessments of US military commanders. He termed the surge in sectarian violence "the last arrows in their quivers."⁵⁵⁵

Despite sectarian violence, the Coalition moved ahead with plans to transfer security control to Iraqi forces. On August 8, Forward Operating Base Dagger near Tikrit and the lead security role for the provinces of Nineveh, Salahuddin, and Tammim provinces to the Iraqi Army 4th Division. Following the handover, five of Iraq's 10 army divisions had primary security responsibility in their areas of operation, and 48 of 110 US bases in Iraq had been turned over to Iraqi control.⁵⁵⁶ British troops were planning to transfer full

responsibility for security in the Maysan province to Iraqi forces in the fall of 2006, training more Iraqi units and preparing to vacate its base at Abu Naji.⁵⁵⁷

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki asserted on August 17 that Iraqi forces “have become capable of taking over security tasks in the majority of the provinces and that they will be able to fill the vacuum in case the Multi-National Forces withdraw.” Iraqi forces at the time were only in full control in the Muthanna province, although the Prime Minister said that they would soon be taking responsibility in parts of the Qadisiyah province.⁵⁵⁸ However, with violence reaching new highs and the US bolstering its troop presence in an attempt to stop the killing, Maliki’s statement did not ring true. Iraqi forces may have been more capable than before, but in August 2006 there was no indication that they could uphold law and order in the face of worsening violence in most regions of the country. Al-Maliki, however, remained confident, saying on August 27 that by the end of the year, Iraqi forces would take control of all the provinces and that Coalition forces could probably completely withdraw from the country within a year.⁵⁵⁹

The Emerging “Second Threat:” Adding Shi’ite and Kurdish Violence and Militias to the ISF Mission

Prime Minister Maliki made bringing the militias under control a key priority for a reason. The CPA and Iraqi interim government had failed to deal with the militias in early 2003, when they had the chance to do so at minimal cost and risk. This left a lasting legacy that grew steadily more dangerous as the insurgency drove Shi’ites and Kurds to react in kind, and by relying on their own forces rather than those of the government. By early 2006, the militias had become a serious threat in virtually all of the provinces, cities, and areas where the insurgency had limited presence.

While any such estimates are extreme uncertain, by mid-2006 some experts estimated that Iraq’s private militia groups might outnumber the 120,000-strong police force, which continued to lose at least several hundred recruits a month.⁵⁶⁰ There were many different small militia and security forces, but the key militias operating in Iraq in the spring of 2006 had three major elements -- all of which posed a direct challenge to the authority and control of Iraqi forces:

Peshmerga: A Kurdish word meaning “those ready to die,” the Peshmerga were created in 1946 to fight for an independent Kurdish state. The forces number up to 140,000 with loyalties divided between the two main Kurdish political parties: the Kurdish Democratic Party, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. About 20,000 Peshmerga had been integrated into Iraq’s army by the spring of 2006, but were still largely based in the Kurdish provinces to the north.

Badr Brigades: A Shi’ite militia formed in Iran in the early 1980s with the aim of toppling Saddam Hussein from exile. Thought to number up to 20,000 trained individuals, it fought on the side of Iran during the Iran-Iraq war. It was once led by Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, who came to head the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIR), one of the main parties in Iraq’s ruling Shi’ite coalition. Badr changed its name to the Badr Organization after Saddam’s overthrow to shift its image away from its military roots.

Mahdi Army: Formed after Saddam’s overthrow in April 2003, it is loyal to Moqtada al-Sadr, who led two rebellions against US and British forces in 2004, and in 2006 threw its political weight in to al-Dawa party behind Shi’ite Prime Minister al-Jafari. The Mahdi Army is estimated to number around 10,000 core fighters, but has thousands more supporters that could be called on to fight.

The Shi'ite Militias as the Main New Threat

The problems with the militias were least damaging inside the areas controlled by the Kurdish government, which had long been under Kurdish control, but the Peshmerga remained a threat to both Iraqi force development and the Iraqi government in areas like Kirkuk and wherever there was tension between Kurd, Arab, Turcoman, and other minorities.

The most serious problems occurred in areas where Shi'ite militias came into contact with Sunnis, which threatened to push the country towards civil war in precisely the way that Sunni Islamist extremists sought in attacking Shi'ites and Kurds in the first place. At the same time, Shi'ite factions contended for power with the central government and each other. The most overt examples were Sadr City in Baghdad, and Basra -- Iraq's second largest city. In these cases, Iraqi forces at best had formal authority while de facto power was in the hands of the militias -- many of which committed crimes and violent acts against members of their own sect.

The Badr Organization, formerly the Badr Brigade, similarly denied charges that it was using the Ministry of the Interior, controlled by SCIRI member Bayan Jabr, to carry out attacks against Sunnis. Hadi al-Amery, the leader of the Badr Organization, claimed that the abductions and executions were the work of insurgents who had either infiltrated the ISF or were using the uniforms to mask their true identity and generate sectarian tensions. He claimed that 5% of his 20,000 Badr Brigade members had been incorporated into the security forces and that the rest were involved in politics.⁵⁶¹

He also charged that Shi'ites were more often the victims and that the violence that persists is a result of the US inability to provide security: "When you ask me who kills the Sunnis, I ask you who kills the Shi'ites? I am not responsible for security. The American forces are responsible for security...Rather than asking me, ask the Americans."⁵⁶²

On April 27, 2006, Iraq's senior Shi'ite Muslim religious figure, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, called on the country's militias to disarm. In a statement, Sistani said that "Weapons must be in the hands of government security forces that should not be tied to political parties but to the nation."⁵⁶³ This issuance, however, came amid growing concerns over militia recruiting successes in 2006. Through better pay, promises of greater levels of safety, and other perks, there was growing evidence at this time that in some instances the militias were outcompeting local police departments in recruiting to expand their forces.⁵⁶⁴

By the summer of 2006, Shi'ite militias operating in the southern province of Basra had become enough of a problem to prompt a visit from Prime Minister Nuri Kamal al-Maliki. During his visit to the city of Basra on May 31, 2006, Maliki berated local leaders regarding the breakdown of the security situation. Rival Shi'ite parties and their associated militias became embroiled in a power grab struggle as Coalition and Iraqi officials largely focused on battling the insurgency in other parts of the country. The result was a sharp increase in killings -- 174 in the two months leading up to Maliki's visit -- as the factions fought for control of the provincial government and the region's oil wealth.

Much of the killings were being carried out through rival factions within the local police force. Basra Police Chief Maj. Gen. Hassan Swadi al-Saad, said at the time that he trusted only a small fraction of his forces, as the 15,000-man force was largely manipulated by the various political parties.⁵⁶⁵

It was scarcely surprising, therefore, that one of Prime Minister Maliki's first steps in coming to office was to call for disbanding the militias or somehow incorporating them into the government or security services, and that he saw bringing the militias under control as a critical priority. It was not only critical to create a political compact that Arab Sunnis could live with, it was critical to make the central government the key authority in Iraq, and Iraqi government forces the source of security and order.

Moreover, by now there were so many different kinds of uniformed and non-uniformed guards that it was difficult for Iraqis to know who they all were, or whether they had any legitimacy. Small security detachments were also a problem. The leaders of some political parties appointed to head ministries had recruited members of their parties' armed wings to serve as guards for their ministries' facilities.

Nabil al-Haidari, Radio Free Iraq's Baghdad bureau chief, made this problem clear: "You have different kinds, and many kinds, of guard forces. There is the police, with official cars, and there are army members, with different colored uniforms, and at the same time there are some ministry guard forces, well-armed, and the strangest thing here are the many cars with civilian people who do not wear uniforms, they are well-armed and they are shouting loudly and sometimes shooting [in the air] for the people to make way for them."⁵⁶⁶ It is difficult enough to distinguish between the police and members of the al-Mahdi Army as both wear identical blue uniforms, carry the same weapons, and drive blue-and-white marked squad cars.⁵⁶⁷

US military leaders were reporting that "more people in Baghdad are being killed by Shi'ite death squads than by al-Qaeda and Sunni insurgents, who had been the main focus of US and Iraqi forces in the capital" previously. General George Casey, the top US commander in Iraq, reported that 60% of Baghdad killings at the time were attributable to Shi'ite death squads.⁵⁶⁸

US and Iraqi officials sought to avoid antagonizing militia leaders and their politically powerful backers by saying that security crackdowns were "designed to go after sectarian death squads and militias of all stripes" rather than singling out the Mahdi Army or other organizations as targets. A US officer said operations were aimed "at anyone involved in murders, kidnappings, and assassinations. 'We're not asking them what union card they're carrying,' [Brig. Gen. David] Halverston said."⁵⁶⁹

Tensions Between the Shi'ite Militias

The problems in separating Iraqi forces from the Shi'ite militias were further compounded by divisions within the Shi'ite militias. These divisions were as much political as familial and tribal. Although the differences between Sadr and Hakim and their respective Shi'ite parties became visible during talks to form a government, the conflict has historical roots extending thousands of years into the past.

Sadr supported Prime Minister al-Jafari and the Dawa party, and rallied a destitute youthful base through his often fiery rhetoric. Sadr, whose age is officially unknown, had a relatively low-ranking formal religious title. This was largely irrelevant, however, since members of both the Sadr and Hakim families had often held the title of grand ayatollah.⁵⁷⁰

Sadr was able to capitalize on government weakness, and exploit a more populist form of Shi'ite Islamist practice than the Hakims. He rebuilt and strengthened his militia. This Mahdi Army and its affiliates were more "grass roots based" than other Shi'ite militia, and did more to reach out to poor and displaced Shi'ites by providing security and basic services.⁵⁷¹

The Hakim clan was equally well known and ruthless, although it was sometimes portrayed as a wiser "old guard." It had founded SCIRI, the largest political party in Iraq and led the Badr Organization. The leader of the party, Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, opposed al-Jafari as the prime minister and openly competed with al-Sadr for the loyalty of Iraqi Shi'ites.⁵⁷²

Although both families suffered under Saddam, Sadr argued that those who escaped to surrounding countries to avoid repression should not be allowed to represent the Iraqi people in a new government.⁵⁷³ The Hakim family largely fled to Iran during Saddam's rule, and Sadr accused it of being an Iranian creation and subject to Iranian influence, SCIRI more or less worked with the US and Coalition forces.

Both factions had leaders that called for early US withdrawal, but SCIRI was far more practical about the need for continuing US and outside aid in force development. Sadr continually called for the US to leave Iraq. The divisions between Shi'ite factions thus not only led to internal clashes, but affected support for any meaningful effort at Iraqi force development.

There were ethnic problems as well. In April 2006, Shi'ite militias began to deploy to Kirkuk in substantial numbers. According to US embassy officials in the region, the Mahdi Army had sent two companies with 120 men each. The Badr Organization extended its reach into the city as well and opened several offices across the Kurdish region. The influx of Shi'ite militias began in the days following the February 22 Askariya bombing. The shift northward was justified by the organizations as a necessary step to protect Shi'ite mosques and families. Yet Shi'ites, many of whom were transferred to the area under Saddam's rule, only made up about 5% of the population in the area.⁵⁷⁴

The Kurdish Peshmerga responded by moving nearly 100 additional troops to the area. Moreover, a Sadr associate in the region, Abdul Karim Khalifa, told US officials that more men were on the way and that as many as 7,000 to 10,000 local residents loyal to the Mahdi Army would join in a fight if one were to break out.⁵⁷⁵

ISF and the Peshmerga

The Kurdish militias did not present as many problems for Iraqi security and Iraqi force development as the Shi'ite militias, but the deployment of Shi'ite militias into the Kirkuk area made it clear that this was no guarantee for the future. Kurdish separatism and claims to areas like Kirkuk and Iraq's northern oil fields remained potentially explosive issues. Thousands of Kurdish Peshmerga soldiers were incorporated into the Iraqi army during the formation of Iraqi forces.⁵⁷⁶ The Kurdish adage, "the Kurds have no friends," seemed to hold true here as well. While Kurdish army units could operate effectively in

their relatively ethnically homogenous north, they were often perceived as outsiders in Arab areas.

Even in the northern city of Balad in March 2006, a 700-man Kurdish army battalion was confined to their base by an angry and hostile Sunni population. The battalion, sent from Sulaimaniyah to bolster the lone Shi'ite forces comprised of local residents, was resisted by the large Sunni minority in the area so much so that commanders were afraid to let their soldiers leave the base. US officials in the city said that this was because the battalion was mostly former Peshmerga.⁵⁷⁷

In May, a Kurdish-dominated army unit openly clashed with its Shi'ite counterpart. The 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 4th Division hit a roadside bomb in Duluiyah north of Baghdad. Although US and Iraqi officials disagreed over the number of dead and wounded in the incident, the Kurdish division raced their wounded to the US hospital in Balad. According to police reports when they arrived they began firing their weapons, ostensibly to clear the way, killing a Shi'ite civilian. As security forces arrived, the Kurdish army unit attempted to leave and take their wounded elsewhere. A Shi'ite army unit from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Brigade tried to stop them and shots were exchanged, killing a member of the 3rd Battalion. As the Kurdish unit attempted to leave in their vehicles, a third army unit attempted to establish a roadblock to stop them. US forces however, were at the scene to intervene and restore calm.⁵⁷⁸

Dealing with the Militias: Integration or Disbandment

There were no good solutions to these problems. The militias had become far too large and powerful to ignore as political and paramilitary forces, but the largely untrained and politically polarized members of the militias that emerged by the spring of 2006 could not be integrated into Iraqi forces. Even in 2003, there already were cases where recruiting militia members from the Peshmerga and Badr Brigades into various elements of the Iraqi Security Forces showed they often had greater loyalty to their sectarian or ethnic groups than to the nation and the national armed services. The same was true later of recruits from the Mahdi Army. US intelligence agencies had provided warnings about the dangers the militias and divisions in Iraqi forces for more than two years.

By the spring of 2006, however, the resulting problems had become a critical issue. Despite the fact US military planners focused on fighting the Sunni-dominated insurgency and on recruiting and training Iraqi security forces. As US military spokesman Major General Rick Lynch said in April 2006, "Last year, as we worked through the problem set, that (militias) wasn't a problem set we focused on." Now these militias had become the primary security concern in Iraq, and US officials blamed them and their integration into the Iraqi security forces for more civilian deaths than the Sunni insurgency.⁵⁷⁹

As described on April 30, 2006 by Tom Lasseter in the Saint Paul Pioneer Press, US policymakers made several missteps in addressing the problem of Shi'ite militias.

- White House and Pentagon officials ignored numerous warnings from the intelligence community of the danger posed by the Badr Organization and the Mahdi Army. The Badr Organization is the armed wing of the Iranian-backed SCIRI. The Mahdi Army is loyal to the radical cleric Muqtada al-Sadr.

- In May 2004, L. Paul Bremer, who headed the CPA, appointed a group of high-ranking Iraqis -- known as the Transition Reintegration Implementation Committee -- to persuade militia leaders to disband their groups. However, the group received no funding for its support offices and was rendered almost completely ineffective.
- US diplomats were slow to recognize that the majority Shi'ite population's rise to power would expand rather than diminish militia activity. US officials believed that the members of the militias would either retire or be integrated into the security forces.
- Taking action against the Shi'ite militias would have undercut the Bush administration's position that foreign terrorists and Sunnis from Saddam Hussein's regime were the problem in Iraq. Any such move would also have called into question US policymakers' reliance on training largely Shi'ite security forces to replace US troops in Iraq.

The problems involved in dealing with the militias were scarcely, however, the fault of the US. Iraqi leaders and politicians were equally slow to take action. The Iraqi Constitution, ratified on October 15, 2005, stated in Chapter 1, Article (9), §1(b) that "Forming military militias outside the framework of the armed forces is banned."

It was not until March 19, 2006, however, that Iraqi officials agreed to set up a national security council that could give each of the country's main political factions a voice in making security and economic policies for a new government. This 19-member national security council was formed to address the rising sectarian tensions across Iraq, was to include the Iraqi president and prime minister, and would hold more power than the Cabinet.

Although a council with powers beyond those of the Cabinet was not mentioned in the Iraqi constitution, Kurdish leaders had originally proposed the council in January 2006 to check the power of the Shi'ite alliance, to help stem Iraq's sectarian bloodshed, and to avert civil war. The Council was expected to set policies governing the army and police, the counter insurgency campaign in Sunni Muslim Arab areas, and the disarmament of Shi'ite Muslim militias accused of sectarian killings. The Council was also to oversee economic matters such as the budget and the allocation of oil revenues.⁵⁸⁰

The push to deal with sectarian militias gathered momentum in other ways. On February 8, 2006, Abdul Aziz Hakim, the head of SCIRI and Iraq's most powerful Shi'ite political leader, made a rare acknowledgement of Sunni leaders' demands that the Shi'ite dominated government rein in the police and army. He called upon security forces "to continue strongly confronting terrorists but with more consideration to human rights."⁵⁸¹

US Ambassador Khalilzad said on April 23 in the northern Iraqi city of Irbil that militias and other unauthorized armed groups posed "a serious challenge to stability in Iraq, to building a successful country based on the rule of law...There is a need for a decommissioning, demobilization and reintegration plan for these unauthorized military formations so that the monopoly for the use of force will be in the hands of authorized people in the Iraqi government."⁵⁸²

The newly forming Iraqi government announced separate initiatives to address the growing problem of militias and armed groups in Iraq. Prime Minister designate Nuri al-Maliki announced the first of these, called Law 91, on April 22, 2006. This initiative aims to merge the militias into Iraq's security forces. The law, drafted by the CPA in June

2004, named 11 militias affiliated with parties and political forces. As Maliki told reporters, "Law No. 91 will take care of integrating [militias] into the armed forces according to rules that don't downplay the rights of those who struggled against the dictatorship."⁵⁸³

Law No. 91 had a dual impact, said Hassan Bazzaz, a political analyst in Baghdad. "It's a message in two directions, One to those who are scared of the militias and the other message is the the militia people: 'We will take care of you.'"⁵⁸⁴ Unsurprisingly, the law met criticism on several fronts.

- Mohammed Bashar Amin, a spokesman for the Sunni Muslim Scholars Association said of Maliki's initiative, "He announced that he will merge militias with the security forces instead of bringing those who committed crimes and atrocities to justice. Thousands of Iraqis have been killed by those militias."⁵⁸⁵
- Sunni leader Salih al-Mutlaq criticized the plan as well, Al-Sharqiyah television reported on May 3, 2006. "Militias are plaguing Iraq. They, along with the occupation, are responsible for the current state of Iraq. We feel that retaining the militias within the security services is extremely dangerous. We are opposed to retaining them in, or further integrating them into the armed and security forces."
- Secular Shi'ite politician and former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi voiced his opposition to the plan in an April 26, 2006 interview with Radio Free Iraq. "We want militias to end. We do not want to have them integrated in the military and similar structures of the state. No integration. The integration would mean creating one regiment Shi'ite, another one Sunni, and another one loyal to the [Iraqi National] Accord, another one loyal to the Supreme Council [of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq], another one loyal to someone else -- and what will be the result? There will be fights. We want an army built in a style that is recognized."

While Sunni Arab leaders opposed this Maliki initiative, they voiced support for President Jalal Talabani's proposal, announced on April 30, 2006 to begin a dialogue with seven, unidentified armed groups to lay down their arms and join the political process. Sunni leaders were skeptical that the groups with whom Talabani was talking were really major players in the insurgency, but as Sunni leader al-Mutlaq said, "I encourage him (Talabani) to stick to this approach and try to reach the real [resistance] factions so that they may be contained within the political process." Shi'ite politicians were more skeptical of Talabani's proposed talks and speculated that the armed groups in question were linked to terrorists and Ba'athists. Talabani denied that the groups were either Saddam Hussein loyalists or linked to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi.⁵⁸⁶

One key problem was that efforts to disentangle Iraqi politicians from militia groups posed a complicated challenge. Eleven of Maliki's main political rivals in parliament still ran their own armies in the spring of 2006.⁵⁸⁷ Prime Minister Maliki's political coalition was supported by the two main Shi'ite militias, the Iranian-trained Badr Brigade -- also known as the Badr Organization and the Badr Corps -- and Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army. Salman Jumaili, a spokesman for the Iraqi Islamic Party, a leading Sunni political group, summarized this situation as follows: "He (Maliki) has a very hard task in front of him, especially in dealing with the militia...The Sadr [faction] supports him, but he has to defuse their militia...to comply with the national unity project."

Similarly, President Talabani, a Kurd, defended the 70,000-strong Kurdish peshmerga as a “regulated force.”⁵⁸⁸ Talabani said that he would not permit the disbandment of the Peshmerga because it has played a major role in protecting the Kurdish people.

Moreover, many Shi’ite politicians refused to refer to their armed wings as militias and dismissed allegations that any members of the Iraqi security forces were loyal to Shi’ite clerics such as Sadr rather than to Baghdad. Hadi al-Amiri, secretary-general of the Badr Organization, said that he favored disarming militias and merging them with the national army. But he did not characterize the Badr Organization as a militia. “This organization proudly carried weapons against the Saddam regime. After the downfall of the Saddam regime, it turned into a political organization,” he said.⁵⁸⁹

Baha al-Araji, a Sadr supporter in the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA), echoed these sentiments. He said that there were many laws that applied to militias, “but if they mean the al-Mahdi Army, then this army is not affiliated with any institution. It represents a popular trend. It was formed according to a natural reaction.”⁵⁹⁰

On April 22, 2006, Iraq’s prime minister designate, Nuri al-Maliki told reporters at a press briefing in Baghdad that the government would take steps to integrate militias into the Iraqi national armed forces. Pursuant to the new Law 91, 11 militias affiliated with parties and political forces were named in the law, according to al-Maliki. The law was drafted by the Coalition Provisional authority in Jun 2004.

US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad responded to this action by asserting the necessity for a decommissioning, demobilization, and reintegration plan for these unauthorized forces, adding that unauthorized formations are the “infrastructure of a civil war.”⁵⁹¹ The law also had the support of Shi’ite Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. A statement issued by Sistani’s office stated that only government troops should be allowed to carry weapons in Iraq.

The integration plan faced opposition from both Sunni and Shi’ite leaders. Sunnis criticized a plan that called for the integration of individuals responsible for acts of sectarian brutality into the armed forces. Meanwhile, secular Shi’ite politicians and former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi voiced concerns of a national military with individuals who could remain more loyal to other political or ethnically affiliated organizations than to the state of Iraq.⁵⁹²

The “Third Threat”: Internal Problems in the Ministries of Defense and Interior and Iraqi Force Development

The combination of the insurgent and militia threats interacted to create another threat to Iraqi force development, this time within Iraqi forces. It created a growing risk that Iraqi force development could fail because of ethnic and sectarian tensions. At a minimum, Iraqi force development faced a growing problem in terms of internal discipline and ties between some elements of Iraqi forces and Shi’ite attacks on Sunnis.

These problems were worst in the Ministry of Interior, but they were only part of the problem. They were serious in the Facilities Protection Service and local security forces of other ministries. They were compounded by the failure of the Ministry of Justice to

create an effective criminal justice, court, and prison system throughout the country, even in many areas where the insurgency was a relatively minor threat.

Militia Infiltration into Iraqi Forces

Militia infiltration into the Ministry of Interior security and police forces was a steadily growing problem in 2005 and early 2006. Substantial numbers of men from both the Badr Organization and the Moqtada Al Sadr's Mahdi Army joined the force. In the case of the roughly 65,000 strong mix of MOI and police forces in the greater Baghdad area, the men from the Badr Organization tended to go into the MOI special security units and those from the Mahdi Army tended to join the police.

Both MNF-I and the Iraqi government were slow to react. The Iraqi government and Coalition continued to claim the situation was improving during much of 2005, although a September 2005 report by the ICG suggested that the process of drafting a constitution had helped exacerbate the existing ethnic and sectarian divisions between Iraqis.⁵⁹³

Much of the problem began at the top of the MOI. The appointment in May 2005 of Bayan Jabr, as the interim head of the Interior Ministry -- which oversaw the nation's police and specialized security units -- exacerbated all these problems. Jabr was a prominent member of SCIRI, with close ties to Iran and to the Badr Brigade. It is unclear how many of the growing problems with the special security forces, police, prisons, and militias were really Jabr's fault -- he had limited power and freedom of action -- but it is clear that no decisive action took place without major pressure on the minister by the US embassy and MNF-I.

This situation was made worse by severe understaffing of the Coalition advisory effort to both the Ministry of Interior and the police, a problem that continued until at least early 2006. It was also made worse by the fact that control of the US advisory effort to the MOI was placed under the US State Department while control of the advisory effort to the MOD was placed under the Department of Defense. This situation was corrected in October 2005, by putting the MOI under the Department of Defense, but this scarcely meant adequate staffing of the advisory effort, and problems in getting qualified civilian advisors continued to be severe.

In any case, Sunni politicians increasingly viewed Jabr's position as particularly troubling during the efforts to form a new government, and blamed the ministry for a wave of Sunni-targeted kidnappings, tortures, and murders allegedly carried out by men wearing police uniforms. In late 2005, the Interior Ministry was found to be running secret detention centers in which more than 800 men and boys, mostly Sunnis, were held in horrific conditions. (The Iraqi Constitution only authorizes the Ministry of Justice to run prisons.)⁵⁹⁴

By late 2005, US officials and military sources were complaining that the MOI and Minister Jabr were not informing them of some MOI and police operations and privately acknowledged that they had observed prisoner abuse. Commenting on the futility of filing reports against the incidents, one US official equated it with "trying to put out a forest fire with a bucket of water."⁵⁹⁵

They expressed particular concern about the actions of the MOI's Maghawir or Fearless Warrior special commando units, and that they were carrying out illegal raids and killings. This 12,000-man force had a number of Sunni officers and had originally been formed under the authority of former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi. Since the new government was formed in April 2005 however, it had recruited larger numbers of new Shi'ite members. Its commander, General Rashid Flaih Mohammed, was reported to have acknowledged that the unit had had some problems. Sunni police commanders like Brigadier General Mohammed Ezzawi Hussein Alwann, commander of the Farook Brigade, were also purged from the MOI forces, along with junior officers.⁵⁹⁶

The inability to distinguish clearly between different types of Iraqi forces, and imposters from real elements of Iraqi forces, became steadily more serious over time. During the winter of 2005 and 2006, body dumps became a favored tactic for both insurgents and militias. Although this trend existed long before the February 22 Askariya bombing, it increased thereafter and became part of the cyclical sectarian violence carried out by Shi'ites and Sunnis. It would be almost impossible to catalogue all of the discoveries, but finding ten to twenty corpses at one site was not uncommon, and each day usually resulted in at least one "body dump" being reported. For example, in the period from March 7 until March 21, over 191 bodies were found. On one day in May, it was reported that 51 bodies were found in Baghdad alone. A health official in Baghdad said that there were over 2,500 murders in the capital since the February bombing, excluding mass-casualty bombings.⁵⁹⁷

There were common characteristics to many "mystery killings." The victims increasingly were relatively ordinary Shi'ites or Sunnis and were not directly working for the government of Coalition forces. Often times victims were taken from their homes or businesses in daylight by masked gunmen or men wearing police or security force uniforms and driving standard issue trucks. These attributes, and the fact that the bodies were almost always found in the same condition -- blindfolded, handcuffed, and shot in the head showing signs of torture-- lent credibility to the claim that many of the killings were perpetrated by Shi'ite militias themselves, or elements of security forces dominated by these militias.

The frequency of such "extra-judicial killings" was discussed in a UN Human Rights Report and linked to police forces: "A large number of extrajudicial killings, kidnappings and torture were reportedly perpetrated mainly by members of armed militias linked to political factions or criminal gangs. The same methods of execution-style killings are usually used: mass arrests without judicial warrant and extrajudicial executions with bodies found afterwards bearing signs of torture and killed by a shot to the head."

In its 2005 Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Iraq, released March 8, 2006, the State Department reported that Iraqi police units, often infiltrated and even dominated by members of sectarian militias, continue to be linked to arbitrary arrests and to the torture, rape, and sometimes death of detainees. The report said of the situation in Iraq:

The vast majority of human rights abuses reportedly carried out by government agents were attributed to the police. Militias, including members of the Badr Organization and the Mahdi Army, penetrated some police units. The minister of interior was an official in SCIRI, the sponsor of the Badr Organization; the governor of Baghdad was a SCIRI member and a leader in the Badr Organization, as were five other provincial governors selected by their respective Governorate Councils under CPA Order 71. On June 7, President Jalal Talabani praised the Kurdish and Badr

militias, calling them necessary to sweep away the remnants of the dictatorship and defeat terrorism. Police officers, some of whom were members of militias, abused official powers and resources, including police vehicles, to pursue personal, criminal, and party agendas. Criminals impersonating police officers also carried out illegal acts including kidnapping.

The level of actual abuses is hard to determine. Far more charges were made than could be validated, and Sunni Islamic insurgents and some Sunni political figures had a strong motive to try to implicate the security services even when they had no guilt. Some of the killings in late November involved key Sunni politicians, leading members of the Iraqi Islamic Party, and a member of the Sunni coalition competing in the December 15 elections. Shi'ites seemed to have little reason to strike at such targets.⁵⁹⁸

Nevertheless, by the beginning of 2006, it was clear that both the Coalition and Iraqi government had to react, and that political progress could not occur without progress in security. Accusations of "retaliation killings," and the implication of Shi'ite-dominated MOI and security forces in acts of violence perpetrated largely against Sunni Arabs, increased sectarian tensions and moved the country closer toward civil war.

US Maj. Gen. William G. Webster, Jr. stated during a press briefing that one of the most important focuses of the US military in Iraq in the coming months would be to train Iraqi forces to operate within the rule of law and with respect for human rights. In addition, he called for efforts to promote "a greater ethnic and sectarian balance within those forces" and a "spirit of national service."⁵⁹⁹ In an attempt to address these concerns, the US had tripled the number of training teams being attached to Iraqi police forces.

Shi'ite and Sunni tensions had other impacts on efforts to develop Iraqi forces. In December 2005 the US Army's 3rd Infantry Division, deployed to Baghdad, had to threaten to demote the readiness rating of an Iraqi Army division scheduled to take over part of the Green Zone and to suspend the transfer of authority indefinitely when Iraq's Defense Ministry refused to confirm the appointment of Col. Muhammed Wasif Taha, a Sunni. US Col. Ed Cardon, commander of the 3rd infantry's fourth brigade, defended the decision saying, "The hand-over was contingent upon their leadership remaining where it was." Although the Defense Ministry eventually capitulated and confirmed Taha as the commander of the brigade, a spokesman for the ministry indicated that it still had the right to replace Taha at a later date.⁶⁰⁰

Continuing Prison, Death Squad, and Other Abuses

The discovery of some 200 Sunnis held in horrible conditions in a bunker in Baghdad in November 2005 was one of the first clear indications of how serious the problem had become. Many of these prisoners were tortured, and the Special Investigative Unit carrying out the detentions was an MOI unit run by an MOI brigadier general and colonel. The colonel was an intelligence officer said to be reporting directly to Jabr.

While the revelations of such large-scale abuses drew the most attention, less severe, day-to-day incidents are no less important and can be illustrative of the underlying sectarian tension in Iraq. For example, when several policemen arrived at an Iraqi police station with three suspected insurgents in plastic cuffs, US Sgt. 1st Class Joel Perez had to cut the cuffs because they were too tight and causing the prisoners' hands to swell and turn blue. Later, one of the Iraqi policeman involved confided in a reporter, "They [the insurgents]

need to be beaten up. The Americans wont let us...I want to have two cars and tie each hand to a different car and break them in half.”⁶⁰¹

In the early months of 2006, these allegations led to investigations. In February, enough evidence and outcry had accumulated to force the MOI to launch an investigation into allegations it was supporting death squads. This investigation however focused only on one incident in which 22 Iraqi police were briefly detained by US authorities on their way to kill a Sunni prisoner in their custody.⁶⁰²

This event led to the first public acknowledgement by the MOI that death squads operated within its own department and the Ministry of Defense. During a press conference in March, Bayan Jabr, Minister of the Interior said, “The death squads that we have captured are in the defense and interior ministries...There are people who have infiltrated the army and the interior.”⁶⁰³

Only one month later however, Jabr made a statement to the contrary. In April he said that these death squads were members of private security forces, not government forces. He claimed that such private companies employ 180,000 security agents, many of whom “are uniformed like the police, their cars like the police.” Similarly, he claimed that, “[t]errorists or someone who supports the terrorists...are using the clothes of the police or the military.”⁶⁰⁴ In May, he reiterated this claim, but upped the number of private security agents to 200,000.⁶⁰⁵

There was evidence to support this. Police uniforms, insignia and equipment were available at some markets. Reportedly, patches with the emblem of the Iraqi police, “IP,” were available for as little as 35 cents and entire uniforms could be purchased for \$13.50.⁶⁰⁶

These problems were yet another factor that eventually forced the Iraqi government to conduct a major reorganization of all the Iraqi forces in the MOI, rename some units guilty of sectarian or ethnic abuses, and issue some units new uniforms and new badges. But these steps did not gather full momentum until May, and it was not until mid-June that Iraqi forces were deployed in large numbers in areas like Baghdad with new badges and insignia.

Iraq’s Deputy Justice Minister, Pusho Ibrahim Ali Daza Yei (a Kurd) sent a letter in June to Major General John D. Gardner, the officer in charge of the US detention system, stating that the nation’s prison system had become so dominated by Shi’ite militias, who continued to free criminals and revanchists of their own sect, and persecute Sunnis, that the Coalition should delay transferring prisons and detainees from Coalition control to the Iraqi government.⁶⁰⁷ The abuses of Sunnis included torture and rape, and Yei indicated that he believed the problem could not be fully corrected until the end of 2006 or in 2007.

This announcement came at a time that Prime Minister Maliki was freeing thousands of detainees, many of whom had turned out to be innocent or only had tenuous ties to the insurgency. The total number of prisoners in early June included more than 15,000 detainees in five US prisons, 7,426 prisoners in Ministry of Justice facilities (many transferred out of the MOI because of past abuses), 1,979 still in MOI facilities, and an unknown number in MOD prisons.

Dealing with Growing Problems in Basra and the South

It was particularly difficult for the US and its allies to deal with abuses of power by Shi'ite dominated security forces in the south. In the predominately Shi'ite city of Basra, British troops arrested 14 Iraqi law enforcement officials, including two senior police intelligence officers, in late January 2006. While several were released, the British claimed those who remained in custody, including the deputy chief of intelligence for Basra, had been involved in political corruption, assassinations, and bomb-making.

Local Iraqi officials denounced what they viewed as excessively "random arrests" and threatened to suspend relations with British forces until the men were released. Maj. Peter Cripps, a British military spokesman in Basra, defended the arrests saying that those arrested "were all part of the former Internal Affairs department that was disbanded by the Ministry of Interior and are now in the criminal intelligence unit and the serious crimes unit. They are alleged to be following their own agenda, including corruption, assassinations and persecutions of citizens."⁶⁰⁸

The British cited the role of militias in the security forces as one of the factors that contributed to the decline of the security situation in Basra, where murder rates doubled to more than one per day between November 2005 and February 2006. The Basra police chief stated that more than half of the 12,000 member forces were militia members and that he could only trust a quarter of his officers. British efforts to instill humane treatment techniques in local police and teach them forensic investigative methods were frustrated by the release of a video showing British soldiers beating a group of young, unarmed Iraqi boys.⁶⁰⁹

The growing distrust between the British and certain parts of the new police force resulted in UK troops being asked to leave when they arrived for a meeting at a Basra station to discuss equipment and professional development. The Iraqi officer who instructed them to do so said he had received a call from his superior who threatened his job if he allowed the British to enter.⁶¹⁰ Tensions between British troops and Shi'ites in Basra flared again in May when a British helicopter crashed in a populated area. When British soldiers arrived on the scene they were pelted with rocks and even Molotov cocktails from demonstrators, estimated to be around 300, cheering the wrecked Lynx helicopter.⁶¹¹

Although initial reports did not rule on the cause of the crash, in subsequent days British intelligence indicated that it was likely a surface-to-air missile, possibly with Iranian origins.⁶¹² British officials said that a splinter group of the Mahdi Army, backed by fundamentalists in Iran, was responsible for the violence that followed when soldiers arrived to rescue any survivors of the crash. Intelligence sources also indicated that there were groups that had broken off from the Mahdi Army and were no longer under Sadr's control, but were rather being supplied and funded by terror groups from within Iran.⁶¹³ This caused Lt. Gen. Sir Rob Fry, deputy commander of all multi-national forces in Iraq, to assert that if the Iraqi government failed to take control of the militias in Basra, British troops would be used to clear them out.

Rising Uncertainty as to the Role of Iraqi Forces in Sectarian and Ethnic Violence

Abductions committed by groups of individuals wearing Iraqi Special Forces uniforms were an ongoing problem in early 2006. Although the Ministry of Interior continually denied the existence of “death squads” within the predominately Shi’ite MOI forces, the ministry launched an internal investigation to address the accusations. Some Sunni leaders estimated that 1,600 people had been killed in what they identified as a campaign of sectarian violence.⁶¹⁴

For example, an inquiry was launched into the infiltration of Iraq’s police by militia forces in mid-February 2006. A 22-man death squad was caught red-handed at a checkpoint in Baghdad. When questioned, the men admitted they were on their way to executing a Sunni prisoner. Four of the men were suspected of having links to the Badr brigades, the armed wing of the Shi’ite Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution. They were arrested and held in the US detention facility at Abu Ghraib. The others were taken to an Iraqi jail.

Although accurate numbers are impossible to obtain, the increasing scale of targeted sectarian killings and similar violence reached the point by 2006 where it changed the nature of the Iraq war and threatened to plunge Iraq into deeper civil conflict.

Baghdad, a “mixed” city, was ground zero for much of this violence. More Iraqi civilians were killed in Baghdad during the first three months of 2006, than at any time since the end of the Saddam regime. Between January and March, 3,800 Iraqi civilians were killed, a significant number of which were found tied, shot in the head, and showing signs of torture.⁶¹⁵ According to the Baghdad morgue in May 2006, it received on average 40 bodies a day. Anonymous US officials disclosed that the targeted sectarian killings, or soft-sectarian cleansing, claim nine times more lives than car bombings, and that execution killings increased by 86% in the nine weeks after the February Askariya mosque bombing.⁶¹⁶

Sectarian militias did more than infiltrate the security forces. There were numerous incidents of the Mahdi Army installing its own members to head hospitals, dental offices, schools, trucking companies, and other private businesses. Rank employees are often fired for no reason. As a Baghdad University professor said, “We are all victims of this new thought police. No longer content to intimidate us with violence, these militias want to control our every move, so they appoint the administrators and managers while dissenters lose their jobs.”⁶¹⁷

The end result was that Sunni neighborhoods in western Baghdad formed citizen groups to keep the paramilitary forces out of their areas entirely. Young men took turns standing in the streets after the 11 pm curfew and sent signals by flashlights and cell phones if strangers approached. In some cases, citizens set up barricades and took up arms against Shi’ite-led commando raids into their neighborhoods. In other cases, residents tipped off Sunni insurgents.⁶¹⁸ Sunni residents attributed the recent drop in paramilitary raids to neighborhood patrols obstructing them. Sunnis cited the fact that killers now struck targets at their workplaces, in hospitals, and while they commuted.⁶¹⁹

Such actions also, however, created new divisions within the Iraqi forces. For example, Iraqi Army night patrols checked in on the citizen watch groups in some areas in Baghdad after dark. Many Sunnis said that they tolerated the Iraqi Army, despite their fear of the Iraqi special police, considering it more professional and less partisan.⁶²⁰

Acts of sectarian violence in the summer of 2006 were increasingly perpetrated by men wearing uniforms, resulting in a continuing lack of trust in the security forces amongst ordinary Iraqis. Shi'ite militias impersonating or operating within the security forces were presumed to be responsible for much of the activity. A Sunni citizen of Baghdad said, "Whenever I see uniforms now, I figure they must be militias. I immediately try and avoid them."

Even Interior Ministry spokesman Brig. Abdul-Rahman admitted "that when he sees men in uniform in Baghdad, he makes sure to keep his distance. 'I just know,' he said, 'that they are authorized to shoot.'" Interior Minister Jawad Bolani "acknowledged rogues were among his ranks. He told Parliament that new uniforms and identification cards would soon be supplied to hobble those 'who carry out bad activities under the cover of this institution.'"

Sunni spokesmen, however, "said the Shi'ite-led government would never end corruption and killings by officers or impersonators until it broke with Shi'ite militias."⁶²¹ The security forces remained unwilling to confront the militias, highlighting the troublesome role of militant sectarian politics in the Iraqi government.

The Battle for Adhamiya

One key example of the problems such violence created for Iraqi force development occurred in Adhamiya in April 2006. Although the exact events were unclear, it appeared that in a two-day gun battle in the Adhamiya district, a Sunni neighborhood near Baghdad, had been the result of a local Sunni militia attempting to repel what it thought were Shi'ite "death squads." US officials countered however, that Coalition forces and the Iraqi Army were on patrol when they received fire from insurgents. Later a joint US-Iraqi checkpoint again took fire, at which point reinforcements were called in. Although the residents may have mistaken US and Iraqi Army patrols for the Shi'ite dominated police, it nonetheless demonstrated that localized Sunni militias were capable and willing to mount a coordinated defense. Moreover, it was a testament to the increasingly polarized divisions between the security forces and the overall relationships between Iraqi Sunnis and Shi'ites.⁶²²

Residents said that the neighborhood security force, which had formed in the aftermath of the February 22 Askariya bombing to protect their families and homes from Shi'ite militias, took up positions on rooftops and began firing at military vehicles. Other men went house-to-house urging able males to join the fight. "We defended our neighborhood, our mosques and our honor," said one man who was part of the battle."⁶²³

Word spread throughout the town that the incoming men were "Iranians;" a slang term meaning that they were part of the Shi'ite groups that fled to Iran during Saddam's rule, and then returned after his fall in 2003.⁶²⁴ Both the Badr Organization and the Mahdi Army were said to have ties to Iran.

There were unconfirmed reports by some witnesses that the Iraqi Army, which was generally more Sunni-dominated, fought with the residents against the Shi'ite-dominated police forces of the Interior Ministry. One woman claimed that the local "heroes of Adhamiyah" were rallying the townspeople to "teach [the Iranians] a lesson" and urged them to "support the Iraqi Army."⁶²⁵

Regardless of whether Shi'ite militias, security forces, or the Iraqi army were the ones entering the town, the perception in the larger Sunni community was that it was another example of Shi'ite death squads tied to the government conducting sectarian cleansing, and their outrage was expressed accordingly.

"We have evidence that some officials and militias are up to their necks in the killings and kidnappings that take place daily in Baghdad," said Sunni politician Dhafi al-Ani. Well known Sunni politician Adnan al-Dulaimi echoed these sentiments and accused the government of waging "the ugliest form of ethnic cleansing," against the Sunni communities and blamed "the existence of unleashed militia, including some militia backed by foreign powers who have only one goal that is to see Iraqis slaughtered in a sectarian war." Saleh al-Mutlaq, a possible candidate for a high level ministerial post and the leader of the Iraqi Front for National Dialogue, demanded that government police forces "stop their raiding, kidnapping and looting."⁶²⁶

The following day, al-Qa'ida in Iraq issued a statement promising "a new raid to avenge the Sunnis at Adhamiyah and the other areas, and the raid will start with the dawn of Wednesday, if God wishes...The Shi'ite areas will be an open battlefield for us."⁶²⁷

The Jafari government claimed that the violence was instigated by terrorist groups masked as security and police forces that had moved in the area. Specifically, the Shi'ite dominated government accused the Islamic Army of Iraq, the 1920 Revolution Brigades, and al-Qa'ida of intentionally trying to "destabilize the city because of its political, demographic and media importance." The statement by al-Jafaari's office continued, "They launched ugly rumors that they belong to the Interior Ministry commando force. These armed groups started to shoot at an Iraqi army camp in two assaults."⁶²⁸

With such a wide variety of accounts of the same events, it was impossible to prove or disprove the version put forth by the Iraqi government. However, in the past, the MOI and the government in general frequently deflected accusations of atrocities by Shi'ite "death squads" by claiming that it was the work of insurgents purporting to be Iraqi security forces. While it would make sense for Islamist insurgents, seeking to foment a civil war, to utilize this tactic, there seemed to be scant evidence to support this claim. To the contrary, the incorporation of Shi'ite militias into the security forces, and the frequency of mysterious abductions and body dumps, especially since the February bombing of the Shi'ite shrine, were all well documented.

While it was unclear if these Sunni "neighborhood watch" groups would cooperate with, or support the "Ba'athist," "nationalist" or "Islamist" elements of the insurgency, reporting of the events portrayed the acts by the "Adhamiya Defense Committees" as a legitimate act of self defense, rather than an insurgent attack on US and Iraqi forces. For

example, the Iraqi newspaper al-Zaman asserted that the “people of Adhamiya had foiled a night assault” by Shi’ite “death squads.”⁶²⁹

These incidents help lead the US to openly voice its disapproval of al-Jafari as the next prime minister in late March. Ambassador Khalilzad added that due to his lack of leadership, Shi’ite-led militias were now killing more Iraqis than the Sunni insurgency.⁶³⁰ Al-Jafari’s response, which warned the US not to interfere with the democratic process in Iraq, addressed the issue of Shi’ite militias being incorporated in the security forces and his political alliance with al-Sadr, whose support put him in office. He stated that he favored engaging with Sadr and his followers instead of isolating him and that he viewed the militias as part of Iraq’s “de facto reality.” He continued to voice support for a government that looks past sectarian differences and to work toward integrating the militias into the police and army.⁶³¹

The Growing Cost of the Iraqi Political Vacuum

The UN Assistance Mission for Iraq’s Human Rights Report specifically highlighted the threat of militias within the security forces and that it had received information “regarding the actions of some segments of the security forces, in particular the police and special forces, and their apparent collusion with militias in carrying out human rights violations.”⁶³²

There were concerns that even Iraqi brigades that were regarded as “mixed” -- in that they struck a balance between Shi’ites and Sunnis within their ranks -- sometimes had elements that took the Shi’ite side. There were reports of at least one soldier who was proudly wearing an al-Sadr t-shirt under his Army uniform. In interviews as well, many of the soldiers privately confided that if they were ever asked to fight the Mahdi Army, they would have to quit the Iraqi forces.⁶³³ Brig. Gen. Abdul Kareem Abdul Rahman al-Yusef, a Sunni, admitted that his brigade was 87% Shi’ite and included members of the Badr Organization. Despite this, he still believed that “it’s not the time to ask the militias to put down their arms,” given that the government cannot provide security to its citizens.⁶³⁴

As Lt. Col. Chris Pease, deputy commander of the US military’s police training programs in eastern Baghdad put it, “We’re not stupid. We know for a fact that they’re killing people. We dig the damn bodies out of the sewer all of the time. But there’s a difference between knowing something and proving something.” Capt. Ryan Lawrence, an intelligence officer with the 2nd Brigade Special Police Transition Team, displayed similar feelings: “Training and equipping a force, while knowing that at least some element is infiltrated by militias, is a difficult situation.”⁶³⁵

Pease also admitted that an Iraqi police officer had confided in him the reality and extent of the militia infiltration into ISF. “His assessment was that the militias are everywhere,” Pease said, “and his officers weren’t going to do anything about that because their units are infiltrated and they know what the cost would be for working against the militias.”⁶³⁶

US observers also noted that the fact that militias and other armed groups could sometimes operate unimpeded by Iraqi Security Forces did more than demonstrate to the Iraqi people that Iraqi government had no monopoly on the use of force. This had a direct effect on how citizens

viewed the government as an effective purveyor of security. For some, militias were viewed as the only way to protect against insurgents and terrorists. For others, often the militias and at times the security forces were the source of the terror. As one Baghdad resident, a member of a joint-Sunni/Shi'ite "neighborhood watch" group put it, "We've been told over and over that the political process is going to make us safer, but all we see are parties fighting over ministries so they can get jobs and money for themselves. If we don't protect ourselves, no one will."⁶³⁷

MOI Problems Continue

Problems with the MOI continued well into the spring of 2006, sometimes in less obvious ways like tacitly allowing violence. For example, when specific intelligence indicating a series of car bombs were likely led to public warning on April 7 by the MOI that told Iraqis not to gather in crowded areas, the ISF failed to act. The ministry had to threaten legal action against "any security official who fails to take the necessary procedures to foil any terrorist attack in his area."⁶³⁸

Another method was failing to use the output of the MNSTC-I training effort properly. Jonathan Steele reported in *The Guardian* on April 4, 2006 that the Interior Ministry had not deployed any graduates of the civilian police assistance team (CPATT), a joint US/UK-trained unit, for three months and instead hired its own men to put on the streets. The CPATT was designed to put the police on a fair footing in the wake of Saddam Hussein's regime and to ensure that the force maintained an equitable ethnic and sectarian balance. While senior Interior Ministry officials argued that they had no control of the CPATT's selection process, the Interior Ministry's refusal to deploy the new recruits further fueled accusations among Sunni leaders that the ministry supported partisan militias infiltrating Iraqi police forces and so-called "death squads" which were said to be responsible for abducting and murdering hundreds of Sunnis.⁶³⁹

In what may have been the largest incident at the time involving MOI security forces, gunmen wearing MOI uniforms allegedly stormed a Sunni owned security firm in early March and abducted 50 of its employees.⁶⁴⁰ The Interior Ministry denied its involvement in the event, but few Iraqis had confidence in such denials, and this was only one incident of many.

Later in the same month, for example, investigators discovered and broke up a group of police who ran a kidnapping and extortion ring. Allegedly led by an Iraqi police major general, this group kidnapped individuals, sometimes killing them, and forced their families to pay ransoms that they then pocketed.⁶⁴¹

In April, the bodies of three young men were recovered from a sewage ditch. According to co-workers, the three were last seen being arrested by MOI forces after their minibus had been pulled over.⁶⁴² In May, two employees of the al-Nahrain television station were kidnapped on their way home by MOI forces, according to witnesses. Their bodies were found the next day, along with six other Sunni men. All had been blindfolded, burned with cigarettes, and severely beaten.⁶⁴³

The MOI continued to deny that it had any role in the increased sectarian violence since the February shrine bombing, but accusations mounted and the accumulation of incidents made this denial more difficult.

In some cases, this benefited Coalition forces at the expense of Iraqi forces. For some Sunnis, the presence of US forces provided a degree of assurance against abuses of power by Iraqi security forces. For example, an advisory on a Sunni-run television network told its viewers not to allow Iraqi police or soldiers into their homes unless US troops were present.⁶⁴⁴ In Dora, local leaders agreed that Iraqi forces could only conduct raids in mosques if US soldiers accompanied them. This same rule was later implemented in Baghdad as well.

Sunnis sometimes requested the presence of US troops in Islamic holy places during searches, something that earlier would have been inconceivable. This was a testament to the depth of sectarian divides and the genuine distrust between the Shi'ite dominated police forces and Sunni communities.⁶⁴⁵ As Ali Hassan, a Sunni, bluntly stated, "We prefer to be detained by Americans instead of Iraqis. Second choice would be the Iraqi army. Last choice, Iraqi police."⁶⁴⁶

Seeking to Change the Iraqi Force Development Effort in Response

These pressures forced the Iraqi government and Coalition to react in ways that had a growing impact on Iraqi force development. There were questions about the proper response. For example, US military procedure and policy in dealing with Iraqi force abuses of prisoners and detainees led to a back-and-forth between Secretary Rumsfeld and Joint Chief of Staff Peter Pace. Pace declared that, "it's absolutely the responsibility of every US service member if they see inhumane treatment being conducted to intervene to stop it." Secretary Rumsfeld countered, "I don't think you mean they have an obligation to physically stop it; it's to report it." Pace respectfully reiterated, "If they are physically present when inhumane treatment is taking place, sir, they have an obligation to stop it." At the same time, former Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi commented to a British newspaper that "people are doing the same as Saddam's time and worse."⁶⁴⁷

The US did, however, push hard for the overall reform of both the Ministry of Interior and the rogue elements of Iraqi forces. In a February 2006 Department of Defense report to Congress, "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq," police, military and justice detention facilities were singled out as being "typically maintained at higher standards than those of the Ministry of Interior facilities." The report also suggested that in an effort to correct the "imbalance," joint US-Iraqi "teams will continue to inspect Iraqi detention facilities, with appropriate remediation through Iraqi-led triage and follow-up logistical, security, public relations, and political support."⁶⁴⁸

Events also made it clear that other aspects of the Iraqi force building effort had to be improved, and that Iraqi forces needed to be further reformed to improve both their loyalty and integrity. This was particularly true of the forces under the Ministry of the Interior. These forces were divided into three main groups: commandos, the public order brigades, and a mechanized brigade that will ultimately be shifted to the army. As of March 2006, the security forces totaled 17,500. The regular blue-uniformed police force numbered 89,000, and the border force totaled 20,000. Matthew Sherman, a former advisor for the Interior Ministry, said that Shi'ite parties were especially keen to seize control of these forces because they had more autonomy and could operate anywhere in Iraq.⁶⁴⁹

The police were most serious problem. In April 2006, Gen. Barry McCaffrey reported that “the police are heavily infiltrated by both the [anti-Iraq forces] and the Shia militia.” He went on to predict that the turnaround would likely take ten years, as the forces were currently “widely distrusted by the Sunni population.” Furthermore, he wrote that “they are incapable of confronting local armed groups. They inherited a culture of inaction, passivity, human rights abuses and deep corruption.”⁶⁵⁰

Iraqi officials proposed several possible alternatives for addressing the problem of militia groups posing as security forces and for countering the infiltration of security forces by militia groups.

- The Iraqi government has proposed restructuring all of Baghdad’s security forces by putting all police officers and paramilitary soldiers under one commander. Iraqis in the National Police force would also wear a newly designed uniform and drive similar patrol cars, said Col. Ali Rashid, a police supervisor at the Ministry of the Interior.⁶⁵¹
- Gen. Mahdi al-Gharawi, head of the second division of the Iraqi National Police, said that the Interior Ministry had fired 7,000 officers for corruption and that Iraqi police would be given new imported uniforms to stop what the ministry describes as the counterfeiting of uniforms.⁶⁵²
- Ellen Knickmeyer reported in the *Washington Post* on May 15, 2006 that the Interior Ministry changed the name of its paramilitary and police forces, grouping commando and public order brigades under the single designation of National Police.

In May 2006, Iraqi leaders began to consider implementing plans to act on such options. One key alternative was to put all of Iraq’s police and interior security forces in the capital under a “unified command,” rather than have them divided between various ministries. The goal of this re-arrangement, was to curb sectarian divisions within the forces, diminish the presence of Coalition forces on the streets, and to instill confidence in Iraq’s citizens and send a message that the Iraqi government was capable of bringing security to Baghdad. The logic behind such a move was summed up by Vice President Adel Abdul Mahdi, “No one knows who is who right now -- we have tens of thousands of forces. We need a unified force to secure Baghdad: same uniform, same patrol car, one commander.”⁶⁵³

Many remained skeptical of the plan, emphasizing that simply restructuring the forces by putting them all together would do little to solve the internal sectarian divides or diminish the presence of militias and death squads within the forces. For some U.S advisors and diplomats in Iraq, a “big-bang” solution seemed unlikely to solve the problems plaguing Iraq’s security forces. These same officials assessed that it was not so much about the structure or command of the forces, but Iraqi political will to confront the issue and implement what would be difficult and controversial solutions.⁶⁵⁴

Sunnis, most often the victims of Shi’ite death squads, did not see the proposal as a workable solution. Baha Aldin Abdul Qadir, a spokesman for the Iraqi Islamic Party said, “If we [consolidate] the militias and put them in the official forces of the Interior and Defense ministries, this will convey the problem [of the militias’ own violent agendas] to these ministries.”⁶⁵⁵ He suggested that if absorption of militias into security forces were to occur, that it would have to be limited to the integration of these members only into

civilian positions such as public-works programs, or be stationed as border guards in remote areas.⁶⁵⁶

However, a less ambitious version of the plan began to be implemented in May. The Interior Ministry issued new and distinctive badges and seals for the Facilities Protection Service, a group of more than 145,000 building guards that were increasingly independent of any command or ministry according to US and Iraqi officials. Initially established by Paul Bremer in 2003, the armed units numbered no more than 4,000 and were charged with protecting the facilities of various ministries, but were not under control of either the Defense or Interior ministry. Because these forces lacked any formal accountability and wore similar uniforms to the other police and security forces, officials speculated that these units were those often implicated by Iraqis in the abductions, executions, and body dumps that had been long blamed on the interior police force.⁶⁵⁷

Seeking a Better Mix of Sectarian and Ethnic Background in Iraqi Forces

As was the case in Lebanon and the Balkans, events showed the need to improve the sectarian and ethnic balance of Iraqi forces. Iraqi force development had favored Shi'ite and Kurdish recruitment and retention though mid-2005, and efforts to recruit Sunnis remained slow. This led to new efforts to improved the balance of Iraqi forces but progress remained slow.

In March 2006, for example, American commanders stated that virtually all the members of the 7,700-member public order brigades were Shi'ites. American officials made it clear that they were pushing the Interior Ministry to diversify its forces. Major General Joseph D. Peterson, in charge of police training, said in early March 2006 that in the last three public order brigade training courses, the number of Sunni Arabs enrolled had increased from 42% to 92%, to virtually all Sunni.⁶⁵⁸

A State Department official reported in April 2006 that Sunnis made up less than 10% of the enlisted forces or roughly half their share of the country's overall population, and most units lacked a sectarian mix of Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Kurds. Consequently, US and NATO military commanders often trained units made up almost exclusively of Shi'ites or Kurds, which raised fears that those units could one day turn on the Sunnis or on each other in a civil war.

By contrast, under Saddam Hussein, Sunnis accounted for more than 20% of the officer corps. A draft Congressional Research Service report described the situation as follows: "With a shortage of reliable Sunni soldiers to patrol Sunni provinces, the US and Iraqi governments have been forced to deploy mostly Shi'ite units to Sunni towns, which has only exacerbated intercommunal tensions."⁶⁵⁹ MNSTC-I commander Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey noted two specific attempts to attempt to rectify the situation. Divisions originally designated as "National Guard" units to be recruited in specific localities were opened up for nation-wide recruitment to attain a sectarian balance, and an Iraqi military committee would select officers for promotion based on merit as well as with an eye toward ethnic and religious representation with the officer corps.⁶⁶⁰

The unreleased Congressional Research Service report summed up the obstacles to creating a multisectarian security force in Iraq: "There is concern that the ethnic-sectarian nature of the burgeoning insurgency is undermining US and Iraqi efforts to create a unified Iraqi security force that can prevent internal insurgent violence from metastasizing into a larger civil war." The report continued: "With violence unabated in Baghdad and Iraq's three main Sunni provinces, there has been considerable emphasis on recruiting, training, and equipping Iraqi soldiers and policemen, but substantially less attention on the future ethnic/religious makeup of various security entities."⁶⁶¹

MNF-I officers and officials acknowledged that reforming the police forces to eliminate sectarian and ethnic divisions could take years because sectarian loyalties had become so entrenched and most police officers are rooted in their communities. The MNF advisory effort has only limited control over any aspect of Iraqi security and police manpower.⁶⁶² Moreover, many recruits who graduated from US-run police academies have defected to private militia groups. Several factors made joining militias more attractive than staying with the security forces -- better pay, less onerous duties, and far less chance of being killed.⁶⁶³

Col. Donald Currier, an officer leading of the US National Guard brigade advising Iraqi police, discussed the difficulty in training and professionalizing Iraqi police forces. "The biggest reason we lost momentum in our ability to train and professionalize the police in Iraq, is when you didn't have a sitting government, and you had a rise in sectarian violence, then you had everyone looking at protecting their own physical security interests. So instead of sending young men to be policemen and supporting the local police, you start asking people to leave the police force and become part of your militia so that you have more influence by force."⁶⁶⁴

Moreover, the problem of factional loyalty has been matched by the problem of corruption. Staff Sgt. Ryan Horton, a military policeman from Dallas who worked closely with the Iraqi police, described the situation: "It's like the Chicago police department in the 1920s, so infested with mobsters that even the good ones are corrupt because they don't want to get killed...They all live in the community with the terrorists, and so do their families. They are very, very intimidated."⁶⁶⁵ Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch addressed the problem of private militias on February 17, 2006. "There is no denying that there are militias present in Iraq and that some of those militia forces have displaced loyalties, and some of those militia forces have indeed integrated with the Iraqi security forces."⁶⁶⁶

These developments created other kinds of problems for the force development effort. Although US troops increasingly accompanied Iraqi units on raids to ensure proper treatment of detainees, as Iraqis increasingly take the lead and missions are based on Iraqi intelligence, the line between counterinsurgency and revenge can become blurry for Coalition soldiers. After a joint US-Iraqi raid in March in which 10 Sunnis were rounded up, for example, one US colonel remembered thinking immediately after, "Wait a sec, were we just part of some sort of sectarian revenge?"⁶⁶⁷ Indeed, many of the soldiers on their second tour in Iraq felt they were returning to a different war. Where their previous focus was on the Sunni insurgency, it had now broadened to containing the Shi'ite militias and preventing further infiltration into the security forces.⁶⁶⁸

Corruption as the “Fourth Threat” to Iraq and Iraqi Force Development

Corruption added a “fourth threat” to the insurgency, militias, and internal problems in Iraqi forces. It is impossible to determine whether corruption in the Iraqi government was more serious in mid-2006 than it had been in the past, but senior Iraqi officials made it clear that both the MOI and MOD presented major problems because of corruption at virtually every level. This was not simply a matter of money. Its impact included phantom hires and absentees, weapons and equipment sales to outside parties, penetration by insurgent and factional elements seeking intelligence, and a host of other problems in functioning at an honest and effective level. The same problems were common in all ministries, and wasted billions of dollars in scarce Iraqi funds, but had a major impact on Iraqi force development.

The Ministry of Defense had suffered badly under the previous interim government from corruption at the ministerial level, and the loss of hundreds of millions of dollars through the purchase of worthless equipment. These problems had presumably been greatly reduced under the Jafari government, but neither Iraqi nor US officials claimed they were eliminated.

In the case of the MOI, corruption inevitably affected virtually every aspect of the police, from the appointment process to the sale of justice and services in the field, at almost every level. This corruption in the MOI interacted with corruption in the Ministry of Justice, and affected the courts in the areas where they actually operated.

The result was often a mix of pressures from insurgents, militias, and criminals that made effective policing and the administration of justice almost impossible. Where the law was not for sale, it was paralyzed by threats and intimidation -- as well as sectarian, ethnic, and tribal ties.

Overall Progress in the Recruiting, Training and Deployment of Iraqi Forces January-June 2006

It is difficult to separate the progress made within each major element of Iraqi forces from the impact of the political climate and changing threat environment in which they had to operate. Some MNF-I and Iraqi government reporting was anything but objective or transparent in character. It is clear, however, that significant progress did occur, especially in Iraq’s regular forces.

The US Department of Defense outlined the following progress in Iraqi Security Force development in its February 2006 report to Congress:⁶⁶⁹

- **A continued increase in the number of Iraqi units able to take the lead in combat operations against the insurgency.** As of January 23, 2006, 98 Iraqi Army and special operations battalions are now conducting counter-insurgency operations, 11% more than reported in October. Fifty-three of these battalions are assessed as being “in the lead or full independent” -- a 47% increase since October. There are 27 National Police Force battalion (formerly the Special Police Forces) and one Emergency Response Unit capable of combat operations, with 10 units assessed as being in the lead.

- **Progress of Iraqi units in assuming responsibility for the battle space.** Thirty-seven Iraq Army battalions now control their own battle space. Iraqi Security Forces are responsible for security in roughly 460 square miles of Baghdad and more than 11,600 square miles in other provinces of Iraq, an increase of almost 4,000 square miles since the last report [October 2005].
- **A continued increase in the number of units and individuals trained, equipped, and formed into operational status.** The program of training and equipping members of the Iraqi Security Forces continues on track. Almost 107,000 soldiers, sailors, and airmen have now been trained and equipped -- an increase of 19,000 since the last report. More than 82,000 police have been trained and equipped -- an increase of over 13,000 since the last report. These police work alongside 38,000 other Ministry of Interior forces. Overall, there are over 227,000 Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior forces trained and equipped for counterinsurgency operations -- an increase of 18% since the October 2005 report.

Trends in Quantity and Quality

Figure 61 shows the growth in total “trained and equipped” manpower in Iraqi forces between January 2006 and May 2006. Such data are the totals of men, however, MNSTC-I and the MNF-I do not attempt to take full account of desertions, or men on unauthorized leave or absent. They also do not report large numbers of police, security, and militia forces that have not been “trained and equipped” but which are present in most of Iraq and actually dominate or control security in many areas, including key areas where there is a negligible insurgent presence, like Kirkuk and Basra.

Nevertheless, the May total of 263,400 was 14% higher than the total reported in February, and 35% higher than the total of 171,300 reported in the first quarterly report to Congress, issued in July 2005. As the following analysis shows, the qualitative improvements in Iraqi forces were as important as the improvements in size, although the effectiveness of such forces was still very mixed.

In the case of Tal Afar, for example, an increase in US troops and better counterinsurgency tactics led to claims the situation was improving because attacks dropped from five per day to fewer than two per day. But the real test was whether Iraqi soldiers could “hold” these cities themselves.

According to Coalition forces in the city, Iraqi troops were displaying more confidence and demonstrating greater discipline by late March 2006. At the same time, problems with pay and equipment shortages continued to plagued Iraqi forces. “AK-47s and Russian jeeps are not going to keep the peace in northern Iraq,” noted one US tank company commander.⁶⁷⁰

Sectarian tensions within the town were also a major problem and some US soldiers worried that heavy-handed tactics by the 1,700 Shi’ite-Sunni mixed police force were alienating Sunni residents. In one instance, after an officer was shot in a Sunni neighborhood, police returned the following day arresting nearly 100 people and put them all in a small cell at a local makeshift jail. US troops took the Iraqi police back to the neighborhood the following day to hand out food and refurbish their image, but local residents such as laborer Fakari Wahab were hesitant to accept the good will. Wahab had lost 30 tribesmen to the Iraqi police “dagnet” and when told to take a list of their names to the jail he protested, “If I go...I’ll be locked up!”⁶⁷¹

While some reports talked about Iraqi “control,” questions arose as to just what Iraqi forces were controlling. Many of the areas transferred to Iraqi “control” were Shi’ite dominated and typically less violent. This reflected the fact that the level of the insurgent threat in the area was just one of four considerations taken into account by the US military when deciding when Iraqi forces are

capable of controlling an area. The other three were the size, readiness, and preparation of Iraqi forces; the quality of the local government; and the ability of multinational forces to back up the Iraqi forces if they are over-run.⁶⁷²

In some cases, “control” seemed to mean assigning responsibility, not actual capability. Some maps showed Iraqi forces as in charge of areas where militias and local security forces clearly had actual day-to-day authority. In a few areas, Iraqi forces were said to be in charge of areas which actually did have a significant insurgent presence, or where at least the police confronted significant “no go” or “don’t intervene” areas.

“Control” also had its costs as well as its benefits. In Rutbah, which joins Tal Afar, Mosul and Samarra, US forces built a 10 and a half mile long, seven foot high, ring of sand around the city, allowing only three possible entrances. This allowed Coalition forces to man a few checkpoints with their Iraqi counterparts rather than patrol the city on foot.⁶⁷³ Although the number of car bombs declined from 25 per month to just five per month once the wall was built, the limited points of entry and exit created massive traffic jams for the citizens and waits could last from one to three hours during peak travel times. Marine Lt. Col. Robert Kosid admitted that the wall was only “an intermediate solution” and that “the long-term success of Rutbah involves a permanent presence in the city.” Although the city had a police force, it was disbanded in 2005 because of corruption within its ranks. Other Iraqi soldiers that were in the surrounding area were moved north for another joint US-Iraqi operation near Qaim.⁶⁷⁴

Iraqi forces did, however, continue to expand their role. By the end of April, Iraqi police and military forces had taken responsibility for of Sulimaniyah and Salahuddin provinces.⁶⁷⁵ In early May, soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment (“No Slack”), 1st Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division turned over large parts of Kirkuk to the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, Nisser Battalion. This marked the second transfer of battle space in the region to the Iraqi army in the same year.⁶⁷⁶

Still, in military press briefings and releases, Iraqi forces were increasingly given credit for operations that netted terrorists, insurgents, weapons caches, and an increase in actionable intelligence from Iraqi citizens. Specifically, Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch said in May that Iraqi security forces were responsible for capturing or killing more than 161 senior leaders of al-Qa’ida in Iraq and seizing more than 2,000 weapons caches in the past six months. He also said that because of the increasing ability of ISF, more than 50% of bombs in the country were defused before they could detonate.⁶⁷⁷

The problems remained largely the same through the summer of 2006:⁶⁷⁸

Nationwide, the Iraqi Army has grown substantially in size—up to 113,000 soldiers. But many of the units are still not fully integrated and few can operate without US support. The Pentagon has touted the handover in July of Multhanna, one of Iraq’s most peaceful provinces, to Iraqi security control. But even Nasier Abadi, deputy chief of staff for the Iraqi armed forces, concedes that not a single Iraqi Army battalion is ready to operate independently.

The focus of Coalition efforts was to put more Iraqi soldiers on the ground as quickly as possible, but it occurred at some expense in quality. Thus the quantity of Iraqi troops and the handover of “control” still did not actually indicate improved capabilities.

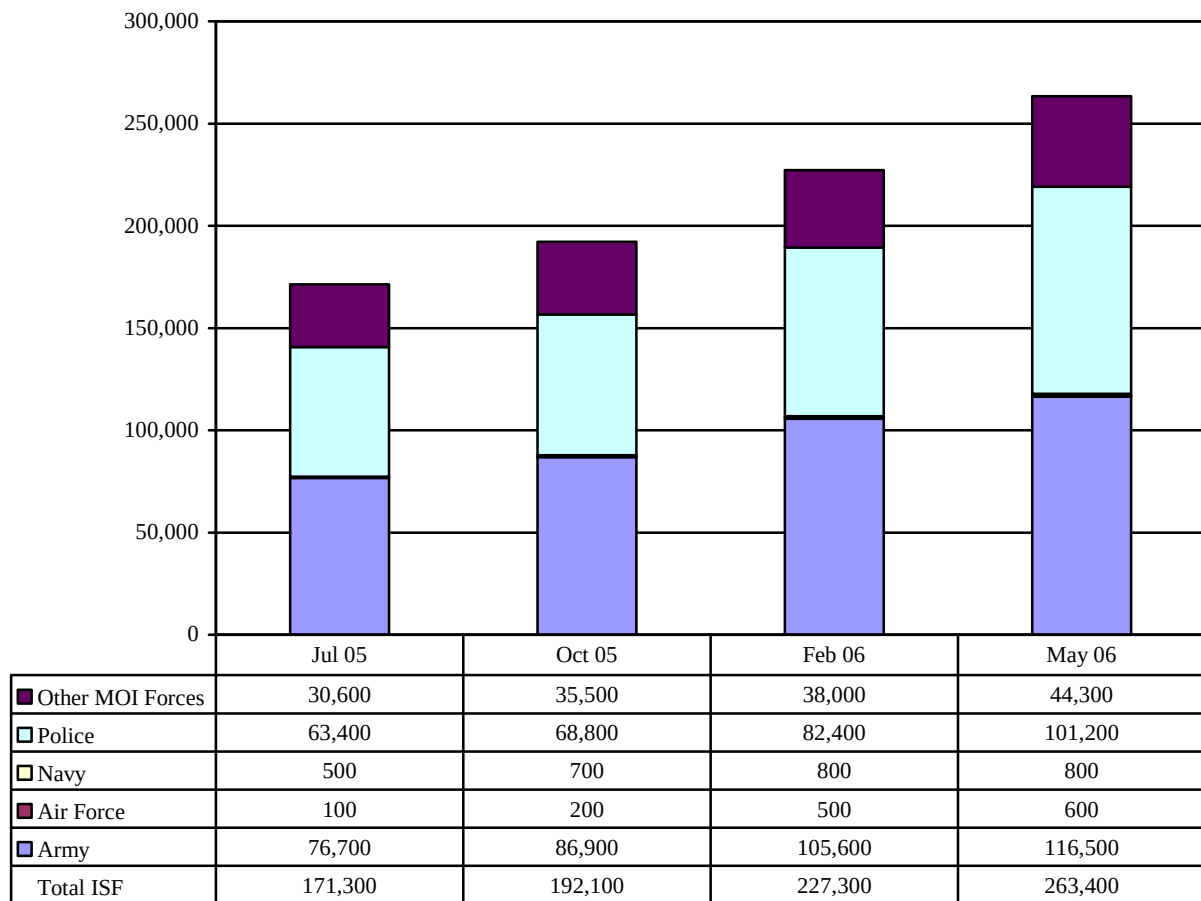
Intelligence

Iraqi intelligence was another factor that affected all aspects of Iraqi force development. It remained heavily dependent on Coalition forces for virtually all technical means, security, and ties between command, operations, and intelligence. One aspect of Iraqi intelligence did improve,

however. Between April and May Iraqis called in 1,500 anonymous tips about insurgent activities to a nationwide hotline. Of these, 98% resulted in “usable intelligence.” Lynch credited the visibility of Iraqi forces for the increase in intelligence tips from civilians saying that Iraqis were “tired of the insurgency, so as Iraqi forces conduct operations on the streets, Iraqi people come up to those patrols and provide actionable intelligence, and it’s happening all the time.”⁶⁷⁹

General Barry McCaffrey of the US Military Academy of West Point gave an assessment of the status of Iraqi Security Forces after his return from Iraq in April that summarized the still uncertain level of progress. His key points included:⁶⁸⁰

- The training of the Iraqi Army has made real progress. They continue to show and willingness to fight, and are taking on greater lead responsibilities in expanding areas. At the same time, they are poorly equipped with “only a few light vehicles, small arms, most with body armor and one or two uniforms.” He also noted that they lack decent communications equipment, air transport or strike support.
- The “corruption and lack of capability” of the Defense and Interior Ministries means that they “will require several years of patient coaching and officer education in values as well as required competencies.” Two to five more years of partnerships with US teams embedded with Iraqis will be necessary to bring the forces up to a level where the forces can hold their own.
- The Iraqi police are beginning to improve and the National Police Commando Battalions increasingly capable; a few even “on par with the best US SWAT units.” As a whole, their intelligence collection capability exceeds that of the Coalition’s. At the same time, “the police are heavily infiltrated by both the AIF and the Shia militia. They are widely distrusted by the Sunni population. They are incapable of confronting local armed groups. They inherited a culture of inaction, passivity, human rights abuses, and deep corruption.” If properly resourced, it will take ten years to surmount these challenges.

Figure 61**Status of Trained and Equipped Iraqi Security Forces: July 2005 to May 2006**

* Source: Adapted from "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq," Reports to Congress: July, 2005, October 2005, February 2006, and May 2006.

Developments in the Ministry of Defense

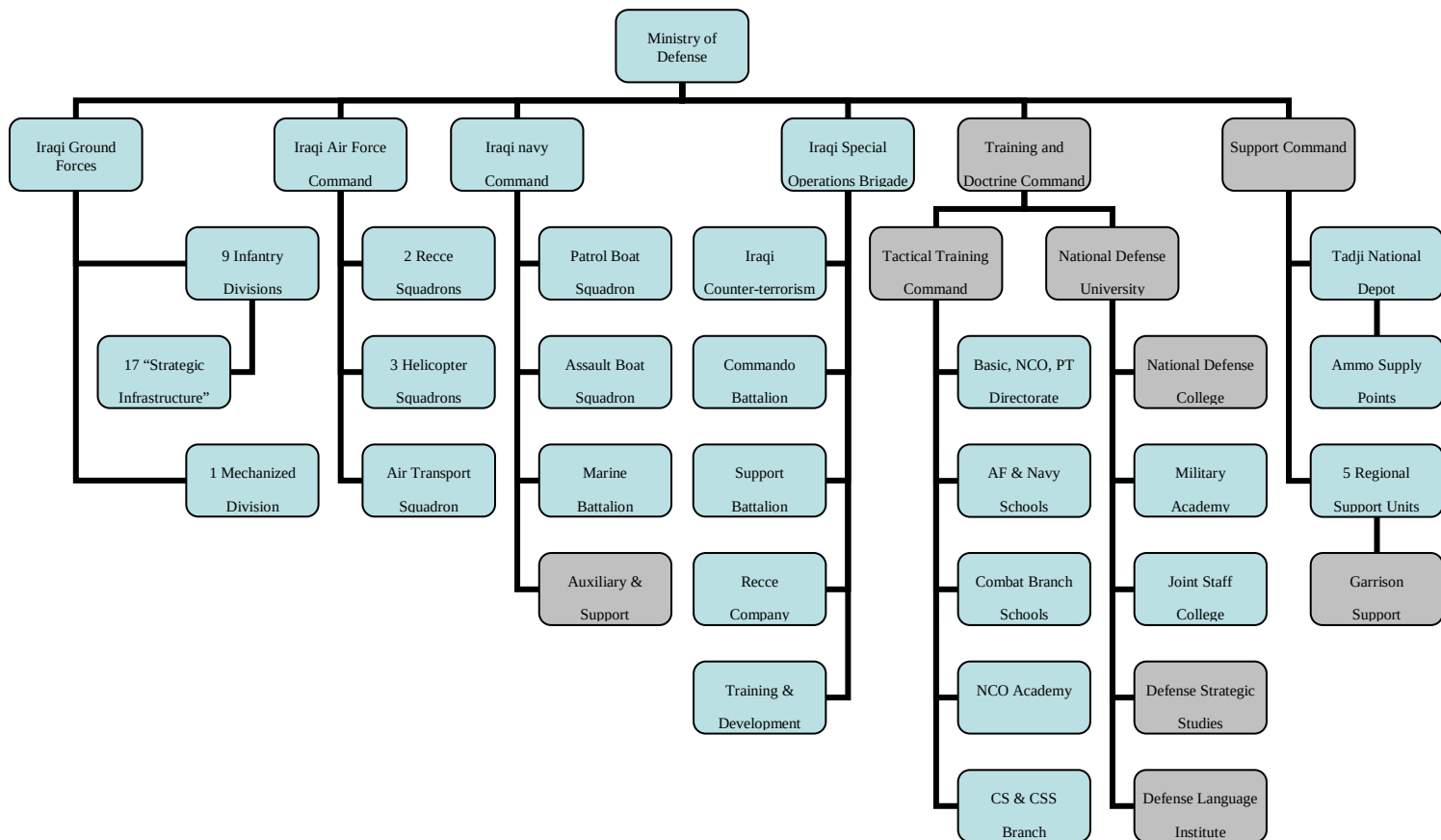
In spite of Iraq's political problems, the MOD made progress in developing its civilian functions during the first half of 2006. The Ministry made strides in building the identified minimum essential processes, which included executive support, contracting, logistics, plans and policy, personnel management, communication, budgeting, and intelligence.

The MOD also approved the Defense Resources and Requirements Management Process to help establish a strategic decision-making model that was to ensure that authority was delegated to the appropriate level and that decisions were balanced and informed. This modularized business model was focused on planning, programming and budgeting, execution, and review.

Although Coalition advisors established these processes in late 2004 and early 2005, Iraqi officials had neglected them and much still needed to be done by June 2006. There was at least, however, a potential basis for action, and one that the establishment of a new government with a longer tenure gave the MOD the opportunity to move forward.

The organization of the MOD at the time the new government came to power is shown in Figure 62.

Figure 62
MOD Organization: April 2006



Note: Gray boxes indicate that the formation is not complete as of April 2006. Source: MNSTC-I, April 2006.

Total MOD Force Size and Manning

Each of the military services was coming on line as an active force: the army (including special forces), the air force, and the navy (including marines). As Figure 63 shows, the MOD made significant additional progress towards reaching its manning goals by May 2006.

Figure 63
Manpower: MOD Forces: January 4, 2006 vs. May 31, 2006

January 4, 2006		May 31, 2006	
COMPONENT	TRAINED & EQUIPPED	COMPONENT	TRAINED & EQUIPPED
ARMY	~104,400	ARMY	~116,000**
AIR FORCE	~500	AIR FORCE	~600
NAVY	~800	NAVY	~800
TOTAL	~105,700*	TOTAL	~117,900

* Unauthorized absence personnel are included in these numbers. **Numbers include Special Operations Forces and Support Forces. Source: Iraq Weekly Status Report, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, US Department of State, January 4, 2006 and May 31, 2006 issues, p. 7.

Iraqi Readiness and “Owning the Battle Space”

Figure 64 shows that Iraqi regular forces made similar progress in increasing the strength of their combat units. By February 2006, the Department of Defense reported that insurgents in Iraq had largely begun to avoid highly coordinated attack scenarios against the ISF, preferring stand-off or hit-and-run attacks instead. However, 80% of all attacks remained directed at Coalition and Iraqi forces at this time, with Iraqis suffering three-quarters of all casualties. Improvised explosive devices remained the primary insurgent method of attack.⁶⁸¹

According to the February 2006 DOD report to Congress, 37 Iraqi battalions controlled their own battle space at that time. The report further stated that Iraqi Security Forces were responsible for security in roughly 460 square miles of Baghdad and more than 11,600 square miles in other provinces of Iraq, an increase of more than 4,000 square miles since the DOD last reported to Congress in October 2005. Furthermore, according to the report, ISF independent operations had increased by 24% since May 2005.⁶⁸²

More Iraqi units reached Level 3 and Level 2 readiness. The number of Iraq troops in control of their own territory, for example, rose from less than 13,000 in September 2005 to about 30,000 in January 2006. According to Multinational Forces spokesman Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, Iraq’s security forces planned and carried out more than a quarter of all

counterinsurgency operations in Iraq in January, a total of 490 Iraqi-run missions, and a nearly 50% increase over the September figure.⁶⁸³

At the end of January, US officials said that Iraqi forces were responsible for more than half of Baghdad. During that same time, US and British forces handed over the eastern Diyala Province, and all or parts of Rawa, Falluja, Karbala, Kirkush, Numaniya, Kut, Najaf, Hilla, and Amara to Iraqi forces. The Iraqi 1st Battalion, 3rd Brigade, 2nd Army Division also inherited a 58 square mile area south of Mosul from the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team. Before taking control of the area, US military officials said that the battalion had conducted “two dozen major, battalion-level missions,” and had lost 13 soldiers.⁶⁸⁴

At an appearance before the House Armed Services Committee February 8, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that there were about 227,000 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces at that time. General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that that number broke down to 106,000 military forces and 121,000 police forces. Rumsfeld added that between 5,000 and 10,000 more were being trained at any given time as well. Pace said that by year’s end, they hoped to have 325,000 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces, both military and police forces combined.⁶⁸⁵

In a February 17, 2006 briefing to President Bush at MacDill AFB in Tampa, military leaders said that there were some 100 Iraqi Ministry of Defense combat battalions in the fight, up greatly from August 2004, when only “a handful” were engaged in the fight. Furthermore:⁶⁸⁶

- There were 10 brigade headquarters and 43 battalions that had assumed battle space, compared to July 2004, when there were no operational Army division or brigade headquarters, and no Iraqi battalions owned their own battle space.
- In December 2005, the Iraqi armed forces performed more independent operations than did Coalition forces.
- There were more than 227,000 trained and equipped Iraqi security forces -- up from 115,000 14 months prior.

On February 24, Lt. Gen. Gene Renuart, head of international relations at the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated that the number of Iraqi battalions rated at Level 1 had fallen from one to zero over the prior six months. However, Renuart also said that the number of Level 2 battalions had increased from 36 in September 2005 to 53. While battalions with a Level 2 rating were not deemed capable of operating independently, as were Level 1 units, they were capable of taking the lead in operations. This was far more important than a somewhat theoretical capability to operate without US support at a time when Iraq had no real army, artillery, or combat airpower, and was only beginning to acquire support and logistic capabilities.⁶⁸⁷

US military trainers were careful to try to find the right balance and timing. They made it clear that it was important the Iraqi forces face real world situations. At the same time, they warned that if Iraqi units were exposed too quickly, they would -- as one Col. Steve Zotti put it -- “get their clock cleaned. Either that, or they may become frightened and be unwilling to fight...You’ve flushed all that effort down the toilet.”⁶⁸⁸

There were other kinds of progress. As US and Iraqi forces increasingly worked together and conducted joint operations, trust and interoperability improved. According to Lt. Col. Fred

Wellman, of the 102 Iraqi battalions deployed in the beginning of 2006, about half could take the lead in operations if given logistical and medical support from Coalition forces. Six months earlier, only 30 battalions were capable of leading counterinsurgency operations. Lt. Col. Wellman stated that by the end of the year, all Iraqi battalions should be capable of taking the lead.⁶⁸⁹

These shifts took place even in high threat areas like Ramadi, where even in November of 2005, Iraqi units did not conduct operations on their own. By January of the next year however, US commanders said that four of the six Iraqi infantry companies could patrol and conduct raids alone. This broke down to 10% of operations within the city being conducted by only Iraqis; 60% as joint US ventures; and the remaining 30% as solely US initiatives.⁶⁹⁰

Progress continued in the spring. A White House press release, dated March 13, 2006 stated that more than 60 of the 130 Iraqi battalions were taking the lead in the fight. This compared with 40 of 120 total Iraqi Army and Police combat battalions taking the lead in fall 2005.⁶⁹¹

In a speech delivered in March 2006, President Bush highlighted progress in turning over areas patrolled by US troops to Iraqi forces and made it a goal to turn over the majority of Iraq to Iraqi soldiers by the end of the year.⁶⁹² He stated that there were more than 130 Iraqi Army and Police battalions that were operational, 60 of which were taking the lead in operations. He also said that at that time Iraqi forces conducted more independent operations than did Coalition forces.⁶⁹³ If measured in actual territory, Bush said that Iraqi units had “primary responsibility” for over 30,000 square miles, an increase of 20,000 since the first of the year.⁶⁹⁴

Quantity also continued to improve along with quality. In an April report, the Government Accountability Office stated that the number of security forces trained and equipped increased from 142,000 in March 2005 to 242,000 in March 2006.⁶⁹⁵ This included 52 Iraqi army battalions, 14 army brigades, and two army divisions that took the lead in counterinsurgency operations supported by Coalition forces. This covered about 18% of Iraq’s territory and about 65% of Baghdad.⁶⁹⁶ It also stated generally that:⁶⁹⁷

Many Iraqis in Baghdad and the central and northern Sunni areas have lost confidence in the Iraqi army and police to improve the security situation. In some Sunni areas, support for the insurgents has increased, and Iraqi Shi’as have expressed greater confidence in their militias. The poor security situation in Iraq has impeded the development of an inclusive Iraqi government and hindered the development of effective Iraqi security forces.

In a statement to Congress in May, in which he urged the body to pass an emergency supplemental spending bill for the training of equipping of ISF, Secretary Rumsfeld stated that 254,000 Iraqi police and army forces had been trained and that 75 security force battalions were leading operations. In addition, early that month the Iraqi army opened its first joint operations center giving it national command and control over its ground forces.⁶⁹⁸

US military spokesmen claimed that as Iraqi forces increasingly took on more responsibility for policing neighborhoods and cities, residents became more willing to work with them and the Coalition, offering intelligence and assistance. For example, in the northern city of Tarmia, local officials approached Coalition soldiers and asked them to route out the insurgents in the area. US and Iraqi forces subsequently cordoned off the city, established checkpoints and swept through the area.⁶⁹⁹

According to the spring 2006 DOD Report to Congress, as of May 15, 2006, there were two Iraqi divisions, 16 brigades, and 63 Army and National Police battalions with the

security lead in their areas of responsibility. These areas covered more than 30,000 square miles of Iraq. As of May 6, 2006, the MOD, MOI, and Ministry of Finance had assumed control and responsibility for 34 Forward Operating Bases from Coalition forces.

Coalition officials, partnered with four divisions of the Iraqi army in the north, said that two of those divisions would be ready to take the lead in operations by the end of the summer and the other two by the end of the year.⁷⁰⁰ In a video conference with the Pentagon on May 20, 2006, Lt. Gen. Peter Chiarelli, Commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, said that the ISF was on pace to control about 75% of the country's battlespace by the end of the summer. That same month, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said that the Iraqi army and police would be able to assume responsibility for security across the entire country by late 2007.

Coalition spokesman Maj. Gen. William Caldwell later emphasized the progress made, asserting that between June 21 and June 28, "Iraqi forces performed 486 operations, 34 percent of which were independently planned and executed entirely by Iraqis." These operations resulted in the seizure of 26 weapons caches, the detention of 587 "anti-Iraq elements," and the death of 64 "terrorists and insurgents."⁷⁰¹ Caldwell would later report a nighttime operation in eastern Baghdad "planned, organized, led, and carried out" independently by Iraqi forces to capture a "high-value insurgent," whom officials would not identify.⁷⁰² The executive officer of a battalion in the 4th Iraqi Army Division, operating near Tikrit, reported in July that his unit could secure its area of operations "75 percent ourselves and 25 percent with American help."⁷⁰³

This did not mean, however, that Iraqi forces were moving rapidly towards being able to operate without continuing US support, a point many Iraqis seemed to have accepted. In a poll conducted by the Brookings Institution in May 2006, 59% of Iraqis surveyed said that Coalition troops would be needed to maintain security for at least six months.⁷⁰⁴ At this time, 130,000 US troops were still in Iraq, with American military officials projecting that 100,000 to 110,000 American forces would still be in Iraq by the end of 2006.⁷⁰⁵

Rethinking the Focus of Operations

In late May 2006, US Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad addressed the overall approach to defeating the insurgency, as well as the effort to reclaim Baghdad. Broadly speaking, Khalilzad asserted that "For the insurgency to end, there has to be a program of national reconciliation with emphasis on unity, for the insurgents have to be engaged and convinced to lay down their arms." He went on to address the militias:

And for the other unauthorized military formations and militias, there has to be a decommissioning, demobilization, and reintegration plan. There have to be steps with regards to de-Ba'athification. There has to be an overall plan with different elements and sequenced appropriately to end this conflict.

Khalilzad further stated that Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki had, in principle, approved a plan presented to him by US and Iraqi officials on May 25 for enhancing security in Baghdad: "It's going to be operationalized, turned into an operational plan, in the coming period and then taken back to him for final approval." No specific details on the plan, however, were provided at that time.⁷⁰⁶

One method employed by Coalition forces in building up effective security forces in the midst of frequent intimidation and harassment by insurgent actors was the cordon method. In spring 2006, Coalition troops cordoned off the Baghdad suburb of Tarmiya with six miles of concertina wire in order to create a safe haven in which to train local police. The method, used previously in the Al-Anbar towns of Falluja and Tal Afar, was meant to give the 40 police respite from the frequent insurgent attacks that had decimated the force leading up to the operation.

The operation was welcomed by a Sunni population that was largely unsupportive of the Sunni insurgents operating in the town. However, as of May 2006, local residents still complained of being effectively cut off from Baghdad proper by the Shi'ite militias that still controlled much of the capital city.⁷⁰⁷

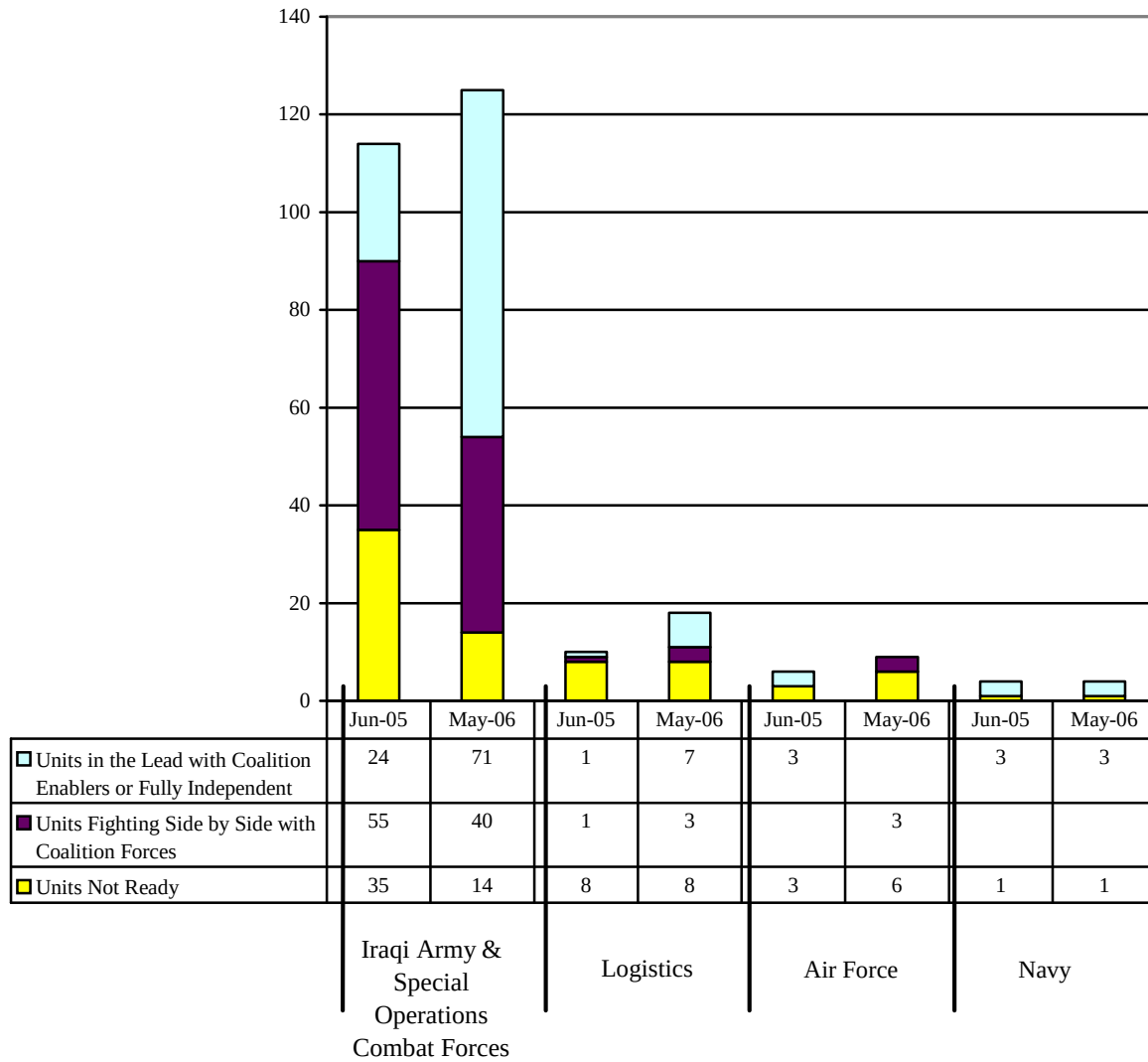
Another fundamental issue that had begun to take shape in the spring and summer of 2006 was the balance of power between Baghdad and the provinces with regard to security responsibilities. A law drawn up by former administrator L. Paul Bremer stipulated that the provinces had full control over their police forces and their local governments. This created for Baghdad a legal barrier to controlling the conduct of local police in the respective provinces, where factional fighting and sectarian intimidation and killings remained an issue.⁷⁰⁸

At the same time, however, plans were starting to take shape to turn over additional key security responsibilities to local authorities. In comments on May 27, 2006, a senior US military official outlined plans to hand over security duties to Iraqi police in Baghdad province, Najaf, Karbala, and Babil before the end of the year. Under the plan, local governors would initially take control of the police, intended as a "bridging phase" before the Iraqi government assumed full responsibility for security.⁷⁰⁹

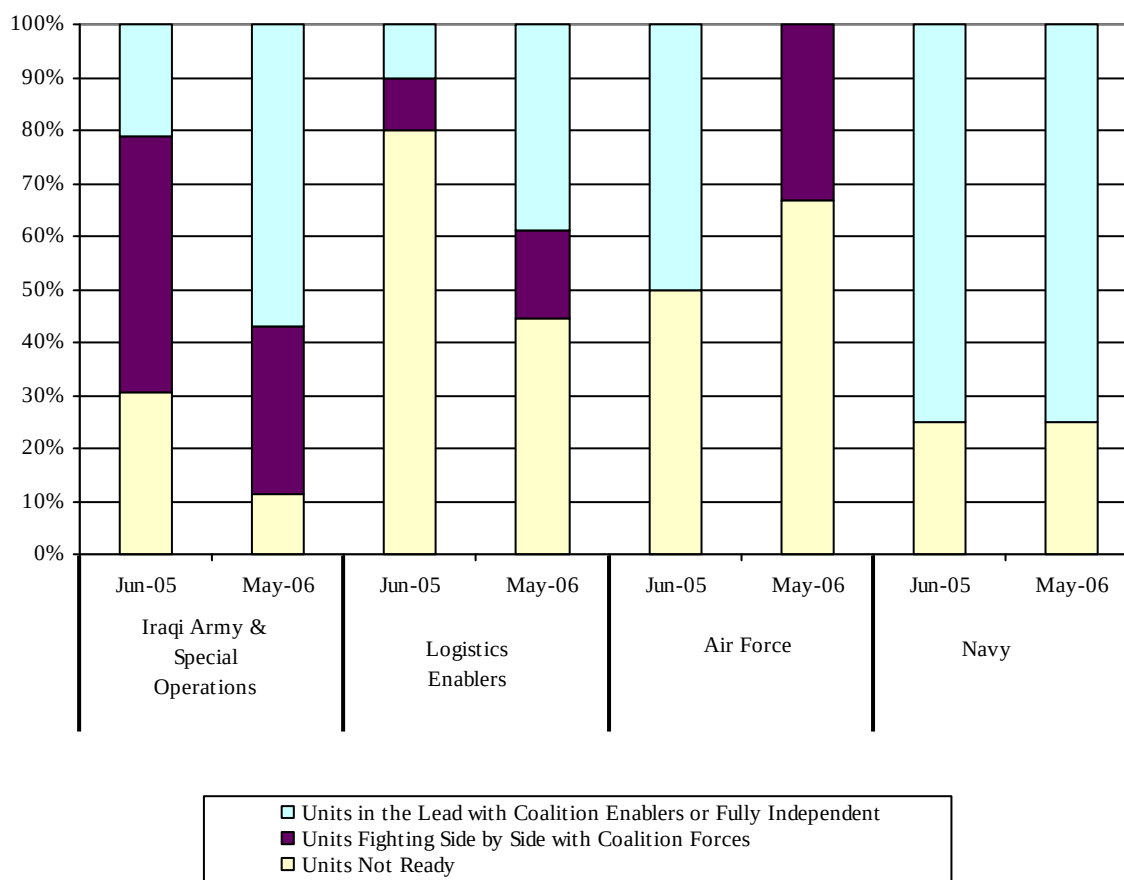
These transition plans took on added urgency because of domestic American politics. The enormous cost of the entire reconstruction effort increasingly became an issue of contention between the Pentagon and Congress. In May 2006, Secretary Rumsfeld urged Congress to pass the emergency supplemental spending bill in order to continue the progress being made in training Iraqi security forces.

Although both the House and Senate versions of the bill were close to the dollar amount requested, money devoted to security forces was shifted toward US tanks and armored vehicles. Warning that the delay could have adverse affects on US programs in Iraq, Rumsfeld told Congress, "A slowdown in training and equipping the Iraqi security forces will have unacceptable harmful effects postponing the day when our men and women in uniform can return home with the honor and appreciation they deserve."⁷¹⁰

The Congress eventually voted to provide most of the requested funds. Both US and Iraqi officials made it clear, however, that they had increasing concerns over whether the time needed to create an effective and independent Iraqi security force -- at least another year -- would be too long for American patience, and that resources would dry up before the job was complete.⁷¹¹

Figure 64**MOD Forces' Assessed Capabilities - Part One****Part I: Number of Units**

Part II: Category by Percentage



Source: Adapted from *Measuring Security and Stability in Iraq*, Report to Congress, May 2006, p. 47.

Ongoing Efforts to Recruit and Train the ISF

By the winter of 2006, the basic training system for the Iraqi army was expanded and consolidated under the command of the Iraqi Training Brigade, which was set to consist of three Iraqi Training Battalions (ITBs). At the time, two ITBs were operational at the Kirkush Military Training Base, and a third was partially formed and conducting training at An-Numaniya.

New recruits to the training brigades attended a five-week program of instruction. Upon graduation, they received an additional three to seven weeks of training depending on their military occupational skill assignment. The specialized training developed infantry, supply, communications, administration, armor, transportation, maintenance, and military police skills, among others. Other training initiatives, such as the Military Intelligence School, Signal School, and Engineer Training School, were also implemented.⁷¹²

Although the Iraqi security forces competed with local militias and gangs for recruits, Coalition troops attempted to seize the initiative by improving Iraqis' lives on a local level with the hope

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that turnouts at recruitment stations would increase. For example, in the northern Iraqi city of Tamiya, Coalition forces constructed a medical clinic that treated over 375 people on its first day of operation. Local leaders then asked citizens to join the police forces to provide security for the town. US military spokesman Maj. Gen. Lynch said that 2,000 Iraqis volunteered, 225 of which were selected for training in Jordan.⁷¹³ Such successes were particularly important because of the failures in the civil aid program. Only 20 of the 142 health clinics the US had originally planned for construction in 2003 were still scheduled to be completed in 2006.⁷¹⁴

In early March 2006, the US further standardized its methods for training US advisors to Iraqi forces. The US Army's 1st Infantry Division 1st Brigade Combat team took over the training of the Army's Military Training and Transition (MITT) teams, the groups imbedded with Iraqi units. These teams were expected to remain with Iraqi forces for what military officials called a "multi-year commitment."⁷¹⁵

The new training process reassigned the recruits from Fort Carson to Fort Riley, where a small-scale replica of an Iraqi urban center was being constructed. The number of days devoted to training at the fort was extended as well from 45 to 60. Trainers received an additional 10 days of training in Kuwait, followed by 10 more days of training in Taji, Iraq at a major US training facility. Before beginning their official stint with Iraqi units, new trainers spent two weeks following their predecessors in the field.⁷¹⁶

The MITT teams were embedded at the battalion, brigade, and division level with 11, 10 and 15 man teams at each, respectively. They were there not only to serve as a professional example, but also to provide additional firepower and air support to the Iraqi forces as needed.⁷¹⁷

By April 2006, the Department of Defense noted the following key measures of progress in the effort to train the ISF:⁷¹⁸

- Continued increases in the numbers of individuals trained, equipped, and formed into operational units: As of March 20, US and coalition forces have trained and equipped more than 111,000 soldiers, sailors, and airmen. More than 89,000 police have been trained and equipped. Police work alongside 41,700 other Ministry of Interior forces, such as the National Police (formerly the Special Police). Overall, over 240,000 Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior forces have been trained and equipped.
- Continued increases in unit readiness and ability to take the lead in combat operations against the insurgents: As of March 20, 102 Iraqi Army regular and special operations battalions are conducting counter-insurgency operations. Sixty-two of these battalions are able to lead in such operations. There are 27 National Police Force battalions (formerly the Special Police Forces) and one Emergency Response Unit conducting combat operations. Seven of the National Police battalions and the Emergency Response Unit are able to lead such operations.
- Progress in assuming responsibility for their battle space: As of March 20, forty-nine Iraqi Army battalions now control their own battle space. Iraqi units have primary responsibility for 65% of Baghdad.

The DOD report also addressed the structure of the ISF, manning progress, and the question of battalions operating "in the lead":⁷¹⁹

The Iraqi government, together with the Coalition, has identified a force structure to maintain a security environment in Iraq to provide a basis for transitioning Iraq to security self-reliance. The end-strength forces structure of the Iraqi Armed Forces is approximately 131,000 personnel, manning one Iraqi Ground Forces Command, 10 divisions and 36 brigade headquarters, 114 Army and special operations battalions, six Air Force squadrons, three Navy squadrons, and 18 combat support, combat service, and support battalions. As of March 20, 111,000 personnel or 85 percent of

the authorized end strength has been trained and equipped. With the initial focus on establishing combat units, attention is now shifting toward the logistics backbone needed to facilitate independent operations. One hundred-two Iraqi Army and Special Operations battalions are now conducting counter-insurgency operations with 62 battalions “in the lead.” ISF have conducted more independent operations than MNF-I in three of the last five months.

The report went on to assert that “There is no specific threshold for the number of Iraqi Armed Forces battalions that must be judged capable of operating independently before the number of US forces in Iraq can be reduced.”⁷²⁰ Coalition forces also sought to ensure that Iraqi military training would continue without outside leadership by setting up programs for “platoons of highly skilled Iraqi Army soldiers” to train other units.⁷²¹

Nevertheless sectarian issues continued to trouble US efforts to recruit and train an effective force. The security forces in general were made up largely of Shi’ites and Kurds. This imbalance made the government forces untrustworthy in the eyes of Sunnis, who had been subjected to abuses by Shi’ite units patrolling Sunni-majority areas. The US established a target of 6,500 Sunni recruits from the Anbar province, a major center of insurgent activity. Yet recruiting and maintaining the loyalty of these troops was not easy. Only 300 Sunni enlistees reported for duty out of a graduating class of 1,000 in July 2006. Two classes of recruits produced only 530 new soldiers actually serving in the ranks.⁷²²

Creating an Effective Officer Corps

The effort to create a functioning leadership corps within the ISF command chain continued into the winter of 2006. This was a challenging process, especially because the “early emphasis of US and coalition forces in getting ‘Iraqi boots on the ground’ to take pressure off their troops mean rebuilding the Iraqi security forces was very much a bottom-up process. As a result, the more senior levels of Iraq’s defense and security establishment are relatively immature.”⁷²³

The DOD’s February 2006 Report to Congress marked the progress as such:⁷²⁴

Leadership development is a major focus in order to build a capable and professional Iraqi Army. To achieve this, a system of Regional Training Centers (RTCs) has been established to meet the Iraqi Army’s need for professionally trained junior leaders. Six RTCs enable increased numbers of students to attend training such as the Squad and Platoon Sergeant courses, which contribute to the development of a non-commissioned officer corps -- a concept non-existent under the Saddam regime. Additionally, these RTCs are conducting the month-long Former Officer Course that provides human rights, ethics, and counter-insurgency training to officers who served in the former regime’s Army and have now been recruited back into the Iraqi Army. A year-long Basic Officer Commissioning Course is being conducted at the three Iraqi Military Academies, with a class of 180 recently graduating from Ar Rustamiyah. The first class of 73 cadets graduated from the Iraqi Military Academy in Ar Rustamiyah in January 2006. The newly commissioned officers completed 52 weeks of intensive military training, including 2,490 hours of lessons and 14 field training exercises in a Sandhurst-modeled curriculum.

The leadership courses are complemented and reinforced through the daily guidance provided by Coalition Military Transition Teams (MiTTs) embedded with every Iraqi battalion, brigade, and division, as well as partnership with Coalition units. The MiTTs and partnership program provide mentorship and expertise critical for development of both unit proficiency and leadership, contributing to increased operational effectiveness. Monthly transition readiness assessments are prepared as a tool to measure each unit’s progress and identify areas for improvement.

The role of the international community remained important in the leadership development effort as well, with the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) playing a key role in professionalizing the Iraqi armed forces. The focus remained on training and advisory support to mid- and senior-level leaders, with NTM-I serving as the lead agent to develop the Junior and Senior Staff Colleges. More than 500 Iraqis had completed out-of-country courses coordinated by NTM-I by early 2006. Host countries included Germany, Norway, Romania, and Turkey, among others.⁷²⁵ Additionally, the Iraqi Defense Ministry announced in August 2006 “that it would begin accepting applications from Iraqis who wanted to attend US military academies.”⁷²⁶ Figure 65 provides details on schooling for Iraqi Armed Forces personnel as of January 16, 2006.

Figure 65
Iraq Armed Forces Personnel Details -- Schools

RTC Schools				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	78	24	1	31
NCOs	456	139	2	30
Enlisted	30	72	5	240
Totals	564	235	8	42
ITB/Academy Schools				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	345	153	0	44
NCOs	1391	802	12	58
Enlisted	586	484	3	83
Totals	2322	1439	15	62
Branch Schools				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	220	109	0	50
NCOs	336	236	3	70
Enlisted	129	193	0	150
Totals	685	538	3	79
Schools Roll-Up				
	AUTH	ASSN	AWOL	%FILL
Officer	643	286	1	44
NCOs	2183	1177	17	54
Enlisted	745	749	8	101
Totals	3571	2212	26	62

Source: Iraq Reconstruction Management Office, US Department of State, January 16, 2006

Training and Progress In Military Transition Teams (MITTs)

The Coalition and Ministry of Defense set the goal of training and equipping 195,000 personnel by spring 2006. MNSTC-I projected that this goal would be met by December 2006. The force generation plan for the Ministry of Defense forces would be completed by mid-2006, with an end-strength of approximately 131,000 soldiers.⁷²⁷ It also announced that the Iraqi forces would create their own training command, as described in Figure 66.

This training effort was now reinforced systematically during action in the field. The US Army had begun fielding 11-man Military Training and Transition Teams (MITTs) in early 2005. Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated in January 2006 that Coalition forces had deployed over 200 transition teams -- military officers embedded with Iraqi forces for training purposes. He further stated that transition teams were operating at the battalion, brigade, and division levels in the Iraqi Army.

In March 2006, the Army announced that it had selected the 1st Infantry Division 1st Brigade Combat Team to take over the training of the Army's MITTs at Fort Riley. The announcement meant that the Army had finally formalized the training process for these teams, and that instead of drawing troops with needed skills for temporary duty in Iraq, the Army would now begin permanently reassigning these selected trainers to Fort Riley. At the time of the announcement, the Army was looking for 2,300 trainers for 2007 in Iraq and Afghanistan, with a potential future need of 5,000.⁷²⁸

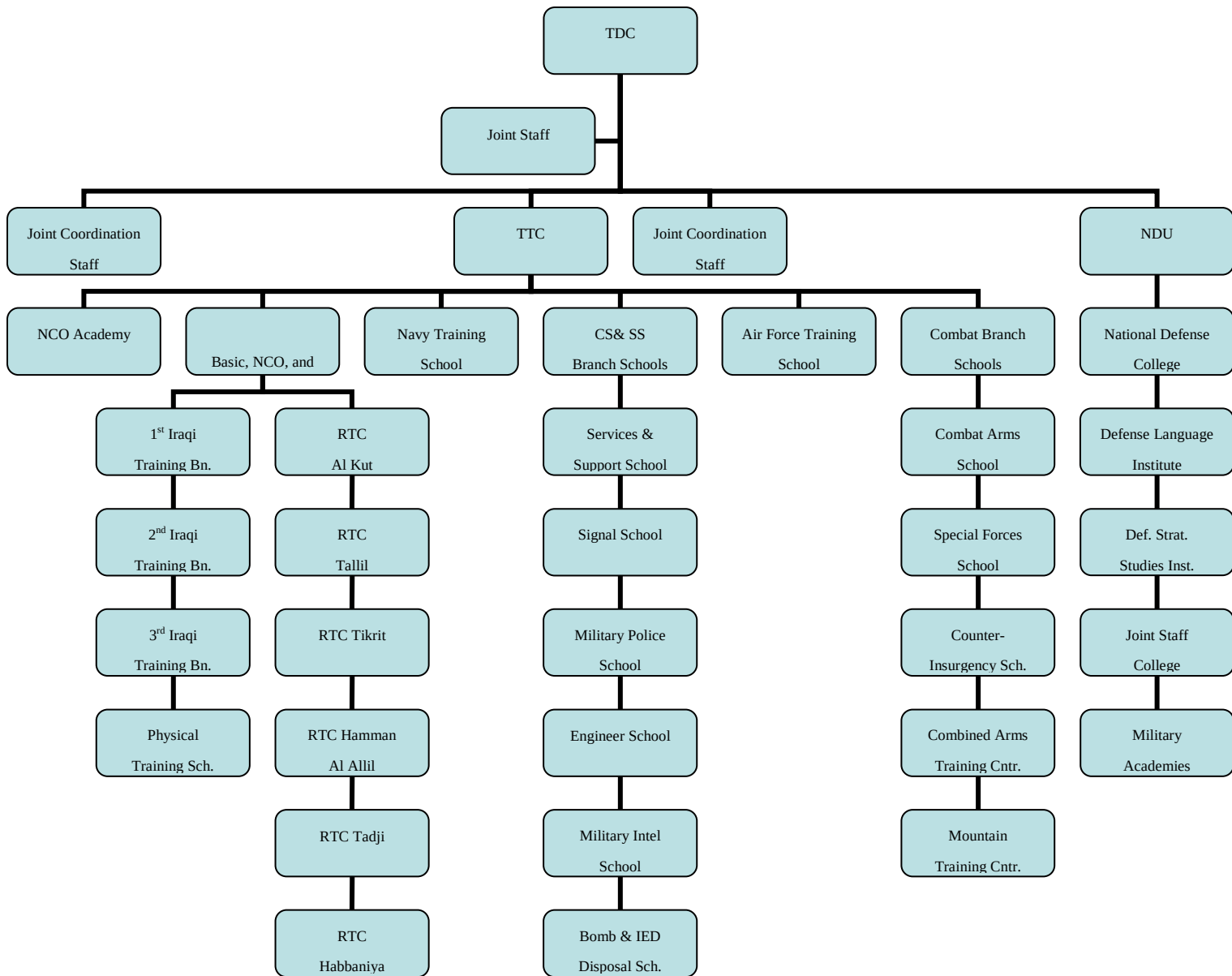
In addition to the MITTs, other types of small teams were working in Iraq, such as the similarly sized Special Police Transition Teams and Border Transition Teams. As of mid-January 2006, there were more than 2,000 officers and noncommissioned officers on more than 200 such teams in Iraq. Before soldiers, sailors, or airmen assume the role or mission of a team, they went through 75 days of training, the first 45 of which were at Fort Hood, Texas. About 500 soldiers were in training in early 2006, set to graduate in March. Training included instruction in Arabic language skills, close-quarter combat drills, staff operations, and basic soldiering.⁷²⁹

Yet the MITTs were far from perfect:⁷³⁰

But though these vital military transition teams are billed as handpicked, elite units, the forces are too often "cobbled together," according to a defense official who has studied the teams. Indeed, one US military report concluded, "The Army could do better to screen [military transition teams] for proper qualifications in skill.

Marine trainers in Fallujah tend to agree. "We're not really set up to train other people to be policemen," says one marine. The teams often report feeling undertrained and overwhelmed. One senior Pentagon official estimates that, throughout the country, Iraq is short US military training teams "by a factor of four or five." President Bush seemed to acknowledge the shortfall last week, when he called for more US military personnel to be embedded with Iraqi units to make them "more effective." What's more, the transition teams all too often lose institutional memory as US trainers rotate to new assignments.

Figure 66
Proposed Iraqi Training Command Organization



Source: MNSTC-I, April 2006.

Transitioning Security Responsibility to the Iraqi Government and Criteria for Withdrawing Forces

All of these efforts moved towards a common goal for both the Iraqi government and Coalition: The transition of responsibility for security from Coalition to Iraqi forces. While neither the Iraqi government nor Coalition as yet had a common timetable or plan, both Iraqi and US official agreed that this transition should be accomplished as soon as possible. The US also announced that its plans for security transition were broken down into four phases, which it described in its third report to Congress on “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq,” which it issued in May 2006:⁷³¹

- Implement partnerships -- MNF-I and its major Subordinate Commands establish and maintain partnerships across the entire spectrum of Iraqi Security forces units, from battalion through to ministerial level.
- Iraqi Army Lead (IAL) -- Process during which Iraqi Army units progress through stages of capability from unit formation to the ability to conduct counter-insurgency operations.
- Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) -- Iraqi civil authorities satisfy the conditions require to assume control and exercise responsibility for the security of their respective provinces.
- Iraqi Security Self-Reliance -- The Government of Iraq achieves PIC (or a combination of PIC and IAL) throughout Iraq; and the Government, through its security ministries, is capable of planning, conducting, and sustaining security operations and forces.

The first phase was already complete by May 2006, and the second phase, Iraqi Army lead, was reported to be well under way. The third phase was being implemented on an area-by-area basis, building ultimately to control entire governorates.

This area-by-area assessment was made by the Iraqi government, acting in concert with Coalition military and political officials. They assessed when conditions permitted handing over security responsibility for specific areas from Coalition forces to Iraqi civil authorities. This assessment was to be made by the Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility (JCTSR) whose principals included the US Ambassador, the UK Ambassador, the Iraqi Ministers of Defense and Interior, the Iraqi National Security Advisor, and the Commanding General of MNF-I. Recommendations for transferring security responsibility included assessing conditions in four categories: threat assessment, Iraqi Security Forces, governance, and MNF-I Forces. For the most part, however, decisions to transfer security responsibility to Iraqi forces were made on a case-by-case basis.

Iraqi progress was still erratic and left gaps that made any effort to predict when real transfers could take place difficult. Administration officials noted that although turning over territory and day-to-day responsibilities to Iraqis was an important indicator of progress in Iraq, even those Iraqi units that had control of areas did not operate wholly independent of US support and assistance.⁷³² US forces were still needed for back up. They also provided the backbone for Iraqi logistics and supply chain.⁷³³ In other words, just because the Iraqis were increasingly taking the lead, it did not mean that US troops could immediately come home, as they still served to facilitate important functions pertinent the operations of Iraqi forces.⁷³⁴

Lt. Gen. John Vines, who had served as commander of MNC-I, reaffirmed this when he said that although progress had been made in fielding effective Iraqi units, much more needed to be done “to bring up to speed the civilian defense bureaucracy needed to support the Iraqi military -- that is, civilian structures to do things like procurement, payroll, medical support, and housing.”⁷³⁵

Maj. Gen. Thomas Turner added a similar caveat when praising the progress in training Iraq units in the north. “The major inhibitor to independent operations is a lack of equipment, manpower, their inability to sustain themselves [with food, fuel, ammunition, etc.] and a lack of systems or policies in place to manage the organization.”⁷³⁶

In an April 2006 report, retired four-star Army General Barry McCaffrey stated that the embedding program had been a “brilliant success story.” He also went on to state that the Iraqi military would need at least two to five more years of US partnership and combat backup before it would be able to stand on its own.⁷³⁷

The lack of an Iraqi logistic system meant that the US provided everything from food, to uniforms to weapons to Iraqi forces. Paychecks, which sometimes arrived as late as six months, were distributed by hand as cash after being transported in large sacs across the desert. A combination of a lack of pay and better opportunities elsewhere fueled desertion rates that were as high as 40% in some towns located in al-Anbar province. Of the 8,000 Iraqi soldiers in the province, 1,500 had deserted since the year prior.⁷³⁸

Although rare, there were reports of drug use among some Iraqi troops as well. For example, in Rawah, US soldiers discovered that some were taking hashish pills. “I’d hate to guess how many of them take that stuff. Now, whenever we step out on patrol, we give them a good look in the eye to make sure they’re all there,” said Major Anthony Marro.⁷³⁹

A Success, Rather than Calendar-Driven, Approach

Once again, the increasing unpopularity of the Iraq war within the US put added pressure on administration and military officials to drawdown US troop levels as quickly and as efficiently as possible. It was clear that the National Guard would be “the first on the off-ramp” according to an anonymous official.⁷⁴⁰ This drawdown was at odds, however, with the fact that Iraqi forces would still need US support for the foreseeable future. Beyond the issue of logistics, Iraqi security forces would still rely on the US for both air-reconnaissance and strike capability.

Nevertheless, the US could still act on the principle that, “As Iraqi forces stand up, the Coalition will stand down.” While US officials would not provide any timetables for a drawdown, Iraqi National Security Advisor Mowaffak al-Rubaie said in April that there was an agreement between Iraq and the US that “by the end of this year the number of multi-national forces of the coalition forces probably will be less than a hundred thousand, by the end of next year the overwhelming majority of the coalition will have left the country, and probably by middle of 2008 there will be no foreign soldiers in the country.”⁷⁴¹ Al-Rubaie said that this reduction of Coalition forces was “based [on] when our Iraqi security forces are ready to assume responsibility.” The goal, he said, was to have 80% of the Iraqi army capable of carrying out combat operations without US assistance.

By May of 2006, there were indications that US military planners were conducting initial preparations for restructuring the US air presence in the region for a time when few

Coalition forces would remain on the ground in Iraq. These plans demonstrated both that the US intended to retain a significant flight capability in the region for some time, but that the aircraft would likely be housed in bases in Gulf countries outside of Iraq or Afghanistan.⁷⁴²

The US had already arranged agreements to use bases in Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. The Air Force also maintained runway access and supplies in Oman and Saudi Arabia. Officials were also negotiating an extension of the current agreement with the Kyrgyz government to maintain forces at Manas Air Base used for operations in Afghanistan.⁷⁴³

The use of these bases in and around the Gulf, led some analysts to speculate that the US had concluded that constructing long-term US military bases in Iraq or Afghanistan is not a politically viable option and would be seen by many as verifying accusations that the US intends to “occupy” the Middle East. The alternative of basing aircraft in surrounding countries, while still operationally sufficient, does not necessarily obviate the problem of domestic opposition to US armed forces on Islamic territory. These countries are still Arab and Islamic nations, and are not immune to pressures from fundamentalist sectors of their societies.⁷⁴⁴

Further developments occurred in June 2006 when Gen. George Casey Jr., the top American commander in Iraq, presented a “concept” for phased troop withdrawals to the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Casey’s proposal outlined three phases for the future of Iraq:

The next 12 months [from summer 2006] was described as a period of stabilization. The period from the summer of 2007 through the summer of 2008 was described as a time when the emphasis would be on the restoration of the Iraqi government's authority. The period from the summer of 2008 though the summer of 2009 was cast as one in which the Iraqi government would be increasingly self-reliant.

US forces would be drawn down from 14 combat brigades to five or six by December 2007. The withdrawals would be “contingent on the growth and expansion of Iraqi forces,” projected by Casey to be 10 divisions strong by spring 2007.⁷⁴⁵ The President later confirmed that he had heard Casey’s plan and “reiterated that any decision on troop reductions would be based on conditions on the ground.”⁷⁴⁶

The broad transition plan, however, remained the same. As Iraqis took on more responsibility for security, Coalition forces were increasingly moved to supporting roles in many areas. As security conditions improve and as the Iraqi Security Forces became more capable of securing their own country, Coalition forces were to move out of the cities, provide transition teams, reduce the number of bases from which they operate, and conduct fewer visible missions, but remain postured to assist. Although the Coalition military presence would become less visible in the process, it would remain lethal and decisive, able to support Iraqi forces and confront the enemy wherever it might gather and organize.

Amid increasing sectarian violence in Baghdad during the summer of 2006, however, the nascent plans for withdrawals were put aside. The new directive was to redeploy troops to reinforce Baghdad, and some US troops had their deployments extended. The 172nd

Stryker Brigade Combat Team, a 3,700-strong force which had been stationed in Mosul since summer 2005, had its tour extended for up to 120 days to boost security in the capital city. The extension increased US troops levels in Iraq back above 130,000 and “decrease[d] the chances that the United States will be able to significantly reduce the number of forces in Iraq by the end of the year [2006].”⁷⁴⁷

The Effort to Create an Effective Support Apparatus

One key to implementing this security transition plan was to create effective combat support, service support, and logistic capabilities. Serious concerns remained over the ability of Iraqi forces to operate independently, and over what some deemed to be inadequate “back-end” support networks. While Coalition money had been poured into creating combat capabilities, and to recruit and train significant numbers of personnel in combat roles, the adequacy of combat support, combat service support, logistical and other tactical enablers was still very much a work in progress.⁷⁴⁸

...while the US has done an admirable job of training Iraqi combat battalions, it has so far failed to build either combat support or combat service support structures to sustain the Iraqi armed forces in counterinsurgency and stability operations. As a result, the Iraqi armed forces lack a functional logistics system, command and control, communications, training, and other vital support elements. Instead, they are wholly reliant on the US military to provide such functions. Were the United States to withdraw its forces from Iraq under present circumstances, the newly-trained Iraqi combat battalions would quickly become incapacitated for want of support.

The DOD addressed efforts to create such enablers in its February 2006 report to Congress:⁷⁴⁹

Generating operational units is only part of the challenge facing the Iraqi MOD; it must also develop the ability to operate and sustain Iraqi forces independently. Efforts to build such capabilities within the MOD have been hampered by assassination or intimidation of employees, corruption, and the relative inexperience of key civilian leaders. In the face of such challenges, the MOD needs to strengthen its capabilities across the board -- in areas such as payroll, material readiness, contracting, and construction. Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq is now expanding upon previous efforts to help the MOD implement the processes that will allow the Ministry to sustain and support its fielded forces.

The DOD went on to outline its intention to focus on building out the support apparatuses necessary to support and enable the combat assets being created in the MOD and MOI.⁷⁵⁰

With the generation of regular line infantry battalions now largely complete, the focus of the train-and-equip program is shifting towards building combat support and combat service support units. These units will provide combat enablers such as logistics/transportation support; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; and medical support that the Iraqi Army needs to sustain operations with minimal or no Coalition assistance. As these units become increasingly capable, more Iraqi units will be able to advance toward full independence, and more of them will be able to assume responsibility for their areas of operation.

In order to realize security self-reliance, the tactical and operational capabilities of Iraqi Army and National Police units and their support elements must be complemented with developed institutional capabilities within the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Interior. These ministries have continued to experience challenges with critical institutional functions, including administrative processes, programming and budgeting, finance, and life support and sustainment. The mission to build the ministerial capability required to manage and sustain the operating forces shifted on October 1, 2005, from the Department of State's Iraq Reconstruction Management Office to the Multi-National

Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I). This realignment enables a unified and synchronized effort under the direction of MNSTC-I to ensure these pivotal ministerial functions develop commensurate with that of the Iraqi Security Forces.

As of May 2006, combat support and combat service support units continued to be generated to provide critical combat enablers. These included Operational Regional Support Units, Motor Transport Regiments, Logistics Support Battalions, and Headquarters and Service Companies. Strategic Infrastructure Battalions remain focused on securing critical oil pipelines. In the first quarter of 2006, the train-and-equip mission for these was increased from 4 to 11 battalions to reflect the adjusted Iraqi Army authorization.

While Coalition forces continued to provide materiel movement, life support, and other combat support to the Iraqi Armed Forces, the MOD made progress in building Iraqi logistical capabilities during the first yearly quarter of 2006.⁷⁵¹

The National Depot at Taji, which is managed by the civilian component of the ministry, provides strategic and some operational-level supply and maintenance support through its military, civilian, and contractor staff. It provides warehouse facilities for the receipt, storage, and issue of the Iraqi Army and Air Force's national stockholding of most classes of supply and facilities for conducting vehicle overhauls and other 4th-line (i.e. national-level) maintenance support. The National Depot feeds five Regional Support Units (RSUs) that provide maintenance and supply support to nearby units. Four of these RSUs are currently operational, and the fifth is being formed. The national Maintenance Contract, which extends through March 2007, continues to provide a limited interim solution for organizational and intermediate maintenance requirements of the Iraqi Armed forces at ten different locations throughout the country. The capability to provide some routine maintenance is being developed within the support units.

As of May 2006, more than 65% of personnel in the Iraqi Army's support forces had been trained and equipped, according to the May 2006 DOD Report to Congress, and logistics units continued to increase their capabilities. Figure 64 shows:

- the disparity between combat capabilities and enabling assets
- the MOD's capabilities for major services and missions, with a comparison of capabilities between June 2005 and May 2006

Civilian administrative capabilities and efficiency lagged due to a lack of attention paid to developing such institutions:⁷⁵²

The lack of adequate resources, backed by incompetent Iraqi administrators, could decisively undermine all [US] efforts in Iraq. According to LTG Chiarelli, "turning off reconstruction funding is like turning off ammunition."

The inadequacy of Iraqi ministries directly affects the ability of the security forces to function. Critical ministries in addition to the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior are essential. As an example, LTG Chiarelli cited that the security forces will have organic fuel trucks to supply their needs, but the allocation of fuel is a function of the Ministry of Oil and, in the past, there has been no certainty that the Ministry would give priority to security needs.

Facilities continued to improve. A July 2006 report by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction described an assessment of a newly constructed garrison post for the 609th Iraqi National Guard Battalion in the Thi Qar governorate. The US Army Corps of Engineers used a generic design that was also utilized for three other national guard garrisons and granted the construction contract to an Iraqi company in Baghdad. The

Garrison was to house 850 officers and enlisted men with their equipment and included in its design:⁷⁵³

- Perimeter security wall, entrance gate, and guard towers
- Office building
- Officers quarters/club
- Laundry facilities for officers and for soldiers
- Battalion headquarters
- Mosque
- Medical center
- Sport room
- Dining facility for officers and enlisted personnel
- Three, two-story barracks
- Logistics building which includes a vehicle maintenance facility
- Ammunition storage building
- Weapons storage guard house building
- Four stand-alone toilet and shower facilities
- Five company offices buildings
- One parade ground
- Water storage and pumping facility
- Generator and transformer facilities
- Parking lots, interior roads, and pathways

Equipment Deliveries and Challenges

Another key was to properly equip Iraqi forces, particularly those in the MOD. Iraqi forces continued to make progress in acquiring the equipment they needed and creating suitable facilities. The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) Report to Congress issued in April 2006 covered Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund-funded (IRRF) activities, as well as information on Iraq Security Forces Fund (ISFF) activity. The following represent the highlights of the security and justice sector report:⁷⁵⁴

- More US funds have been devoted to security and justice than any other reconstruction sector. A total of \$11.6 billion has been allocated, combining funds from IRRF 2 and ISFF.
- By the end of this quarter, 82% of the \$6.35 billion IRRF allocation had been expended, and 31% of ISFF funds have been expended.
- Approximately 250,500 military and police personnel have reportedly been trained and equipped.

- More than 600 facilities have been completed -- police stations, fire stations, courts, border forts, and army facilities.

According to MNSTC-I, the Iraqi Army had received a number of war zone essentials from Coalition forces by the end of 2005:⁷⁵⁵

- more than 95,000 assault rifles
- 4,400 machine guns
- almost 95,000 sets of body armor
- more than 3,500 vehicles
- 83,000 batons
- more than 105,000 sets of handcuffs

However, the continuing focus on light equipment deliveries is shown by the deliveries to the MOD in the final quarter of FY2005:

- 9,000 AK-47 rifles
- almost 1,800 pistols
- more than 4,700 light and medium machine guns
- more than 750 light and medium vehicles
- almost 15,000 sets of body armor
- more than 9,000 Kevlar helmets

According to Coalition planners, the Iraqi Armed Forces received equally light equipment between January 2006 and May 2006:

- more than 25,000 AK-47s
- more than 6,200 9mm pistols
- nearly 1,300 light and medium machine guns
- nearly 1,000 light and medium vehicles.
- more than 17,000 sets of body armor
- more than 15,000 Kevlar helmets.
- 176 HMMWVs, which were distributed among the divisions and Motorized Transportation Regiments.

There were some exceptions. During the same time period, the Iraqi Army's 9th Mechanized Division received 77 Hungarian-donated T-72 tanks and 36 Greek-donated BMP-1 armored personnel carriers. These vehicles were integrated into the 2nd Brigade, which was comprised of two tank battalions and one mechanized battalion.⁷⁵⁶

Equipment transfers from the US military continued to be significant. Through July 5, 2006, the US Army had "turned over to Iraqi forces 251 tracked vehicles, 2,600 wheeled

vehicles, 153,000 small arms, 16,000 night-vision devices, 601,000 uniforms, 242,000 sets of body armor, 170,000 Kevlar helmets and 56 pieces of engineering equipment.”⁷⁵⁷

Weapons also came from other sources. As of July 2006, the 9th Division, the only armored division in Iraq’s ten-division army, possessed 200 armored vehicles, mostly leftover Soviet equipment acquired under the Saddam regime such as T-55 and T-72 tanks and BMP and MTLB armored personnel carriers. These old vehicles were extremely difficult to maintain, with Iraqi mechanics and US transition teams struggling to “keep [the] machines running on little more than ingenuity and a few salvaged parts.” Because “factories Mr. Hussein maintained to manufacture parts had been looted and destroyed after the 2003 invasion, damaged equipment like cracked engine blocks could not be repaired,” and refurbishment work had to be carried out under contract in former Warsaw Pact countries such as Hungary. The armor also proved to still be vulnerable to large insurgent IEDs. Yet many Iraqi soldiers and civilians as well as US troops believed the efforts were worthwhile because of the “dampening effect” the appearance of armored units had on insurgent activity in certain areas of the country.⁷⁵⁸ Additionally, some new equipment was planned for the Iraqi Army: the US Army’s Tank-automotive and Armaments Command contracted BAE Land Systems to build 378 specially-designed Light Armored Vehicles, scheduled to be delivered to the Iraqi military between November 2006 and May 2007.⁷⁵⁹

As a result, equipment deliveries and plans became a growing issue with Iraqi commanders during 2006, with complaints that a lack of proper equipment precluded decisive advantage over relative well armed and equipped insurgent forces. One criticism was that corruption in the Iraqi Ministry of Defense was largely to blame for the problem. In 2005, the MOD “misplaced” \$1.3 billion that had been allocated to arm the troops. Another complaint from field commanders was that US and Coalition equipment deliveries did not contain the types of heavy equipment necessary to definitively crush the insurgents.⁷⁶⁰

Outside experts expressed similar views. In a memo written in April 2006, Army General Barry McCaffrey said that Iraqi army units were “very badly equipped with only a few light vehicles, small arms, most with body armor and one or two uniforms. They [had] almost no mortars, heavy machine guns, decent communications equipment, artillery, armor, or [air force] transport, helicopter and strike support.”⁷⁶¹

By the spring 2006, similar issues had arisen as to what types and how much heavy equipment would be left behind by the US military for use by the Iraqi Army. Because the bulk of Iraqi equipment at the time consisted of former Soviet and Warsaw Pact vehicles, doubts had arisen as to Iraq’s ability to afford maintenance of more advanced US vehicles. At a March 30, 2006 joint hearing of the House Armed Services readiness and tactical air and land forces subcommittees, Gen. John Vines, who had recently spent a year as joint forces commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, spoke to the issue of equipping the Iraqi military: “I don’t advocate leaving large amounts of that equipment because it’s not compatible with their current force structure.”⁷⁶²

By late March 2006, the US plans for heavy equipment leave-behinds for the Iraqis had yet to solidify. Although no list of equipment had yet been produced, Lt. Den. David

Melcher, US Army deputy chief of staff for programming, analysis, and material integration, testified to the House Armed Services Committee that “up-armored Humvees of some nature” would clearly be on that list. He went on to explain that the Humvees likely to be left would likely not be the Level 1 M1114 vehicles, those constructed with the most armor, but rather Level 2 vehicles, which had armor added.⁷⁶³

Yet, more than 80% of IRRF 2 funds for military and police forces had been expended, as of March 31, 2006 -- although only 30.5% of ISFF funding was expended (ISFF funds began to be expended later than IRRF funds). The Administration also submitted an FY2006 supplemental request that included \$3.7 billion to continue to train, equip, and build facilities for the Iraqi army and police, and \$962 million in foreign assistance funding to fulfill goals related to security.⁷⁶⁴

The end result was that neither the Iraqi government nor the MNF-I announced any meaningful program to give Iraqi forces the armor, artillery, combat aircraft, and ships they need to defeat the insurgents, much less deter and defend against foreign enemies. At a more immediate level, the focus on MOD forces left the police particularly vulnerable. At the same time, central and national facilities were generally better funded and more secure than facilities in the field and urban areas, presenting problems in deploying and protecting forces in the field.

Army

In early 2005, only three Iraqi battalions had had lead responsibility for security in their respective areas. By October 2005, that number had grown to one division, four brigades, and 23 battalions. There were some 105,000 trained and equipped Iraqi army soldiers in early 2006, organized into 98 army and special forces battalions, with 37 battalions reportedly controlling their own battle space.

Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stated in January 2006 that over 90 Iraqi battalions were conducting combat operations at the time, and that in December 2005, 50% of all military operations were joint missions between Coalition and Iraqi forces. Additionally, he noted that 30 Iraqi units maintained independent security control over areas throughout the country. The US military was also training specialized Iraqi units to protect infrastructure and critical services, such as the electrical grid, and to carry out special tasks such as hostage search and rescue.⁷⁶⁵

By May 2006, the Iraqi Army included approximately 116,500 trained and equipped combat soldiers, including Strategic Infrastructure Battalion personnel and approximately 9,600 support forces. There were 111 Iraqi Army combat battalions “in the fight.” These included two Special Operations battalions and seven Strategic Infrastructure Battalions. There were also 28 National Police battalions “in the fight.” The number of Iraqi Army units that rated as having “assumed the lead” had doubled to two Iraqi Army divisions, 14 Iraqi brigades, and 57 Iraqi battalions. Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey, commander of MNSTC-I announced in June 2006 that the Iraqi Army would be built up to full strength by the end of 2006, although it would still require US support for combat

operations and officer training.⁷⁶⁶ The ten-division national force would by then consist of approximately 137,000 men.⁷⁶⁷

Figure 67 shows the increase in the number of Iraqi army battalions in combat from August 2004 to January 2006. The generation of all Iraqi army battalions in current plans was more than 89% complete, and the Army's train-and-equip effort had shifted towards building combat support and combat service support forces.

Increasing Combat Capability and Readiness

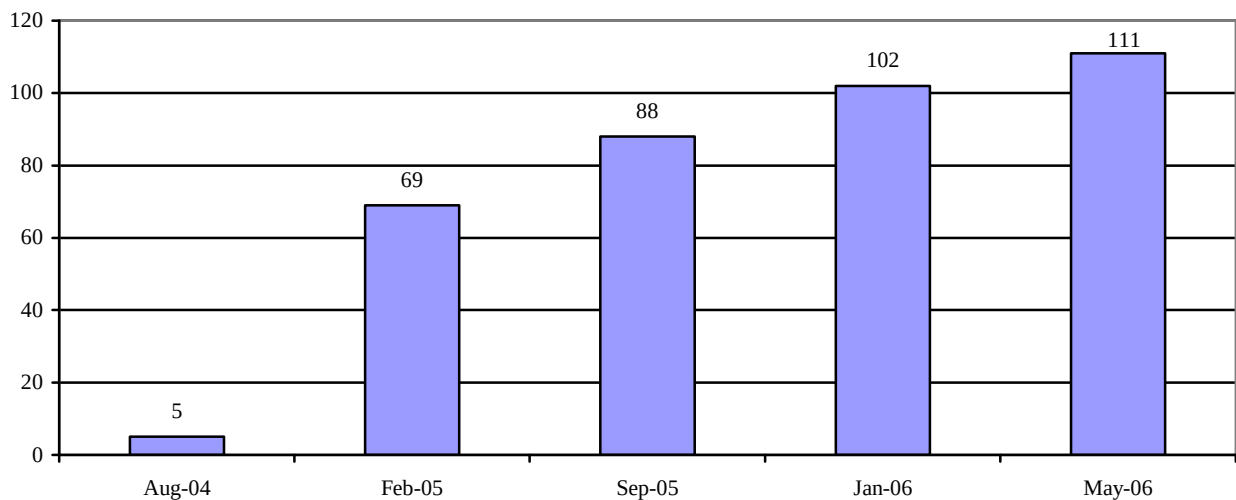
In May 2006, MNC-I assessed the readiness of Iraqi units at four different levels: "Units Being Formed"; "Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces Fighting Side-by-Side"; "Iraqi Lead with Coalition Support"; and "Independent Iraqi Operations." This "Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA)" had been steadily refined to enable more accurate measurement of inputs from the advisory teams on the various criteria being assessed such as manning, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipping, and leadership.

Iraqi units in all categories, save those classified as "Units Being Formed," were operational and engaged in operations against the enemy. However, only units rated "Iraqi Lead with Coalition Support" and higher could "control" their own areas of responsibility. This did not mean they were as yet truly independent of Coalition support, but it did mean they had reached the point where such support was limited, and Coalition forces could focus elsewhere.

The highest rated units, designated "Independent Iraqi Operations," were capable of planning, executing, and sustaining counter-insurgency operations. These units had considerably more capability than simply being able to fight and win at the small-unit level. Units rated as "Independent Iraqi Operations" had fully operational logistical elements, ministry capacity and capability, intelligence structures, and command and control.

As has been shown earlier, the number of counter-insurgency operations conducted independently by ISF as a percentage of total combat operations increased steadily from December 2005 through March 2006. Coalition forces intensified their own combat operations in April 2006, so the percentage of independent ISF operations declined somewhat. However, the total number of ISF and combined ISF/Coalition combat operations in April exceeded the number of independent and combined operations of the previous month. Moreover, MOI forces conducted many counter-insurgency operations that it did not report to Multi-National Corps-Iraq. MNC-I expected to include these MOI operations in future reports.

Figure 67
Iraqi Army Battalions in Combat



Note: Includes Special Operations battalions and Strategic Infrastructure battalions, but does not include Combat Support and Combat Service Support units. Source: Adapted from “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq,” Report to Congress, May 2006, p. 53.

Trend in Army Support Forces

While combat force generation unfolded largely on schedule, the creation of army logistical support and other enablers lagged, and became a growing priority for improving the effort in force development. Progress in creating a logistical, tactical, and materiel support apparatus for the Iraqi army stood as follows as of early 2006:⁷⁶⁸

- The National Depot at Taji, which is currently in operation, provides operational-level supply and maintenance support through its military, defense civilian, and contractor staff. It provides warehouse facilities for the receipt, storage, and issue of the Iraqi Armed Forces’ national stockholding of most classes of supply, as well as facilities for undertaking 4th-line maintenance support, including the ability to overhaul a range of vehicles and other equipment. The National Depot feeds five Regional Support Units (RSUs) that provide 3rd-level maintenance and supply support to nearby units. The RSUs, when fully operational, will also manage the provision of garrison and contract support for units located within their designated region. Garrison Support Units will be responsible for management and provision of garrison support to a designated base.
- Motorized Transport Regiments (MTRs) have been integrated into force generation plans to support each of the nine infantry divisions in order to provide improved mobility and sustainment capabilities for each division. Three MTRs are operational and are conducting critical logistical support missions for Iraqi Army units by moving personnel and materiel. The Coalition Corps Support Command is partnered with these units to mentor them and help develop their capabilities. A fourth MTR is being generated and will become operational in early 2006.
- In addition, each combat battalion will have a Headquarters and Service Company (HSC) to provide organic logistics and limited signal support; about half of these HSCs have been generated, and some are now operational.

- Vehicle maintenance is performed under a US Government-funded National Maintenance Contract in the absence of an organic MOD capability to provide depot-level maintenance. This capability will be built in the future since the contract does not expire until 2007. The capability to provide some routine maintenance is, however, being developed within the support units.
- The Iraqi Armed Service and Supply Institute (IASSI) at Taji plays a critical role in training the officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers to fill combat service support positions throughout the Army. The IASSI is training the soldiers and supervisors for the Motorized Transport Regiments and Headquarters and Service Companies. Members of the Regional Support Units and Strategic Infrastructure Battalions will soon start to receive similar training. In this way, the IASSI is making a critical contribution to the development of capabilities that will be necessary for Iraqi forces to take over missions now being performed by the US and other Coalition forces. As the Iraqi Army's operational support system is completed and matures, its ability to provide logistics support to all echelons in the fight will emerge and reduce the need for US forces performing these functions.

In May, the army continued to focus on building combat enablers:⁷⁶⁹

Of the planned nine Motorized Transportation Regiments (MTRs) to support each of the nine Iraqi Army light infantry divisions, four are now at least initially operationally capable. These MTRs provide improved mobility and sustainment support for the Iraqi forces. The operational regiments are conducting critical logistical support missions in partnership with the Coalition Support Command. All nine MTRs are expected to reach initial operational capability by mid-2006. Under the Iraqi Armed Forces Logistics Concept, the 9th Mechanized Division will be supported by a total of five Logistics Support Battalions, of which two are currently operational. Generation of the remaining battalions will significantly increase the division's ability to sustain itself throughout its area of operations. In addition to these combat enablers, the structure of each combat battalion brigade, and division has been adjusted to include a Headquarters and Service Company (HSC), which provides organic support to these units. This support includes resident transportation, communications, medical, supply, and maintenance capabilities. To date, approximately 80% of the required HSCs have been formed, of which 41% are operational.

The Iraqi Armed Service and Supply Institute (IASSI) at Taji trained more than 5,000 officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) who were to be the soldiers and supervisors for the Motor Transport Regiments, Regional Support Units, and Headquarters and Service Companies. As consolidated under the Iraqi Training Brigade, the basic training system continued to develop. New recruits attended a five-week program at the Kirkush Military Training Base and An-Numiniyah. After graduating, recruits received additional specialty training that varied from three to seven weeks depending on the military occupational skill assignment.

Junior leadership development designed to help build a solid NCO Corps lay in a system of Regional Training Centers and in the Non-Commissioned Officer Academy. The NCO Professional Education System included a Sergeants Major Course and a Chief Warrant Officer Course. Iraqi Military Academies at Zahko, Qualachulon, and Rustimiyah continued to conduct new officer training. The one-month Former Officer Course (FOC) continued to focus on human rights, ethics, and counter-insurgency operations. To further press upon members of the Iraqi Armed Forces the importance of ethics, human rights, and leadership, planners also proposed the concept of the Center for Ethics and Leadership to provide institutional oversight for ethics, education, training, and assessment.

As of July 2006, however, logistics and the provision of basic supplies to Iraqi troops remained “a serious issue” that “stymied” force development. A US Army major working with an Iraqi battalion asserted that logistics “was overlooked” earlier in Iraqi force development and that “it’s probably going to take a couple more years for that [logistics] to come together.” Iraqi military units still depended on the US for fuel, weapons, and equipment.⁷⁷⁰ Iraqi supply-chain mismanagement became so problematic that in the Anbar province the US military resumed providing supplies to Iraqi forces. The overall situation was severely deficient:⁷⁷¹

Senior US officials speaking on the condition of anonymity said the situation was worse, with many Iraqi Army supplies not arriving and others being siphoned off to the black market. One Iraqi fighting unit went days without sufficient supplies of food. Meanwhile, because Iraqi forces are still paid in cash delivered to the front, some units suffered desertions after the Iraqi government failed to deliver their salaries on time.

US officials said the deficiencies were disturbing and raised serious questions about the Iraqi government’s ability to become self-sufficient.

Iraqi Special Operations Forces

By the winter of 2006, Iraqi special operations forces consisted of approximately 1,500 trained and equipped personnel organized into two battalion-sized combat forces -- the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Task Force (ICTF) and the Iraqi Commandos -- as well as one support battalion and a special reconnaissance unit. However, at this time, these forces were still reliant on Coalition enablers, such as ground and air mobility assets.⁷⁷²

As of May 2006, the Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) were composed of approximately 1,600 trained and equipped personnel organized into the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Task Force (ICTF), the Iraqi Commandos, a support battalion, and a special reconnaissance unit. The ISOF was to complete force generation by the summer of 2006, according to the DOD’s May 2006 Quarterly Report to Congress. The ICTF and Commandos continued to conduct counter-insurgency operations throughout the nation. The ISOF primarily used US equipment, including the M4 carbine, M240 machine guns, M2 heavy machine guns, and up-armored HMMWVs.

Navy

The organization of the Navy in early 2006 is shown in Figure 68. During the last quarter of 2005, the Iraqi Navy’s Naval Support Unit assumed responsibility for the on-site management of all base support functions at the Umm Qasr Naval Base. The Iraqi Marines also assumed point defense responsibilities for the Khor Al-Amaya oil terminal and al-Basra oil terminal in December 2005.

In the first months of 2006, the Iraqi Navy had 800 trained and equipped sailors and marines organized into an operational headquarters, two afloat squadrons, and six marine platoons. No significant asset deliveries were made to the Iraqi Navy since early 2005. The Navy was operating five predator class patrol boats, 24 fast-aluminum boats, and 10 rigid hull inflatable boats. Force generation plans in early 2006 also called for a total of six Al-Faw class patrol boats by September 2006.

While the size of the Iraqi Navy did not grow significantly through spring 2006, there were reports of increased command and control capabilities at operational headquarters. However, as with the other services at this time, institutional capacity to execute acquisitions, logistics, and personnel policies remained underdeveloped.⁷⁷³

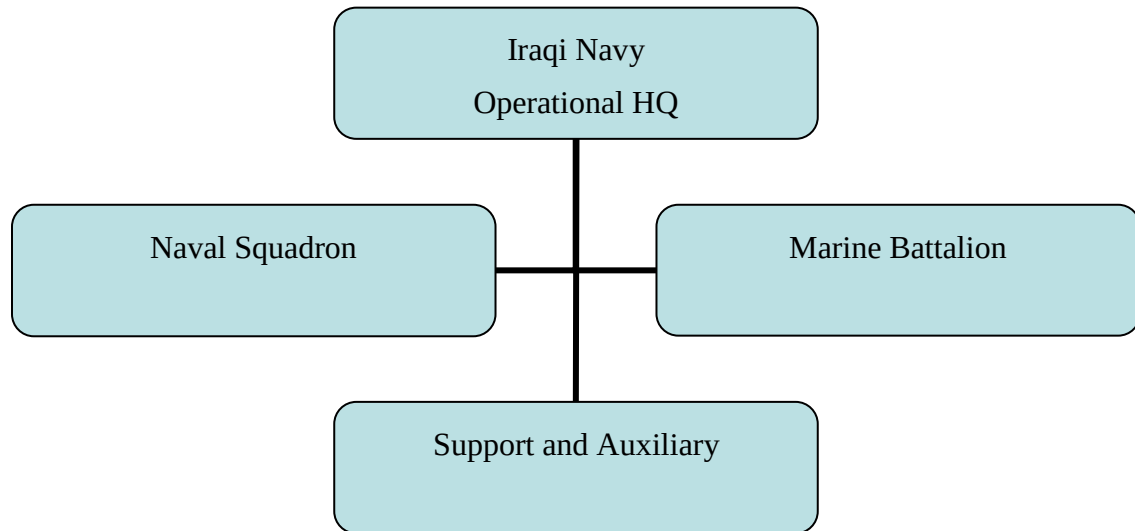
As of May 2006, the Iraqi Navy had 800 trained and equipped sailors and Marines organized into an Operational Headquarters, two afloat squadrons, and six Marine platoons. The following advancements were also reported:⁷⁷⁴

The Iraqi Navy continues to develop capabilities for surface surveillance, maritime interdiction, oil terminal protection, and support operations. The Navy has shown improvement in the command and control capability of the Operational Headquarters as well as the capability to mount a Quick Response Force for board-and-search missions, while maintaining communications with the headquarters and operating forces.

At this time, the Iraqi Navy order of battle included the Patrol Boat Squadron, composed of 5 Predator Class boats; the Assault Boat Squadron, composed of 10 Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats; and 24 Fast Assault Boats. The delivery of three al-Faw patrol boats continued to be delayed. The procurement of two Off-Shore Support Vessels had also been delayed by the MOD until the formation of the new government. The following advancements in training were also reported:⁷⁷⁵

Training of the Iraqi Navy continues to be conducted by the Iraqi Navy Training Department, with the assistance of the Coalition's Navy Transition Team. Training remains focused on maintaining basic seamanship skills and conducting maritime operations. Afloat Forward Staging Base and visit board search and seizure training continues. Marine training continues to be supported by US Navy Mobile Security Detachments and includes regular marksmanship refresher training.

Figure 68
Iraqi Navy: April 2006



Ship Inventory

Patrol	4/5 <i>Predator</i> class; 1/6 <i>Al Faw</i> class
Offshore Support	0/2 Offshore Support Vessels
Small Craft	10/10 Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats; 24/24 Fast Aluminum Boats

Source: MNSTC-I, April 2006.

Air Force

The organization of the Iraqi air force is shown in Figure 69. In early 2006, the Iraqi air force had nearly 500 trained and equipped personnel, and was developing three airpower capabilities: reconnaissance, battlefield mobility, and air transport. Major assets for these capabilities included the following:⁷⁷⁶

- Aerial Reconnaissance Fleet
 - 2 Seabird Seekers
 - 2 SAMA CH-2000s
 - 6 AeroComp Comp Air 7SLs
- Battlefield Mobility
 - 4 UH-1H helicopters
 - 5 Bell 206 Jet Ranger helicopters

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- Air Transport Capability
 - 3 C-130E aircraft

As of early 2006, the air force's UH-1 helicopters (from Jordan) were scheduled to be converted in the United States to Huey-II configuration. The quality of the fleet was questionable, having reportedly being described as "not secondhand but tenth-hand" by an Iraqi pilot.⁷⁷⁷

Development of Air Force personnel capabilities was also underway, with the establishing of Coalition Advisory Support Teams. Progress into early 2006 was reported as thus:⁷⁷⁸

The coalition has established Advisory Support Teams to facilitate development of a capable Iraqi Air Force. Two teams are aiding in the reconnaissance mission, with one in Kirkuk and the other working at Basra. These teams have trained nearly 70 personnel, including 25 pilots, 41 aircraft maintenance engineers, and 3 administrators. Established basic, mission, and instructor upgrade syllabuses for Iraqi Air Force aerial reconnaissance pilots continue to be utilized. Training is being conducted both in the United States (pilot, navigator, maintenance officer, flight engineer, and loadmaster courses) and in Iraq (maintenance and aircrew personnel courses). Nearly 30 basic air-land qualified C-130 aircrew personnel have been trained, as well as the first complete mission-ready Iraqi crew.

A media report issued in June 2006, however, indicated that progress was minimal and not a real priority for US force development efforts in Iraq. The few pilots had served under the Saddam Hussein regime and had an average age of 48 years, and "when they leave, the air force will will vanish unless recruitment begins in earnest." Trainee pilots "went unpaid for months" and were hindered by technical problems with the aircraft. They also had to deal with intimidation and death threats from insurgents and militias, which drove some pilots to quit their jobs. For its part, the US seemed reluctant to allow Iraqis a significant role in controlling their own airspace. The US military denied Iraqi requests for flight missions and maintains most aircraft support facilities in Iraq for its own use, leaving the Iraqis with only one significant base.⁷⁷⁹

The one Iraqi air base, Muthana, was located within the US military compound that encircled Baghdad International Airport. It was a minimal location that included one runway, a large hangar, and aircraft. The planes available for flight by the Iraqi 23 Squadron were three C-130 planes and 30 helicopters for transport or operations missions. The Air Force had no fighting ability. The 23 Squadron was one of five units, but the other four had not yet been assigned bases.⁷⁸⁰

The members of the Muthana division would not allow their names to be printed or photos taken for fear of their lives. "We are afraid for our families," one colonel said. "There is no one to protect them." Another added, "They kidnap our children, they are trying to kill us." Despite this and the relatively few aircraft at the base, these pilots, many of whom had served under Saddam, were anxious to fly.⁷⁸¹

As of May 2006, the Air Force had approximately 600 trained and equipped personnel. The following advancements were also reported:⁷⁸²

Iraqi reconnaissance aircraft have a limited capability to perform oil infrastructure reconnaissance and surveillance support for nationwide counter-insurgency operations. The Iraqi Air Force (IAF) reconnaissance aircraft consist of single-engine airplanes used in civilian and commercial markets.

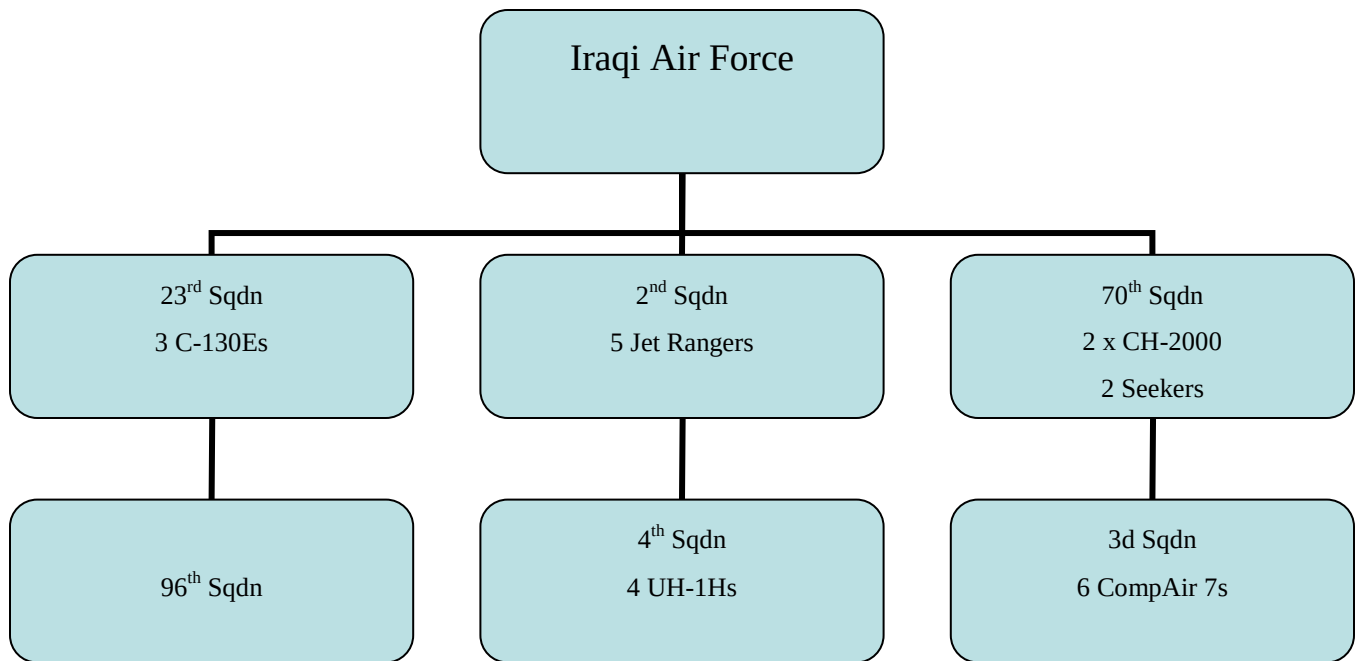
One such IAF type, the CH-2000, has continued to experience issues with carbon monoxide presence, which has limited its effectiveness. A temporary fix has been designed, and full operational capability is expected by late May. Another IAF reconnaissance aircraft, the compare, awaits the arrival of a US Air Force team, scheduled to be in theater in may, to modify the fleet and return it to operational status.

The IAF has three squadrons of helicopters (2nd Squadron, 4th Squadron, and 12 Squadron) in support battlefield mobility. Sixteen Uh-1H helicopters have returned to the United States for modifications and upgrades to the Huey II configuration. The first seven of these aircraft are scheduled to return to Iraq in January 2007, with the remainder following two to three months later. The 4th Squadron will initially operate 10 Mi-17s procured by the Iraqi MOD. Eight of these 10 have been delivered, but they are awaiting additional armor, weapons mounts, and pilot training and proficiency. These aircraft are expected to be operational by the end of 2006. The 12th Squadron operates five Bell 206 Jet Ranger helicopters, which are used for training purposes.

The 23rd Transport Squadron, with its three C-130E aircraft, completed its move to the new al-Muthanna Air Base early this quarter. This squadron has continued to perform transport, mobility, and humanitarian missions this quarter.

According to US Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Moseley, the Iraqi Air Force was “not yet developing an attack capability” as of June 2006.⁷⁸³ Due to sectarian militia penetration of the security forces, the US is leery “of putting such formidable power in Iraqi hands.” Iraqis were limited to reconnaissance near the borders, monitoring infrastructure, supply missions, and transporting government officials.⁷⁸⁴

Figure 69
Iraqi Air Force: April 2006



Aircraft Inventory (22)

Recce	6 CompAir 7s; 2 Seekers; 2 CH-2000s
Battlefield Mobility	4 UH-1Hs; 5 jet Rangers; (Mi-17s)
Airlift	3 C-130Es
Search and Rescue	none
Air Defense	none
Light Attack	none

Source: MNSTC-I, April 2006.

Ministry of Interior Forces

The ethnic, sectarian, and other problems that remained in the Iraq's Ministry of Interior and its forces in mid-2006 did not mean that they did not improve some aspects of their effectiveness. They also played an important role in supporting the regular military and in a wide range of security missions. Attacks on infrastructure declined by more than 60% between February and April 2006, and Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch claimed this was a direct result of the more than 250,000 Iraqi security forces conducting operations in the country.⁷⁸⁵

During the period before the new government took office, the force generation structure for MOI forces called for 195,000 trained and equipped personnel. In June 2006, US Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey, commander of MNSTC-I, cited a target of 188,000 personnel for police, border patrol, and other units under MOI as on track to be trained by the end of the year.⁷⁸⁶ Figure 70 summarizes manning levels and goals for MOI forces as of early 2006. Figure 71 provides more detail and compares goals against actual strength.

Real versus Authorized Strength

Estimating the actual strength of MOI forces was, however, a major problem. US and Iraqi commanders had long criticized the policy whereby Iraqi soldiers could leave their units whenever they want to. The Iraqi army does not require its soldiers to sign contracts, so soldiers treat enlistments as temporary jobs. As Col. Alaa Kata al-Kafage said, "All the soldiers now, they don't care about the country. They care about the money...Under the military agreement, they can leave anytime. After (soldiers) get paid and save a little bit of money, they leave." This policy is at least partially responsible for draining Iraqi ranks to confront the insurgency by as much as 30% to 50%.⁷⁸⁷

This situation was far worse for the forces under MOI command than those under the MOD, and both MNF-I and Iraqi sources had to admit that in most cases there was no reliable reporting on the manpower actually present. In May 2006, the Iraqi police force was estimating that it lost several hundred recruits every month. One such recruit, a 23 year old named Alah, simply made a "career move" and left the Iraqi police shortly after graduation and joined the Mahdi Army. The reasons he noted were fairly simple: The pay was better and there was a smaller chance of getting killed.⁷⁸⁸

Active recruiting by the militias presented a growing problem, and many who chose the militias over the national army and police scarcely did so out of religious conviction. In violence prone areas where few jobs were available, young males often had reasons and incentives such as security, money and general wellbeing to join the militias over the state-run forces. As one such case summed up, the offer by the Mahdi Militia was "an attractive package." Not only did it offer a greater salary, but the organization also promised to take care of his family if something were to happen to him.

Yet, there were still fewer defections and personnel abandoning their positions than during the early efforts to train such Iraqi forces, and in fact when leaves were canceled after the bombing of the Golden Shrine, the vast majority of soldiers reported for duty. Still, soldiers are still contractually permitted to leave their units whenever they would like without punishment and the MOI dealt with many of its problems by turning a blind eye.

Human Rights at the MOI

By the late spring of 2006, the Iraqi government and its Coalition partners had taken a number of steps to promote respect for human rights within the MOI:⁷⁸⁹

Iraqi police recruits receive 32 hours of human rights and rule of law training during the 10-week police basic training program. At the 3-week-long Transition Integration Program, in-service personnel receive 20 hours of human rights and rule of law training. National Police Forces receive 9-15 hours of human rights training during their 6-week courses. Additionally, throughout the country there are numerous programs to train existing MOI security forces in human rights standards, such as embedding civilian advisors and military police into Iraqi police stations.

While the US government helped the Iraqi government establish an abuse complaint process system that involved the Inspector General, Internal Affairs, and the Public Affairs Office, the MOI still did not have the ability to police itself and eradicate human rights abuses. Human rights violations were particularly egregious at detention centers where there are no places to shower, pray, or prepare food and where plumbing and electrical systems are substandard. The Joint Iraqi Inspection Committee, comprised of Iraqi Inspectors General from various ministries with the support of the US Embassy and MNF-I, continued its investigation of these detention centers as of spring 2006.

The fact that many of the MOI forces had become associated with Shi'ite and Kurdish attacks on Sunnis during this period presented another kind of problem. On May 2006, Senior Iraqi leaders were preparing a major restructuring of Baghdad's security brigades that would place all police officers and paramilitary soldiers under a single commander and in one uniform. The move came as part of a wider effort to curtail the sectarian violence that was ravaging the city.⁷⁹⁰ The one reassuring note was that Sunni Muslims continued to join the security forces in large numbers, a possible sign of success in the effort to include people of Iraq's various religious factions into the military.⁷⁹¹

Figure 70

Manpower: MOI Forces: January 4, 2006 vs. May 31, 2006

January 4, 2006		May 31, 2006	
COMPONENT	TRAINED & EQUIPPED	COMPONENT	TRAINED & EQUIPPED
POLCE	~ 77,500	POLCE	~103,400
HIGHWAY PATROL		HIGHWAY PATROL	
OTHER MOI	~40,500	OTHER MOI	~44,300

FORCES		FORCES	
TOTAL	~118,000*	TOTAL	~145,500

* Unauthorized absence personnel are included in these numbers. Source: Iraq Weekly Status Report, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, US Department of State: January 4, 2006 and May 31, 2006 issues, p. 7.

Figure 71
Manning Realities vs. Goals February 2006

MOI Force	Manning as of Feb. 2006	Manning Goal as of Feb. 2006
Iraqi Highway Patrol	1,800	6,200 (August 2007)
Police Commandos	9,000	11,800 (December 2006)
Mechanized Police	1,500	NA
Public Order Police	8,100	10,600 (May 2006)
Emergency Response Unit	400	700 (June 2006)
Border Police	18,500	28,000 (May 2006)
Dignitary Protection	600	NA

Source: Adapted from US Department of Defense, Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, Report to Congress, February 2006, pp. 49-54.

Ministry of Interior “National Police”: Special Security Forces and Police Commandos

Previous plans had authorized more than 11,800 commandos, which MNSTC-I had planned to have fielded by December 2006. Nearly 9,000 were trained and equipped as of early 2006. Training consisted of six weeks at the police commando academy in northern Baghdad, with instruction in the following topic areas:

- Urban patrolling
- Unarmed combat apprehension
- Use of force
- Human rights and ethics policing
- Introduction to Iraqi law

- Vehicle checkpoints
- IED characteristics and recognition
- Weapons qualification

After two years of establishing the training program, Coalition forces still found that “many of the early troubles” with Iraqi national police forces remained: “weak discipline, divided loyalties, failure to complete tasks, [and] the tendency to fire wildly in every direction at the first sign of danger.”⁷⁹²

Build-Up in 2006

Figure 72 shows that the resulting build-up of MOI special security and commando forces and units continued to be significant in 2006. The *New York Times* reported on January 16, 2006 that about 80,000 local police officers across Iraq were certified as trained and equipped, more than halfway toward the goal of 135,000 by early 2007.⁷⁹³

As of February 20, 2006, Multinational Forces spokesman Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch said that Iraq’s growing security forces planned and carried out more than a quarter of all counterinsurgency operations in Iraq in January, a total of 490 Iraqi-run missions, nearly a 50% increase over the September 2005 figure.⁷⁹⁴ The Coalition also worked with the Iraqi Public Order Special Police who served as a bridge between local police and the Iraqi army in handling terrorist and insurgency threats. Numbering about 9,000 as of February 2006, the public order police operated primarily as a light urban infantry.

As of May 2006, there were around 22,700 trained and equipped National Police (formerly known as “Special Forces” and Commandos”) personnel, an increase of 4,000 since the previous DOD report to Congress in February 2006.⁷⁹⁵

The 1st and 2nd National Police Divisions will reach 95% of equipping and authorized manning by June 2006 and will complete force generation by December 2006. The 1st National Police Mechanized Brigade continues to provide route security along Route Irish (from the International Zone to Baghdad International Airport), and is currently completing the fielding of 62 Armored Security Vehicles.

The problem with this build-up was that some of these forces were responsible for serious abuses, and became a de facto part of the problem rather than the solution. Colonel Gordon Davis stated in February 2006, the composition of these forces was about 20% Sunni, many of whom are officers, and claimed this made it unlikely that the group could be infiltrated by vigilantes who carry out ethnic-based attacks. “There are a heck of a lot of strongly willed patriots amongst that group, and if they believed one of their own may be an insurgent or terrorist, then they would pick them out right away because that puts their own lives on the lines, as well as those of their families.”⁷⁹⁶

In an April 6, 2006 report to Congress, the DOD addressed the overall progress in the force structure of Iraq’s Interior Ministry as follows:⁷⁹⁷

The end-strength force structure for all Ministry of Interior forces is 195,000 trained and equipped personnel manning two division headquarters, nine brigade headquarters, twelve Public Order battalions, twelve Commando battalions, three mechanized battalions, and one Emergency Response Unit. The force structure plan is designed to enable a stable civil-security environment in which a prosperous economy and a democratic and representative government that respects and promotes

human rights can evolve. As of March 20, 130,700 Ministry of Interior security personnel, or 67 percent of the authorized end strength of 195,000, have been trained and equipped. This includes 89,000 IPS personnel, as described in the next section, and 41,700 other Ministry of Interior forces, such as 27 National Police Force battalions and one Emergency Response Unit conducting operations with ten of these units “in the lead.” There is no specific threshold for the number of Iraqi special police units that must be judged capable of operating independently or in the lead before US force levels can be reduced.

The report went on to outline progress and the outlook for training and equipping the Iraqi police forces:⁷⁹⁸

The end-strength force structure of the IPS is 135,000 trained and equipped personnel. As of March 20, over 89,000 IPS, or 66 percent of the authorized end strength, have been trained and equipped, an increase of over 14,000 since the December 15, 2005 parliamentary election. These IPS personnel work alongside the 41,700 other Ministry of Interior forces described in the previous section.

The IPS is the primary civilian police organization in Iraq. Their mission is to enforce the law, safeguard the public, and provide internal security at the local level. The IPS is organized into patrol, station, and traffic sections in all major cities and provinces in Iraq and is responsible for providing security in more than 130 districts and at nearly 780 stations throughout Iraq. The scope of their responsibility demonstrates the critical need to ensure the development of professional, capable police forces that utilize modern policing techniques, follow the rule of law, and respect human rights. The Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) works closely with the Ministry of Interior to improve the performance and professionalism of these forces. Police Transition Teams mentor and assist the IPS in a role similar to that of the Coalition Military Transition Teams, evaluating their progress and instituting the necessary procedures to continue development of a professional police force.

There is no specific threshold for the number of IPS that must be trained and equipped to maintain law and order and thereby enable US force levels to be reduced.

Coalition military leaders reported in August 2006 that the Iraqi Interior Ministry forces had 92 percent of a planned strength of 188,000. Within that total were regular police, described as 90 percent trained and 83 percent equipped, and the National Police, described as 98 percent trained and 92 percent equipped. The Border Enforcement police were reportedly 92 percent trained and 56 percent equipped, due to the diversion of resources to forces in “contested areas.”⁷⁹⁹

Steps Toward Reform

For all the reasons discussed earlier, however, it was clear that major reforms were still needed. As a result, the Ministry of Interior merged the Police Commandos, the Public Order and Mechanized Police, and the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) to form the Iraqi National Police on April 1, 2006. Under the National Police Headquarters fall the 1st and 2nd National Police Divisions, the 1st National Police Mechanized Brigade, and the Emergency Response Unit (ERU). The two police divisions were formed from the Commando Division and the Public Order Division.

The 1st National Police Mechanized Brigade remained a direct supporting unit, and the ERU, previously part of the MOI’s Supporting Forces organization, was reassigned as a direct reporting unit to the National Police Headquarters. Two police academies -- Camp Solidarity and Camp Dublin -- also fell under the National Police Headquarters and provided specialized training and professional development. In addition, the

Headquarters was formally recognized to provide command and control, manning, equipping, training, and sustainment for the National Police Forces.

The Emergency Response Unit (ERU) now reported directly to the National Police Force Headquarters and had more than 400 trained and equipped personnel assigned to it. The goal was for the ERU to become a highly trained, national-level unit similar to the hostage rescue team of the United States FBI. ERU training consisted of two four-week courses that included instruction in handling detainees, human rights, target reconnaissance, physical fitness, and mission planning. Selected personnel received training at the eight-week Explosive Ordnance Disposal course or the six-week Intelligence/Surveillance course.

Figure 72

Estimated MOI National Police Force Capabilities Before the Spring 2006 Reorganization

COMPONENT	IRAQI UNITS ACTIVELY CONDUCTING COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS	
	Units fighting side-by-side with Coalition Forces*	Units in the lead with Coalition enablers or fully independent
Public Order Battalions	7	5
Mechanized Battalions	2	1
Police Commando Battalions	9	3
Emergency Response Unit	0	1

*The numbers in this column may decrease as units are assessed into higher levels (i.e., “in the lead” or “fully independent”). Source: *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Department of Defense report to Congress, February 2006, p. 37.

Further Progress in Reform in the Spring 2006

By early 2006, Ministry of Interior forces earned a black reputation among many in Iraq, particularly among Iraq’s Sunni population. So poor was the force’s reputation that after the bombing of the Askariya shrine in Samarra on February 22, many Sunnis claimed that the perpetrators of the act were MOI forces seeking a pretext for civil war.⁸⁰⁰ Among the forces that had gained the mixed reputation as among the most effective, but also the most feared, were the MOI’s special security forces and police commandos.

In early 2006, the White House released a fact sheet highlighting the importance of revamping image and procedures of MOI forces and elite units:

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The Interior Ministry's Special Police are the most capable Iraqi police force...Many are professional and diverse, but recently some have been accused of committing abuses against Iraqi civilians. To stop abuses and increase professionalism, the Coalition is working with the Iraqi government to make adjustments in the way these forces are trained. Human rights and rule of law training is being increased. A new Police Ethics and Leadership Institute is being established in Baghdad. To improve capabilities, Iraqi Special Police battalions will be partnered with Coalition battalions so that American forces can work with and train their Iraqi counterparts.

Indeed, much attention in spring 2006 was placed on re-orienting the special MOI forces toward being a more positive force, and reducing divisive behaviour and the interloping influences of sectarian actors. Some of the actions taken were largely cosmetic. The elite "Wolf Brigade," for example, was renamed the "Freedom Brigade." Meanwhile, MOI special forces and commandos were collectively renamed, simply, the "National Police."

Other steps taken by American commanders in Iraq were more significant. To allay fears of mistreatment by MOI elite forces in the Iraqi population, for example, in April 2006 US soldiers handed out thousands of cards to encourage residents to call the authorities if they saw commandos, or fighters posing as commandos, on suspicious missions without US troops.⁸⁰¹ By early summer, however, the future of the MOI remained uncertain, with militia loyalties and Badr Organization involvement still concerns.

With sectarian killings on the rise in mid-July, MOI issued new orders to its anti-crime units requiring notification of headquarters of all operations. Seeking to curb "kidnappings by men in uniform," MOI also urged Iraqis to "demand identification before following orders by officials claiming to be police."⁸⁰²

Some Baghdad neighborhoods actually tried to ban national police units from entering after several incidents of citizens being kidnapped and killed by men wearing national police uniforms.⁸⁰³

Interior Minister Jawad Bolani insisted that "Interior Ministry troops who had been reportedly seen robbing armored cars and kidnapping dozens were not representative of the force."⁸⁰⁴ He announced that "new uniforms and identification cards would be supplied to hobble those 'who carry out bad activities under the cover of this institution.'" 25,000 new uniforms were on order, made "with imported camouflage cloth and intricate patches and insignias...designed to be difficult to copy." However, a young Iraqi tailor selling copies of security force uniform for the equivalent of about \$33 estimated it would take "a day" for the new uniforms to be copied by enterprising tailors.⁸⁰⁵

On August 14, the new uniforms for the national police were unveiled by US military officials. "The bluish-gray uniforms, to be issued in October, have a stamp-size Iraqi flag printed into the cloth."⁸⁰⁶ Additionally, the US military announced "standardized vehicle markings" and "Iraqi-led inspection boards" as part of a plan to rein in violent activity by rogue police officers and those impersonating officers.⁸⁰⁷

The Regular Police

The primary organization for local civilian policing in the MOI was the Iraqi Police Service (IPS). MNSTC-I's Civilian Police Assistance Training Team was working with

the IPS to improve performance and professionalism, and Police Transition Teams were providing mentorship and development roles.

By early 2006, over 80,000 IPS personnel had been trained and equipped, an increase of 13,000 since October 2005. As of early 2006, MNSTC-I was projecting to complete force generation by February 2007.⁸⁰⁸

Increases in Police Strength

As of spring 2006, MOI forces included the IPS and National Forces. The IPS consisted of patrol, traffic, station, and highway police assigned throughout Iraq's 18 provinces. National Forces consisted of the National Police, the Department of Border Enforcement, and the Center for Dignitary Protection.

As of March 2006, the MOI had integrated the former Iraqi Highway Patrol into the respective provincial police departments. This decreased the authorization of MOI forces to 188,000 trained and equipped personnel. The National Police had 28 battalions in the fight with 6 battalions having the security lead for their areas of responsibility.

The end result was that the Coalition Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) had trained and equipped approximately 101,200 IPS personnel as of May 2006, an increase of 18,800 since the previous report. As of May 2006, the CPATT anticipated that it would train and equip the total authorization of 135,000 personnel by December 2006. More than 225 Iraqi Police stations had been constructed and refurbished, 80 more than in February 2006. The CPATT projected that another 225 police stations would be completed by December 2006.

The "Year of the Police"

All of this progress, however, did not affect the fact that problems in the police and other MOI forces were so severe that the Iraqi government and MNF-I not only agreed to the reorganization discussed earlier, but that a comprehensive new approach to training was needed. All elements of the MOI forces needed better training and organization, but the regular police were so large that retraining them was a key challenge to the MOI, the Iraqi government, and MNF-I.

The fact that the training and overall readiness of the Iraqi National Police remained behind the Iraqi army, as well as the presence of militia members or "death squads" operating within or in association with the forces caused the US to elevate its efforts to make the police an effective fighting force, and to unofficially dub 2006 the "Year of the Police."

President Bush identified these problems in a March speech, he proposed three solutions:⁸⁰⁹

- First, to increase partnerships between US and Iraqi battalions in order that Iraqi units cannot only learn tactical lessons but also that the US forces can "teach them about the role of a professional police force in a democratic system" so that they can conduct their operations "without discrimination."⁸¹⁰
- Second, he called for further efforts by Iraqi officials in conjunction with their US partners to identify and remove leaders within the police ranks who demonstrate loyalty to a militia. He

claimed one success story in this area already. In December 2005, after receiving reports of abuses, the MOI dismissed the Brigade commander of the Second Public Order Brigade. His replacement subsequently removed more than 100 men with ties to militias.⁸¹¹

- Third, to recruit a greater number of Sunni Arabs into what is seen by many as a predominately Shi'ite police force. President Bush noted that a basic training class that graduated in October 2005 was less than 1% Sunni. Although it is unclear how much progress has been made in diluting the Shi'ite majority within the ranks, Bush subsequently remarked that the class graduating in April 2006 "will include many more Sunni Arabs."

More than 200 police transition teams were established at the national, provincial, district, and local levels that provided Coalition oversight, mentorship, and training to the police forces.

Rebuilding the police force in the predominantly Sunni Anbar province continued to be unusually difficult and time-consuming. It was a "major challenge" to find "recruits willing to serve. According to statistics that were gathered at the end of June by the Marine command that oversees the province, there were about 5,200 policemen for an area roughly the size of Louisiana." US commanders hoped to have 11,000 police officers serving in Anbar. Fallujah had 1,700 policemen and the towns of Baghdadi and Qaim had 250 and 700 police officers, respectively. Yet other towns in the province, such as Hit, Rutba, Ana, and Haditha, had no police presence at all at the end of June 2006.⁸¹² In August, up to "half of Fallujah's 1,700 member police force had failed to report to work" in the face of insurgent death threats.⁸¹³

Reform of the Police

The initiative led to the deployment of Coalition Police Assistance Training Teams (CPATTs), under MNSTC-I, to lead the MNF-I "Year of the Police" initiative, and partnering with MOI to plan, coordinate, and execute the necessary measures to develop the ministry. Training increasingly focused on leadership development. The MOI also improved its internal investigative capability with the Internal Affairs section graduating another group of students, bringing the total number of trained Internal Affairs specialists to 25 as of May 2006.

Following the April 1, 2006 reorganization, National Police recruits were to finish basic training programs at the National Police Force Training Academies. Training focused on leadership development and "train the trainer" courses to facilitate the transition to an Iraqi lead in all areas. The training academy in northern Baghdad accommodated 300-500 students for six weeks of intense training in weapons qualification, urban patrolling techniques, unarmed combat apprehension, use of force, human rights and ethics in policing, introduction to Iraqi law, vehicle checkpoints, and improvised explosive device characteristics and recognition.

Also effective April 1, 2006, National Police Transition Teams (NPTTs) were reassigned to MNC-I to ensure an integrated approach to command and control for the transition teams. This was meant to help ensure a more synchronized effort between Iraqi forces and operational Coalition units. NPTTs provided daily mentorship to the National Police forces in the field to help develop leadership, plan and execute operations, and otherwise professionalize the force, while emphasizing the importance of human rights and the rule

of law. US CENTCOM commander General John Abizaid commented on July 21, 2006 that reforming the police presented a continuing problem that needed to be dealt with to halt an upsurge of sectarian violence. “Definitely one of the things that is not going well is the national police and police reform, and it needs to be looked at carefully, he remarked. “You can’t allow sectarian politics to influence the ministries.”⁸¹⁴

In a July 30 statement before Parliament, Interior Minister Jawad Bolani vowed to “clean up” Iraq’s law enforcement agencies, particularly the police, who had been implicated in various sectarian-motivated killings and abductions during the summer of 2006. A ministry spokesman acknowledged that “there are extremists who are abusing their position.”

Bolani stated that he had “launched 13 investigations of police officers charged with crimes ranging from improper detention of suspects to shaking down people for bribes.” Other measures included “recalling police vehicles assigned to political leaders” as well as “issuing difficult-to-forgo badges for officers and vehicles, new uniforms, special paint for police cars and a new program for licensing weapons.” Bolani declared, “The ministry is unwilling to keep those individuals who mishandle authority and violate human rights.”⁸¹⁵

Equipment and Training

The Iraqi Police Service (IPS) was equipped with AK-47s, PKCs, Glock pistols, individual body armor, high frequency radios, small pick-ups, mid-size SUVs, and medium pick-ups. The IPS’s logistics capabilities, especially in regard to vehicle maintenance, continued to be a concern, although progress had been made in the effective distribution and improved accountability of supplies and equipment. Forces in the nine key cities approached 80% of their authorized key pacing items.

Deliveries, however, were even lighter than for the regular forces. Equipment deliveries for all MOI forces in the final quarter of 2005 included the following.⁸¹⁶

- More than 10,000 AK-47 rifles
- 16,000 pistols
- 800 light and medium machine guns
- 4,000 sets of individual body armor
- 700 Kevlar helmets
- More than 65,000 cold weather jackets

Police in the Najaf province received 40 new US-manufactured four-wheel-drive trucks from the coalition in July 2006.⁸¹⁷

Iraqi police training continued at the Jordan International Police Training Center (JIPTC) and at the Baghdad Police College (BPC) while smaller regional academies complemented these training initiatives. The JIPTC accommodated around 1,500 students per class while the BPC accommodated around 1,000. The 10-week basic course covered the rule of law, human rights, and policing skills in a high threat environment. Since the

previous DOD Report to Congress in February, more than 20,000 police personnel had received specialized training by May 2006 on diverse subjects, including interrogation procedures and counter-terrorism investigations. Leadership development remained on track to meet the December 2006 goal of having all required officers and NCOs trained.

Dealing With Divided Loyalties

Reorganization and retraining still left open the question of divided loyalties. By the spring of 2006, a background check by Iraqi police investigators found more than 5,000 police officers with records of crimes that included attacks on American troops. The results raised questions over the initial vetting process for creating the force, as well as continuing problems of quality. A 2006 internal police survey conducted northeast of Baghdad found that 75% of respondents did not trust the police enough to tip them off to insurgent activity.

In response to these concerns, the Pentagon announced it was sending 3,000 police trainers across the country in 2006 in an attempt to remake the force, and to have a competent, functional force of 190,000 police officers by early 2007.⁸¹⁸ According to Army Col. Rob Barham, this goal was to follow on a shorter-term goal of 135,000 officers patrolling in all 18 Iraqi provinces by the end of 2006.⁸¹⁹

Facility Construction

As of spring 2006, work on the Baghdad Police College (formerly the Baghdad Public Safety Training Academy) continued. The project was 80% complete and was expected to be finished by July 2006. Renovations on the Al-Zab Courthouse in Kirkuk, which began in October 2005, were 52% complete by April, with an estimated completion date of mid-August 2006.

Progress on the Nassriya correctional facility was 28% complete, and had been hampered due to inadequate workforce levels and security concerns at the site. The facility was expected to be completed in August 2006, and was slated to have a capacity of at least 800 beds, with the possibility of an additional 400 beds.

By April, construction was also completed on the following military facilities:⁸²⁰

- Camp India Base, which will support 2,500 Iraqi soldiers in the 4th Brigade of the 1st Division
- Samawah, which will support 750 Iraqi soldiers in the 2nd Brigade of the 10th Division
- Naiad, which will support 250 Iraqi soldiers in the 1st Brigade Headquarters of the 8th Division

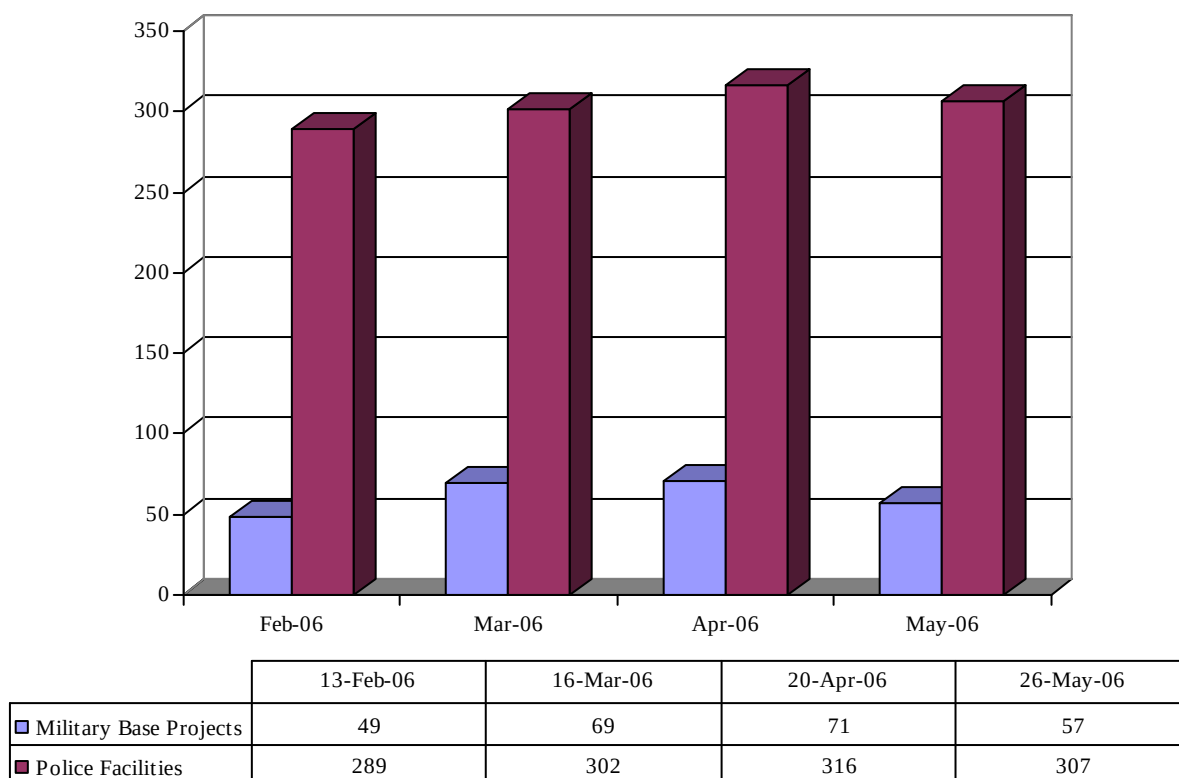
Figure 73 shows the status of IRRF 2-funded projects by subsector as of April 2006. Figure 74 shows military base projects and police facilities constructed from Feb. 13, 2006 through May 26, 2006.

Figure 73
Status of IRRF 2-Funded Projects by Subsector

Project	Funds	Number of Projects

Military Facilities (173)	\$962M	80
Police Stations (390)	\$181M	294
Police Training (27)	\$139M	5
Border Enforcement (261)	\$135M	151
Prisons (3)	\$124M	N/A
Courts (36)	\$80M	20
Security Communications (3)	\$59M	1
Fire Facilities (81)	\$27M	63
Points of Entry (11)	\$22M	9
Witness Protection (5)	\$14M	N/A
Investigations of Crimes Against Humanity (28)	\$4M	27
Miscellaneous (1)	\$3M	N/A
Construction & Repair (1)	\$0.5M	N/A
Emergency Force Protection (1)	\$0.2M	N/A

Source: Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, April 2006 Report to Congress, p. 23.

Figure 74**Iraqi Military and Police Facilities Constructed Feb. 13, 2006 - May 26, 2006**

Note: Project numbers include projects funded by the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) and the Development Fund Iraq (DFI) and managed by GRD/PCO. Source: [Iraq Reconstruction Update](#), Weekly Publication of the US Department of the Army: Issues 02/13/06, 03/16/06, 04/20/06, 05/26/06.

Department of Border Enforcement

Progress also occurred in creating an effective Border Police, a step that was hoped to help stem the infiltration of foreign fighters, smugglers, and Iranian agents. By early 2006, more than 18,500 border police had been trained and equipped, up by 1,500 since the last yearly quarter of 2005, but lagging the goal of 24,000 by the December 15 election. While three border force academies were operation, delays in construction at the Department of Border Enforcement was blamed for the slow progress of bringing forces online. Construction had been delayed due to weather, remote location, restricted movement, and contractor delays.

By May 2006, the Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) numbered approximately 21,000 trained and equipped personnel, an increase of 2,300 since February 2006. These forces were organized into five regions, 12 brigades, and 38 battalions.

Coalition Border Transition Teams (BTTs)

Members of the 10- to 11-man Coalition Border Transition Teams (BTTs) were trained in various specialties, including logistics and communications, and provided valuable

mentorship and support for border force commanders in the areas of personnel management, intelligence, operations, budgeting equipment accountability, and maintenance. The number of BTTs was increased from 15 to more than 25 as part of the “Year of the Police” initiative.

These Coalition Border Transition Teams served as mentors for the border security units, assisting in areas such as personnel management, intelligence, operations, budgeting, and equipment accountability/maintenance. Three academies with a capacity of 800 students each were operational, as well, with instruction in the following:

- Law enforcement
- Weapons qualification
- Combat life-saving
- Vehicle searches
- Iraqi border law
- Human rights
- Arrest and detainee procedures
- Small unit patrolling
- Human relations

Such efforts had limits, however. Although the lack of border control helped allow the passage foreign fighters and supplies, many came through legal border crossings and the insurgency was not dependent on smuggling or foreign volunteers. In fact, Iranian pilgrims were the most frequently intercepted trespassers.

“There is still a lot going over the border,” Lt. Gen. Peter Chiarelli said. “I don’t know if you can ever stop it completely.”⁸²¹ For example, border patrols at Ft. Tarik captured several suspected Iranian intelligence agents crossing into Iraq and have also discovered supplies being smuggled in for roadside bombs.⁸²²

During a tour of two of the 258 border posts established by Coalition forces, Chiarelli said that Iraqi border forces were getting “better and better every single day.” Yet he noted that these forces needed better pay and equipment. Some forts lacked radios and other standard communication equipment and a few do not even have enough gas on hand to conduct patrols.⁸²³

In a typical case, Ft. Tarik -- a border outpost so close to Iran that it could see its counterpart -- 60 Iraqi security forces had been recruited from local a local Shi’ite tribe and were being trained by US and Ukrainian forces. Ironically, US Maj. Vic Lindenmeyer pointed out, the same security forces manning the outpost and watching for trespassers were often related to those on the other side performing the same duty.⁸²⁴

Border Forces Equipment and Training

Equipping the DBE and Point of Entry forces was an ongoing process with a force generation and distribution plan calling for the delivery of 85% of the key equipment by

summer 2006. Standard organization equipment included small and medium pick-up trucks; mid-size SUVs, generators; and mobile, base, and hand-held radios. Border forces also required personal equipment such as AK-47s, medium machine guns, and individual body armor.

Three DBE academies in al-Kut, Basra, and Sulamaniya, each with a capacity of approximately 800, were utilized for training border patrol students. Students in the Iraqi Border Patrol (IBP) Basic Training Course received instruction in law enforcement, human relations, human rights, weapons qualification, combat life saving, vehicle searches, Iraqi border law, arrest and detainee procedures, and small unit patrolling. The curriculum was to be updated to include specialized instruction in first aid, communications, maintenance, and food preparation. After completing the three week core curriculum, recruits were then tracked according to these four specialties.

The DBE continued to make progress in designating standard organizations, delineating responsibilities, and developing detailed policies and procedures for land Points of Entry (POE). As of May 2006, there were 14 land POEs, and 13 of these were functional. Making significant changes in the operation of POEs is difficult because multiple ministries are involved.

Uncertain Progress in Facilities

The border forces were to man 258 border forts. As of May 2006, 244 border posts and forts had been completed, an increase of 74 since February 2006. Layered security efforts included border patrols by DBE units, Iraqi Army checkpoints, and Coalition forces.

This progress was, however, sometimes more apparent than real. In spring 2006, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (SIGIR) conducted ground project surveys of 22 border forts located along the Iraq-Iran border. Progress on the completion of these projects was described as thus:⁸²⁵

At the time of the ground survey, 17 were complete or near complete and functional. However, only 7 of the 17 border forts had perimeter security systems, gates, berms, or walls installed. Concrete quality was sometimes poor, and inconsistent surfaces in concrete and plaster finishing were common in the buildings and other structures. Numerous sites lacked retaining walls to prevent degradation of the embankments created by site leveling.

Based on discussions with local personnel at the border forts at the time of the site visits, SIGIR found that the day-to-day users -- the border police -- were unaware of a plan for maintenance and logistical support for the border posts, and received little if any training in maintaining the generator and septic systems. Logistical needs, such as fuel and water delivery, were lacking at some border posts. The generators lacked protection from drifting snow, and some outdoor electrical fixtures lacked proper insulation against rainwater. SIGIR requested copies of contract documents for the remaining five border forts included in our surveys; however, the MNSTC-I was unable to identify or locate the contract(s) for these projects. As a result, SIGIR was unable to determine the project objectives, SOW, or design specifications.

All five of these border forts were of poor quality construction and showed no signs of any recent maintenance. Although small generators were located at the five border forts, fuel storage was not available. Electrical and water systems were consistently either inoperable or needed repair.

Other Developments in Border Enforcement

On May 27, 2006, on the second day of his visit to Iraq, Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said that Iran and Iraq had agreed to form a joint commission to oversee border issues, and that its primary task would be to “block saboteurs” crossing the 700-mile border. Mottaki went on to say that improved border controls would be part of a wider effort to build close ties between the countries, including \$1 billion in Iranian economic assistance to Shi’ite and Kurdish areas of Iraq.⁸²⁶

Facilities Protection Forces, Private Security Personnel and “Ministry Armies”

Iraq and the MNF-I also had problems with a wide range of lighter forces, many of which were corrupt, ineffective, and had elements that either supported the insurgency or rogue Shi’ite operations

The Facilities Protection Services

L. Paul Bremer, former head of the CPA, established the FPS in September 2003 to free US troops from guarding Iraqi government property and to prevent the kind of looting that erupted with the entry of US forces and the overthrow of Saddam Hussein. Bremer’s order put the FPS under the command and pay of the ministries they protected, not of the interior and defense ministries, which handle the rest of Iraq’s security forces. The order also allowed private security firms to handle the contracting of FPS guards for the ministries.⁸²⁷

US and MOI officials increasingly described the FPS units as militias that answer only to the ministry or private security firm that employs it. US officials acknowledged that they have no more control over the FPS than the Interior Ministry does. “Negative. None. Zero,” said Lt. Col. Michael J. Negard, a spokesman for the US training of Iraqi forces. Even Interior Ministry Bayan Jabr said in April 2006 that the FPS was “out of control.”⁸²⁸

On May 14, 2006, Ellen Knickmeyer reported in the *Washington Post* that Iraq’s Interior Ministry had begun negotiations to bring central authority to the Facilities Protection Service, a unit originally numbering no more than 4,000 building guards, but which US officials say has become the new government’s largest paramilitary force, with 145,000 armed men and no central command, oversight or paymaster.

On May 6, the private security companies that employed the FPS members agreed to several Interior Ministry proposals intended to bring some measure of central control and oversight to the paramilitary units. The ministry was to issue badges and distinctive seals for FPS vehicles and supervise FPS weapons. Agents of the security companies and the ministry clarified that FPS members were liable for prosecution for any crimes. The security companies also agreed to bring the FPS under ministry supervision, but General Raad al-Tamimi of the Interior Ministry did not disclose any details.⁸²⁹ On July 6, in a blunt acknowledgement of security force corruption, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki singled out the FPS by announcing:⁸³⁰

...a police force with thousands of members assigned to protect government buildings and other installations was filled with criminals and murderers. The declaration was an unusually blunt

acknowledgment of the corruption that has plagued the Iraqi security forces. "It didn't really protect the ministries," he said of the force, called the Facilities Protection Service. "On the contrary, it turned into a partner in the killing."

The Prime Minister's statement indicated that the FPS remained something of a rogue element within the security forces and lacked much credibility even within the government. On July 27, for example, FPS reported the robbery of 2 billion Iraqi dinars from one its armored cars in Baghdad by people dressed in army uniforms. The Interior Ministry's reaction was that it was "not sure if that was true or the FPS made it up to take the money."⁸³¹

By August 2006, the FPS was 140,000 strong and lacked accountability mechanisms that were being applied to police and military forces. US efforts to reform the security forces were not applied to the FPS, which was still described as "unaccountable to police, the army, or the US military."⁸³²

The Infrastructure Protection Forces

The various infrastructure protection forces were placed under the MOD, but were much lower quality forces than the regular military, the MOI security forces, and many of the police. In many cases, they were corrupt, subject to insurgent penetration, and tied to various sects, ethnic groups, and tribes.

While Prime Minister Maliki referred to such forces as having some 150,000 men in May 2006, many were phantom employees, deserters, or virtually inactive. Such units also often sold their uniforms, weapons, and equipment. They also generally reported in de facto terms to another ministry, even when they were formally under the control of the Ministry of Defense. Since April of 2006, the Interior Ministry started putting the Federal Protection Service (FPS) under stricter control, proposing badges for its members and suggesting making members liable for crimes they commit. There was also talk about bringing it under a more centralized command.⁸³³

The two key entities responsible for the security of Iraq's oil infrastructure in spring 2006 were the Strategic Infrastructure Battalions (SIBs) and the Oil Protection Force (OPF). The electric infrastructure was protected by the Electric Power Security Service (EPSS).

- The SIBs fielded more than 3,400 trained personnel to guard Iraq's critical oil infrastructure, particularly the vast network of pipelines, as of April.
- The OPF, managed by the Ministry of Oil, was responsible for guarding all other Iraqi oil industry assets and facilities.

As reported in SIGIR's April 2006 Report to Congress, the government formed the SIBs to improve infrastructure security. The SIBs were part of the Ministry of Defense, and four had completed basic training at the time of the report. They were currently conducting security operations to protect oil pipelines and facilities critical to the domestic market and export industry. MNSTC-I equipped the SIBs and helped the Ministry of Defense develop institutional expertise and tradecraft. Developments reported by SIGIR included the following:

More than 3,400 soldiers have completed training in this area, and training for a second group has already begun. Attacks on Iraq's infrastructure account for only a small portion of total attacks.

According to DOD, attacks on infrastructure during this quarter are down by 60%. But, combined with other variables, attacks on critical infrastructure are still expected to have a significant impact on:

- oil and fuel production
- revenues derived from crude exports

Additionally, although the number of infrastructure attacks has recently decreased, the complexity of the attacks has increased: insurgents have become more proficient at targeting critical infrastructure nodes, as well as intimidating personnel who deliver essential services.

These forces had serious problems, however, and were generally ineffective and could not be trusted. In early March 2006, DOS reported that Iraqi police had arrested several SIB guards on suspicion of aiding insurgents in targeting the oil pipeline system. This was the second recent incident in which SIB personnel were arrested in connection with insurgent plots against the oil pipeline infrastructure.⁸³⁴

In April 2006, Interior Minister Bhan Jabr accused the Facilities Protection Service (FPS) of carrying out some of the killings largely attributed to death squads operating within MOI forces.⁸³⁵ That same month, oversight of expansion and training of these forces raised further uncertainty. An inspector general was assigned to audit the \$147 million US-overseen FPS program. The report reflected a lack of transparency:⁸³⁶

...the auditors were never able to determine basic facts like how many Iraqis were trained, how many weapons were purchased and where much of the equipment ended up.

Of 21,000 guards who were supposed to be trained to protect oil equipment, for example, probably only about 11,000 received the training, the report said. And of 9,792 automatic rifles purchased for those guards, auditors were able to track just 3,015.

The Americans exercise no oversight over the F.P.S., nor does any central authority in the Iraqi government.

On July 9, insurgents sabotaged a pipeline from northern Iraq to Turkey, necessitating over two weeks of repairs. The same 400-mile long pipeline had been bombed on multiple occasions before and had previously been out of commission for seven months, demonstrating an inability “to provide full security to the pipelines.”⁸³⁷

Iraqi Force Development Fall 2006 - Early 2007

The Political and Economic Dimensions of Iraqi Force Development

"Any student of history knows there is no military solution to a problem like that in Iraq, to the insurgency of Iraq. Military action is necessary to help improve security ... but it is not sufficient."

Gen. David Petraeus, March 9, 2007⁸³⁸

A meaningful assessment of Iraqi force development must recognize that progress in political compromise and economic development are the sine qua non for success. Without such progress there is a significant risk that even the successful development of an Iraqi army could backfire. That said, Americans need to remember that Iraq's political leadership cannot always move at an American pace and that the present government has really been empowered since June 2006.⁸³⁹

An effective army will be useless or even counter productive if it is used to promote narrow sectarian aims. As Ambassador Barbara Bodine put it: "The issue is not the size or capability of the Iraqi military or police force. The issue is the legitimacy, not just the legality, of the Iraqi government. Creating an army or a police force absent not just a functioning state but a legitimate one is to create a house of cards, a hollow structure unable to stand."⁸⁴⁰ Though there have been some positive signs in recent months, Iraq is not yet making the political and economic progress necessary to create an environment in which the ISF can successfully develop into an organization for Iraqi national unity.

Iraqi Force Development and Iraqi Public Opinion

Insurgencies and civil wars are as much wars of perception as military struggles. The role that internal and external forces play in achieving strategic victory is partly determined by their ability to win tactical battles, but is in large measure achieved when government security and other institutions impose popular obedience or win popular support. Despite the steady expansion of every element of Iraqi forces, both Iraqi and Coalition forces have faced steadily growing problems.

Iraqi public opinion has been split in many ways, with marked differences among Iraq's major ethno-religious groups. Despite the increasing violence, many Iraqis did not lose hope. The trend did however deteriorate sharply between 2005 and early 2007 (**Figure 2.1**).

The favorable trends in Iraqi opinion were heavily concentrated in Kurdish areas where the Iraqi government and forces played only a minimal role, and in Shi'ite areas where local governments and forces dominated by other Shi'ites played a major role. Public

opinion was far less favorable in mixed areas, areas where insurgents and militia death squads were active, and in all Sunni areas.

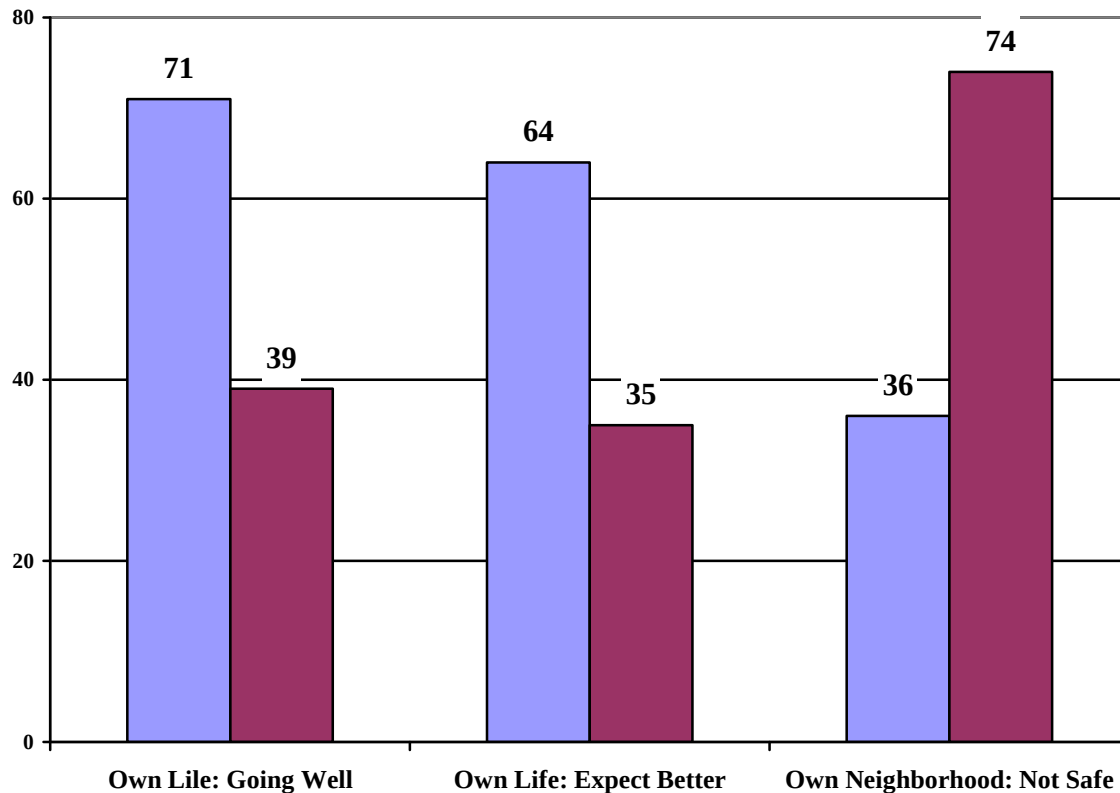
Polling data from the Kurdish areas in the north also suggested that geography and ethno-sectarian realities play a large role in determining whether militias or government troops are more trusted. Additionally the data on the Shi'a-dominated south suggests that confidence is divided along sectarian lines. Since the Shi'a are the largest ethnic group, and showed the highest participation in voting and governmental programs, it is unsurprising that the south shows the greatest confidence in the government.

These trends were not unexpected. **Figure 2.2** shows the results of another poll warning that by Fall 2006 confidence in the Iraqi government had already waned in Sunni and other troubled as the violence caused by the insurgency and civil conflict steadily worsened. It also shows that in the Sunni and mixed areas--where the insurgency and civil conflict are most serious--there was almost no confidence in security and the future, while that in areas where Shi'ites are clearly achieving dominance, "confidence" is more the result of Shi'ite success than national progress.

This may change with time. Al Qa'ida has alienated key tribes in the West. Al Anbar-based Sunni tribes have organized to fight against Al Qa'ida efforts at control.. The Government of Iraq and Coalition plan to provide limited but still significant standardized training and support for Provincially-controlled Emergency Response Units (ERUs) to support the tribal sheikhs, and are taking other significant steps to improve security and confidence in the mixed provinces of Diyala, Salah ad-Din, et al, as well as throughout Baghdad [(Joint Security Stations (JSS). At present, however, it is far too early to know just how much such efforts will succeed or alter Iraqi perceptions.

Figure 2.3 provides a "snapshot" of Iraqi attitudes as revealed in February and March 2007 in perhaps the most detailed poll yet conducted. It is clear that enough Iraqis perceive the country to be in a civil war for it to be a civil war: Any serious effort by the majority or one of Iraq's significant minorities can sustain a conflict. The same poll found that 53% percent of all Iraqis saw security as the most serious single issue facing the country (55% Sunni, 52% Shi'ite, and 45% Kurd), with political and military issues making up a close second (26% of all Iraqis, 26% Sunni, 27% Shi'ite, and 18% Kurd.) Only the relatively secure Kurds revealed a significant percentage that saw Iraq's growing economic problems as a dominant factor. (9% of all Iraqis, 9% Sunni, 7% Shi'ite, and 18% Kurd.)⁸⁴¹

Figure 2.1
Iraqi Views of Life in Iraq: November 2005 versus February-March 2007
 (Percent Replying Yes to Question)



Source: ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD poll, released March 19, 2007. This is the third such poll and is based on experienced local pollsters going from location to location in a statistically relevant number of points throughout the country. **The survey** was conducted for ABC News, USA Today, the BBC and ARD German TV by D3 Systems of Vienna, Va., and KA Research Ltd. of Istanbul. Interviews were conducted in person, in Arabic or Kurdish, among a random national sample of 2,212 Iraqis aged 18 and up from Feb. 25 to March 5, 2007.

Four-hundred-fifty-eight sampling points were distributed proportionate to population size in each of Iraq's 18 provinces, then in each of the 102 districts within the provinces, then by simple random sampling among Iraq's nearly 11,000 villages or neighborhoods, with urban/rural stratification at each stage.

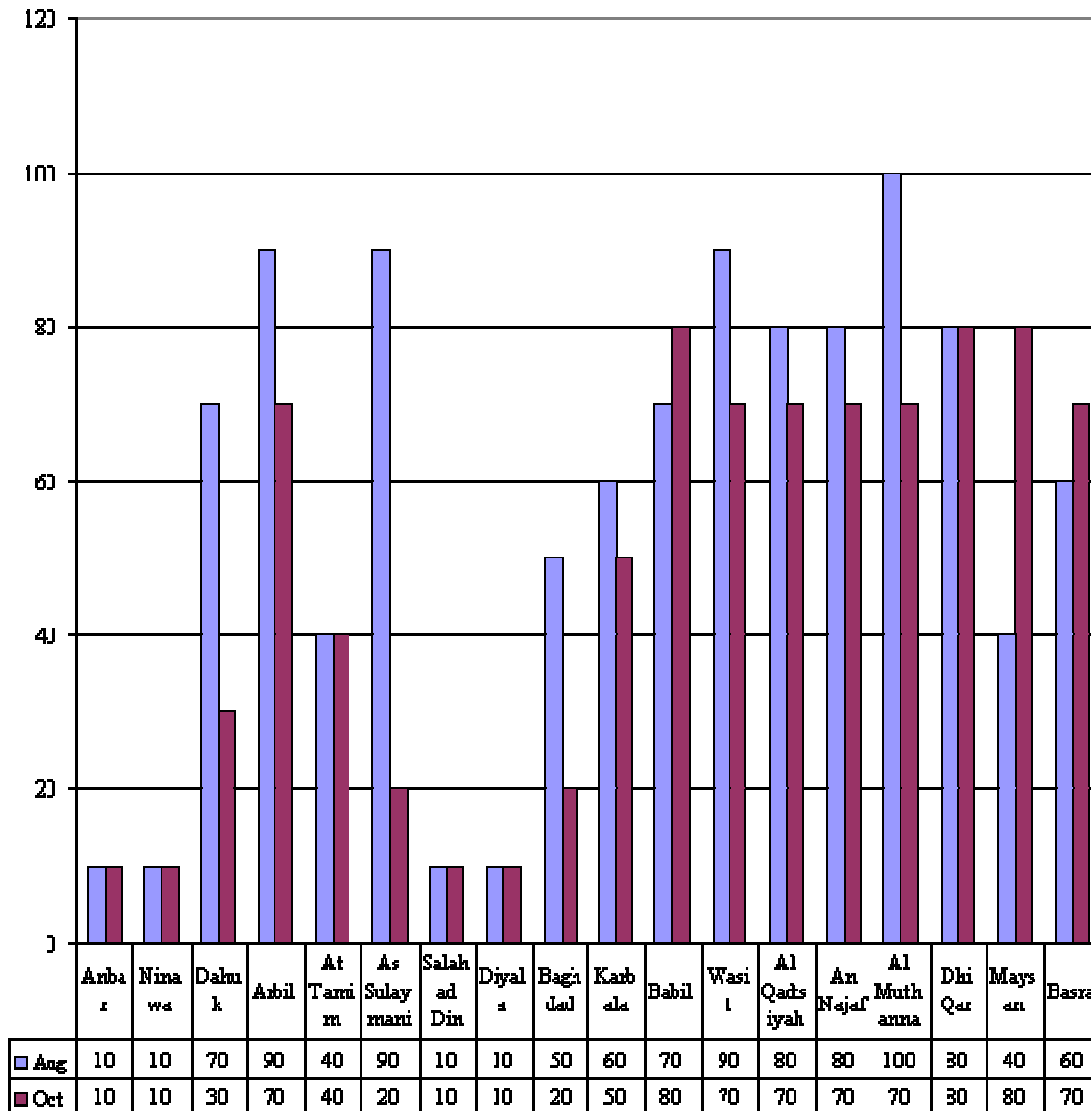
Maps or grids were used to select random starting points within each sampling point, with household selection by random interval and within-household selection by the "next-birthday" method. An average of five interviews were conducted per sampling point. Three of the 458 sampling points were inaccessible for security reasons and were substituted with randomly selected replacements.

Interviews were conducted by 103 trained Iraqi interviewers with 27 supervisors. Just over half of interviews were back-checked by supervisors – 28 percent by direct observation, 14 percent by revisits and 10 percent by phone.

In addition to the national sample, oversamples were drawn in Anbar province, Sadr City, Basra city and Kirkuk city to allow for more reliable analysis in those areas. Population data came from 2005 estimates by the Iraq Ministry of Planning. The sample was weighted by sex, age, education, urban/rural status and population of province. The survey had a contact rate of 90 percent and a cooperation rate of 62 percent for a net response rate of 56 percent. Including an estimated design effect of 1.51, the results have a margin of sampling error of 2.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

Figure 2.2**Confidence in the ability of the Iraqi Government to protect from threats, August versus October 2006**

Percent people answering “a great deal” or “some” confidence



Source: “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq,” Department of Defense, Quarterly Report to Congress, November 2006, p. 26

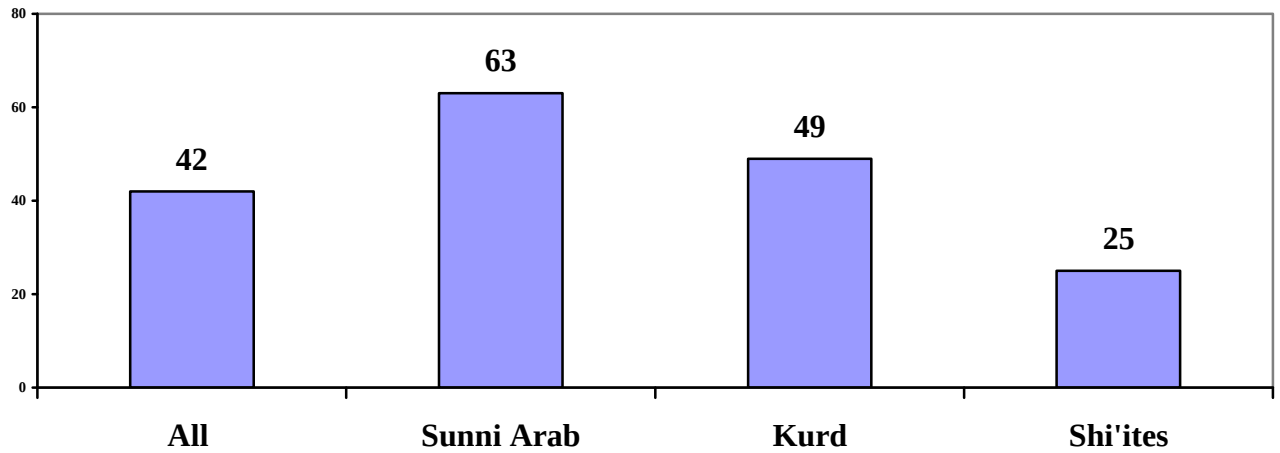
Data points are estimates from the DoD report.

Sample Size ~8,000, margin of error +/- 1%

Figure 2.3
Iraqi Views of Life in Iraq: Detailed Attitudes Towards Security and
Civil War in March 2007 – Part One

(ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD Poll⁸⁴²)

Is Iraq in a Civil War (Percent Saying Yes)



Ethnic Cleansing and Displacement (Percent)

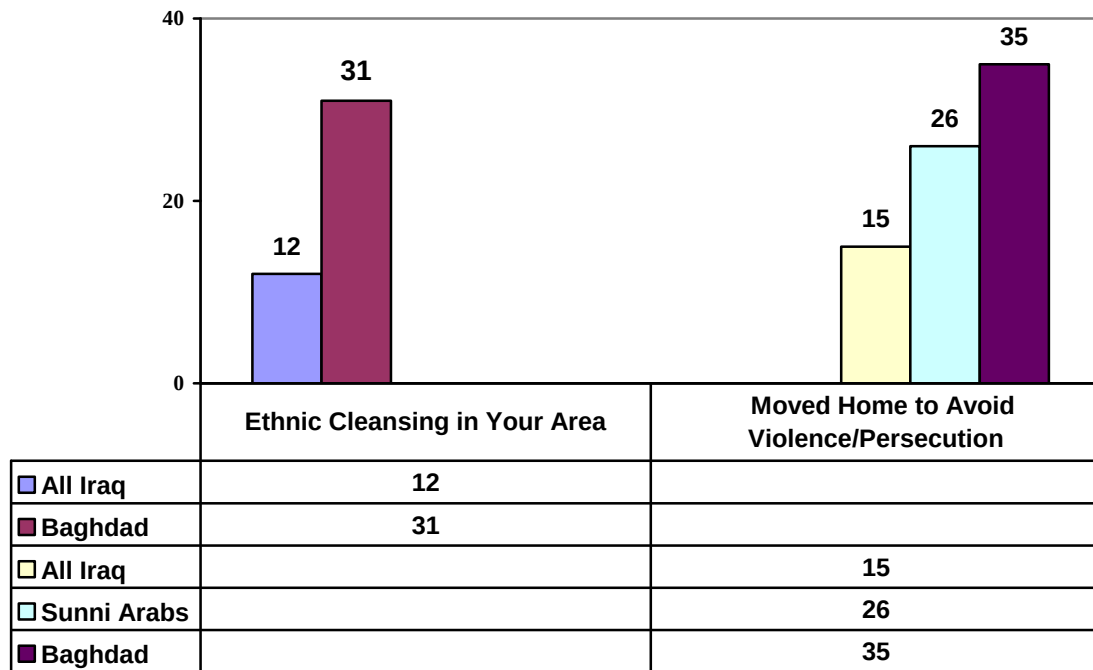
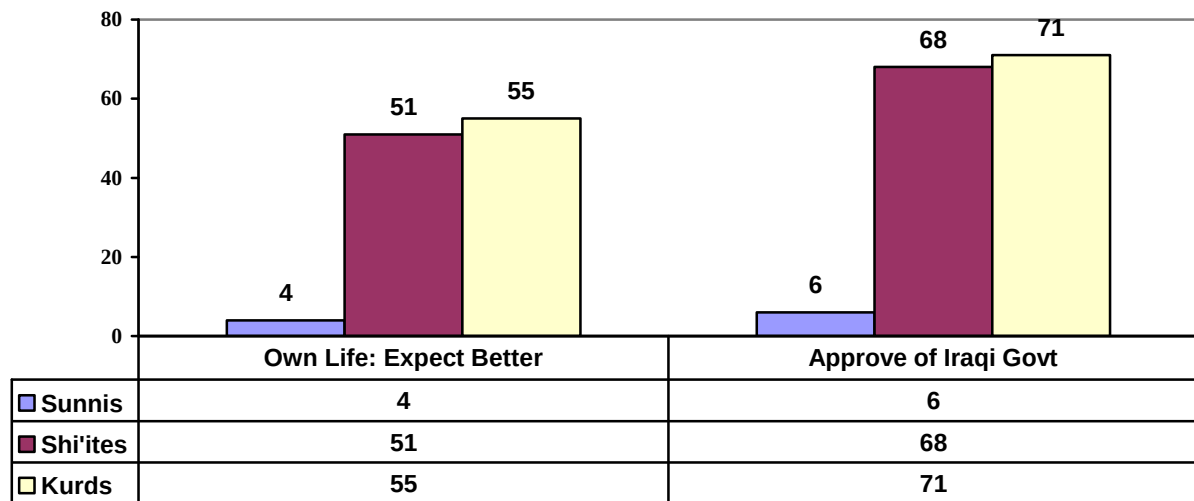


Figure 2.3

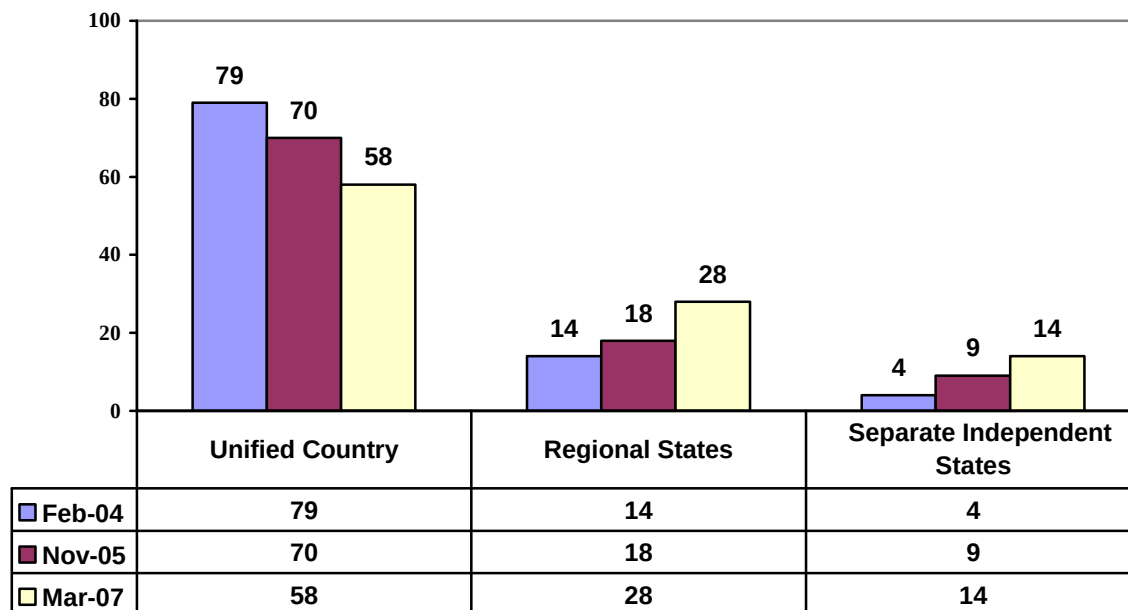
**Iraqi Views of Life in Iraq: Detailed Attitudes Towards Security and
Civil War in March 2007 – Part Two**

(ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD Poll⁸⁴³)

Sectarian Divisions Over Future (Percent)



Preference for Future Structure of Iraqi State (Percent)



An ABC news poll, conducted between February 5 and March 7, 2006, revealed a slide in the confidence Iraqis have in both the Iraqi Army and police force. The poll also revealed clear divisions between Sunnis, Kurds, and Shi'ites in their level of confidence in the ISF. As seen in both **Figure 2.4** and **Figure 2.5**, total level of confidence in the Iraqi army and police force was higher in 2007 than it was in 2003. However, in both cases total confidence dropped between November 2005 and March 2007. This suggests that confidence in the ISF has been dropping in response to the massive increases in civilian casualties during 2006, although the Iraqi Army is still popular enough to be an important institution in supporting Iraqi national unity.

Despite the rise in violence in 2006, Few Iraqis blamed the ISF. Only 2% of Iraqis listed “unnecessary violence against civilians” by either the Iraqi Army or Police Service as their greatest concern. This contrasts with the 16% of Iraqis listed “unnecessary violence against civilians” by the US or Coalition forces as their greatest concern. Likewise, only 1% of Iraqis blame the Iraqi Army or Police for the violence occurring in Iraq, while 31% blame Coalition forces.⁸⁴⁴

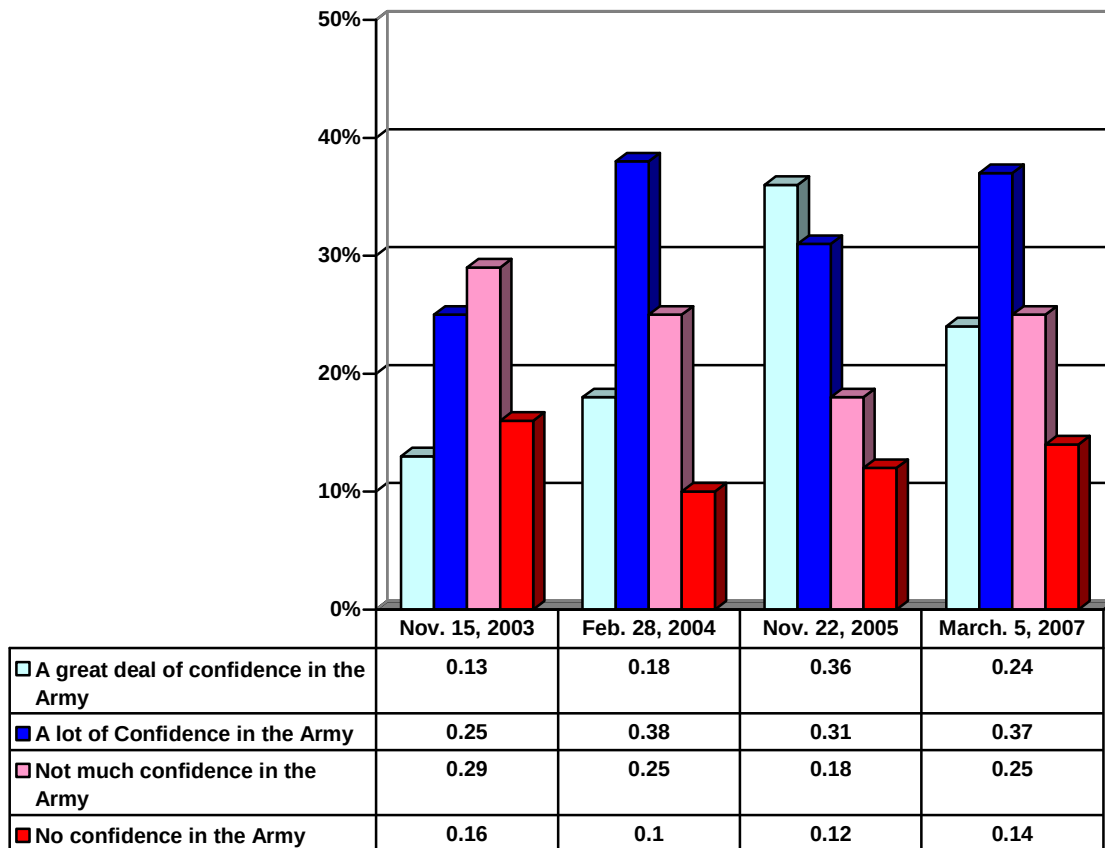
Iraqi support for the ISF was higher than Iraqi support for Coalition forces. As seen in **Figure 2.6**, the vast majority of Sunni and a slim majority of total Iraqis find attacks against Coalition forces acceptable. **Figure 2.7** clearly shows that a huge majority of Iraqis do not find attacks on the ISF acceptable. Unfortunately, 34% of Sunnis believed that attacks on the ISF were acceptable.

Although confidence in the ISF remained relatively high, many Iraqis tried to avoid contact with them because their deployments were associated with US and British operations, checkpoints, or fighting with insurgents and militias. One irony of the rising violence in Iraq was that ordinary Iraqis had more day-to-day reason to fear the forces fighting for national unity than the various groups that sporadically attacked and whose presence was far less predictable and far harder to avoid. For similar reasons, local militias were seen as more of a day-to-day problem than outside threat.

As seen in **Figure 2.8**, more than half of Iraqis avoid Police stations, two-thirds avoid checkpoints, and an even greater majority of Iraqis avoid US/Coalition forces. The percentage of Sunnis avoiding ISF checkpoints or buildings was markedly higher than other ethno-religious groups in Iraq. The lack of confidence in ISF forces by Sunnis comes as no surprise when viewed in light of **Figure 2.9**. The percentage of Sunnis reporting violence against civilians by ISF forces nearby was much higher than what was reported by Shi'ites or Kurds.

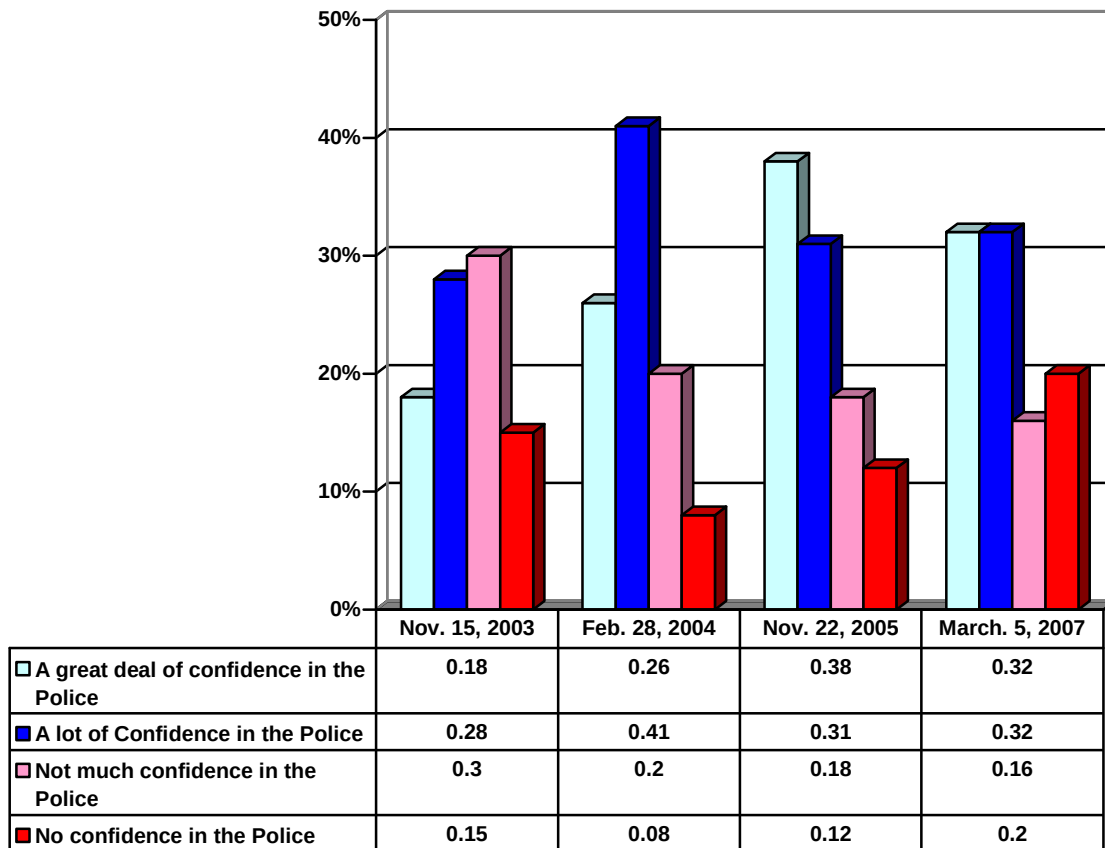
There were several other negative polling results in regards to the overall situation in Iraq. 42% of Iraqis felt they are now in a civil war, with 24% feeling one is likely. Barely 40% of Iraqis expect their children to have a better life. In November 2005, 63 percent of Iraqis felt very safe in their neighborhoods. In early 2007 just 26 percent said the same. In Baghdad, 84% of Iraqis feel entirely unsafe. 53% of Iraqis have a close relative or friend who has been killed or wounded in the violence.

Figure 2.4
Confidence in the Iraqi Army Over Time: 2003-2007



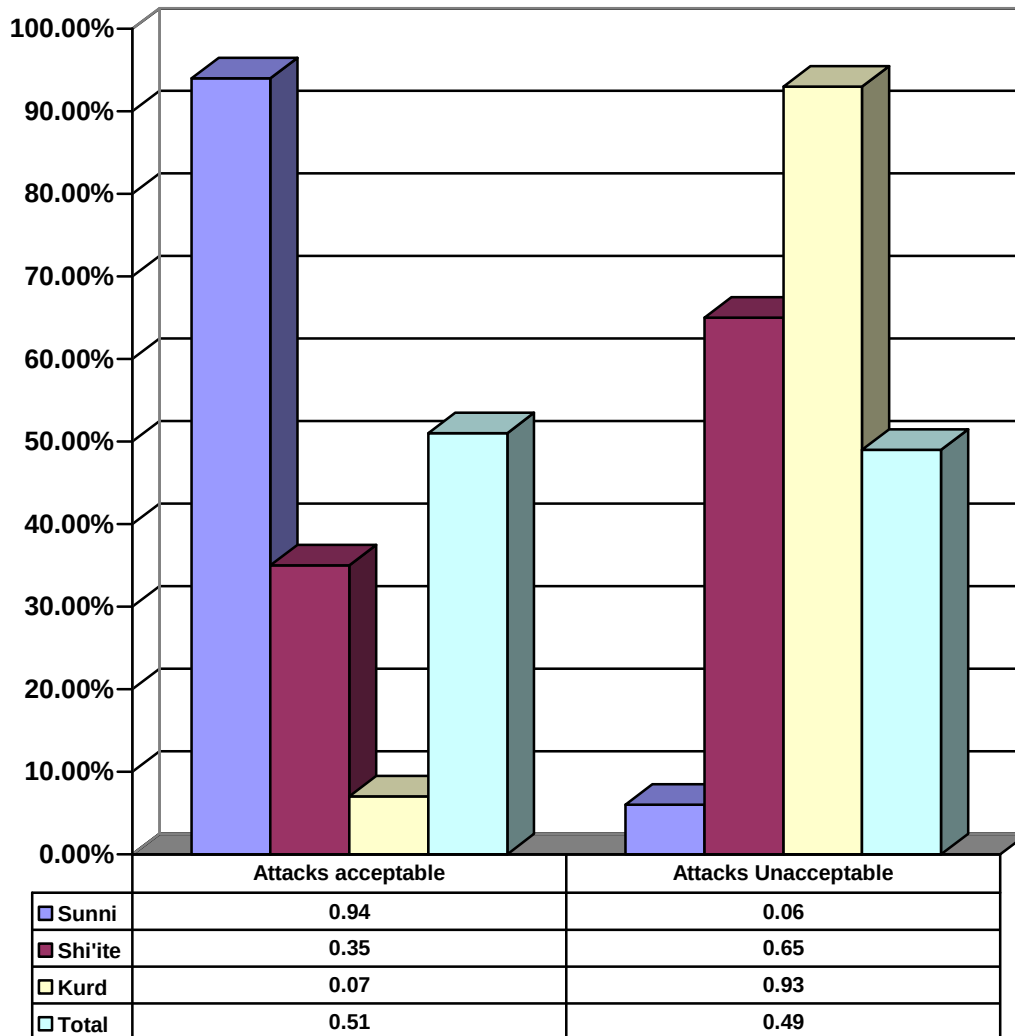
Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq" ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD Poll. March 19, 2007. Pg. 25

Figure 2.5
Confidence in the Iraqi Police over time: 2003-2007



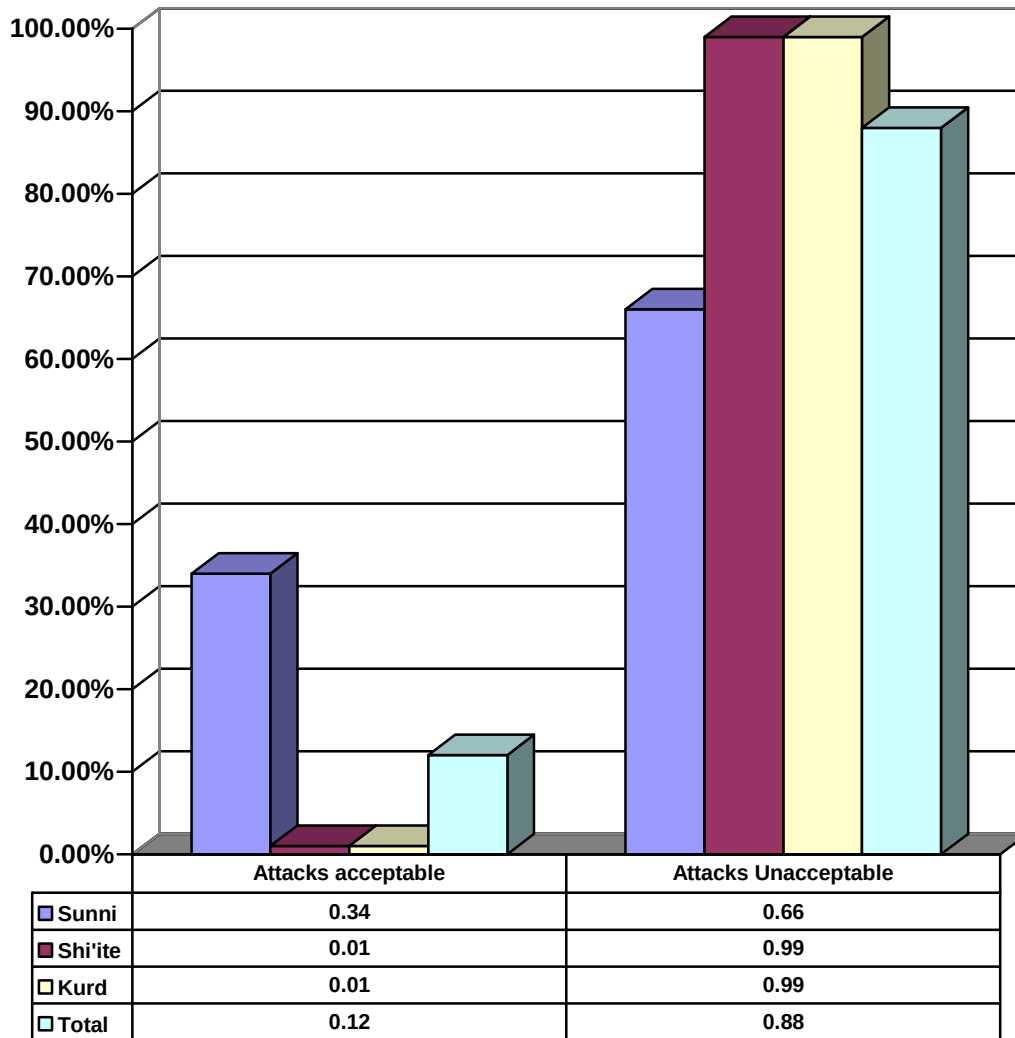
Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq" ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD Poll. March 19, 2007. Pg. 25

Figure 2.6
Percentage of Iraqis Finding attacks against Coalition Forces Acceptable by Sect and Ethnicity: Early 2007



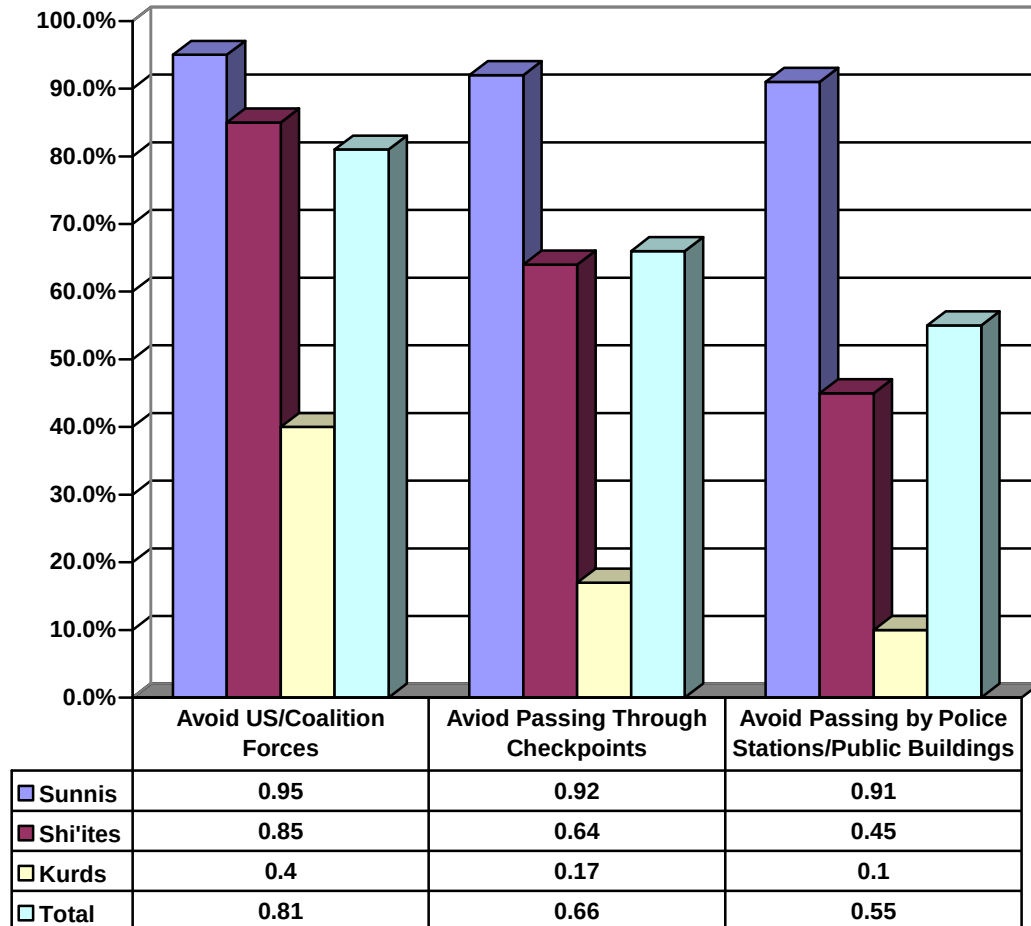
Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq." ABC News/BBC/USA Today/ARD March 19, 2007. Pg 29.

Figure 2.7
Percentage of Iraqis Finding attacks against Iraqi Government Forces Acceptable
by Sect and Ethnicity: Early 2007



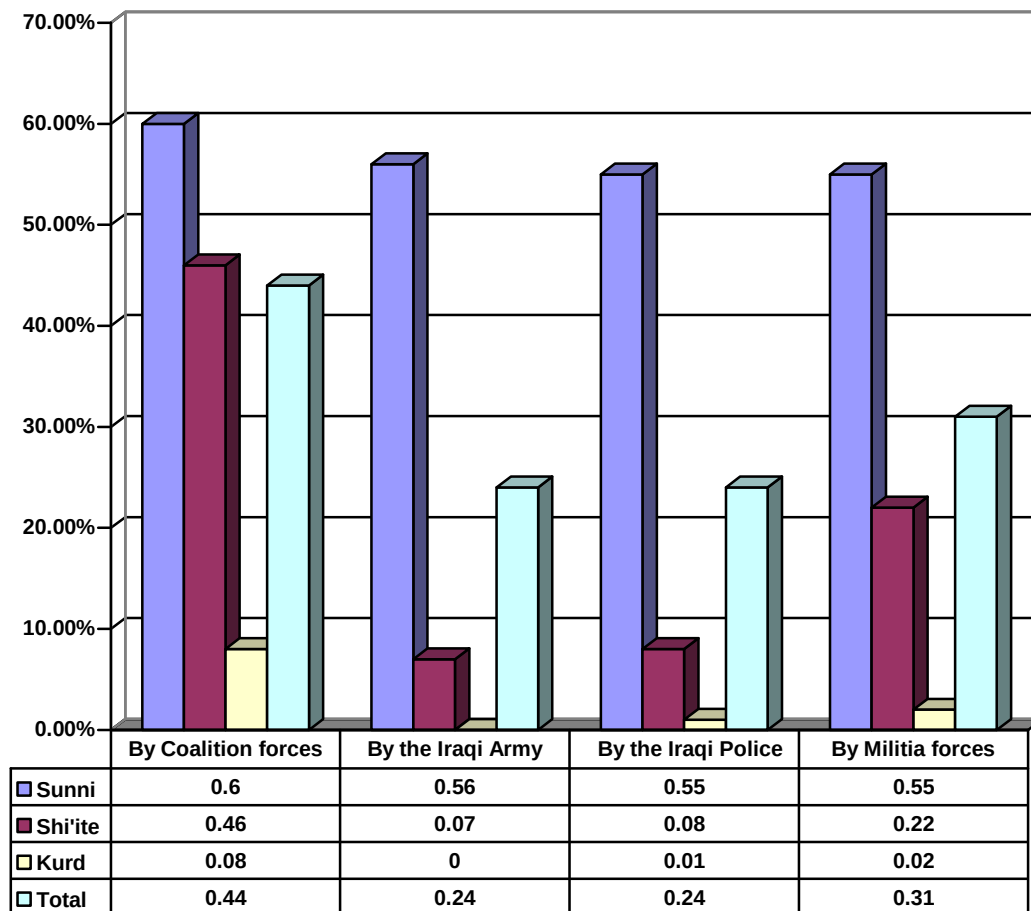
Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq." ABC News/BBC/USA Today/ARD March 19,2007. Pg 29.

Figure 2.8
Percentage Of Iraqis Avoiding US/Coalition Forces, Checkpoints, Or Passing By
Police Stations by Sect and Ethnicity: Early 2007



Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq" ABC/D/USA Today Poll, 03/19/2007. Pg 5.

Figure 2.9
Violence Against Iraqi Citizens
Percentage of Iraqis Reporting Violence Against Citizens Nearby Being Perpetrated
by Coalition forces/ the Iraqi Army/ the Iraqi Police/ Militias



Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq" ABC/D/USA Today Poll, 03/19/2007. Pg 10.

Political Progress and Creating the Conditions for an Effective and Unified ISF

The efforts at political conciliation that are as critical to successful ISF development as any aspect of military training and advice have had some limited success, but scarcely on the necessary scale. On August 20, Iraqi security forces officials, national and local government officials, and local civic, tribal and religious leaders met in Hillah to discuss the government's national reconciliation objectives and to sign an oath pledging to cooperate to meet these goals, without regard to ethnic, religious or tribal differences. The conference was organized by the provincial police chief, Major General Das Hamza. A similar meeting was organized on August 26-27, 2006, and drew several hundred tribal leaders.⁸⁴⁵

Under pressure from the Bush administration, Prime Minister Maliki announced that Iraqi leaders would meet in mid-December 2006 to reconcile opposing factions and "strengthen the Iraqi national unity."⁸⁴⁶

The Iraqi parliament passed a law on October 11, 2006 to postpone the creation of "federal" regions for at least 18 months. At the same time, the law set up a system allowing provinces to merge into autonomous regions with considerable self-rule.⁸⁴⁷ The sectarian identities of the major political parties, as well as the political weakness of the non-sectarian parties, continued to foster a political climate that increased the divisions between Iraq's sectarian and ethnic groups. Federalism as an organizational principle was vaguely incorporated into the Iraqi constitution, but was interpreted differently by different factions.

Arab Sunnis, however, had growing reason to fear being left in Shi'ite and Kurdish dominated areas in most of the country with only a resource-poor enclave in the West. Arab Sunnis have dominated Shi'ites and Kurds for decades and even centuries in some cases, and are concerned about political payback. Many believe that they are the rightfully endowed rulers of Iraq despite their minority status. The Shi'ites and Kurds faced tensions of their own over Mosul, Kirkuk, and control of their "ethnic fault line." Iraq's neighbors had conflicting interests as well, and Turkish foreign minister Abdullah Gul warned that federalism in Iraq could lead to the country's break-up and threaten regional stability:

The core of the problem is that if Iraq is divided, definitely there will be civil war and definitely neighboring countries will be involved in this. The Middle East can't shoulder this. It's too much."⁸⁴⁸

While Iraqi leaders did continue to try to make progress in conciliation, and brought together outside nations in an effort to reduce external pressures and threats, the Iraqi Parliament continued to have severe problems in solving any of Iraq's major issues. Most members of Parliament stopped showing up when Parliament was in session in the fall of 2006. The Sadrists suspended participation in the Council of Representatives during this period and many of the legislators went on pilgrimage and vacation during these traditional Ramadan and Feast of the Sacrifice periods,

During November and December 2006 nearly every session had to be adjourned because of low attendance. As few as 65 members made it to work some days, and many don't even live in Iraq anymore.⁸⁴⁹ The poor attendance on the part of legislators reflected both the immaturity of this new institution and security concerns. The end result, however, was a widespread view that the Parliament was ineffective.

Legislators were paid generously, regardless of attendance. As a result, decisions, when they occurred at all, occurred in private meetings, with Parliament merely rubber-stamping them when it manages to meet. "They have never sat together to have a sound dialogue" stated Mahmoud Othman, a Kurdish member of Parliament. Othman also added that sectarian tensions are "preventing the Parliament from doing anything."⁸⁵⁰

Yet despite Othman's view, the Parliament was able to come back into special session and pass a responsible budget in a democratic manner and in accord with the Iraqi Constitution. Moreover, both the Prime Minister and the Council of Representatives have seen fit to extend a necessary State of Emergency so as to better enable ISF, Council of Representatives and other institutions critical to the Government of Iraq's effort to prosecute the counterinsurgency.

The government also did little to give even Sunni officials confidence, and increasingly discriminated against both Sunni political leaders and government officials. In a February, 2007 interview, Salam Z. al-Zobaei, the Deputy Prime Minister, expressed frustration over the sectarian nature of the Iraqi government. As one of two deputy Prime Ministers, he was technically a powerful office holder in the Iraqi government. However, as a Sunni in a Shi'ite dominated government, his influence was small. "I don't have any authority," he stated.⁸⁵¹

It also was not clear whether Shi'ite and Kurdish officials who seemed to seek conciliation really did so, or were simply reacting to outside pressure with political gestures. When US pressure to rein in militias and reach a political consensus on Iraq's future intensified in late 2006, both Maliki's rhetoric and his reaction to militia violence and police infiltration appeared to change, signaling at least some tolerance for confronting Shi'ite militias. Maliki also announced an initiative to reshuffle his cabinet, possibly including the Defense and Interior ministers.

This shift still had not taken place as of late April 2006, however, and many in the Government of Iraq and Coalition viewed the possible removal of the current Minister of Defense and Minister of the Interior as a giant step backwards as both have taken technocratic and generally non-sectarian approaches with their efforts to build their respective institutions. Candidates to replace ministers are also chosen by political parties, not directly by the Prime Minister, raising the prospect of serious political problems in find better replacements.⁸⁵²

In mid-April, 2007, Moqtada al-Sadr withdrew his six ministers from Maliki's cabinet in protest of the lack of government pressure on US forces to withdraw. The departing ministers led the Health Ministry, Tourism and Antiquities Ministry, and the Ministries of Agriculture, Civil Society, and Provincial Affairs.⁸⁵³ The Transportation Minister, also loyal to Sadr, left the country in 2006 and did not return. Although it was unclear what

the full effects of this move would be, if Sadr were to cut off all support for Maliki it would seriously weaken his government. However, as most of the departed ministers were corrupt and inefficient, their removal may not hurt the government in the long run.

After a particularly large-scale kidnapping with probable police involvement had occurred in Baghdad in early November 2006, Maliki said: "What is happening is not terrorism, but the result of disagreements and conflict between militias belonging to this side or that." The government reacted with large police sweeps, and the interior ministry publicly announced several hours after the abductions that arrest warrants had been issued for several police commanders from the district where the crime had occurred.⁸⁵⁴

Not all signs regarding political conciliation were negative. An Iraqi government spokesman stated in early February, 2007 that consensus had been reached among the major political parties on a few initiatives, including: an agreement to create a committee to negotiate with political parties close to sectarian militias to try to get them to lay down their arms; and a planned debate in Parliament on whether to relax restrictions on allowing former Ba'ath party members back into government service.⁸⁵⁵

A more encouraging step occurred on February 26, 2007, when the Iraqi cabinet approved a draft oil law. An agreement between Iraq's major factions on revenue sharing and oil exploitation is widely seen as key to any broad political conciliation. The draft of the law approved by the cabinet allows the central government to distribute oil revenues to the provinces based upon population. This is an important concession to the Sunnis, who mostly live in oil poor areas and fear being cut off from of Iraq's oil riches. The law also grants regional oil companies the right to sign contracts with foreign oil companies for exploration and exploitation. Although this was certainly a positive step, significant hurdles remained. The draft must be passed by Parliament to become law. Furthermore, the draft law was short on important details, such as establishing a dispute resolution mechanism. The draft law was also vague on what legal protections foreign investors would have.⁸⁵⁶ In early May, both Sunni and Kurdish parliament members began expressing serious doubts about some of the Oil Law's major provisions.⁸⁵⁷ It is doubtful that the law would pass in Parliament without the support of at least the Kurdish block.

There were a few other positive accomplishments. The Council of Representatives (CoR) passed a law on January 23 creating an Independent Higher Election Commission, although no members were immediately appointed to it. Also, on January 24, 2007, the Council of Representatives passed the *Military Court Procedures Law* and the *Military Punishment Law*. These two laws formally established the Iraqi military justice system.⁸⁵⁸ Finally, in late March the Iraqi prime minister introduced a law to Parliament that would allow former members of the Iraqi Baath party to return to government work.⁸⁵⁹ This measure was seen as vital to ensuring the support of Sunnis in the Iraqi government, as well as increasing the skill and experience level of the Iraqi government bureaucracy.

The Council of Representatives passed the 2007 Federal Budget on February 8, 2007. The \$41 billion budget committed \$7.3 billion to the ISF. While the passage of the 2007 budget was an important achievement, it must be noted that only 40% of the 2006 budget was actually obligated to capital projects.⁸⁶⁰ Persistent corruption and a lack of

accounting practices added to this problem, as did “a culture of corruption coupled with incompetence in certain key areas.”⁸⁶¹

The impotence of the Iraqi Parliament, combined with the hardening of sectarian lines, left limited hope for a political compromise. According to a January 2007 National Intelligence Estimate: “. . . even if violence is diminished, given the current winner-take-all attitude and sectarian animosities infecting the political scene, Iraqi leaders will be hard pressed to achieve sustained political reconciliation.”⁸⁶²

These internal tensions were further complicated by negotiations with Iraq’s neighbors. Maliki’s foreign policy also took a new turn on November 20, when he announced he would restore diplomatic ties with Syria after nearly 25 years. He announced this step after a meeting with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem. Al-Muallem pledged Syria’s help in quelling sectarian violence in Iraq, while Maliki urged Syria to tighten its borders to stop the flow of foreign Sunni Arab extremists into Iraq.

At the same time, relations with Iran also underwent change. President Talibani met with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in late November, 2006. Both Syria and Iran have offered to help stabilize the fractured government in Baghdad.

US State Department spokesman Tom Casey said the Bush administration welcomed “discussion and dialogue” between the three countries, but urged caution: “The problem is not what they say, but what they do,” alluding to Syria not stopping foreign fighters from entering Iraq, and to Iran’s support for Shi’ite militias. The Syrian foreign minister said that while his government had not allowed foreigners to enter Iraq to join the insurgency, it was impossible to completely seal the Syrian-Iraqi border.⁸⁶³

Despite calls by the Iraq Study Group for the US to engage with Iran, relations between Iran and the US grew increasingly tense in the winter of 2006-2007. The US arrested several Iranian security officers during high-profile raids in Iraq. Furthermore, new, more aggressive “kill or capture” rules of engagement for US forces dealing with Iranian agents in Iraq were revealed in late January.⁸⁶⁴ Previously, a “catch and release” policy was employed in regards to Iranian agents.

Perhaps partly in response to the more aggressive US stance, Iran announced an ambitious plan to strengthen its economic and military ties with Iraq. The plan included military assistance and equipment, as well as reconstruction assistance to Iraq.⁸⁶⁵

The Shi’ite dominated Iraqi government also increasingly resisted outside interference. When UN Secretary –General Kofi Annan suggested in December 2006 to hold an international conference on Iraq, Abdul-Aziz al-Hakim, leader of SCIRI, denounced this idea as “unrealistic, incorrect and illegal.” He said it would be “unreasonable or incorrect to discuss issues related to the Iraqi people at international conferences.”⁸⁶⁶

Prime Minister Maliki was especially critical of the suggestion to hold the conference outside of Iraq, but on December 5, 2006 called for a regional conference (to be held in Iraq) himself. He said he would send envoys to neighboring countries (which he did not name). The Prime Minister said he would call for holding a conference “after preparing the proper political atmosphere” and that he would invite “all those countries that are interested in the security and stability of Iraq.”⁸⁶⁷

In early May, 2007, an international summit on the future of Iraq was held in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt. Unfortunately, Iraq did not receive much relief from its huge Saddam-era debts owed to multiple countries. The summit did, however, result in a pledge by many of Iraq's neighbors to stop foreign militants from joining the insurgency in Iraq.⁸⁶⁸

The Iraqi Economy and Its Impact on ISF Development

There are positive signs in Iraq's economy. The Iraq Study Group noted that: "Currency reserves are stable and growing at \$12 billion. Consumer imports of computers, cell phones, and other appliances have increased dramatically. New businesses are opening, and construction is moving forward in secure areas. Because of Iraq's ample oil reserves, water resources, and fertile lands, significant growth is possible if violence is reduced and the capacity of government improves. For example, wheat yields increased more than 40 percent in Kurdistan during this past year."⁸⁶⁹

Most official reporting on the Iraqi economy has been as misleading and unrealistic as the reporting on Iraqi force development. The US and Iraqi governments have issued largely meaningless macroeconomic and aid data that do nothing to reflect the real world economic plight of many ordinary Iraqis, and which again sharply exaggerates progress in an area where parallel action is critical to effective Iraq force development.

The Real Economy and its Role in Civil Violence

The real-world economic situation in much of Iraq is a major factor in the insurgency and civil violence, and does as much to ensure that tactical victories, or "wins," cannot be followed by "build," and the lack of effective police forces, criminal justice and governance does to make it impossible to "hold." There is massive unemployment, constant uncertainty, compounded by crime.

This situation is made worse by massive mistakes in the past US aid effort. An Inspector General report in late October noted that the decentralization of authority that the CPA initiated had "the effect of empowering inexperienced local officials to manage the delivery of provincial government services."⁸⁷⁰ The Iraqi government, according to the Iraq Study Group "is not providing its people with basic services: electricity, drinking water, sewage, health care, and education."⁸⁷¹

Far too much of the outside aid to Iraq, however, was wasted in ways that did nothing to contribute to its security or to ease the pressures on the development of the ISF. As of October 2006, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction estimated that the US had appropriated a total of \$38.3 billion in reconstruction funding. In addition, the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi governments that had followed had used up some \$41.2 billion in Iraqi funds.⁸⁷² A

Accurate information on the expenditures of the funds pledged at the Madrid conference continues to be difficult to obtain, but other international donors seem to have pledged some \$15.0 billion more.⁸⁷³ Much of this funding has been wasted, or has done nothing more than maintained the economic status quo that existed before the US led invasion. As the US government eventually came to report in detail, so much money went to

security, waste, corruption, contractors outside Iraq, dealing with insurgent threats and sectarian violence, coping with crime, and paying for other factors that ordinary Iraqis rarely saw any progress over the level of services and wealth that they had had at the time Saddam fell. In May, 2007, the former chairman of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq stated that “Reconstruction is difficult enough in a relatively pacific environment. In this environment, it is almost impossible, if not impossible. Over all, the picture is dire, dire.”⁸⁷⁴

***Reporting by the Special Inspector General for Iraqi
Reconstruction (SIGIR)***

The October 2006 report on the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) painted a bleak picture of American reconstruction efforts, stating that only four of Iraq’s 13 provinces had US Provincial Reconstruction Teams or satellite offices that were “generally able” to carry out their missions.⁸⁷⁵ Four were “somewhat able,” while three were “less able,” and two were “generally unable” to carry out their PRT missions.⁸⁷⁶ (Note that the SIGIR report did not evaluate the PRTs’ actual performance, only their “ability to meet the mission.”)

The main obstacles were security concerns that limited the face-to-face contact of PRT personnel with Iraqi officials, while State Department funding seemed adequate for 2007.⁸⁷⁷ While the MNF-I told the SIGIR that one-on-one contact with local officials was not necessary for satellite office personnel, staff at the local level thought differently. Overall, the SIGIR evaluates the PRT effort as “individual successes arising from individual efforts and improvisations, which allowed some PRTs to move forward with their capacity-development mission.” The teams were expected to continue operating through FY 2008 and then transition their mission to a traditional USAID training program to develop local governance capacity.⁸⁷⁸

The SIGIR report further investigated US military commanders’ use of the Iraqi Interim Government Fund (IIGF). This \$136 million fund could be used by US military commanders to respond to urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction requirements in their areas of responsibility. As of July 31, 2006, MNC-I had disbursed \$114.9 million. While the SIGIR the funds were used for their intended purposes and in accordance with rules and regulations, he noted that project files were incomplete and “data could not be reconciled to the financial records or to the project files.” MNF had also not reported to the Iraqi government between December 2005 and July 2006, although monthly reporting was required.⁸⁷⁹

The SIGIR recommended several actions to the Commanding General, MNF-I, in order to alleviate these problems.

- “Enforce existing guidance on maintaining project records, including conducting quarterly reviews to ensure the accuracy of IIGF project files.
- Develop a tracking system for controlling and processing IIGF project files through the entire management process
- Continue efforts to improve IRMS accuracy for IIGF projects.”⁸⁸⁰

The Iraqi side of the reconstruction effort was also blamed, with “bureaucratic resistance within the Ministry of Finance, which traditionally has been slow to provide funds,” keeping the Iraqi government from spending its \$6 billion budget for major rebuilding projects. Of 142 primary health clinics funded by the US, only six were operational. Some successes, however, were also noted. Electric capacity nationwide passed pre-war levels in the fall of 2006, though not in Baghdad, and oil exports at 1.66 million barrels per day met Iraqi goals. 88% of US projects had been completed when the report was published.⁸⁸¹ These problems will grow worse, at least in the near-term, and the US has neither plans nor funds to provide major new amounts of aid.

Another SIGIR report released in April 2007 examined 8 reconstruction projects that had been declared a “success” by the US. The report found that 7 of them were no longer operating as designed because of plumbing and electrical failures, bad maintenance, apparent looting, and expensive equipment that lay idle. Many of the problems were not due to Iraq’s deteriorating security situation; rather they were a product of poor initial construction, and a lack of maintenance.⁸⁸²

In a joint State Department / DoD initiative, the number of PRT’s in Iraq was set to double (from 10 to 20) as part of the 2007 “surge.” The PRTs would be embedded in US combat brigade teams. Six teams will be added to Baghdad, three to Anbar, and one to North Babil province.⁸⁸³

The Lack of Security and the Lack of Aid

The fighting in Iraq has already compounded serious, if not critical, problems in the past allocation of aid. US implementation of nation-building programs has been guided by National Security Presidential Directives 36 and 44.⁸⁸⁴ The work of SIGIR has led the Bush Administration to admit that much of the effort based on these directives has failed.⁸⁸⁵ Iraq and the US have been unable to account for aid spending in detail, or to measure the effectiveness of aid projects with any accuracy.

The US aid program was rushed into Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein without proper planning, management, and oversight. The US initially sought the rapid transformation of Iraq from a command kleptocracy into liberal capitalism with little understanding of the scale of the economic, political, political, and, and cultural problems it faced. Massive infrastructure projects were planned and started without proper surveys of need, without proper assessment of whether suitable contract support existed, and without consideration of whether the Iraqi government could manage the effort or whether the completed project would be sustainable.

In fact, Iraqis in Baghdad, Western Iraq, and in many areas outside the Kurdish security zone saw a major drop in delivered services, major problems with unemployment, and crippling personal losses because of violence or forced ethnic and sectarian cleansing. All of these problems were further compounded by the fact that paper increases in salary for those who were employed were largely offset by what SIGIR reported in January 2007 was the second highest rate of inflation in the world – reaching a rate of over 33% in calendar 2006.⁸⁸⁶

Iraq ranked 137th out of the 158 countries surveyed in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index. It ranks lower than Egypt, Syria, Iran, and other countries in the region. Iraq's Commission on Public Integrity requires financial disclosure by senior government officials, from the civilian level of director general and military rank of captain and upward. The commission has threatened to refer noncompliant individuals to court.⁸⁸⁷

The SIGIR has poignantly called corruption Iraq's "second insurgency," saying it cost the country \$4 billion per year. A US government report concluded that oil smuggling provided insurgents with \$100 million a year, helping to make them financially self-sustaining.⁸⁸⁸ Some US companies were part of the problem; the SIGIR referred 25 cases of fraud to the justice department for criminal investigation, four of which have led conviction, and 90 more cases are under investigation. The main reason for fraudulent behavior appeared to be a lack of oversight and contracts that calculated company profits as a percentage of the total costs, giving companies a strong incentive to let costs increase.

The other part of the corruption problem was Iraqi side. The SIGIR found that nearly \$9 billion in Iraqi oil revenues were unaccounted for.

US Political Developments and Iraqi Force Development: The "Surge"

On January 10th, 2007, President Bush announced a new security strategy for Iraq. A "surge" of US troops, helped by an increase in ISF units in Baghdad, would attempt to quell the spiraling violence in the country. The equivalent of five combat brigades, or 17,500 troops U.S. combat troops, was to be sent to Baghdad. A further 4,000 soldiers would be added to Anbar. Three Iraqi Army brigades, totally roughly 8,000 soldiers, were to be sent to Baghdad from the Kurdish north and Shi'ite south. The new "surge" strategy was dependant on the performance of Iraqi forces in the capital, with the Iraqi government officially in charge of the operation.⁸⁸⁹

The President announced that the US troop increases were to be tied to benchmarks of political and military progress in Iraq. Gen. David Petraeus was put in overall command of US forces in Iraq, and unanimously confirmed by the Senate on January 23rd. Petraeus is seen by many as the Army's preeminent counterinsurgency expert.

At the same time, the Bush Administration came under growing pressure from a Congress that was now controlled by Democratic majorities to speed Iraqi force development, push the Iraqi government into more active efforts at conciliation, establish clear benchmarks for Iraqi progress, and withdraw US troops. This raised the pressure to create Iraqi forces to replace Coalition forces as soon as possible – or sooner.

Partly in response to such calls for timetables or a more rapid withdrawal from Iraq, several retired US generals, including outspoken critics of the war and of Secretary Rumsfeld, openly warned against quick withdrawals and the idea of pressuring the Iraqi government with troop reductions. Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, former head of CENTCOM, stated that

The logic of this is you put pressure on Maliki and force him to stand up to this. Well, you can't put pressure on a wounded guy. There is a premise that the Iraqis are not doing enough now, that

there is a capability that they have not employed or used. I am not so sure they are capable of stopping sectarian violence.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. John Batiste also spoke out against withdrawing US forces too soon. Calling Congressional proposals “terribly naïve,” he said:

There are lots of things that have to happen to set them up for success. Until they happen, it does not matter what we tell Maliki.

The January 2007 National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq supported the view that rapid withdrawals of US troops from Iraq would have serious negative consequences. The declassified portion of the report states:

Coalition capabilities, including force levels, resources, and operations, remain an essential stabilizing element in Iraq. If Coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this Estimate, we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi Government, and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation.

If such a rapid withdrawal were to take place, we judge that the ISF would be unlikely to survive as a non-sectarian national institution; neighboring countries—invited by Iraqi factions or unilaterally—might intervene openly in the conflict; massive civilian casualties and forced population displacement would be probable; AQI would attempt to use parts of the country—particularly al-Anbar province—to plan increased attacks in and outside of Iraq; and spiraling violence and political disarray in Iraq, along with Kurdish moves to control Kirkuk and strengthen autonomy, could prompt Turkey to launch a military incursion.⁸⁹⁰

Iranian Influence on Iraq and the ISF

Domestic political and economic factors, and US politics, were only part of the factors influencing Iraqi force development. Iraq’s neighbors also played an important role, particularly Iran.

Press sources reported in January 2007 that some 150 Iranian intelligence officers, plus members of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard Command, were operating in Iraq at any given time.⁸⁹¹ They reported that Iran had significant influence over some members of the Iraqi government and ISF. They also reported that Iran was playing a powerful role in training, arming, and funding Shi’ite militias, including some that attack US and British forces.

Most Shi’ite political parties had strong links with Tehran. SCIRI’s orientation towards the Iranian regime was longstanding and well documented – the party was formed in Tehran in 1982 and its armed wing, the Badr Organization, was trained, even staffed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guards. Chatham House also argued that Moqtada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army was the probable recipient of Iranian fighters should the time come for an all-out fight between the Mahdi Army and US forces.

Iranian influence was not only felt in the south or in Shi’ite regions – Kurdistan remained vulnerable to Iranian (and Turkish) meddling and “could be turned into a dangerous and volatile region, like the rest of Iraq.”⁸⁹² A senior coalition intelligence official said that Iran funded many different groups to ensure continued influence no matter which one came out on top.⁸⁹³

Iraq’s political and Shi’ite religious leadership viewed Iran’s role with mixed feelings. One the one hand, Iran was a source of significant support. On the other hand, there were

longstanding tensions between the two countries. Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the pre-eminent Shi'ite cleric, had a very different theological outlook than many Iranian-based clerics. Al-Sistani's ideas of the separation of the spiritual and political realms were at odds with Iranian style rule of the clerics. A Chatham House report in 2006 noted that:⁸⁹⁴

"Several Iranian-based Ayatollahs may be well placed to succeed Sistani if anything untoward happened to him, including Kazim al-Haeri of Qom. If this happened, the political landscape of the centre and south of Iraq would change overnight.

There is also a struggle for supremacy in the Shi'a world between the most prominent of the religious centers, and especially Najaf and Qom. During Saddam's rule, Najaf was virtually off limits as a centre of pilgrimage and Qom benefited greatly. However, the situation has changed and Najaf is again the pre-eminent city. Maintaining this trend, and keeping control of Najaf away from the clutches of Iran, must surely be on the minds of the learned men of the religious establishment."

The report also noted that Iraqis viewed Iranian influence with some sympathy, but realized they had to accommodate both US and Iranian demands.⁸⁹⁵

"The view from Iraq, however, is in keeping with most of the Arab world outside the Gulf – i.e. why should Iran not have a nuclear weapon? There is little apparent danger that any such weapon would be deployed against Iraq, especially as Iraq is now dominated by Shi'a parties and movements, and it is unrealistic to think that Iraq could pose a threat to Iran at any time in the foreseeable future. Rather, Iraqis tend to view Iran's bomb as a 'Muslim bomb', balancing against it the fact that Israel possesses nuclear weapons, and that the US presence in the region continues unabated.

But Iraqis also recognize that they are caught between the geopolitical wishes of two powers, both of which have to be satisfied. The US maintains a dominant presence on their territory, and retains formative influence over Iraq's development and integration into the international community. The wishes of the US, therefore, cannot be ignored. But the problem is that the same argument can be applied to the Iran-Iraq relationship. In terms of pure influence, Tehran now has more than Washington and, more importantly, its ability to affect Iraq exists at the level of the street in addition to the more confined spaces of the Green Zone. Furthermore, the ability of Iran to influence Iraqi decision-makers is very well developed, not only among the Shi'a leadership, but also with the Kurds, and to a lesser extent, the Sunnis. Caught between such immovable forces, the Iraqi government may find itself having to say one thing to the US, but in effect, taking pragmatic actions that are more satisfying for Iran."⁸⁹⁶

President Jalal Talibani publicly spoke out against regional (Iranian) interference in September 2006, threatening that Iraq was prepared to "make trouble" with its neighbors if countries like Iran, Turkey, and Syria did not "stop interfering in our internal affairs."⁸⁹⁷

Iran's national security adviser Ali Larijani outlined his ideas about the Iranian role and the political price for Iranian cooperation with the US at the Arab Strategy Forum in early December 2006. In his view, America was bogged down in Iraq, while Iran was positioning itself as a dominant regional power. He repeatedly called for a US withdrawal plan from Iraq, although he did not outline a strategy for the time after US military disengagement. When asked about what he would see as evidence that the US was changing its strategy, he said: "The clearest sign would be the exit or evacuation of US forces. Should there be a timetable presented, that would serve as a positive sign."

Larijani also stated Iran was opposed to a “tribal democracy,” and instead favored a system based on the current constitution, which enfranchised Iraq’s Shi’ite majority.⁸⁹⁸ After a one-on-one conversation with Larijani, Harvard professor Graham Allison, said: “In discussing Iraq after US withdrawal, he didn’t seem to have a credible idea of what comes next.”

Iranian Arms Transfers, and Tensions with the US

Iran’s action also led to a more direct confrontation between Iran and the US, with an obvious potential impact on Iraqi force development. US officials were concerned that the progressively more powerful and sophisticated weaponry being employed against US armored vehicles was coming from Iran.⁸⁹⁹ According to a February 10, 2007 report in the New York Times, there was “broad agreement” among US intelligence agencies that Iran is supplying Iraqi militants with sophisticated armor-penetrating roadside improvised explosive devices.⁹⁰⁰

These IEDs use an explosively formed projectile that is a shaped charge warhead that focuses its explosive power to form a jet of molten metal and gas that can penetrate many forms of armor. It is theoretically similar to the High Explosive Anti-Tank (HEAT) rounds used by many advanced conventional armies. Additionally, US intelligence agencies have stated that they possess evidence of Iranian transfers of other weapons to Iraqi Shi’ite militias, including rocket propelled grenades, anti-aircraft missiles, and mortars.⁹⁰¹

The US sent a second aircraft carrier group was sent to the Persian Gulf area in January 2007, creating a very large naval task force close to Iranian shores.⁹⁰² The purpose of this carrier group was to “underscore to our friends, as well as to our potential adversaries in the region, that the United States has considered the Persian Gulf and that whole area, and stability in that area, to be a vital national interest” according to Secretary Gates.⁹⁰³ General William Fallon, the nominee for Central Command, called Iran “destabilizing and troubling” in his confirmation hearings before the Senate.

The Bush Administration authorized US forces in Fall 2006 to “kill or capture” Iranian security agents found working in Iraq According to leaks from senior administration officials to the Washington Post.⁹⁰⁴ This altered the previous policy wherein most Iranian agents were merely captured and held for several days, fingerprinted, photographed, and then released. In January 2007, a National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq found that “Iranian lethal support for select groups of Iraqi Shia militants clearly intensifies the conflict in Iraq.”⁹⁰⁵ The US arrested several Iranian security officers during high-profile raids in Iraq in January. Additionally, senior pentagon officials have indicated that the US Air Force may begin more aggressively patrolling the Iranian border with Iraq.⁹⁰⁶ There is no evidence that Iranian agents have directly attacked US forces, and likewise there have been no reports of US forces killing Iranians.⁹⁰⁷

In an interview on January 12th, President Bush stated that “The Iranians are providing equipment that is killing Americans . . . if they are, in fact, in Iraq killing Americans, they’ll be brought to justice.”⁹⁰⁸ General William Fallon, the nominee for Central

Command, called Iran "destabilizing and troubling" in his confirmation hearings before the Senate.⁹⁰⁹

On February 1st, Under Secretary of State R. Nicholas Burns stated "'We have picked up individuals who we believe are giving very sophisticated explosive technology to Shia insurgent groups, who then use that technology to target and kill American soldiers . . . This is a very serious situation, and the message from the United States is Iran should cease and desist." He added the United States has been tracking expanding contacts between Iranian security services and Iraq's Shi'ite militias for the past two years and have warned the Iranian government privately to stop destabilizing their Iraqi neighbors.⁹¹⁰

Perhaps partly in response, Iran announced an ambitious plan to strengthen its economic and military ties with Iraq. The plan included military assistance and equipment, reconstruction assistance, and even the opening of an Iranian bank in Baghdad.⁹¹¹ This announcement came on top of the already large economic and social ties between Iraq and Iran. According to a Washington Post report, it is "increasingly common" for Iraqis to receive medical care in Iran. Furthermore, Iran exports electricity, refined oil products, cars, and many other products to Iraq. Iran also extended a \$1 billion line of credit to Iraq to help fund reconstruction. Iran's ambassador to Iraq stated, "The economic power between these two countries, it's enormous."⁹¹²

Trends in Attacks and Violence and Their Impact on Iraqi Force Development

“It seems pretty clear to me that what we’ve been doing is not working”

-Admiral William Fallon, CENTCOM Commander, January 30, 2007.⁹¹³

The steady increase in insurgent and sectarian violence provided another powerful set of influences on Iraqi force development during 2006 and early 2007. Despite of a variety of new defensive efforts in Baghdad and the country as a whole during the fall of 2006 the total number of attacks on civilians, the ISF, and Coalition forces continued to increase, and the security situation across the country continued to “deteriorate.”⁹¹⁴ The violence in Iraq also worsened considerably in the winter of 2006-2007.

The nature of the conflict did, however, vary from province to province. Much of the violence was focused on local or regional issues, rather than on control of the entire country. Baghdad continued to be the center of much of Iraq’s violence, with dozens of bodies turning up everyday, most showing signs of torture and bullet wounds in the head. Firefights and bombings were an almost daily occurrence, with the violence being characterized by sectarian struggles between the Mahdi army and Sunni groups, as well as continuing attacks on Coalition forces.⁹¹⁵

In Diyala and Balad, as well as in Baghdad proper, the violence was the result of a conflict between al-Qa’ida in Iraq and the Mahdi Army, described by the DoD as “a sectarian competition for power and influence.”⁹¹⁶ Importantly, the Mahdi militia and Al Qa’ida rarely clashed directly, instead carrying on reciprocal violence against Shi’ite and Sunni civilians through high-profile bombings or sectarian cleansing.⁹¹⁷ Throughout Baghdad, Shi’ite groups were clearly ascendant, systematically taking over Sunni neighborhoods using intimidation and death squads.⁹¹⁸

In Basra, Amarah, and in the south, tribal rivalries, intra-Shi’ite competition, and attacks on Coalition forces characterized the violence. The main groups causing violence in the south are the Mahdi militia, the Badr Organization of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), and smaller militias.

In Anbar, the violence was almost exclusively initiated by Sunni insurgent groups or Al Qa’ida in Iraq (AQI) and directed at Coalition forces. According to the DoD: “AQI and affiliated Sunni extremists are attempting to intimidate the local population into supporting the creation of an Islamic state. However, in a positive development, these efforts are provoking a backlash among some tribal figures and Sunni insurgent leaders, who are encouraging local opposition to AQI, particularly in ar-Ramadi.”⁹¹⁹

The DoD also reported in March, 2007, that the fighting in the north of Iraq “is characterized by sectarian tensions, insurgents and extremist attacks, and competition among ethnic groups (Kurd, Arab, Turcoman) for political and economic dominance, including control of the oilfields centered around Kirkuk. Violence remained focused

primarily in and around the northern cities of Kirkuk, Mosul, and Tal' Afar, where ethnic competition for power is exacerbated by violence from Sunni extremists."⁹²⁰

Rising Levels of Violence

The Department of Defense has consistently underreported the number of attacks on ISF and Coalition forces in Iraq since the beginning of the insurrection in 2003, although much the problem lies in the difficulties in getting meaningful reporting on the complex mix of violence in Iraq. Part of the problem is that the DoD counts focus on insurgent activity with a known source. For example, some attempted attacks are not counted, and murders and crimes that cannot be clearly linked to insurgents or militia are not counted. This may explain why the UN estimated that 6,000 civilians were killed in December 2006, while DoD estimated roughly 3,000. An estimate by the Iraq Study Group found that the DoD might be underreporting attacks by as much as a factor of ten, although the Iraq Study Group Report used attacks and significant acts of violence interchangeably and did not define how either were measured.

Kidnappings and disappearances of Iraqis are often not counted because there are no reliable reports. Intimidation, threats, and force relocations have also been key instruments of violence, particularly in Arab versus Kurd struggles, Shi'ite versus Shi'ite struggles, and Sunni versus Sunni struggles, but cannot be include in counts of attacks or killings. Iraqis also perceive civilian involvement and woundings in combat between Coalition and ISF forces and hostile forces as major threats, but no data exist that allow such incidents to be counted.

Even using DoD counts, however, attacks against Coalition forces, the ISF, the civilian population, and infrastructure increased 22% between August 2006 and November, and remained high into early 2007. The total number of attacks on and casualties suffered by Coalition forces, the ISF, and Iraqi civilians, was the highest on record from October to December for any 3-month period since 2003.⁹²¹ Iraqi casualties increased by 51% between May and August 2006, and a further 2% by November.⁹²² Comparing October 2006 to January 2006, the total number of attacks increased 70%, attacks against the ISF doubled, and attacks against civilians were four times higher.

The majority (68%) of the attacks that the DoD did count between August and November were directed against coalition forces. However, the insurgents did not seek close engagement with Coalition forces and the majority of attacks against Coalition forces consisted of IEDs, small arms fire and indirect fire weapons.

The roadside bomb continued to be the biggest killer of US soldiers. Compared with the period from May-August, Coalition casualties increased by 32% during August-November. Compared to the February-May period, casualties increased by 60%. Despite this massive increase in Coalition losses, however, Iraqis continued to suffer the "overwhelming majority" of casualties.⁹²³

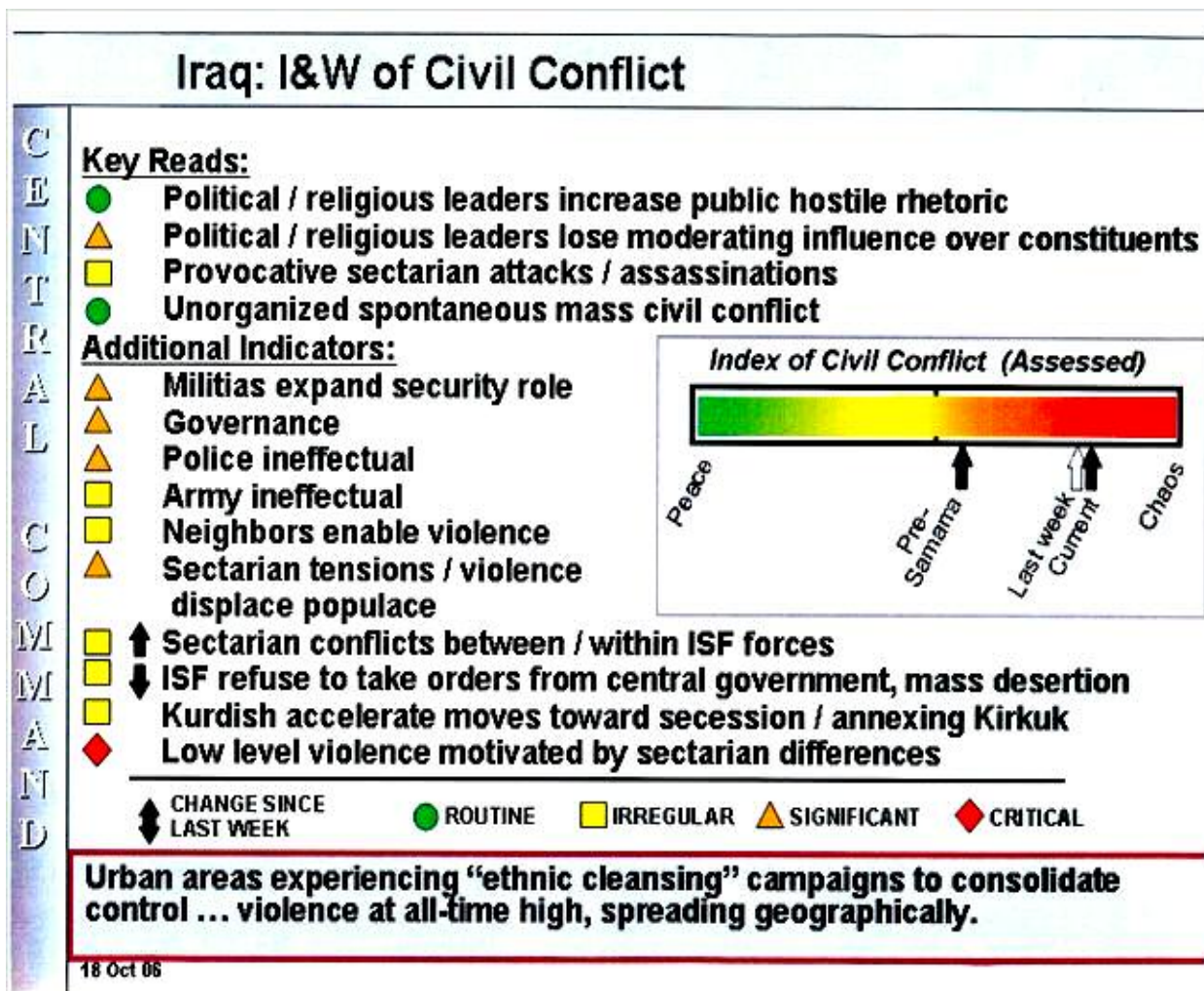
The Changing Nature of Combat

The nature of the combat US and Iraqi forces had to engage in also shifted in late 2006. Protracted urban battles, which, with the exception of the fight to retake Fallujah in 2004,

had been rare, were becoming increasingly common. This increase in urban combat led to increased American casualties. An Associated Press analysis found that more American casualties occurred in the months of October, November, December and January than in any comparable period since the war began. The analysis also found a higher percentage of US deaths occurring in Baghdad, again reinforcing the dangers of protracted urban fighting to US troops.

A US Central Command briefing slide dated October 18, 2006 provides a summary graphic display of CENTCOM's assessment of the overall security situation of a kind that has not generally been publicly released, and of the threat coalition and ISF forces had to deal with. This display is shown in **Figure 3.1**. It was published by the New York Times on November 1, and showed a significant rise in civil conflict since the February bombing of the Samarra shrine, and includes a continuing downward trend in the week before it was prepared. CENTCOM noted several indicators of a deteriorating situation, while the one positive indicator was that fewer "ISF refuse to take orders from central government, [fewer] mass desertions."⁹²⁴ It is especially noteworthy that CENTCOM noted ethnic cleansing campaigns in urban areas to consolidate control, and that the level of violence was higher than ever and spreading geographically.

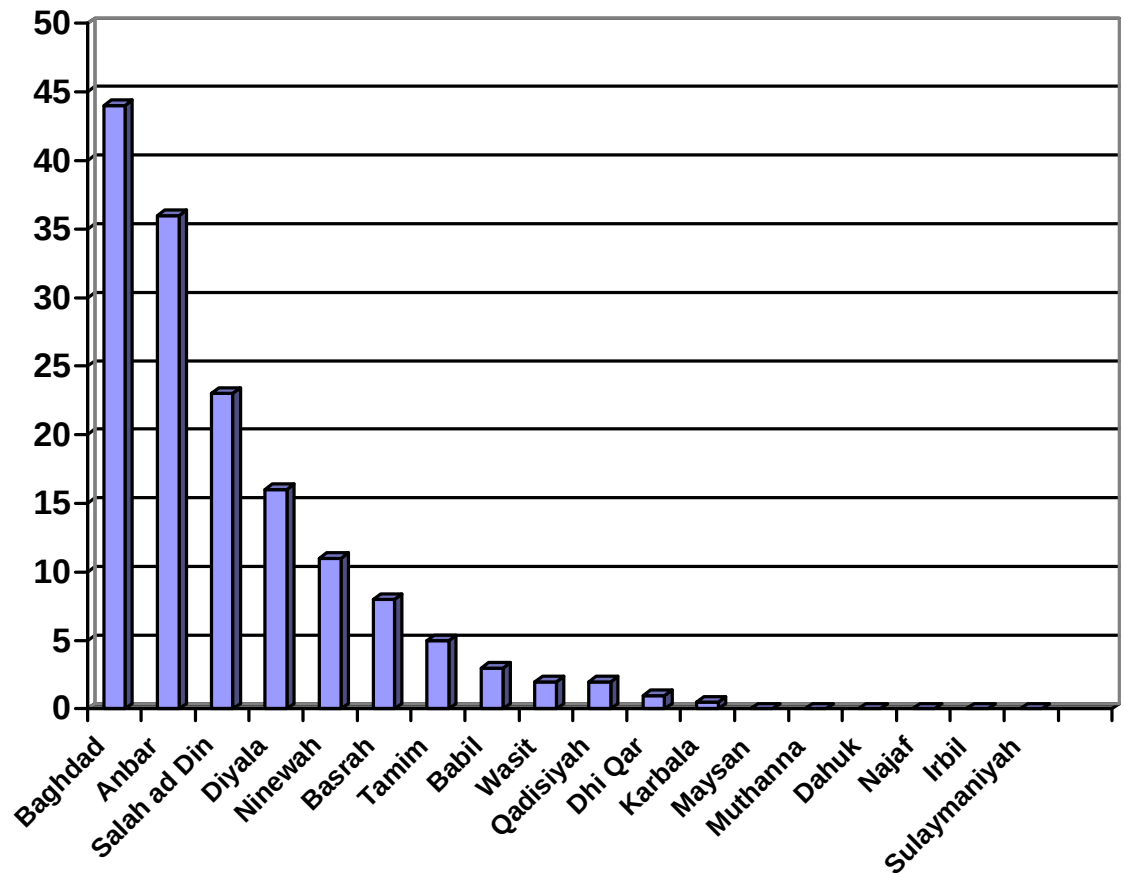
Figure 3.1
CENTCOM View of Iraq's Civil War, October 18, 2006



Source: Michael R. Gordon, "U.S. Central Command Charts Sharp Movement Of The Civil Conflict In Iraq Toward Chaos," *New York Times*, November 1, 2006

Baghdad, Anbar, Salah ad Din, and Diyala continued to be the most volatile provinces in terms of direct insurgent violence, accounting for 80% of attacks, as counted by the DoD.⁹²⁵ This can be seen in **Figure 3.2**, which ranks the provinces by the average number of daily attacks. These 4 provinces account for 37% of Iraq's population.

Figure 3.2
Average Daily Attacks by Province, as Counted by MNF-I, November 11, 2006-February 9, 2007*



Source: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March 2007 Report to Congress, p. 15

Note: Margin of error: +/- 5%.

Other sources generally support this trend analysis, although they differ in detail. According to a June 2006 UN report, an increasingly complex armed opposition continued to be capable of maintaining a consistently high level of violence across Iraq. The UN worst affected provinces were Baghdad, Ninewa, Salahuddin, Anbar, and Diyala, while other areas, particularly Basra and Kirkuk, saw an increase in the number of violent incidents.⁹²⁶ Figures published in late September 2006 reported more than 250,000 Iraqis displaced by sectarian violence.⁹²⁷ MNF-I estimates are somewhat higher, although the time periods involved are not directly comparable, and the MNF-I finds the four most violence provinces are Baghdad, Anbar, Salah ad Din, and Diyala.

In contrast to some previous Defense Department efforts to present a favorable picture of the trends in the insurgency and civil conflicts, the March 2007 DoD quarterly report on Iraq presented a more realistic perspective on the nature of the violence in Iraq. The report called the conflict in Iraq “a mosaic,” and admitted that, much like a civil war, “Illegally armed groups are engaged in a self-sustaining cycle of sectarian and politically motivated violence, using tactics that include indiscriminate bombing, murder, and indirect fire to intimidate people and stoke sectarian conflict.”⁹²⁸ According to the report, there were three main “destabilizing elements” in Iraq: Sunni Insurgents, Al Qa’ida in Iraq, and the Jaysh alMahdi (Mahdi militia).

The DoD report stated that the goals of the Sunni Insurgents were:⁹²⁹

- Expel US and Coalition forces from Iraq
- Topple the “unity” government
- Re-establish Sunni governance in Anbar and Diyala

The goals of Al Qa’ida in Iraq were:

- Force Coalition forces withdrawal
- Gain territory to export conflict
- Provoke clash between Islam and others
- Establish caliphate with *Shari’a* governance

The goals of the Mahdi militia were:

- Force Coalition forces withdrawal
- Consolidate control over Baghdad and the Government of Iraq
- Exert control over security institutions
- Implement *Sahri’a* governance

These different goals resulted in different forms of violence, although the overall trend in every type of violence continued to increase in spite of Coalition and ISF efforts. On September 20, 2006, the US military reported a “recent” increase in attacks by Al-Qa’ida in Iraq, other insurgents, and death squads, together with the expectation of a further rise in attacks during Ramadan 2006.⁹³⁰ The number of deaths among Iraqi security forces, however, fell to 150 in September 2006, the lowest number since June and among the lowest in 18 months. This happened even as US military casualties were climbing.

Possible reasons for this development included both an insurgent's concentration on attacking US forces and a stronger and more able Iraqi force. One indication that insurgents have indeed shifted their focus back towards Americans was a radio address by Al Qa'ida in Iraq's new leader Abu Ayyub Masri calling for such a shift.⁹³¹ The trend of fewer casualties among Iraqi forces continued in October, with 139 killed, according to Interior Ministry figures, while US casualties climbed to the highest monthly total in 2006. This number was substantially below the more than 300 Iraqi forces casualties the US military commander in Iraq had announced for Ramadan. (9/23 – 10/22 2006)⁹³²

Gen. Caldwell attributed the high American death toll in October to "very conscious and deliberate operation" in Ramadi.⁹³³

It's an aggressive, offensive approach to taking back the city of Ramadi, to return it back to Iraqi security forces. *Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell*

A spate of successful attacks on American helicopters occurred in the first two months of 2007. Seven helicopters were shot down between January 20th, and February 7th. According to an intelligence report leaked to the New York Times, these crashes were the result of a coordinated effort involving machine guns, rockets, and surface-to-air missiles.⁹³⁴

Overall Attack Levels

Attack levels continued to follow the seasonal pattern of increasing through the spring and summer and decreasing in the fall and winter months. Overlaid on this seasonal variation, however, was a trend of increasing violence. Overall, attacks increased by 23% from 2004 to 2005. The number of attacks rose to the highest level ever in July 2006. Indicating increasing violence, total attacks reported from January 2006 through July 2006 were about 57 % higher than the total reported during the corresponding period in 2005.⁹³⁵

Patterns in Weekly Attacks

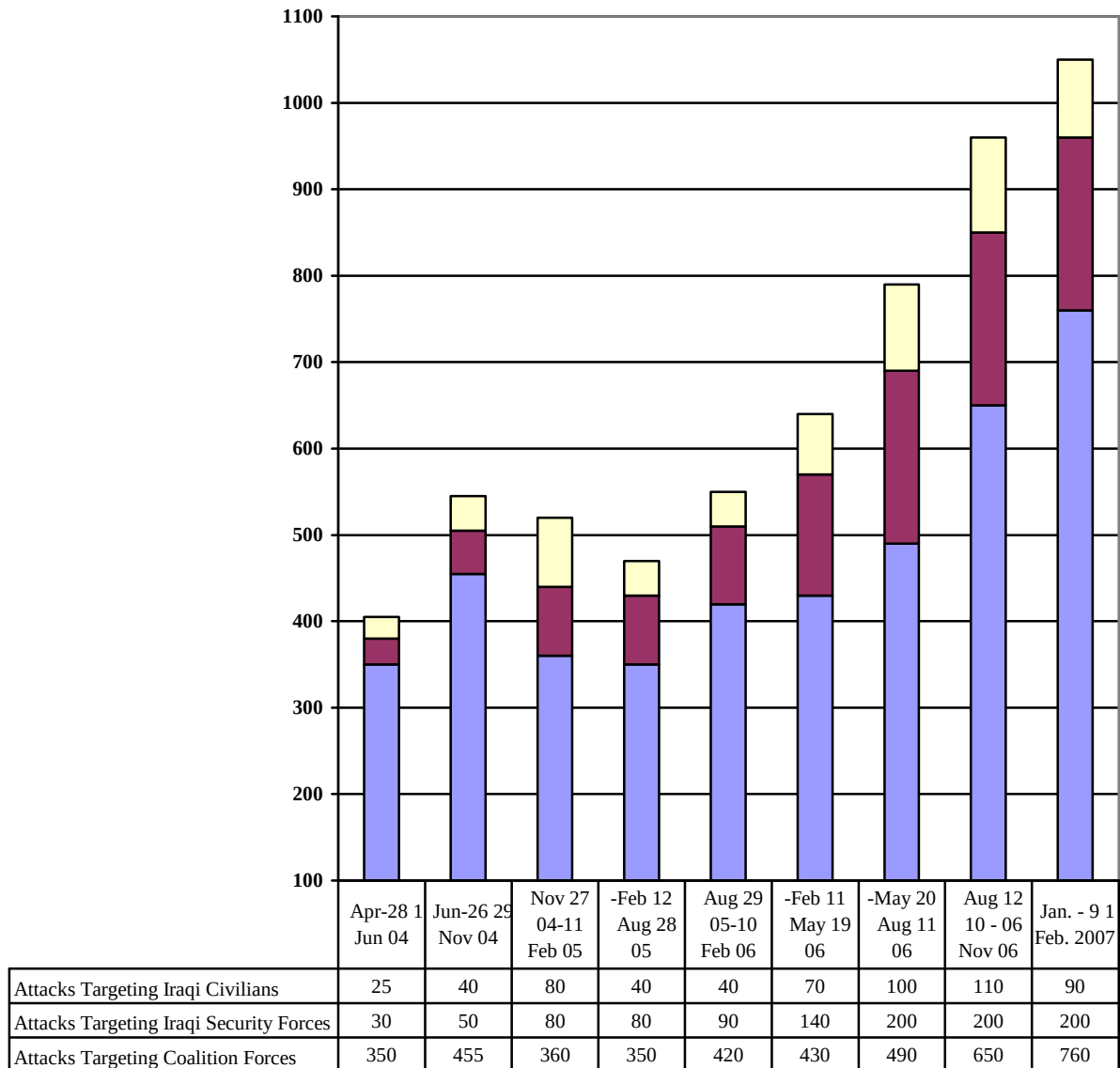
Figure 3.3 shows the ebb and flow of weekly attacks during different periods and the overall increase in attacks, reflecting the record highs during the summer of 2006. These attacks again, however, only reflect the patterns in insurgent and Sunni versus Shi'ite violence that could be directly confirmed with MNF-I sources.

In Baghdad, a massive expulsion of Sunnis from their houses is taking place across much of the city. In Amal, a mixed Sunni-Shi'ite neighborhood in southwest Baghdad, the entire Sunni population of a track of about 300 houses had left. Shi'ite militias, sometimes supported by Iraqi security forces, threaten and attack residents until they leave, often sending them threatening letters.⁹³⁶ One such letter, received by a Sunni, read:

"We decided that you should be expelled from our neighborhood in order to make it peaceful," the letter began. "Remove your evil from our neighborhood in the next three days or else you should be killed like dogs in the street." The letter was signed: "God's Revenge."⁹³⁷

Once again, many of the types of violence that pose a challenge to the ISF and MNF-I cannot be collected or counted with any accuracy and are not be reported in US

government or MNF-I reports. They do, however, remain critical factors in the ongoing conflict.

Figure 3.3:**Average Weekly Attacks by Time Period 1 Apr 04-9 February, 2007***

Source: MNC-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress, March 2007, and p. 19;

*Note: Data points are estimates from material adapted from the DoD report. The DoD has named the time periods used in the graph as follows: Pre-sovereignty: 1 Jan-31 Mar 04, Pre-sovereignty: 01 April 2004 – 28 June 2004, Sovereignty: 29 Jun-26 Nov 04, Election: 27 Nov 04-11 Feb 05, Pre-Constitution: 12 Feb-28 Aug 05, Referendum/Election: 29 Aug 05-10 Feb 06, Gov. Transition: 11 Feb-19 May 06, Government Established: 20 May-11 Aug 06, Government Established: 12 Aug 06 - 10 Nov 06, Transition to self reliance: 1 Jan. - 9 Feb. 2007.

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*Note: The Iraq Study Group found that the Department of Defense may be underreporting attacks by as much as a factor of ten.

Rising ISF and Iraqi Civilian Casualties

Figure 3.3 provides a rough estimate of the increasing number average attacks over time. Total Iraqi casualties increased by 60% over the 11 February-19 May period. The proportion of attacks targeting civilians increased from making up 11% of all attacks in April 2006 to 15% of all attacks in June 2006. In Baghdad attacks against civilians began at a higher percentage in April (15%) and reflected a greater increase than in the country as a whole, climbing to 22% in June.⁹³⁸

A report by UNAMI's Human Rights office stated in September that 3,590 civilians were killed in Iraq during July and 3,009 during August. These figures reflected a two-month total of 6,599 civilians killed, a record high, increasing from the 6,000 that were killed in the previous two months. For Baghdad, the numbers were 2,884 in July and 2,222 in August, the decrease most likely being the result of greater security because of the "Together Forward" large-scale sweeps. The numbers in Baghdad included body counts from both the morgue and from hospitals in the capitol.

Rising Average Daily Levels of Violence

As **Figure 3.4** shows, the number of Iraqi civilians killed by political, sectarian and ethnic violence also continued to climb according to Interior Ministry figures. Average daily civilian casualties also rose steadily, as seen in **Figure 3.5**. While these numbers are significantly lower than UN estimates or the disputed study undertaken by the medical journal The Lancet, they still showed intensifying violence against civilians, with 1,089 deaths in September and 1,289 in October 2006. According to these numbers, 42 Iraqi civilians were killed per day in October, 18% more than in September.⁹³⁹ These data are both a clear indication of the growing challenges the ISF faced, and the pressures threatening to divide them on sectarian and ethnic lines.

The casualty figures issued by the Iraqi government, however, became increasingly politicized as the violence mounted. The Prime Minister's office in October instructed the health ministry to stop providing mortality figures to the UN. The UN's top official in Iraq, Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, warned in a confidential cable that this might affect the UN's ability to accurately record the number of civilians killed or wounded.

The Medico-Legal Institute in Baghdad (controlled by the health ministry) had been supplying UN investigators with raw figures from morgues on violent civilian deaths since July 2005. The health ministry's department of operation provided similar figures from hospitals. One reason for the information cut-off may have been the Prime Minister's suspicion that the health ministry, controlled by politicians allied to Moqtada al-Sadr, was deliberately overstating fatality numbers.⁹⁴⁰

Despite this change in information policy, health minister Ali Shammari estimated on November 9, 2006, that an estimated 150,000 civilians had been killed since the 2003 invasion. He later said this figure was based on an estimated average of 100 bodies per day taken to morgues and hospitals, although this calculation would yield a number closer to 133,000 fatalities. Hassan Salem of SCIRI said the 150,000 figure included not only civilian deaths, but also police fatalities and kidnapping victims. Shammari said: "It

is an estimate.” His number was three times as high as an LA Times estimate in June that was based on Health Ministry and Baghdad morgue statistics.

Although it is nearly impossible to calculate the numbers of civilians killed by US forces, the Pentagon did disclose 500 claims submitted to the Army by Iraqi and Afghan civilians seeking payment for non-combat killings.⁹⁴¹ The US released the documents in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by the ACLU. The 500 claims represent only a fraction of the total submitted to the US Army. As of mid-April, 2007, the military had spent a total of \$32 million paying off these claims. That figure does not include condolence payments made at a unit commander’s discretion. The claims are not numerous or comprehensive enough to allow an estimation of the number of civilians accidentally killed by US forces. However, as most payments were under \$7,500, the \$32 million in total payouts does indicate the immense scale of the problem.

Figure 3.4 depicts the total casualties for the ISF, Coalition, and Iraqi civilians from the beginning of 2004 to November 2006. The huge increase in civilian casualties after the February bombing of the Golden Mosque is evident. ISF casualties also rose over this period.

Figure 3.4
Iraqi Government Reports of Civilian Deaths from Political Violence 2006

Source: Alistair Macdonald, "Iraqi Government Reports Big Jump In Civilian Deaths," Boston Globe, November 2, 2006

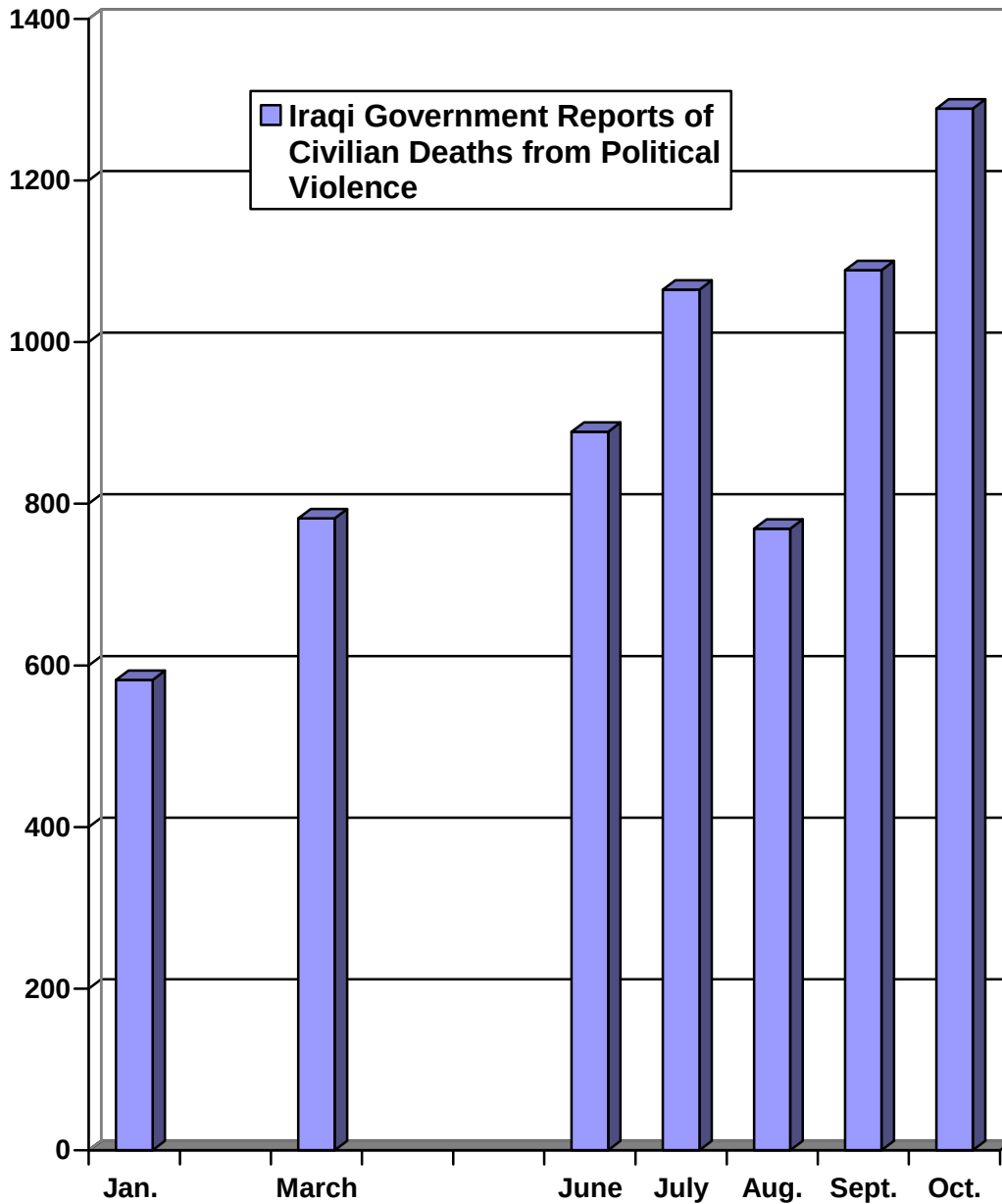
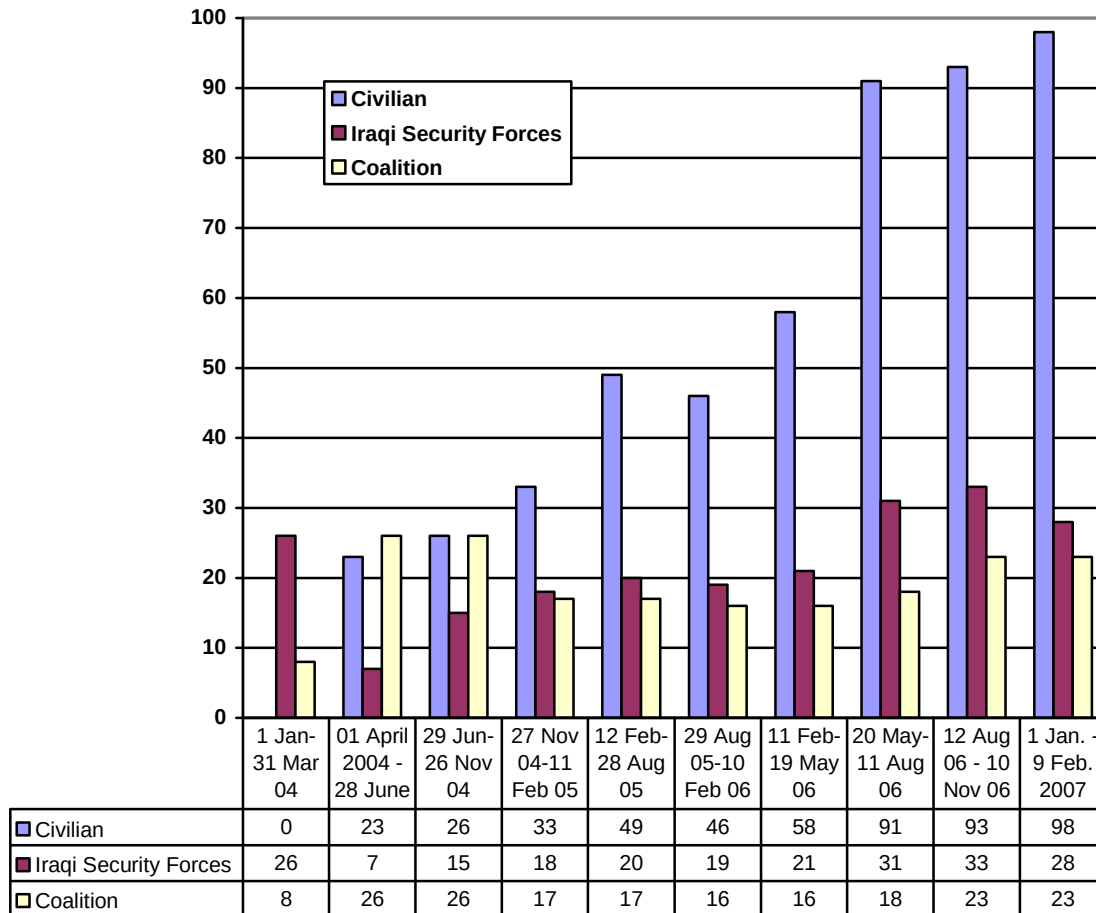


Figure 3.5**Average Daily Casualties*-Iraqi (including ISF) and Coalition 1 Apr 04 - 9 February, 2007**

*Casualty data reflect updated data for each period and are derived from unverified initial reports submitted by coalition elements responding to an incident; the inconclusively of these numbers constrains them to be used only for comparative purposes.

Note: Data points are estimates from material adapted from the DoD report. The DoD has named the time periods used in the graph as follows: Pre-sovereignty: 1 Jan-31 Mar 04, Pre-sovereignty: 01 April 2004 – 28 June 2004, Sovereignty: 29 Jun-26 Nov 04, Election: 27 Nov 04-11 Feb 05, Pre-Constitution: 12 Feb-28 Aug 05, Referendum/Election: 29 Aug 05-10 Feb 06, Gov. Transition: 11 Feb-19 May 06, Government Established: 20 May-11 Aug 06, Government Established: 12 Aug 06 - 10 Nov 06, Transition to self reliance: 1 Jan. - 9 Feb. 2007.

Source: MNC-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress, March 2007, p. 19; Note: +/- 5% margin of error

Other Forms of Violence: Torture, Kidnappings, and Disappearances

It is again important to stress that MNF-I, US and Iraqi government statistics on violence in Iraq fail cannot collect reliable estimates of threats, kidnappings, woundings, intimidation, or sectarian and ethnic crimes.. These ‘lower’ forms of violence became far more common in Iraq than killings, and represent the bulk of the real-world challenge to the ISF.

The ABC News poll conducted in February and March 2007 found that,⁹⁴²

Widespread violence, torn lives, displaced families, emotional damage, collapsing services, an ever-starker sectarian chasm – and a draining away of the underlying optimism that once prevailed. Violence is the cause, its reach vast. Eighty percent of Iraqis report attacks nearby – car bombs, snipers, kidnappings, armed forces fighting each other or abusing civilians. It’s worst by far in the capital, Baghdad, but by no means confined there. The personal toll is enormous. More than half of Iraqis, 53 percent, have a close friend or relative who’s been hurt or killed in the current violence. One in six says someone in his or her own household has been harmed. Eighty-six percent worry about a loved one being hurt; two-thirds worry deeply. Huge numbers limit their daily activities to minimize risk. Seven in 10 report multiple signs of traumatic stress.

The poll found that while in 2005, 63 percent of Iraqis said they felt very safe in their neighborhoods in 2005, only 26 percent had said this in early 2007. One in three did not feel safe at all. In Baghdad, home to a fifth of the country’s population, eighty-four percent feel entirely unsafe. Even outside of Baghdad, just 32 percent of Iraqis felt “very safe” where they lived, compared with 60 percent a year and a half ago.⁹⁴³

The ABC poll asked about nine kinds of violence that broke the security problems Iraqis and ISF forces faced into far more detail than the Coalition and US had ever reported (car bombs, snipers or crossfire, kidnappings, fighting among opposing groups or abuse of civilians by various armed forces). Essentially everyone in Baghdad said at least one of these had occurred nearby; half reported four or more of them. Even outside Baghdad, 74 percent reported at least one form of violence, and 25 percent reported four or more (34 percent excluding the Kurdish area, which ABC, ORB, and other surveys showed as far more peaceful than the country overall.) These results are reflected in **Figure 3.6**⁹⁴⁴

Figure 3.6**Kinds of Violence Iraqis Reported as Occurring Nearby in Early 2007**

(In percent)

	All	Baghdad	Kurdistan	Rest of
Iraq				
Kidnappings for ransom	40%	58%	4%	41%
Gov't/anti-gov't fighting	34	57	1	33
Car bombs, suicide attacks	32	52	3	31
Snipers, crossfire	30	56	*	27
Sectarian fighting	25	49	1	22
Unnecessary violence by:				
U.S./coalition forces	44	59	9	47
Local militia	31	44	2	32
Iraqi police	24	44	1	22
Iraqi Army	24	44	0	22
Any of these	80	100	12	86
Four or more of these	37	70	1	34
Friend/family member harmed	53	77	29	49

Source: ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD poll, released March 19, 2007, pp. 5-6.

As **Figure 3.6** shows, 53 percent of Iraqis said a close friend or immediate family member had been hurt in the current violence. That ranged from three in 10 in the Kurdish provinces to nearly eight in 10 in Baghdad.

Torture continued to be widespread, not only by death squads, but also in official detention centers, where some detainees showed signs of beating, as well as use of “electrical cables, wounds in different parts of their bodies, including in the head and genitals, broken bones of legs and hands, electric and cigarette burns.” Bodies found in Baghdad (most likely victims of death squads) often showed signs of torture that included “acid-induced injuries and burns caused by chemical substances, missing skin, broken bones (back, hands and legs), missing eyes, missing teeth and wounds caused by power drills or nails.”⁹⁴⁵ These victims were frequently found dead on the streets with execution style gunshot wounds.

The increase in violence not only caused problems in terms of security and increased casualties, but also caused problems in political and economic spheres. Furthermore, the violence greatly hindered efforts to create effective, unified and loyal ISF forces. The State Department reported to Congress in July 2006 that the recent increase in violence had hindered Coalition efforts to engage with Iraqi partners. For example, sectarian divisions and violence frustrated Iraqi government efforts to foster reconciliation.

Kidnappings and threats to embassy personnel made some Iraqi ministers reluctant to meet US personnel. A lack of security also hindered relations between Provincial Reconstruction Teams and provincial leaders. The UN noted that security problems were hampering reconstruction efforts, that the diplomatic community remained under serious threat, and that international agencies needed improved security to provide their

services.⁹⁴⁶ Overall, the State Department argued that a basic security level was a prerequisite for improvements other realms, which together would help achieve the conditions for withdrawing US forces.⁹⁴⁷

Increasing Sectarian Violence

What had been a largely Sunni insurgency from 2003 to 2004, increasingly became a sectarian struggle between Sunni and Shi'a factions during 2005 and 2006 that effectively escalated into a state of limited civil war. Much of the violence was concentrated on controlling the capital, leading to the overwhelming majority of casualties being reported in Baghdad.

"The sectarian violence that's taking place in the Baghdad area and up northwards towards Diyala province is probably the gravest threat to stability that there is in the country right now," stated Army Gen. John Abizaid in January 2007⁹⁴⁸. However, increasing violence between Sunni and Shi'a extremists, violence between Kurds and Arabs took place in virtually every mixed area in Iraq. Sunni insurgents, like Shi'ite militias, engaged in ethnic cleansing in urban centers, threatening or killing Shi'ite residents.⁹⁴⁹

The increase in sectarian incidents (which includes all types of violence or threats of a sectarian nature) was accompanied by an increase in sectarian executions. "Sectarian executions" are defined by the DoD as "murders with distinct characteristics" that reveal their sectarian nature. These executions were partially reflected in the large numbers of bodies found each day throughout Iraq showing signs of torture and bullet wounds, most often to the head. The rising numbers of sectarian executions and incidents is shown in **Figure 3.7**. Towards the end of 2006, the gap between the number of sectarian incidents and murders grew considerably, again demonstrating the increasing lethality of the sectarian conflict.

Figure 3.8 shows a clear trend towards more sectarian incidents, and more casualties caused by these attacks. The number of sectarian incidents increased 6-fold in February 2006, largely in response to the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra. In the months that followed, sectarian incidents, and their casualties, increased even further.

This graph illustrates not only the scale of the response to the bombing of the Golden Mosque, but the changing nature of the conflict in Iraq. Before February 2006, Sunni insurgent forces caused most of the attacks and casualties. After February 2006, Sectarian violence came to dominate the conflict in Iraq.

The steady increases in sectarian violence during 2006 led not only to death and injury but also to further displacements. The UN estimated that a total of 1.6 million Iraqis had been displaced within Iraq by the fall of 2006, primarily because of direct or indirect threats against them or attacks on family members and their community, and a further 1.8 million Iraqis had fled the country altogether.⁹⁵⁰ Because internally displaced persons' were competing for limited services, their plight could lead to further intercommunal animosities and generate further displacement.⁹⁵¹

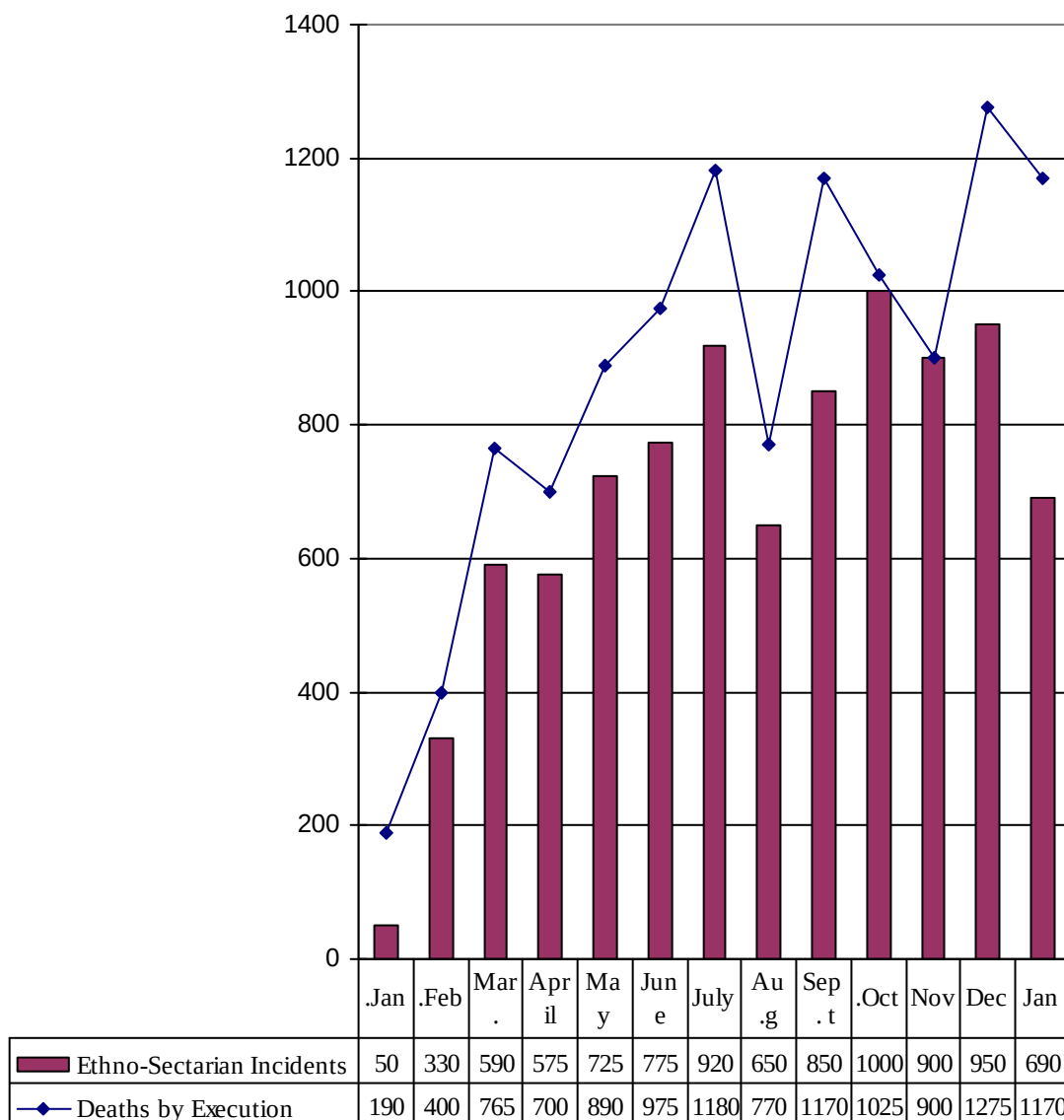
In its August report to Congress on stability and security in Iraq, the Department of Defense acknowledged these trends noting:

Setbacks in the levels and nature of violence in Iraq affect all other measures of stability, reconstruction, and transition. Sectarian tensions increased over the past quarter, manifested in an increasing numbers of internally displaced persons. Sunni and Shi'a extremists, particularly al-Qa'ida in Iraq and rogue elements of Jaysh al Mahdi (JAM), are increasingly interlocked in retaliatory violence and are contesting control of ethnically mixed areas to expand their existing areas of influence.⁹⁵²

In an interview on September 21, 2006, General Casey emphasized the changing nature of the insurgency, saying, "We're starting to see this conflict here transition from an insurgency against us to a struggle for the division of political and economic power among Iraqis."⁹⁵³

This shift also changed the attitude of different Iraqi actors towards US troops. As Shi'ite militia violence continued to grow, Baghdad's Sunnis sometimes became more welcoming towards US forces, seeing them increasingly as protectors against death squads.

"There's no question we're seeing that the Sunni extremist elements are in fact being much more engaging with coalition forces. If you go into neighborhoods where traditionally in the past we found some real anti-coalition-force sentiment, it's probably turned around almost 180." *Maj. Gen. William Caldwell*⁹⁵⁴

Figure 3.7**Ethno-Sectarian Incidents and Murders, January, 2006 – January 2007**

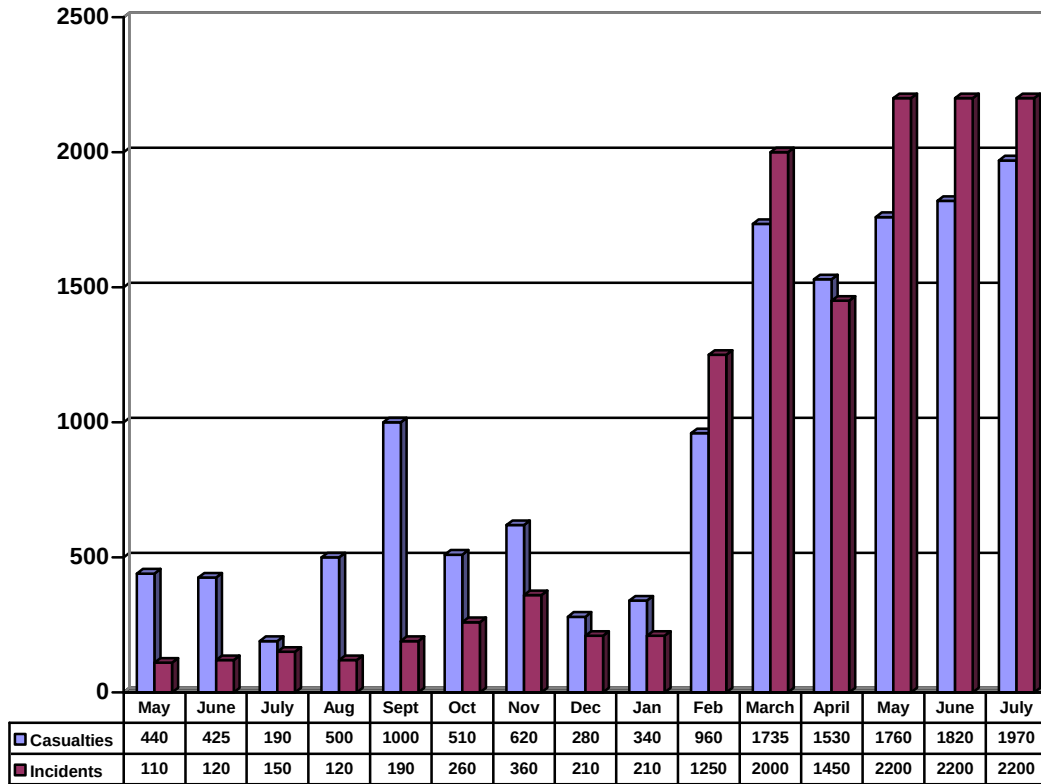
Source: “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq,” Department of Defense, Quarterly Report to Congress, March, 2007, p. 17

Note: Data points are estimates from material adapted from the DoD report.

Note: Ethno-sectarian incidents and execution recorded in MNC-I Significant Activities Database. Ethno-sectarian incidents are threats and violence with apparent sectarian motivations. Multiple casualties can result for a single incident. Ethno-sectarian executions are murders with distinct characteristics, and are a subset of total civilian casualties.

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Note: The Iraq Study Group found that the Department of Defense may be underreporting attacks by as much as a factor of ten.

Figure 3.8:**Sectarian Incidents and Violence: May 2005 – July 2006**

*Casualty data reflect updated data for each period and are derived from unverified initial reports submitted by coalition elements responding to an incident; the inconclusively of these numbers constrains them to be used only for comparative purposes.

*Note: The Iraq Study Group found that the Department of Defense may be underreporting attacks by as much as a factor of ten.

Source: MNC-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 35; Note: +/- 5% margin of error

Insurgent Attacks on the ISF

The Sunni insurgency remained a pressing problem, even after the death of Abu Musab al Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qa'ida in Iraq. DoD reported that al-Qa'ida remained capable of conducting operations due to its resilient command structure of semi-autonomous cells.⁹⁵⁵

October 2006 marked a 9-month high in US fatalities. This was driven by assaults by Sunni Arab insurgents, demonstrating their undiminished capability to conduct anti-Coalition operations. 43 of the 103 US deaths occurred in Baghdad, mostly in the capital's Sunni-dominated western neighborhoods, possibly indicating a shifting focus away from the Sunni heartland to Baghdad. Yet, two thirds of the attacks continued to occur outside the capital.

At the same time, the rise in sectarian and ethnic conflict made Iraqi security forces key targets in the effort to bloc the creation of an effective Iraqi government and were a key reason many elements of the Iraqi force development effort did not provide a realistic basis for recruiting, training, equipping, and committing Iraqi forces.

The nature of the attacks on the ISF can be illustrated by a chronology for the month of October 2006. Note that the difference between "insurgent" and "militia" attacks could not always be clearly distinguished:

- **October 1, 2006:** A policeman was killed in Mosul. Police found the body of another policeman a day after he was kidnapped in the town of al-Shirqat. Mortar rounds landed on a police station wounding seven people, including four policemen, in Mosul.
- **October 2, 2006:** 3 bomb incidents targeting Iraqi security forces killed two people and wounded 7. 3 attacks by gunmen killed 4 police officers, including a colonel in the Interior Ministry, and wounded 5
- **October 3, 2006:** Gunmen attacked a police checkpoint near Tikrit late on Monday, killing a police officer and wounding a policeman.
- **October 4, 2006:** A roadside bomb in Anbar province blasted the motorcade of a police chief, killing six policemen and seriously wounding their chief. A suicide car bomber struck an Iraqi police and army checkpoint in Tal Afar, wounding three policemen, two soldiers and nine civilians. At least 14 people were killed and 75 wounded in a car bomb attack in central Baghdad targeting the convoy of Iraq's industry minister. Two of the bodyguards were killed. A suicide truck bomber blew himself up outside the Iraqi army headquarters in western Ramadi. Only the bomber was killed but a number were wounded. An Iraqi Army brigadier escaped an assassination attempt when his vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb in Kirkuk. Mortar rounds hit an army recruitment centre killing four recruits and wounding eight others in Mosul. A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded a policeman and a civilian in central Baghdad. Gunmen killed two policemen and wounded four people in the town of Baquba. A suicide car bomber wounded four policemen in Ramadi.
- **October 5, 2006:** A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in Mahmudiya. Gunmen killed two people, including a policeman, in Fallujah. Gunmen also killed a police officer in Baquba. Police Brigadier Shaaban al-Obeidi died of wounds he sustained in a roadside bombing near his convoy on Wednesday in Anbar province.
- **October 7, 2006:** A suicide car bomb killed 14 people, including four soldiers, and wounded 13, including nine civilians, at a checkpoint in Tal Afar. A roadside bomb killed one policeman in southern Baghdad. Gunmen attacked an Iraqi army checkpoint and wounded four soldiers near Ishaqi. One gunman was killed.

- **October 8, 2006:** Three roadside bombs in Baghdad wounded at least seven policemen. A mortar round landed near a police patrol, killing one policeman and wounding two people. Gunmen killed a policeman and his 8-year-old son in Samarra. One policeman was wounded by gunmen in Baghdad. Baghdad police found the body of the deputy chief of the Interior Ministry internal affairs office. A roadside bomb killed the police chief of Rabia, a small town near the Syrian border.
- **October 9, 2006:** A suicide car bomber killed a policeman and wounded 11 others - a policeman and 10 civilians - at a police checkpoint in Tal Afar. Gunmen shot dead police Colonel Faleh al-Obeidi in Baquba. A roadside bomb killed two policemen and wounded three others near Baquba.
- **October 10, 2006:** Two roadside bombs targeting police wounded five civilians in Mosul. Another roadside bomb killed two policemen in Mussayab. Gunmen killed a police captain in Mosul and two policemen near Kirkuk. Another policeman was shot near Hilla.
- **October 11, 2006:** A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol exploded in west-central Baghdad, killing one and wounding six, including three policemen. Two more roadside bombs targeting a police patrol in eastern Baghdad wounded eight people, including three policemen. One insurgent and two policemen were killed and four people were wounded following clashes after gunmen attacked a police station south of Baghdad. A policeman was shot in front of his house in Fallujah. Brigadier Qais al-Mamouri, chief of Babil police, escaped an assassination attempt when his convoy was struck by a roadside bomb in Iskandariya.
- **October 12, 2006:** A motorbike strapped with explosives targeted a police patrol and killed three people, including a policeman, and wounded 15, including five policemen, in Qahira district. Gunmen attacked a police station on Wednesday, killing a policeman and freeing 10 detainees near Diwaniya.
- **October 13, 2006:** A bomb planted inside a police station in Hilla killed Colonel Salam al-Mamouri, commander of a special police force, his deputy and six others. The blast wounded 10 others and punched a hole in the building's ceiling in Hilla.
- **October 14, 2006:** Three policemen were wounded when two mortar rounds hit their building near Hawija.
- **October 15, 2006:** Five people were killed, including three policemen, in Tal Afar by a suicide bomber. In Baghdad, a roadside bomb targeting the convoy of a Finance Ministry official killed four civilians and wounded six. Clashes between gunmen and Iraqi police on Saturday night left three policemen wounded in an area between Baghdad and Kut. Nine gunmen were also arrested.
- **October 16, 2006:** Gunmen killed Farouq Atta, an air force brigadier, and wounded two of his companions on Sunday in northern Baghdad. A roadside bomb targeted the convoy of Mohammad Daekkh, the head of the police crime department, wounding one of his bodyguards in Najaf. Gunmen killed two bodyguards of former Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari in Khalis. Three roadside bombs killed three civilians and wounded seven other people, including a policeman, near a bank in central Baghdad. Clashes between police and gunmen killed three people and wounded five in central Baghdad. Gunmen killed 5 more policemen, wounded two, and kidnapped three in different towns and cities.
- **October 17, 2006:** A suicide car bomber targeted an Iraqi army checkpoint, killing a soldier and wounding two others in Shirqat. A roadside bomb in Baghdad produced the same number of victims. Another suicide car bomber targeting police commandos killed two police and wounded nine, including four civilians, in Baghdad. A roadside bomb aimed at a police patrol wounded five civilians in eastern Baghdad. Also in Baghdad, a mortar round killed two people and wounded three policemen. Gunmen killed a man and wounded a policeman when they attacked the house of the brother of Mosul's governor.

- **October 18, 2006:** Gunmen killed a policeman in Fallujah and another policeman as he was leaving his house in Suwayra. A car bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol in central Baghdad wounded five civilians. Police found the body of a police officer shot dead in an area between Kerbala and Hilla.
- **October 19, 2006:** A former police chief, Brigadier Sabar al-Janabi, was killed in front of his home in Fallujah on Thursday. He had been detained by U.S. forces and released two weeks before. In Baghdad, gunmen shot dead police Colonel Basim Qasim. A roadside bomb in the capital targeting a police patrol killed five people -- three policemen and two civilians -- and wounded 12, nine of them civilians. Gunmen attacked a police station in Baghdad and killed four policemen and wounded 10 civilians. A car bomb and a roadside bomb in targeting a police patrol killed a civilian and wounded five others in Baghdad, including two policemen. In Kirkuk, a suicide car bomber targeted Iraqi army troops collecting salaries from a bank. He killed at least eight people and wounded 70 others. Also in Kirkuk, two roadside bombs targeting police patrols wounded three policemen and a civilian. Near Kirkuk, a suicide car bomb killed two Iraqi soldiers and wounded four more. Six suicide bombers in vehicles, including one in a fuel truck, attacked Iraqi police and U.S. patrols in Mosul, and insurgents fired mortars and clashed with police. The violence killed at least 20 people. Three Iraqi policemen were killed in clashes with gunmen near Baquba.
- **October 21, 2006:** Insurgents killed six policemen and wounded two others when they attacked a police station in Baghdad. Also in the capital, gunmen wounded a policeman and two civilians. Gunmen killed three policemen after attacking their patrol in Baquba. A roadside bomb killed two Iraqi soldiers and wounded four in Diwaniya. The governor of Diyala province Raad Rasheed al-Timimi escaped an assassination attempt when a roadside bomb exploded near his motorcade in Baquba.
- **October 22, 2006:** Gunmen in a car shot and killed one civilian and wounded two policemen in Kirkuk. One civilian was killed and five people, including two policemen, were wounded when a roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol in Latifiya. Two policemen were killed while they were defusing a bomb placed on the side of the road in Iskandariya. Two children were wounded in the attack. Assailants bombed the house of a policeman who was killed a week ago in Mosul, wounding five of his neighbors.
- **October 23, 2006:** Men at a checkpoint beheaded nine people, including some policemen, after pulling them out of two cars in Baiji.
- **October 24, 2006:** Clashes erupted between gunmen and police in southern Baghdad, killing two civilians and wounding eight others. Two roadside bombs exploded in quick succession in Kirkuk. The first targeted the police deputy chief and wounded one of his security guards. The second exploded near a police station, wounding two policemen and two civilians. A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army patrol killed two soldiers and wounded another one in central Kirkuk.
- **October 25, 2006:** A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol wounded two policemen in Baghdad. Gunmen wounded a policeman in Diwaniya.
- **October 26, 2006:** Gunmen ambushed an Iraqi police convoy near Baquba, killing 28 policemen, including the commander, and wounding 25. Earlier, gunmen attacked an Iraqi special police force station near Baquba, killing six police and wounding 10. A suicide bomber in Tal Afar detonated his explosive-laden belt and injured two Iraqi soldiers. Clashes between gunmen and Iraqi police erupted in towns near Baquba, and hospital sources said there were casualties.
- **October 28, 2006:** A roadside bomb exploded near an Iraqi police patrol, killing one policeman and wounding three. A roadside bomb targeting security forces guarding an oil industry facility wounded two police officers in eastern Baghdad. A third car bomb exploded near a municipal

building in Dujail, wounding five people including a policeman. In Fallujah, at least two soldiers and one civilian were killed in clashes between Iraqi army and insurgents. Another three civilians were wounded. One Iraqi soldier was killed and three wounded when they raided a house in Hawija and clashed with gunmen inside. Also in Hawija, gunmen killed the head of a women's organization and then shot dead a police officer as they fled her home. Gunmen kidnapped 11 Iraqi soldiers traveling in a minibus at a fake checkpoint in the town of Udhaim.

- **October 29, 2006:** A roadside bomb exploded near a police patrol, seriously wounding two people, including a policeman, in the centre of Kirkuk. Gunmen clashed with the Iraqi army on Saturday, killing three soldiers and wounding four near Balad. Gunmen shot dead a policeman near a checkpoint in Kut. Gunmen also killed three people and seriously wounded two, including a police major, in two different incidents on Saturday in Baquba.
- **October 30, 2006:** Police found four bodies, including that of a policeman, in different parts of Mosul. A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi army convoy injured one soldier, also in Mosul. A suicide car bomber hit an Iraqi army checkpoint at a border pass near Syria, killing four soldiers and wounding one. An hour earlier, another suicide bomber attacked the same checkpoint, causing no casualties. A suicide attacker blew himself up inside a police headquarters in Kirkuk, killing two policemen and a three-year-old girl and wounding 19, including 10 policemen. Police said the attacker was wearing a police officer uniform. Gunmen attacked a police centre in Baiji, killing two policemen. Police retrieved the bodies of six policemen bearing signs of torture and with bullet wounds from a river in Suwayra.
- **October 31:** A roadside bomb targeting a police patrol killed a policeman and wounded three others in Baghdad. A roadside bomb killed one policeman and one civilian in the western city of Fallujah. Two civilians were also wounded. Also in Fallujah, an Iraqi army soldier died in clashes with gunmen. Four "terrorists" and one Iraqi army lieutenant were killed during a raid on a building used by militants in Tal Afar. Four gunmen and an Iraqi army soldier were killed in clashes in the same city. In Baquba, clashes between gunmen and police left a policeman dead and three others wounded.

Key Centers of Insurgent Violence

Baghdad and Anbar province remained the focus of insurgent activity, as counted by the MNF-I and DoD. Most attacks in Al Anbar occurred in Ramadi, the embattled provincial capital.⁹⁵⁶ The casualty statistics showed not only the strength of the insurgency, but also an increase in sectarian violence and the US and Iraqi government effort to meet this challenge by force. The rise in US casualties inevitably rose as US forces attempted to stiffen and replace Iraqi units in an essentially hopeless mission. According to the White House, insurgents may also have tried to influence the US mid-term elections by increasing US casualties, but none of the data available support this claim.⁹⁵⁷

According to the Brookings Institution, 34.8% of US fatalities through October 26 were caused by IEDs, while "other kinds of hostile fire" killed 31.8%.⁹⁵⁸ This continuing high impact of IEDs came despite jamming devices, tactical adjustments and the increased armoring of military vehicles.⁹⁵⁹ This may be partly explained by the fact that significant numbers of explosively formed shaped charge projectiles (EFPs) started appearing at this time.⁹⁶⁰

The Iraqi body count in October was 224 Iraqi security forces and 1,315 civilians.⁹⁶¹ Al Qa'ida in Iraq stepped up insurgency activity during Ramadan 2006.⁹⁶² Al Qa'ida leadership's broad direction of attacks through public statements also appeared to work,

as suggested by the increase in attacks on US forces in the two weeks after its leadership called on insurgents to target American forces on September 7, 2006.⁹⁶³

The Role of Foreign Volunteers

Foreign fighters still made up a small percentage of the Sunni insurgency, around 20% according to Iraq's national security advisor, Mowaffak Rubaie, 10% or less according to a Brookings Institution Report, and possibly fewer than 5% according to some US intelligence expert.⁹⁶⁴ Their total numbers were estimated in the range from 800 to 2,000 in October 2006, with a total insurgent strength of over 20,000 people. They have, however, had a much more important impact on the fighting than their numbers would indicate because they initially made up most of the suicide attackers, and still played a significant role in such attacks in the spring of 2007.

The US military estimated that between 50 and 70 foreign fighters crossed the border into Iraq every month, while US and Iraqi forces captured 630 foreign fighters between January and mid-September 2006 (an average of 74 per month). Meanwhile, most insurgents were native Iraqi Sunni Islamists or members of the old Ba'ath party regime.⁹⁶⁵

US military spokesman Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell said in November 2006 that Iraqi and US forces had killed more than 425 foreign fighters and caught more than 670 in Iraq in 2006. More than 20% of those detained came from Syria, Caldwell said.⁹⁶⁶

New Patterns in Sectarian Violence

The most important trend in Iraqi violence during 2006 was the increase in sectarian Sunni-Shi'ite violence, which rose twelve times between January and mid-August 2006. Sectarian violence continued to increase throughout 2006. Much of this violence was carried out by militias. Despite the existence of several militias in Iraq before 2003, many other militias and other small armed have arisen as a defensive response to the violence plaguing much of the country. According to the DoD:

...militias and other small, armed groups operate openly, often with popular support, but outside formal public security structures. These militias provide an element of protection for the populace, generally on a sectarian or political basis. This is especially true in areas where there is a perception that the Government of Iraq is unwilling or unable to provide effective security for the population. Some militias also act as the security arm of organizations devoted to social relief and welfare, lending these armed groups further legitimacy.⁹⁶⁷

Changes continued in insurgent tactics. Insurgents were reported in September 2006 to have started using involuntary "suicide" bombers. This technique involves kidnapping motorists, putting bombs in their cars, and then setting their victims free with their rigged vehicles, detonating the bombs by remote control once the car reached a checkpoint or another target deemed valuable.⁹⁶⁸

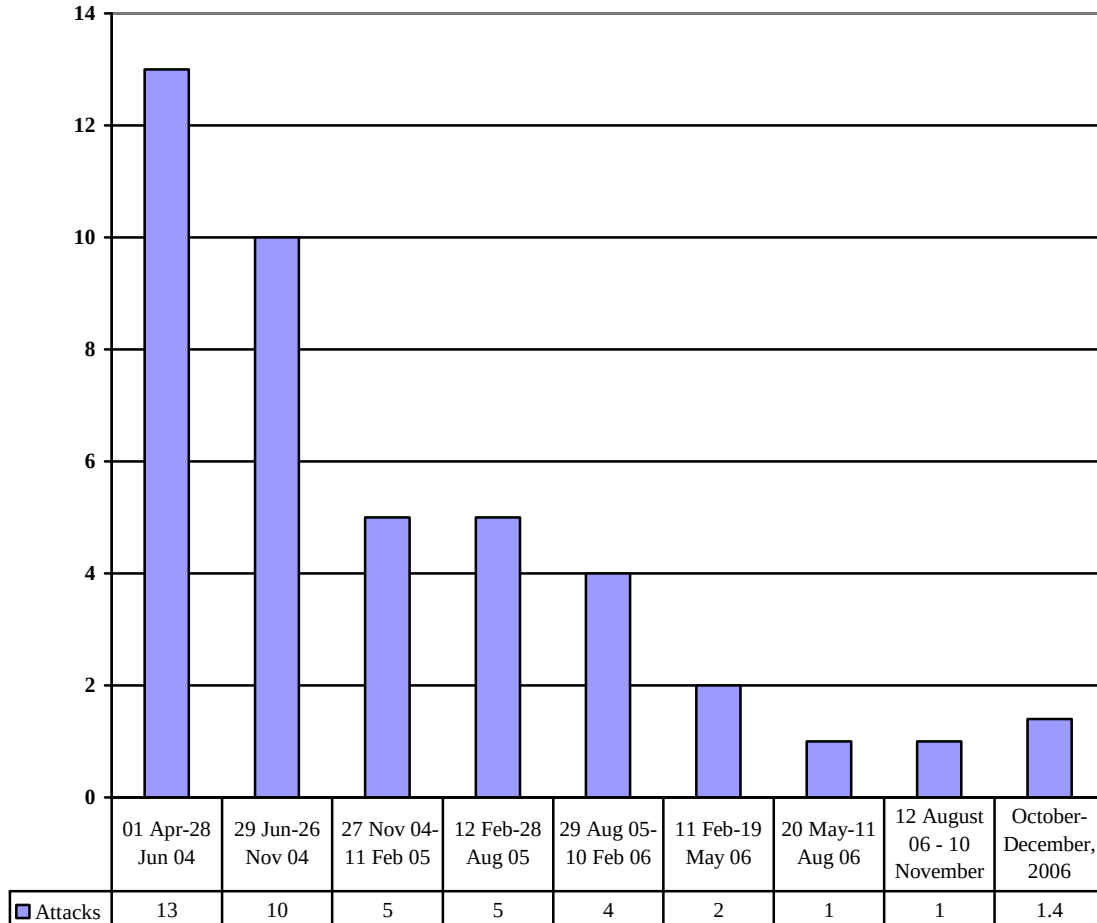
Infrastructure Attacks

Poor security conditions continued to hamper efforts to rebuild Iraq's economy, and put additional stress efforts to develop effective ISF capabilities. Indicators include the following:

- Iraq's oil production remained under target levels: during the week of August 16-22, Iraq produced 2.17 million barrels per day, while the Oil Ministry's goal was 2.5 million barrels (the pre-war level was about 2.6 million barrels per day)
- According to SIGIR: "Electric lines are attacked regularly, and the northern pipelines are largely inoperable because of interdiction. Iraqi repair crews are frequently unable to work because of repeated attacks."
- Over the same week, electricity availability averaged around 5.9 hours per day in Baghdad and 10.7 hours nationwide. Electricity output for the week was only about 9% above the same period in 2005.

Despite the decrease in the number of infrastructure attacks shown in **Figure 3.9**, they continued to have a significant impact. In addition to decreases in production, major oil pipelines continue to be sabotaged, shutting down exports. Efforts to increase electricity output by a greater amount were also injured by repeated sabotaging of major electrical transmission lines. The Defense Department noted in its March, 2007 quarterly report that "the timing and location of more recent attacks resulted in greater disruption of services" when compared with earlier attacks.⁹⁶⁹

According to the DoD: "weak ministerial oversight, ineffectual rapid-repair teams, and criminal harvesting of infrastructure assets (e.g., copper from power lines) have proved to be major impediments to improving the supply of essential services. Since poor delivery of essential services adversely affects the legitimacy of the government in the minds of the civilian population, Iraq's infrastructure will remain a high-value target"⁹⁷⁰ To combat these problems, the US planned on focusing efforts on strengthening the Strategic Infrastructure Battalions.⁹⁷¹

Figure 3.9**Average Weekly Infrastructure Attacks: 1 April 2004 to December, 2006****

*Average rounded to nearest whole number

**Note: The Iraq Study Group found that the Department of Defense may be underreporting attacks by as much as a factor of ten. The DoD has named the time periods used in the graph as follows: Pre-sovereignty: 1 Jan-31 Mar 04, Pre-sovereignty: 01 April 2004 – 28 June 2004, Sovereignty: 29 Jun-26 Nov 04, Election: 27 Nov 04-11 Feb 05, Pre-Constitution: 12 Feb-28 Aug 05, Referendum/Election: 29 Aug 05-10 Feb 06, Gov. Transition: 11 Feb-19 May 06, Government Established: 20 May-11 Aug 06, Government Established: 12 Aug 06 - 10 Nov 06, Transition to self reliance: 1 Jan. - 9 Feb. 2007. Source: MNC-I, from US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March, 2007 Report to Congress, p. 20.

The United States had invested about \$320.3 million by October 2006 in an effort to improve Iraq's capability to protect its oil and electricity infrastructure. The protection of key infrastructure nodes and an upgraded Iraqi government capability to protect them itself are part of the overall strategy of the current administration.⁹⁷² The US has done much to further this self-sustaining infrastructure protection effort, including the training and equipment of several special security services, and partnering them with coalition forces. These services are the:

- Strategic Infrastructure Battalions
- Oil Protection Force
- Electrical Power Security Service⁹⁷³

The SIGIR further noted that insurgent attacks were only part of the problem – Iraq's energy infrastructure is also plagued by criminal activity and simply by its own age and poor maintenance.⁹⁷⁴

Shi'ite Militias: Open Challenges, Police Infiltration, and Underground Death Squads

*"This is the toughest thing I hope I ever do: fighting a counterinsurgency atop a sectarian conflict." Col. James Pasquarette, commander of the Army's 1st Brigade Combat Team.*⁹⁷⁵

At the same time, civil conflict presented a growing challenge to ISF development. Shi'ite Militias of varying sizes played a steadily rising role in the violence in Iraq during mid 2005 to the end of 2006. The DoD stated that: "It is likely that Shi'a militants were responsible for more civilian casualties than those associated with terrorist organizations. Shi'a militants were the most significant threat to the Coalition presence in Baghdad and southern Iraq."⁹⁷⁶

According to the CENTCOM commander, Shi'ite militias became the largest contributors to sectarian violence in the country.⁹⁷⁷ They targeted Sunnis, mostly civilians, both in retaliation for insurgent attacks and for sectarian reasons. Sunnis in mixed-sect neighborhoods in turn formed local "neighborhood watches".

The Iraq Study Group reached a similar conclusion:

Shi'ite militias engaging in sectarian violence pose a substantial threat to immediate and long-term stability. These militias are diverse. Some are affiliated with the government, some are highly localized, and some are wholly outside the law. They are fragmenting, with an increasing breakdown in command structure. The militias target Sunni Arab civilians, and some struggle for power in clashes with one another. Some even target government ministries. They undermine the authority of the Iraqi government and security forces, as well as the ability of Sunnis to join a peaceful political process. The prevalence of militias sends a powerful message: political leaders can preserve and expand their power only if backed by armed force...Militias are currently seen as legitimate vehicles of political action."⁹⁷⁸

The Uncertain Role of the Mahdi Militia

The Mahdi militia presented the most serious problem, and had clearly recovered from its military defeat in 2004 to become a serious threat. According to a report by the RIIA in 2006, Mahdi Army membership “may now be several hundred thousand strong and is itching for the opportunity to be unleashed upon both the Arab Sunni insurgents and the Multinational Force.”⁹⁷⁹ US government estimates put their numbers at 60,000, and felt that they were only a limited force given the power of other Shi’ite parties. One US Army intelligence analyst in Baghdad did say in October 2006, however, that,⁹⁸⁰

“They’ve infiltrated every branch of public service and every political office they could get their hands on. As soon as the US leaves, they’ll be able to dominate the area with key citizens, key positions, key offices. They’ll pretty much have the lay of the land.” –

The same analyst reported ethnic cleansing activities carried out by the Mahdi Army in Baghdad. Its members would paint large red Xs on the sides of houses the militia wanted vacated. People knew they had a few days before it would be firebombed. The organization used this tactic to clear entire clans from neighborhoods and drive rivals from neighborhoods under its control.⁹⁸¹ The Defense Department reported in November that the Mahdi Army is “currently having the greatest negative affect on the security situation.”⁹⁸²

US forces found it increasingly difficult to respond to the growth of the Mahdi militia, Badr organization, other Shi’ite sectarian forces and death squads in carrying out their ISF training missions: “To fight these extrajudicial killings effectively, we need to be embedded, almost one to one, with the Iraqi forces. We need to watch their every move,” said Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Nelson, an intelligence analyst with the US Army’s 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment in Baghdad. Nelson further stated that arrests for sectarian killings were rare because of militia affiliations of Iraqi security forces. When US forces had intelligence on a death squad or killing, they would often share it with their Iraqi counterpart, leading to leaks and blown operation. The Sergeant reported that his battalion had investigated 40 sectarian killings and collected 57 bodies one particular week, with none leading to an arrest. “Sometimes we have a feeling of complete hopelessness,”⁹⁸³

As extremist elements in the Mahdi Army caused more and more violence, it became less and less clear how firm Sadr's control really was over his militia. Many security officials believed that he was losing the grip on the more extreme elements, and that many parts of the militia were really loosely tied affiliates that often acted on their own or with a considerable degree of independence.⁹⁸⁴

A senior coalition intelligence official in Baghdad said in September 2006 that: “There are fractures politically inside Sadr’s movement, many of whom don’t find him to be sufficiently radical now that he has taken a political course of action.”⁹⁸⁵ One report put the number of “rogue” Mahdi Army members as high as a third of the militia.⁹⁸⁶

A Coalition intelligence official said in September there were at least six senior militia leaders striking out on their own, including Abu Dera, whom Sunnis believe to be responsible for thousands of murders.⁹⁸⁷ News reports citing “defense sources” reported the loss of control over “large numbers” of militiamen who had formed independent

death squads to murder civilians around Baghdad.⁹⁸⁸ Prime Minister Maliki commented that, “we don’t know what Mahdi Army means any more.”⁹⁸⁹ These defections increased Iran’s avenues for manipulation in Iraq, with more independent Shi’ite groups that could be influenced.⁹⁹⁰

A February 2007 report by Jane’s Terrorism & Security Monitor also cast doubt on the unity of the Mahdi Army. In particular, the political and military branches of the organization appeared to be at odds. According to Abu Kamael, Mahdi Army member and admitted death squad leader: “There is conflict between the two branches. The fighters say they are the source of the Sadrists’ political power, while the politicians say they give the group its focus and meaning, its ability to build, and stop it being a rabble. The only thing holding the two elements together is Moqtada al-Sadr himself. Without him, the movement will be destroyed...Sadr is trying to impose control ...In my opinion, the political wing of the Sadr line is being weakened by the worsening security situation.”⁹⁹¹

Moqtada al-Sadr himself, in a telephone interview with *Jane’s*, Sadr said: “I am innocent of any element of the Mahdi Army that kills members of the other community. They are not acting for the Mahdi Army and do not represent the Mahdi Army they are criminals, gangsters and extremists.” He added “Death squads that say they kill on behalf of the Mahdi Army are trying to destroy us and divide us and prevent us from raising arms against the forces of occupation. Criminals are using my name as cover for their actions.”⁹⁹²

At the same time, Sadr City, the home territory of the Mahdi Army, was one of the safest parts of Baghdad for Shi’ites, and the Mahdi militia provided much better security than the ISF. Mahdi Army death squads would go to other, contested parts of the city, commit violence, and then return to Sadr City and blend back into the general population there. US officers in Baghdad examined where the victims of sectarian killings were found in Baghdad, and concluded that the perpetrators mostly came from Sadr city:

“Sadr City. That’s the nucleus.” *Capt. Will Wade, 1st Battalion, 77th Armored Regiment.*

“They’re in the export business, so a lot of their force is outside Sadr City. The fact that the Corleones or the Gottis may live in my neighborhood doesn’t mean they do all their business there.” *Maj. Charles St.Clair, military advisor in Sadr City with the 506th Regimental Combat Team*

The Failure to Disband or Control the Militias

The growing political and security problems created by militias being seen as protectors by “their” constituencies became evident in October 2006, when US troops cordoned the Sadr City district in Baghdad in October, looking for a kidnapped US soldier as well as a particularly notorious death squad leader. The US operation forced the Mahdi Army to go underground in the area, and when attacks happened in the usually safe neighborhood, Sadr supporters blamed the Americans for suppressing the only force that protected them.⁹⁹³ Moreover, US forces received only token ISF support and Prime Minister Maliki ordered the end of the operation on October 31.⁹⁹⁴

It was also easier for a Shi'ite-dominated Iraqi government to talk about dealing with the militias, and relying on truly national Iraqi security forces, that it was for the government to take meaningful action. Prime Minister al-Maliki made several statements to the effect that militias had to be disbanded.⁹⁹⁵ But his government initially lacked the will and capacity to back his words up with enforcement measures, since they had no apparent effect on the size and vitality of these organizations. Al-Maliki stressed that "the dissolution of militias must be through the political powers."⁹⁹⁶ He stated in late October that the Sunni insurgency was still the main engine of sectarian violence in the country.⁹⁹⁷

The efforts for all political groups should be focused on the most dangerous challenge, which is the combination of al Qa'ida and the Saddam Ba'athists.

After the bombing in Samarra there was sectarian tension. The Mahdi Army and the Badr group and some independents had a reaction to that. But the government managed to stop that. [...] Terrorism and the militias are separate issues. There is a political plan aimed at making the militias the priority. The militias are not acceptable but they are not the main reason [for the security situation]. Terrorism is the main reason. There is Sunni pressure and Arab pressure on this but we reject drawing a veil over the Ba'ath party and terrorism. At least we can talk to the militias, we know who they are. They follow Moqtada al Sadr, the Dawa party, Badr etc. We can talk to them but who are terrorists loyal to and who do they follow? *Nouri al Maliki, Oct. 26, 2006*⁹⁹⁸

By late in 2006, Maliki realized he could not succeed by trying to reconcile with his Shia Political rivals, and that some of his rivals were irreconcilable. This gave new impetus to President Bush's new security plan for Baghdad, because Maliki did not place restrictions on either the ISF or Coalition forces in acting even-handedly against extremists of either sect, and indicated that the Iraqi government would finally sanction military and political actions against the Shi'ite militias.

This was critical because the new security plan for Baghdad was officially commanded by Iraq, and as such any decision to attack the Mahdi army or enter Sadr city would be left up to the Iraqi government. However, pentagon official felt that this time, as opposed to Operation Together Forward, they would be allowed to attack the Shi'ite militias. According to one anonymous pentagon official "This time we have a commitment from Maliki and other key players in the Iraqi government . . . to have a no holds barred arrangement for neighborhoods in Baghdad." Sadr city, he added, "would not be a safe haven" for militias.⁹⁹⁹

Even so, such statements presented the practical problem that the Shi'ite militias could respond by dispersing and/or standing down as the new plan went into action. The end result was that the US-led effort would then have to focus on the Sunni insurgency and any elements of the Shi'ite militias that did not respond to Iraqi government control. If the US plan worked, it meant steadily expanding Shi'ite power in Baghdad as US domestic political pressure grew on the Bush Administration to leave or phase down US forces. If the US plan failed, it meant the militias could reassert themselves more quickly, possibly with US support.

The beginning of President Bush's "surge" and new 'gated community' security plan for Baghdad in 2007 had mixed results. An anticipation of the coming US/Iraqi security plan, the Mahdi militia was ordered to stand down, and many of its checkpoints in

Baghdad disappeared. However, as the Iraqi troops deployed to the capital took longer than anticipated to arrive, a security vacuum developed. A massive bombing on February 3rd, killing 135 in the market of the Sedriya neighborhood of Baghdad was widely blamed on the delay in implementing the security plan and the lower profile of the Mahdi militia.

Shi'ite Militias and Links to the ISF

Shi'ite militias not only 'competed' with the security forces for domination of neighborhoods and cities, they tried to directly influence the behavior of ISF forces' behavior through infiltration and intimidation. They threatened policemen with attacks on their families to coerce their cooperation, for example to let militia members pass checkpoints unsearched. This problem was much harder to address for the government as well as for US officials than infiltration, because it could not be solved by a straightforward process like vetting recruits. US troops in Baghdad tried to prevent intimidation of police officers by watching for suspicious cars leaving a police station, with unknown results.¹⁰⁰⁰

Militia infiltration of the security forces not only took place at the level of policemen and soldiers, but at the political level. Iraqi policemen complained that whenever they moved against militias, they would receive phone calls from top politicians telling them to allow these militias to operate. This put commanders in the uncomfortable position of either letting radicals operate freely in their area of responsibility or risking their job.¹⁰⁰¹ Some American officers went so far as saying that they could judge the importance of a captured Sunni insurgent or Shi'ite militiaman by the number of high-ranking Iraqi commanders calling to demand his release.¹⁰⁰²

Partisan interference in ISF affairs has come from the highest levels of the Iraqi government. A report surfaced in April, 2007, that a department in the office of the prime minister had been responsible for the arrest or removal of several Iraqi Army and National Police commanders because of sectarian reasons.¹⁰⁰³ This department, the Office of the Commander in Chief, has also been accused of pressuring other commanders to leave Shi'ite groups alone.

As has already been discussed, the two most influential Shi'ite militias -- Moqtada al-Sadr's Mahdi Army and the Badr Brigades (the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI)) -- openly challenged Iraqi police's control of Baghdad and Basra. Other cities were affected, such as Diwaniya, where on August 28 the Mahdi Army battled with Iraqi Army and police for hours in a fight that left at least 40 dead, including 25 soldiers.¹⁰⁰⁴ The background for this clash was the arrest of prominent Sadr supporters by Iraqi forces. The raids were carried out by Iraqi Army units backed by Polish troops.¹⁰⁰⁵ Sadr's office in Diwaniya claimed that the arrests had not been made, as usual, by Iraqi police, but by Army units without warrants.

The political leaders behind the largest Shi'ite militias were also major players in Iraqi national politics: Moqtada al-Sadr not only controlled the Mahdi army, but his followers were in charge of 4 out of 40 Iraqi ministries: the ministries of health, transportation, agriculture, and tourism and antiquities. According to a DoD report, the Sadr militia

enjoyed popular support in Baghdad and the southern provinces, and was tolerated by some in the Iraqi government. The second big Shi'ite militia, the Badr organization, was the paramilitary wing of SCIRI, one of the two largest Shi'ite political parties in the new government. One of Iraq's two deputy presidents and the Minister of Finance are SCIRI members.¹⁰⁰⁶

Moreover, Shi'ite militias played a role in death squads that included elements from the police and the army.¹⁰⁰⁷ According to a statement by Gen. George Casey in August 2006, Shi'ite death squads were now responsible for 60% of the killings in Baghdad.¹⁰⁰⁸ One day later, US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad put the percentage of sectarian violence at 77%.¹⁰⁰⁹

There was an increase of incidents in which men in Interior Ministry uniforms rounded up Sunni men, mostly civilians, who were later found dead, hands bound in police handcuffs, showing signs of torture, and shot execution-style. This type of killing started in May 2005, shortly after Bayan Jabr took office as interior minister. Jabr, who was out of office by August 2006, maintained that the perpetrators were outsiders wearing stolen uniforms. He claimed that death squads mainly emerged from private security services, such as the Facility Protection Service.¹⁰¹⁰

Iraqi authorities did try to counteract this infiltration. In early October, they pulled an entire brigade of about 700 policemen out of service in its biggest move ever to remove troops with links to death squads.¹⁰¹¹ Progress was still mixed, however, as the experience of the American police transition team of the 372nd Military Police Battalion in Baghdad illustrated:

The signs of the militias are everywhere at the Sholeh police station. Posters celebrating Moqtada al-Sadr, head of the Mahdi Army militia, dot the building's walls. The police chief sometimes remarks that Shi'ite militias should wipe out all Sunnis. [...]

Seventy percent of the Iraqi police force has been infiltrated by militias, primarily the Mahdi Army, according to [the head of the police transition team] and other military police trainers. Police officers are too terrified to patrol enormous swaths of the capital. And while there are some good cops, many have been assassinated or are considering quitting the force. [...]

American soldiers said that although they gather evidence of police ties to the militias and present it to Iraqi officials, no one has ever been criminally charged or even lost their jobs. [...]

The American soldiers and civilians who train the Iraqis are constantly on guard against the possibility that the police might turn against them. Even in the police headquarters for all of western Baghdad, on of the safest police buildings in the capital, the training team will not remove their body armor or helmets. An armed soldier is assigned to protect each trainer. [...]

[The deputy team chief] estimated it would take 30 to 40 years before the Iraqi police could function properly, perhaps longer if the militia infiltration and corruption continue to increase.¹⁰¹²

Other MNF-I experts felt, however, that it was not possible to generalize on the basis of single source, local, anecdotal evidence. It was clear that Individual police stations, individual units, and individuals may be culpable of every thing alleged in such quotations. However, they felt that only Baghdad and Basra exhibited the kind of sometimes dominant militia influence described. Furthermore, they felt that the period immediately following the Samarra Bombing in February 2006 was characterized by

broad expressions of ethnicity and sect, and that the Government of Iraq had later been steadily—albeit cautiously—restoring discipline to the ranks of the ISF.

It is also difficult to precisely attribute given killings to specific ISF and police units or distinguish which were performed by elements of the ISF and by underground groups, but police were clearly culpable in some of the incidents, given the frequency of the murders and the practice of recruiting police from local militias. GAO also reported that Shi'ite militias tried to place members into army and police units as a way to serve their interests.¹⁰¹³

There was at least one instance of the Mahdi Army publicly disavowing killings by certain death squads while these death squads continued to serve it by killing Sadr's enemies.¹⁰¹⁴

Interior minister Bolani told reporters in October 2006 that “very few, individual” security forces were actually involved in death squad activity, with the majority of the culprits coming from the Facilities Protection Service. He also blamed the bodyguards of unnamed politicians to be involved. Bolani described a “problem of impressions” regarding the police role in sectarian killings. The minister stressed the ongoing reforms of the police force, such as retraining efforts and requiring loyalty oaths. He said major changes were needed at the command level of his ministry itself and that he had the government's support to implement them.¹⁰¹⁵

In September 2006, senior US officers publicly questioned prime minister al-Maliki's tactics for ending sectarian violence, implying this government was not doing enough in this respect.

We have to fix this militia issue. We can't have armed militias competing with Iraq's security forces. But I have to trust the prime minister to decide when it is that we do that. *Lieutenant General Peter Chiarelli, second-highest-ranking US military official in Baghdad*

[The militias are] a problem that the government must deal with immediately. *Major General James Thurman, commander of US forces in Baghdad*¹⁰¹⁶

The prime minister announced a plan on October 3 to deal with militias, saying that only the police should be armed and that militias threaten the future of the government. His comments remained unspecific, however, and only outlined committees that would further investigate the problem.¹⁰¹⁷

Further north, the violence had a more ethnic than religious dimension: in Kirkuk, for example, Iraq's third-largest city, Arabs and Kurds struggled violently for the control of the city.

Shi'ite Militias and Links to Iran

The key Shi'ite groups and militias all had ties to the government of Iran, as well as to elements within the ISF. According to the Director of National Intelligence, Iran provided guidance to political groups as well as weapons and training to militant groups to enable attacks against Coalition forces. Iran also contributed to the increasing lethality of insurgent attacks by enabling Shi'ite militants to build IEDs with explosively formed projectiles, similar to those developed by the Lebanese Hezbollah.¹⁰¹⁸

During an August 23 press briefing, the new Deputy Director of Operations for the Joint Staff, Brigadier General Michael Barbero, indicated that there was evidence of Iranian elements inside Iraq helping to train Shi'ite extremists. He further stated that there was "irrefutable" evidence that Iran was responsible for training, funding, and equipping some of the Shi'ite groups, particularly with advanced IED technology, and that it was his belief that it was the policy of the central government in Tehran to support Shi'ite extremist groups in Iraq.

Wayne White, who led the State Department's Iraq intelligence team during the war, said a well-placed friend had seen "considerable physical evidence of it, and just about everyone in (Maysan province) knew about it." Meanwhile, the British troops patrolling Maysan province at the border with Iran were unconvinced that arms were being smuggled into the country from the east. The following comments on the subject were made by British army officers stationed in Maysan province and in Basra.

"We have found no credible evidence to suggest there is weapons smuggling across the border."
Maj. Dominic Roberts

"I suspect there's nothing out there. And I intend to prove it." *Lt. Col. David Labouchere*

"It's a question of intelligence versus evidence. One hears word of mouth, but one has to see it with one's own eyes. These are serious consequences, aren't they?" *Brig. James Everard*

Not only British military personnel thought there were no weapons being smuggled into Iraq from Iran. British Defense Secretary Des Browne said in late August that

"I have not myself seen any evidence – and I don't think any evidence exists – of government-supported or instigated" armed support of Iran in Iraq."¹⁰¹⁹

Barbero did state, however, that during the five weeks preceding the briefing, the number of incidents of sectarian violence had dropped steadily, with a corresponding drop in the number of attacks on infrastructure in the preceding three weeks. He also pointed to the denouncement of Iran by two Shi'ite political parties in Iraq that week as a positive development. The two groups publicly called Tehran to task as a destabilizing force responsible for increased violence in Iraq.¹⁰²⁰ It is also important to note that British forces operating near the Iranian border did not find evidence of Iranian infiltration or arms transfers.¹⁰²¹

The Uncertain Role of Kurdish Security Forces and Militias

These Sunni-Shi'ite and Shi'ite-dominated central government problems were only part of the story. In Kurdistan, the Kurdish-Arab rivalry for control of key cities continued, and presented additional problems for the development of the ISF. In and around Mosul, 40 to 50 people were being killed each week, according to the city's deputy governor, Khasro Goran. 70,000 Kurds fled their homes between January and September 2006, many intimidated by death threats. Goran expected the violence to get worse leading up to the decision what areas would be included into Kurdistan at the end of 2007. He advocated the division of the province.

No single group controlled Mosul in the fall of 2006, and the ISF were ethnically divided. The 2nd Iraqi Army Division was based in the city, and the 3rd Division outside it, each 15,000-strong. , Both divisions were at least 50% Kurdish, and both had Kurdish

commanders. US forces, however, have forbidden these units to patrol too aggressively in order to not provoke negative Sunni Arab reactions. Meanwhile, Mosul's police force is Arab-controlled, 16,000 policemen are deployed in the province, 6,000 of them in the city. They are not trusted by the city's Kurds, who had already long accused them of being sympathetic to the Sunni insurgency.

The relationship between US and Sunni elements of the local security forces deteriorated after most police officers resigned in response to the Battle of Fallujah in November 2004. US and Kurdish forces, however, still cooperated, and the Americans there heavily relied on Kurdish intelligence to search for guerrillas. US forces, originally based at four locations in the city, had retreated to one large base at the airport by fall 2006.

The conflict in predominantly Kurdish areas also played out in the local security forces. In Jalawla, for example, a police station was transferred to a new – Arab – commander in September 2006, prompting Kurdish militiamen to seize the station to prevent the transfer. They were led by the new commander's predecessor.

These problems had national as well as local implications. Concerns also grew about the deployment of Kurdish brigades to Baghdad as part of President Bush's "surge" of 2007. The two Kurdish brigades slated to be deployed in the capital do not speak Arabic, and fear meddling in what many see as the primarily Shi'ite-Sunni conflict.

Also in September 2006, the regional parliament of Kurdistan sent a draft constitution to the government in Baghdad that included Kirkuk and other disputed areas in the Kurdish-controlled areas.¹⁰²² Fighting over Kirkuk grew more intense in late 2006. The January 2007 NIE on Iraq reported that:

The Kurds are moving systematically to increase their control of Kirkuk to guarantee annexation of all or most of the city and province into the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) after the constitutionally mandated referendum scheduled to occur no later than 31 December 2007. Arab groups in Kirkuk continue to resist violently what they see as Kurdish encroachment.¹⁰²³

The militia issue in Kurdistan also had implications for Iraq's relations with Turkey. Turkey demanded military action from Iraq to disarm the PKK, which the Kurdish elements of the ISF refused to take. The US on the one hand realized that the Kurds were its strongest allies in Iraq, but on the other hand needed to placate Turkey as a long-standing ally, and wanted to prevent Ankara from turning towards Iran and Syria, who shared Turkey's interests in suppressing Kurdish nationalist ambitions.¹⁰²⁴

Israeli security contractors are reported to have secretly trained Kurdish soldiers, starting in 2004. They were employees of the firms Kudo and Colosium, both subsidiaries of Interop, an Israeli security-consulting firm, although both Kudo and Colosium described themselves as Swiss-registered companies. The former Israeli commando soldiers were said to be training two groups of Kurdish soldiers, one guarding the international airport at Irbil (Hawler), and a group of Peshmerga fighters for "special assignments," such as shooting an attacker in a crowd. It was not clear what type of soldiers comprised the group destined to guard the airport. In addition to training, Kudo provided quad bikes, communications equipment and security fencing. During 2004-5, Interop and Kudo were run by Shlomi Michaels, a former head of Israel's counter-terrorist unit. Any public

connection to Israel is a sensitive issue for Kurdish officials, since their political enemies have long accused them of cooperating with Israel.¹⁰²⁵

Progress in Iraqi Force Development

The effort to create effective Iraqi military, national security and police forces has been more successful than Iraqi political and economic efforts, but has not achieved the level of success the US planned. The March 2007 Department of Defense report to Congress on “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” summarized Iraqi progress to date as follows,¹⁰²⁶

As of February 19, 2007, there were 112 Iraqi Army combat battalions. One hundred three are conducting operations at varying levels of capability; an additional nine battalions are being generated. There are two Special Operations Battalions, both conducting operations. Of the 17-planned Strategic Infra-structure Battalions (SIBs), 14 are assessed as conducting operations at various levels. Of the 103 Iraqi Army combat battalions conducting operations, 93 have the lead in counter-insurgency operations in their areas of responsibility. Additionally, 27 National Police battalions are operational, with 6 in the lead. All but one of the National Police brigades is currently conducting security operations in Baghdad. A brigade-sized operational reserve consisting of a mechanized battalion from the Army, a National Police battalion, and a Special Forces company has been established

The most significant shortcoming in both MOD and MOI forces’ capabilities is in planning and executing logistics and sustainment requirements. Factors underlying this deficiency include inadequate levels of sustainment stocks and limited capacity of the MOD and the MOI to execute the planning/ acquisition/sustainment cycle. DoD is addressing the challenges to reduce Iraqi reliance on U.S. support. For example, the 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) is partnered with Iraqi logistics units to assist in the development of Iraqi Army divisional support capabilities. Embedded civilian advisors are assisting senior MOD and MOI officials in developing their capacity to organize, train, equip, sustain, and upgrade their forces.

In addition, Prime Minister Maliki had given the MOD and MOI a critical role in the implementation of the national counterterrorism capability concept that he approved on October 10, 2006. This concept achieved an Initial Operational Capability in March 2007. Iraqi personnel began to occupy positions within each Counter-Terrorism headquarters in March 2007, and begin operations and training. This program will have Full Operational Capability in December 2007, and will consist of three complementary components:

- Development of a national Bureau of Counter-Terrorism, separate from the ministries, that serves as the principal advisor to the prime minister on counterterrorism matters
- Establishment of a coherent, non- sectarian, counter-terrorism “tiering” strategy that determines the level of the terrorist threat, assigns appropriate responsibility for action, and defines approval authority for execution; this strategy was established as part of the overall counter-terrorism concept
- Establishment of a separate major command, equivalent to the ground, air, and naval forces commands, that provides support to the Bureau of Counter-Terrorism in intelligence and targeting areas

These developments do represent very real progress in many areas, but this progress has often been far less successful than the Department of Defense has claimed, and has been presented in recent testimony to Congress. The Iraqi government has also exaggerated the effectiveness of its armed forces, although for different kinds of domestic political reasons. On January 18, 2007, Prime minister Nouri al-Maliki stated that the need for

American troops would “dramatically go down” in 3 to 6 months if the United States accelerated the process of equipping and arming Iraq’s security forces.¹⁰²⁷

It is never quite clear whether these exaggerated reports of progress in ISF force development are the product of “spin” and the search for political advantage, the desire to avoid seeing the US accept defeat, or self-deception on the part of those doing the reporting. The reality is, however, that virtually nothing the US officially says about Iraqi force development can be taken at face value.

US and MNF-I plans that called for Iraqi regular military forces to allow significant Coalition troop reductions in 2006 have failed. Worse, the effort to develop the Iraqi police and security forces has gotten badly out of balance with the effort to develop regular forces and lags more than a year behind it. The so-called “year of the police” has barely begun and will at best gather momentum in 2007. Real-world Iraqi dependence on the present scale of US and allied military support and advisory efforts will continue well into 2008 at the earliest and probably to 2010.

Far too much of the reporting on ISF manning levels has severely distorted force development planning and create unrealistic and unfair expectations of progress. Ironically, the end result may be to cripple the very effort such distortions were expected to aid. It breeds unfair frustration with Iraq performance, makes the US and its allies slow to identify and correct the problems in the effort, understates the time and resources required, and leads to political pressure to make Iraq forces ready too quickly and withdraw US forces too soon.

Two key problems exist in most unclassified manpower and combat readiness reporting. One is reporting the number of “trained and equipped” men in the ISF. This total, for example, was 323,180 military and police personnel as of March 5, 2007.¹⁰²⁸ The US and MNF-I, however, base such figures on the number of men that the MNF-I has trained and equipped and not on actual manning. Such figures bear little resemblance to the actual levels of men that who are really still in service.

While over 320,000 men have been trained and equipped since the fall of Saddam Hussein, a large percentage has since left and deserted, substantial numbers have been killed and wounded, and some 10-20% of those who remain are absent at any given time because they leave to take care of their families and transfer their pay in a country where there is no meaningful banking system. The Iraqi regular forces and National Police may only be about 20-25% short of the totals reported for trained and equipped manpower, but the percentages could be much higher. There certainly are many battalion elements with manning levels well under 50%, and many units with critical shortages of officers and NCOs.

Such problems in reporting total manning are, however, more complex than focusing on total manpower shortages can indicate. Where there are battalions that are understrength in enlisted soldiers, they have often been mal-assigned. For example, battalion and brigade headquarters are often at 200% strength while companies are short. This tendency to overman headquarter is a heritage carried over from the Saddam era that MNSTC-I and the MNF-I working to correct.

Mid-grade officers (Captains and Majors) are in short supply. Several recalls of former officers have closed the gap, however, and the MoD is examining other options for generating about 5,000 additional officers. Some of the shortages in noncommissioned officers shortages are also a reflection of a force too busy to send its rising soldiers to required training. In April 2007, the MoD was examining options to generate almost 30,000 additional noncommissioned officers].

Similarly, the US and MNF-I claimed that Iraqi units are in the lead often have little or no real operational capability or activity, mixing units that reflect very real mission capability with ones that are failed force elements that should actually be assigned the lowest levels of readiness. Their reporting mixed real transfers of responsibility to effective Iraqi forces with cosmetic, politically motivated transfers to Iraqi commands and units that cannot perform such missions and often are dependent on US armor, artillery, airpower, logistics and service support, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (IS&R).

Iraqi forces simply are not ready to assume the burden of national defense. Moreover, even if more effective and realistic force development plans are implemented and given the proper resources, they will still fail unless Iraqi military progress is matched by Iraqi political progress. The only way to avoid this continuing dependence on the US and other outside power without greatly increasing the risk of a major civil war, and collapse of the Iraqi force development effort, would be a level of political conciliation so great as to fundamentally undermine the insurgency and end the drift towards civil war.

Progress and Problems in the Current Effort

The problems in Iraqi force development are described in details in the chapters that follow, and they are necessarily complex. In broad terms, however, the problems still begin at the top and involve every aspect of Iraqi force development.

Uncertain Leadership by the MoD and MoI

The appointment of a new Minister of Defense on June 8th 2006 brought an end to nearly half a year without clear leadership, but scarcely created an effective Ministry. The new Minister, Abd al-Qadr Muhammad Jassim al-Mufraqi, had only limited experience and inherited a Ministry whose staff had limited competence, a reputation for favoritism and corruption, and was deeply divided along sectarian and ethnic lines.

His status as a Sunni raised questions about his authority in a Shi'ite-Kurd dominated government, and he faced rivals in the form of a Shia Minister of the Interior, Jawad al-Bolani, and two rival and duplicate national security advisors: Muwafaq al-Rubai, the National Security Advisor first appointed under the CPA; and Shirwan al-Waili, the new Minister of Staff for National Security Affairs. Moreover, Prime Minister Maliki called for a major shake-up of his cabinet on November 12, 2006, casting serious doubt as to how long both Mufraqi and the MOI Jawad Bolani would stay in office.

There also were many complaints about the MOI, similar to those about the MoD. MOI Bolani's case is interesting because he was picked for the exact qualities that came to haunt him: Although he was a Shi'ite, he came from a nonpartisan, secular background

and did not have strong political ties. US officials continued to publicly back Bolani and praised his efforts against corruption and sectarian violence originating within the ministry, pointing out that he had fired 1,775 personnel in his first 60 days, more than any previous minister.

Some Iraqi officials, however, cast him as an ineffective leader who had done little to root out corruption or quell sectarian violence. They singled out his failure to directly challenge known Badr Brigade members within the ministry, especially a cell of militia commanders located on the seventh floor of the Interior Ministry headquarters building. Allegedly, powerful Badr and Mahdi leaders had marginalized Bolani within his own ministry.

At least publicly, however, Bolani did not acquiesce to militia demands. In October, he described the Mahdi Army, along with Sunni insurgent groups, as “outside the political body and structure,” and said, “we do not approve of the existence of these militias.”¹⁰²⁹

Bolani also stressed his ministry’s anti-corruption efforts, saying they had purged about 3,000 employees from their ranks for “corruption.” 1,228 of those employees had received administrative punishment, while 10 to 20% had been referred for possible prosecution.¹⁰³⁰

Early October brought new charges against Bolani, this time from Shi’ite parliamentarians. They charged he was letting too many former Ba’ath party members into the police.¹⁰³¹

Problems with Pay, Benefits, and Corruption

The US military and MNF-I, as well as the Iraqi government do not have anything approaching an adequate system for tracking pay, leave, transfer of money to families, health benefits, and death and disability benefits – if any. This situation is almost certainly worse in the regular police (and terrible in the various low-level security forces) than in the regular forces and National Police. It is probably inadequate to bad in most elements of Iraqi forces.

Corruption, favoritism, and nepotism are inevitable in Iraq. They are part of the political cultural and entire structure of governance. Sectarian, ethnic, and tribal divisions add to the problem, as did abolishing the secular, experienced core of Iraqi governance and forces by forcing so many low and mid-level Ba’athists out of government early in the US occupation.

This made it absolutely vital from the start of the ISF development effort to look beyond leadership and unit cohesions and create a system that can ensure that abuses are kept within reasonable bounds (those that the men in Iraqi forces can actually live with) and that recruiting, retention training, and embed efforts deal with the reality that most Iraqi officers and NCOs are inevitably caught up in the pressures of Iraq’s sectarian and ethnic differences. Most Iraqi enlisted men volunteer because they need the money, because their dependents are desperately in need of their support.

It is still critically urgent to have an effective pay system that can limit the impact of corruption. It is equally critical to look beyond actual pay (and comparability) and to

determine what mix of pay, getting pay to their families, medical services, and real-world death and disability benefits can hold Iraqi forces together as they develop.

No effort that is not founded on pay and benefits, rather than leadership and motivation, can possibly succeed. The Transitional Readiness Assessments do measure tactical performance, reliability, sustainability, and leadership. If these issues are not honestly and openly addressed by the Iraqi and US governments, however, Iraqi force development cannot succeed.

Rushing Force Development and Deployment

The ISF development effort has sometimes been harmed by an overly accelerated force generation timetable. In some cases, Iraqi battalions and force elements have been into being and then into combat before they were ready. This has undercut the Iraqi force development process and sometimes gravely weakened fledgling Iraqi units that were not ready to perform such missions. Some US advisors and embedded training teams have also not been ready for the missions they were supposed to perform, compounding the problems inherent in creating new units.

Other problems resulted from trying to use force elements built for local defense missions on a national level and in far more demanding forms of counterinsurgency warfare and civil conflict missions than they were recruited for and designed to fight. There were additional problems with corruption, nepotism, creating sufficient junior officers and NCOs, and providing the levels of firepower, mobility, and communications Iraqi forces really need. Hollow units do not learn by being thrust prematurely into combat; they are crippled or wasted.

One case study of the precipitous effect of premature handover to less-than-able forces was shown in Haditha in the fall of 2004, when US troops withdrew from the city to retake Fallujah. Michael Gordon, chief military correspondent of the New York Times, also notes the important psychological effects of such premature responsibility shifts on future ISF recruiting:

What followed was a devastating setback for the American effort to carry out counter-insurgency operations in the violent al-Anbar province. While the Americans were securing Fallujah the Iraqi police in Haditha were accosted by insurgents and executed. The episode left the town without a police force that could check the operations of the insurgents and taught the Iraqis there that the Americans could not be counted on to protect their nascent institutions, whatever their good intentions.

It also made the task of recruiting a new police force all but impossible. When follow-on marine units were deployed to Haditha their efforts to mount a police recruitment drive failed, forcing the marines to think about seeking police recruits from other parts of the country.¹⁰³²

These challenges Iraq faces are further complicated by the fact that some Iraqi forces, including roughly half the division in the army and almost all of the regular police, were recruited and equipped to serve locally in limited defensive roles, not act as mobile forces trained and equipped to act as active combat units deployable throughout the country to deal with insurgency and civil conflict. This means the recruiting base must now be changed, new pay and arrangements are needed to create a nationally deployable force,

and new equipment and facilities will be need for the deployable units thrust into more serious combat.

The challenges Iraq faces are further complicated by the fact that some Iraqi forces, including those in the army, were recruited and equipped to serve locally in limited defensive roles, not to act as mobile active combat units deployable throughout the country to deal with insurgency and civil conflict. Five Iraqi Army divisions were recruited from a national pool and trained with the expectation that they would deploy as needed throughout Iraq. The other five were integrated from the former Iraqi National Guard on the basis of regional deployment. It is also far from clear that many of those recruited for the “national” divisions understood that they would serve outside their area or volunteered for any reason other than economic desperation – a motive that ties them far closer to their families and dependents than any concept of national service.

It was only in the spring of 2006, that the MNF-I and MNSTC-I began to develop deployability as a core competency of the entire Army. As a result, and the MNF-I made several major procurements, including added armor protected mobility and route clearance capability, to give the Iraqi Army better deployability.

The MoD established a deployability plan in October 2006 that has led to the successful deployment of battalions from outside Baghdad into Baghdad. It requires additional work but is the beginning of creating deployability as a core competency of the Iraqi Army. To support this deployability plan, MNSTC-I has assisted the Government of Iraq in constructing a Multi-purpose Range Complex at Besmaya Range east of Baghdad as a training center of excellence.

The MNF-I and Iraqi government are now seeking to improve the recruiting base, improve pay Since January 2007, the Iraqi Army has had a deployment bonus for those units serving outside their assigned sectors, and to make other arrangements to create a nationally deployable force. The fact remains, however, and new equipment and facilities will be needed for the deployable units thrust into more serious combat.

Problems with Equipment and Facilities Construction

It has proven far easier to throw money at equipping and facilitizing the ISF than to make that spending honest and effective. The equipment problems in the ISF are described in more detail in the chapters that follow, but generally reflect two major sets of problems. First, the equipment provided has not approached that of the MNF-I forces that Iraqis are supposed to fight with, has never been adequate to deal with a developing insurgent threat, and has never been linked to plans to transition from counter insurgency warfare to national defense.

Second, the sources of the equipment have often provided low quality equipment and been corrupt. The Iraqi forces are used to replacing equipment and rear area maintenance and not to the US concept of preventive and in unit maintenance and are being rushed into action before they can successfully adapt. And, the same failure to track equipment readiness exists for all elements of Iraqi forces than exists in tracking actual manning.

The Iraqi MOD forces (Iraqi Army, Air Force, Navy, Special Operations, and Support forces) have also had better equipment than the MOI forces with the exception of the

National Police, and have usual performed better. The Defense Department announced in March 2007 that, “Iraqi Ministry of Interior (MoI) forces will be trained and equipped like MoD forces.”¹⁰³³ It did not define what this meant and no equipment and funding plans have as yet been issued that indicate this will take place.

The situation is no better for facilities and has been made worse by constant shifts in Iraqi locations and sudden deployments. A report released by the office of the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction in January 2007 detailed severe problems in the construction of ISF facilities.¹⁰³⁴ In many of the construction projects inspected in the report, sustainability was a major problem. Spare parts, warranties on equipment, and training for Iraqis were all lacking.

Oversight from the government agencies responsible was also lacking. In one instance, the construction of a residential camp on the Adnan Palace grounds in Baghdad to house training personnel, \$4.2 million of the approximately \$43.8 million spent on the camp was not contractually authorized at all. This money was spent on, among other things, relocating the camp to outside the palace grounds, manufacturing an additional 20 VIP trailers, and constructing an Olympic size swimming pool. As of January 2007, the camp had never been used due to security concerns.

The project to modernize the crumbling Baghdad Police College was a particularly troubling example. This facility was to house and train 10,000 cadets. The SIGIR investigation revealed severe construction and contracting problems, including:

- A design and specification review process for construction, equipment, and parts with approval/rejection/resubmission and acceptance of documentation was not implemented.
- Poor-quality and non-standard construction methods were used, which were not in compliance with required codes.
- Low-quality parts were used.
- Beneficial Occupancy forms were improperly used.
- The QM program was poor.
- The contractor did not perform invoice reviews.
- Contractor test results and as-built drawings were questionable.

These shortcomings led to several problems in the construction of the facility, such as: leaking plumbing, resulting in wastewater leaks throughout many of the buildings; live wires dangling above a shower area, urine and fecal matter seeping into ceilings and light fixtures, and expansion cracks on the exterior of a building. The problems SIGIR found with this project were so severe that a fraud investigation of the contractor was opened.

ISF Motivation Problems

All of these problems compounded the ISF’s serious problems in leadership and unit cohesion. Human beings do not live in the dawn of tomorrow; they live in the noon of today. Most Iraqi officers and NCOs are inevitably caught up in the pressures of Iraq’s sectarian and ethnic differences. Most Iraqi enlisted men volunteer because they need the money, because their dependents are desperately in need of their support.

At the level of officers and NCOs, the options are ultimately political conciliation and compromise, division by sect or ethnicity with a strong risk of creating separate Shi'ite or Sunni force, or a coup or strong man. The same is true of other ranks in both the regular forces and police. All desperately need an effective pay system and enough income to resist corruption and infiltration. All need family support and adequate means of getting pay to their families. Medical services are critical; so are real-world death and disability benefits. No effort that is not founded on pay and benefits, rather than leadership and motivation, can possibly succeed.

Similarly, it is impossible to treat all Iraqi forces as if they were truly national and could be deployed on a national level. Some units do behave in this manner, and many more can be created over time. The fact is, however, that most Iraqi regulars were recruited for local defense and far less demanding missions. Most police are local, and will be driven by local interest and political conditions. The local role of militias and various non-“national” security forces cannot be ignored, and must somehow be integrated into the ISF structure or given incentives to disband. No ISF effort can succeed that does not explicitly recognized these realities.

Uncertain Success in Recruiting

Desperate young men, and those motivated by sectarian and ethnic agendas, may be easy to recruit, but manpower numbers also have to be linked to motivation. There is no way to tell how much recruiting reflected any real desire to join the ISF and how much was the result of Iraq's crippling unemployment problems. It is also unclear how many men were recruited out of a desire to join what were really sectarian and ethnic elements of the ISF.

The ISF did continue to have far more recruits than it could use, and August 21 saw the culmination of one of the year's most successful recruiting efforts. For example, more than 950 new Iraqi recruits were ready to begin a 10-week Basic Police Officer training course, after a recruiting drive that focused on screening men from communities in and around the Euphrates River Valley. Some of the new recruits were to receive their training either at the Baghdad Police College, while others would be sent to the Jordan International Police Academy.¹⁰³⁵

The problems lay in retention, willingness to fight, and commitment to the nation versus personal survival, tribe, and faction. Economic desperation made many volunteer. It did not make them stay, or build unit cohesion and effectiveness. More broadly, the Army has shown little overall willingness to become actively involved halting Iraq's civil fighting through early 2007, although a few force elements performed well in such missions in Baghdad during the summer and fall of 2006. Like all Iraqi forces, the Army was never recruited, trained, or equipped to fight sectarian and ethnic forces in civil conflict, or intervene in civil war and local civil clashes. If a major civil war does occur, or the country divides along sectarian and ethnic lines, Iraqi regular forces could divide as well. They could fragment even further if the Shi'ite coalition divides, or the Shi'ites and Kurds divide.

Overall Progress in Manning

Approximately 323,180 Iraqi soldiers and police were reported to have completed their initial training and equipping by March 2007, and MNF-I reporting indicated that the ISF had met its force generation targets.¹⁰³⁶ Yet large numbers of men were perpetually absent, had deserted, or left. Much of the equipment was missing and could not be accounted for. The operational capabilities of the ISF remained low. This was especially true of the regular police and other MOI forces.

Such DoD reports are misleading to the point of being actively dishonest, however, because there are such severe problems in the basic integrity of the reporting on Iraqi forces. No clear distinction is made between the number of men who went through the training process and the number still on service. The rising manpower and combat unit totals conceal many critical problems in given elements of the ISF order of battle. Gross numbers grossly exaggerate capability.

While very real progress was taking place in many elements of the army, discussions with MNF-I experts indicate that major manning and equipment shortfalls existed in given battalions and units, and that substantial numbers of combat battalions said to be “in the lead” had less than 30-50% of their authorized manning actually in the unit. As has been noted earlier, one credible source claimed that, “The Iraqi army has about 134,000 men (trained and equipped), but about half are doing only stationary guard duty...of the half that conduct operations, only about 10 battalions are effective – well under 10,000 men.”¹⁰³⁷

Despite constant pronouncements of Iraqi forces being “in the lead,” Iraqi units continued to operate poorly in combat situations. “This is occurring slower than we originally projected.” stated Gen. George Casey, in an understatement typical of Defense Department reporting on ISF development.

Nevertheless, the following figures do reflect real progress, if scarcely at the exact levels shown:

- **Figure 4.1** shows the scale of the overall ISF force development effort. However, it is clear that the MNF-I and Iraqi government attempted to make very rapid progress in building up the ISF during 2005-2006 – almost certainly far more rapid progress in force quantity that could be supported by matching improvements in force quality. The resulting pressures may be eased if manpower increases are kept to minimum, as they have been in recent months.
- **Figure 4.2** shows the growth of MOI and MOD force levels by major force element, according to US reporting. It must be stressed that these numbers do not accurately show the numbers of men actually on duty. The reporting on regular military forces is said to be approximate in the actual charts. The reporting on MOI forces open states that it does not make an effort to report actual manning.
- **Figure 4.3** shows a similar GAO estimates of the number of Iraqi Security Forces trained and equipped from 2005 through late 2006. Although the actual numbers of on-duty ISF soldiers is much lower, this graph clearly demonstrates the growth trend of the ISF.

The Problems in ISF Manpower Data

It must be stressed that the Department of Defense notes to **Figure 4.1** and **Figure 4.2** provide important warnings about their accuracy.

If one reads between the lines, the March 2007 status report warns that the data for the MOI are little more than shadow figures based on total men trained and authorized strength:

As of February 19, 2007, approximately 328,700 forces (not including replenishments) have been trained. The actual number of present-for-duty soldiers is about one-half to two-thirds of the total due to scheduled leave, absence without leave, and attrition. The police have also experienced significant attrition of personnel who have been through Coalition training, but provincial and local governments have hired additional police outside the train-and-equip program. Both the MOD and the MOI have assumed control of most force generation tasks and have developed a plan to continue routine replenishment of the force.¹⁰³⁸

...The total number of trained-and-equipped MOD military personnel are about 136,400 (not including replacements), of which about 132,800 are in the Iraqi Army. For fielded units, about 65% of authorized personnel are present for duty at any time; this percentage varies widely among units. The greatest contributor to the difference between authorized strength and present-for-duty strength is a leave policy that places about one-quarter of all soldiers on leave at any time so that they can take their pay home to their families. This is driven by the lack of a nationwide banking system. In addition, since the first Iraqi Army combat units entered into service in November 2003, more than 20,000 personnel have been killed or severely wounded or have otherwise left the Army.¹⁰³⁹

The MOD is planning on replacing and expanding the overall force structure with a 30,000-person Replenishment Initiative, organized and implemented by the Iraqi JHQ. This initiative will add approximately 10,000 soldiers every two months over six months and will result in all combat units manned at 110%. The MOD has completed recruiting for this initiative, and the first training sessions began on October 1, 2006. About 44% of the 30,000-soldier expansion is complete

...The MOI does not yet have accurate personnel accountability and reporting procedures, and it is unknown how many of the more than 306,000 employees on the ministry's payroll are present for duty on a given day. MNSTC-I estimates that, on an average day, less than 70% of MOI personnel are present for duty. This is a combination of authorized absences (leave, school, sickness) and unauthorized absences. The problem of personnel accountability is being addressed through the purchase of an automated human resources and payroll system. The equipment and software for this system were installed in January 2007, and training has begun. Full deployment of the system is expected to take 18 months. Once complete, the personnel management system will be integrated fully with employee biometrics, improving the accuracy of employment rosters and facilitating employee criminal background screening.¹⁰⁴⁰

...MOI forces consist of the Iraqi Police Service, the National Police, the Directorate of Border Enforcement, and other, smaller forces.²⁰ MNSTC-I has completed its initial training and equipping goal for the Objective Civil Security Force (OCSF) of 188,300 MOI security forces and is in the process of expanding the MOI forces to 194,800.

Although the MOI is implementing an automated personnel management system, there are currently no reliable data to indicate how many of the OCSF are still serving with the MOI. Additionally, the MOI has hired a significant number of police beyond those trained by MNSTC-I. MNSTC-I estimates attrition for the MOI as approximately 20% per year, with the Iraqi Police Service and the National Police attrition remaining higher than the Directorate of Border Enforcement and other personnel due to the variance of risks in the duties.¹⁰⁴¹

The problems exist in the GAO data in **Figure 4.3**. According to GAO, the State Department reported the number of trained and equipped Iraqi security forces to have

increased from about 174,000 to 294,000 from July 2005 to August 2006. The GAO also warned, however, that such numbers did not provide a complete picture of the units' capabilities because they do not give detailed information on the status of equipment, personnel, training, and leadership. GAO also noted that these figures probably overstated the number of forces on duty.¹⁰⁴²

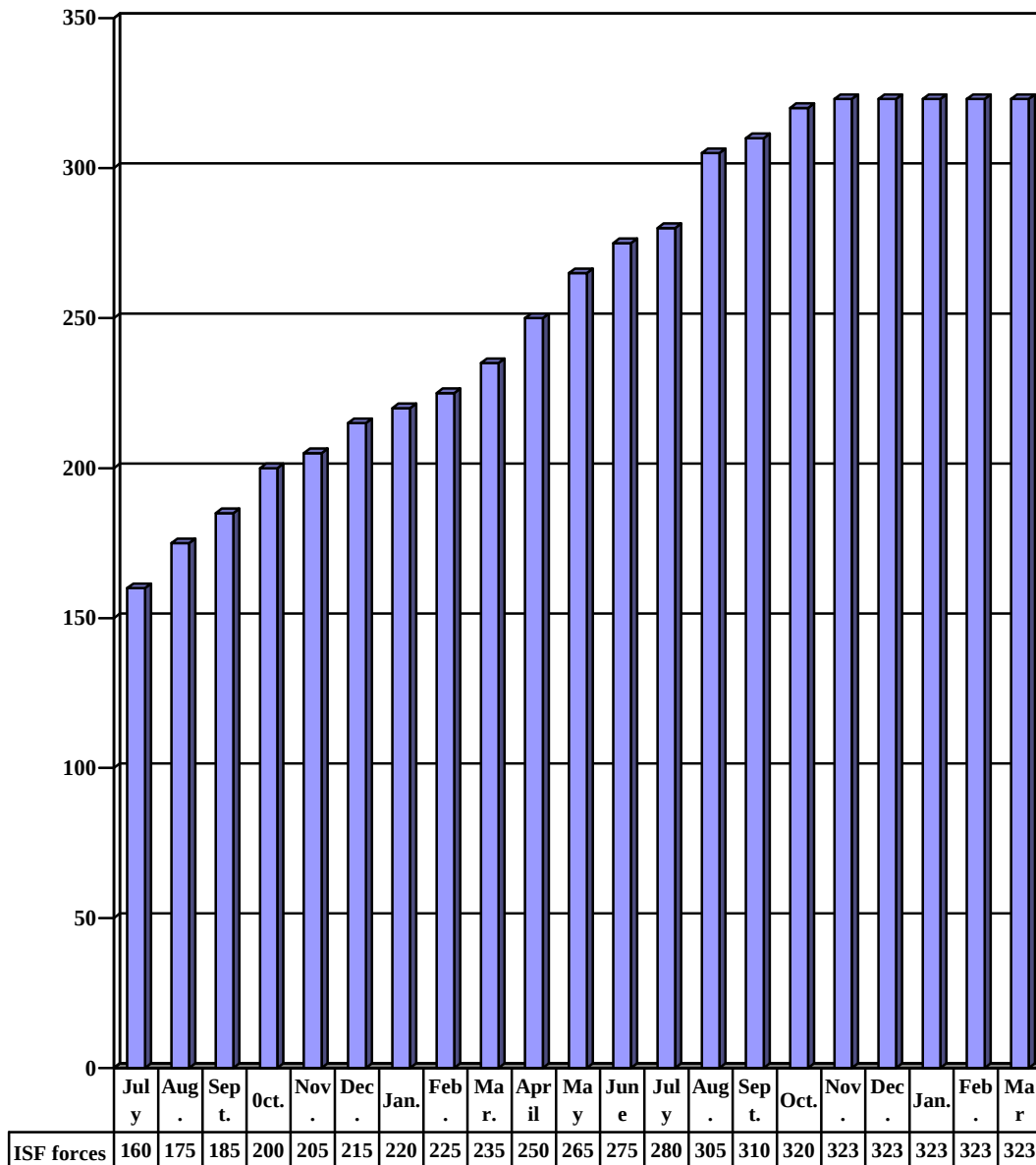
The shortfalls in actual strength versus "trained and equipped" figures for the regular police and Facilities Protection Force are much larger than for the army and National Police. They are probably well in excess of 30% of the total of men reported as trained and equipped and possibly on the order of 50% -- although so many phantom men, absentees, and inert but manned units exist that any estimates are difficult to impossible. Many units are clearly so badly manned that they are phantom or hollow forces, but the Department of Defense has reported that there is no accurate way to track the total, and anecdotal data are far less reliable than for the regular forces.

Furthermore, such manpower totals do not show what are often severe imbalances in the manning of given units. Some units actually have excess manpower, while others have far more serious shortfalls than the average. Units may have adequate total manpower, but be critically short of officers and/or NCOs. This again makes it difficult to place much faith in the unclassified totals reported on totals of trained and equipped manpower. Without a break out of manpower that

shows officers and NCOs on hand, total manning data provides little insight into force capability, the time needed to make Iraqi forces effective or for units to replace US and other MNF-I forces, and it is generally more misleading than useful. These data are collected monthly, however, through the Transitional Readiness Assessments (TRA) process and are addressed on the Iraqi side by the MoD and MoI at monthly commanders' conferences.

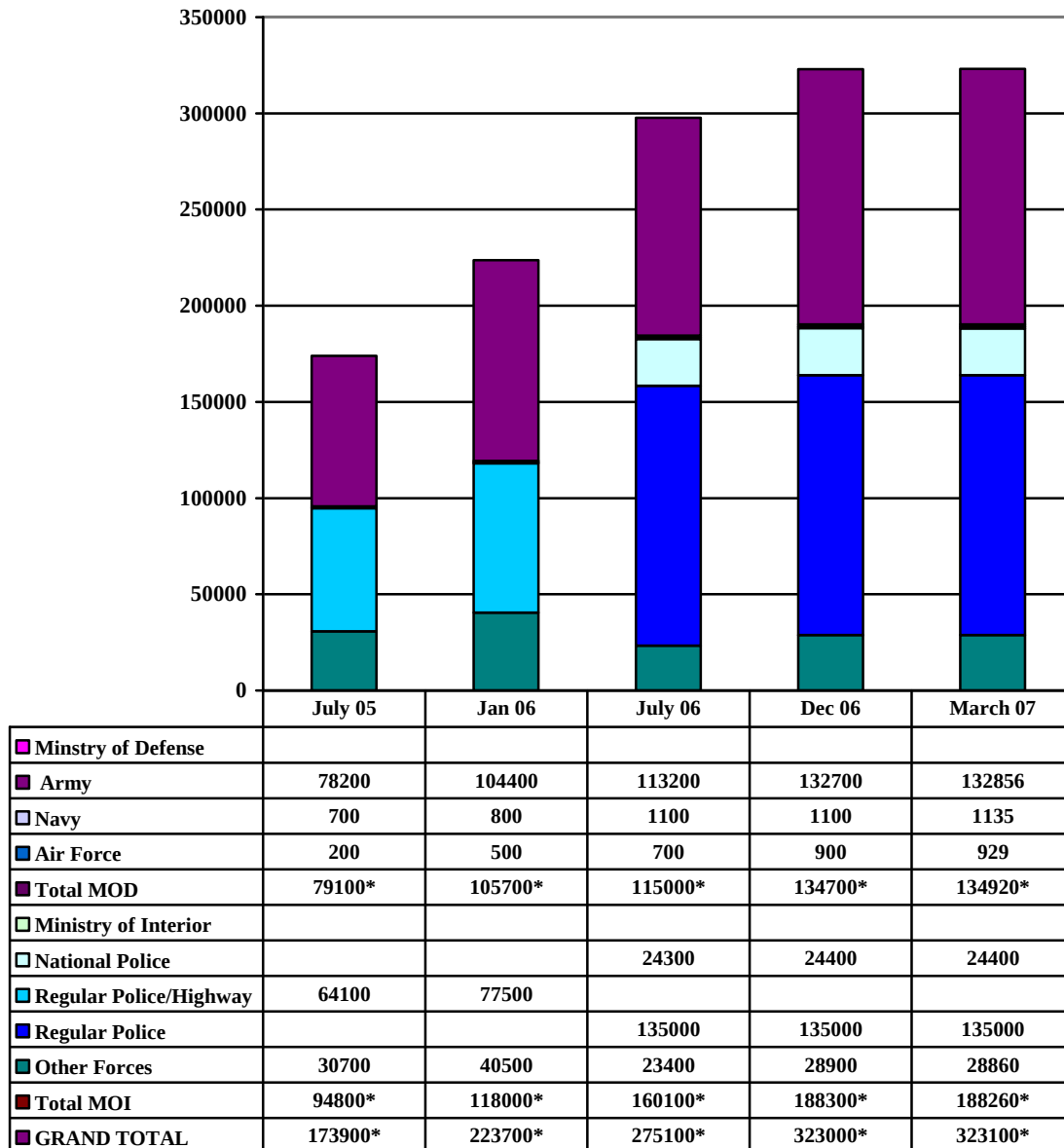
Figure 4.1 ***Number of Iraqi Security Forces Trained and Equipped: July 2005-March 2007****

(In Thousands)



*Source: Walker, David M. GAO Audit Approach and Findings. "Securing, Stabilizing, and Rebuilding Iraq." 01/18/2007. Pg. 24. and Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, US Department of State "Iraq Weekly Status Report" 02/21/2007, pg. 7.

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Figure 4.2**Trained and Equipped Manpower for Major Branches of MOD and MOI Forces:
July 2005 to March 2007**

Note: These figures only show the number of men trained and equipped and have nothing to do with the manpower and equipment actually in active service in the unit.

-- Unauthorized absence personnel are said not to be included in MOI figures, and to be included in MOD figures, but the reality is that the MOD figures do not reflect actual manning and are all shown as approximate.

--Army numbers include Special Operations Forces and Support Forces.

--Does not include various Facilities Protection Forces, which had an authorized strength of some 144,000 men working in 27 ministries on March 5, 2007

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Source: US State Department

Figure 4.3
GAO Figures for Trained and Equipped Troops: July 2005 to August 2006

Ministry and Component		July 2005	January 2006	August 2006	February 2007
Ministry of Defense Forces	Army	78,200	-	105,600	132,800
	Air Force	200	-	500	900
	Navy	700	-	800	1,100
	Subtotal	79,100	-	106,900	136,400
Ministry of Interior Forces	Police	64,100	-	82,400	135,000
	Other forces	30,700	-	38,000	57,300
	Subtotal	94,800	-	120,400	192,300
	Total	173,900	-	227,300	328,700

Note: These figures only show the number of men trained and equipped and have nothing to do with the manpower actually in active service in the unit.)

Source: Government Accountability Office, "Stabilizing Iraq: An Assessment of the Security Situation," September 11, 2006, p.17 and US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March, 2007 Report to Congress, pg 25

Sectarian and Ethnic Problems

Sectarian issues are less serious in the regular military forces under MoD control than in the MOI forces, but still presented a broad set of problems. According to the Director of National Intelligence's February 2006 report, many elements of the Iraqi security forces remain loyal to sectarian and party interests.¹⁰⁴³ In cases where commanders do seek to be impartial, they may face resistance from the prime minister's office, which has been repeatedly accused of pressuring for the release of arrested Shi'ites and firing Iraqi commanders who act against Shi'ite militias.¹⁰⁴⁴

Sectarian divisions within the armed forces reflect the fact many units were created along geographic lines. Sunnis, Shi'ites and Kurds mostly served in geographic areas familiar to their groups. These divisions were even more notable at the battalion level, where battalion commanders tended to command only soldiers of their own sectarian or regional backgrounds.

According to the Brookings Institution's Iraq Index, Sunnis made up less than 10 percent of the existing forces in 2006. Ed O'Connell, a senior analyst with the Rand Corp., said that the Iraqi military was chiefly built along sectarian lines. He added: "There have been recent efforts to recruit the Sunni, but no one wants to die, so that has been largely unsuccessful."¹⁰⁴⁵

Sunnis and Kurds are over-represented in senior leadership positions. Shi'ites were adequately represented at the battalion level, but less so at higher echelons. The reason for this was primarily the military experience required for higher levels of command, which a greater number of Sunnis and Kurds had earned in the old regime's army and the *Peshmerga*, respectively.

While the nationally recruited divisions are more representative of Iraq's ethno-religious composition, the even-numbered divisions were originally formed as National Guard units, to be deployed in their respective local regions. These units continued to be more ethnically and religiously representative of their region, not of Iraq as a whole.¹⁰⁴⁶

At the same time, many Shi'ite leaders clearly believed by mid 2006 that the violence in Baghdad was rooted in the Sunni attempt to regain power through violence, and that Shi'ite militias and revenge killings were an inevitable response. These beliefs raise doubts about the loyalties of the Shi'ite dominated ISF. Sunnis, on the other hand, often believed that the Shi'ite-dominated ISF serves only Shi'ite interests. According to one Sunni resident of violence plagued Sunni neighborhood in Baghdad: "People were disgusted and were enraged by the activity of the security forces."¹⁰⁴⁷

As seen in **Figures 4.5** and **4.6**, the level of confidence in the Iraqi Army varies according to ethnic group. Sunnis had far less confidence in the ISF than Shi'ites or Kurds. This is at least partially due to the widespread perception that the ISF is composed of and sympathetic to the interests of Shi'ites and Kurds.

Sectarian and Ethnic Composition: Seriously Seeking More Sunnis?

Sectarian and ethnic issues remain a growing problem for Iraqi force development. The Department of Defense August 2006 Quarterly Status Report described the problems in creating an effective sectarian and ethnic balance in Iraqi forces as follows:¹⁰⁴⁸

The U.S. Government is committed to creating an Iraqi military that reflects the ethnic and religious fabric of Iraq, with diverse units loyal to the nation and not sectarian interests. Although competence and merit are the deciding factors when selecting recruits, particularly leaders, the ISF are developing so that they generally mirror the demographic make-up of Iraq. Sectarian lines remain drawn, however, along geographic lines, with Sunni, Shi'a, or Kurdish soldiers mostly serving in units located in geographic areas familiar to their group.

These divisions are even stronger at the battalion level, where battalion commanders of one particular group tend to command only soldiers of their own sectarian or regional backgrounds. The Minister of Defense, through an Officer Selection Committee, has used the normal transitions to continue to diversify the senior leadership in the Iraqi Army. This continuing process strives to ensure that the Iraqi Army is led by competent leaders who are representative of the national fabric. In the aggregate, Sunni, Kurd, and Shi'a are well and appropriately represented in senior leadership positions.

The Sunni and Kurds are slightly over-represented, while the Shi'a are slightly under-represented, though Shi'a commanders still hold a large majority of command positions. The percentage of Sunni leaders at each level remains constant. At the battalion level, the echelon in which the Shi'a have the highest percentage of commands, they are appropriately represented when compared to the demographics of the Iraqi population. The relatively high percentage of Sunni and Kurds in higher-level commands is a result of the requirement for experienced military leaders, of which few were Shi'a.

Generally, Shi'a and Kurds were excluded from higher-level positions in the former regime. The Kurds, however, benefited from years of experience in the *Peshmerga*. Nationally recruited Iraqi Army divisions are otherwise representative of the ethno-religious composition of the country. The even-numbered divisions were originally formed as National Guard units, with the intent that these units would serve in the respective local regions. The composition of these units tends to be representative of the region in which they serve. Over time, replacements from the national recruiting pool will increase the diversity of these divisions.

The Defense Department quarterly report for March, 2007 was less clear about the problems of sectarian and ethnic loyalties in the ISF, but did state that: "There are...indications that political forces in Iraq have influenced senior military appointments on the basis of sectarian affiliation."¹⁰⁴⁹ The detailed discussion of MOD and MOI forces also noted in several places that,

The Coalition and the Government of Iraq are committed to creating an Iraqi military that reflects the ethnic and religious fabric of Iraq, with diverse units loyal to the nation, not to sectarian interests. Although competence and merit are deciding factors when selecting recruits and leaders, ISF units mirror the demographic make-up of Iraq generally. The even-numbered divisions were assembled from former Iraqi National Guard battalions and tend to resemble the demographics of communities from which they were recruited. The odd-numbered divisions were nationally recruited and represent the national fabric. The Minister of Defense, through an Officer Selection Committee, has used normal transitions to diversify the senior leadership in the Iraqi Army. There are, however, indications that political forces in Iraq have influenced senior military appointments on the basis of sectarian affiliation. MNF-I and U.S. Embassy Baghdad are working closely with the Government of Iraq to

discourage sectarian influences in the senior ranks and to encourage a balanced representation in leadership. The Government of Iraq is considering other methods to balance representation across the entire Army, Navy, and Air Force.¹⁰⁵⁰

The Iraqi Police Service is generally representative of the demographic makeup of its neighborhoods, although there are some neighborhoods in Baghdad and other cities where the percentage of Shi'a in the Iraqi Police Service is disproportionately high. Initial estimates, compiled during implementation of the National Police Transformation and Retraining program in late 2006, show that the National Police are disproportionately Shi'a. The U.S. Government is committed to helping the Government of Iraq create an MOI that reflects the diversity of the Iraqi people. The goal is to create ethnically integrated units at the national level, while still allowing local police to reflect the ethnic composition of the communities in which they serve. MNSTC-I continues to advocate recruiting initiatives targeting Sunnis to improve diversity and to provide a force that will impart even-handed law enforcement.¹⁰⁵¹

Corruption, illegal activity, and sectarian influence constrain progress in developing MOI forces. Although the primary concern of the Government of Iraq remains the Sunni insurgency, tolerance of and influence exerted by Shi'a militia members within the MOI are troubling. Militia influence affects every component of the MOI, particularly in Baghdad and several other key cities. Recruits take an oath of office denouncing militia influence and pledging allegiance to Iraq's constitution. Whenever actionable evidence is found, it is acted on by the MOI Internal Affairs Directorate and the minister.

These warnings, however, repeated discussions of problems that the MNF-I has flagged as early as 2004, and the repeated promises of MNF-I and the Iraqi government to deal with them since that time have had little tangible result. If anything, growing national sectarian and ethnic tensions have increased the tensions within the ISF, and the Iraqi government often pledges to take action while relying on half measures at best.

The Iraqi government does claim, however, to be taking continuing initiatives to recruit more Sunnis and to correct some of the earlier problems in de-Ba'athification that had helped block political conciliation and ISF force development. On August 15, 2006, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense started a recruiting drive that featured a direct appeal to former members of the Iraqi Army. In the first 15 days of the effort, the results were as follows:¹⁰⁵²

- Former Officers: 1,366
- Non-Commissioned Officers: 628
- Soldiers: 9,700

The recruitment of former officers and NCOs from the former regime was potentially significant, but no hard data followed that showed a steady pattern of improvement, and most unit reporting reflected the opposite trend.

A failed Army recruiting drive in the Sunni neighborhood of Adhamiyah in Baghdad exemplifies many of the problems of recruiting Sunnis. The main recruiting center for the area is at Al-Muthana airport, which is too far from Adhamiyah for many Sunnis to safely travel to. Local council members complained to the US about the lack of Sunni recruits and it was decided to hold a recruiting drive in the Adhamiyah neighborhood itself. The local council's head, Abdul Razaq, was particularly outspoken about encouraging Sunnis to enlist in the Army and police. He was murdered in March 2007. The starting monthly salary for soldiers joining the Army is \$360, a large sum for most in

Iraq. Despite this, the young Sunni men of Adhamiyah seemed to understand the dangers of joining the Iraqi Army, and only 20 showed up at the recruiting drive. Of these, only 10 were accepted. 156 other young men showed up at the drive, mostly Shi'ites.¹⁰⁵³

Figure 4.5
Ethnic and Sectarian Confidence in the Iraqi Army among Shi'ites, Sunnis, and Kurds

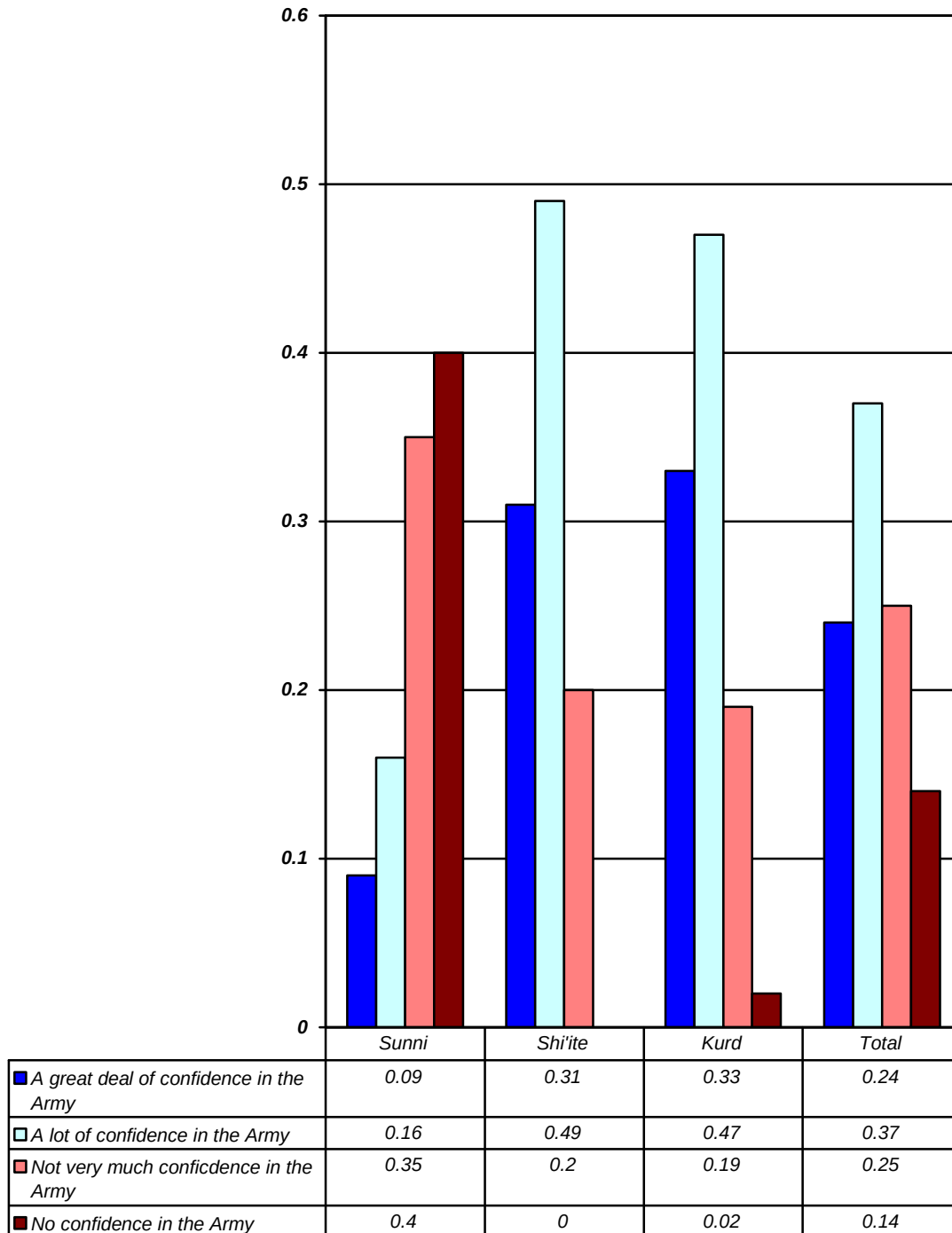
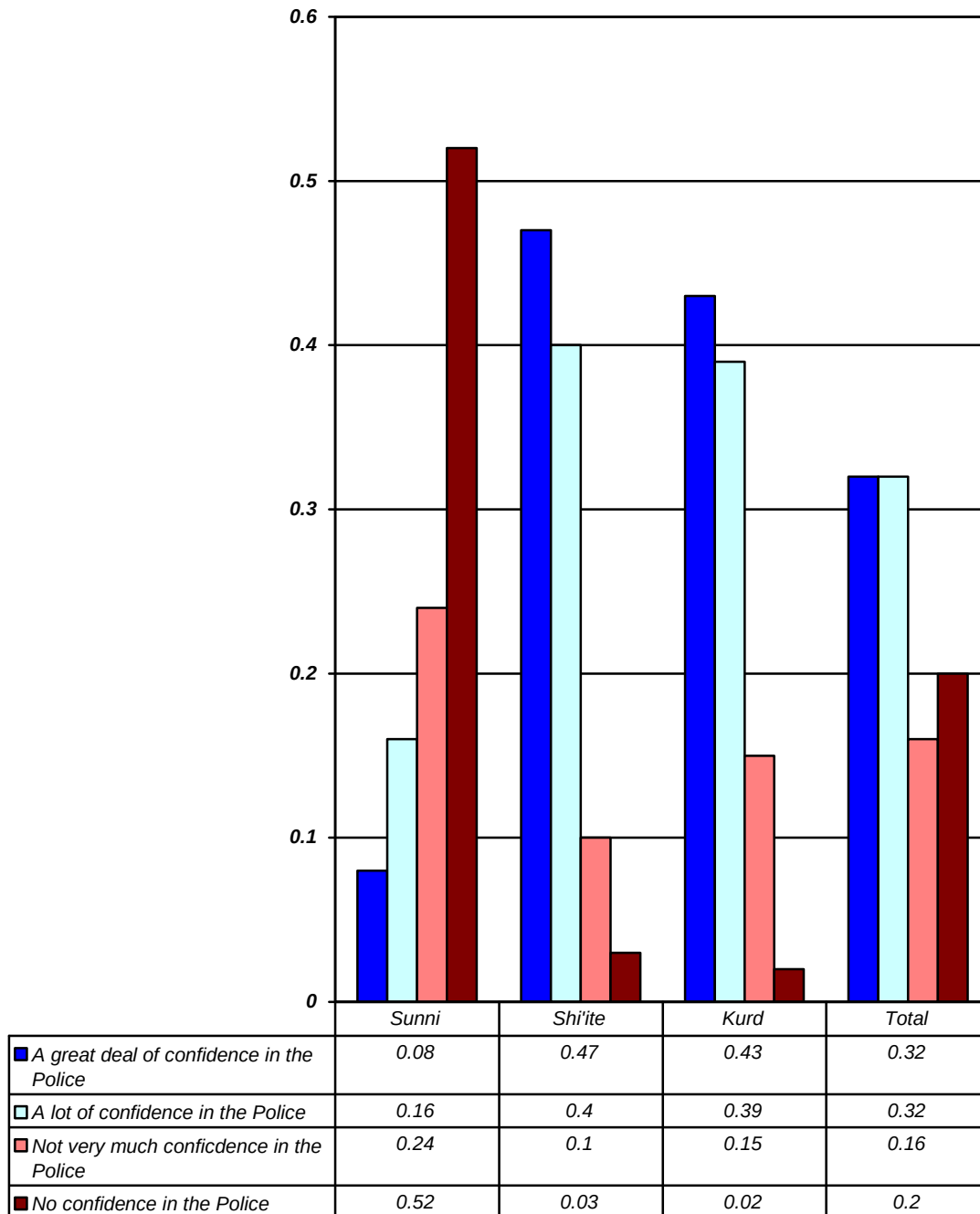


Figure 4.6
Ethnic and Sectarian Confidence in the Iraqi Police among Shi'ites, Sunnis, and Kurds



Source: "Ebbing Hope in a Landscape of Loss Marks a National Survey of Iraq" ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD Poll. March 19, 2007. Pg. 24

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Popular Perceptions of Iraqi Force Development

These sectarian and ethnic divisions also provide an important perspective on Iraqi force development. The US and MNF-I are seeking to develop effective forces. The battle in Iraq, however, is as much one to end civil conflict as it is to defeat the insurgency, and Iraq popular attitudes towards both Iraq and US forces become very different when they are related to the violence that shapes day-to-day life in Iraq. The MNF-I, US and Iraqi government statistics on violence in Iraq fail to make a serious effort to estimate threats, kidnappings, woundings, intimidation, or sectarian and ethnic crimes. These ‘lower’ forms of violence have become far more common in Iraq than killings, and represent the bulk of the real-world challenge to the ISF.

An ABC News poll conducted in February and March 2007 found that,¹⁰⁵⁴

Widespread violence, torn lives, displaced families, emotional damage, collapsing services, an ever-starker sectarian chasm – and a draining away of the underlying optimism that once prevailed. Violence is the cause, its reach vast. Eighty percent of Iraqis report attacks nearby – car bombs, snipers, kidnappings, armed forces fighting each other or abusing civilians. It’s worst by far in the capital, Baghdad, but by no means confined there. The personal toll is enormous. More than half of Iraqis, 53 percent, have a close friend or relative who’s been hurt or killed in the current violence. One in six says someone in their own household has been harmed. Eighty-six percent worry about a loved one being hurt; two-thirds worry deeply. Huge numbers limit their daily activities to minimize risk. Seven in 10 report multiple signs of traumatic stress.

The poll found that while In 2005, 63 percent of Iraqis said they felt very safe in their neighborhoods in 2005, only 26 percent had said this in early 2007. One in three did not feel safe at all. In Baghdad, home to a fifth of the country’s population, eighty-four percent feel entirely unsafe. Even outside of Baghdad, just 32 percent of Iraqis felt “very safe” where they lived, compared with 60 percent a year and a half ago.¹⁰⁵⁵

Nationally, 12 percent of all Iraqis surveyed reported that ethnic cleansing – the forced separation of Sunnis and Shiites – has occurred in their neighborhoods. In mixed-population Baghdad, it’s 31 percent. This is not desired: In rare agreement, 97 percent of Sunni Arabs and Shiites alike oppose the separation of Iraqis on sectarian lines. Nonetheless, one in seven Iraqis overall – rising to a quarter of Sunni Arabs, and more than a third of Baghdad residents – said they themselves have moved homes in the last year to avoid violence or religious persecution.

As security conditions have worsened, so have expectations for future improvement in the conditions of life – an especially troubling result, since hopes for a better future can be the glue that holds a struggling society together. In 2004 and 2005 alike, for example, three-quarters of Iraqis expected improvements in the coming year in their security, schools, availability of jobs, medical care, crime protection, clean water and power supply. Today only about 30 to 45 percent still expect any of these to get any better.

The ABC poll asked about nine kinds of violence that broke the security problems Iraqis and ISF forces faced into far more detail than the Coalition and US have ever publicly reported (car bombs, snipers or crossfire, kidnappings, fighting among opposing groups or abuse of civilians by various armed forces). These results are reflected in **Figure 4.7.**¹⁰⁵⁶

Most Iraqis in Baghdad said at least one of these had occurred nearby; half reported four or more of them. Some 53 percent of Iraqis said a close friend or immediate family

member had been hurt in the current violence. That ranged from three in 10 in the Kurdish provinces to nearly eight in 10 in Baghdad. Even outside Baghdad, 74 percent reported at least one form of violence, and 25 percent reported four or more (34 percent excluding the Kurdish area, which was far more peaceful than the country overall.)

What is equally striking, however, is what Figure Three reveals about Iraqi perceptions of US, Iraqi Army, and police forces. It is clear that with the exception of the people in the Kurdish zone many Iraqis see all of the forces deployed as guilty of unnecessary violence, and this is especially true in Baghdad. The source data for the poll also show a strong correlation between force activity and the perception of unnecessary violence. These same trends emerge when Iraqis are asked what they try to avoid to improve their security. While the US and Iraqi government may focus on force development to defeat the insurgency and control civil violence, Iraqis seem such forces as a major civil-military problem and a serious threat to their daily security.

Figure 4.7
**Kinds of Violence Iraqis Reported as Occurring Nearby and the Civil-Military
 Reaction in Early 2007**

(In percent)

	All	Baghdad	Kurdistan	Rest of Iraq	
Type of Violence Encountered (Percent reporting)					
Kidnappings for ransom		40%	58%	4%	41%
Gov't/anti-gov't fighting		34	57	1	33
Car bombs, suicide attacks		32	52	3	31
Snipers, crossfire		30	56	*	27
Sectarian fighting		25	49	1	22
Perceive Unnecessary Violence by: (Percent reporting)					
U.S./coalition forces		44	59	9	47
Local militia		31	44	2	32
Iraqi police		24	44	1	22
Iraqi Army		24	44	0	22
Any of these		80	100	12	86
Four or more of these		37	70	1	34
Friend/family member harmed		53	77	29	49
Focus of Efforts to Avoid Violence: (Percent who try to avoid)					
	All	Sunni	Shiite	Kurdish	
U.S./coalition forces		81%	95	85	40
Passing through checkpoints		66	92	64	17
Passing by police stations/ public buildings		55	91	45	10
Markets/crowds		54	74	53	17
Travel		53	71	54	18
Leaving home		51	77	48	5
Going to/applying for work		43	63	40	7
Sending children to school		39	66	32	3

Source: ABC News/USA Today/BBC/ARD poll, released March 19, 2007, pp. 5-6.

Steadily Tighter Funding

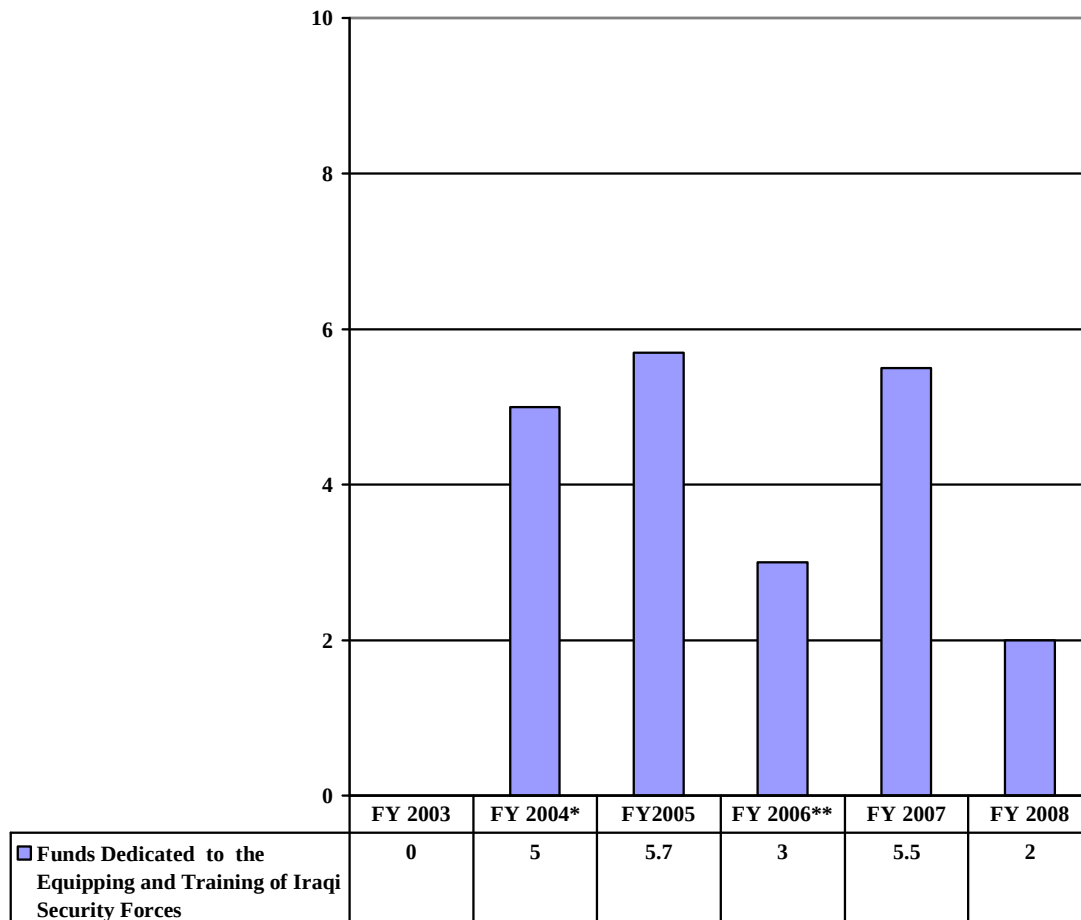
There are a range of estimates of the cost of developing ISF forces, but it seems clear that ISF force development faces steadily more serious funding constraints in the future.. The CRS estimated that US spending on training and equipping Iraqi security forces grew from \$3.24 billion in January 2004 to around t \$10.7 billion as of September 22, 2006. Another \$3.0 billion was in the supplemental conference bill for FY 2006, bringing the total up to \$13.7 billion.¹⁰⁵⁷ Most of these funds came from US sources, although plans called for the new Iraqi government was expected to begin playing a greater role in the budgeting and equipment procurement process.¹⁰⁵⁸

Growing political pressure is already limiting some aspects of how much the US will contribute in the future. In February 2007, the Defense Department published a detailed breakdown of the President's FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Request. This was the first time such a detailed report had been issued by the DoD. The Defense Department report revealed the following funding levels for Iraqi security forces, as seen in **Figures 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10**. The budget request for FY 2008 reflects a steep drop in funding for the ISF, 64% less than FY 2007. This is due to an optimistic assumption that the Iraqi government will have taken on primary responsibility for funding its security forces.

- **Figure 4.8:** This graph demonstrates the overall funding levels of the ISF between FY 2003 and FY 2006. Funding through FY2004 was allocated to the State Department. Afterwards, all funding was allocated through the Defense Department.
- **Figure 4.9:** In February 2007, the Defense Department published a detailed breakdown of the President's FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Request. This was the first time such a detailed report had been issued by the DoD. The Defense Department report revealed the following funding levels for Iraqi security forces. The largest increase between FY 2006 and FY 2007 for the Iraqi Army was in funds dedicated to sustainment operations, in keeping with the DoD's focus on creating Iraqi forces capable of sustaining themselves in the future.
- **Figure 4.10:** The budget request for FY 2008 reflects a steep drop in funding for the ISF, 64% less than FY 2007. This is due to an optimistic assumption that the Iraqi government will have taken on primary responsibility for funding its security forces.

The successful development of Iraqi Forces remains dependent on the willingness of the US government to enter into a long-term security relationship with the Government of Iraq, and the honest recognition that the US will almost certainly have to fund this effort initially and for some years to come. This does not mean that the Iraqi government cannot do more, and it plans to.

The Iraqi budget for 2007 calls for Iraq to spend more on Iraqi forces than the US government for the first time since the fall of Saddam Hussein. If these Iraqi plans are actually and honestly implemented, the Iraqi budget for 2007 funds the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior at \$7.3 billion. In addition, Iraqi is investing \$1.7 billion in end of the year 2006 funds in equipment purchases through the US Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. Total funding authority for the MoD and MoI is \$9.0 billion. The US government program in the Iraqi Security Forces Fund over 18 months is approximately \$5 billion, roughly 50% of planned Iraqi expenditures.

Figure 4.8**Funding Dedicated to the Training and Equipping of the ISF**

*Funding through FY2004 was allocated to the State Department. Afterwards, all funding was allocated through the Defense Department.

**Includes both FY2006 Title IX bridge funds and the FY2006 Supplemental request.

Source: Belasco, Amy. *The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Global War on Terror Operations Since 9/11*. CRS Report for Congress and

Department of Defense, "FY 2008 Global War on Terror Budget Request." February, 2007. pg. 35

Figure 4.9
Iraqi Security Forces Appropriations*

\$ in Billions	Title IX**	Supplemental	Total	-	Title IX***	Supplemental	Total	Percent Change
Iraqi National Army	-			-				
Infrastructure	-	0.8	0.8	-	0.3	0.3	0.6	-25%
Equipment and Transportation	-	0.6	0.6	-	0.1	1.6	1.7	183%
Training	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	-
Sustainment	-	0.2	0.2	-	0.2	1.0	1.2	500%
Total	-	1.6	1.6	-	0.6	3.0	3.6	125%
Iraqi National Police				-				
Infrastructure	-	0.5	0.5	-	0.1	0.2	0.3	-40%
Equipment and Transportation	-	0.4	0.4	-	0.1	0.4	0.5	25%
Training	-	0.2	0.2	-	0.5	0.1	0.6	200%
Sustainment	-	0.2	0.2	-	0.2	-	0.2	-
Total	-	1.3	1.3	-	0.9	0.7	1.6	23%
Related Activities		0.1	0.1	-	0.2	0.1	0.3	200%
Total Iraq Security Forces	-	3.0	3.0	-	1.7	3.8	5.5	83%

*Note: Numbers may not add due to rounding

**Title IX, FY 2006 Defense Appropriations Act (PL 109-148)

***Title IX, FY 2007 Defense Appropriations Act (PL-109-298)

Source: Department of Defense, "FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Request." February, 2007. pg. 38.

Figure 4.10
Iraqi Security Forces Appropriations Through FY 2008*

\$ in Billions	FY 2006 Total Enacted	FY 2007 Total	FY 2008 Total	Percent Change FY 2007 – FY 2008
Iraqi National Army				
Infrastructure	0.8	0.6	-	-100%
Equipment and Transportation	0.6	1.7	1.1.	-35%
Training	-	0.1	0.1	-
Sustainment	0.2	1.2	0.1	-92%
Total	1.6	3.6	1.3	-64%
Iraqi National Police				
Infrastructure	0.5	0.3	-	-100%
Equipment and Transportation	0.4	0.5	0.2	-60%
Training	0.2	0.6	0.5	-17%
Sustainment	0.2	0.2	-	-100%
Total	1.3	1.6	0.7	-56%
Related Activities	0.1	0.3	-	-100%
Total Iraq Security Forces	3.0	5.5	2.0	-64%

*Note: numbers may not add due to rounding

Title IX, FY 2006 Defense Appropriations Act (PL 109-148)

Title IX, FY 2007 Defense Appropriations Act (PL-109-298)

Source: Department of Defense, "FY 2008 Global War on Terror Request." February, 2007. pg. 35.

The GAO s released slightly different numbers regarding ISF funding requests. The GAO reports the DoD 2007 Supplemental funding requests as follows (figures are dollars in billions):¹⁰⁵⁹

- **Total MOD: 2.980**
 - o Infrastructure: **0.264**
 - o Equipment and Transportation: **1.584**
 - o Training and Operations: **0.051**
 - o Sustainment: **1.079**
- **Total MOI: 0.704**
 - o Infrastructure: **0.205**
 - o Equipment and Transportation: **0.373**
 - o Training and Operations: **0.053**
 - o Sustainment: **0.073**
- **Total ISF 2007 funding request: 3.842**

The GAO reports 2008 DoD funding requests as follows (dollars in billions):

- **Total MOD: 1.255**
 - o Infrastructure: **0**
 - o Equipment and Transportation: **1.043**
 - o Training and Operations: **0.077**
 - o Sustainment: **0.135**
- **Total MOI: 0.745**
 - o Infrastructure: **0**
 - o Equipment and Transportation: **0.245**
 - o Training and Operations: **0.500**
 - o Sustainment: **0**
- **Total ISF 2008 funding request: 2.000**

The Iraqi government passed its budget for 2007 on February 8th, 2007. The budget totaled \$41.1 billion, a 21 percent increase over 2006. \$7.3 is dedicated to security-related expenses, a 35 percent increase over 2006. As part of the budget, \$150 million was allocated for the demobilization of militias. This money will support economic opportunities and reintegration for militia members and potential recruits.¹⁰⁶⁰ However, it should be noted that 40% of the 2006 budget was never obligated.

Current Status of ISF Elements

Given this mix of problems, it is scarcely surprising that Iraqi forces remain anything but perfect, and will probably still take some 3-5 years to complete their development and become independent. If one looks at the real-world readiness of the Iraqi defense effort in the spring of 2007, it may be summarized as follows:

- ***Ministry of Defense:*** Still very much a work in progress. Poorly organized, divided along sectarian and ethnic lines, poor planning and fiscal control capability, problems with corruption. The Ministry remains divided. Disagreements among senior leaders in the MoD are about how the Military should be developed—as in former times or in imitation of western countries].
- ***The regular army, air force, and navy (132,856 claimed to be operational; real number unknown, but full time active strength probably below 100,000) as of March 3, 2007:*** Some battalion sized elements of the Army (132,856 men trained and equipped) are emerging as a real force at the infantry battalion level with some light mechanized and armored elements. Real divisions and brigades are beginning to emerge , although many headquarters, command and control, combat and service support, logistic and intelligence elements are missing or having little capability. The regular Iraqi military still cannot operate without massive MNF-I support, embedded US and other coalition advisory teams, and largely US mechanized infantry, armor, artillery, fixed and rotary wing air support, air mobility, and logistic and service support,

Air Force (929 men) is at best a small cadre of forces with token reconnaissance and air transport capability. Navy (1,135 men) is slowly emerging as capable of carrying out patrol missions, but is severely limited in operational capability with little real support capability.

The MNF-I reported that as by the end of 2006, 100% of the authorized Iraqi Army battalions had been created, and that force building efforts to train and equip forces now focused on combat support forces.¹⁰⁶¹ Such reports are misleading to the point of being actively dishonest. There are severe problems in much of the reporting on Iraqi forces, and no clear distinction is made between the number of men who went through the training process and the number still on service. The rising manpower and combat unit totals conceal many critical problems in given elements of the ISF order of battle. Gross numbers grossly exaggerate capability.

Even more serious problems exist with reports that say the regular Iraqi forces are taking the lead, and the MNF-I has been successful in transferring responsibility to Iraqi forces and command. The regular military and some paramilitary National Police units are making real progress – but most units are severely undermanned, have critical problems in officer and NCO quality and leadership, are too lightly equipped and poorly facilitized, and many are Shi'ite or Kurdish dominated.

While progress is occurring in the army, discussions with MNF-I experts indicate that major manning and equipment shortfalls exist in many battalions and units, and that substantial numbers of combat battalions said to be “in the lead” had less than 60% of their authorized manning actually present in the unit on a day-to-day basis.

The Department of Defense reported as of March, 2007, 14 Strategic Infrastructure Battalions, 2 Special Forces battalions, and 103 regular battalions were in combat,¹⁰⁶² but it is unlikely that even one-third of these totals had serious independent warfighting capability and there is no way to assess their willingness to engage as truly national forces in civil conflict.

The MNF-I claimed that, “in mid-October 2006 that six of the 10 Iraqi divisions – 30 of the 36 brigades and almost 90 of the 112 battalions were ‘in the lead.’”. One respected journalist stated on November 28, 2006, however, that “The Iraqi army has about 134,000 men (trained and equipped), but about half are doing only stationary guard duty...of the half that conduct operations, only about 10 battalions are effective – well under 10,000 men.”¹⁰⁶³

There is no way to resolve these radically different pictures of Iraqi forces, but it is clear that Iraqi forces will be highly dependent on US and other MNF-I support well into 2008, and probably through 2010. Only a truly radical improvement in political conciliation could reduce this dependence, and the present drift towards added civil conflict could sharply increase it.

- **Ministry of Interior:** Still very much a work in progress and lags behind the MoD in capability. Poorly organized, with elements more loyal to Shi'ite and Kurdish parties than nation. Poor planning and fiscal control capability, serious problems with corruption. Minister Boulani did embark on a Ministry Reform Program in October 2006, but so far the Department of Defense has not reported that such efforts have made significant progress.
- **The National Police (24,400 claimed to be trained and equipped as of March 5, 2007; real number of actives unknown, but closer to 20,000):** Some elements have been properly reorganized and are as effective as regular army units. Most still present problems in terms of both loyalty and effectiveness. Still are some ties to Shi'ite and Kurdish militias. A number of units have critical problems in officer and NCO quality and leadership, are too lightly equipped and poorly facilitated
- **Other MOI Forces (28,860 claimed to be trained and equipped as of March 5, 2007; real number of full time actives unknown, but closer to 22,000):** Most elements, like the Border Police, are just acquiring proper training and have only light equipment and poor facilities. Some elements are capable in undemanding missions. Most are underpaid, under equipped, badly led, and corrupt. Many are poorly facilitated.
- **The Regular Police (135,000 claimed to be trained and equipped as of March 5, 2007; real number of full time actives probably under 85,000):** Underpaid, under equipped, badly led, and corrupt. Many will not fight or act if faced with a local threat. Desertion and absence rates high. Generally only function where security exists for other reasons, or the police have strong ties to sectarian, ethnic, and tribal forces. Many are poorly facilitated

The problems in the "trained and equipped police" forces are compounded by large number of locally recruited "police" and security forces loyal to local leaders and sectarian and ethnic factions. Various sectarian and ethnic militias are the real "police" in many areas.

- **Facilities Protection Force, Pipeline Protection Force, and other limited security forces:** Reported to have an authorized level approaching 145,000. Actual day -to-day forces actively performing their mission may be less than half that total. Even more so than the regular police, these forces are underpaid, under equipped, badly led, and corrupt. Generally only function where security exists for other reasons, or are tied to sectarian, ethnic, and tribal forces. Prime Minister Maliki has made a commitment to consolidate the FPS under the MoI, but until such efforts prove fully successful, the problems remain.

Expanding and "Transforming" Iraqi Forces

This summary of current capabilities is a warning about the dangers of forcing the pace in Iraqi force expansion. In all too many cases, the US and MNF have already rushed Iraqi battalions and force elements into being and then into combat before they are ready, effectively undercutting the Iraqi force development process and sometimes gravely weakening fledgling Iraqi units that are not ready to perform such missions. It often has used US advisors and embedded training teams that also are not ready for them missions they are supposed to perform, compounding the problems inherent in creating new units.

Other problems have resulted from trying to use force elements built for local defense missions on a national level and in far more demanding forms of counterinsurgency warfare and civil conflict missions than they were recruited for and designed to fight.

There are additional problems with corruption, nepotism, creating sufficient junior officers and NCOs, and providing the levels of firepower, mobility, and communications Iraqi forces really need. Hollow units do not learn by being thrust prematurely into combat; they are crippled or wasted.

One case study of the precipitous effect of premature handover to less-than-able forces was shown in Haditha in the fall of 2004, when US troops withdrew from the city to retake Fallujah. Michael Gordon, chief military correspondent of the New York Times, also notes the important psychological effects of such premature responsibility shifts on future ISF recruiting:

What followed was a devastating setback for the American effort to carry out counter-insurgency operations in the violent al-Anbar province. While the Americans were securing Fallujah the Iraqi police in Haditha were accosted by insurgents and executed. The episode left the town without a police force that could check the operations of the insurgents and taught the Iraqis there that the Americans could not be counted on to protect their nascent institutions, whatever their good intentions.

It also made the task of recruiting a new police force all but impossible. When follow-on marine units were deployed to Haditha their efforts to mount a police recruitment drive failed, forcing the marines to think about seeking police recruits from other parts of the country.¹⁰⁶⁴

These challenges Iraq faces are further complicated by the fact that all Iraqi forces, including the army, were recruited and equipped to serve locally in limited defensive roles, not act as mobile forces trained and equipped to act as active combat units deployable throughout the country to deal with insurgency and civil conflict. This means the recruiting base must now be changed, new pay and arrangements are needed to create a nationally deployable force, and new equipment and facilities will be need for the deployable units thrust into more serious combat.

Prime Minister Maliki's New Force Initiative: Creating More Iraqi Forces Before Existing Efforts Pay Off

The Iraqi government and MNF-I are now committed to expanding the Iraqi Army at what may well be an impractical rate. The 2004 campaign plan, which had elaborated and refined the original strategy for transferring security responsibilities, was revised in April 2006 by MNF-I. In conjunction with the US embassy in Baghdad, a new Joint Campaign Plan was issued with the goal of transferring security responsibility to Iraqi security forces

Both the Iraqi government and MNF-I developed a consensus towards the end of the summer of 2006, however, that the total number of Iraqi Security Forces would have to be increased in order for Iraqis to assume more serious security responsibilities. The ISF then numbered some 298,000 as of late August, and was expected to grow to 325,000 by year's end.

Both the MNF-I and Maliki government became committed to raising this number.¹⁰⁶⁵ In late August 2006, the MNF-I reported that the Iraqi government was developing a long-term plan to shape the type of armed forces needed 5 to 10 years in the future.¹⁰⁶⁶

On October 10, 2006, Prime Minister Maliki approved the implementation of the national counter-terrorism capability concept. This concept is scheduled to reach "Full

Operational Capability” by December 2007. According to the DoD, “Full Operational Capability” consists of:

- Development of a national Bureau of Counter-Terrorism, separate from the ministries, that serves as the principal advisor to the prime minister on counterterrorism matters
- Establishment of a coherent, nonsectarian, counter-terrorism “tiering” strategy that determines the level of the terrorist threat, assigns appropriate responsibility for action, and defines approval authority for execution; this strategy was established as part of the overall counter-terrorism concept
- Establishment of a separate major command, equivalent to the ground, air, and naval forces commands, that provides support to the Bureau of Counter-Terrorism in intelligence and targeting areas.¹⁰⁶⁷

On October 31st, Defense Minister Abdul-Qadir announced at a Baghdad news conference that Iraq would expand the army beyond previously planned limits. He said that this was done in consultation with Gen.’s Dempsey and Casey, but reporters on the scene felt that the effort was really an “initiative undertaken by the PM to increase the size of the Iraqi Military....”

Abdul-Qadir stated on October 31st that that the Prime Minister’s Initiative for the growth of new Iraqi Army units had been approved in September. This would expand the Army by eight brigade-equivalents (approximately 18,700 soldiers). Major General Caldwell supplemented this briefing on November 2nd, and the two briefings provide the following description of the Prime Minister’s “long war” plan for transforming Iraqi forces:

- Add additional combat power in the most heavily contested areas of Iraq (Baghdad, Basra, Diyala, Al Anbar).
- *Provide additional units to allow tactical commanders to establish a tactical reserve that can be deployed around the country.*
- Provide an additional brigade to the 9th Iraqi Army Division to establish an operational reserve that can be moved around the country. This would be the first unit specifically recruited to act as a mobile force, rather than one designed largely for static local defense. It would begin the transformation of the Iraqi forces to act as a mobile, rather than static force. No details, however, were provided on the pay incentives, changes in equipment, changes in training, and changes in facilities necessary to begin what amounts to a “transformation” of Iraq forces.
- Recruit and train 18,000 men -- in addition to the 18,700 men to create new Iraqi units to provide individual replacements for Iraqi units. The first 10,000 men for this force element were recruited in early October and will be ready in November.
- Provide sufficient redundancy within the Iraqi Army Divisions to allow them to remove units from the battlespace periodically for rearm, refit, and retrain as part of a “long war strategy.” This is essential to allowing units to recover, go back to their home areas, and be retrained and reequipped. The goal is a 10% “overage” in manning. This means recruiting 12,000 more men to act as a pool of recruits to fill in existing Iraqi units by “overmanning” their authorized strength to keep a suitable number of soldiers actually in place in such units.

The Prime Minister’s Initiative called for the following new Iraqi forces and force elements, only some of which had specific unit designations and missions:

- Three (3) Division Headquarters:

- Add 11th Division headquarters, which will split the span of control for battalions in Baghdad between Karkh and Rusafa
- Add two (2) Strategic Infrastructure Division headquarters to improve command and control of the SIBs
- Five (5) Brigade Headquarters and 20 more Battalions
- Add 4th Bde to the 9th IA Div to provide the division to serve as the Operational Reserve for the IA with four total brigades.
- Add 4th Bde to the 5th IA Div, which will allow a brigade for Diyala.
- Add 6th Bde to the 6th IA Div, which will provide three brigades to each IA division in Baghdad.
- Add 4th Bde to the 7th IA Div, which will add a brigade to western Al Anbar province.
- Add 5th Bde to 10th IA Div.
- Add one battalion to the 1st, 2nd, and 4th Bde of the 8th IA Div, which will add a brigade-equivalent to Diwaniya.
- Add one battalion to the 2nd and 3rd Bde of the 10th IA Div, which will add nearly two brigade equivalents to Basra (with the additional 5th Brigade addition noted above)
- Add one (1) Special Forces Battalion to ISOF

The total estimated cost was \$800 million, all to be funded by the Iraqi government. It was not explained where this money would come from, how this requirement was shaped, and where the figure of 18,700 individual replacements came from or whether it would come close to dealing with even the existing manpower shortfalls in the regular army. Then Defense Secretary Rumsfeld endorsed a proposal on October 31, 2006 to spend at least \$1 billion as part of an add-on to the 2007 budget to expand the size of Iraqi security forces beyond the goal of 325,000 and accelerate their training and equipment process.¹⁰⁶⁸ The US had already spent about \$10 billion on developing Iraqi forces. Gen. George Casey also recommended expanding Iraqi forces.

It was far from clear that any aspect of Iraqi force development could successfully be rushed forward. It is extremely difficult to judge the quality of the Iraqi forces development effort at any level of detail using unclassified data. The Pentagon has reported that it was now using three sets of factors to measure progress in developing Iraqi security forces capabilities and responsibilities:

- The number of trained and equipped forces.
- The number of Iraqi army units and provincial governments that had assumed responsibility for security in specific geographic areas. In August 2006, 115 Iraqi army units had assumed the lead for counterinsurgency operations in specific areas, and one province had assumed security control.
- The capabilities of operational units, as reported in unit-level and aggregate Transition Readiness Assessments (TRA). In August 2006, the General Accounting Office had still not obtained the unit-level TRA reports.¹⁰⁶⁹

The resulting assessments remain classified, however, and the Department of Defense no longer reports on even overall force building in terms of Level I-IV readiness.

The Status of Plans to Increase Iraqi Forces in 2007

The fact that the fighting has intensified while the US has lost domestic political support for the war has since threatened to make things worse. Pressure has grown to further expand Iraqi forces and rush them into the field.

In March 2007, the DoD announced that More than 60,000 ISF personnel would be added in 2007.¹⁰⁷⁰ This expansion included:

- **Replenishment of 30,000.** MNSTC-I is funding the training and equipping of 30,000 soldiers to replace personnel losses and to increase the manning of combat units to 110% to improve present-for-duty strength. This expansion was 44% complete as of February 2007.
- **Prime Minister's Army Expansion Initiative.** In consultation with the U.S. Government, the Government of Iraq decided to increase the size of the Army by approximately 24,000 soldiers. The additional forces will increase the MOD's ability to command and control its forces, enhance its operational and tactical flexibility, and allow battle-weary units to be pulled off-line to retrain and refit. This Government of Iraq initiative also came with fiscal resources from the MOD budget.
- **Replenishment of National Police Brigades.** The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team (CPATT) is working to replenish all National Police units with personnel and key pacing items of equipment in support of the Baghdad Security Plan and Phase II training at Numaniyah.
- **Expansion of National Police to 10 Brigades.** The CPATT is supporting the prime minister's initiative to build a multicomponent (Iraqi Army and National Police) division-sized force to protect the Samarra Shrine reconstruction project. The team is generating a 10th National Police Brigade in support of this effort.¹⁰⁷¹

The Challenge of Force Transformation

Executing a real-world handover and expansion of Iraqi forces requires a major force transformation from a static, local defense force. It means creating large numbers of nationally deployable forces with different training, pay, equipment, mobility and support, and facilities.

This makes it highly questionable as to whether Iraqi force development can be effective in replacing US and allied forces 12 to 18 months, and that Iraqi forces can credibly expand some 36,000 to 48,000 actual men in place beyond their current size, without Iraqi success in reaching a political compromise that sharply reduces the demands for Iraqi effectiveness and the unity of the Iraqi security forces (ISF) in dealing with insurgents, militias, and death squads.

The challenge is also made more difficult by the fact that threat levels have continued to rise. It is meaningless to keep claiming that the security problems are limited to small areas, and ignore intra-Shi'ite fighting and Arab-Kurdish tensions. For example, General Casey stated in a press conference on October 26, 2006 that, "...we are in a tough fight here in the center of the country and in Anbar province. But I think it's important to remind people that 90 percent of the sectarian violence in Iraq takes place in about a 30-mile radius from the center of Baghdad; and that secondly, 90 percent of all violence

takes place in five provinces. This is not a country that is awash in sectarian violence. The situation is hard, but it's not a country that's awash in sectarian violence."

This statement was more than self contradictory, it clashes with previous claims in the Department of Defense quarterly status report for August 2006 that 81% of the violence took place in these provinces, and that statement ignored all of the softer forms of sectarian and ethnic "cleansing" and intra-Shi'ite fighting and Arab-Kurdish tensions.

This does not mean that real progress is not being made in ISF force development, and there are many reports of individual Iraqi units carrying out local missions, taking risks, and taking casualties. The fact remains, however, that far too many Iraqi army units are being credited with taking the lead or being effective in the field. Effective units are also being lumped together with units that will not perform their missions, which are tied to sects and factions, and which often have only 50-60% of their manning.

The Costs of Rushing Iraqi Force Development

At best, even currently planned efforts will take years to be effective. They are also taking place at a time the political demands on Iraqi force development are becoming steadily less realistic, and Iraqi forces continue to be pushed into service before they are ready and with US embedded training teams that often have readiness and qualification problems of their own

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the pace of Iraqi force development is partly being dictated by political necessity without due regard to what can really be accomplished and the inevitable loss of life to Iraqi forces that are pushed too hard, too soon.

The net effect is sometimes to use unready or over-committed units up in spite of adding US embeds and partner units. Men who did not volunteer for demanding combat missions, particularly in complex sectarian or ethnic environments or outside their home areas are being pushed into combat. They often have poor facilities, equipment and weapons that are sharply inferior to their US counterparts, are at least partly excluded from the command and intelligence loops to preserve security. They are treated as second best or unreliable partners.

Some Iraqis are truly motivated. Most are not, but are asked to fight as if they were truly motivated to support the national government rather than signed up to earn a living and survive. As was the case with the ARVN in Vietnam, their advisors often are not trained and lack the language skills to monitor pay, equity in promotion, conditions in quarters, food supply, and the other material conditions critical to real world morale and motivation. Many advisors choose to ignore the reality of sectarian and ethnic differences and motivation, do not track why Iraqi personnel actually go on leave, and do not monitor family conditions or attitudes towards military personnel in their home areas.

Serious problems in leadership by inexperienced and/or inadequate Iraqi officers and NCOs are downplayed or ignored. These problems are compounded by a US command ethic whose de facto impact is to seek good news, and not receive bad news, from embeds and the advisory teams.

In many cases, Iraqi combat troops are asked to take on an unfamiliar concept of maintenance and support at the same time. They lack the experience to maintain their weapons and equipment, and lack the in unit capability and outside support to do so. A flood forward and replacement oriented military culture is asked to sustain its equipment as if it were Western or American.

Coupled to ongoing pay problems, corruption, lack of adequate facilities and equipment, lack of proper medical care, lack of proper support for families, and death and disability payments, the end result will often be to the poverty and unemployment of Iraqi young men, and create major effectiveness, desertion, morale and motivation, and future retention problems.

This situation has grown worse since late 2006. Statements by President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki, and the impact of the US election, seem to have accelerated US scheduling and allied withdrawal, and expanding Iraqi forces, become a political necessity. It seems to be the only way for the US to stay for a significant period, and the only way to make an Iraqi takeover seem credible. Little about Iraqi performance in the field, however, indicates that the army, security forces, and police are “75% complete” as some US spokesmen had claimed in talking about an 18-24 month time period for a full scale shift of responsibility to Iraqi forces. A realistic timeframe is closer to 3 to 5 years.

The Challenge of Training and Creating Effective Iraqi Leadership

Creating well-trained and equipped soldiers is only half the battle. In order for the ISF to be truly valuable, it must have effective leadership. The creation of an Iraqi security force that can operate successfully and ethically in the field is a difficult process. Creating an efficient Iraqi fighting force may even be counter-productive if it is co-opted by sectarian elements or used to oppress the Iraqi people.

Progress and Problems with US Embeds and Training Teams

One of the key lessons of the Iraq War is that basic training is only one element of effective force development. Units require embedded trainers and advisors as they go into service, and partner units to help them learn how to fight, protect them, and provide the firepower, IS&R assets, and any other capabilities they lack. The failure to fully implement this lesson through 2005, at least in the case of the police forces, was a major factor limiting Iraqi force development and using up and wasting new units in the field.

Since that time, however, at least the Iraqi regular military forces have gained proficiency through three sources including, Iraqi schools, MITT Teams, and partnership units. The US and MNF-I have developed and deployed five different types of Transition Teams. These include: Military Transition Teams; Border Transition Teams; National Police Transition Teams; Police Transition Teams; and MNSTC-I Transition Teams. As their name implies these teams advise an array of different types of forces.

In all cases, these nearly 500 teams are embedded with their Iraqi counterparts. For example, the CMATT training teams are embedded with every Iraqi training unit and school as well as the MNC-I direct fire MiTT Teams that are overwatched by the Iraq Assistance Group (IAG). Both of these organizations have been involved in the training of Iraqi units for the past two years. (2005-2007). While the CMATT training teams help the Iraqi training schools train Iraqi soldiers the direct fire MiTT teams carry on the training of Iraqi soldiers in line companies, battalions, brigades, and divisions.)

Since early 2005, both the strengths and weaknesses of the US embed and training program have been critical in shaping the development of the ISF. The US has shown that does have considerable capability in such force development efforts, but also that it has a number of important limitations.

The US Training Effort Winter 2006/2007

All five types of team were in place by late 2005. These teams received preparatory training in US at a number of training sites and were validated as trained and ready prior to deploying for additional training in Kuwait and Iraq before deployment into sector. For example, the decision to stand up responsibility to train MITTs was made in late 2005 and preparations at Fort Riley began in the late spring and continued into the summer of 2006. Fort Riley built on the experience of the 2nd Brigade, 91st Training Support Division at Fort Carson, commanded by COL Ray Lamb). The soldiers deployed to Ft. Riley received 60 days of training with the team they will deploy with. The next step was additional training in Kuwait before moving to Taji, Iraq and attending the IAG's

Phoenix Academy for 10+ days. Only then did a MiTT Team move into sector and begin their left and right seat ride with the team they were replacing. The total preparatory time amounted to nearly 100 days of training and experience before assuming control of the mission.

By late 2006, the US training effort employed 5,000 US trainers who lived and worked year-round with their Iraqi units. Iraqi units from the division down to the battalion level had a team of 11-15 embedded US trainers attached to them. (11 at the battalion and brigade level and 15 at the division level)¹⁰⁷²

There were 435 transition teams throughout Iraq in December 2006, with about 5,000 personnel. This number does not include additional staff received from local commanders. The numbers by Iraqi service were as follows:

- Military Transition Teams – approximately 140
- Border Transition Teams – approximately 25
- National Police Teams – approximately 35
- Police Transition Teams – approximately 175
- Other Transition Teams – approximately 60 (“Other” teams provided basic training, education etc. There were also Transition Teams embedded at the MoD and the MoI to assist Iraqi command and control officers.¹⁰⁷³

Their relative numbers are compared in **Figure 5.1**.

As the training effort grew, this part of the mission increasingly shifted from Special Forces to regular Army and Marines units. The Army’s 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley was given the responsibility of training the Military Transition Teams and the Police Transition Teams.¹⁰⁷⁴ Maj. General Carter F. Ham stated that each team trains at Fort Riley for approximately 60 days. Each team member receives over 50 hours of formal classroom language training conducted by Defense Language Institute instructors. Approximately 75% of the trainers have combat experience, most of which has occurred in the past two years.

By early 2007, the US/Iraqi training effort had grown to considerable size. Iraqi militaries academies were graduating 600 to 700 lieutenants every 6 months. In addition to the field training carried out by the US embed effort, on any given day there were about 15,000 Iraqi soldiers in training at an institutional training base.¹⁰⁷⁵

Initial Problems in the Embed Effort

One problem was that US embeds were “good contacts at the command and control level, but more limited in providing constant access to the fighting soldier at the company and platoon level.” The central issue surrounding the decision whether or not to increase the number of trainers was the question of having trainers who would operate with these smaller units.

Another issue confronting US commanders organizing the training effort was the danger US soldiers faced when embedded into Iraqi units. Embed assignments in 11-15 man

teams were considered “high risk” according to testimony from Maj. General George J. Flynn, commander of the Marine Corps Training and Education command. “In many ways, these individuals are out there alone and unafraid” and this speaks “to the quality of the men and women who are in uniform.”¹⁰⁷⁶ Since military and police advisor first came to Iraq in 2004, 33 have been killed. Almost half of these deaths occurred in late 2006 / early 2007, as Iraqi forces have begun taking a more active role in combat.¹⁰⁷⁷

General John Abizaid told the Senate Armed Services Committee in November 2006 that the objective of increasing the number of trainers was for them to work at the company and platoon level. He favored a solution in which the additional trainers would be drawn from existing forces in Iraq.¹⁰⁷⁸ Local commanders in Iraq have already augmented transition teams with other soldiers already in Iraq, but these soldiers, while often called “trainers,” often act in support roles for the actual trainers, providing logistical or specific area support. One example were the “2,500” trainers in General Benjamin Mixon’s area of responsibility in northern Iraq. These 2,500 trainers were actually a smaller number of trainer teams that had been augmented to allow the trainers to broaden their reach.

According to a senior military official overseeing the trainers, it would not be a problem to increase the ranks of the training mission because current trainers could “provide leadership” to the larger teams. This official did believe, however, that the current training levels for future trainers in country and stateside would need to be increased in order to boost the mission with more trainers.¹⁰⁷⁹

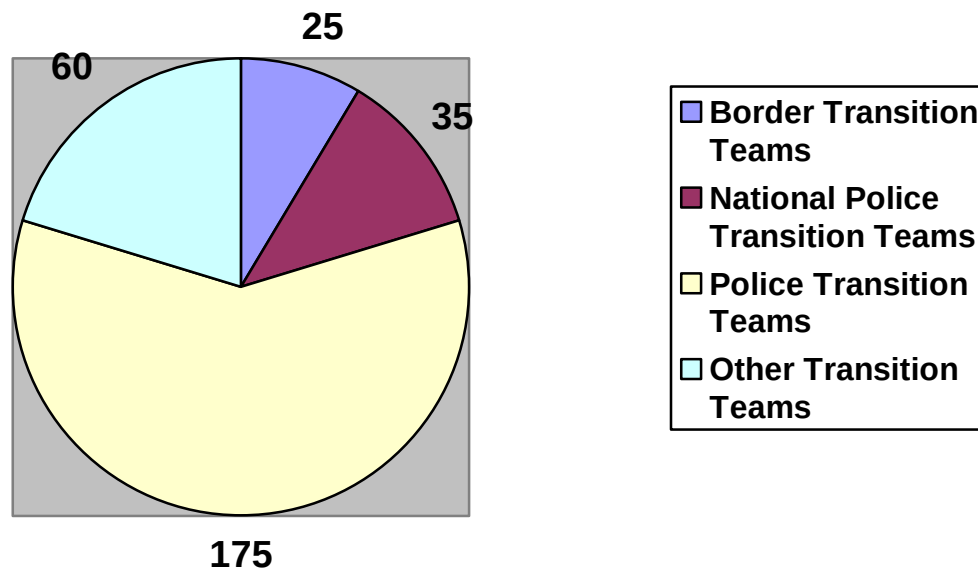
Efforts to Sharply Increase the Embed Effort

In the three weeks before December 5, 2006, American commanders shifted about 1,000 US soldiers in Baghdad from traditional combat roles to serve as trainers and advisers to Iraqi units. These troops did not go through the special program for trainers but, according to commanders in Iraq, are working in their areas of expertise. US commanders did not request replacements for these troops for their regular combat units.¹⁰⁸⁰ In early December 2006, Brig. Gen. Dana J.H. Pittard, commander of Iraqi Advisory Group, stated, “we’re going to double, triple, quadruple the size of the transition teams.”¹⁰⁸¹

The Iraq Study Group suggested in December 2006 to dramatically boost the number of embedded trainers for the ISF from 4-5,000 to 10-20,000. Apparently, these increases would only be training the Iraqi army, not the police. The reason was that the Iraq Study Group wanted to shift training responsibility for the Iraqi police from DoD to the Justice Department. This is interesting not least because the military originally took over police training responsibility from the CPA because of the slow pace of training.¹⁰⁸²

The President’s 2007 security plan called for further increases in the embedding of American advisers in Iraqi Army units – partnering a Coalition brigade with every Iraqi Army division, and giving US commanders and civilian’s greater flexibility to spend funds for economic assistance. However, no substantive changes to the training and embedding program were announced.

Figure 5.1
Transition Teams for the Different Iraqi Security Forces



Source: ABC News, December 1, 2006. Note that numbers are approximated.

Deploying More Trainers Than Can be Trained?

The fact is, however, that the U.S. training and embed effort has expanded far more quickly than the US could possibly find capable trainers to embed in Iraqi forces, find and retain translators, and create the core of a training effort to build paramilitary police forces – an effort for which the US military has little recent experience, internal training or core competence.

Congressional interest in this aspect of the war has been rather low, and the US Army's studies of its effectiveness have not been publicly released. Even basic information, such as the number of National Guard and Reserves personnel involved in the US training effort, were unusually difficult to attain. The majority of these embedded Soldiers came out of the reserve component as individual replacements. Linking up on the battlefield to form a team. The 39 days of training a year did not adequately prepare them for the complexity of the task and sophistication and required to accomplish the mission. However, MNF-I experts feel reserve component teams from established units such as the 80th and 104th Training Support Divisions have performed well as direct fire MiTTs, and have excelled as advisors at the 21 Iraqi Training Centers and Schools.

The US Army's Combat Studies Institute at Fort Leavenworth has provided one of the few publicly available sources on the training program. It has conducted interviews for with US advisers to Iraqi forces for the Army's oral history archives since shortly after the invasion in 2003. It sounds a warning that the US military, Administration, and

Congress need to take with deadly seriousness in examining options to expand Iraqi forces.

The US advisers were often under the impression that their mission was given low priority and that it was not well integrated into the overall US military mission in Iraq. Lt. Col. Paul Yingling, a staff officer with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment who trained Iraqi forces through February 2006 commented:

The thing the Army institutionally is still struggling to learn is that the most important thing we do in counterinsurgency is building host-nation institutions, yet all our organizations are designed around the least important line of operations: combat operations.¹⁰⁸³

Many Iraqi officers seem to agree with their US counterparts that the US military and advisory presence in Iraq is still essential to prevent the collapse of the Iraqi government and all-out civil war. They generally viewed US military advisers as sources of great military expertise. That said, the relationship between US military advisers, “their” Iraqi units and the US partner unit is often strained, inhibiting the Iraqi unit’s progress.¹⁰⁸⁴

Lt. Col. Carl D. Grunow, former trainer of the 2nd Armored Brigade, 9th Mechanized Division, warned:

One of the most frustrating points of friction I observed was caused by mistaken beliefs about [Iraqi units being part of Coalition forces.] Many U.S. commanders thought that the Iraqi force was part of the Coalition and OIF was another exercise in Coalition warfare. Numerous examples demonstrate how this misunderstanding created confusion and discord: An Iraqi platoon leader refusing to participate in a combined patrol because he had not received an order from his battalion commander; Iraqi patrols leaving their assigned area to respond to an MOD order to escort a convoy from Baghdad to Taji; an Iraqi brigade commander ordering a squad to remain in an ambush position, effectively masking a U.S. unit that had already occupied a position nearby; and Iraqi soldiers refusing to follow American orders to search a mosque until the order was cleared by an Iraqi division commander. [...] While the American commander’s first impulse was to be furious with the Iraqis, from the perspective of building new units, there was clearly good news in this evidence of a strengthening Iraqi chain of command.¹⁰⁸⁵

Other former military advisers are more critical of the relationship with regular US units, highlighting such basic flaws as major problems with the Army supply chain. Maj. Pete Fedak, an adviser near Fallujah in 2004, said:

As an adviser, I got the impression that there was an ‘us’ and ‘them.’ In other words, there was an American camp and then, outside, there was a bermed area for the Iraqis, of which we were part. Guys would come under fire so they could get computer supplies, paper and things like that. It was a surreal experience.

Another major problem hampering the training effort has been the lack of US and local interpreters, particularly ones that can deal with local dialects and the special semantics and language skills needed for military training and operations.

Maj. Robert Dixon reported that during his tour in 2004, his team had no interpreters at all. Maj. Mike Sullivan, who also advised native forces in 2004, recounted how he would run from the headquarters to a company to “borrow an interpreter, run him over to say something, and then send him back.” The interpreters that were available were often “substandard,” speaking little or no English. This sometimes resulted in the interpreters getting fired, but the Center for Army Lessons Learned also released a study that found

one unit that only learned after 10 unproductive months how badly its translators conveyed their instructions to their Iraqi students. The translations were so poor that the Iraqis had trouble understanding even the basic concepts taught by the Americans.¹⁰⁸⁶

Many US military advisers were unimpressed with their peers and their own training. While Maj. Sullivan described the US Army's instruction for the mission as "very disappointing," Maj. Jeffrey Allen, an active-duty soldier, noted that all other members of his team were from the National Guard. The team was supposed to have 10 members, but was only allocated five. Allen evaluated it as "weak...in particular the brigade team chief."

Learning Hard Lessons Along The Way

An internal review by the Center for Army Lessons Learned, based on 152 interviews with soldiers involved in the training and advisory program, found that there was "no standardized guideline for preparing military advisers, despite the fact that 'a majority of advisers have little to no previous experience or training.'"¹⁰⁸⁷ Trainers in 2006 received 60 days of training at Fort Riley, Kansas, over a week in Kuwait, an additional two weeks training in Taji, Iraq, and then time in sector learning the ropes with the team they were replacing.¹⁰⁸⁸

Iraq's forces also received less partnership support from US units as US forces became more heavily committed during the course of 2006. At the same time, Iraqi Force Development and "placing Iraqis in the lead" officially became strategic goals, US brigade and battalion commanders had to concentrate their efforts mainly on fighting the insurgency. This left the training responsibility mainly to Iraqi commanders and their US advisers, an arrangement that "can work only if the U.S. force provides enough stability to allow the Iraqis to train and practice tactics, techniques and procedures inside and outside the wire."

When it came to combined missions, the Iraqi Army involvement was sometimes no more than "a 'drive-by' pick-up of an Iraqi squad while the U.S. unit is on the way to the objective." This type of behavior by US commanders was, of course, understandable. Training Iraqi units during combat operations involved cumbersome translation problems and distracted from the tactical objective at hand; conducting an operation as a purely US or "pick-up Iraqis on the way" mission was the easiest way to avoid these problems. It was, however, not helpful for the development of independently capable forces.¹⁰⁸⁹

Nonetheless, there appeared to be a slow, but tangible change in US commanders' attitudes. Especially the practice of having periodic meeting between the American commander and his Iraqi counterparts proved to be helpful.

In November 2005, an OIF III brigade commander staunchly defended his formal authority over Iraqi formations by refusing an IA division commander's request to allow a company team to participate in a ceremony marking a donation of NATO armored vehicles. During preparation for the December election, this same colonel emphasized that 'if we want our Iraqi units to play in our battlespace, they better be ready.' [...]

During OIF IV, after the sea change directing that Iraqis be put in the lead, U.S. commanders deferred to the 'Iraqi solution' from MOD down to the company level. As the 2d Brigade took over its AO in May 2006, the U.S. commander respected the Iraqi commander's prerogatives.

Although misunderstandings continued to occur, the overall direction was very positive, thus reinforcing the Iraqi chain of command.¹⁰⁹⁰

Key Challenges to US Advisors

It is interesting to note in this context that Grunow listed several key challenges for US military advisers in his 2006 Military Review article, although at least some of these challenges seem to have been overcome by spring of 2007.

- **Recruiting, retraining and accountability:** Iraqi soldiers were under effective contract, and always had the option to leave. The only instruments to keep them in the military were money and the soldiers' sense of duty, and the military had no credible way to punish absent soldiers. Meanwhile, there were numerous incentives for soldiers to quit: from a simple fear that training was too hard to threats against their families. Grunow, who trained an Iraqi Arm armored brigade, recounts that

They have assumed roles in the new Iraqi Army at great personal risk. In my brigade alone, the litany of personal tragedy grew with depressing regularity. The commander's brother was kidnapped and killed. The deputy commander's cousins, hired to protect his family, were found murdered and stacked up on his doorstep with a note saying he was next. Two of four battalion commanders had to move their families because of death threats. A deputy battalion commander's son was kidnapped and has not been found. Staff officers, soldiers, and interpreters spoke of murdered relatives or told harrowing personal stories of close calls with terrorists.

Grunow assesses that "without steadfast American support, these officers and soldiers will likely give up and consider the entire effort a lost cause."

Another issue was personnel accountability. There were no routine accountability formations, and units usually waited until payday to get a more or less accurate picture of who was assigned to the unit. US advisers actually started counting soldiers at checkpoints to get an idea of their units' manpower.¹⁰⁹¹

- **Motivation:** Iraqi commanders were very reluctant to deploy a large percentage of their combat power on missions. US advisers tried to change this by confronting Iraqi commanders with numbers of soldiers and/or vehicles on mission, with no discernable effect. What did change the commanders' motivation, according to Grunow, was the imminent prospect of the brigade taking the lead in its area of operations.¹⁰⁹²
- **Understanding of the mission:** Saddam-era Iraqi commanders were still attuned to the strategy and tactics of the high-intensity Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, "a war with clear battle lines fought with mass military formations, and one in which civilians on the battlefield were a nuisance, not the center of gravity." Officers and soldiers tried to solve current, low-intensity tactical problems with 1980s methods. "I frequently heard the refrain that if the Americans would only 'turn them loose,' the Iraqis would defeat the insurgency in short order," Grunow recalls.¹⁰⁹³ His trainees had trouble understanding the strategic importance of governance, infrastructure, and the economy. They rather relied on the liberal application of force, even when it was unjust and/or ineffective. "Iraqi leaders understand our reverence for the rule of law in theory, but not in practice." Also, officers below the grade of lieutenant colonel were reluctant at initiating and planning small-unit operations.¹⁰⁹⁴

Grunow also warned that the Iraqi reaction to enemy fire was more appropriate to large-scale attacks than to insurgent tactics.

Unfortunately, the Iraqi 'death blossom' is a common tactic witnessed by nearly every U.S. Soldier who has spent any time outside the wire. Any enemy attack on the IA, whether mortar, sniper, or an improvised explosive device, provokes the average Iraqi soldier to empty his 30

round magazine and fire whatever belt of ammunition happens to be in his machine-gun. Ninety percent of the time, there is not target, and the soldiers always agree that this is extremely dangerous, in addition to being a grievous waste of ammunition. But they continue to do it.

A similar phenomenon occurs when Iraqis react to the death of a comrade on the battlefield. The reaction is very dramatic. I once observed overwrought Iraqi soldiers start to rampage through a civilian community, an event that could have been tragic if an adviser had not stepped in to stop it. At another time, an enemy sniper attack triggered a reaction that had Iraqis 'returning fire' nearly 90 minutes after the enemy had delivered one deadly shot. This 'burst reaction' may be attributed to Iraqis experiencing denial, anger, and grief all at the same time.¹⁰⁹⁵

- **Infrastructure:** Grunow's assessment was that some materiel and infrastructure problems could be overcome rather quickly: spare parts would become more available as the National Maintenance Contract would go into effect, soldiers would be paid more regularly, and there would be a routine system to recruit, train, and allocate new soldiers.

More time and effort were needed in order to mold the schools and training centers into a coordinated and effective military education network. Regional support centers could not immediately establish an effective logistics system. Personnel management would also need improvement. The lesson here was that "U.S. support provide[d] critical credibility while these systems [became] available."¹⁰⁹⁶

Cultural Differences and US-Iraqi Interactions

The cultural challenges affecting US and other MNF-I efforts to train Iraq's forces are less tangible, but equally important. Once again, Grunow provides important insights on the cultural factors that impact on US training of Iraqi units:

- A more pronounced **unwillingness to recognize misconduct or failure** on the part of Iraqi soldiers and officers. "Advisers have found that photographic evidence is essential to achieve a constructive after-action review."¹⁰⁹⁷
- **Less diligence and attention to detailed planning.**

"Iraqis eschew operational calendars and typically forecast little beyond the next 48 to 72 hours. One example of this lack of regard for planning occurred prior to the handing over of operations to the 2d Brigade. The American commander's battle rhythm included representation at local government meetings each week. When the Iraqis took charge of this schedule, they continually re-tasked responsibility for attendance, selected officers at random to attend and take notes, and generally failed to make the most of this opportunity to engage local leaders. The morning operations and intelligence update, a staple at every American tactical operation center (TOC) and an opportunity to synchronize operations, usually drew only token Iraqi attendance."¹⁰⁹⁸
- **Reactive, not proactive behavior.** Grunow relates how the unit he advised did not live up to US standards of long-term planning, but was far more comfortable with improvising on-the-spot solutions than its US partner unit.¹⁰⁹⁹

These underlying cultural factors interacted with US and MNF-I efforts that rushed many Iraqi units into battle and very tangible differences in capability:

- Iraqi soldiers only received 5 weeks of basic training before they are faced with actual operations and combat. Many soldiers receive an additional 3-7 weeks of Military Occupation Specialty Qualification training, to include specialties such as infantry, transportation, and medical.
- The fast deployment into the battlespace also applied to entire units. In one instance, a new brigade conducted independent operations with Coalition support only 10 months after receiving its first soldiers.

- Iraqi officers had to make do with much less technical and manpower support than US commanders. “The battle captain in a brigade combat team (BCT) runs a TOC shift of 15 officers and soldiers while his Iraqi counterpart typically has 2 radio operators and a cell phone to call the commander.”¹¹⁰⁰

More broadly, such differences affected both the advisory effort and actual operations in complex ways, and led to different perceptions of tactics, rules of engagement, targeting, and limits to the use of force. As the previous chapter has shown all too clearly, the operations of both US and Iraqi forces alienated many Iraqis and helped fuel sectarian and ethnic differences. Neither the US nor the ISF seemed able to find methods of operations that kept popular anger and resentment (and fear) to a practical minimum.

There many variables that affected this situation, including Iraq’s failures in political conciliation and lack of unity, and the broader weaknesses in its structure of governance. MNF-I experts feel that the top three from the military dimension were skill, will and team work. Where US officers made a major effort to work closely with Iraqis, adapted to their needs, and prepared them through team efforts to mitigate the known or suspected hazards using steps like ROC drills, map recons, sand table rehearsals, the end results were more successful.

At the same time, many in the ISF had been raised in a culture and political climate that encouraged the use of excessive force against perceived enemies and sectarian, ethnic, tribal, and clan loyalties to perceived friends. US advisors tended to train Iraqis according to US national norms that assumed Iraqi their values focused largely on serving the government as if there was not civil conflict or deep underlying set of sectarian and ethnic differences. Some Iraqis did operate on the basis of such norms. Most did not.

Seen from an Iraqi side, however, US and MNF-I trainers, embeds, and partner units often operated with far too little intelligence to understand Iraqi values and norms. They often appeared to disregard Iraqi concerns and sensitivities, and task Iraqi forces with missions that emphasized purely military goals in what was a developing mix of civil conflicts where politics, faction, and cultural sensitivity were critical.

This interacted with the fact that US and MNF-I personnel were on limited tours, while Iraqi personnel had live in the country indefinitely. The sharp differences in pay, equipment and weapons, facilities, medical care, family security often led ISF personnel and units to be far more cautious and less willing to act than US and Coalition units. So did the fact that many advisors regularly communicated distrust in Iraqi personnel, and sometimes a lack of empathy and respect. This was particularly true in the field and combat operations,

None of this meant that many Iraqi units were not willing to fight. In fact, the MNF-I estimates that Iraqi Security Forces suffered losses at a rate over three times higher than US and Coalition Units. Nevertheless, the problems in ISF force development, and US efforts to transfer responsibility to the ISF, must be seen from the perspective of US as well as Iraqi limitations.

The Role of US Special Operations Forces in Training Iraqi Security Forces

At a different level, US special forces again demonstrated their capabilities in the training and advisory mission. A total of 3,768 US Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and Air Force combat controllers were operating in Iraq by September 2006. They were partnered with a third of the Iraqi Army battalions and 13 SWAT-like police units.

Colonel Kenneth Tovo, commander of the Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Arabian Peninsula, described their role as follows:¹¹⁰¹

One, they are working with battalion staffs to integrate intelligence and operations and teach them how to target. Two, they are training scout platoons to find and fix the enemy. (...) This task force understands that we cannot kill our way to victory. That said, we live in the security side of the house. We are building Iraqi security force capacity and using that to attack insurgents.¹¹⁰²

SF Teams have done an expert job of working with Iraqi Special Operation Forces. They have been embedded since these units were stood up several years ago. This lasting relationship has resulted in the effectiveness that ISOF continues to experience. MNF-I trainers often led as well as advised: From January until September 2006, Iraqi units with special operations advisers detained 2,065 selected targets, including 460 high- and mid-value ones, killed 222 enemy combatants, and wounded 92. Both their targeting and evidence preparation seemed successful, resulting in the continued detention of 70% of those captured. Especially impressive was the 85% conviction rate of those brought to trial, compared to the 40-50% rate of other Iraqi units.

Elite units also helped develop Iraqi forces in the field. In Mosul, a 12-man Special Forces team worked with the 172nd Stryker Brigade, but managed to make the city's mostly Sunni police force cooperate effectively with the Kurdish Army brigade, which controls Mosul's eastern half. Special Forces took Iraqi detectives along to raids to collect evidence. Ironically, the reluctance of Mosul judges to bring cases to trial or to impose sentences made part of these successful operations ineffective. The presence of Special Forces soldiers in Mosul also helped compensate for the reduction of MNF-I forces from a division to two battalions reduction in the city over the past two years,.

Kirkuk provides another example of Special Forces and 101st Airborne Division training, although no comparable figures on operations were found. A leadership course for Iraqi lieutenants, platoon leaders, and sergeants was set up, where Iraqi officers and sergeants swapped roles, learned to plan operations, and improved basic soldiering skills. Special Forces soldiers were also used as advisers to each Iraqi company. A problem here appeared to be equipment, with Iraqi units using old pickups and Special Forces relying on old Humvees.

As always, however, personalities did matter. Relations between Special Forces and the local US conventional commander appeared worse than in Mosul, however, with the latter not incorporating the whole team into the planning and execution of a sweep through three towns west of Kirkuk, days before the team was scheduled leave. As in Mosul, the Special Forces team expressed concern that their work needed to be sustained by the units following them, so that local forces would not revert to their old ways.¹¹⁰³

Real and False Progress in Assuming Leadership in Field Operations

Iraqi forces did play a steadily improving role in many areas, or that a growing number could not take the lead at the tactical level as long as they have MNF-I support and could count on MNF-I reinforcement in an emergency. Iraqi units played a larger and more important role in field operations. The problem in evaluating Iraqi capabilities is not that the ISF development program has failed, but that it has had far less real world success and independence than the Administration and Department of Defense have claimed in unclassified statements and reports and testimony to Congress.

Far too many of such claims have been more cosmetic than real. Many units “in the lead” have demonstrated little or no real mission responsibility or capability, and were extremely dependent on MNF-I command, planning, and support. In practice, they could only act under the leadership of embedded advisors and/or in cooperation with partner units. Moreover, the US ceased to report on the readiness of the units involved in any way that related to their real-world mission readiness and performance. The good were lumped together with the mediocre, bad, and inactive.

Exaggerated Progress in 2006

This was disguised by claims that approximately one-third of company-sized operations in Iraq from May until August 2006 were conducted independently by Iraqi forces, and there was a 35% increase in the number of Iraqi Army battalions that assumed the lead for counter-insurgency operations.

Department of Defense reporting and testimony also downplayed the grave problems in MOI forces. DoD reported that all 27 National Police battalions conducted counter-insurgency operations, and six battalions had the security lead in their areas of responsibility. 203 National Police Transition Teams (10 provincial, 44 District, and 149 Station) support the training of these units.¹¹⁰⁴ Additionally, 10 Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) were transferred to the Government of Iraq during May through August, bringing the total to 52 of a total 110 FOBs under Iraqi control. Three more FOBs were scheduled to be transferred to Iraq by January 2007.¹¹⁰⁵

The MNF-I’s refusal to tie its reporting to real-world unit effectiveness led it to report that a total of 5 Iraqi Army divisions, 25 brigades, and 85 battalions and 2 National Police battalions had assumed the lead responsibility for their respective areas of operation by August 7, 2006. By this time the Iraqi Army was said to have a total strength 106 combat battalions. There were eight Strategic Infrastructure Battalions (SIBs) at varying levels of capability with another three combat battalions in the process of forming. The SIBs and other enabling units were seen to be critical for improving the overall quality and independence of the Iraqi forces. Given the fact, outside experts were reported that as few as 10 battalions were effective in late November 2006, such reports presented major credibility problems.¹¹⁰⁶

The August 2006 Quarterly Status report to Congress stated:¹¹⁰⁷

The Coalition’s primary force development objective to date has been to produce trained, equipped, and capable combat units; there has been less emphasis placed on enablers, including logistics and

command and control. Now that more than two-thirds of the Iraqi Army combat units are in the lead, the Coalition's focus will shift more toward helping the Iraqis develop these enablers.

A September 2006 report by the GAO was only marginally more realistic, but provided the additional data shown in **Figure 5.3**, which compares figure from January 2006 to August and December 2006 for Iraqi units taking the lead on security operations. This figure drew on DoD and State Department reports and the GAO noted that DoD reported more detailed information on security transition in a classified format.

The GAO also stated that when an Iraqi army unit assumed the *lead*, this did not necessarily mean that the unit was capable of conducting *independent* operations, since additional capabilities provided by Coalition forces may still have been necessary. The DoD November quarterly report also stated that, "Although these units lead security in their respective areas of operations most still require substantial logistics and sustainment support from Coalition forces."¹¹⁰⁸ Developing these capabilities and certify Iraqi units as fully independent required far more time since this involved the further development of logistical elements, ministry capacity and capability, intelligence structures, and command and control.¹¹⁰⁹

DoD provided GAO with classified data on the aggregate number Iraqi units at each "Transition Readiness Assessment" level for the GAO September 2006 report, as well as with more detailed information on which Iraqi units had taken the lead in counterinsurgency operations."¹¹¹⁰

It is important to note, however, that the DoD did not provide unit-by-unit data, which would have provided a clearer overall picture since the individual unit reports contain readiness assessments in several sub-categories (personnel, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipment, leadership) as well as a narrative assessment of key shortfalls and impediments of the unit to assume the lead for operations. The individual reports also estimate the time needed for the unit to assume the lead.

These failures to honestly tie claims Iraqi forces were "in the lead" to real-world effectiveness cast serious doubt on one of the most critical aspects of public MNF-I and US reporting. In fact, the GAO listed three key reasons why an accurate assessment of ISF readiness and progress could only come from the unit-by-unit reports:¹¹¹¹

- The usefulness of TRA reports as an instrument to measure combat readiness could have been tested.
- The aggregate data could have been verified.
- Shortfalls in specific areas, such as personnel, equipment, logistics, training, and leadership, could have been identified.¹¹¹²

The GAO also stated that ultimate goal of continuing to strengthen ISF combat forces and the support units was to eventually eliminate the Iraqi force's dependence on coalition forces.¹¹¹³

Figure 5.3
Iraqi Units Leading Operations and Provinces with Security Responsibility as of December 2006

Type of Security Transition		January 2006	August 2006	October, 2006	December, 2006	DoD goal
Iraqi army units leading counterinsurgency operations in specific areas	Divisions	2	5		7	10
	Brigades	8	25		30	36
	Battalions	37	85	90	93	114 (includes Iraqi army and special operations battalions)
Number of Provinces that have assumed security responsibility		0	1		3	18

Source: General Accounting Office, "Stabilizing Iraq: An Assessment of the Security Situation," September 11, 2006, p.17 and Walker, David M. , "Securing, Stabilizing, and Rebuilding Iraq." General Accounting Office January 18, 2007, pg. 23-24

Reported Programs as of Early 2007

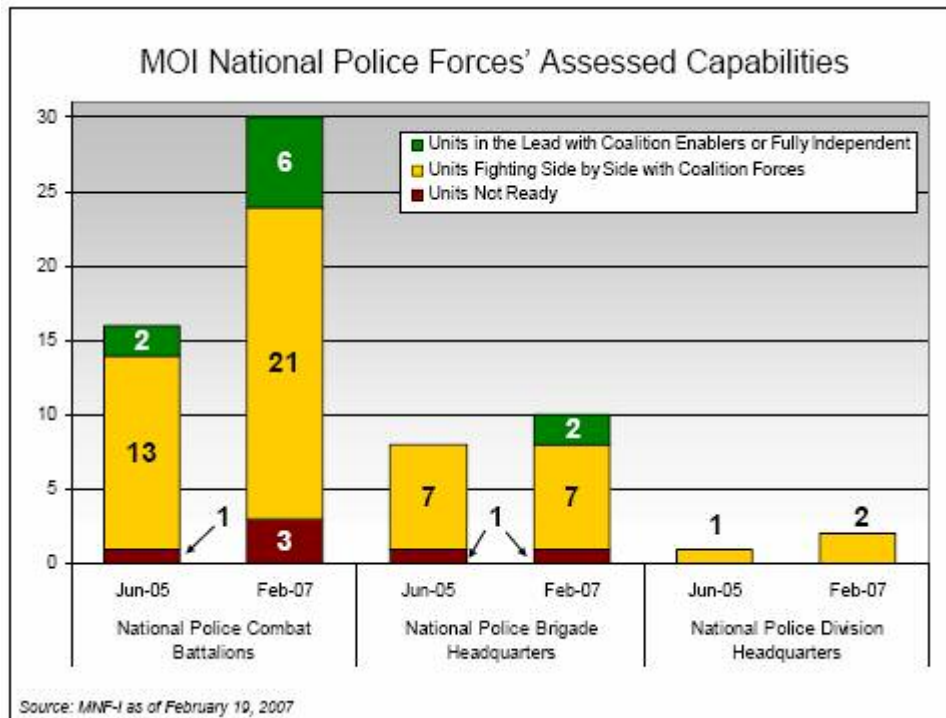
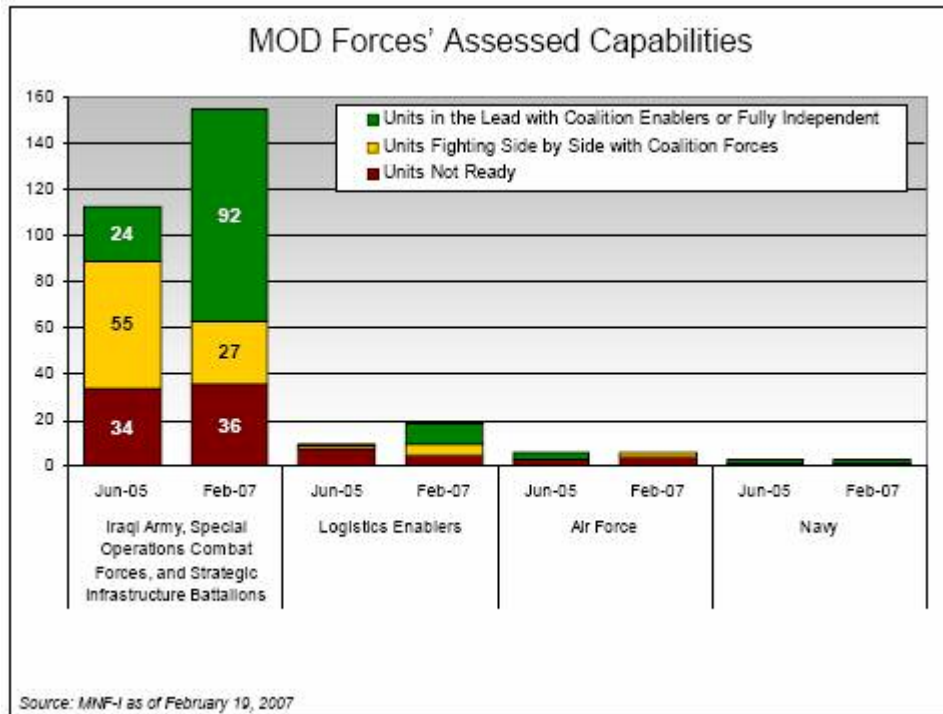
Figure 5.4 compares the growth of assessed MOD and MOI National Police force capabilities at the unit level from June 2005 to February, 2007 in terms of units not yet ready, units fighting side by side with Coalition force, and units in the lead with Coalition enablers or fully independent. Once again, however, DoD has defined the term “in the lead” as being “with Coalition enablers or fully independent,” and neither shows how many of these units are really “fully independent” or defines this term in ways that have any relation to actual combat units.¹¹¹⁴

In fact, the units counted as “in the lead” in **Figure 5.4** range from highly effective to virtually passive and incapable of any kind of meaningful mission on their own. Once again, meaningful readiness data would required unit-by-unit data that contained readiness assessments in several sub-categories (personnel, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipment, leadership) as well as a narrative assessment of key shortfalls and impediments of the unit to assume the lead for operations. They would also estimate the time needed for the unit to assume the lead.

Useful combat capability data would also have to be based on actual unit performance in given types of missions, not readiness data or estimates devoid of combat experience. It is one of the odd tragedies of current intelligence and force assessment reporting that it generally is far less meaningful than the World War One era assessments that focused more on unit history in combat than efforts to find directly comparable statistic indicators or assessments by category.

Moreover, “fully independent” is almost meaningless if the units cannot engage in any form of demanding combat operation without support from US airpower, artillery, and or logistics; they lack the armor to operate in demanding missions; and require emergency back up from Coalition forces if anything goes wrong. Even the best forces cannot use weapons they do not have, or perform missions for which they are not equipped. This is particularly true when Iraqi forces have very limited IS&R capabilities, which are grossly inferior to those of US forces, and security considerations restrict how much data many “in the lead” units can be given.

Figure 5.4
MOD Forces' Assessed Capabilities



Adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March 2007 Report to Congress, p. 26; Note: +/- 5% margin of error

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Little progress has been made in providing more objective reports. Gen. George Casey reported in mid-October 2006 that six of the 10 Iraqi divisions – 30 of the 36 brigades and almost 90 of the 112 battalions were “in the lead.” He still described the task as training and equipping units, then “putting them in the lead,” to finally make them independent.¹¹¹⁵ Roughly the same claims were made in testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee in mid-November, and in the March 2007 DoD quarterly report..

Virtually all independent reporting by major media, however, has presented a very different picture of readiness as have many officers returning from Iraq. For example, an LA Times article in early December 2006 described an operation in Baghdad with Iraqi units supposedly “in the lead,” that showed some of the difficulties Iraqi Army units had under the stress of combat. While this evidence is at best anecdotal, it is still significant because the unit in question was Iraq’s 9th Mechanized Division; one of Iraq’s best trained and equipped divisions (mentioned earlier as the unit trained by Lt. Col. Carl D. Grunow). US Army Col. Douglass S. Heckman, recalls how “In August, when we started Operation Together Forward to secure Baghdad, we called on a bunch of units to assist. This division was the only one that moved into the operation. The others balked.”

The problems even this unit had in performing against insurgents in Baghdad did not bode well for the state of Iraqi security forces and suggested that Iraqi force development would take patience. The operation’s objective in Baghdad’s Fadhil neighborhood was to capture 70 high-value targets. In the end, 43 insurgents, including three foreign nationals, were captured, and an estimated 100 killed, with only one Iraqi soldier killed and six wounded, albeit with significant collateral damage.

The course of the 11-hour operation revealed several weaknesses of the 9th mechanized division. After the unit had walked into an ambush and were stopped by a coordinated rocket, grenade, and mortar attack, “fear took over” among the Iraqis, according to Staff Sgt. Michael Baxter. “They refused to move. We were yelling at them to move.” While the Iraqis were supposed to take the lead in the operation, “it started out that way,” Baxter said. “But five minutes into it, we had to take over.”

The LA Times article recounted how

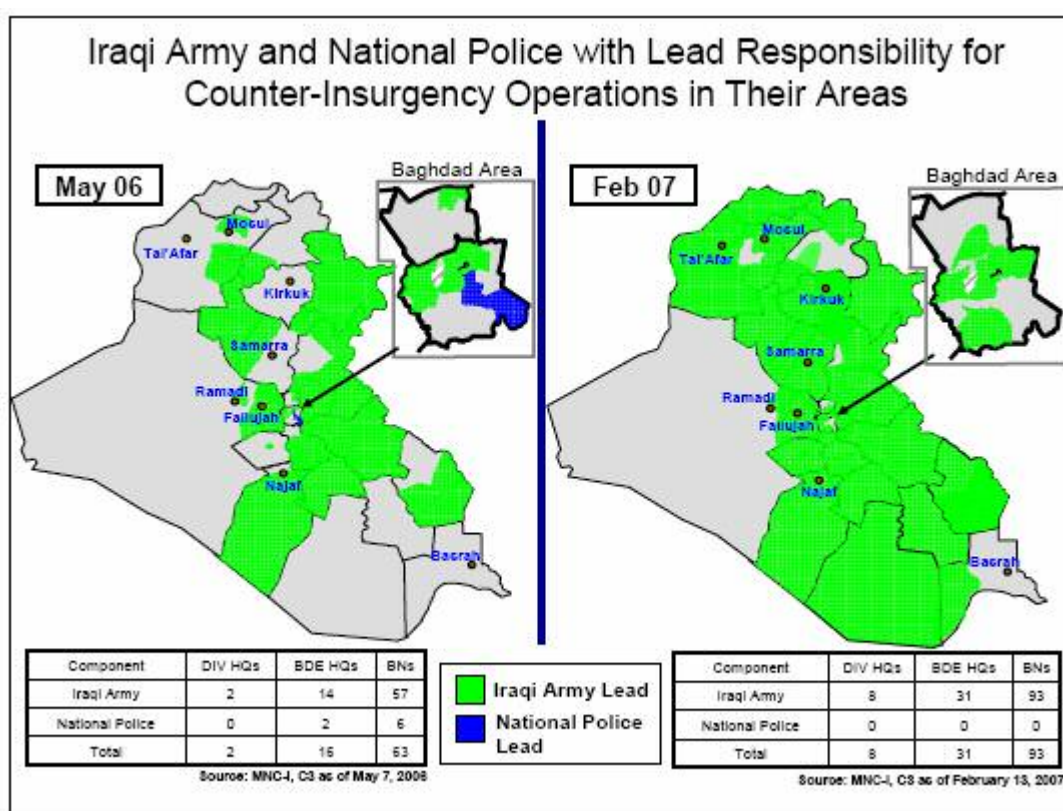
[...] confusion swiftly reigned as insurgents in Fadhil pummeled dismounted Iraqi troops and their American advisors. U.S. radio jammers seeking to hinder communications between insurgents ended up blocking the Iraqi soldiers’ walkie-talkies, forcing them to use unreliable cell phone signals to stay in contact. Voice commands were lost [...]

(The 9th Iraqi Division and its 1st Brigade were employed in combat operations in East Baghdad for the first time in August. The division was required to control multiple brigades and US advisers witnessed the same lack of weapons discipline Grunow described in his Military Review article: At times, the overwhelmed Iraqi soldiers fired wildly, sweeping their machine-gun barrels across friendly and insurgent targets alike, witnesses said. “I had to throw bullet casings at them to get their attention,” said Sgt. 1st Class Agustin Mendoza, another U.S. trainer who manned a Humvee gut turret during the battle. “They had no weapons discipline.” [...]

Other reporting casts serious doubt on the value of the kind of reporting provided in The March 2007 Department of Defense Quarterly report. This report provided a map showing that Iraqi Army units were in the lead in counterinsurgency operations in Iraq in every area in Iraq except Al Anbar, roughly half of Baghdad, a Kurdish area, and the Basra area in the far southeast. This same map also claimed that the Iraqi Army had experienced extraordinary levels of development from May 2006 to February 2007. These data are somewhat different from those reported in Figure 5.3 and are shown in **Figure 5.5**:

Figure 5.5

Iraqi Army and National Police with Lead Responsibility for Counter Insurgency Operations in Their Areas



	Division HQs		Brigade HQs		Battalions	
	May 06	Feb 07	May 06	Feb 07	May 06	Feb 07
Iraqi Army	2	8	14	31	57	93
National Police	0	0	2	0	6	6
Total	2	8	16	31	63	93

Source: US Department of Defense, "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq." Report to Congress, March 2007, p. 22

The data in **Figure 5.5** also show the high level of dependence still placed on the uncertain capabilities of the National Police. The Department of Defense reported that all 27 National Police battalions conducted counter-insurgency operations, and six battalions had the security lead in their areas of responsibility. 203 National Police Transition Teams (10 provincial, 44 District, and 149 Station) support the training of these units.¹¹¹⁶ Additionally, 10 Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) were transferred to the Government of Iraq during May through August, bringing the total to 52 of a total 110 FOBs under Iraqi control. Three more FOBs were scheduled to be transferred to Iraq by January 2007.¹¹¹⁷

The Impact of Manpower Quality

As is discussed in more detail in the chapters that follow, manpower quality affects every aspect of Iraqi force development. It has, however, been a major factor limiting how quickly responsibility can be transferred to Iraqi forces, and the real-world capability of units to take the lead in combat.

Issues with Junior Officers and NCOs

Leadership quality and experience take years to develop and a lack of junior officers and NCOs continued to be one of the largest factors hampering development of MOD forces. There were not enough trained officers and NCOs to fill the lower-level staff and leadership positions.

Addressing these leadership problems could only be solved over time as officers were trained and NCOs gained experience. To provide educational opportunities, the Regional Training Centers (RTCs) and the NCO Academy focused on training personnel for senior leadership positions. In addition to the schools, Coalition Military Assistance Training Teams provided additional guidance. The military leadership also began to interact more with civic leaders in their areas of operation, moving toward the possibility of Iraqis becoming more responsible for a comprehensive approach to their own security and interests.¹¹¹⁸

The Department of Defense, in August 2006, summarized the situation as follows and in ways that further illustrated the problems concealed in the reporting on the transfer of responsibility and the number of Iraqi forces in the lead:¹¹¹⁹

The lack of junior officers and NCOs continues to be one of the biggest factors impeding development of MOD forces. There is a shortage of school-trained officers and NCOs to fill lower-level staff and leadership positions. The shortage of leaders will abate as officer recruits are commissioned and they join their units. For NCOs, qualified soldiers are being “grown from within” through development and schooling to achieve promotion to NCO leadership positions. The Regional Training Centers (RTCs) and the NCO Academy focus on junior leader development that is critical to building a professional force. The RTCs conduct Squad Leader and Platoon Sergeant Courses. Newly formed Sergeants Major and Chief Warrant Officer Courses have been added to the NCO Professional Education System. Specialized leadership courses, such as Logistics Supervisor, are being conducted at the Iraqi Army Service and Support Institute at Taji. Three Iraqi Military Academies at Zahko, Qalachwan, and Ar Rustimiyah continue to train future officers.

According to Gen. George Casey, one limiting factor to meaningful growth of the Iraqi Army was a dearth of qualified commanders:

“Frankly, some of our guys will say it’s still kind of the limiting factor. (...) If you want to grow two more divisions, the real question is: Can you come up with two divisions’ worth of good Iraqi leaders?”¹¹²⁰

Another problem was links between Shi’ite militias and high-level officers at military headquarters as well as government officials, who cancelled a number of operations, protecting friends or certain neighborhoods.¹¹²¹

Like the problems in the MOD, the loyalty and competency of those in MOI leadership positions continued to be of even more serious concern. To address these problems and to develop more effective leaders in the IPS three two week long leadership courses were designed: the First Line Supervisor course, the Intermediate Level Course and the Senior Level Course were intended to train company grade, field grade and General Officers respectively. The courses were designed to address topics in police methods, ethics, leadership, management and problem solving at a level appropriate to the various levels of leadership.

Additionally, plans were in place to expand the Intermediate-Level Officers course beginning in the fall of 2006. Among officers with experience in the old regime, forming a substantial part of those in higher leadership positions, the matter of conflicting or uncertain loyalties continued to be problematic. Overall, officers trained solely through the IPS courses were thought to be more committed to their mission and it was hoped that as they rose in the ranks displacing higher level officers the officer corps as a whole would become more effective and more loyal.¹¹²²

Educating the Overall Force

Continued progress has taken place in turning over the training mission of Iraqi soldiers to Iraqi trainers. In July and August 2006, for example, soldiers from the 24th Scout Platoon, 2nd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, conducted a three-week training course that covered an array of topics, including weapons maintenance, basic rifle marksmanship, reflexive fire training, basic infantry skills, and urban combat tactics.¹¹²³ The presence of Iraqi military trainers was a significant piece of the effort to endow Iraq with the indigenous abilities to build and maintain a force for the long-term.

So was the growing institutionalization of the Iraqi training effort. The Iraqi Army came to utilize over 21 schools and centers. The Iraqi Police were trained at nine different police academies. On any given day the Iraqi Army had as many as 15,000 soldiers training at their training bases.

On August 10, 2006, for example, Iraq’s Ministry of the Interior graduated 16 students from the first Inspector General’s investigation course. The Office of the Inspector General was created as an independent, objective office within the MOI, charged with investigating charges of corruption, fraud, waste, abuse, and other complaints regarding MOI officials. Additionally, the unit was set up to conduct audits and evaluations “to review effectiveness, efficiency and integrity of all MOI personnel and operations.”¹¹²⁴ Charges of corruption, abuse, fraud, and waste had plagued the MOI since its inception.

The creation of an internal accountability mechanism was seen as at least one step in the right direction toward combating these deficiencies.

On September 12, 16 Iraqi police officers boarded planes bound for the United States to receive training. The men, members of the Iraqi River Patrol, headed to the US to receive riverine training at the Stennis Space Center in Mississippi. The six-week course was designed to give the selected group skills in such areas as basic seamanship skills and covert night operations. The effort was part of the US military's "train-the-trainer" effort, whereby these men would go back to Iraq and be responsible for future training of personnel in these techniques.¹¹²⁵

There were, however, continuing problems with the quality of training, and the rush to create new capabilities led to other problems. During late the summer and early fall of 2006; some military officials began to express discontent with the number of US military personnel being employed in the training and mentoring effort. At the time, there were 4,000 US military advisers serving on Military Transition Teams (MiTTs). The number of partnered units was, however, beginning to drop as of August 2006, with advisers being concentrated on fewer and fewer bases. Moreover, most advisors now operated that at the battalion level and above, while the type of counterinsurgency warfare being taught is actually fought, for the most part, at the company, platoon and squad level.¹¹²⁶

More tangibly, the rush to create new facilities sometimes created major problems of a different kind. The new Police Academy, for example, was so badly constructed that parts quickly became virtually uninhabitable.

Dealing with Injury, Illness, and Retirement

Additional problems occurred when Iraqi forces were killed, wounded, or retired. In March 2007, the government of Iraq was still formulating a law to reform the system of retirement and death benefits payments. According to the DoD: "The current system is based on an upfront lump sum payment and a pension of 80% of the total basic pay and allowances. This provided adequate financial support to families. These benefits have received significant attention from the MOI, and potential changes that would have undermined these initiatives have been strongly resisted. This effectively means that the MOI's employment rolls are enlarged; this is currently seen as being the most effective means of 'looking after their own.'" ¹¹²⁷

The ISF system for caring for severely wounded service members remained badly in need of reform. Currently, most wounded simply remain on the rolls in their old units in order to receive pay and benefits. The MOD recently created medical "follow-up" units across the country, to which severely wounded soldiers are assigned. According to the DoD: "This allows soldiers who are physically incapable of conducting their duties to be dropped from their unit rolls while still retaining pay and benefits." A similar plan will be implemented in the MOI.¹¹²⁸

Progress in the Transfer of High Level Command and Responsibility

The US and MNF-I have worked with Iraqis, its allies, and outside powers to move towards a full transfer of authority over military operations to the Iraqi government under

Iraqi command, subject to suitable conditions. The US and MNF-I have already taken many steps to facilitate the actual transfer authority for military operations and Iraqi force building to Iraqi hands.

At the same time, some transfers occurred before Iraqis were fully ready, and some involved combat units that could not perform serious missions. Such transfers were also limited to the degree they focused on dealing with the insurgency, rather than creating a fully combat capable national force, and left ISF units dependent on MNF-I forces in many ways:

- Iraqi forces do not have offensive airpower and have only limited operational air mobility. They have no near to mid-term prospect of getting precision air strike capability.
- They are indefinitely dependent on the US for armor and artillery support.
- They are critically short of force enablers like logistics and sustainability. It is dependent on the US for much of the shipping it needs to bring supplies and equipment into the country, and on services that require US bases to be active in Iraq.
- They are indefinitely dependent on US intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (IS&R) capabilities.
- No plans as yet exist to create Iraqi forces heavy enough to defend Iraq against Iraq's neighbors and create forces capable of defending Iraq's sovereignty.
- Iraq cannot finance the force posture it is creating.

Plans and Progress in Transfers of Responsibility in 2006

By 2006, the MNF-I and Iraqi governments had developed a formal process for transferring responsibility. The US and MNF-I stated that such transitions in provincial security were based on monthly reviews of the situation in the provinces and in the provincial capitals by the MNF Division Commander and Provincial Governor, assisted by representatives of the Iraqi Ministries of Interior and Defense, and US and UK Embassies. "The Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility (JCTSR) working group presented its monthly recommendations to the JCTSR principals about the readiness of individual provinces. Once such a decision to hand over responsibility was made, the JCTSR working group was responsible for providing oversight of the handover process, to develop a public affairs plan, and to arrange a security arrangement for the time after the transfer of control."¹¹²⁹

It also involved a four phases that MNF-I said emphasized the role of the Iraqi government and visibility to the Iraqi people:¹¹³⁰

- **Implement Partnerships.** MNF-I and its Major Subordinate Commands establish and maintain partnerships across the entire spectrum of ISF units, from battalion to ministerial level.
- **Iraqi Army Lead (IAL).** Process during which Iraqi Army units progress through stages of capability from unit formation to the ability to conduct counter-insurgency operations.
- **Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC).** Iraqi civil authorities satisfy the conditions required to assume control and to exercise responsibility for the security of their respective provinces.
- **Iraqi Security Self-Reliance.** The Government of Iraq achieves PIC (or a combination of PIC and IAL) throughout Iraq, and the government, through its security ministries, is capable of planning,

conducting, and sustaining security operations and forces.

US Reporting stated that,¹¹³¹

These phases are not strictly sequential. For example, the Iraqi Army does not have to assume the lead in a province before Coalition forces may begin transfer of provincial control. This was the case in Muthanna. Phase 1 of the security transition concept—implementing partnerships—is already complete. As described above, the second phase, Iraqi Army lead, is well under way in many provinces. The third phase, establishing provincial Iraqi control over security, will be implemented on an area-by-area basis. The Government of Iraq, jointly with military and political leadership of the United States and Coalition partners in Iraq, will assess when conditions permit handing over security responsibility for specific areas from Coalition forces to the Iraqi civil authorities. The Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility (JCTSR) has developed criteria to guide the transfer of security responsibility. Recommendations for transfer include an assessment of conditions in four categories:

- Threat Assessment
- ISF Readiness
- Local Governance Capability
- MNF-I Ability to Respond Quickly to
- Major Threats, if Needed

The recommendation to transfer security responsibility is based on the specific situation in any one province or provincial capital in the context of the overall security environment. The appropriate Multi-National Force Division Commander and Provincial Governor, assisted by representatives of the Iraqi Ministries of Interior and Defense and U.S. and United Kingdom Embassies, conduct monthly assessments of provinces and of provincial capitals. The JCTSR working group meets monthly to review the assessments and to present recommendations to the JCTSR principals regarding which provinces are ready to be transferred. Once a decision is made, the JCTSR working group will provide oversight of the development of transition directives, develop a public affairs plan, and arrange a post-transfer security agreement between MNF-I forces and provincial governors. Every transfer will ensure an effective and successful handover of security responsibilities. Moreover, the transition and reduced presence of MNF-I forces will be plainly visible to the Iraqi people.

The US, MNF-I, and the Iraqi government announced a wide range of steps to transfer responsibility to Iraqi forces in 2006. Some represented real progress, but many tried to rush Iraqi force development forward at rates driven more by politics than actual readiness and capability. The pace became far too fast in terms of real world ISF effectiveness and illustrates the danger of rushing still additional measures to transfer control to Iraq. Several years, not months, are required in some cases to make such transfers complete and effective.

The key developments in 2006 can be summarized as follows:¹¹³²

- Giving 115 Iraqi army units the lead for counterinsurgency operations in specific areas as of August 2006.¹¹³³
- In July three northern provinces – Dahuk, Irbil, and Sulamanlyah – were evaluated as ready for transition. Anbar and Basrah were considered as “not ready”, while all other provinces, including Baghdad, were evaluated as “partially ready for transition.” Three southern provinces –An Najaf, Wasit, and Maysan – are projected to assume security responsibility by February 6, 2006.¹¹³⁴
- Control of Muthanna province was transferred to the Provincial Governor and the civilian-controlled Iraqi Police Service on July 13th.¹¹³⁵

- On August 14, the 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division took control of security operations in the Mahmudiyah and Lutufiyah areas of Baghdad. The transition gave the brigade responsibility for security operations in the area in one of the safest areas in Iraq, but this was still real progress over the past and allowed Coalition forces to shift to more of a support role.
- On August 30, US Army General George Casey told reporters in Baghdad that, “over the next 12 to 18 months, I can see the Iraqi Security Forces progressing to a point where they can take on the security responsibilities for the country with very little Coalition support.”¹¹³⁶ By late August, half of Iraq’s 10 army divisions were said to be in charge of their own territories or in the process of taking over from Coalition forces.¹¹³⁷
- On September 7, 2006 the Iraqi government said it was starting to formally take control over the highest echelons of the command of its armed forces, beginning with the 8th Army Division, the Navy, and the Air Force. A US military spokesman speculated that further control transfers could take place at a pace of about two divisions per month.¹¹³⁸ The transfer of command included the creation of a chain of command for controlling the armed forces running from the Prime Minister to the defense minister, then to joint headquarters in Baghdad, and finally to the Iraqi ground-forces command. The United States said this self-sufficient line of authority was crucial for the independence of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF).¹¹³⁹
- On October 28, President Bush and Prime Minister Maliki announced they had set up a working group to speed the transfer of security responsibilities in Iraq to Iraqi government. It included the Iraqi national security advisor, minister of defense and minister of interior, the US ambassador, and the commander of MNF-I. The goals of this group would be “accelerating the pace of training the Iraqi Security Force, Iraqi assumption of command and control over Iraqi forces, and transferring responsibility for security to the government of Iraq.” The plan was presented as a response to Maliki’s wish to speed up the transfer of responsibility.¹¹⁴⁰
- On September 21 the Italian forces in Dhi Qar Province handed security responsibilities over to Iraqi forces making it the second province to come under local Iraqi control.¹¹⁴¹ This paved the way for the departure of most of Italy’s 1,600 troops by the end of 2006.¹¹⁴²
- In mid-October, Gen. George Casey estimated that there would be six or seven provinces under provincial Iraqi control by the end of 2006.¹¹⁴³
- On November 13, 2006, the Iraqi Army assumed responsibility for one of the most dangerous sections of Baghdad. The 6th Iraqi Division, Fourth Brigade, Fifth Battalion, took charge of the 23 square mile section in the south of the capital. It includes Dora, a Sunni neighborhood dominated by hard-line supporters of the old Ba’ath party regime, and also parts of the “triangle of death,” also a volatile area. The battalion is almost equally divided between Sunnis and Shi’ites and commanded by 32-year-old Colonel Ali Fadil. The US Army’s 25th Infantry Division’s Fourth Brigade will stand by and help the Iraqi unit if needed. The 4th brigade has also placed combat advisers among the Iraqi soldiers.¹¹⁴⁴

In December 2006, responsibility for security in An Najaf Province was transferred from MNF-I to the provincial government and civilian-controlled Iraqi Police. An Najaf is the third of Iraq’s 18 provinces to be designated for transition to PIC. The joint decision of the Government of Iraq and MNF-I to hand over security responsibility is the result of the An Najaf civilian authorities’ demonstrated ability to manage their own security and governance duties at the provincial level.¹¹⁴⁵

- Security responsibility for 3 southern provinces - Qadisiyah, Ninewah, and Maysan - was scheduled to be ready to assume security responsibility in the spring of 2007.¹¹⁴⁶ The transfer of responsibility in An Najaf occurred in December 2006.
- On December 17, 2006, the Prime Minister and the Ministerial Committee for National Security approved the transfer of security responsibility for Dahuk, Irbil, and Sulaymaniyah to the

Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). These provinces will transition to PIC on completion of negotiations between the Government of Iraq and the KRG to resolve a national budgetary issue concerning the defense budget. These three provinces and three others—Qadisiyah, Maysan, and Ninewah—are expected to transition to PIC by the spring of 2007. The remaining provinces are expected to achieve PIC in 2007 except for Anbar, which is projected to transfer to PIC in early 2008.¹¹⁴⁷

Progress in Early 2007

The Department of Defense announced further steps to accelerate the transfer of responsibility to Iraqi forces in its March 2007 Quarterly report, as well as new efforts to plan and coordinate an accelerated transfer. The Department of Defense reported that the US and MNF-I reported that 8 Division Headquarters, and 93 Iraqi Army battalions had assumed “the lead” for counter-insurgency operations within their assigned areas of operations as of February 13, 2007, and that Iraqi Ground Forces Command (IGFC) had assumed command and control of 6 of 10 Iraqi Army divisions (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 8th, and 10th). In contrast, the National Police, which was rated as having 6 battalions “in the lead” in May 2006, was rated as having none in the lead in February 2007.¹¹⁴⁸

The March 2007 Quarterly Report claimed that:¹¹⁴⁹

Events in January 2007 validated the post-transfer security concept. When the local An Najaf police were unexpectedly fired upon, they assessed the situation to be beyond their means to control. The provincial governor then requested assistance from the National Command Center (NCC), which alerted and deployed additional units from outside the province. Once those units arrived, an additional call for support was sent. The NCC requested helicopter and airplane support from Coalition forces, which also sent a Quick Reaction Force to assist. The outcome was a decisive victory by the ISF.

The British reported additional developments in the south. Major Ormond-King stated that British forces would be ready to turn over full control of Basra by the spring of 2007. However, he also stated that there were no British plans to disarm the Shi’ite militia groups that operate in the city. The feasibility of fully transferring control of security to Iraqi forces while large and well-armed militias continue to operate remains to be seen.

The Department of Defense also described potential improvements in US and Iraqi coordination in planning and implementing the transfer of responsibility in the course of late 2006 and early 2007,¹¹⁵⁰

The President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Iraq met in Amman, Jordan, in November 2006, to review the recommendations regarding the transfer of security responsibilities to the Government of Iraq. These recommendations included the establishment of nine committees focused on the following issues: MOD training and equipping, MOI training and equipping, transfer of operational control of Iraqi Army Divisions to the Government of Iraq, transfer of provincial control to the Government of Iraq, development of ministerial capacities, improved security coordination between MNF-I and the Government of Iraq, development of an Iraqi counter-terrorism capability, development of an Iraqi National Intelligence system, and development of a National Security Architecture. With the approval of the Iraqi Prime Minister, implementation of this effort is under way.

...The first series of reports from the nine committees was completed on February 19, 2007. The committees will continue their efforts toward acceleration and transference of security responsibilities until completion. After the transfer of security responsibilities is complete, a long-

term security relationship serving the interests of the United States, Iraq, the region, and the rest of the world can be established.

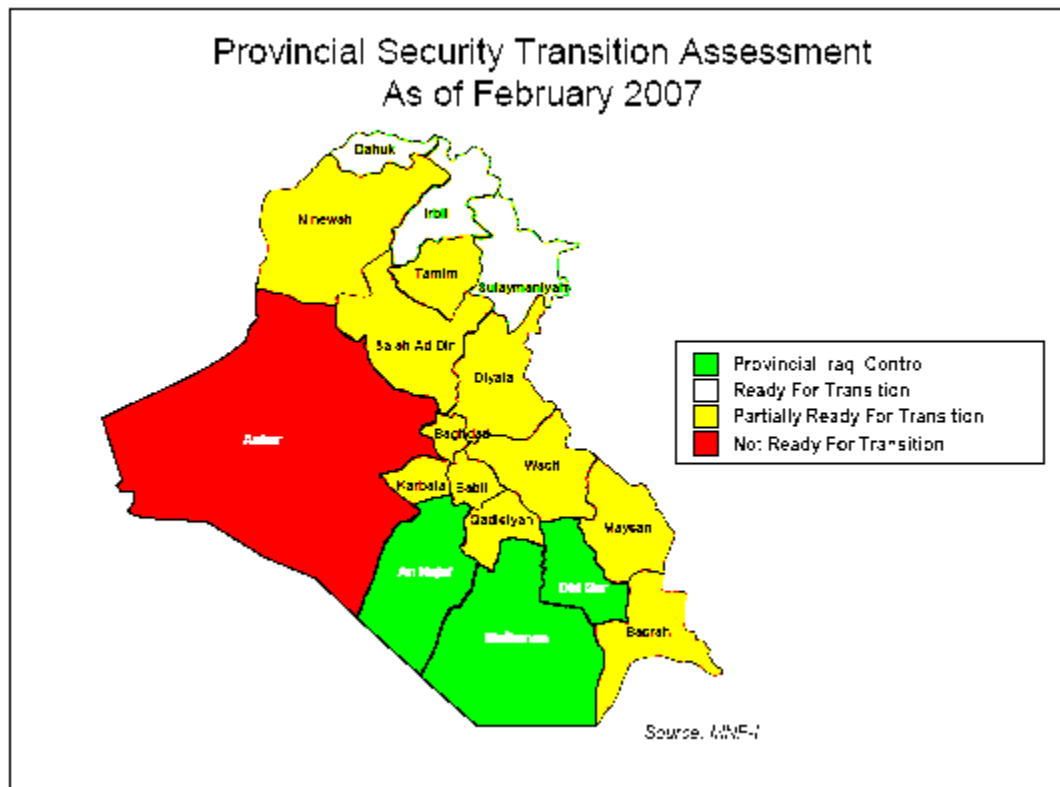
...The Coalition is focusing on improving the proficiency of all military and police units, primarily through the efforts of Transition Teams. These teams, composed of 6,000 advisors in more than 480 teams, are embedded at all levels of Iraqi units in all major subordinate commands.

...The transfer of security responsibility from Coalition forces to the Government of Iraq reflects Iraq's ability to protect its citizens and safeguard its territory. As Iraqis take on more responsibility for security, Coalition forces move into supporting roles, while maintaining sufficient forces on the ground to help Iraq consolidate and secure its gains.

The Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility (JCTSR) has developed criteria to guide the transfer of security responsibility to Iraq. Recommendations for transfer include an assessment of conditions in four categories: Threat Assessment, ISF Readiness, Local Governance Capability, and MNF-I Ability to Respond Quickly to Major Threats (if needed). The appropriate Multi-National Force division commander and provincial governor, assisted by representatives of the Iraqi Ministries of Interior and Defense and U.S. and United Kingdom Embassies, conduct monthly assessments of provinces and provincial capitals. Once a decision is made to transfer security responsibilities, the JCTSR provides transition directives, develops a public affairs plan, and arranges a post-transfer security agreement between MNF-I and provincial governors.

The overall progress reported in transferring responsibility at the provincial level is shown in **Figure 5.2**.

Figure 5.2
Transfer of Responsibility to ISF as of February 2007



Source: Department of Defense, Quarterly Report to Congress, March 2007. p. 23

Uncertain Political Cosmetics

Unfortunately, transfer efforts continued to be attempted at a rate where they could not be realistic. For example, the Department of Defense August 2006 Quarterly Status report on Iraq stated that the ISF might be able to transition to control nine of the 18 provinces by the end of 2006. It did not explain why this would be possible or provide any risk assessment. It also did not state what level of continued US support would be needed after the transfer.¹¹⁵¹

The Department of Defense Quarterly status report for August 2006 warned that,¹¹⁵²

The new Minister of Defense, Abd al-Qadr Muhammad Jassim al-Mufraji, is confronting the challenges he faces and is already making his mark...Close and effective relationships are being forged by team members with all senior MOD headquarters officials, and the confidence, and thus capacity, of these officials is strengthening. The ministries and the Joint Headquarters are expected to be in the lead with Coalition support by the end of 2007. However, a partnership with these institutions will be required through at least the first peaceful transfer of power in 2010.

Media report after media chronicled the fact that many, if not most, Iraqi forces were not actually capable of taking full responsibility. The ISF was not capable of fully independent operational and intelligence planning in command in any province and had severe qualitative limits in most. Divisions and brigades were still forming, and at the battalion level, the March 2007 Department of Defense Quarterly report still warned that virtually all of the Iraqi units involved “still require substantial logistics and sustainment support from Coalition forces.”¹¹⁵³

Transfer of US and MNF-I Bases to the ISF

The transfer of bases from US and other MNF-I forces to the ISF has also made progress, and helped defuse Iraqi fears that the US and MNF-I sought to be permanent “occupiers.” The Coalition had closed 48 of 110 Forward Operating Bases by August 2006, handing over 31 to different Iraqi security forces, and 17 to the Ministry of Finance.

The Department of Defense reported in August that, “MNF-I will efficiently consolidate its footprint in Iraq to reduce its military basing requirements progressively. Specifically, MNF-I seeks to minimize its presence in major cities while building the flexibility required to support other elements in Iraq, including Coalition partners, PRTs, Transition Teams, Department of State activities, and other supporting units and entities. This process will culminate in the transition through Operational and Strategic Overwatch, which will leverage and maximize support through a minimum number of strategically located FOBs and Convoy Support Centers.”¹¹⁵⁴

Three more Forward Operating Bases were closed and transferred by January 2007.¹¹⁵⁵ Furthermore, the US reported that continued transfer of bases to the ISF was a significant element of its strategy,¹¹⁵⁶

MNF-I is consolidating its locations in Iraq to reduce its temporary basing requirements using a “bottom-up” conditions-based process to synchronize basing requirements with Coalition forces requirements and the projected command-and-control structure. The timeline for this process is being adjusted to support the short-term surge for the Baghdad Security Plan. However, MNF-I has already reduced its presence in major cities while developing the flexibility and maintaining the force level required to support other elements in Iraq, including Coalition partners, Provincial

Reconstruction Teams, Transition Teams, other supporting entities, and the Department of State. This process will maximize support through a minimum number of strategically located forward operating bases and convoy support centers. Because most of the ISF have been strategically based on former Coalition bases, MNF-I is actively engaging the Ministry of Finance and other entities in the Government of Iraq in order to identify future tenants to take possession of the remaining bases.

Transfer of Detainees

Progress in another critical aspect of ISF development -- transferring detainees from MNF-I to ISF control -- has been severely impacted by sectarian and ethnic divisions. The US has reported that that MNF-I had begun training Iraqi guards for a potential transition of the Coalition detention facilities and detainees. It stated that transitioning detainee operations was a three-phase process, and showed the detainee population shown in **Figure 5.6.**¹¹⁵⁷

In June 2006, MNF-I, in coordination with the Government of Iraq, conducted a large-scale release of detainees in support of the newly formed national unity government. The release served as a visible symbol of the government's commitment to national unity and reconciliation in the progress toward democratic governance and the rule of law. MNF-I released 2,500 low-risk detainees over a period of three weeks. Coupled with the 500 detainees from the normal Combined Review and Release Board process, MNF-I had a net reduction of more than 2,000 detainees in June. A MNF-I special board reviewed approximately 6,500 records to identify the low-risk detainees. Each file was also reviewed by the MNF-I Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence to consider any additional intelligence reports. Detainees involved in violent acts, IED making/placement, financing insurgent operations, identified as key insurgent leaders, or who have been recaptured were not considered for release...

- Phase 1 consists of individual and collective training of Iraqi guards and leaders, including training alongside their U.S. counterparts inside the facility.
- Phase 2 consists of the removal of U.S. guards and establishment of a U.S. transition team to supervise Iraqi Security Forces and to maintain legal custody of detainees.
- Phase 3 consists of the final removal of all U.S. personnel and turnover of the facilities and legal custody of the detainees to the Government of Iraq.

The criteria for transfer includes the requirement for the Government of Iraq to possess the legal authority to hold security detainees, each facility demonstrating the ability to meet the care and custody standard, and the MOJ having effective oversight of the program.

The MNF-I worried, however, that such efforts were still in Phase 1 as of August 2006. It stated that, "significant challenges exist to ultimately meeting these criteria. The Iraqi Corrections System has not demonstrated since that time that it has the capacity to effectively resource and run a major facility, such as Camp Bucca."¹¹⁵⁸

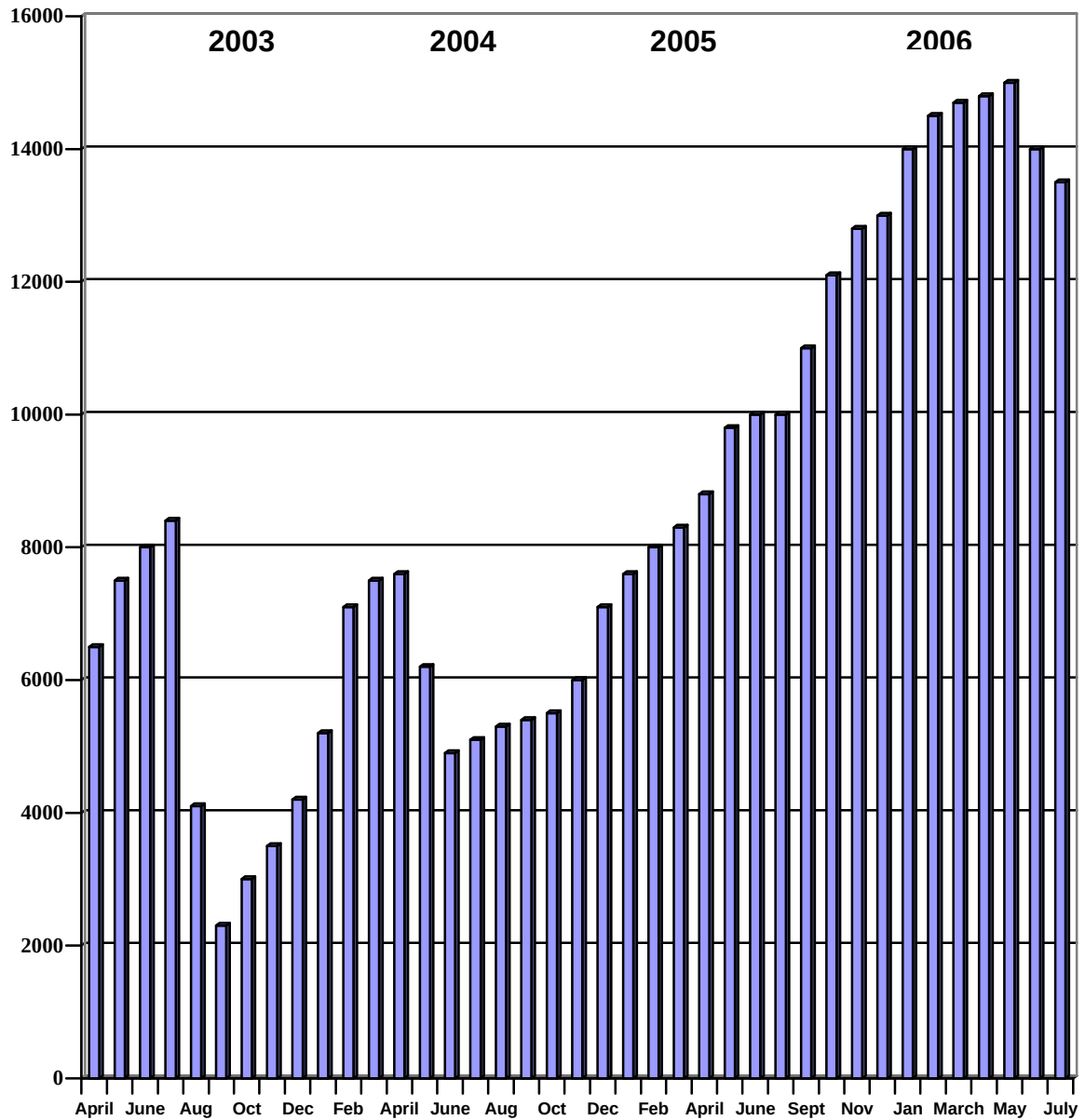
The MNF-I did begin training Iraqi guards for a potential transition of the Coalition detention facilities and detainees, and transitioning detainee operations in a three-phased process

- o Phase 1 consists of individual and collective training of Iraqi guards and leaders, including training alongside their U.S. counterparts inside the facility.
- o Phase 2 consists of the removal of U.S. guards and establishment of a U.S. transition team to supervise Iraqi Security Forces and to maintain legal custody of detainees.

- o Phase 3 consists of the final removal of all U.S. personnel and turnover of the facilities and legal custody of the detainees to the Government of Iraq.
- o The criteria for transfer includes the requirement for the Government of Iraq to possess the legal authority to hold security detainees, each facility demonstrating the ability to meet the care and custody standard, and the MOJ having effective oversight of the program.

Given the sectarian and ethnic composition of the guard forces, however, “serious questions remain as to whether they will be able to develop the required standards of care and custody. The most significant obstacle remains establishing the legal authority to hold security detainees. There is widespread opposition inside the Sunni political leadership to providing this authority to the Government of Iraq.”¹¹⁵⁹

Figure 5.6
Detainee Population: 2003-2006



*Derived from US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 61; Note: +/- 10% margin of error

Some aspects of the problem are clearly getting worse. The UN reported in November 2006 that police and military security operations continued to be based on massive sweeps that resulted in growing numbers of individuals detained and without access to adequate judicial review.¹¹⁶⁰ According to the Ministry of Human Rights, the total number of detainees for the entire country was 29,256 (13,571 of whom are in MNF I detention facilities) at the end of October, a slight decrease from the number of 30,104 detainees reported at the end of September 35,543 reported at the end of August, and 28,378 in July. The UN report noted the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights reported the following breakout of detainees by jurisdiction. These results are summarized in **Figure 5.7**:

Figure 5.7
Iraqi Holdings of Detainees by Jurisdiction"¹¹⁶¹

	September	October
MNF – I	13,571	13,571
MOJ	8,450	8,528
MOI	4,181	3,613
MOD	873	873
MOLSA	480	456
Totals except KRG	27,555	27,041
Totals in Kurdistan	2,549	2,215
Totals all over Iraq	30,104	29,256

The UN also reported serious problems in this aspect of ISF force development:¹¹⁶²

Arbitrary detention, grievous conditions of detention, allegations of torture and mistreatment continue to remain an issue of serious concern in Iraq. The absence of judicial guarantees is a pattern and individuals are often arrested without warrant, not informed of the charges against them, and not brought promptly before an investigative judge. Most of the arrests emerge from various factors: the “state of emergency,” extended by the Council of Representatives for an additional 30 days on 2 October, as well as the Anti-Terrorism Law promulgated in 2005 and continuous security sweeps resulting from the various security plans in Baghdad. All those factors continue to swell the number of detainees and overwhelm the judicial system. HRO is also of the view that protracted internment of detainees for “imperative reasons of security”, without judicial oversight, is de facto arbitrary detention.

The synchronization of Iraq’s key justice sector institutions (computerized sharing of data and improved collaboration of police, prisons and courts) is crucial to enhance the effectiveness of administration of justice, as well as remedy arbitrary detention. HRO hopes that the increase in the number of judges will facilitate processing a growing number of judicial cases and avoid impunity for major human rights violations. 86. The process of hand over of MNF-I prisons to Iraqi control continues with the transfer of authority for Abu Ghraib prison to the Iraqi Ministry of Justice (MoJ) and the Iraqi Army on 2 September. The Suse prison was handed over to the Ministry of Justice on 16 September in an attempt to create enough space for the detainees at the Ministry of Interior (MoI) custody to be transferred to MoJ. UNAMI also finds encouragement in the continuous release of MNF-I security detainees by the Combined Release and Review Board (CRRB).

The Joint Detention Committee (JDC) aimed at reviewing the cases of individuals held for over 18 months continues to meet regularly. The situation of juveniles in detention is particularly worrisome. According to Iraqi law, juveniles are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) since March 2005, although due to a lack of facilities, juveniles held outside Baghdad are still in the custody of the Ministry of Justice. According to the figures provided by MoLSA, on 12 October 2006, 406 juveniles were being detained in 3 facilities in Baghdad, among them 22 females. Due to the fact that there is only one investigative judge in Baghdad dealing with juvenile cases, judicial oversight is not guaranteed. An increase in juvenile arrests has been noted by MoLSA officials as the result of the new security plan in Baghdad.

A recent joint MNF-I and Iraqi experts' inspection of Al-Kharkh juvenile prison, carried out at MoLSA's request, revealed that there were 284 inmates, aged from 7 to 22 years, in deplorable hygiene and medical conditions with signs of physical and sexual abuse allegedly committed by the prison guards and/or by their fellow inmates. Some were being detained without charges or convictions.

Inhumane conditions of detention were noticed during the inspection: overcrowding (4 cells holding approximately 70 juveniles each); lack of food, potable water and ventilation and inadequate medical care (3 cases of tuberculosis). Moreover, the convicted were not separated from pre-trial detainees. Of all inmates, 41 inmates were handed over from the Ministry of Interior to the MoLSA bearing signs of mistreatment/torture and sexual abuse. 89. Poor detention conditions have been revealed in the past, during joint MNF-I and Iraqi inspections in places of detention under the control of the Ministry of Interior, Defense and Special Forces throughout the country. HRO welcomes the revival of those inspections following a formal authorization to conduct those inspections issued by the Prime Minister.

Plans for a forthcoming amnesty, as part of the National Reconciliation Plan announced by Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki on 25 June in an attempt to boost national reconciliation, are being articulated. According to information communicated to HRO, draft legislation has not yet been circulated. The future amnesty in Iraq will, however, benefit primarily individuals currently in detention (mostly neither charged nor convicted) as well as individual members of the insurgency, militias and other armed groups, who renounce violence and, consistent with international standards, have not been responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

HRO recommends that the category of offences to be covered by the proposed amnesty be clearly defined so as to establish legal certainty and to eliminate ambiguities in implementation and to have national final lists of those to be excluded from the amnesty so as to avoid individual institutions drawing up their own lists. As a general principle, an amnesty shall be without effect with respect to the victims' right to reparation and shall not prejudice the right to know. Amnesty should also exclude those suspected of having committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and torture.

In Kirkuk, HRO continued to receive reports alleging that Kurdish militias detain individuals and transfer them to the Kurdistan Region without notifying governorate authorities or the police. There have been allegations that officials in Kirkuk are aware of such practices, yet no effort has been made to halt them. According to official reports, on 30 October, at the request of the Human Rights Committee, the Legal, Health, Social Affairs, Human Rights and Women Parliamentary Committees of the Kurdistan National Assembly met with several KRG ministers.

These Committees have visited prisons in Dahuk, Suleimaniyah and Erbil and have concluded that a large number of prisoners have been arrested without judicial intervention; most were arrested under violent circumstances; they have been held without trial for long periods and there have been complaints by family members that prisoners were held in unknown locations. The Committees presented their findings and recommended prison and corrective centre reforms.

***Long Wars Require Long Efforts: Real-World Iraqi
Dependence Through 2010***

The MNF-I and US have sent mixed signals as to how successful the security-transfer process really is. The internal reports on ISF readiness are more critical than the public statements made by the US. Public statements have not tied transfers to effectiveness, did not explain the level of continuing Iraqi dependence, and do not address any aspect of the need to expand ISF capabilities from light counterinsurgency forces to forces fully capable of defending the country against foreign threats. Some statements have also been too optimistic. For example, General Casey speculated in late August 2006 that Iraqi forces might achieve self-sufficiency within 18 months, although he made it clear that the US remained committed to event-driven US force reductions:

“I don’t have a date, but I can see over the next 12 to 18 months the Iraqi security forces progressing to a point where they can take on the security responsibilities for the country with very little coalition support. (...) The future coalition presence, 12 to 18 months from now, is going to be decided by the Iraqi government”¹¹⁶³

In September, President Talibani suggested a similar schedule, saying that the Iraqi Army would be ready to face its challenges on its own “within two years”.¹¹⁶⁴ In an early September meeting with visiting British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett, Iraqi President Jalal Talibani predicted a shorter timeline, stating that he believed fighting in Iraq would abate by the end of 2007, and that Iraqi forces would be able to handle any remaining violence.¹¹⁶⁵

In the real world, however, it is apparent that proper training of the ISF will take years and require a serious advisory and aid effort well beyond 2008. This reality is reflected uncharacteristically frank in passages often hidden in the midst of larger Defense Department reports. The FY 2008 Global War on Terror budget request states that **“Over the coming years, the U.S. military, along with our Coalition partners will continue to build, enhance and develop the ISF to full operational capacity.”**¹¹⁶⁶ Another passage buried deep in the Department of Defense status report for August warned that,¹¹⁶⁷

The new Minister of Defense, Abd al-Qadr Muhammad Jassim al-Mufraji, is confronting the challenges he faces and is already making his mark. Previous logjams in acquisitions and contracting are being eased, and he is working closely with MNSTC-I to proceed on force development, force expansion, and logistics support. The MOD Transition Team grew to meet this accelerated pace of business and expanded to more than 50, half of whom are Military Professional Resources Incorporated contractors.

Close and effective relationships are being forged by team members with all senior MOD headquarters officials, and the confidence, and thus capacity, of these officials is strengthening. The ministries and the Joint Headquarters are expected to be in the lead with Coalition support by the end of 2007. ***However, a partnership with these institutions will be required through at least the first peaceful transfer of power in 2010.***

Developments in the Ministry of Defense

“This is occurring slower than we originally projected.”

-Gen. George Casey.¹¹⁶⁸

The Iraqi Ministry of Defense controls most of the Iraqi forces with serious warfighting capability. As of March 2007, its forces consisted of the IGFC, the Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF), the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy (including Marines), with the Joint Headquarters and the MOD HQ providing strategic direction and support. The Iraqi military forces under its control consist of an authorized strength of approximately 177,000 personnel, and are centered on an Army with nine infantry divisions, one mechanized infantry division, and associated combat support/combat support units. Two additional infantry divisions were in development as part of Prime Minister Maliki’s Expansion Plan. The Iraqi Air Force consisted of six squadrons; the Navy had two squadrons and a Marine battalion.¹¹⁶⁹

The MOD has also taken over most of the training mission. The Iraqi Training and Doctrine Command Headquarters reached initial operating capability in July 2006 and it was planned that it would eventually command and control all Iraqi institutional training facilities. The Iraqi Training and Doctrine Command, under the command of the JHQ, consisted of the Tactical Training Command and the National Defense University. The Tactical Training Command will begin to assume control of the institutional tactical training facilities—six Regional Training Centers and three Iraqi Training Battalions—in 2007. The National Defense University has reached initial operating capability and has started to operate institutions of professional development (e.g., Iraqi Staff Colleges, the National Defense College, and the Strategic Studies Institute).

The MoD advisory effort was strengthened during 2006. At the headquarters level, the Ministry of Defense Transition Team grew to more than 50, half of whom were contractors from Military Professional Resources Inc.¹¹⁷⁰ The capabilities of the Ministry also continued to increase. It spent over 85% of its 2006 budget; and it developed a coherent 2007 budget submission, and generated, codified and prioritized its plans and problems. It began to introduce elaborate checks and balances into the contracting system to try prevent the previous level of corruption.

Nevertheless, there are still serious deficiencies in the Ministry, in particular an immature acquisition process and a complex approval process for the commitment of funds. As a result, the MOD is now pursuing the bulk of its requirements for equipment, services and infrastructure through the US Foreign Military Sales office, using funds transferred from the MOD budget.

The political climate also remained difficult. By August 2006, a number of Shi’ite leaders were calling for the dismissal of both the Minister of Defense and Minister of the Interior. Prime Minister Maliki resisted such efforts. He also sought to find ways in which Arab Sunnis, Arab Shi’ites, and Kurds could cooperate in reviewing ISF operations of all kinds, and help reduce the constant charges that operations favored one side over the other.

There was little tangible progress in many aspects of national conciliation through the spring of 2007, although there was progress in some aspects of local security politics. On October 2, 2006, Maliki announced a plan that called for committees of neighborhood leaders in their own community to try to deal with sectarian and ethnic violence by working with the ISF and Iraqi authorities to plan operations like checkpoints, identify high risks, and clear identify legitimate ISF operations from rogue or deception operations.¹¹⁷¹ Under the direction of the Minister of Defence, this outreach policy has continued and is beginning to pay dividends in areas such as Anbar and Diyala, where local and tribal leaders are working with the Iraqi Army against the terrorists.

Problems in the Ministry

Leadership and management remain poor to uncertain at the ministerial level. All of Iraq's ministries face serious problems with sectarian and ethnic differences, understaffing, a lack of key skill sets, facility and equipment problems, and corruption. The Department of Defense report from March 2007 summarized these problems as follows,¹¹⁷²

The Minister of Defense has had some success in stabilizing the MOD, which suffered through a string of assassinations, widespread intimidation and death threats against employees, and a major corruption scandal in the year following its establishment in March 2004. The current minister recognizes the importance of forging a close partnership with the Coalition and is emphasizing joint initiatives, such as force replenishment, generation, and deployability. MOD's capacity to determine priorities and translate them into procurement requirements is improving.

However, competence levels in certain parts of the MOD remain low. The MOD suffers from a lack of strategic policy development and implementation and an inefficient procurement and budgeting process. A culture of distrust coupled with incompetence in certain key areas has made committing and obligating funds very difficult. The Coalition's MOD Transition Team is providing mentoring support to all senior MOD officials in developing their capacity to manage key ministerial functions, such as personnel management, budgeting, logistics, intelligence and security, acquisitions and contracting, plans and policies, communications, and inspections and investigations.

The current MOD team consists of approximately 50 advisors as well as 6 U.S. military personnel advising MOD civilians and 12 civilian advisors from other Coalition countries. There are no U.S. Government civilian advisors at the MOD, which is problematic in that MOD civilians are not provided direct mentorship by their U.S. counterparts. A similarly scaled effort occurs at the JHQ, with U.S. military personnel comprising about half of the advisors and the rest roughly split between U.S. civilian contractors and military personnel from other Coalition countries.

Some MNF-I experts feel, however, that such comments overstate the MoD's deficiencies. They feel that strategic policy direction has improved considerably. They note that a sophisticated exercise to determine and order 2007 capability requirements has been completed; and the majority of procurement orders are now being pursued through FMS. At the same time, they warn that the intense scrutiny of MOD activities by the Commission of Public Integrity, prompted by the legacy of previous MOD corruption, has created a climate of fear that is slowing the MOD internal decision process.

At the same time, they feel that this has reinforced the importance of the Coalition's MOD Transition Team role in providing mentoring support to all senior MOD officials in developing their capacity to manage key ministerial functions, such as personnel

management, budgeting, logistics, intelligence and security, acquisitions and contracting, plans and policies, communications, and inspections and investigations. They also note that there are no US civilian advisors at the ministry, which is problematic because MOD civilians are not provided direct mentorship by their US counterparts.

Iraqi Intelligence Agencies

Iraq's developing intelligence agencies have tangled with the same ethno-sectarian problems afflicting the Iraqi police and Army, leading to a serious split along sectarian lines. Iraq's primary intelligence agency is the Iraqi National Intelligence Service (INIS). This organization was created in spring 2004 by the CPA. According to an anonymous US military official, the INIS is "funded completely by the Central Intelligence Agency and not by the Iraqi government."¹¹⁷³ US funding for the INIS amounted to \$3 billion over a three year period starting in 2004.¹¹⁷⁴ The INIS is headed by Gen. Mohammed Shahwani, a Sunni Arab.

Deep divisions existed within the new Iraqi government over how much various elements of the INIS could be trusted since the agency's creation. Mohammed Shahwani was involved in the CIA-backed coup against Saddam Hussein years ago, owns a home in the US and maintains a very close relationship with US officials. The INIS officially reports directly to Prime Minister Maliki, yet for most of 2005 and part of 2006, Shahwani was banned from cabinet meetings. The agency employs many agents from the Hussein era, further hurting its reputation in the Shi'ite led government. The INIS also did little to earn favor with the Shi'ite elites in 2004 and 2005, arresting some prominent Shi'ites and accusing SCIRI of being on Iran's payroll. Ministers in the Iraqi government charged that the US and CIA were still controlling the service and would not turn it over to Iraq.

The deep distrust of the INIS resulted in top Shi'ite officials attempting to have Shahwani removed in 2005. He remained in his job due to strong American support and the US fear of top Shi'ite official's close ties with Iran. Failing this, a parallel intelligence agency was set up under the auspices of the minister of state for national security, Sherwan Waili, a Shi'ite. The ministry is technically a second-tier organization with a small budget. However, the ministry hired its employees on contracts to get around its budget. This allowed the agency to expand dramatically in the 2006, and it boasted 1,200 agents as of April, 2007. According to an anonymous Western diplomat, the agency has "representatives in every province. At the moment, it's a slightly shady parallel organization."¹¹⁷⁵

The parallel Shi'ite-led intelligence agency has provided a hard-line Shi'ite view in national security meetings. The agency has also been accused of pursuing investigations based on sectarian motivations. In its most controversial operation, the agency spied on a Sunni Member of Parliament, Abdel Nasser Janabi. The agency submitted evidence to the Iraqi judiciary, accusing Janabi of being behind the killings of more than 150 Shi'ites. The agency has not, as of May 2007, pursued any investigations into Shi'ite-led sectarian killings.¹¹⁷⁶

Weaknesses in Iraq's Regular Military Forces

The Defense Department noted that in early 2007, force generation of the Iraqi Security Force had been “nearly completed.”¹¹⁷⁷ In fact, however, weaknesses do exist in both the MOD and overall structure of Iraqi forces. For example, the January 2007 NIE on Iraq states that, “Sectarian divisions erode the dependability of many units, many are hampered by personnel and equipment shortfalls, and a number of Iraqi units have refused to serve outside of the areas where they were recruited.” The NIE on Iraq also characterized the weakness of the ISF as “persistent.”¹¹⁷⁸ The fact that all units have been issued 100% of their equipment requirements does not mean that they retain them, or that their equipment is adequate.

Readiness is uncertain at best. Unfortunately, the Department of Defense has stopped issuing public reporting on Level I-IV reporting and substituted vague and undefined levels of readiness and capability. The MNF-I reports that “Readiness and capability reporting systems have been implemented and are progressively being developed,” but cannot provide any details.

The Iraqi Army is still a relatively a fragile structure that may well be able to succeed over time, but whose development cannot be rushed, and which is not ready or equipped to fight without substantial US support. The Iraqi Special Operations Forces is 1,000 strong, organized into a CT battalion, a commando battalion, a support battalions and a special reconnaissance unit, with plans for further expansion. The combined strength of the Army and ISOF, however, is far too small to bring security to the entire nation, particularly if this means ongoing urban warfare or “pacification” in Baghdad, and spreading civil violence in the great Basra area, Kirkuk, and Mosul

Key elements of the Iraqi regular forces were not able to take on the necessary missions in Baghdad, and “Operation Together Forward” exposed other failings that Iraqi and MNF-I commanders are now addressing and seeking to correct. As of early 2007, Iraqi forces could not operate in hostile areas in Anbar without massive US support. Initial problems in deploying Iraqi troops to Baghdad as part of the 2007 security crackdown are now being overcome, but they do illustrate the continuing problems in ISF forces. .

The Iraqi air force still has around 900 men, although plans exist to expand it to over 3,000 by the end of 2007. It is equipped for counter-insurgency operations, with ISR and transport aircraft and a growing rotary wing fleet, but does not have any aircraft that can provide combat support or attack capability.

The 1,200-man navy is organized into two afloat squadrons and four marine companies and is expanding its capability with the acquisition of offshore support vessels, patrol ships and boats and a number of smaller vessels. It is taking on combat missions, but is far from being capable of securing Iraqi waters or being able to deal with potential threats like Iran.

***A Force Too Light and Too Undeveloped to Succeed On
Its Own***

The US and its allies have made a massive contribution to Iraqi force development. MNSTC-I has spent nearly \$19B over 3 years, over half of which has been in support of the MOD, to train and equip Iraqi Joint Forces. This financial support is in addition to Government of Iraq funds: the MOD spent nearly \$3B last year and its 2007 budget is over \$4B.

The fact remains, however, that manning, motivation, leadership, and pay are only part of the problem. The Army - the key focus of MOD activity - lacks armor, heavy firepower, tactical mobility, and an Iraqi Air Force capable of providing combat support. No Administration official has presented a plan to properly equip the Iraqi forces to stand on their own, or give them the necessary funding to phase out US combat and air support in 12 to 18 months. (

The Department of Defense quarterly status report issued in August 2006 dodged around some of these issues, but still provided important warnings about how long effective force development would take:

Army battalions is said to be 97% complete, and the support forces are only 65% complete. However, other parts of the report note that absenteeism is an average rate of 15%. It notes that, "there is currently no judicial punishment system with the Iraqi Army. Therefore, Iraqi Army Commanders have little legal leverage to compel their soldiers to combat, and soldiers and police can quit with impunity." (p. 58)

The MNF-I reports that a Service Discipline Law will come into effect by summer 2007, giving commanders the legal powers to clamp down on unauthorized absenteeism. This may make a difference, but the effectiveness of such a law has yet to be demonstrated.

- Says the army has 92% of authorized equipment, but fails to describe lack of armor, artillery, heavy squad weapons, and mobility. (pp. 55-56) The focus on numbers trained and equipped ignores the fact that the equipment and facilities were often inadequate and left Iraqi forces dependent on MNF-I support. (p. 41) The figures on page 42 portray major gaps between training and equipment in several categories of Iraqi forces, even ignoring their lack of heavy weapons and support equipment.
- Notes that the, "lack of junior officers and NCOs continues to be one of the biggest factors impeding the development of Iraqi forces..." Efforts are being made to correct this, but no clear picture of timelines and capabilities are provided. (pp. 55-56)
- States that the training effort for the MoD has been expanded. However the statements that the ministries and Joint Headquarters are expected to be in the lead by the end of 2007 are too heavily qualified to be meaningful. (p. 56): In fact, the report warns that, "A partnership with those institutions will be required at least through 2010." (p. 57)
- The data on "Coalition Support Requirements" focuses on logistics, and ignores the need for intelligence, armor, artillery, and air support. It touches on only one part of a major continuing issue where no clear plan seems to currently exist. (pp. 57-58).
- No assessment of naval capability, no force plans. (p. 54)
- Says there is plan to double air force manning from 750 to 1,500 by end 2007. Then describes major continuing operational and readiness problems with existing aircraft that do not include combat aircraft. (pp. 54-55).

- The report does address the major sectarian problems in the regular forces. It does not give any figures or detailed data, but is much franker than it the past about the fact that most units tend to mirror the ethnic and sectarian areas where they operated (although the report fails to mention this is not true of Sunnis). Emphasis is put on the number of Sunni and Kurdish officers in higher command slots, but growing problems for Sunni officers are not addressed. (p. 58)

The DoD quarterly report for November 2006 also pointed out a range of serious shortcomings in the development of the portions of the ISF under MOD control:

The number of Iraqi Army personnel who are present for duty at any time, however, may well be less than the authorized strength due to casualties, desertion, and leaves. The greatest contributor to the difference between authorized strength and present-for duty strength is a leave policy that places about one-third of all soldiers on leave at any time so that they can take their pay home to their families. This is driven by the lack of a nationwide banking system.

For divisions facing sustained combat operations within their normal operational area, the Iraqi Army reports AWOL rates of 5%–8%. These rates have risen to more than 50% when units were directed to deploy to areas of combat outside of their normal areas of operations.

Personnel Shortages – Marginal overall manning exacerbated by a liberal leave policy, lack of officers and NCOs, no existing Military Occupational Specialty tracking system, and personnel assignment mismanagement.

Inadequate Logistics Infrastructure – Shortcomings in fuel supply and distribution; lack of repair parts, tools, and capability to conduct all lines of maintenance; poor and inconsistent life support; and shortage of medical specialty personnel.

Equipment Shortages – Existing shortages in vehicles, weapons, and essential equipment readiness items, such as tools and medic bags; no capability to replace battle-damaged equipment; and little equipment accountability.

Enablers – Limited Iraqi Army capability to mitigate the loss of Coalition-provided fire support and dedicated medical evacuation assets.¹¹⁷⁹

The MOD has tried to address some of these issues. For example, it launched a major program to recruit and train an additional 30,000 troops, to improve Army manning in October 2006. As of April 2007, the initiative had produced 25,000 extra troops and the program was being extended through September 2007 to provide a further 16,000 beyond the initial 30,000 target. Nevertheless, many of these same themes were repeated in the Department's March 2007 Quarterly Report, although the report stated that significant progress had been made in the MOD's high command:¹¹⁸⁰

MOD logistics and sustainment is still a relatively immature system that requires significant Coalition assistance, especially in warehouse/depot operations and transportation. Development and implementation of MOD strategic logistics policy is particularly immature. The Iraqi Army has been slow to support sustainment, and there is limited indigenous capability and capacity to replace battle-damaged equipment.

MNSTC-I has oversight of approximately 60 transition teams (of the 400 total teams for the MOD and the MOI) assigned to assist in logistics and sustainment issues. Throughout 2007, the focus will be on developing the areas of fuel, maintenance, budget, sustainment, ammunition, medical equipment and supply account- ability, and national warehouse. Coalition forces continue to provide Combat Service Support by backstopping life support and fuel during times of emergency. In April 2006, the MOD assumed management of life support and its contracts, but Coalition

forces are still assisting *in extremis*. Overall, support to the Iraqi Army provided by Coalition forces has decreased dramatically.

Approximately 90% of the planned Headquarters and Service Companies have been formed and are at some level of operational capability. MNSTC-I has distributed all key equipment to the Headquarters and Service Companies. Although the Headquarters and Service Companies are gaining some capability, Coalition forces and MNC-I logistics units will continue partnering and mentoring them as they assume their roles and in case of emergency or failure within the new Iraqi logistics system.

...The MOD and the JHQ are developing processes to reduce the reliance on MNF-I to direct, support, and sustain MOD forces. The transition of Iraqi Army divisions and the IGFC to MOD control marks the first time since the removal of the former regime that any Iraqi Army combat forces are under complete Iraqi command and control.

The transition also means that the MOD, through the JHQ, has assumed responsibility for support and sustainment planning for these divisions as well as for forces transferring to JHQ command and control in the future. The JHQ planning and coordination processes are immature and are currently hampered by bureaucracy, lack of trust and understanding, lack of experience with strategic planning, and dependence on Coalition support and funding.

Once again, the MNF-I view is more favorable. Its experts note that the MOD is taking financial responsibility for the National Maintenance contract, under which this service will be provided through external contractor support while the MOD develops an indigenous maintenance capability. They also note that the MOD has taken over full responsibility for the provision of life support and no longer has to call on emergency coalition aid. They report that the requirement for coalition provided fuel supplies has decreased dramatically.

There are severe dangers, however, in exaggerating the progress in developing the MoD and regular Iraqi forces. For example, General Casey stated at a press conference on October 26, 2006 that, "During the battle of Fallujah, we had a handful of battalions in the Iraqi army, and they operated in support of us. Today, six of the 10 Iraqi divisions are in the lead; 30 of the 36 Iraqi brigades. Almost 90 of the 112 Iraqi battalions are in the lead, and we operate in support of them."

This statement was technically true, but only because of the virtually meaningless definitions now used for transferring responsibility and "taking the lead." The reality is that transferring responsibility for security and saying that Iraqi units "are in the lead" hides serious disparities in the quality and effectiveness of many of the forces involved, many of which are far from being ready to fight in any meaningful way on their own.

The problems in the Ministry of Defense and regular forces are less serious than those in the Ministry of the Interior and police, but they again are going to take at least several years to correct. The MoD and Iraqi regular forces are not going to be ready to operate on their own in 2008, and will require a continuing Coalition military, advisory and aid effort.

Exaggerating Iraqi readiness can make it easier for some US politicians and experts to demand that Iraq assume responsibility, and take over the burden of its own defense, but the MOD is no more ready to do so than any other element of the Iraqi security structure. It also faces problems because of the lack of a strong and effective leadership within the

Iraqi government as a whole, and because institutional capability and competence is still developing.

Army and Special Operations Forces: Increasing, but Mixed Capabilities

The Iraqi regular forces were little more than a few light battalions in 2004. By the beginning of 2007, Ministry of Defense Forces consisting of the Army (including Special Operations Forces), Air Force, and Navy (including Marines) totaled 136,400 personnel.¹¹⁸¹ The Iraqi Army had also become both the key to effective Iraqi force development and to US and allied ability to withdraw forces from Iraq without creating a military power vacuum.

As of early March 2007, the Army had 131,300 soldiers and officers in 36 brigades and 112 battalions. The Prime Minister's Expansion Plan was in the processing of increasing the Army by 2 division HQs, 6 brigade HQs, and 24 battalions. The Army had Nine Motorized Transportation Regiments (MTRs). The last two MTRs had been generated and released to MNC-I by the end of 2006. Although a lack of trained maintenance personnel and equipment had delayed full capability, the Department of Defense reported that MTRs could now provide mobility and sustainment for Iraqi forces.¹¹⁸²

The Army supported a Special Operations Forces Brigade. This ISOF Brigade was the operational component of the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Command and was composed of approximately 1,500 soldiers organized into a counter- terrorism battalion, a commando battalion, a support battalion, and a special reconnaissance unit. It was being expanded to include an additional commando battalion with forward-based commando companies in Basrah, Mosul, and Al Asad.

The Iraqi Army had 3 Strategic Infrastructure Brigade headquarters commanding 17 SIBs. These units are deployed to protect oil pipelines and electricity infrastructure.¹¹⁸³ Efforts to improve the capability of these units were led by Military Transition Teams, with U.S. and other Coalition officers and soldiers embedded in each battalion, brigade, and division headquarters; at IGFC headquarters; and at JHQ. The force goal was 4 Strategic Infrastructure Brigades

The Army also had 4 logistics battalions, 2 support battalions, 5 Regional Support Units, and 80 Garrison Support Units provide logistics and support for divisions, with Taji National Depot providing depot-level maintenance and re-supply. Headquarters and Service Companies provide logistical and maintenance support for each battalion, brigade, and division.

The top force generation priorities for the MNSTC-I were: the development of the Iraqi Army Objective Counterinsurgency Force and the Objective Civil Security force; and the establishment of Logistics enablers. These Logistics enablers include improvements in sustainment, maintenance support, supply support, transport support, and health support.¹¹⁸⁴

Growing Too Fast to Achieve Force Quality

The Iraqi Army had, however, grown too quickly to achieve the proper level of effectiveness. It expanded from 4 brigades and 23 battalions in November 2005, to 36 brigades and 118 battalions that had assumed responsibility by February 2007.¹¹⁸⁵ The

authorized (not actual) manpower in the Iraqi Army rose from 115,000 “trained and equipped” in August to 136,200 as of February 2007.¹¹⁸⁶ These figures included SIB personnel and about 9,600 support forces. The Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) were composed of 1,500 soldiers making up the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Task Force, the Iraqi Commandos, a support battalion, and a special reconnaissance unit.¹¹⁸⁷

It needed time to bring this structure to suitable levels of readiness, continued support from Coalition forces, and help from Coalition embeds and partner units. It needed a clearer force development plan to provide the firepower and armor it lacked, and better equipment in many areas. It needed time and patience to mature its new units into an experienced force. The problem was not that the Iraqi Army was failing, but rather that it needed several years in which to consolidate its rapid growth.

Manning Levels at 65%

In practice, however, only average manning rates of 65% of authorized personnel were normally at duty at any given time, and manpower distribution was skewed so that a few units were overmanned, while many had even less average manpower or were short significant numbers of officers and NCOs.¹¹⁸⁸

The total number of trained-and-equipped MOD military personnel is about 136,400 (not including replacements), of which about 132,800 are in the Iraqi Army. For fielded units, about 65% of authorized personnel are present for duty at any time; this percentage varies widely among units. The greatest contributor to the difference between authorized strength and present-for-duty strength is a leave policy that places about one-quarter of all soldiers on leave at any time so that they can take their pay home to their families. This is driven by the lack of a nationwide banking system. In addition, since the first Iraqi Army combat units entered into service in November 2003, more than 20,000 personnel have been killed or severely wounded or have otherwise left the Army. The MOD is planning on replacing and expanding the overall force structure with a 30,000-person Replenishment Initiative, organized and implemented by the Iraqi JHQ. This initiative will add approximately 10,000 soldiers every two months over six months and will result in all combat units manned at 110%. The MOD has completed recruiting for this initiative, and the first training sessions began on October 1, 2006. About 44% of the 30,000-soldier expansion is complete.

These problems had forced the government of Iraq to conclude that a larger force was needed. As has already been discussed in Chapter IV, more than 60,000 ISF personnel were to be added in 2007.¹¹⁸⁹ This expansion included: 30,000 soldiers to replace personnel losses and to increase the manning of combat units to 110% to improve present-for-duty strength; an increase in the size of the Iraqi Army by approximately 24,000 soldiers; and the expansion of the National Police to 10 Brigades, in order to protect the Samarra Shrine reconstruction project; and the establishment of Three Emergency Response Unit Battalions of auxiliary policemen in Anbar, primarily in the greater Ramadi area.

The March 2007 Quarterly report also noted that,¹¹⁹⁰

The high operational tempo faced by many units makes it difficult to sustain this initial training proficiency. This is particularly true in the area of logistics specialty training. Approximately 2,500 additional personnel are needed to allow both daily operations and focused training at the small- unit level.

Across the Iraqi Army, Iraqi divisions facing sustained combat operations within their normal operational area report absent- without-leave rates to be between 5% and 8%. Passage of the

Military Court Procedures Law on January 24, 2007, will provide Iraqi commanders with a tool to deal fairly and effectively with absenteeism and desertion

Maintenance and support had lagged behind the effort to create combat units from the start of the ISF development effort, and continued to encounter problems. Although the Motorized Transportation Regiments (MTRs) were said to be approaching full operational capability, a continued lack of competent maintenance personnel limited their ability to reach full capability.¹¹⁹¹

As has been noted earlier, however, significant progress had been made in creating training units. The three planned Iraqi Training Battalions had been formed. This allowed Iraqis to train soldiers independently in sufficient quantities. Army recruits attended a 13-week program of basic instruction followed by military occupational training of a length varying from three to seven weeks, depending on specialty.

Specialty schools included the Military Intelligence School, Signal School, Bomb Disposal School, Combat Arms Branch School, Engineer School and Military Police School. These schools were intended to both contribute to professionalism in the Iraqi Army and teach the necessary skills for fighting counter-insurgency campaigns. The Iraqi Armed Service and Supply Institute (IASSI) at Taji provided training for service and support officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs). By August 2006 IASSI had trained more than 5,000 officers and NCOs.¹¹⁹²

Sectarian and Ethnic Problems: A Force Never Designed to Fight Civil Conflicts and Civil War

These problems were compounded by the impact of Iraq's growing civil conflicts. Sectarian and ethnic issues were less serious in the regular military forces under MoD control than in the MOI forces, but – as discussed in Chapter IV – they still presented serious problems within the Army. According to the Director of National Intelligence's February 2006 report, many elements of the Iraqi security forces remained loyal to sectarian and party interests.¹¹⁹³

More broadly, the Army showed little overall willingness to become actively involved halting Iraq's civil fighting through early 2007, although a few force elements performed well in such missions in Baghdad during the summer and fall of 2006. A battalion commander with the 1st brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, Maj. Hussein al-Qaisi, said government officials often called him when he tried to arrest suspected high-ranking militia leaders, Sunni as well as Shi'ite. Al-Qaisi, stationed in Baghdad, said: "Sometimes they'll back them up no matter what. We have to let them go."¹¹⁹⁴

Iraqis were scarcely alone in detecting mixed loyalties in Shi'ite-dominated Iraqi army units. Lt. Col Edward Taylor, embedded with the Iraqi Army's 6th Division in Baghdad, reported that: "I have to operate under the assumption that within this unit there are people loyal to Jaish al-Mahdi [known in the US as the Mahdi Army]. I have to make that assumption so I have the proper security measures in place to protect my soldiers."¹¹⁹⁵ During January 2007 operations in Turki, east of Baghdad, US commanders, fearful of leaks, kept operational details from Iraqi army units until the last minute. Although this measure may have increased operational security, it didn't allow Iraqi units much

time to prepare: “I didn’t have time to organize supplies, vehicles or ammunition for the soldiers” reported one Iraqi company commander.¹¹⁹⁶

While some US soldiers praised their Iraqi counterparts, there were reports of US soldiers complaining about their Iraqi counterparts as being “among the worst they’ve ever seen” during combined US and Iraqi army operations in Baghdad in the summer and fall of 2006. Their loyalties appeared unclear as they let militiamen pass checkpoints unhindered during raids and allowed barriers and concertina wire meant to bolster defensive positions to be dragged away. Even the notification of the senior officer at the checkpoint by US troops did not help. US military advisor Lt. Col. Greg Watt attributed this behavior to sectarian loyalties:

From my perspective, you can’t make a distinction between Iraq army Shi’ites and the religious militias. You have a lot of soldiers and family members swayed and persuaded by the religious leadership. (...) There’s no doubt in my mind that (an Iraqi division commander in Baghdad) has soldiers who are followers of religious leaders. Are they loyal to the division commander? Yes. But they may be loyal to both.

He added that another problem was violence against Iraqi soldiers when they were off duty, and threats against their families.¹¹⁹⁷ This highlights the need to look beyond force development in the narrow sense, and ensure that Iraqi families have some protection, that Iraqi soldiers can safely provide funds transfers to their families, that suitable death and disability payments not only exist but will actually be paid, and that leave policies exist which meet the real-world needs of Iraqi soldiers. Important as leadership, motivation, and training may be; they are no substitute for an effective overall approach to giving Iraqi forces the mix of capabilities and support necessary to give them material motives and incentives.

Lt. Col. Avanulas Smiley, a battalion commander in Baghdad, commented on local police acting on tribal or political loyalties:

“I wouldn’t say I find it often, but I suspect it often. You can’t always prove it. And that can cause some frustration on the street with soldiers.”

Another example of the operational effects of sectarian allegiances in the Iraqi Army took place in Baquba in October 2006. The security situation in the religiously mixed city apparently deteriorated when the Fifth Iraqi Army Division staged raids that led to the arrest of 400 people, nearly all Sunni Arabs. (Note that this is an odd-numbered division, which were supposed to be more representative of Iraq’s population than their even-numbered counterparts) Local Sunni leaders believed this showed the division’s bias against Sunnis and that they were singled out while Shi’ite criminals had been ignored. Subsequently, local Sunni and Shi’ite groups put out calls for help, and fighters from the Shi’ite Jaish al-Mahdi militia as well as Sunni groups, including Al Qa’ida elements, moved into the area.¹¹⁹⁸

Army officers who do seek to act impartially in regards to the militias may face opposition from within Nouri al-Maliki’s government. A report surfaced in April 2007 that a department in the prime minister’s office had played a key role in the arrest or removal of 16 top Army and National Police officers.¹¹⁹⁹ Although commanders are removed fairly frequently in Iraq for legitimate reasons (the MOI alone has removed

14,000 employees), these removals raised concerns of sectarian influence. Nine of the commanders removed were Sunni, and several were considered to be among the better Iraqi officers in the field. The reason behind the removals appeared to be the commander's willingness to confront Shi'ite militias.

According to Brig. Gen. Dana J.H. Pittard, commanding general of the Iraqi Assistance Group: "Their only crimes or offenses were they were successful. . . I'm tired of seeing good Iraqi officers having to look over their shoulders when they're trying to do the right thing."¹²⁰⁰ The Office of the Commander in Chief is seen as being behind the removals. This office works largely behind-the-scenes on military issues on behalf of the prime minister.

One adviser in particular, Bassima Luay Hasun al-Jaidri, appeared to be responsible for many of the firings. An anonymous American official stated: "Her office harasses [Iraqi commanders] if they are nationalistic and fair. They need to get rid of her and her little group." Maj. Gen. Abduhlla Mohammed Khamis al-Dafi, the Sunni Commander of the 9th Iraqi Division, responsible for Eastern Baghdad, threatened to resign on April 23rd due to repeated "interference" from the prime minister's staff.¹²⁰¹ The Bush administration's only comment on the matter was "We're aware of the reports, we're concerned about them, and those are the kinds of things we do discuss with the Iraqis that will be a focus of conversations."¹²⁰² US commanders are considering installing a liaison officer in the department.¹²⁰³

Like all Iraqi forces, the Army was never recruited, trained, or equipped to fight sectarian and ethnic forces in civil conflict, or intervene in civil war and local civil clashes. Counterinsurgency or COIN training and organization do not create the capability to deal with struggles where there is no enemy, and where every action tests the unity of a force in terms of ethnic and sectarian alignment. If a major civil war does occur, or the country divides along sectarian and ethnic lines, Iraqi regular forces could divide as well. They could fragment even further if the Shi'ite coalition falls apart, or the Shi'ites and Kurds divide.

Combat Effectiveness, Readiness, Desertions and Mission Capability

The Army's role in combat increased did increase steadily during 2006 and early 2007 in spite of these problems. Department of Defense reporting provided the following measures of this increase in the March 2007 Quarterly Report to Congress:

- **Figure 7.1** compares the number of Iraqi army battalions in combat and Strategic Infrastructure Brigades. It shows just how rapid the growth in battalions was as well as the lag between generating combat and support capabilities.
- **Figure 7.2** shows the percent of combat operations being carried out at the company level and above by combined forces, Coalition forces, and ISF. It is clear from this Figure that ISF forces were virtually never in the lead, and were almost always tied to MNF-I forces that were. Most of the ISF-only operations in this figure seem to have been relatively undemanding operations with embed and outside support. Additionally, the number of ISF-only operations dropped off sharply towards the end of 2006, despite the completion of ISF force-generation targets.

- **Figure 7.3 shows the number of Iraqi battalions supposedly in the lead,** The claims for growth in the number of Iraq battalions in the lead are clearly not supported by the number of mixed operations shown in Figure 7.3.

Once again, however, the data sharply exaggerated what was actually happening. Figures 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 do reflect a very rise in Iraqi Army readiness and capability, but many of the units involved were seriously undermanned, under equipped or under facilitated, and lacked experience and capable leadership. Many Iraqi units would not take the initiative and some would not fight. US advisers warned that Iraqi forces, both soldiers and officers remained reluctant to initiate contact with the enemy.¹²⁰⁴ The steady rise in ISF operations portrayed in these Figures also does not reflect the need ISF units had for external support, the often undemanding nature of ISF operations, and continued dependence on cadres of MNF-I advisors.

CENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid painted a franker picture in early September, praising the special operations forces as “some of the best units anywhere in the Middle East,” but admitting disappointment in other units.¹²⁰⁵ Gen. John Abizaid also stated that while Iraqi army forces were fighting, they were not yet capable of ensuring Iraqi security.¹²⁰⁶ He also said that Iraqi and MNF-I efforts to increase the independence of Iraqi Army units continued to focus on combat enablers.

Some units simply did not function. When British troops left Camp Abu Naji, just outside Amarah, the ensuing clashes between Iraqi army forces and unknown attackers caused the mutiny of the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Brigade.¹²⁰⁷ During the last weekend in August 2006, 100 soldiers of a 550-strong battalion in the southeastern province of Maysan refused to deploy to Baghdad, partly because of concerns about confronting fellow sect members. US Army Brig. Gen. Dana Pittard, commander of the Iraq Assistance Group in Baghdad, portrayed the incident as isolated, but admitted to the difficulty of creating truly national forces in Iraq:

What it tells me is that, primarily, the Iraqi army has been a regionally recruited organization, which really means if you are from a particular area, that’s where you’re recruited from, and that’s where your roots are. Now as other units are asked to go to other places, it becomes more difficult because, for many of those soldiers, they just thought that they would be operating in their homeland areas.¹²⁰⁸

Deployability

It also was still difficult for both the MNF-I and Iraqi units to know which units would actually deploy, and manage deployments with any efficiency. The March 2007 Quarterly report noted,¹²⁰⁹

As a result of the inability of the Iraqi Army to deploy units to Baghdad in August 2006, the Minister of Defense formed a committee to determine how to improve the deploy- ability of the Iraqi Army. The recommendation of the committee was to identify a battalion from each Iraqi Army Division to serve as the rapid deployment force for that division, and provide incentive pay for soldiers who volunteer to serve in this elite battalion. To increase the predictability of deployments for soldiers, the committee also recommended a four-phase, 150-day deployment cycle that all units complete prior to movement from their home base. In February, five of the seven battalions recently ordered to Baghdad were successfully deployed, with the rest expected within the month.

Army Unit Manning and Attrition

Attrition was a problem in combat as well as in causing chronic undermanning. Approximately 15% attrition was the norm during initial training. During deployment, absent-without-leave rates were typically about 1-4% for most Army divisions, although deployment to combat let these rates climb to 5-8%, according to DoD.¹²¹⁰ According to Jane's Defense Weekly, however, many reports from Iraq suggest higher figures.¹²¹¹ According to former coalition personnel, these rates depended on whether units deploy in their home areas or not and whether they were tasked to operate against insurgents of their ethnic or religious background.¹²¹² The Defense Department put desertion rates at 50% or higher in late 2006 for units deployed outside of their normal areas of operation,¹²¹³ although deployment rates to support the 2007 Baghdad security plan were higher.

Iraqi Army leaders in Al Anbar province complained about desertion rates in some units being as high as 40%.¹²¹⁴ US advisors to Iraqi forces pointed to a Catch-22 situation with regard to local recruiting: soldiers would care more about the security of their home town than about an unknown area, but locally recruited soldiers sometimes also found themselves in a conflict of loyalties between family, tribe and friends on the one hand and their unit's military operations on the other.¹²¹⁵ DoD noted that there was no judicial punishment system within the Iraqi Army, giving commanders little legal leverage to compel their soldiers to combat, so soldiers and police quit with impunity.¹²¹⁶ The Council of Representatives passed the *Military Court Procedures Law* on January 24, 2007 and the *Military Punishment Law* on February 5, 2007.¹²¹⁷ These two laws formally established Iraq's system of military justice, and may help to give commanders some legal tools to curb desertion rates.

The MOD was still attempting to create a comprehensive personnel system for the army in early 2007. This new, digital system was being designed to eventually give every soldier an MOD ID card. According to the director of the MOD Records Directorate: "The system is providing commanders with an exact idea of who is serving in the military at the battalion level and will also ensure that all Iraqi soldiers receive the pay that is due them."

Army Unit Effectiveness

The reality is that force-wide counts never come to grips with the actual need to measure effectiveness. In the real world, entire forces are never ready; only individual units are ready and all have different levels of readiness. There is no way, however, to use the limited data that the MNF-I and US government make detailed judgments about the genuine readiness of Iraqi regular forces on a unit-by-unit basis.

There is considerable disagreement on how to judge some units' performance, although it is clear that a handful of units stand out as highly capable. In general, some experts feel Kurdish units are the most effective because of their experience as guerrilla forces that have retained their officers and cohesion.¹²¹⁸ Others feel that Iraqi capability is mixed, and that only 10-15 of Iraq's more than 90 combat battalions had serious readiness at the end of 2006.

Some experts cite the 205th Iraqi Army Battalion, or “Tiger Battalion,” for both its military professionalism and competence. Breaking with Saddam-era traditions, officers delegated responsibility to their soldiers. The unit was mostly recruited from within its area of operation, helping it with intelligence collection efforts.

The Second Battalion, Second Brigade, First Iraqi Army Division, operating in Fallujah, was also praised for its effectiveness. Its progress towards operating alone was said to be especially noteworthy given the serious Iraqi morale problems during the fight for the city in 2004.¹²¹⁹

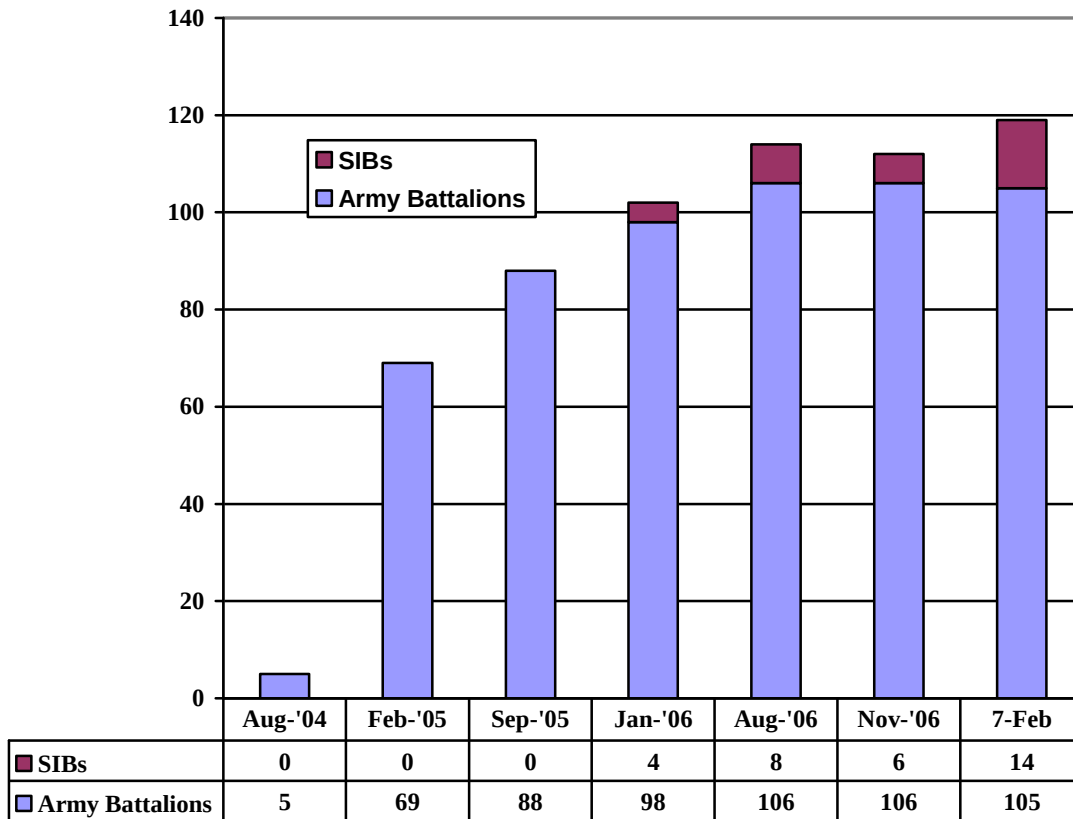
One highly effective brigade from Hilla in the south, was known as the Scorpions. When the Scorpion unit’s commander, Colonel Salam al-Mamuri, was killed, a Washington Post article described his unit as highly effective and not taking political sides. The Scorpion unit was noted for taking tough action against both Al-Qa’ida in Iraq and the Mahdi Army. The unit also received high marks from US Special Forces members:

“They are literally the only Iraqi unit under arms in the south that is completely independent of the political parties and the militias. Everyone else – the police, the army – is playing ball for somebody. They won’t.”

“We look at them as peers, we don’t look at them as below us.”¹²²⁰

While any such reporting is necessarily anecdotal, Iraqi forces do become steadily more successful with time if they do have the right mix of embed trainers and partner units, if they are given the necessary time to develop unit effectiveness and cohesion, and if they have adequate manning, equipment, and facilities,

Figure 7.1
Iraqi Army Battalions in Combat: August 2004-February 2007



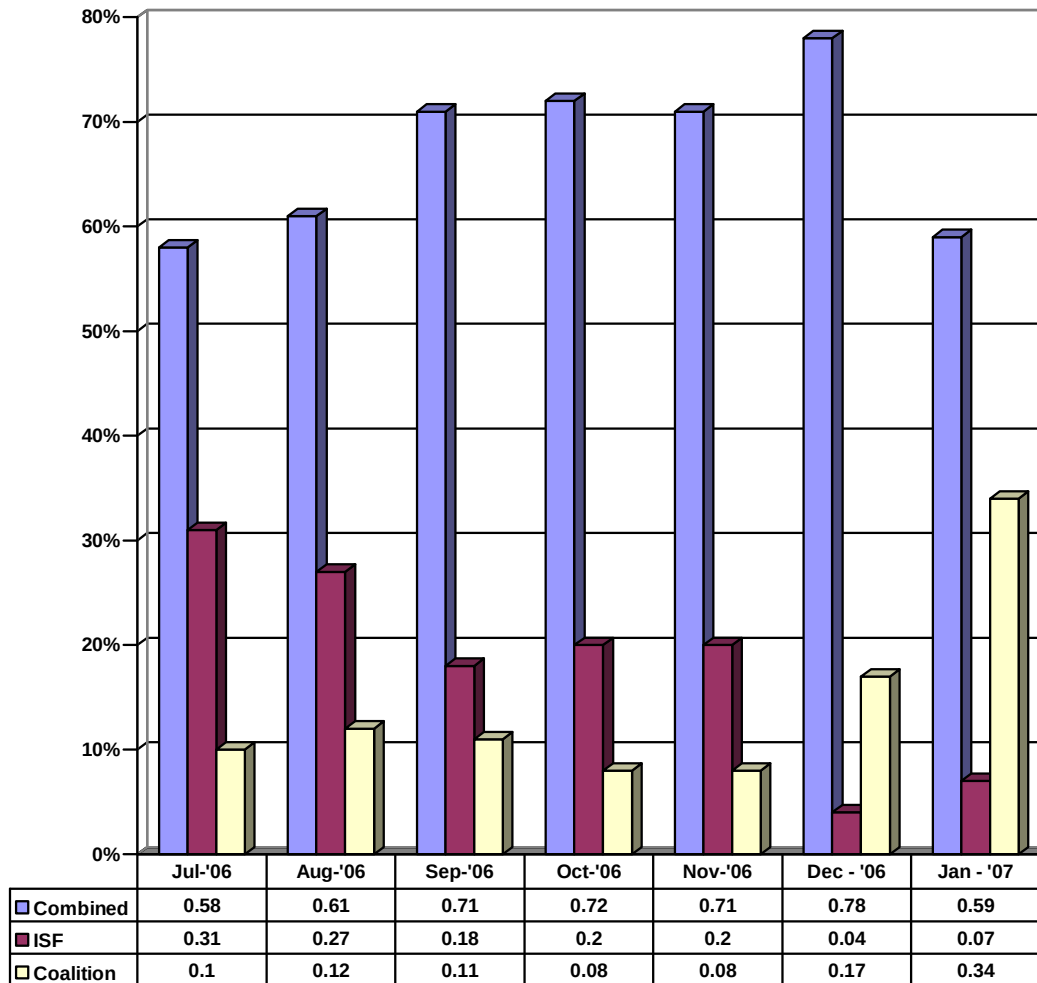
NOTE: Army Battalions Includes special operations battalions but does not include combat support and combat service support units.

Data as of November 13, 2006

Source: Adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, Report to Congress, March 2007, p.25;

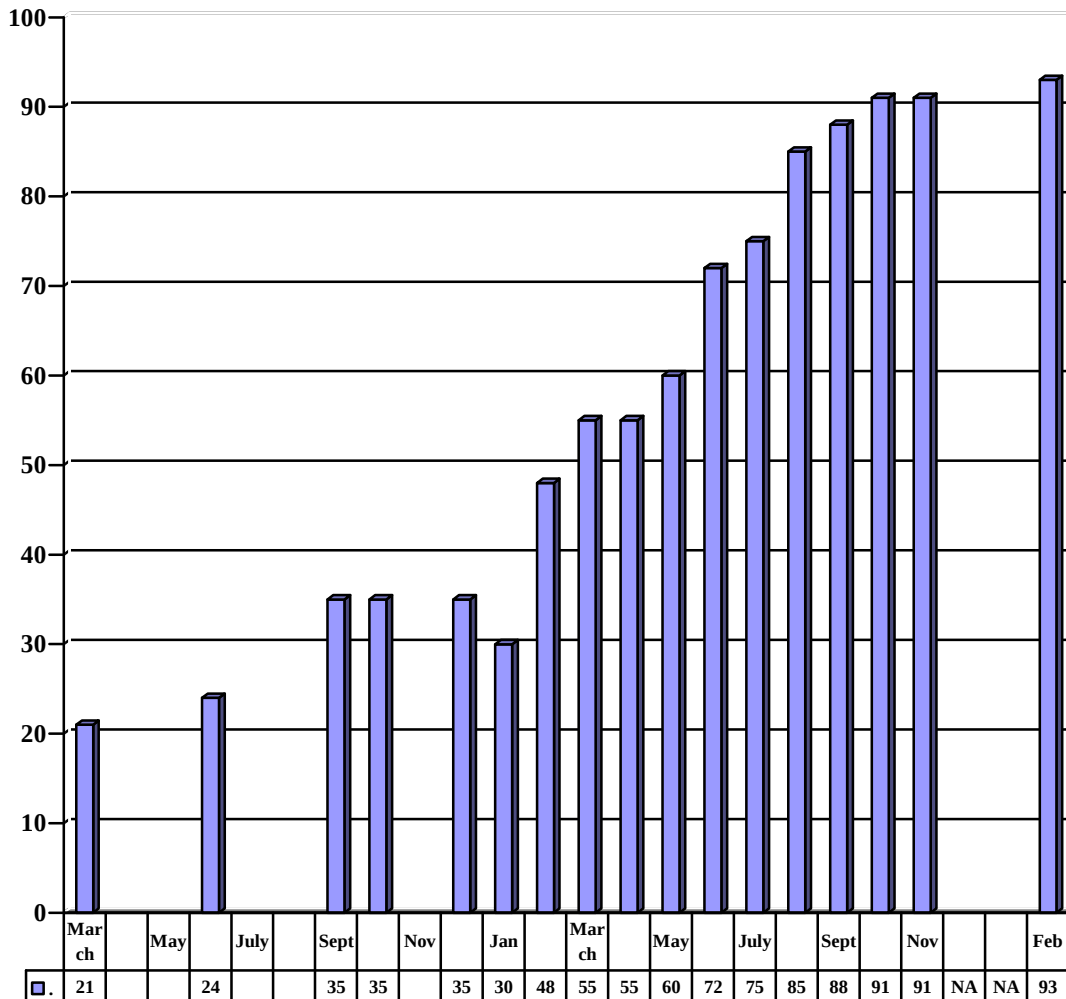
Note: +/-5% margin of error

Figure 7.2
Role of Coalition and ISF Forces in Combat Operations: July 2006-January 2007
 (Company level and above*):



* Includes MOD and National Police units; data includes only those ISF independent operations that are reported to the Coalition
 Data as of March 2, 2007.

Source: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March 2007 Report to Congress, p.38.

Figure 7.3**Iraqi Army Battalions “leading” Counterinsurgency Operations: March 2005-February 2007***

Equipping the Force: Problems with Arms Transfers and Accountability

The Iraqi Army has also faced continuing force development problems because its equipment plans have never caught up with the growing level of threat it faces, or come close to matching the level of capability of US and other MNF-I forces. Once again, the metrics that have been publicly reported seem better than they are.

The US had planned to provide equipment for 325,000 ISF personnel by December 2006. 277,600 of these had been issued weapons by August 2006.¹²²¹ The Department of Defense reported that 100% of individual authorized items had issued by the end of 2006.¹²²² The US also reported continued to provide personal equipment such as body armor sets, and also up-armored Humvees, tracked M113 armored personnel carriers, heavy machine guns, and fuel trucks. According to according to Col. Brian Jones, commander of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, this significantly shored up the confidence of Iraqi soldiers.¹²²³

Too Light to Fight

As **Figure 7.4** indicates, most ISF forces were only issued personal and squad-level weapons, and light, unprotected vehicles. MNF-I issued about 480,000 weapons, 30,000 vehicles and 1.65 million pieces of gear (uniforms, body armor, helmets, footwear), among other items, to the ISF as of October 2006.¹²²⁴ This equipment was procured from a number of sources, including funds from the US, Iraq, and other coalition countries, as well as weapons captured since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom and then redistributed to Iraqi forces.

The rushed pace of the ISF training and equipping program hampered DoD efforts to properly track equipment transfers to the ISF, and led to continuing problems in cross-leveling between and within army units that led to shortages in some subordinate units. Although it is unclear what accountability regulations the DoD has applied to the program, MNSTC-I did take initial steps to account for the equipment transfers in 2004 and 2005. In May and June 2004 MNSTC-I ordered: serial numbers for all sensitive items such as weapons and radios to be recorded; relevant information to be entered onto a Department of the Army hand receipt form; signatures from receiving Iraqi security forces; and property accountability information to be submitted to MBSTC-I.¹²²⁵

The creation of an operational equipment distribution network, however, did begin in 2004, but was not completed until mid 2005. This network included establishing regional distribution centers, taking stock of existing inventory, and creating a database to track equipment. By the time the network was operational, MNF-I had already been distributing large amounts of equipment to the ISF for over a year. Under staffing at the responsible offices in MNSTC-I also contributed to the accountability problems.

According to the former MNSTC-I commander, several months passed after MNSTC-I's establishment before the commander received the needed number of staff. As a result, shipping containers were not opened and individual items distributed to Iraqi forces were not recorded.¹²²⁶ Finally, the operational demands of rapidly equipping the ISF as it was

forced to fight the growing insurgency limited the MNSTC-I's ability to conform to accounting procedures.

Corruption Without Compare

Iraqi army forces increasingly complained about corruption and the lack of armor, protected vehicles, and artillery. In October 2006, former Iraqi finance minister Ali Allawi, alleged that a total of "up to \$800 million" meant to equip the Iraqi Army had been stolen by former officials through fraudulent arms deals, mostly during the tenure of former interim prime minister, Ayad Allawi. The former minister did not accuse specific officials. Iraqi investigators were, however, investigating former procurement officer Ziad Cattani, who in turn claimed he could account for the hundreds of millions he used to buy weapons. Analysts at Jane's, however, said this documentation did not prove whether any of the weapons ordered by Cattani were actually delivered.¹²²⁷

Sectarian biases within the MOD also hampered the distribution of Iraqi Army equipment. According to Col. Bryan Owens, Commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 82nd Airborne Division, operating in Salah ad Din Province, sectarian discrimination has played a role in the lack of equipment received by the mostly Sunni Iraqi Army forces in the province. There were, according to Owens, "warehouses down in Taji and other locations that have equipment," for the ISF, but "a combination of sectarian bias in the Iraqi government and a 'bureaucracy . . . worse than I've ever seen' has kept the equipment from the ISF in Salah ad Din."¹²²⁸ Similar issues slowed the distribution of equipment to Sunni Iraqi police and Army units in Anbar province as well.

Irregularities in US Arms Shipments to Iraqi Forces

Equipment accountability was as critical a problem as equipment type. A request by the head of the Senate Armed Services Committee John Warner to the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction prompted a discouraging report from SIGIR. About \$133 million of the IRRF was used to purchase more than 370,000 weapons through 19 contracts with 142 delivery orders. These weapons were small arms, comprising 12 types ranging from semiautomatic pistols and assault rifles to heavy machine guns and RPG launchers.¹²²⁹

It was clear that the US military did not properly track hundreds of thousands of weapons intended for Iraqi security forces and did not record the serial numbers of nearly half a million weapons provided to Iraqis, making it impossible to track them. It also failed to provide spare parts, repair manuals, and maintenance personnel for the equipment.

Of the 505,093 weapons given to the Ministries of Interior and Defense, only 12,128 were properly recorded. These arms include RPG launchers, assault rifles, machine guns, shotguns, semiautomatic pistols and sniper rifles. Of those weapons, 370,000 were bought with American taxpayer money under the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, and thus fell within the general mandate of the Special Inspector General.

Although there were standard DoD regulations in place, US military officials in Baghdad said they thought these rules – the DoD small-arms serialization program – did not apply to them. Moreover, there were large discrepancies in the numbers of weapons purchased and those arrived in Iraqi warehouses. The US government directly bought 176,866

semiautomatic pistols, but only 163,386 showed up in warehouses, making for a difference of 13,480. Nearly 100 MP-5 machine guns and all of the 751 M1-assault rifles that were shipped have also vanished.

The total number of lost weapons could indeed be higher, because the Inspector General was only responsible for equipment bought directly with US taxpayer money.¹²³⁰ MNSTC-I responded to the SIGIR's concerns, but while the SIGIR found some of MNSTC-I's comments "responsive," he did not believe that MNSTC-I adequately responded to SIGIR's recommendation to establish accurate weapon inventories.¹²³¹

Part of the problem came from the way the force development effort was funded. Congress funded the training and equipping of Iraqi forces outside of traditional security assistance programs, initially through the Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund, and later through the Iraq Security Forces Fund. This gave DoD greater flexibility in managing the program, but also led to accountability issues. Accountability requirements normally applicable to security assistance programs, such as the registration of small arms or the many other procedures for storing, protecting, transporting, and registering sensitive items, did not necessarily apply to the Iraqi arms transfers. It is unclear what, if any accountability measures the DoD has taken in regards to the train-and-equip program for Iraq. DoD officials, according to the GAO, "have expressed differing opinions on this matter."¹²³²

In any case, the end result was an inability to account for all of the weapons issued to Iraqi forces, and an inability to ensure that all of the distributed equipment reached the intended recipients. The DoD admitted in February 2007 that equipment accountability was "at a level below that desired by the Coalition or the Government of Iraq [Government of Iraq]".¹²³³ According to the GAO, the numbers reported by the former MNSTC-I commander do not necessarily represent the weapons received by the ISF. Instead, these numbers only indicate weapons tracked at national warehouses and regional distribution centers. In particular, the GAO discovered 80,000 pistols and 90,000 rifles that were reported as issued but were not recorded.¹²³⁴

A Lack of Proper Equipment

The problems in the quality of the equipment supplied to the ISF, however, remained far more serious than the ability to account for the equipment supplied. Any effort to "uparmor" the ISF also lagged badly behind the Iraqi Army's requirements. The MOD did begin to increase its armored forces, but its efforts fall far behind need – a fact made all too clear by the constant increases in the US army and Marine Corps effort to the uparmor US forces. These problems have been made worse by mismanagement and corruption.

The lack of heavy weapons, armor, logistical support, and air support continued to hamper the ISF. At the same time, the contrast between the constant uparmoring of MNF-I forces and the failure to do so for the ISF helped lead to widespread ISF complaints. So did the fact that stepping up Iraqi operations in the field coupled with their lack of protection and firepower left them increasingly exposed.

The MOD is, however, slowly procuring more armored forces. In June 2005, for example, the MoD ordered 98 BTR-80UP armored personnel carriers (APC) from Poland. The deal was delayed a year, and the first of the vehicles began to arrive in September 2006. Most of the BTR-80UP's will be delivered in a basic APC configuration. Iraq will also receive some specially modified BTR-80UP's, including: command vehicles for battalion commander (BTR-80UP-KB), command vehicles for company commander (BTR-80UP-KR), staff vehicles (BTR-80UP-S), armored ambulances (BTR-80UP-A), reconnaissance vehicles (BTR-80UP_R), cargo vehicles (BTR-80UP-T), and armored maintenance/recovery vehicles (BTR-80UP-BREM).¹²³⁵

Additionally, 398 ILAV Badgers were purchased by the Iraqi Army. These large armored Infantry Fighting Vehicles are deployed with engineer platoons, and had started to arrive in Iraq by March, 2007. Badgers, based on a South African design, provide good IED protection.¹²³⁶

Armored humvees are also critical to operations in Iraq, as demonstrated by the controversy over the US military's delayed procurement of 'up-armored' humvees. The ISF fielded about 2,400 armored humvees as of March 2007. Existing procurement plans would add another 300, and the Prime Minister's New Force Initiative would add another 400. In total, the Iraqi Army plans to field roughly 3,200 armored humvees.¹²³⁷

The lack of heavy Iraqi forces was apparent in ISF operations in Turki, east of Baghdad, in January 2007. On January 4th a joint Iraqi and American offensive began to root out insurgent forces that had been hiding and staging attacks in Baghdad from a network of irrigation canals. The Iraqi forces, part of the 1st brigade, 5th Army Division, had received 181 out of the 211 armor-plated Humvees promised by the US. However, many of them were deployed elsewhere when the operation began, and 45 had already been destroyed or damaged by roadside bombs. They had no heavier vehicles, or indigenous air support.

Heavy rains made roads muddy, and immediately the Iraqi pickup trucks and minivans became mired in the mud. US troops were forced to tow them out using their Bradley fighting vehicles and tanks. As the operation continued for several weeks, the US was forced to fly in all of the Iraqi's supplies, from ammunition to food. According to one of the Iraqi soldiers engaged in the fighting: "The coalition forces have airplanes, tanks, all the equipment they need. But the Iraqi army does not have that. We need US support."¹²³⁸

Corruption compounded the ISF's equipment problems and forced Iraq to expand the use of "total package" military procurements.¹²³⁹ A large \$400 million deal to procure Russian helicopters from a Polish contractor in 2004 and 2005 turned out to be corrupt. Many of the helicopters that did arrive were more than 25 years old and not air-worthy. The Iraqi government then renegotiated the deal, to bring in 28 new MI-17 Russian helicopters. The four MI-17's that had arrived by February 2007, however, were missing key onboard systems that allowed the helicopters to perform combat missions. They were restricted to training missions in friendly airspace only.

This corruption extended down to the level of individual soldiers. Reports of under-equipped Iraqi soldiers were common. One reporter noted in February 2007, that Iraqi soldiers manning checkpoints in Baghdad wore plastic shower sandals instead of army boots. 1240 Iraqi officers were sometimes accused of selling the uniforms their men were supposed to be issued.

The most that the Department of Defense could promise in March 2007 was that,1241

Equipment accountability is improving; however, it is still at a level below that desired by the Coalition or by the Government of Iraq. MNSTC-I and the Government of Iraq are now issuing other mission-critical items to the Iraqi armed forces, such as up-armored HMMWVs, wheeled APCs, heavy machine guns, and fuel trucks. MNSTC-I is currently working with the MOD to transfer maintenance capabilities to the Iraqi Army. The MOD will fund a contract through a Foreign Military Sales sustainment case planned to start on April 1, 2007. This contract will be monitored by a joint Iraqi/Coalition forces board that will determine when the transition requirements have been met. The MOD agreed, in principle, to fund the National Maintenance Contract from spring 2007 through March 2008 using a Foreign Military Sales case. Total cost of the maintenance support contracts to be assumed by the MOD is estimated to be US\$160 million.

These statements gloss over the continued lack of a clear plan to provide heavier forces, and the honest recognition that the US will almost certainly have to fund this effort initially and for some years to come. If the US wants out of Iraq in a way that produces lasting regional stability, then armor, artillery, mobility, IS&R, close air support, and a large range of support assets must come in. A long-range strategy, plan, and aid funds are critical. If they exist, they exist in remarkable silence.

Figure 7.4
Partial List of U.S. Army Equipment Given to the Iraqi Army as of June 2006*

*Source: "U.S. Army and Marine Corps Equipment Requirements: Background and Issues for Congress,"

Item	Quantity
Tracked Vehicles	251
Wheeled Vehicles	2,600
Small Arms	153,000
Night Vision Devices	16,00
Uniforms	601,000
Body Armor Sets	242,000
Kevlar Helmets	170,000
Engineer Equipment	56
Generators	195
Material Handling Equipment	17

CRS Report For Congress, 12/20/2006. Pg. 25.

Support Capabilities and Requirements

The Multinational Command-Iraq continue to provide logistical support to Iraq's armed forces, and 22% of the funds spent on supplies and services for the ISF between May and August 2006 were spent on the armed forces.¹²⁴² As of February 2007, MNSTC-I had 60 transition teams (out of 400 total teams for the MOD and MOI) dedicated to assist in logistics and sustainment issues.¹²⁴³ DoD reported that areas of focus in 2007: "will be on developing the areas of fuel, maintenance, budget, sustainment, ammunition, medical equipment and supply accountability, and national warehouse."¹²⁴⁴

Progress and Problems in 2006

The August 2006 report by the US Department of Defense summarized the situation as follows:¹²⁴⁵

MNC-I continues to provide logistical support to the Iraqi Armed Forces where the established system falls short. Although there has been some success with Iraqi Army units using their own processes, there is still a great deal of institutional development remaining. MNF-I is working with both MNC-I and MNSTC-I to aid the Government of Iraq in developing a defense logistics system, but in the absence of a self-reliant system, MNF-I must provide extensive support to Iraqi forces.

The Multinational Security Transition Command processed life support contracts worth US\$7.8 million in May and June 2006. As of August, all such contracts had been handed over to the Ministry of Defense, while Multinational Security Transition Command had set up a working group to oversee proper support of the ministry to Iraqi Army requirements.

Even seemingly simple supply and sustainability problems like fuel supply, however, still presented serious issues. In June 2006, all Iraqi Army units submitted requisitions for fuel. Fuel storage capacity was predicted to be fully fielded by December 2006. The units designated for fuel storage and transportation, the Garrison Support Units and Motorized Transportation Units, were not yet at full strength. Three of the nine planned Motorized Transportation Units were approaching operational capability, but were still hampered by a shortfall of competent maintenance personnel¹²⁴⁶, while the Garrison Support Units were not expected to be functional until March 2007.

A concern over Iraqi over dependence on American-supplied fuel led US officials to carry out a test of the Iraqi capacity to provide its own fuel. In September 2006, American fuel was cut off to an Iraqi base in Taji, outside of Baghdad. The Iraqi supply chain proved incapable of handling demand, and the base was soon plagued by blackouts. Iraqi forces throughout Baghdad were affected, and in one neighborhood were even unable to operate at all due to lack of fuel. The US was eventually forced to rush in emergency supplies to keep the ISF operational.¹²⁴⁷ **Figure 7.5** provides data on Coalition support to Iraqi Army units in terms of fuel supply through June 2006. Col. Stephen Twitty, commander of US forces in Ninewah province, stated that in order to keep Iraqi forces supplied with fuel, US forces had resorted to pre-positioning fuel trucks in neighborhoods where operations take place.¹²⁴⁸

The SIGIR report of October 2006 concluded that Iraqi forces were still heavily dependent on US military forces to sustain them in the areas of fuel, ammunition, troop transport, health care and maintenance. The US military was unable to provide information on how many Iraqi logistics personnel it had trained because the records had been deleted in a computer network crash.¹²⁴⁹

“There’s a couple of red flags. Most significantly, is the Iraqi Ministry of Interior properly preparing to take over the mission and sustain it? We don’t know because we don’t have adequate visibility into their budgeting, and to a lesser extent the same red flag is up for the Department of Defense.” *Stuart W. Bowen, Jr., Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction*

Moreover, the report found that money for spare parts was allocated for only 5 of the 12 different kinds of weapons sent to Iraq. When the Special Inspector General contacted the Defense and Interior Ministries, they did not know how or where to requisition spare parts.¹²⁵⁰ ISF units also apparently decided not to fill vacant arms maintenance positions.¹²⁵¹ When this report was published, the overall US expenditure for Iraqi weapons had been \$133 million and \$666 million for Iraqi logistics capabilities.¹²⁵²

According to the SIGIR report, MNF-I had made some progress in building effective logistics capabilities within the Iraqi Army and to transition their control to the MoD. The report noted, however, “significant challenges remain that put at risk MNF-I’s goal to transition a sustainable and maintainable logistics operation to the Ministry of Defense by January 1, 2008.”¹²⁵³

One additional problem was that MNSTC-I could not tell SIGIR how many personnel have been trained to support logistics functions.¹²⁵⁴ Another uncertainty is whether the MoD, with its 2007 budget yet to be approved, will be prepared to provide the \$3.5 billion MNSTC-I then said it needed to sustain its operations in 2007.¹²⁵⁵ MNF-I did, however, inform SIGIR that it was considering a “train-the-trainer” approach, in which already trained Iraqi logisticians would train other Iraqi soldiers. MNF-I has not yet committed to this training policy.¹²⁵⁶

Limited Logistics and Sustainment

The Defense Department stated in its November 2006 Quarterly Report that, “Perhaps the most significant shortcoming in both MOD and MOI forces’ capabilities is in planning and executing their logistics and sustainment requirements. Factors underlying this deficiency include inadequate levels of sustainment stocks and limited capacity of the MOD to execute fully the planning/acquisition/sustainment cycle.”¹²⁵⁷

Similar reporting took place in the March 2007 report,¹²⁵⁸

MOD logistics and sustainment is still a relatively immature system that requires significant Coalition assistance, especially in warehouse/depot operations and transportation. Development and implementation of MOD strategic logistics policy is particularly immature. The Iraqi Army has been slow to support sustainment, and there is limited indigenous capability and capacity to replace battle-damaged equipment.

MNSTC-I has oversight of approximately 60 transition teams (of the 400 total teams for the MOD and the MOI) assigned to assist in logistics and sustainment issues. Throughout 2007, the focus will be on developing the areas of fuel, maintenance, budget, sustainment, ammunition, medical equipment and supply account- ability, and national warehouse. Coalition forces continue to provide Combat Service Support by backstopping life support and fuel during times of emergency.

...In April 2006, the MOD assumed management of life support and its contracts, but Coalition forces are still assisting *in extremis*. Overall, support to the Iraqi Army provided by Coalition forces has decreased dramatically.

Approximately 90% of the planned Head- quarters and Service Companies have been formed and are at some level of operational capability. MNSTC-I has distributed all key equipment to the Headquarters and Service Companies. Although the Headquarters and Service Companies are gaining some capability, Coalition forces and MNC-I logistics units will continue partnering and mentoring them as they assume their roles and in case of emergency or failure within the new Iraqi logistics system.

...The MOD and the JHQ are developing processes to reduce the reliance on MNF-I to direct, support, and sustain MOD forces. The transition of Iraqi Army divisions and the IGFC to MOD control marks the first time since the removal of the former regime that any Iraqi Army combat forces are under complete Iraqi command and control.

The transition also means that the MOD, through the JHQ, has assumed responsibility for support and sustainment planning for these divisions as well as for forces transferring to JHQ command and control in the future. The JHQ planning and coordination processes are immature and are currently hampered by bureaucracy, lack of trust and understanding, lack of experience with strategic planning, and dependence on Coalition support and funding.

The “Year of Leaders and Logistics”

This may explain why the Department of Defense dubbed 2007 the “Year of Leaders and Logistics” in Iraq.¹²⁵⁹ One can only hope that 2007 goes better for the Iraqi logistics and support personnel than 2006 (the “year of the Police”) went for the Iraqi Police. Support and sustainability are problems that will take several years to solve. The Commanding General, MNF-I, stated on August 30, 2006, that capabilities were one of the key enablers to help develop ISF so they could eventually operate independently of US and coalition forces.¹²⁶⁰

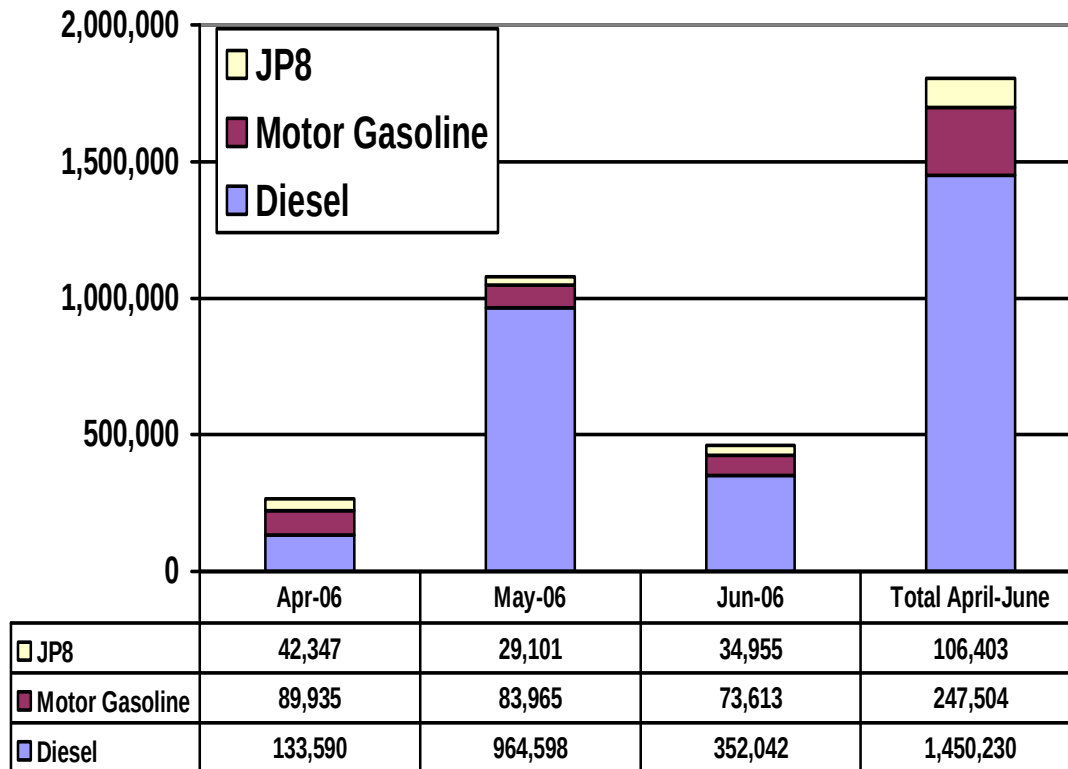
The President’s FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Request referred to developing ISF logistics capabilities as one of its top priorities. The budget request cited several key categories of logistical support that needed improvement, such as: Sustainment, including critical infrastructure improvements, completion of all regional support units/Garrison support units and military specialty schools, and Administrative and Information Services Support to Regional Support Units/Garrison Support Units; Maintenance

Although the DoD implied in its March 2007 quarterly report that Coalition forces provide logistical support mainly “during times of emergency,” the GAO found that “Iraqi units remain dependent upon the coalition for their logistical, command and control, and intelligence capabilities. As of December 2006, the coalition was providing significant levels of support to the Iraqi military, including life support, fuel, uniforms, building supplies, ammunition, vehicle maintenance and spare parts, and medical supplies.”¹²⁶¹

Despite progress in Iraqi Army logistical capabilities, and cheerful DoD claims that “Overall, support to the Iraqi Army provided by Coalition forces has decreased dramatically,” much work remained to be done in institutional development.¹²⁶² “We need about one year to three years” before the MOD will be able to sustain itself,” said Mr. Mudafa, the director of contracting for the Iraqi Ministry of Defense.¹²⁶³ The Multinational Force Iraq, Multinational Command, and Multinational Security Transition

Command all helped the government in developing a defense logistics system, but until the completion of that system, extensive support to Iraqi forces by the Multinational Force was still necessary.

Figure 7.5
Fuel Supplied to Iraqi Army Units
(In Gallons)



Source: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress. 57.

VIII. Progress in the Iraqi Navy

Iraq's navy continued to have its main base at Umm Qasr. It was tasked with the defense of Iraq's small shoreline and its offshore oil loading facilities. Its authorized (not actual) strength in March 2007 was 1,483 sailors and four marine companies deployed for point defense of the offshore oil platforms together with Coalition forces, Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) operations, and base defense. These forces were organized into an operational headquarters, patrol and assault boat squadrons and a marine battalion.

MNF-I summarized the progress of the Iraqi Navy as follows in a report in March 2007:¹²⁶⁴

The Iraqi Navy faces significant challenges in meeting the individual and collective training needs for its ambitious acquisition program, including the leadership development of midgrade officers and technical skills of sailors. Training efforts include mentorship conducted by the Naval Transition Team and active skills training conducted by Coalition Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard forces. Infrastructure development will remain the main effort throughout 2007. Naval planning is maturing and coherent across acquisition, training, and infrastructure lines of development out to 2010.

The Navy planned to expand to 2,500 personnel, with 21 naval vessels, comprised of two offshore support vessels, four patrol ships, 15 patrol boats, and a number of smaller vessels. The four patrol ships are expected to enter service approximately October 2008. The two offshore vessels and a number of the smaller vessels are scheduled to enter service beginning in August 2008.

The Iraqi Navy's five Predator patrol boats were under the tactical control of the US Navy Command Task Force 158 (CTF 158). They assist CTF 158 in overwatch of Iraq's two offshore oil platforms. Iraq's 10 fast assault boats conducted counter-insurgency, counter-smuggling, and counter-piracy operations in the shallows of the Khawr Abd Allah waterway, which leads to the port of Umm Qasr.¹²⁶⁵

Both the UK Royal Navy and the US Navy reported progress in training and equipment, although efforts at independent operations were still highly erratic. Iraqis regularly served on board US and UK ships, and the Iraqi Marines and Navy boats were closely integrated into coalition operations to protect oil infrastructure.¹²⁶⁶ Iraqi sailors have also begun participating in ship boarding and inspection operations with American, British, and Australian forces.¹²⁶⁷

Figure 8.1 provides details on Iraqi naval assets, as of February 2007.

Figure 8.1
Iraqi Naval Capabilities

Patrol boats	Fast Assault Boats	Fast Assault Boats	Offshore patrol support vessels	Patrol Ships	Patrol Boats
5	24	Purchase of 26 planned	Purchase of 2 planned and under contract	Purchase of 4 planned and under contract	Purchase of 15 planned

Source: Ripley, Tim, "Country Briefing Iraq," *Jane's Defense Weekly*, July 5, 2006, p.28 and Department of Defense, *FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Request*. February 2007. Pg. 46-47.

Progress in the Iraqi Air Force

Iraq's air force has remained small. Its actual (not authorized) strength was around 900 on November 15, 2006, up from 750 earlier in the year, and was still only 929 in March 2007.

Increasing the Iraqi Air Forces capabilities was listed as a top priority in the Bush Administration's FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Budget Request. Development plans called for an interim manpower goal of 3,298 airmen by the end of 2007.¹²⁶⁸ The primary focus of the Iraqi Air Force (IqAF) over the next three years was said to be increasing air operational capability across the spectrum of missions supporting the counter-insurgency fight.

The FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Budget Request listed five elements as the IqAF's developmental focus¹²⁶⁹:

- Providing real-time intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), and enhancing security force projection through the use of rotary wing Battlefield Mobility of Fixed Wing Air Transport.
- The development of an armed counter-terrorism response capability for both fixed wing ISR and rotary wing Battlefield Mobility assets.
- Development of an aircrew and specialist training pipeline to provide the airmen needed for the planned expansion of the IqAF.
- Develop an air traffic and airspace control while providing a longer-term structure for future transfer and integration of civil airspace control to the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority.
- Modernization of the fixed-wing Air Transport mission area.

The MNF-I summarized progress in creating the IqAF as follows on August 29, 2006: "The Iraqi Air Force continues to evolve toward supporting the counter-insurgency force, but progress has been slowed by difficulty in recruiting qualified applicants. There have been recent airworthiness issues with the CompAir 7SL aircraft, and the Coalition is working with the Iraqi Air Force to develop solutions and alternatives to continue supporting the mission."¹²⁷⁰

The Iraqi Air Force concentrated on reconnaissance, battlefield mobility and airlift during the rest of 2006 and in early 2007. The control of Iraqi airspace remained a US responsibility, and the Ministry of Defense had not developed plans to procure its own combat aircraft. Increasing the size of the force continued to be a problem, because of the difficulty in finding qualified applicants. The Defense Department called pilot and technician training "wholly inadequate" in February 2007.¹²⁷¹ The FY2007 budget request noted that:

The current fixed wing ISR and utility helicopter fleet is not able to provide the capability required by a modern and mobile land force. Close air support capability only exists through the use of Coalition air forces. The IqAF's current fixed wing ISR aircraft are becoming increasingly difficult to support because they are unsuitable to the harsh Iraqi environment and for the mission requirements.

The IqAF was, however, becoming increasingly operational. The Iraqi 23rd Squadron became fully operational in early February 2007. This squadron had 3 C-130 transport aircraft, giving Iraq a nascent military air-transport capability. The 2nd Squadron based at Taji Air Base received its first 6 UH-1H Huey IIs in early 2007 and was expected to use them initially for battlefield mobility and casualty evacuation. The first 10 of 28 Mi-17 helicopters arrived in Iraq in Fall 2006. A total of 16 UH-1s were being upgraded to a UH-1H Huey II configuration, and were scheduled to be completed by April 2007.

The IqAF had three fixed-wing airbases in March 2007. The newest, New Al-Muthanna, Air Base housed the 23rd Squadron and operated 3 C-130Es¹²⁷². The other fixed-wing airbases were located in Basrah and Kirkuk, and there was one helicopter base in Taji. The IqAF planned to request an additional 3 C-130s from the US, bringing the eventual squadron size to 6.¹²⁷³ Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft were located at Kirkuk Air Base (3rd Squadron with four SAMA CH-2000s) and Basrah Air Base (70th Squadron with four SAMA CH-2000s and two Sea Bird Seeker SB7L-360s).¹²⁷⁴

Figure 9.1 provides details on Iraqi Air Force assets as of April 2007, according to the Defense Department.

Figure 9.1
Iraqi Air Force Capabilities

	C-130E Hercules transport aircraft	CH-2000 observation aircraft	SB7L-360 Sea Bird Seeker	Mi-17 battlefield helicopters	Bell 206 Jet Ranger helicopters	Cessna Caravan 20SB	Bell UH-1 helicopters
# of aircraft	3 (Three more requested in late 2006)	8	2-8	10 (18 more expected 2007)	5	3	16 (upgraded to US to Huey II) 18 more on order
Role	Air Transport	Patrol oil pipelines and other critical infrastructure facilities	Patrol oil pipelines and other critical infrastructure facilities	Battlefield Mobility	Basic rotary- wing training	Intelligence, Surveillance, And Reconnaissance ISR	Battlefield Mobility / Casualty Evacuation

Source US Department of Defense.

Developments in the Ministry of the Interior

The Ministry of the Interior's forces consisted of the Iraqi Police Service, the National Police, the Directorate of Border Enforcement, and other, smaller forces. MNSTC-I had completed its initial training and equipping goal for the Objective Civil Security Force (OCSF) of 188,300 MOI security forces by March 2007 and was in the process of expanding the MOI forces to 194,800.

In March 2007, the DoD announced that the government of Iraq was planning on expanding both the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi police services. The expansion of the Iraqi police was comprised of:

- **Replenishment of National Police Brigades.** The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team (CPATT) is working to replenish all National Police units with personnel and key pacing items of equipment in support of the Baghdad Security Plan and Phase II training at Numaniyah.
- **Expansion of National Police to 10 Brigades.** The CPATT is supporting the prime minister's initiative to build a multicomponent (Iraqi Army and National Police), division-sized force to protect the Samarra Shrine reconstruction project. The Samarra BDE was recruited locally and are newly trained IP's with NP leadership.
- **Establishment of Three Emergency Response Unit Battalions in Anbar.** The CPATT, in cooperation with the MOI and provincial authorities, is assisting with the training and equipping of three battalions of auxiliary policemen, to assist the Iraqi Police Service primarily in the greater Ramadi area. This is an initiative to take advantage of increased Sunni participation in the police forces of Anbar Province.¹²⁷⁵ The size of the ERU and its mission is still to be determined.

Nevertheless, the various security and police forces had made substantially less progress than the Ministry of the Defense and Iraq's regular forces. There were 24,400 men trained and equipped for the National Police, around 135,000 trained and equipped for the regular police, and 32,900 men for the other forces reporting directly to the Ministry of the Interior in March 2007. Even more than was the case for Iraq's regular forces, counts based on the total number of men that were trained and equipped, rather than actually present, sharply exaggerated the number of men actually in service

MOI forces were still being actively vetted and purged in the spring of 2007. The MOI had to take an entire brigade of the National Police off line in October 2006 because of its ties to Shi'ite sectarian violence. This was an important step in cleaning up the MOI's forces, although other elements of the MOI forces still had significant ties to Shi'ite parties, militias, and death squads. Biometrics were also now being used to identify those individuals with criminal pasts and those who have previously been in the custody of coalition forces.

The Department of Defense quarterly report for August 2006 provided a number of important warnings about the MOI level of progress to date:

- Major progress has been made in reforming the internal operations of the MOI in every area but logistics and says expect major progress in that area by end 2006. It provides some details on logistic and support contracts and equipment plans. But does not address adequacy of equipment

and states that, "...the MOI does not currently have an effective equipment management system in place...it is unknown what percentage of the equipment issued to the MOI is still serviceable." (pp. 48-50)

- "the MOI does not currently have an effective personnel management system. As a result, it is unknown how many of the forces still trained by CPATT are still employed by the MOI." Puts attrition at least 20% per year. (p. 50)
- Serious problems exist in the allocation and training of police in key provinces (p. 50)
- Both the National Police and DBE are overmanned, and that no estimate exists of how many are trained and equipped by the MNF-I now actually serve versus those who have left. (p. 51)
- Merging the National Police Commandos and Public Order Battalions before the January 2006 elections helped reduce sectarian problems and abuses, but no details. (p. 51).
- The seriousness of corruption is key problem. (p. 51)
- Units have problems with militia ties and influence, and say some are influenced by Iran, but no details, perspective, or examples. Does note that 45 more transition teams were deployed to the police in July 2006. (pp. 51-52)
- There is "unprofessional and, at times, criminal behavior" of some National Police units but does not describe which units or the level of progress in dealing with what used to be the Iraqi security forces. (p. 46)
- US and other NPTTs are now embedded in all levels of units down to the battalion level. This should lead to major problems in dealing with sectarian and ethnic abuses and in leadership. They have, however, been able to put a police training team in every police station and facility in Baghdad.
- It is unclear that any meaningful recruiting and vetting process has yet taken hold. (p. 47)
- Some unquantified progress in creating mechanized battalions and providing armored vehicles. (p. 47)
- The section on the Department of Border Enforcement and Department of Ports of Entry describes a rushed effort of limited present effectiveness with goals that seem unrealistic. The percentage data on manning and equipment say nothing about effectiveness.
- The current strength and capability of the Center for Dignitary Protection is unknown. (p. 48)

The August 2006 status report summarized the MOI's internal problems as follows:¹²⁷⁶

Corruption, illegal activity, and sectarian bias have constrained progress in developing MOI forces. Inappropriate tolerance of and infiltration by Shi'a militias, some of which are influenced by Iran, is the primary concern of the Government of Iraq. A lack of effective leadership and policies to stem corruption through accountability for actions, equipment, and personnel have enabled the theft of pay and equipment, unlawful detentions, and reported cases of abduction and torture or execution of Sunnis. The minister is committed to changing corrupt leaders and instituting policies to eliminate corruption.

An additional 45 transition teams were deployed in July to increase PTT coverage across the country. As stations begin to reach TRA Level 2 in August, transition teams will expand their coverage of nearly 1,000 total stations across Iraq. This will limit infiltration by militias, improve adherence to the rule of law, and prevent complicity and participation in sectarian violence.

The November Quarterly Report was no more flattering and added: "corruption and smuggling are becoming more organized and entrenched." This is due partly to that fact

that MOI internal security training leaves little time left for “training on or conducting criminal investigations.”¹²⁷⁷ The analysis in the March 2007 report was only marginally better,¹²⁷⁸

Embedded transition teams continue to report modest improvements in the MOI’s ability to perform key ministry functions, such as developing and implementing plans and policies, intelligence, personnel management, logistics, communications, and budgeting. MNSTC-I assesses MOI as being partly effective. As was described in the November 2006 report, the CPATT’s MOI Transition Team works with the MOI on developing and assessing these capabilities. The MOI Transition Team is composed of slightly more than 100 advisors.

Certain functional areas of the MOI operate under an assortment of financial authorities intended for a command-and-control structure that no longer exists. In this uncertain regulatory environment, proper financial reporting is inconsistent and results in difficulty for the MOI to budget centrally and execute funds effectively and transparently. Nevertheless, budget execution under Minister of Interior Jawad al-Bolani is improving and the Foreign Military Sales program will mitigate some of the risk of mismanagement in this area.

The MOI Transition Team is focusing on developing the minister’s ability to delineate authority, responsibility, and accountability clearly throughout the MOI. The chain of command is relatively clear and effective for National Police and Border Forces. However, command and control for the provincial police is unclear. The decentralized nature of the Iraqi Police Service often results in conflicting guidance and directives coming simultaneously from the central ministry and the provincial government.

...Corruption, illegal activity, and sectarian influence constrain progress in developing MOI forces. Although the primary concern of the Government of Iraq remains the Sunni insurgency, tolerance of and influence exerted by Shi’a militia members within the MOI are troubling. Militia influence affects every component of the MOI, particularly in Baghdad and several other key cities. Recruits take an oath of office denouncing militia influence and pledging allegiance to Iraq’s constitution. Whenever actionable evidence is found, the MOI Internal Affairs Directorate and the minister act it on.

It should be noted that some MNF-I experts did feel these comments were unduly negative. For example, one expert noted that he felt the DBE was not overmanned for its mission. The Director General DBE had built 162 smaller expeditionary forts to augment the Coalition forts and planned to build an additional 291. Additional border forts and planned construction necessitates more personnel than the original OCSF authorization

The Growth of MOI Forces

The DoD announced in February 2007 that MNSTC-I had met its initial training and equipping goal for the Objective Civil Security Force of 188, 300. The forces were still being expanded through 2007 to 194,800.¹²⁷⁹

The President’s FY 2007 Emergency Supplemental Request called for: force structure increases such as 4,000 police and forensic specialties; National Police forces to be provided with armored/SWAT vehicles and HMMWVs, tactical gear and body armor; National Police reform training to include law/ethics training, leader capability to include surveillance system equipment; and life support capability to include development of a MOI logistics structure and infrastructure sustainment.¹²⁸⁰

The following figures summarize some of the trends in the growth of MOI forces as measured in terms of the number of men who were trained and equipped:

- **Figure 10.1** shows the growth of the men trained and equipped for MOI forces by force element. The actual number of men retained and on duty on a day-to-day basis was often below 60% of these totals. One MNI-experts notes, however, that, “When training, leave and authorized absences are taken into account this figure is not below what could be expected in a war time force. A peace time military force might be expected to be below 80% when leave, training, medical and moves are included.”
- **Figure 10.2** provides similar data to Figure 10.1, shows force distribution by percentage.
- **Figure 10.3** contrasts DOD assessed capabilities for the National Police Service, June 2005 and February 2007, at the combat battalion, brigade, and division level. These figures reflect the same exaggeration of actual Iraqi combat capabilities as similar data for the Army. Note that the DoD qualifies units “in the Lead” as “with Coalition enablers or fully independent.” How many units are “fully independent” is not revealed. MNF-I experts do comment, however, “We rightly developed the operational capabilities first to get the Iraqis “out in front” or “in the Lead” and now must develop the support capabilities in these units.”
- **Figure 10.4** provides a force generation timeline, with information on manning and training as well as equipment deliveries, as of August 2006. This schedule is far too demanding, even given the limited length of training and the light nature of the equipment provided to the forces involved.

The Iraqi Police Service did, however, make major progress in many areas of training. The IPS effort began with JIPTC and the IPS Academy in Baghdad. The first IPS class graduated from the Baghdad academy in February 2004. The initial class had only 2 female IPS, but that number grew progressively with each additional class to a class of 360 females in late 2004. Also, the overall class size was close to 1000 IPS throughout 2004. As of December 31, 2006, the majority of Iraqi Police Academies had transitioned to Iraqi control. Only the Baghdad Training Center and the Jordan International Training Center remained under Coalition control.¹²⁸¹

Thousands of former IPS who returned to duty in fall of 2003 and went through a three week TIP course in policing in a democratic society. These TIP Academies were spread throughout the entire country and conducted in every large city. The Military Police were given the mission and that became their main effort from late 2003 through fall of 2006. While training sometimes still have to be rushed, it still was far more effective than no training.

Real Manning Levels Are Unknown

Once again, the manpower data in Figures 10.1 to 10.4 only count manpower throughput in the training system and authorized manning. They do not report actual manning or real world force readiness and capability. They ignored desertions, absenteeism, and many other problems. As one MNF-I expert explains, “They do not report actual manning because we have no way to track that data. The MOI personnel system is a paper process. We are reporting the only figures on which we have accurate data.”

The DoD reported in November 2007 that:

The MOI continues to struggle with personnel management. Lack of standardized personnel strength reporting from stations up their district and provincial chains causes lack of transparency on the total number of Iraqi police officers on duty on any given day. The only numbers available are the payroll numbers submitted by the provinces, which, in many cases, are higher than the

actual numbers of Iraqi police officers on hand. As a result, it is unclear how many of the forces trained by the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team are still employed by the MOI, or what percentage of the 180,000 police thought to be on the MOI payroll are Civilian Police Assistance Training Team-trained and equipped.¹²⁸²

In addition to the uncertainties in the overall number of trained regular police officers on duty there continued to be problems with distribution of the manpower that actually did exist among provinces. Some provinces were reluctant to take officers off the streets in order to send them to training resulting in those provinces being understaffed with trained personnel. Meanwhile these openings allowed other provinces to fill the empty slots in the academies and having more than their authorized trained force.¹²⁸³

Absenteeism continued to be a serious problem, with leave policies and undeveloped personnel management accounting for 30-40% of absent personnel. In the IPS shift schedules make it difficult for the coalition teams to offer any assessment of the level of absenteeism.¹²⁸⁴ Finally, to make up for chronic absenteeism and manpower shortages in the Iraqi police, many provincial and local governments have hired additional police outside of the central government's train-and-equip program.¹²⁸⁵ Unfortunately, these "extra" police are trained and equipped by the local governments, and are often put on the job with little or no training. Since the provinces continue to hire above the OCSF numbers it is also impossible to track specific policemen trained versus those untrained in individual stations

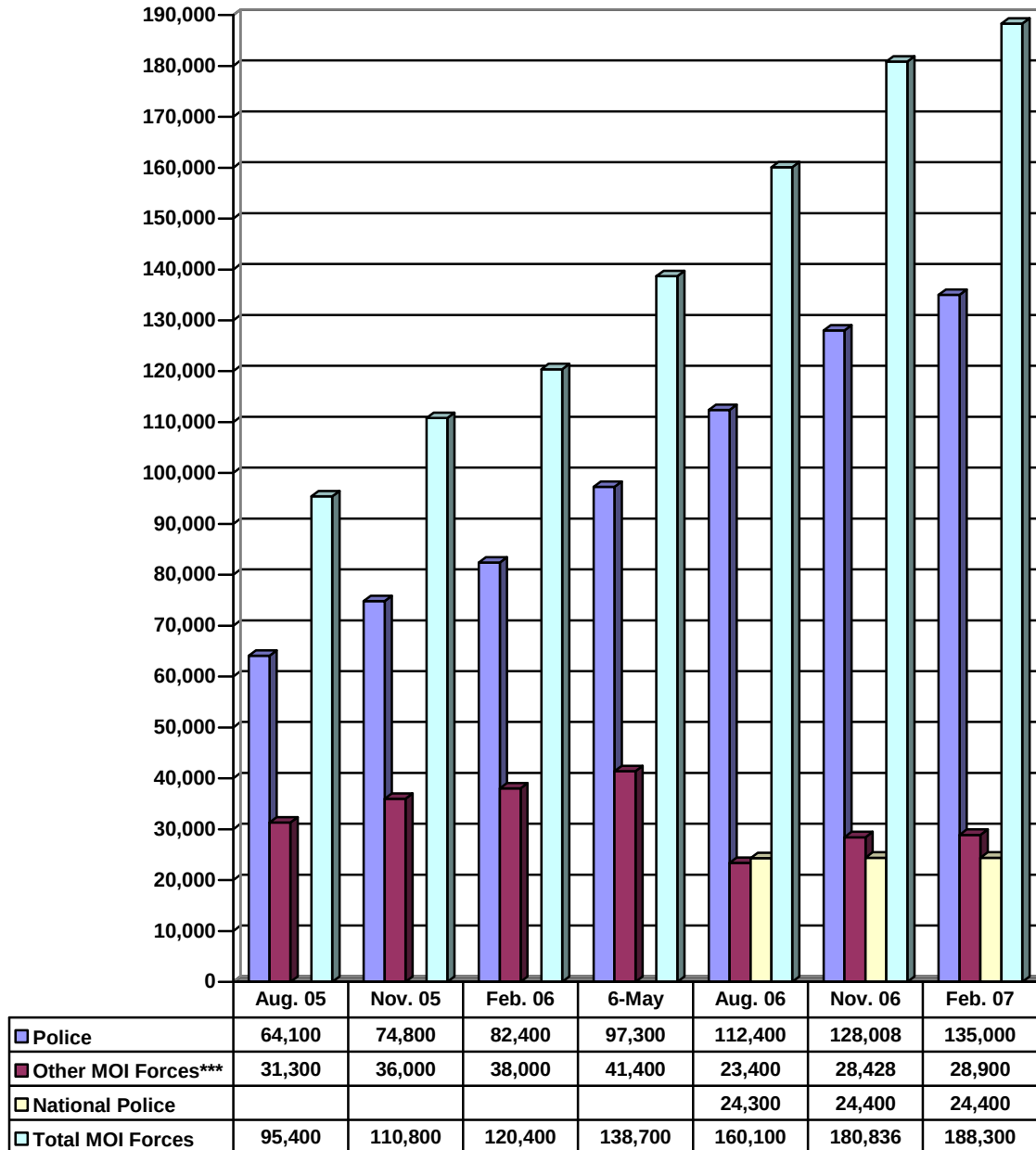
The Department of Defense Quarterly Report for March 2007 summarized the MOI's manpower and personnel problems as follows,¹²⁸⁶

The MOI does not yet have accurate personnel accountability and reporting procedures, and it is unknown how many of the more than 306,000 employees on the ministry's payroll are present for duty on a given day. MNSTC-I estimates that, on an average day, less than 70% of MOI personnel are present for duty. This is a combination of authorized absences (leave, school, sickness) and unauthorized absences. The problem of personnel accountability is being addressed through the purchase of an automated human resources and payroll system. The equipment and software for this system were installed in January 2007, and training has begun. Full deployment of the system is expected to take 18 months. Once complete, the personnel management system will be integrated fully with employee biometrics, improving the accuracy of employment rosters and facilitating employee criminal background screening.

...Although the MOI is implementing an automated personnel management system, there are currently no reliable data to indicate how many of the OCSF are still serving with the MOI. Additionally, the MOI has hired a significant number of police beyond those trained by MNSTC-I. MNSTC-I estimates attrition for the MOI as approximately 20% per year, with the Iraqi Police Service and the National Police attrition remaining higher than the Directorate of Border Enforcement and other personnel due to the variance of risks in the duties.

... The Ministers of Defense and Interior are aware of "ghost" soldiers and policemen who exist only on the rolls. By maintaining these soldiers and policeman on their roles, units are able to receive additional resources based on per capita planning factors. Additionally, corrupt leaders often collect pay and other compensation designated for these soldiers and policemen. The ministries have made significant strides in reducing corruption within the personnel and pay systems and are well along in the automation of these systems to reduce corruption further and to tackle the absenteeism resulting from soldiers leaving their units to deliver their pay in cash to their families in their home districts.

Figure 10.1
MOI Manning Levels*: August 2005 to February 2007*



Note:* These figures only show the number of men trained and equipped and not the manpower and equipment actually in active service in the unit.

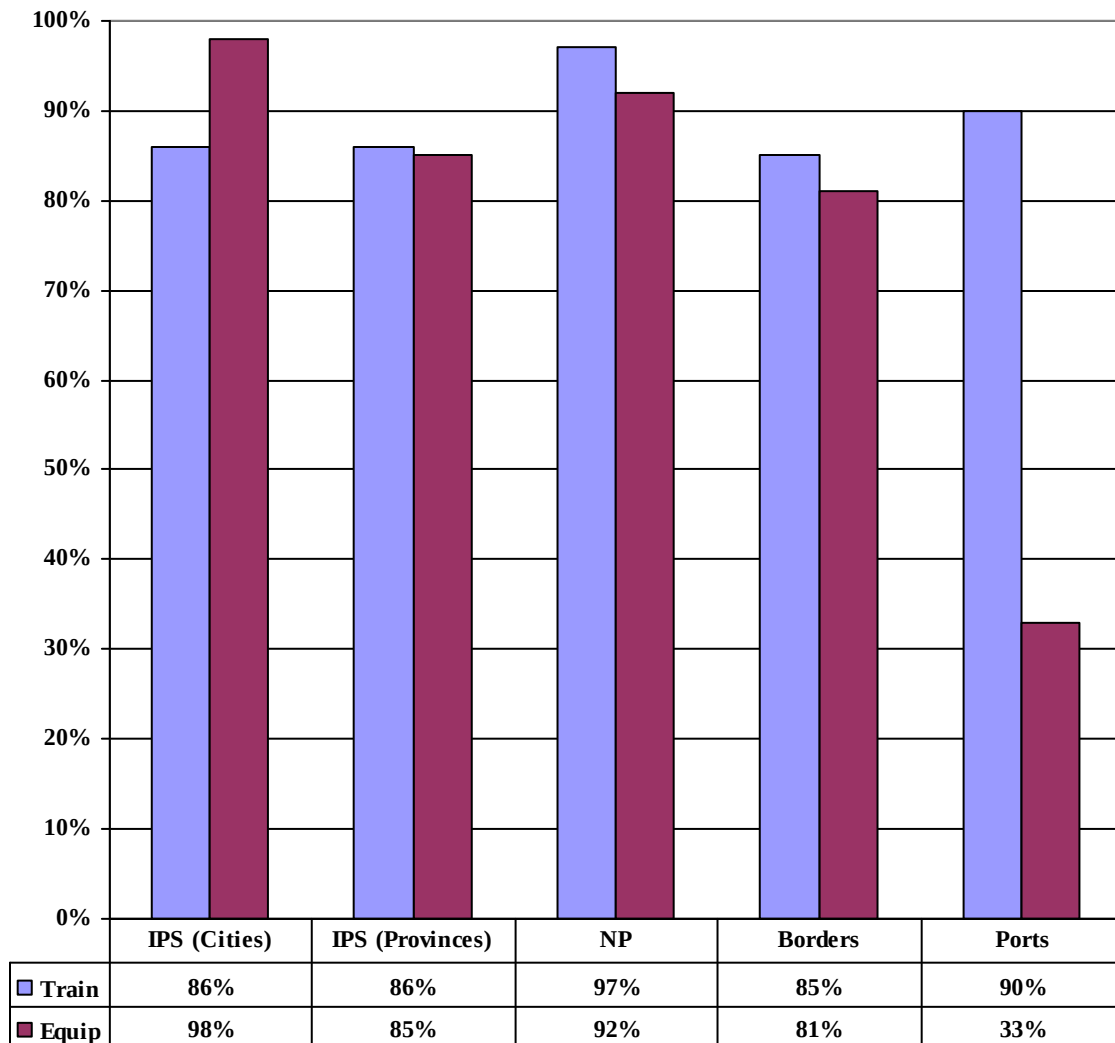
Note: ** Does not include Facilities Protection Service

*** "Other MOI Forces" includes Border Protection forces, Dignitary Protection Forces. The National Police were taken from these forces to form a separate force.

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Source: Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State Weekly Status Reports, August 2005-February 2007.

Figure 10.2
Trained and Equipped Manpower for Major Branches of MOI Forces
 (Figures as of July 2006)

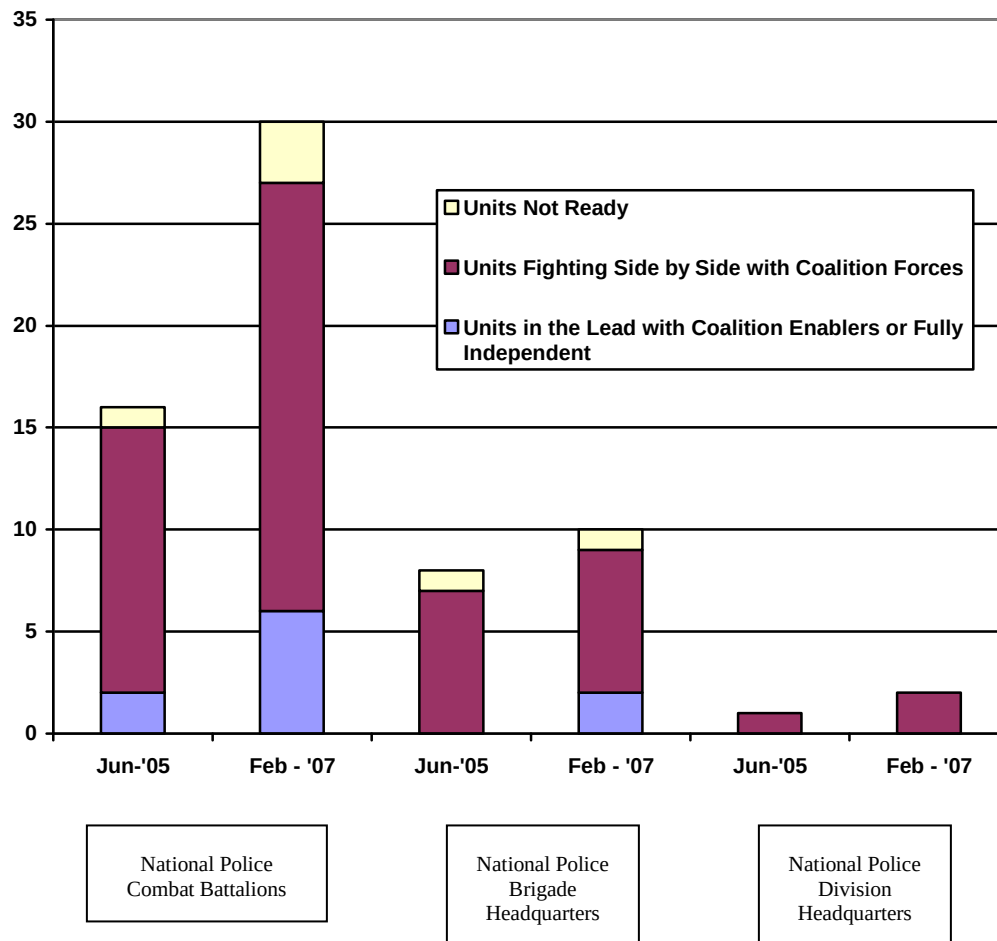


Note: These figures only show the number of men trained and equipped and not the manpower and equipment actually in active service in the unit.

Data as of 15 July 2006. Source: Adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 42; Note: +/-5% margin of error.

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Figure 10.3
MOI National Police Forces: Assessed Capabilities



Data as of November 13, 2006

Source: Adapted from *US Department of Defense, Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, March 2007 Report to Congress*, p. 26.

Note: +/- 5% margin of error.

Figure 10.4
Force Generation Timeline

Part I: Manning and Training

	1 st National Police Division	2 nd National Police Division	Department of Border Enforcement	National Information and Investigative Agency	Criminal Investigative Division	Iraqi Police Service
To be trained in 2006	1,116	3,634	4,351	1,471	1,173	41,179
Total Objective Force at end of 2006	11,238	11,238	28,360	2,500	4,000	135,000
2006 Training goals expected to be reached by...	July 2006	August 2006	November 2006	December 2006 (this date is also listed as the training completion date of the “MCU”, which supposedly stands for “Major Crimes Unit”, although neither the term nor the abbreviation are mentioned elsewhere in the August 2006 Report to Congress “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” from which the data in this table is taken.		

Equipment Issues

Figure 10.5 shows that the Iraqi Police Service was supposed to have 77% of its authorized equipment as of November 2006. The police were then expected to have 100% of their authorized equipment by summer, 2007.¹²⁸⁷ The supporting data in the August Quarterly Report are summarized in **Figure 10.5**, and the report stated that:

- Overall on track to meet OCSF equipping goals by Dec 06
- Expect significant progress on weapons when shipment arrives from Russia in Aug 06
- Shipping delays regarding communications equipment resolved; equipment inbound
- Pistol purchase contract challenged causing delay in manufacture and delivery

The DoD reported that as of March 2007, the Iraqi Police Service in Baghdad and 9 other cities had received 100% of their authorized vehicles and equipment. As of early 2007, the Iraqi Police service overall had received 83% of its authorized critical equipment, and is expected to receive 100% by the summer of 2007.¹²⁸⁸ The National Police were also reported to have received all of their equipment by the end of 2006. The MNF-I reports that most units were well equipped for their duties, but that a minority of units in particularly dangerous areas were outgunned.

Furthermore, the DoD stated in its March, 2007 Quarterly Report that:¹²⁸⁹

Due to the immaturity of the MOI's equipment accountability system, there are no reliable figures on how much of this equipment remains in service, nor is it known how much equipment the MOI has purchased for additional Iraqi Police Service staff and for staff authorized by provincial governors. The most accurate reports on equipment quantities and serviceability are provided by MNC-I through the Police Transition Teams (PTTs). MNSTC-I continues to work with the Iraqi Police Service to implement standardized reporting and tracking processes and mechanisms. In conjunction with MNSTC-I, the MOI is developing a comprehensive procurement plan to ensure that MNSTC-I funds and MOI equipping funds are spent coherently.

The spiraling violence has also greatly increased demand for police equipment. According to Col. Bryan Owens of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, "The original mandate from CPATT was to equip 5,830 policemen in Salahuddin. That was based on the population of Portland, Oregon, which is about 1.2 million. Well, as you know, the security situation in Portland, Oregon, is a lot different than it is here. And so in Salahuddin, we have close to 12,000 policemen and they are only being equipped by coalition forces to the tune of 5,830."

This lack of accurate force strength data seems to be even more critical in the case of the various police forces, because the MOI forces were generally significantly less ready and reliable than their regular army counterparts. While some MNF-I advisors disagree, discussions with both Iraqi and US personnel on the scene indicate that Iraqi police units often had more severe manning and equipment problems, officers and NCO presented more problems, corruption was a greater problem, and they were more likely to support Shi'ite operations and militias.

Figure 10.5
MOI Equipment Breakout as of August 2006

9+ CITIES	% Eqpd	Overall	Key Shortfall	18 PROVs	% Eqpd	Overall	Key Shortfall	
Baghdad	98	99%	AK-47s	Baghdad	98	66%	AK-47s	
Fallujah	100			Anbar	43		Personnel	
Ramadi	99		AK-47s	Dahuk	16		All, Priority	
North Babil	96		PKM	Irbil	53		Comms	
Mosul	100			Karbala	73		PKM, Comms	
Tal A’Far	100			Najaf	86		PKM, Comms	
Najaf	100			Sulymaniyah	13		All, Priority	
Baqubah	100			Wasit	68		Glocks, PKM, Comms	
Basrah	93		AK-47s	Babil	72		Glocks, PKM, Comms	
Kirkuk	100			Basrah	71		AK-47s, PKM,	
Samarra	100			Dhi Qar	82		Glocks, PKM, Comms	
				Diyala	57		AK-47s, PKM,	
National Police		92	92%	B.A., Glocks, PKM, Comms	Maysan		82	Glocks, PKM
				Muthanna	91		Glocks, PKM	
DDE		81	56% ^b	PKM, Vehicles ^a	Ninewah		62	Weapons, Body Armor
					Qadisiyah		75	Glocks, PKM, Comms
POE		32		Glocks, Body Armor,	Salah Ad		68	AK-47s, PKM,
				Tamim	79		PKM, Comms	

Data as of July 15, 2006.

a. Note that MNF-I reports important improvements since that time. MNF-I reports the MOI forces were at 75% in April 2007. Fuel trailers, Fuel trucks, 9 ton trucks, and uniforms were the current key shortfalls, and MOI forces were expected to be at 100% by August 2007

b. The equipment fill percentage was 70% in April 2007. Key shortages included patrol vehicles, flat bed trucks, 10K generators, and uniforms. The flat bed trucks and uniforms were to be 100% filled by the end of the 2007, all other key shortages were to be filled by August 2007

Source: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 56 and 49.

Ongoing Sectarian Issues

There was a continuing effort to ensure the ethnic diversity of the MOI forces – but far too little substance progress was made. Older units such as the Public Order Battalions, by August 2006 integrated into the National Police, remained less diverse, since they were formed when Sunni participation in governmental efforts was particularly low. In comparison with these older units the newer ones were increasingly diverse. In contrast with the National Police, local police forces typically continue to reflect the ethnicity of the community in which they work, according to the DoD.¹²⁹⁰ However, the DoD also noted that, “there are some neighborhoods in Baghdad and other cities where the percentage of Shi’a in the Iraqi Police Service is disproportionately high.”¹²⁹¹

The National Police also continued to be composed of a disproportionate number of Shi’ites. In 2004, many of the senior Iraqi Police leaders were Sunni, but have since been removed by the predominantly Shi’a controlled MOI.

Sectarian militia infiltration of the police forces was a serious problem. In March 2007 the DoD noted, “tolerance of and influence exerted by Shi’a militia members within the MOI are troubling. Militia influence affects every component of the MOI, particularly in Baghdad and several other key cities.”¹²⁹² Retired Army Gen. Barry McCaffrey, after conducting a fact-finding tour of Iraq in March 2007, reported “The police force is feared as a Shia militia in uniform which is responsible for thousands of extra-judicial killings.”¹²⁹³

Infiltration of MOI forces by Shi’ite militias remained a primary concern as corrupt, unprofessional or illegal activities by such groups within the police or with police consent continued to reflect poorly on and degrade the confidence in the police forces. As with the other problems it was hoped that implanting stronger leadership and more effective policies would lead to a lessening of criminal activity and an increase of organizational loyalty. In March 2006, the MOI HQ conducted a program led by three Deputy Ministers that required employees to participate in assemblies in which loyalty to the state was emphasized over family or tribal loyalty. Each session ended with an oath of allegiance to Iraq. Additionally, further transition teams were deployed to help limit infiltration by militias and criminal activity by members of the police in July 2006

A high profile case of police torture and mistreatment in May 2006 – the “Site 4 case” led to the dismissal and prosecution of 55 Interior Ministry employees. Some remained free as of November, leading Ambassador Khalilzad to warn Iraqi leaders that unless they pursued the case more vigorously, the US might be forced to suspend aid to the police services under the so-called Leahy Law, which prohibits the financing of foreign security forces that commit “gross violations of human rights. In the spring of 2007, however, the most notorious of the Site 4 suspects were remanded over for trial at the new Rusafa “law and Order” complex.

The police force in Basrah was mentored and trained by Armor Group Services Ltd, a private security contractor. Armor Group’s approach to overcome mixed loyalties due to sectarian or tribal affiliation was to hire young men of about 18-21 years of age,

expecting them to be less entangled in traditional networks. Armor Group employees reported this system to work very well for the Basrah police's Tactical Support Unit, which came to be a highly respected unit and one of the very few ones without any corrupt practices.¹²⁹⁴

Basra's general police force, however, met much lower standards. The 7,000 policemen were "notoriously corrupt even by Iraqi standards, and death squads wearing police uniforms and traveling in police vehicles have abducted and killed Sunnis and journalists." British forces had lost oversight over the police in the area, but tried to regain control in October 2006 in "Operation Sinbad." 1,000 British soldiers backed up by 2,000 Iraqi troops reinforced existing police stations to raise standards.¹²⁹⁵

British training efforts experienced a setback on October 29, 2006, when 17 Iraqi police instructors and two translators were killed on their way home from a British-run training school.¹²⁹⁶ A British operation to re-take a renegade police station in Basra on December 25th provided a clear example of the corruption rampant in Iraqi Police forces. British forces, aided by 600 Iraqi army soldiers, the police station in Basra, transferred all 127 of its prisoners to another station, and demolished the building. Many of the prisoners showed signs of ill treatment and outright torture. Major Charlie Burbridge described the condition of the prisoners as "appalling."¹²⁹⁷ The 'Serious Crimes Unit' that had run the station was suspected of involvement with local death squads. The British acted on a tip that the police were about to execute their prisoners.¹²⁹⁸

On March 27th, 2007 a massive truck bomb exploded in Tal Afar, killing 152 people, the deadliest single bombing in the entire Iraq war. The bombing sparked reprisal attacks on Sunnis the following night. Although many of the reprisals were led by Shiite militiamen and civilians, the Iraqi police force gave at least tacit support to the reprisals. There were reports of police officers actually taking part in the revenge killings. The violence only stopped after the arrival of Iraqi Army units. Soldiers from the Iraqi 3rd Division detained 20 police officers, but released them for fear of sparking wider violence.¹²⁹⁹

Fighting Corruption in the MOI and Police Forces

The MOI has expanded the staffs that are supposed to fight corruption. During the fourth quarter of 2006, it sought to improve its internal capacity to identify, deter, and prevent corruption. Approval by the Ministry of Finance allow the MOI's Inspector General (IG) to plan to increase the number of employees by 1,000 individuals during 2007. Added resources also improved the IG's ability to evaluate and report independently on the performance of MOI programs and operations throughout Iraq.

The March 2007 Quarterly Report stated that the IG developed its first Annual Inspection Plan and formally set up IG special inspection committees to conduct inspections of pre-selected MOI organizations throughout Iraq based on approved inspection checklists. The IG also formalized a professional development program for serving IG employees and expanded the core Program of Instruction for basic training of IGs. During this period, the IG increased its number of trained investigators from 81 to 125, to include employees serving in outlying provinces.

These efforts allowed the IG's office to increase its trained investigators from 81 to 125 during the last months of 2006. Funding increases also allowed the IG office to grow by 1,000 employees by Spring 2007. The IG also created an annual inspection plan "aimed at formalizing the use of IG special inspection committees to conduct inspections of pre-selected MOI organizations throughout Iraq based on approved inspection checklists."¹³⁰⁰ Its Internal Affairs Directorate initiated a specialized training curriculum, training 73% of its 1,250 full-time employees by the end of 2006.¹³⁰¹

The MOI launched a police reform program, dubbed "Quicklook" in December 2006. This program "consisted of stations visits by the MOI team, composed of representatives of Police Affairs, Internal Affairs, Human Resource, Training, and Administrative directorates, and complemented by the local PTT, which provides both inspection preparation and on-site security. The team gauges the reliability of police forces as well as the more traditional readiness metrics involving manning, equipping, and facilities."¹³⁰²

The program is time-consuming, and as of April 7, 2007 42 stations have been inspected. The program started in Baghdad, and will take 3-4 months to complete in the city. The program will then be expanded to the rest of Iraq. MNF-I experts feel however, that this effort sets the stage for a near complete transformation. A similar effort with the National Police had great success, and may prove to be equally successful with the regular police.

On the surface, the record of IG internal affairs investigations was impressive. A total of 3,403 corruption-related investigations and 249 human rights-related investigations were opened in 2006. Many of these investigations resulted in disciplinary action, as seen in **Figure 10.7**. More than 10,000 employees were fired or re-assigned due to the IG investigations.¹³⁰³ According to the DoD, of the 3,403 corruption-related investigations:¹³⁰⁴

775 (22%) resulted in disciplinary punishment, 312 (9%) were forwarded to the Commission of Public Integrity or to a court for subsequent adjudication, 49 (1.5%) were closed because of insufficient evidence, and 106 (3%) were handled as internal MOI discipline. The other 2,161 (63%) remain open pending judicial review, ministerial review, or the completion of further investigation by Internal Affairs.¹³⁰⁵

Of the 249 human rights-related investigations:

The Internal Affairs Directorate conducted 249 human rights-related investigations. Of these, 76 (30%) resulted in disciplinary punishment and 10 (4%) were closed because of insufficient evidence. The other 163 (65%) remain open pending judicial review, ministerial review, or further investigation.¹³⁰⁶

In addition to corruption and human rights-related investigations, the MOI conducted inspection and compliance programs and screened its employees for ties to the Ba'ath party or criminal records. Of the MOI's more than 280,000 employees "8,000 were reported as possible derogatory matches, 1,228 employees were dismissed, and 2,143 were identified in late December 2006 and are pending dismissal."¹³⁰⁷

In order to improve the IG's capabilities to fight corruption, the Specialized Advance Training Unit at the Baghdad Police College began training new investigators, with 125 investigators completing the training by March 2007.¹³⁰⁸ It is expected to take until

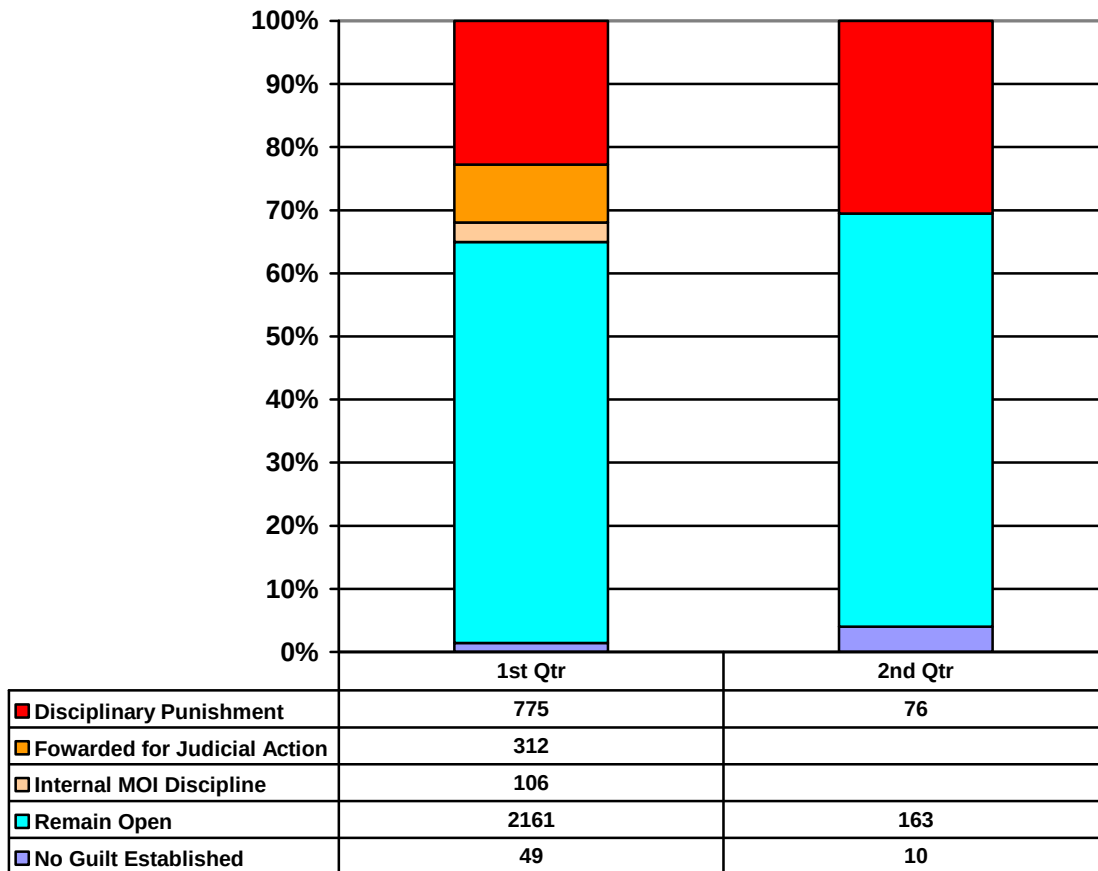
January 2008 to complete the training of the entire Investigations Directorate.¹³⁰⁹ Additionally, through September 2006, 65% of Internal Affairs officers had received specialized training. The entire force of Internal Affairs officers is expected to complete this training by March 2007.¹³¹⁰

It was clear, however, that it would take years to eliminate the corruption that affected both the Ministry and National Police and which was endemic in the regular police. One key problem was that corruption interacted with an inadequate pay and benefit systems, poor and over-accelerated training and deployment efforts, poor facilities, and a lack of adequate weapons and systems to track and control their use. Another problem was a series of operational needs that drove the Government of Iraq to put more security forces on the street even if this meant the ISF could not wait for academy graduates to fill the requirement.

According to a USIP report issued in February 2007, “There is ample anecdotal evidence of Iraqi police officers participating in training in order to obtain a weapon, uniform and ammunition to sell on the black market. U.S. advisors operate through translators and are often unaware of what transpires around them.”¹³¹¹

Far too many elements of the police development effort also had never planned for the level of capability needed to deal with a cycle of serious insurgency and civil conflict. The human dimension was lost in the rhetoric about patriotism and motivation and the focus on “leadership,” or simply ignored because planners and advisors believed they could not get the necessary aid.

Figure 10.7
2006 MOI Internal Affairs Investigation by Outcome



Source: US Department of Defense, "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq." March 2007 Report to Congress, p. 31

The “Year of the Police” in 2006

Some of the MOI’s problems were caused by US and MNF-I neglect, and the failure to initially give the development of MOI forces the priority that was necessary or to shape these forces to meet the needs of Iraq. It was not until October 2005 that the police training effort was placed under the US military along with the creation of regular forces. The US military had previously been restricted from providing such training and had little practical experience with creating the kind of paramilitary forces needed to “hold” and deal with civil conflict.

The same was true of US police forces. Despite the widespread recognition in America of the importance of training effective Iraqi police forces, the training effort remained under-staffed and under-funded. The DoD admitted in its March, 2007 quarterly report that it was not: “deploying enough PTTs [Police Transition Teams] to cover all of Iraq’s police stations; at any time, only 5 of Iraq’s 18 provinces have sufficient PTTs to conduct the full range of activities. . .”¹³¹²

The mission had not really existed since the US military had effectively had to abandoned missions because of problems and abuses in Latin America during the Cold War. The US lacked cadres of experienced trainers for the kind of forces needed by both the National Police and police. It is a tribute to the US military and civilian advisors that many succeeded in spite of these problems, and many cadres are becoming steadily more effective.

By 2006, however, the MNF-I was ready to start a “year of the police” that involved a far larger training effort and taking many other steps to reform and improve the MOI forces. The August 2006 status report by the Department of Defense summarized some of these steps as follows:¹³¹³

The MNF-I initiative to develop professional civil security forces able to assume the lead for the security of the Iraqi people has been dubbed the “Year of the Police.” The focus is on creating a force loyal to the people of Iraq and its Constitution, and committed to guaranteeing human rights and the rule of law. This was designated as one of MNC-I’s main efforts in 2006.

Mentoring of civil security forces is conducted by Police Transition Teams (PTTs), National Police Transition Teams (NPTTs), Border Transition Teams (BTTs), and Customs and Border Protection Teams (CBPTs). More than 160 PTTs are assisting the development of the IPS. Because of the large number of police stations dispersed throughout Iraq, the PTT program has initially focused on provincial headquarters, district headquarters, and Iraqi police stations in key strategic cities, but will spread to other stations throughout the country as more stations achieve a higher level of readiness. To conduct their mission, the PTTs travel to their assigned stations to train, teach, and coach the Iraqi police and to conduct joint patrols with their Iraqi counterparts.

The integration of International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) into the PTTs significantly increased the Coalition force’s ability to develop the IPS. The IPLOs provide the civilian police with expertise in all technical aspects of criminal investigation and police station management. The deployment of five additional Military Police companies in July 2006 added extra PTTs, enabling the expansion of the program to assess and assist in the development of the IPS.

Twenty-seven BTTs mentor and enable development of border forces. Additionally, Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Patrol Teams (CBPTs) provide critical mentorship at ports of entry, while 38 National Police Transition Teams (NPTTs) continue to support the

development of the National Police units. These transition teams are intended to improve the readiness and capability of their MOI partner units. The Coalition Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) is on track to meet the goal of recruiting and training the authorized number of MOI forces by the end of December 2006. The force generation of the Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) and the IPS will occur in November 2006 and December 2006, respectively. Specialized police units, such as the Criminal Investigative Division (CID) and the National Information and Investigative Agency (NIIA), will be trained by the end of 2006.

US and MNF-I efforts to develop the Iraqi police forces often fell short of their goal, or remained at least partially ineffective through the rest of 2006. In testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee on January 31st, 2007, when asked whether 2007 will actually be the “Year of the Police” in light of the failures of 2006, Lee Hamilton, the co-chairman of the Iraq Study Group, replied that there is: “Little evidence to suggest that that will be the case.” Senator Durbin added: “Any notion that we are going to surge to victory dies in the Iraqi police stations.”

Even so, the MNF-I feels it made important progress during the “year of the police:” MNF-I experts summarized the situation in April 2007 as follows:

- CPATT achieved its Objective Civil Security Force (OCSF) goals in 2006. All twelve Iraqi MOI training academies were turned over to Iraqi leadership and supported by the MOI in Dec.
- The OCSF equipping objective has been achieved with very few exceptions. DBE and some forces in low risk areas will receive the remainder of their personal protective equipment and uniforms by June. Contested areas and National Police have been replenished with increased allocations of key equipment and weapons to sustain the fight.
- Ministerial_capacity steadily improves. CPATT advisors have spent more than 130K hours embedded with their Ministry counterparts to date. Their efforts have contributed immeasurably to improving Ministerial Capacity and have directly supported the Minister’s MOI reform efforts especially in the fight against corruption. The MOI is functional and rated partially effective.
- Implementation of a professional development system for MOI forces is also on track. The first half of an officer program is in place and the remainder along with an NCO professional development system will be instituted later in 2007. (COL Bartran)
- Having achieved OCSF objectives, CPATT’s training focus shifts to: 1) Sustainment of the OCSF: Ensuring that the ministry recruits, vets, and trains the appropriate forces to address a 20% attrition rate. 2) Overseeing National Police (NP) Transformation: NP transformation training began in October 06 and is expected to run through July 07. We will also work to bring to fruition: the NATO supported “Carabinieri” leader training for the NP, forward regional deployment of NP brigades, and the establishment of a NP Training Center of Excellence. 3) Support for MOI Training Academies: We are conducting an analysis to determine how best to support the training academies and the specific role of our International Police Trainers.
- Sustainment of MOI forces will remain a priority through 2007. This includes the establishment of a functional logistic and supply system as well as a maintenance program to sustain the operational readiness of MOI’s fleet. CPATT will assist in the oversight of these programs and the establishment of a process to track readiness. Key areas of concern include: working with the MOI to set up effective warehouse operations, spare parts management, and replacement of lost or aging equipment.
- CPATT will continue to embed over 100 personnel in the MOI to improve ministerial capacity. The #1 priority for the MOI Transition Team is to help the MOI establish their maintenance and

logistics programs. We will also focus on: dissemination of the minister's Strategic Directive, implementation of the MOI Organizational Structure Law, the continued establishment of the MOI information technology system (e-Ministry), dissemination of the Human Resources recruiting and hiring directive, development and establishment of a MOI healthcare action plan, fielding and establishment of the National Information and Investigative Agency (NIIA), enhancing C2 capabilities in the National Command Center, completion and implementation of the 2007 Training Directive, revising subordinate ministry 5 year plans, executing an Inspector General inspections program, strengthening MOI Public Affairs, refining financial procedures to include budgeting, planning and execution processes, MOI assumption of life support contracting, and establishment of infrastructure management capabilities.

- Finalizing the establishment of a professional development system for the MOI will also be a primary concern for CPATT. This will include: the expansion of the Baghdad Police College from 1000 to 3000 cadets by Oct 07, and completion of the officer and NCO professional development system.

National Police

The National Police was now composed of Iraq's old security forces, which were elite Shi'ite units formed by an earlier Minister. It still presents serious problems because MoI efforts to recruit more Sunnis have so far had little success and the ties of some elements in the National Police to Shi'ite parties, militias, and death squads.

As part of effort to reform the National Police, it was reorganized into a headquarters, two divisions, the 1st and 2nd, a mechanized brigade and an Emergency Response Unit (ERU). The 1st and 2nd National Police Divisions were reported to have reached 99% of their authorized equipping and manning levels by July 2006, and completed force generation by the end of 2006.

Force Strength and Generation

Approximately 24,300 National Police Personnel had been trained and equipped by August 2006. This was an increase of 1,600 since May of that year, although such figures did not reflect absences and desertions. The total was 24,400 in March 2007, but Prime Minister Maliki announced a plan to expand the National Police by three battalions. This would bring the authorized strength of the National Police to 26,900

Deployment and Operations

In March 2007, all but one of the National Police brigades which were not enrolled in the National Police Transformation and Retraining program were conducting counter-insurgency operations to support the Baghdad Security Plan. Two National Police battalions were assigned security lead for their areas of responsibility within Baghdad. One battalion has been designated as part of the prime minister's operational and an additional brigade has been requested by the prime minister to provide security to the Samarra Shrine reconstruction project. Thirty-nine NPTTs support the development of National Police units by mentoring, training, and facilitating communication with Coalition forces. NPTTs assess the readiness and operational capability of the National Police, similar to the tasks performed by Military Transition Teams with Iraqi Army units.

Training

Training for the new recruits consisted of six weeks of training in the police academy in northern Baghdad. The equipment of the National Police consisted of small arms, medium machine guns, RPGs, and light trucks, which were used for patrols. The mechanized battalions were equipped with Armored Security Vehicles and REVAs, a South African wheeled APC. Like the regular police, however, some of the equipment they were supposed to have was not delivered or was somehow lost.

Equipment

The National Police had received 92% of their authorized equipment by August 2006. They reached 96% by the end of November, falling short of the goal of reaching 100% by that time. They were reported to be fully equipped by the end of December.¹³¹⁴ These figures, however, were at least as misleading as those for manpower. Much of the equipment was too light or inadequate for the missions the force now had to perform and much was missing or unaccounted for.

The March 2007 Quarterly Report noted that,¹³¹⁵

The National Police was issued all of its key authorized equipment by the end of December 2006. MNSTC-I tracks the end-items issued to the National Police and relies on National Police Transition Teams (NPTTs) to report periodically on the status of that equipment. The MOI is responsible for equipping National Police hired in excess of the agreed authorization, although CPATT provides additional uniforms and key equipment to National Police units as they rotate through the Phase II program at Numaniyah.

During this reporting period, Iraqi and Coalition forces leadership emphasized National Police property and personnel accountability via the Quicklook program. The MOI Administration and Vehicles Directorates are making measurable improvements in property accountability policies and processes. The Administration Directorate developed and staffed an electronic data repository to track and account for items issued. This database will continue to be backed up by hard copies of supply transactions until more robust and stable electronic media, such as the e-ministry program, are available. The Vehicles Directorate is initiating an electronic database to track vehicles. Both directorates are writing policies and documenting accountability processes to enable future compliance audits of their activities.

Sectarian, Ethnic, and Crime Problems

The National Police are sometimes said to be as effective as the army or even more so. Some units, such as the 'Scorpions' brigade in Hilla, are often held up as model units for their professionalism, effectiveness, and lack of sectarian bias. Nevertheless, the National Police continued to have problems with unprofessional and criminal behavior in some units. This was true in spite of ongoing efforts to review each unit and make changes in personnel or send units to be retrained as the need arose. The Department of Defense status report for August 2006 touched on those problems, although it scarcely fully addressed them:¹³¹⁶

Organized into a National Police Headquarters, two National Police Divisions, the 1st National Police Mechanized Brigade, and the Emergency Response Unit (ERU), the National Police are charged with maintaining law and order while an effective community police force is developed.

The National Police Headquarters provides command and control, staffing, equipping, training, and sustainment for these National Police Forces. It also commands the two training and professional development academies at Camp Solidarity and Camp Dublin.

...Unprofessional and, at times, criminal behavior has been attributed to certain units in the National Police. This behavior and the decrease in public confidence in these forces has been the impetus for a National Police reform program. Each unit and its leaders will be assessed by a joint (Coalition and Iraqi) committee. Substandard leaders at all levels will be removed and units will undergo retraining.

„The U.S. Government is committed to helping the Government of Iraq create an MOI that reflects the diversity of the Iraqi people. The goal is to create ethnically integrated units at the national level, while still allowing local police to reflect the ethnic composition of the communities in which they serve.

The former Police Commandos, now part of the National Police, are becoming increasingly diverse. The former Public Order Battalions, also now part of the National Police, tend to be disproportionately Shi'a, due to a lack of Sunni participation when these units were being formed in preparation for the January 2005 elections.

Merging the National Police Commandos and the Public Order Battalions into one National Police force has helped produce a more representative National Police. Recruiting initiatives targeting Sunnis have improved the diversity. Unlike the National Police, local police forces tend to be of the same ethnic mix as the communities in which they live and work.

... the National Police payroll is significantly larger than its authorized end strength.

...There are currently more than 29,000 National Police on the MOI payroll, but it is unknown how many of these have been trained and equipped. Absenteeism among National Police units generally follows the same pattern as in the military. Leave policies and immature personnel management policies account for 30%–40% of personnel not present for duty. Absenteeism in the IPS is difficult to quantify because shift schedules preclude PTTs from ascertaining which police officers are absent and which are simply off duty.

The DBE payroll is also larger than its authorized end-strength, with 25,832 DBE personnel on the MOI payroll. It is currently unknown how many untrained DBE personnel are on the rolls and how many of the trained and equipped border personnel have left the MOI. As with the other personnel issues, an effective personnel management system will help resolve these reporting and accountability deficiencies.

The Iraqi National Police was not immune from the problem of militia infiltration. Some of the most combat capable and best-equipped forces in the National Police were heavily implicated in the 2005 prisoner torture scandal.¹³¹⁷ Other army and police units especially known for their brutality displayed a high level of independence from the government. They included several Police Command Units, as well as the Tiger and Thunder Brigades, founded in 2004 without the consent of US commanders.

Units known to brutalize Sunnis included the Volcano Brigades, the Punishment Committee, and the Secret Investigative Unit. The Wolf Brigade and Maghawir Special Commando Brigades displayed strong continuity from the Saddam era, Wolf being mostly recruited from the former Iraqi Special Forces and Maghawir mostly made up of Saddam-era veterans.¹³¹⁸

In early October 2006, the entire 8th Brigade of the 2nd National Police Division was removed from duty and its commanders were arrested. The Brigade was implicated in a raid on a food factory in Baghdad in which 26 Sunni workers were kidnapped, and 7

executed.¹³¹⁹ According to a February, 2007 USIP report, many of the un-vetted original units that were combined to form the National Police in early 2006 were primarily loyal to Shi'ite Militia organizations.¹³²⁰

In December, Lt. General Martin Dempsey, the Multinational Security Transition commander in Iraq, responsible for assisting the Iraqi government in development, organization, training, equipping and sustaining Iraqi security forces, briefed reporters about ongoing training efforts. He stated that: "The National Police is the biggest worry, about 20 to 25 percent of them probably needed to be weeded out." To help accomplish this "weeding out" process, National Police brigades were being taken out of service, one brigade at a time, for a four-week police training program that included the re-vetting of leaders and background checks and polygraph checks. This was the first police training that most of these units had ever received.

As of November 2006 there were 177 Police Transition Teams (PTTs) (14 Provincial, 54 District, and 109 Station) assisting the development of the Iraqi Police Service. Each team had approximately 11–15 members; 3 or 4 members of each team are International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) hired as contractors by the U.S. State Department and the rest are typically military personnel, many of whom are Military Police. PTTs travel to stations to coach the Iraqi police and to conduct joint patrols with them.¹³²¹

Four of Iraq's nine National Police brigades have, however, gone through retraining as of April 7, 2007, while another brigade remained in retraining. This is a process will continue until each brigade is taken off line for retraining. General Martin Dempsey, the Multinational Security Transition commander in Iraq said there's been "significant change in those units that go through that process and a fairly wholesale change of leaders in those units." There is re-vetting of leaders underway with background checks and polygraph tests. This retraining was ordered in the wake of reports that one particular National Police Brigade had actively participated in sectarian violence.

Iraqi Police Service

"There remains a significant shortfall in the abilities of the Iraqi police forces in the area of leadership, personnel, training and equipment in my area."

-Brigade Commander Col. Paul Funk, April 9, 2007¹³²²

The situation was far worse in the regular police and the Facilities Protection Service. Most regular police units were too adequately equipped for police duty, but units in dangerous neighborhoods were too lightly equipped and had a high rate of desertion or retreated from their stations. MNF-I feels such cases are not representative of "most regular police units" today, but there have been many media reports of units that suffered massive desertions, and local recruiting has meant that many units serve sectarian and ethnic – not national – leaders. Such problems are of critical important because the Iraqi Police Service is should provide day-to-day security, and perform much of the "hold" function in the "win, hold, build" strategy of counterinsurgency. As the previous Figures have shown, the Iraqi Police Service also constitutes the majority of MOI forces. In 2007,

Iraqi Police Service is composed of patrol, traffic, station, and highway police, as well as specialists, such as forensic specialists, assigned throughout Iraq's 18 provinces. Its mission is to enforce the law, safeguard the public, and provide internal security at the local level.¹³²³

By the end of 2006, approximately 135,000 Iraqi Police Service (IPS) personnel had been trained and equipped, an increase of 21,200 over the prior three months. The fact remained, however, that actual manning could be as low 60,000-70,000, and is certain to have been well below 135,000. No one knew the numbers that remained in service, or how many of these men were even moderately effective. It was also clear that there were major shortages in manpower in some areas and small excesses in given units. The real world personnel situation was radically different from the largely meaningless totals of "trained and equipped" reported in MNF-I press releases.

Police Problems in 2006

The DoD quarterly report for August 2006 was not explicit in describing all the problems in these forces. It did, however, provide enough detail to raise major questions about efforts to rapidly improve the force:

The lack of PTTs means the US only has "limited observations of the IPS (Iraqi Police service)" in 13 of 18 provinces. This means that US and MNF-I have no real system for rating effectiveness and capability of the IPS in most of Iraq. (p. 45)

The section on IPS recruiting and vetting indicates some progress has been made, but admits that "There is currently no screening process to ascertain militia allegiance" and "currently, no method exists to track the success rate of these or other police officers." (p. 45)

The progress reported on equipping the IPS ignores the fact that the equipment supplied does not include protected vehicles and leaves the police underarmed compared to threat forces. (p. 45)

The section on IPS leadership describes the training program, not actual leadership. (pp. 45-46)
There is no meaningful reporting on progress in removing failures in senior leadership.

The August report also described other problems in police development:¹³²⁴

.The MOI does not currently have an effective personnel management system. As a result, it is unknown how many of the forces trained by CPATT are still employed by the MOI, or what percentage of the 146,000 police thought to be on the MOI payroll are CPATT trained and equipped.

CPATT estimates attrition to be at least 20% per year going forward. The MOI reports having paid death benefits for more than 6,000 police officers since the fall of the Ba'athist regime in May 2003. In addition to the overall number of police in Iraq, there are some issues with distribution of the police among the various provinces.

For example, by the end of the year, Diyala Province will have recruited its authorized force, but will not have trained the entire authorized number. In the case of Diyala, the provincial leadership has resisted sending 100% of the force to training due to security concerns and the reluctance to take its police off the streets. Anbar, Basrah, and Ninewah may also miss their training targets for the same reason. Rather than let training seats go unfilled, other provinces were permitted to send some of their untrained personnel to training. As a result, those provinces will have more than the authorized force trained in their provinces.

...More than 230,000 MOI employees have been screened by the Iraqi Police Screening Service, which checks fingerprints against Ba'ath Party records and Saddam-era criminal records. Of these,

5,300 were reported as possible derogatory matches, and 74 have been dismissed. There is currently no screening process to ascertain militia allegiance.

The November, 2006 DoD quarterly report was somewhat more frank about the problems in the police forces:

The MOI continues to struggle with personnel management. Lack of standardized personnel strength reporting from stations up their district and provincial chains causes lack of transparency on the total number of Iraqi police officers on duty on any given day. The only numbers available are the payroll numbers submitted by the provinces, which, in many cases, are higher than the actual numbers of Iraqi police officers on hand.

It is unclear how many of the forces trained by the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team are still employed by the MOI, or what percentage of the 180,000 police thought to be on the MOI payroll are Civilian Police Assistance Training Team-trained and equipped.

The Coalition estimates that attrition will remain approximately 20% per year as long as fighting in Iraq persists.

The US was finally able to embed a US advisory team in most key police station and facilities in Baghdad by the end of 2006. This, however, was largely a reaction to the failures in Operation Together Forward. In broad terms, the “year of the police” still left most of the police without adequate US teams to serve with Iraqi forces, and looked far more like the “two to three years of the police,” beginning in 2007. As the Department of Defense quarterly report for August made clear, there was still no meaningful database on where the men trained and equipped for the regular police actually are, or on the effectiveness of individual units.

The March 2007 report noted that the US was still badly short of advisors in March 2007,¹³²⁵

There are 203 field-deployed PTTs (10 Provincial, 44 District, and 149 Station) assisting the development of the Iraqi Police Service. Each team has approximately 11–15 members; 3 or 4 members of each team are International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) hired as contractors by the Department of State, and the rest are typically military personnel, most of whom are Military Police. IPLOs provide civilian law enforcement expertise in technical aspects of criminal investigation and police station management. To conduct their missions, PTTs travel to stations to coach the Iraqi police and to conduct joint patrols with them. These joint PTT/Iraqi Police Service patrols promote active community policing and work to improve the reputation of the police among the Iraqi people.

Each month, MNC-I uses PTTs to assess the operational readiness of a portion of the police forces using the Transition Readiness Assessment process. This process evaluates the ability of the police to perform core functions required for effective law enforcement and community policing. Key assessment criteria include manning, leadership, training level, equipment, facilities status, force protection measures, and station ability to conduct independent operations. *Cost and risk preclude deploying enough PTTs to cover all of Iraq’s police stations; at any time, only 5 of Iraq’s 18 provinces have sufficient PTTs to conduct the full range of activities described above. Continued PTT presence and participation at Iraqi Police Service stations are needed to improve police readiness and to sustain progress in reforming community policing.*

Ongoing Police Manpower Problems

Some important aspects of the police development effort did improve. By mid October 2006, 88,000 police recruits had passed through the 10-week basic course. Those recruits

with prior experience attended the three-week Transitional Integration Program (TIP), in lieu of the longer program. Originally only officers trained during the Saddam regime were eligible for the TIP program, but in July it was extended to include those that lacked formal training, but had at least one year of experience on the force. In addition to the TIP program the Officer Transitional Integration Program was designed to train officers for leadership and supervisory roles in the IPS.

The US reported that the “trained and equipped” strength of the Iraqi police had reached a total force of 192,000 by March 19, 2007. This included 24,400 National Police, 32,900 other MoI forces, and 135,000 regular police. In practical terms, however, the US provided no readiness and capability reporting, and no data on actual manning. At total of 49,100 officers had graduated from the TIP and OTIP programs. By the end of 2006, more than 151,000 Iraqi police had completed basic training courses. In addition, 26,000 National Police had completed initial training, and 30,000 in the Department of Border Enforcement.¹³²⁶

In an effort to ensure that MOI personnel were loyal, honest, and qualified, more than 230,000 MOI employees were screened by the Iraqi Police Screening Service. The process checked fingerprints against records of Ba’ath Party membership and Saddam-era criminal records. In addition to the fingerprint checks over 54,000 police candidates were tested for literacy. Of these candidates 73% passed and were enrolled in basic training. Unfortunately, the new screening process did little to affect the number of desertions, still let in many unqualified men, and there was no test for checking on possible militia allegiance.

As MNF-I experts pointed out in April 2007,

There are numerous ongoing initiatives to reduce militia influences (see previous comment at Central Ministry program). However, militia memberships (or other personal allegiances) are difficult to detect during a vetting process

While the full details are unclear, Colonel Ahmad Taha Hashim, the head of internal affairs at the Iraqi MOI admitted in an interview published in Al Zaman news paper on Sep 27th that the MOI had investigated and dismissed more than 1300 police officers some with high ranks. He said some of them were leaking information to outside entities and had criminal record. Furthermore, some of them were demanding bribes from applicants of up to \$600 in return for a job in the police force, as well as rehiring ex-convicts into the service and issuing fake IDs. According to Col. Hashim the personal investigating this case constantly receiving death threats, in fact 6 of his personal body guards and 16 other officers had been killed in the past few month.

Some of the applicants told the newspaper that brokers with connections to government officials at the recruitment centers bargained with recruits to provide them with the endorsement necessary to be admitted into the force for bribes. Col. Kareem confirmed the story to ABC and the number was actually 1,500 police personal dismissed and investigated on charges of corruption and human rights violations. When he was asked about reports that an additional 7000 were being investigated, he replied this was exaggerated but did not deny the additional numbers were substantial.

The March 2007 Quarterly Report summarized the manpower situation as follows:¹³²⁷

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CPATT has met the nationwide OCSF goal of training 135,000 Iraqi Police Service personnel. However, distribution of that 135,000 has not been according to original program goals, leaving some provinces with more than their programmed allocation and some with less. Basic training continues in those provinces still working to meet their individual requirements. CPATT is working with the MOI to build institutional capacity and to identify annual requirements for force sustainment, reconciling anticipated annual requirements with institutional capacity.

To meet local needs and dynamic requirements, the MOI authorized provincial governors to hire additional Iraqi Police Service officers, but the MOI and the governors are responsible for the additional officers' equipment and training. Every province, except Anbar, has more personnel than agreed. However, many of these additional police are put on the job with minimal or no training. As the Coalition transfers the institutional training base to MOI control, training of these "extra" local police will continue.

As of December 31, 2006, the majority of Iraqi Police academies had transitioned to Iraqi control. The two exceptions are the BPC and the Jordan International Police Training Center. For all academies, the administration and instruction functions transferred with relative ease. Operational control of the BPC was turned over to the MOI in 2006. Life support for the BPC will transition to the MOI this quarter. Because sufficient training capacity exists inside Iraq, the Jordan International Police Training Center is scheduled to cease basic-level training by March 2007, although the Department of State is looking at options to keep it open, to train limited numbers of Iraqi police officers in leadership and specialized courses, after DoD funding for the facility ends.

Real world training, however, was either limited or just beginning to affect the officer corps. The March 2007 Quarterly report noted that,¹³²⁸

The Iraqi Police Service has three 2-week leadership courses to improve the quality of its leaders. The First Line Supervisor Course is designed for company-grade officers; the Intermediate-Level Course is designed for field-grade officers; and the Senior-Level Course is designed for general officers. Courses cover topics ranging from management to ethics to field training. To date, 691 officers have completed the First Line Supervisor Course; 690 officers have completed the Intermediate-Level Course; and 606 officers have completed the Senior-Level Course.

The MOI's Intermediate Staff Officers Course, started in September 2006, teaches senior lieutenants and junior captains staff operational functions. To date, 14 officers have completed this course. The Advanced Staff Officers Course, which began in November 2006, teaches senior captains and majors field-grade staff functions. The Senior Staff Officers Course and the Executive Officers Course—designed for colonels and generals—are scheduled to begin in early 2007.

One bright spot in police recruitment did emerge in Anbar province in Winter 2006/2007. The leaders of several tribes decided to band together against Al Qaeda in Iraq, which had previously been quite powerful in the province. The move was brought on by Al Qaeda's frequent beheadings, kidnappings, and bombings of Sunni civilians. An immediate result of the tribal leader's shift has been increased cooperation with American and ISF forces. Additionally, police recruitment in the province, which had been extremely low, jumped. During the winter of 2005/2006, there were roughly 1,300 police in the province. As of April, 2007 there were 13,200, with more in training.¹³²⁹ A police recruiting drive in Ramadi in March, 2007 netted 2,500 recruits.¹³³⁰

Ongoing Police Equipment Problems

The IPS continued to be poorly equipped. They were supposed to be equipped with AK-47s, PKC light machine guns, Glock pistols, body armor, high-frequency radios, small

and medium pick-up trucks, and mid-sized SUVs. Much of the equipment they were supposed to have, however, was not delivered or was somehow lost. In Baghdad, and the nine other key cities, IPS personnel were supposedly equipped at 99% of their authorized equipment by the end of June 2006. They were expected to be fully equipped by mid-August. Overall, however, in the 18 provinces the IPS was only 83% equipped by early 2007, and were not expected to be fully equipped until the summer of 2007.¹³³¹

The March 2007 Quarterly report indicated that,¹³³²

Due to the immaturity of the MOI's equipment accountability system, there are no reliable figures on how much of this equipment remains in service, nor is it known how much equipment the MOI has purchased for additional Iraqi Police Service staff and for staff authorized by provincial governors. The most accurate reports on equipment quantities and serviceability are provided by MNC-I through the Police Transition Teams (PTTs). MNSTC-I continues to work with the Iraqi Police Service to implement standardized reporting and tracking processes and mechanisms. In conjunction with MNSTC-I, the MOI is developing a comprehensive procurement plan to ensure that MNSTC-I funds and MOI equipping funds are spent coherently.

Ironically, MNF-I experts felt that this statement was true of equipment that the MNF-I has issued directly to the units. However, they felt that the MOI appeared to have a good equipment accountability system for items issued through them.

Uncertain Iraqi Police Service Effectiveness

Combat effectiveness remained poor and Local police did not always respond aggressively when militias carried out sectarian or ethnic attacks. Col. James Pasquarette, commander of the Army's 1st Brigade Combat Team in Baghdad, felt the need send out letters to every police officer and official in his area, warning they would be fired if they did not combat militias, and threatening their detention if they cooperated with them.¹³³³

The assessment of local police forces before they had to hold their own ground was not always reliable. In one case in the small town of Saba al-Bor, north of Baghdad, the local force had been considered a model unit until two weeks after the US pulled out of the town. It was overrun by Sunni insurgents and armed Shi'ites retaliated in return. The police force disintegrated, the police chief fled after being shot at, and the new chief said he could account for only 24 of his 150 policemen.¹³³⁴

Department of Border Enforcement and Department of Ports of Entry

The Directorate of Border Enforcement (DBE) and the Directorate of Ports of Entry (POE) are charged collectively with controlling and protecting Iraq's borders. The DBE is in the lead on Iraq's borders; backed up by Iraqi Army units in accordance with an MOI/MOD Memorandum of Understanding that was signed in January 2007. According to US Army Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey, MNSTC-I commanding general, responsibility for border protection followed a tiered approach, wherein border police on the perimeter would be backed up by the Iraqi Army, who would be backed up by Coalition forces.

The DBE was organized into 5 regions, 12 brigades, and 38 battalions, and included forces that man 420 border posts and forts, of which the Coalition had funded 258. There were 17 land border Ports of Entry, 4 sea Ports of Entry, and 4 air Ports of Entry.¹³³⁵ The

Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) had 28,400 trained and equipped personnel by February 2007. These personnel were organized into 5 regions, 12 brigades, 38 battalions and the staff for 420 border structures.¹³³⁶ By April 2007, the DBE had increased to 42 battalions and 420 border structures. The DBE forces were trained in three academies each with the capacity to train approximately 800 recruits at a time.

As of early August 2006, the Coalition had funded the construction of 258 border forts throughout nine Iraqi provinces. There are no plans to go beyond 258 Coalition supported border forts. The Director General of the DBE has, however, built 162 smaller expeditionary forts and plans to build an additional 291 for a total of 711 border forts and expeditionary forts. The forts were seen as critical to ensuring the Iraqis' ability to assume responsibility for 3,161 kilometers of Iraq's borders.

The traffic the boarder guards had to handle is illustrated by Iraqi officials' accounts of traffic at Rabiya, a border control point at the Iraqi-Syrian border. 2,000 people with Iraqi passports, up to 500 foreigners, plus 300 commercial trucks, 80 cars, and as many as 30 buses crossed into Iraq at this border point per day.¹³³⁷ Despite meeting the objective manning goal of 28,400 personnel, many border forts remained undermanned. Over-staffing at regional and brigade-level headquarters diverted personnel from these border forts, partly because of non MTOE identified requirement for PSD to protect the headquarters and leaders. The March 2007 Quarterly Report noted that,

Border Forces payroll exceeds its authorized initial training objective. Overstrength regional and brigade-level headquarters continue to divert personnel away from border forts and POEs. The DBE has begun cross-leveling of excess personnel, and current staffing levels at POEs are sufficient. Promotion opportunities across DBE and POE units are improving, and there have been fewer pay problems. There are still discrepancies between MOI payroll numbers and actual assigned strength. The Iraqi leadership is addressing these issues through official investigations.¹³³⁸

Coalition teams continued to support the DBE by mentoring and training border units in fall 2006. Supplying the DBE and the Ports of Entry (POE) were given priority in receiving equipment and this in addition to the cross-leveling of personnel managed to raise most units to TRA Level 2 by August. Furthermore, of the 14 land POEs in Iraq, 13 were functional by November 2006.

The DBE and POE were supposed to be equipped with AK-47s, medium machine guns, body armor, medium pick-up trucks, mid-size SUVs, generators, and radios. The DoD reported 79% of authorized critical equipment for the DBE had been issued by early 2007, although the MNF-I only reported 75% in April 2007..¹³³⁹ The POEs were expected to be fully equipped by the end of December 2006,¹³⁴⁰ As of March 2007, , only 61% of authorized equipment had reached the land POEs, although they were expected to be fully equipped by August 2007.¹³⁴¹ These equipment estimates were not supported by equipment audits to show how much equipment was combat capable and remained on-hand.

The March 2007 Quarterly Report stated,

All Coalition-planned border forts are completed. Refurbishing headquarters buildings, and the assignment of trained border police, are complete. Seventy-nine percent of the authorized critical equipment for DBE and 61% for land POEs have been issued. Remaining issuance of equipment,

logistics facilities, and other infrastructure will continue throughout 2007. The MOI has reduced the numbers of legal POEs in an effort to concentrate on the readiness for those border crossings that remain open, and, since the last report, DBE and POE units have improved in Transition Readiness Assessment progression.

The DBE is supported by 28 Coalition Border Transition Teams. Each team is composed of 11 members. There are also 4 three-man Department of Homeland Security teams monitoring the DBE at critical POEs.¹³⁴²

Facilities Protection Service

In addition to the regular MOI forces, an estimated 144,000-145,000 personnel were authorized to serve in the Facility Protection Service (FPS), working directly for 27 other ministries. The FPS forces were used as security guards for governmental buildings and compared to other MOI forces were minimally trained and equipped. These forces received no formal training, but were issued police style uniforms, badges, and weapons.

Some 80% of these personnel were contract employees hired by each of the Ministries. They lacked a standardized training and equipping. The Actual manning in terms of men both present and willing to perform any useful duty may also have been closer to 70,000, although no one had meaningful figures. The FPS was conducting an audit of the men in the 27 ministries in April, however, and this audit was designed to account for all FPS personnel and place them into a central data base. If successfully completed, it could provide the foundation that the FPS will could upon to establish a more solid program

There were also serious problems with the integrity and loyalty of FPS officers and personnel. DoD stated in its November quarterly report that: "There was substantial evidence that some Facilities Protection Service personnel were unreliable and, in some cases, responsible for violent crimes and other illegal activity."¹³⁴³

The DoD Quarterly Report for August 2006 noted serious problems in the Facilities Protection Service and that these include the fact their uniforms look enough like police uniforms to help compound the problems in identifying real police from sectarian attackers and criminals. (p. 48). These uniforms have since been changed, but the differences between various force elements are difficult for ordinary Iraqis to track, particularly since no branch of the ISF has yet proved reliable or free of sectarian and ethnic bias. In short, the majority of Iraqi police forces remained as much a part of the problem as the solution.

According to the Iraq Study Group: "these units have questionable loyalties and capabilities." In the ministries of Health, Agriculture, and Transportation, controlled by Moqtada al-Sadr, the Facilities Protection Service is a source of funding and jobs for the Mahdi Army. One senior U.S. official described the Facilities Protection Service as "incompetent, dysfunctional, or subversive." Several Iraqis simply referred to them as militias."¹³⁴⁴

Senator Jack Reed, after a trip to Iraq, reported that there are "bad elements" in FPS units that "are carrying out murders and kidnappings . . . [and] attacking the infrastructure that they are supposedly protecting." He also added that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki had

described them as “worse than the militias.”¹³⁴⁵ According to a February, 2007 USIP report:

The ministerial guard forces became the private armies and a source of patronage jobs and funding... The FPS provides money and jobs for the Mahdi Army. The same is true for ministries controlled by Kurdish politicians and other political parties that have militias.

As the Department of Defense status report for August 2006 noted, however, the FPS uniforms looked similar to those of the IPS leading Iraqi civilians to confuse the two forces. Mistakenly identifying FPS forces as IPS forces undermined the reputation and thereby the capability of the better trained IPS forces.¹³⁴⁶ This situation was supposedly corrected by issuing new uniforms, but the real world impact was uncertain. As a result, an entirely new uniform for the FPS is due to be on the street by May 2007. Furthermore, corruption, theft, and favoritism were common in the FPS. Many elements operated on tribal, ethnic, and sectarian lines and there was significant insurgent infiltration.

The March 2007 Quarterly Report described the FPS as follows:¹³⁴⁷

The Facilities Protection Service (FPS) is a decentralized group of security guards who protect Government of Iraq buildings and act as personal security details to protect government ministry officials. Each ministry controls its own force of FPS personnel. Although they share the same name, FPS personnel are not a coherent force. More than 150,000 personnel work for 27 ministries and 8 independent directorates, with half of the FPS personnel working in Baghdad. The MOI's FPS continues to have better regulation, training, and discipline than do FPS staff of other ministries, and a higher proportion of them—possibly half—have completed the FPS basic training course.

There continues to be evidence that FPS personnel are unreliable and, in some cases, responsible for violent crimes and other illegal activity. On December 27, 2006, the prime minister signed a consolidation directive that provided instructions placing all FPS personnel under the Minister of Interior and ordered the transfer of money for salaries to the MOI budget. The directive maintained the separation of the Ministry of Oil, the Ministry of Electricity, and the Higher Juridical Council forces. The MOI has a plan to assess the current state of these forces and implement the consolidation, including standardizing training, equipment, uniforms, and procedures.

Other MOI Programs

The Center of Dignitary Protection (CDP) was reported to be fully manned, trained and equipped as of August 2006. The CDP included 600 personnel trained for Protective Security Details (PSDs) to provide security for Iraq's governmental leaders. These are trained units working within the MoI, that work with the FPS, and not an outside organization. An Iraqi training team took over responsibility for training future PSD personnel in June 2006.

Logistics and Sustainability

By August, logistics continued to be a significant concern, being the only essential system still assessed as ineffective by the transitional readiness assessment (TRA). Vehicle maintenance continued to be of particular concern. During the summer a Director General for Logistics and staff were put into place. A 6-month vehicle maintenance contract for the National Police and Baghdad IPS was agreed upon. For the MOI forces a

US\$950,000 vehicle spare parts contract was implemented and a US\$350,000 one for the National Police.

From April to June an average of US \$20,266,121 was required for logistical life support coming to a total of \$60,798,363. By December an MOI National Storage and Maintenance Facility started in June 2006 was expected to be completed. Additionally one of the seven LDI storage warehouses was transferred to Iraqi control as a test case in August 2006.¹³⁴⁸

SIGIR reported in October 2006 that MNC-I spent 84% of the funds used to support the ISF on Iraqi local and national police forces.¹³⁴⁹ The October 2006 SIGIR report feared there would be several significant challenges to the MoI logistics capabilities that MNF-I hoped to develop until the end of November 2006.

SIGIR believed there was a significant risk that even if the initial goal to develop a sustainable logistics capability plan was achieved by the end of November 2006, the ministry would not be capable of sustaining logistics for the local and national police forces in the near term.¹³⁵⁰

- Implementing the MNF-I plan and achieving logistics capabilities “because the Ministry does not control the Iraqi Police Service.”
- Training enough logistics personnel. “Because MNF-I plans are not yet final, there can be no assurance that MNSTC-I is planning to train enough police forces logistics personnel by the end of 2006.”
- Ensuring the availability of sufficient funds to sustain the logistics capabilities of the Iraqi police forces. “MNSTC-I estimates it will cost the Ministry of Interior about \$2.4 billion to sustain its operations in 2007. Because the Ministry of Interior’s budget has also not been submitted to or approved by the Iraqi Parliament, its is not possible to assess whether the Ministry of Interior is prepared to provide sufficient funds to support logistics capabilities in 2007.”

SIGIR recommended that MNF-I in cooperation with the MoD and the MoI identify the respective logistics personnel requirements and “formulate a plan for training these personnel.”¹³⁵¹

The March 2007 DoD quarterly report noted continued problems in MOI logistics capabilities, including:

Fuel. Shortfalls of adequate fuel continue to hinder mission performance – a problem that affects MoD forces as well and all government of Iraq operations.

Equipment Accountability. Due to decentralized control and funding of elements that comprise the MOI, there is no standardized unit equipment accountability procedure. The responsibility for proper equipment accountability is delegated to the subordinate organizations, with most elements maintaining equipment accountability through the use of hand receipts and manual ledgers.

Financial Accountability. Certain functional areas of the MOI operate under an assortment of financial authorities intended for a command- and-control structure that no longer exists. In this uncertain regulatory environment, proper financial reporting is inconsistent and results in difficulty for the MOI to budget centrally and execute funds effectively and transparently.¹³⁵²

Critical Failures Parallel Development of the Criminal Justice System

The lack of an effective criminal justice and prison system were another set of major problems limiting progress in shaping the ISF. Both are which are essential for both true progress in creating an effective police force and establishing local security and trust in the government. The Department of Defense status report for August summarized the strengths and weaknesses of the criminal justice system in ways that had not changed as of early 2007:¹³⁵³

The Coalition continues to provide administrative support as well as technical and legal assistance in drafting legislation.

...The Coalition has helped the Government of Iraq improve the judicial system in several areas, including building or renovating courthouses, expanding the Central Criminal Court of Iraq (CCCI), and improving security. The CCCI, for example, now has 12 panels operating throughout Iraq. It processes, on average, 118 insurgency-related cases each month. Due to the limited capacity of the 11 panels outside Baghdad, the Baghdad CCCI is the primary facility for hearing insurgency cases.

Poor security for judges and judicial facilities, an insufficient number of judges, and an inadequate court infrastructure undermine advancements in the rule of law in Iraq. Judges are subject to intimidation and in many areas are afraid to prosecute insurgents. The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Marshals Service, responded by providing secure housing, personal security details, courthouse protection, and personal protection firearms to some members of the Iraqi judiciary. In Baghdad, the Coalition has provided facilities for 22 judges to reside in the International Zone. Working in conjunction with MNF-I, the U.S. Marshals Service has begun training an Iraqi Marshals Service. The U.S. Department of Justice, along with the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Defense, is proceeding with plans for the renovation and construction of Iraqi courthouses and other related court facilities, including witness protection buildings. As of July 21, 2006, approximately 20 projects to improve judicial capacity have been completed, and 13 more are under way. Five additional projects are planned.

...The MOJ is responsible for imprisoning convicted criminals and insurgents in Iraq. MOJ prisons . . . are already at maximum capacity. As a result, many detainees spend time in MOI or MOD facilities, which generally fall short of internationally accepted standards. To address this issue, the U.S. and Iraqi governments are funding construction of seven new MOJ prison facilities, one each in Basrah, Khan Bani Sa'ad, Nasiriyah, Dahuk, and Baladiyat, and two in Rusafa. Work has stopped at Khan Bani Sa'ad and Nasiriyah due to problems with the primary contractor. Bridge contracts have been awarded to local Iraqi contractors to provide site security and to perform some continuing construction work. The Gulf Region Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers anticipates that contracts will be issued to a new contractor in September and that both facilities will be completed in April 2007.

Construction at the two Rusafa facilities has been delayed due to a title dispute between the Ministers of Justice and Interior. The title dispute is currently in litigation in the Iraqi courts. Dahuk, a 1,200-bed facility in the Kurdish region, is scheduled for completion in February 2007. Construction at Baladiyat was completed and the prison facility there has been activated and is currently in use by the Iraqi Corrections Services. Upon completion in mid-2007, all of these facilities will add a combined 4,800 beds.

Even with these additions, however, projections show another 20,000 beds will ultimately be needed. Thus, the Government of Iraq must address insufficient bed space, enactment of custody transfer laws, abuses in MOI and MOD detention facilities, and the need for more guards and trained supervisors. The Government of Iraq also faces the problem of prisoner-detainees awaiting adjudication/ resolution of the charges against them. The MOI and MOD are believed to be

detaining between approximately 2,000 and 10,000 people in pre-trial status, many in crowded, substandard facilities.

The Department of Defense Quarterly Report for March 2007 noted that pre-trial detention facilities were “overcrowded, with substandard facilities and poor detainee accountability practices.”¹³⁵⁴ Post-conviction facilities were better maintained and generally met international standards but were still overcrowded. However, according to the DoD: “Concerns remain that the Iraqi Corrections Service is increasingly infiltrated by criminal organizations and militias.”¹³⁵⁵

The U.S. Department of Justice estimated that Iraq needed 1,500 judges, yet only 870 are now working. To address this need, the Iraqi government recently appointed 79 judges to the bench, and another 80 are pending approval. 178 judges and prosecutors are expected to graduate from the Judicial Training Institute in summer 2007.¹³⁵⁶ In November 2006 Defense Department reported:

To meet the demands of the courts, the number of judicial investigators is slated to reach 700 in 2007 and 1,000 in 2008. In addition, the Ministry of Justice has a Judicial Training Institute, which offers a 2-year training course for judges and prosecutors. The first class of 178 judges and prosecutors is scheduled to graduate in the summer of 2007. A second class of 60 has just started training.

It concluded that while “corruption in the judiciary was less pronounced than in other branches of the justice system,”¹³⁵⁷ courts often failed to act or were corrupt even when they were present, and much of the real justice system operated on a local tribal, religious, or militia level.

Intimidation of judges is an ongoing problem. The DoD stated that: “Judges frequently face threats and attacks, and thus absenteeism and resignations undermine the workforce. Those who remain often fear handing down guilty verdicts against defendants with ties to insurgent groups or militias. In the provincial courts, judges often decline to investigate or try cases related to the insurgency and terrorism.” To combat this problem, the US has obligated roughly \$38 million since 2004 for judicial security. Secure criminal justice complexes are under construction, complete with courthouses, detention facilities, forensic labs and judicial housing. The first of these complexes is to be located in the Rusafa district of Baghdad, outside the Green Zone.¹³⁵⁸

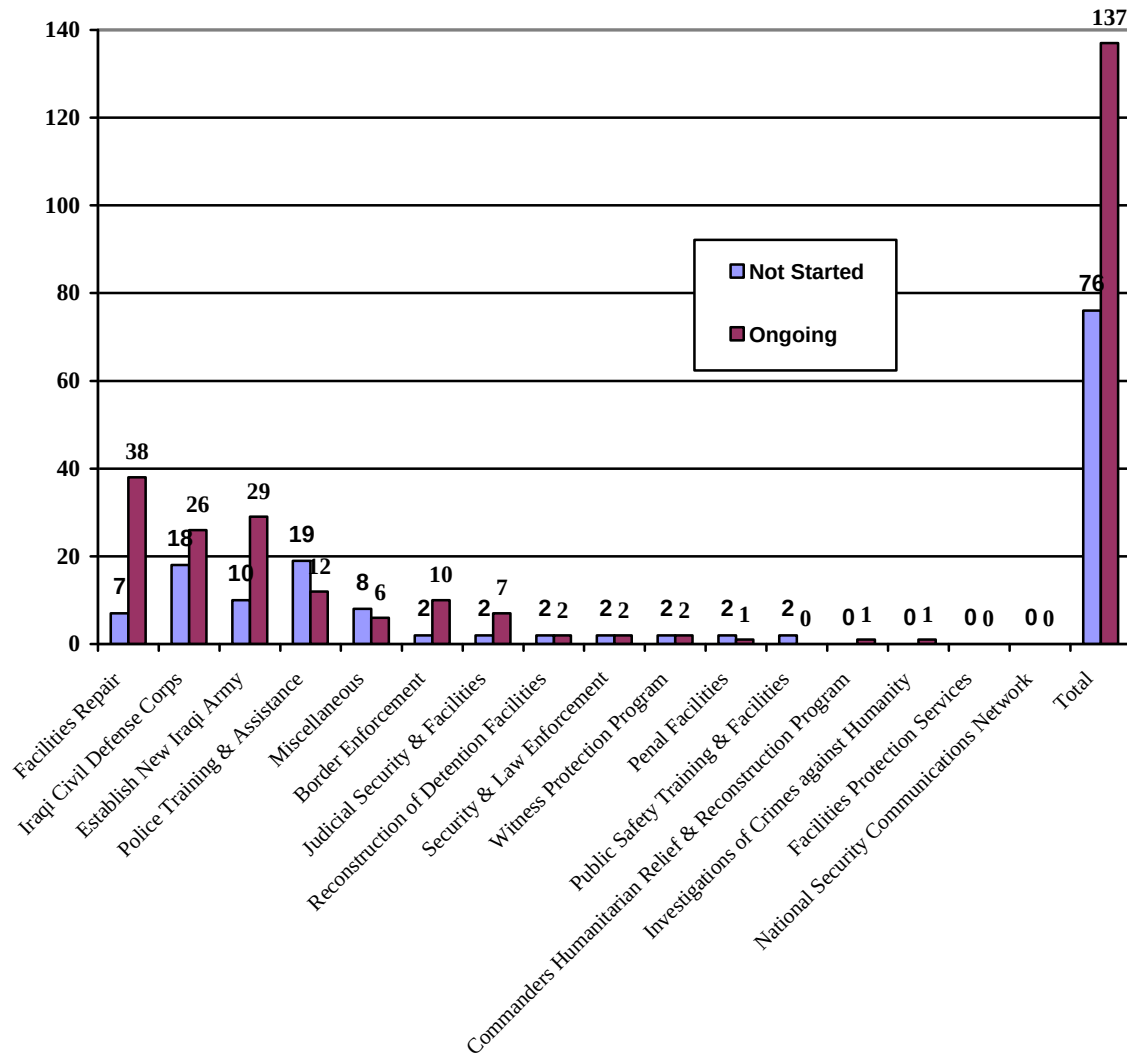
Reflecting the deep problems Iraq had in establishing law, the Justice Minister, Hashem al-Shebly, resigned on March 31st. She cited dissatisfaction with how the government is being run.¹³⁵⁹

The slow development of the criminal justice system has harmed the legitimacy of the Iraqi government as a whole. Problems were particularly critical in the case of the police that often had to try to operate in a legal vacuum. In short, nearly four years after the US-led invasion, Iraq does not have an effective criminal justice system or rule of law in much of the country. A critical partner to both ISF development, and serious efforts to “hold” and “build,” had still not appeared on the scene.

Status of Security Projects

The October 2006 SIGIR report provided more detailed data on the state of security- and justice-related construction projects, detailing the number of “Ongoing” projects and planned efforts “not started.” **Figure 10.8** shows this data. Note that the SIGIR did not report such comprehensive data on the *completion* of construction projects – only the Facilities Protection Services and National Security Communications Network were completed as of October 2006.

Figure 10.8
Status of Security and Justice Projects



Source: Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, "Quarterly Report to the United States Congress," October 30, 2006, p.69

Operational Developments: Summer and Fall 2006

Everything stays very dynamic in this type of environment, and it's clear that the conditions under which we started are probably not the same today. And so it does require some modifications of the plan. *Maj. Gen. William B. Caldwell IV, October 19, 2006*

Important as the force development problems outlined in this report are, they are an argument for patience, honesty and transparency, and adequate time and resources, *not for giving up on the ISF*. It is important to note that Iraqi forces often fought hard and with great courage in spite of the larger problems in the force development effort. They had a number of tactical successes in spite of these problems and pressures, and the growing sectarian and ethnic tension and rising number of clashes.

At the same time, the drift toward ethnic and sectarian conflict, and civil war forced significant changes in the operations of both Iraqi and MNF-I forces towards the end of 2006, and increased the pressures and demands on Iraq's new and still maturing units.

These trends presented new operational problems that were steadily compounded by the drift towards full-scale civil war, and the lack of underlying progress towards political conciliation made it more difficult to develop unified forces and create popular support for either counterinsurgency operations or efforts to control the militias and other sectarian and ethnic forces.

The 2006 Battle for Baghdad

The new Iraqi government did cooperate with the MNF-I in making did make new efforts to arrest the drift towards civil war, and use the Iraqi forces to perform this mission. The key operation to achieve this goal during the summer and fall of 2006 was an effort to bring security to Baghdad.

Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki announced this operation on June 14, 2006. It was called Operation Together Forward, or *Amaliya Ma'an ila Al-Amam* in Arabic. The original plan relied very heavily on Iraqi forces and consisted of steps like increased checkpoints and patrols, curfews and enforcement of weapons bans in targeted areas of the city. US troops were to hold cleared areas for 60 to 90 days, during which infrastructure and economic reconstruction would start.¹³⁶⁰ It also included a three-day reassessment of all Iraqi brigades.¹³⁶¹

A Failed Initial Plan and Iraqi Effort

The size and complexity of the security situation meant that *Amaliya Ma'an ila Al-Amam* would take months to complete, and other major problems soon emerged.¹³⁶² The Iraqi government was in control of both US and Iraqi military operations in Baghdad, and US troops had to seek Iraqi government approval to act in the capital, giving the government the possibility to take into account its delicate political position.¹³⁶³ The Prime Minister complained in October 2006 that he had not been informed about an American-backed raid to capture the suspected leader of a Shi'ite death squad. Gen. Caldwell's response was that the raid had been led by Iraqi forces and concerned a suspect whom the Iraqi authorities had given prior approval to capture. "Notification was made to the

government of Iraq, but it's apparent that it didn't make it to the prime minister," Caldwell said.¹³⁶⁴

Iraq's national unity government and MNF-I did devise a Baghdad Security Plan, comprised of three principal components:¹³⁶⁵

- *Stabilizing Baghdad zone by zone.* Four Iraqi Army battalions, two Coalition brigades and five military police companies will be redeployed to Baghdad, resulting in more than 12,000 additional forces on the city's streets. The National Police will simultaneously undergo intensive retraining, with each brigade to be subjected to a three-day assessment period, with its leadership evaluated and, if necessary, replaced. Each brigade will subsequently receive additional training focused on countering violent sectarianism before redeployment. Over the last 10 days this approach began to be implemented in five areas of Baghdad--Doura, Ghazaliyah, Rashid, Ahmeriyya and Mansour. In coming weeks other districts will be added.

Iraqi government and Coalition forces are adopting new tactics to stem sectarian killings. Increased checkpoints and patrols are being used to deny freedom of movement and safe haven to sectarian killers. The leaders of the death squads are being targeted. Security forces have started to work with cross-sectarian neighborhood committees. These and other new tactics will drive toward the goal of achieving security neighborhood by neighborhood. As each district of Baghdad is secured, operations will expand into contiguous zones over coming weeks and months.

- *Disrupting support zones.* Even as Iraqi and Coalition forces concentrate on securing specific neighborhoods, they will continue to conduct targeted operations in other zones that are staging areas for the violence. This includes targeted raids and other operations on areas outside of Baghdad's center, where planning cells, car-bomb factories and terrorist safe houses are located. This will degrade the ability of the terrorists and death squads to mount offensive operations into the areas we are working to stabilize.
- *Undertaking civic action and economic development.* One of the most tragic elements of the increasing violence in Baghdad is that it has robbed the Iraqi people of the sense of normalcy they desperately seek after living under crushing tyranny for more than three decades. In the immediate aftermath of Iraq's liberation, the entrepreneurial spirit of the Iraqi people was demonstrated as Baghdad's shops overflowed with consumer goods prohibited under the previous regime. However, the increasing violence in the streets of Baghdad has forced many Iraqis to close their shops for fear of their safety.

This plan, however, read far better than the actual practice. Iraqi forces were not up to the job, and the civic action and economic development efforts faltered and often failed. Some units performed well. However, significant numbers of Iraqi forces failed to deploy, and others were badly manned, lacked leadership from their officers and NCO, and played only a pro forma or static role. At least some allowed insurgents and militias to operate in their areas, refused to engage them, or provided support to sectarian or ethnic factions.

The operational plan was also flawed because success to a large degree depended on political conciliation and building trust in the new government, and on the ability to control or disband militias and other sectarian and ethnic forces, and not simply attack "terrorists" or insurgents. Disrupting support zones had some success in the case of neo-Salafi Sunni groups, but little in the case of Shi'ite militias or more mainstream Sunni security forces. Furthermore, the operational plan for Operation Together Forward telegraphed American intentions. This allowed insurgents to clear out of neighborhoods long before American or Iraqi forces conducted their sweeps, returning once major forces

had left. Often, ordinary Iraqi's weapons were confiscated, leaving them more vulnerable when the insurgents returned.¹³⁶⁶

Part of the problem was the ineffectiveness of some Iraqi units deployed to Baghdad for Operation Together Forward. According to US military officials, several Iraqi battalions deserted rather than follow orders to go to Baghdad. Sending them to the capital was tantamount to demobilizing them, despite the extra pay that US officials offered to persuade reluctant troops to come to their aid in Baghdad.^{1367, 1368} At the end of October 2006, only two of the six additional Iraqi battalions that US commanders requested had been sent to the capital.¹³⁶⁹

The first month of the operation did not result in the projected decreases in the number of attacks. There were an average of 23.7 attacks per day over Baghdad's 10 districts, virtually identical to the 23.8 daily average for the month prior to the operation.¹³⁷⁰ When Prime Minister al-Maliki visited the United States in July 2006, he and President Bush announced adjustments to the Baghdad Security Plan including the key addition of increasing security force levels in the city, and further adjustments in tactics and procedures. The two primary foci of the new security operations were to reduce sectarian violence by de-legitimizing illegally armed groups and to establish the Iraqi Security Forces as the dominant security presence.

These failures forced the US to take over much of the effort. This "Phase II" of the operation began on August 7, 2006. The MNF-I Commanding General said on August 30 that he was pleased with the operation's progress, but also stated that it would take a long time to bring security to Baghdad's neighborhoods. US intelligence assessments of this operation's impact were classified as of September 2006,¹³⁷¹ but according to the State Department, the daily rate of killings in Baghdad was reduced by 46% from July to August as a result of Operation Together Forward. It also stated that 33,000 buildings had been searched, over 700 weapons confiscated and 70 individuals detained by the end of August.¹³⁷²

During the end of the summer of 2006, the Baghdad neighborhood of Doura, in the Rashid District, became one of the main focuses of US engagement as part of Operation Together Forward. One of the capital's most violent neighborhoods, Doura was the subject of "intelligence-driven precision operations" meant to clear the area of violent elements and establish joint Coalition-Iraqi police patrols to protect area residents. The US Army's 4th Brigade Combat Team was working closely with the Rashid District Council and local religious leaders to initiate a series of public works on the district of 1.8 million to empower the citizenry and help revitalize the community.

By August 18, Colonel Michael Beech of the 4th Brigade Combat Team announced that the murder rate in Doura had dropped from an average of 20 per week to only one murder in the preceding 10 days. After three weeks spent searching 3,700 homes, Col. Beech further announced that Doura was now securely under the protection of Iraq's 6th National Police Brigade. Beech placed specific police companies in each of Doura's subdivisions to establish a community effort, in an attempt to facilitate the process of Doura inhabitants coming to recognize the police as trusted protectors.¹³⁷³

As of late August, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense reported that the crime rate in Doura had been reduced by 80%.¹³⁷⁴ Tribal leaders and imams in the Rashid districts also met to sign an agreement forswearing violence, and renouncing protection for tribal members who engage in sectarian violence.¹³⁷⁵ This last measure was seen by many as a positive step, at least at a formal level, in moving away from sectarian agendas to a unified solution within the district.

On August 25, US Army Col. Robert Scurlock, stated that the two weeks prior had experienced a 41% decline in violent attacks across Baghdad. On August 13, Scurlock's combat team had moved into Baghdad's restive Amiriyah neighborhood, in an operation similar to that in Doura. That same day, in a meeting in Washington with Donald Rumsfeld, Iraqi Deputy President Adil Al-Mahdi told journalists that 70% of Iraq had been effectively secured. Still, as of late August, the number of violent deaths in Baghdad hovered at about 2,000 per month.¹³⁷⁶

By mid-September, Iraqi and Coalition forces had searched 52,000 buildings in the Doura, Amiriyah, Ghazalia, Shula, and Adhamiya neighborhoods. According to US Army Maj. Gen. William Caldwell, spokesman for MNF-I, at a September 14 press briefing, these searches resulted in the seizure of 32 weapons caches and more than 1,200 illegal weapons. Ninety-one individuals with suspected links to insurgents, terrorism, or sectarian violence were also detained during the course of the searches.

Caldwell said that Iraqi and Coalition troops had conducted 10 combat operations in the week leading up to the press briefing, centered on southwest Baghdad, in order to keep violence from returning to these neighborhoods. He also announced that Coalition and Iraqi forces were now expanding these security operations into three more neighborhoods: Risalah, Khadra, and Shaab.¹³⁷⁷

As of early October it was clear that Iraqi forces still presented major problems at every level, still had high absentee rates and serious leadership problems, and that the Maliki government still had failed to make major moves towards conciliation and demonstrate it could support security operations by deployed an effective government presence into secured areas. At the same time, Iraqi forces were getting better, some areas were more secure, and the operation was not a failure.

In late October 2006, the US military said it had committed 15,600 troops to the operation, compared with 9,600 Iraqi Army troops and 30,000 Iraqi policemen serving in support roles. In practice, American troops led 95,000 house searches, Iraqi regular forces often failed to perform their missions, and many police units were ineffective or passive.¹³⁷⁸

In short, the ISF effort in Baghdad largely failed and the limited successes that did occur took place because the US provided a substantial increase in both its troop presence and its efforts to reform and stiffen the ISF units operating in the Baghdad area. As time went on, the Iraqi government and MNF-I claimed a number of limited tactical successes in given districts of the city, although they did not demonstrate the ability to deal with sectarian forces or control a city of over five million.

Chairman of the JCS Gen. Peter Pace acknowledged in October 2006 that senior US commanders were puzzled by the failure of the plan to train and equip Iraqi forces to curb violence. Pace said other factors driving violence needed to be examined. He also admitted that US troops were unable to stop sectarian violence: "You cannot have enough men under arms 24-7 to stop the hatred killings."¹³⁷⁹ Phillip Carter, an embedded adviser with the 101st Airborne Division in Baquba, also questioned the viability of the strategy focused on building up Iraqi forces to replace Coalition troops:

"In theory, security should have improved with the development of capable Iraqi Army and police units. That did not happen. This is the central paradox of the Iraq war in fall 2006: we are making progress in developing the Iraqi Army and police, yet the violence gripping the country continues to worsen. This paradox raises fundamental questions about the wisdom and efficacy of our strategy, which is to 'stand up' Iraqi security forces so we can 'stand down' American forces. Put simply, this plan is a blueprint for withdrawal, not for victory. Improving the Iraqi Army and police is necessary to prevail in Iraq; it is not sufficient. (...) This means many more embedded advisers like myself (are necessary), working in tandem with teams from the State Department and other agencies, supported by combat forces only when force is necessary."¹³⁸⁰

US commanders in October said that the Baghdad campaign had so far only covered the "clear" and "hold" phases, with little infrastructure reconstruction.¹³⁸¹

By late 2006, it was painfully clear that US and Iraqi forces had not succeeded in curbing the overall level of violence in Baghdad, defeating the insurgents in any lasting way, or breaking up the militias. The overall number of armed attacks on US soldiers and Iraqis in the capital had *increased* by 43 percent since midsummer.

Maj. Gen. William Caldwell noted an 11% decrease in violence in the neighborhoods where sweeps had been focused. Individual accounts of Iraqis in these neighborhoods corroborated this improvement.¹³⁸² But this positive development was more than offset by more attacks in other parts of the city. Caldwell said the military expected the level of violence to keep rising during the remainder of Ramadan.¹³⁸³

The first three weeks of the holiday saw an average 36 violent incidents per day in Baghdad, compared to 28 per day since mid-June, when Operation *Forward Together* first began.¹³⁸⁴ The Health Ministry reported 2,700 Iraqi civilians killed in the city in September 2006, 400 more than in August and nearly as many as in July.¹³⁸⁵

Caldwell also said that the operation had not succeeded in keeping neighborhoods peaceful once they were cleared of insurgents or militias. "We're finding insurgent elements, the extremists, are pushing back hard. They're trying to get back into those areas" where Iraqi and US forces had targeted them before. "We're constantly going back in and doing clearing operations."¹³⁸⁶

A lack of motivation, logistical support, and proper organization contributed to the Iraqi ineffectiveness of Iraqi forces. According to Lt. General Martin Dempsey, the Multinational Security Transition commander in Iraq:

As to why only 2 Iraqi brigades were willing to participate in operation Together Forward, A review found the soldiers felt 1) they weren't trained for the job required in Baghdad, 2) no one had talked to local leaders and 3) 'it wasn't made clear to them how long they were coming to Baghdad for.' The point is, there has to be somebody at the far end to help you move out, even in our system, and there has to be somebody at this end to catch you when you get here and orient

you. And both of those systems failed. But that wasn't an indictment on the Iraqi training; it was an indictment, frankly, on the training program.”¹³⁸⁷

Some of the Iraqi units that did take part in Operation Together Forward caused more harm than good. A DoD report found that a major reason for the failure of Operation Together Forward II was the support Shi'ite death squads received from the Iraqi Police Service as well as the National Police. These police forces often “facilitated freedom of movement and provided advanced warning of upcoming operations” to the Shi'ite groups.¹³⁸⁸ Thus the neighborhoods that had been “cleared” were quickly retaken by insurgents.

The Government Introduces Baghdad Neighborhood Committees

The al-Maliki government responded in ways that partially bypassed the entire ISF development effort. It introduced a new security plan on October 2, 2006, after being criticized for its mishandling of the security situation, especially the escalation of sectarian killings. This plan included forming committees of Baghdad neighborhood leaders to try to ease sectarian tension.

Local political leaders, tribal sheiks, clerics and members of the security forces would monitor every Baghdad neighborhood. They would not have control over security forces, but instead function as arbitrators for local disputes, identify dangers and collect intelligence for the security forces, and act as a bridge between them and the civilian population.¹³⁸⁹ Another task was to set up checkpoints “with Iraqi authorities.”¹³⁹⁰ They reported to a ‘central commission for peace and security,’ which would in turn work with security forces. The plan was apparently meant to improve trust in and cooperation with the police, although details of the plan at first remained vague.¹³⁹¹

The plan did gain broad support in parliament among the major Sunni and Shi'ite political blocs, despite the fact that it appeared to conflict with Shi'ite politicians' plan to set up armed neighborhood watches.¹³⁹²

The United States also endorsed the plan. Gen. Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad issued a joint statement, describing the plan as “a significant step in the right direction.”¹³⁹³ The idea of neighborhood watches was at odds with the imperative to abolish militias, but was seen as expedient by some military officials.¹³⁹⁴ In practice, however, nothing really improved. This lack of progress was a key reason for the new Bush strategy announced in January 2007.

Securing Anbar Province

The uncertainties in the battle of Baghdad were compounded by developments in other parts of Iraq, many of which revealed similar weaknesses in some aspects of Iraqi forces. These problems became especially clear in Anbar Province in western Iraq – the area most dominated by the Sunni insurgency.

In August 2006, Col. Peter Devlin, a senior Marine Intelligence officer at the Marine headquarters in Anbar Province, prepared a report on the province's security situation and requirements to improve it. The Washington Post leaked parts of his assessment, and

several military officials familiar with the document disclosed additional material. While a number of senior officers did make it clear that they felt his assessment might understate the potential for future success, none disagreed with its basic conclusions.

Devlin's assessment stated that without the deployment of an additional US division, "there is nothing Multinational Force-West can do to influence the motivation of the Sunni to wage an insurgency." Several parts of the assessment are consistent with the views of some Marine officers who were interviewed in the field in July 2006. Lt. Col. Ronald Gridley, XO with Regimental Combat Team 7, pointed to his regiment's recommendation that additional troops be allocated to its section of Anbar. Even a battalion or two, Gridley said, would have impact.¹³⁹⁵

Develin warned that the Sunnis in Anbar province had generally lost faith in the national government and feel marginalized to a degree that "their greatest fears have been realized." The report describes Al Qa'ida in Mesopotamia, which is predominantly made of native Iraqis, as an "integral part of the social fabric" of Anbar.¹³⁹⁶

He also warned that even successful attacks on low-level insurgents had little practical value, since losses were limited and the men involved could be easily replaced, and because insurgents could simply hide or disperse. He noted that as long as the insurgent had the support of the people, or could broadly intimidate them, that insurgency could not be defeated.

At the same time, he stated that the addition of troops could increase the number of border posts and the number of raids along smuggling routes. Another approach could be to focus on the towns and cities along the river west of Baghdad, as well as the roads from Fallujah towards Syria. Extra troops could also assist in nation-building tasks. On the other hand, more troops could also increase the perception among Iraqis of the United States as a heavy-handed occupier.¹³⁹⁷

The practical problem in responding to Devlin's caveats was that the US was already increasing its deployments to deal with Baghdad and Iraqi forces remained weak. About 30,000 US forces were stationed in Anbar, a region that borders on Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, and is about the size of Louisiana.

Iraqi forces also lacked the strength and capability to solve the problem. Two Iraqi divisions were already in Anbar, with an authorized strength of 19,000 men. The Iraqi units, however, were at least 5,000-7,000 troops short of their authorized strength and hundreds more are AWOL. Together with the practice of giving monthly leaves, these problems produced a day-to-day strength of the two divisions of 50% and 35% respectively.

Iraqi force performance remained erratic throughout Anbar and in all other threatened areas outside the Kurdish zone. As was the case in Baghdad Province, some forces fought and some could only provide limited support. Battalions and units identified as being in the lead ranged from combat capable to virtually inactive. Iraqi forces generally could not plan or execute without substantial US support, and often did no better than US units in attracting local support and HUMINT. While Iraqis as a whole might support the ISF, the Iraqis in the field often saw them as tied to other sects and ethnic groups.

This did not mean that some Iraqi forces did not succeed. Some Iraqi units did show the ability to go out into the field and the ability to work with local and tribal leaders. Moreover, local volunteers continued to join the ISF. Iraqi force development still have great potential, but it was clear that it could take several more years to make effective, and that much depended on Sunni belief at the local and national level that the Iraqi government would serve Sunni as well as Shi'ite and Kurdish interests.

Marine Maj. Gen. Rick Zilmer, commander of the troops in the region, said his forces were sufficient to fulfill the primary mission of training Iraqi forces, but not enough to also defeat the insurgency in Anbar. Marine Brig. Gen. Robert Neller, deputy commanding general of Multinational Force West, also said in November that the training effort was making progress, but commented on an Iraqi police officer's request for more US forces: "Let's be honest with each other. There are not enough Marines, Iraqi army or police to cover all this ground. And I can't tell you there will be more Marines coming."¹³⁹⁸

In mid-November 2006, Neller said that many police officers in Anbar province had not been paid for three months, because the central government did not provide security forces there with the necessary funding. "That's why people in Anbar think the government in Baghdad doesn't want them to succeed," Neller said. "Sometimes I wonder if the government in Baghdad wants them to succeed." The government's response to such allegations was that the reason for the lack of funding was police corruption in Anbar province that the government was unwilling to subsidize.¹³⁹⁹

Co-opting Tribal Leaders in Anbar

In September 2006, the leaders of 25 out of 31 tribes in Anbar province agreed to unite in the fight against the insurgency. It remained unclear, however, how quickly and forcefully they would confront Al-Qa'ida and other insurgent elements. One of the tribal leaders, Sheik Abdul Sattar Buzaigh al-Rishawi, estimated that the 25 tribes counted 30,000 young men armed with assault rifles willing to fight against insurgents, whose number the Sheik put at about 1,300. He also demanded weapons, equipment and tactical help for Anbar's tribes from an Iraqi army brigade. According to US military sources, the tribes in the area had fought Sunni insurgents in the past, but had never coordinated their actions in the fight. The initial government response from Baghdad was grateful, but avoided specific commitments.¹⁴⁰⁰ The agreement was denounced shortly afterwards as "pure nonsense" by other tribal leaders from Anbar.¹⁴⁰¹ The week after the announcement, however, seemed to confirm the tribal leader's sincerity in fighting the insurgency; armed tribesmen seized four men at a mosque in Ramadi they believed to be Al Qa'ida fighters. Their bodies were later found in a dumpster.¹⁴⁰² Meanwhile, Marine Corps commandant Michael W. Hagee described security in Anbar as improving, but said the province was nonetheless still hazardous.

"The security situation has changed very greatly since we went in there. Now, it's still very dangerous."¹⁴⁰³

By the end of the 2006, the agreement with tribal leaders did seem to have begun to bear fruit. The number of recruits joining the Iraqi police force rose dramatically in Anbar Province in December and January. In Ramadi, during the first 2 weeks of 2007 more than 1,000 applicants sought police jobs. In December 1,000 applicants joined the police

force.¹⁴⁰⁴ This contrasts with previous month's recruitment numbers, which were "a few dozen."¹⁴⁰⁵ US commanders attributed the sudden surge in recruits to deals brokered with several local tribal militias, in which tribal leaders agreed to send their fighters to join the local police. According to US commanders, a rift has opened up between local tribes and groups like Al Qa'ida. "They've seen enough of the murder and intimidation," stated Maj. General Richard Zilmer.¹⁴⁰⁶

The strategy of co-opting tribal leaders appeared to pay off in March 2007. Iraqi Army and police forces together with local tribal forces, killed dozens of suspected Sunni insurgents in an unusually fierce battle. 80 others were captured. According to Abdul-Karim Khalaf, a spokesman for the MOI, "The tribes in this area refused to join al-Qa'ida."¹⁴⁰⁷

Securing Ramadi

One additional problem with Operation Forward Together was that Coalition and Iraqi efforts concentrated on securing Baghdad over the summer, and the pacification effort in other parts of the country had to get by with lower troop numbers. This put more strain on ISF forces as well as those of the MNF-I, and most of the forces supposedly "in the lead" already faced serious problems in manning levels and real-world mission capability.

One example was Ramadi, the capital of Anbar province. Although the Iraqi government had authorized police force strength of 3,000, there were only about 300 trained and equipped policemen in August 2006. About 2,000 Iraqi troops and several thousand US soldiers were also stationed in the city of 300,000. In comparison, about 12,000 US and Iraqi troops were employed to rid Fallujah of insurgents, a city about half the size of Ramadi.

US Army Col. Sean MacFarland, commander of the brigade responsible for the Ramadi area, openly admitted to the low priority given to the city as a result of the troop requirements for the Baghdad offensive, saying that Baghdad, not his area of operation, was currently the main effort: "I'm trying to take the heat off Baghdad." Part of the security problem in Ramadi may actually have been the retaking of Fallujah, when insurgents were pushed out of the city and partly relocated to nearby Ramadi.

The political process in the province was also hampered by the high level of violence, which had killed four of 31 members of the Anbar Provincial Council in the past months. Insurgents had tried to kill Anbar's governor, Maamoun Sami Rashid al-Awani, 30 times. Employees going from one part of the government compound to another had to sprint in order to avoid sniper fire.

Politics on a national level also slowed down progress. Anbar was the only province not to receive its share of the 2006 budget for development and reconstruction projects. All other provinces have received about 10 - 40% of their share of the money. While al-Awani alleged that the Shi'ite-dominated central government wanted to weaken his government, politicians in Baghdad said they wanted better guarantees that the provincial administration was stable enough to safeguard the money. A Ramadi bank had recently been robbed of more than \$6 million in central government funds.

The US military did, however, feel that MNF-I and ISF efforts had been more successful in some other parts of Anbar province, both in terms of security and reconstruction, for example in Fallujah and several towns in the Euphrates valley.¹⁴⁰⁸

Partial British Retreat From Basra

The British government in late October moved most of its civilian staff out of its compound in Basra due to rocket and mortar attacks by militias, saying this was a temporary measure.¹⁴⁰⁹

ISF Operational Successes and Human Intelligence

One area where MNF-I experts did feel that ISF forces became more successful was HUMINT. For example, Operation Sidewinder, executed on August 1, 2006, was seen as a success in terms of Iraqi Security Force operational capabilities, as well as growing ISF HUMINT capabilities.

The mission was carried out by Iraqi soldiers assigned to the 3rd Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division, and was a cordon and search operation to interrupt “anti-Iraqi forces” activity in Sadiquiyah. According to US Marine Sergeant Brian A. Richmond, a rifleman who provided support to the Iraqi forces, the Iraqi soldiers were able to gather more intelligence from the local citizens than he believed Coalition troops could have.¹⁴¹⁰ In a counterinsurgency operation where HUMINT serves as a key ingredient to success, Iraqis’ growing ability to obtain information and tips indicates possible growing trust from the public, which Coalition trainers have sought to establish through increased emphasis on professionalism.

Other ISF successes in obtaining actionable Human Intelligence in the late summer and early fall of 2006 included:¹⁴¹¹

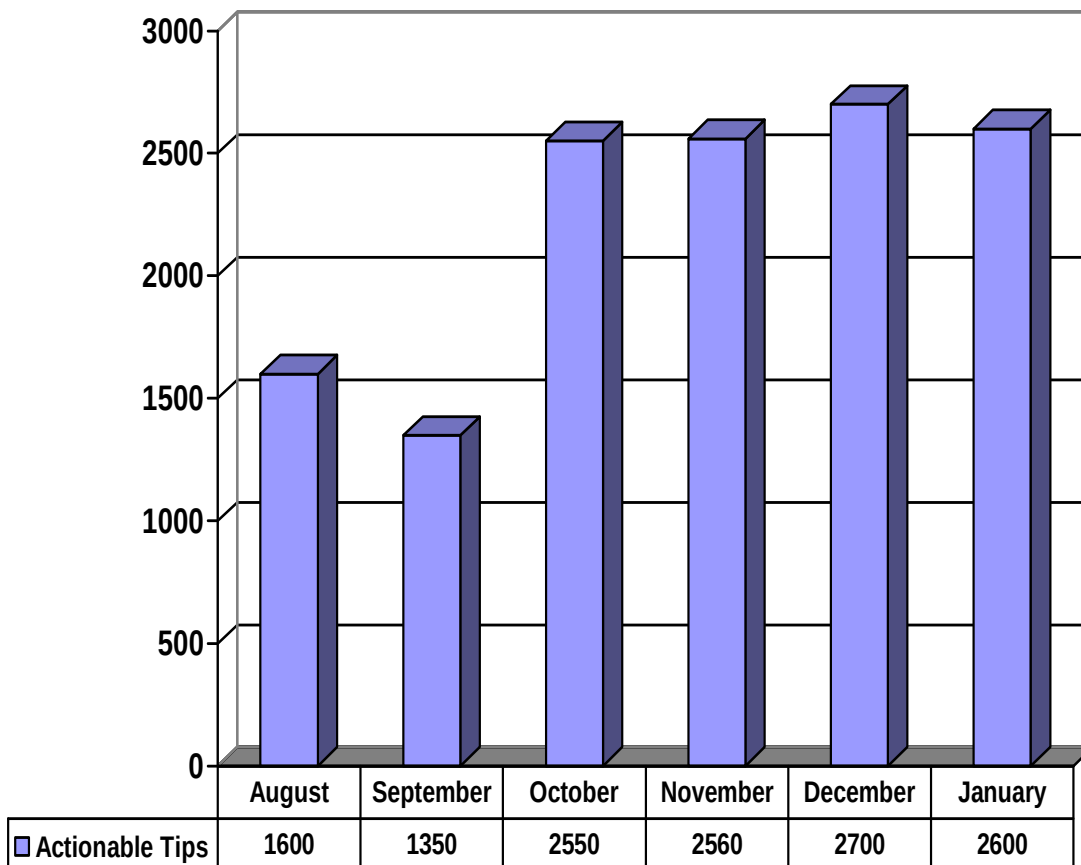
- Jul 31: A tip from an Iraqi citizen led a patrol of the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition soldiers to a munitions cache in east Baghdad. The soldiers discovered 18 60mm rounds with fuses installed. It reportedly took the soldiers less than 15 minutes from the time the tip was called to locate the cache.
- August 9: Operating on a tip from local citizens in Muqdadiyah, Iraqi soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition forces four terror suspects after searching a building in the northern part of the city. The search also revealed a vehicle-born IED factory, three vehicles that matched the description of cars used in an attack on an Iraqi police checkpoint earlier in the week, and one rocket-propelled grenade launcher.
- August 20: A women in Karkh who claimed to have been kidnapped previously entered the office of the Iraqi Army’s 6th Division and led soldiers from the 5th Battalion to a house where she said another kidnapped victim was located. The soldiers rescued the woman, unharmed, and arrested the two kidnappers. That same day, in Baghdad, a tip from a citizen led soldiers from the 5th Special Troops Company, 9th Iraqi Army Division to a permissive entry of the Al Fadly Mosque, where they discovered a cache of weapons and detained two five suspected terrorists.
- August 21: An Iraqi citizen in Baghdad led soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division to a house in the Adhamiyah neighborhood where kidnap victims and weapons were kept. One victim was rescued, along with the discovery of a cache of rocket-propelled grenades, propellant charges, grenades, and rifles.

On September 3, 2006, Iraqi authorities announced that a top Al-Qa'ida leader who had been in custody since June 19 had yielded valuable intelligence, including information leading to the capture of 20 terrorist leaders. In the weeks leading up to this announcement, Iraqi army and national police units conducted over 80 missions specifically targeting Al-Qa'ida in Iraq. During these operations, it was reported that 49 terrorists were killed, while Iraqi forces detained 225 more who had been connected with bombings, kidnappings and murders, as well as facilitating movement of foreign fighters, weapons, explosive materials, and funding into the country.¹⁴¹²

Figure 11.1 shows the rise in actionable tips to Coalition and Iraqi forces, as reported by MNF-I as of August 2006. The data show fluctuation on a weekly basis, but an overall upward trend since March 2006.

Figure 11.1

National Hotline Actionable* Tips



Note: Not all actionable tips result in the apprehension of enemy forces or the seizure of illegal weapons.

Source: MNF-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March 2007 Report to Congress, p. 20; Note: +/-5% margin of error.

Other Operational Developments

The scale of the problems Iraqi forces had to deal with becomes clearer from a chronology of the major daily interactions between ISF forces, insurgents, and militias during July-September 2006 and what some now call “anti-Iraqi” actors. Iraqi army and police units partnered with Coalition forces in 140 operations, killing 17 insurgents and detaining 300 suspects In August 2006.¹⁴¹³

- **July 1, 2006:** In the aftermath of a powerful bomb attack that killed over sixty people in a marketplace, US and Iraqi forces arriving to provide assistance were pelted with rocks by civilians, the *New York Times* reported. Female Sunni MP Taysir al-Mashhadani was abducted in Baghdad, apparently by a Shi’ite militia. Sunnis accused the Shi’ite-dominated Iraqi security forces of complicity, since Iraqi patrols were apparently nearby but did not attempt to intervene.
- **July 2, 2006:** Iraqi military forces with more than 50 vehicles and backed by US helicopters moved to surround the Ur neighborhood northeast of Baghdad in an attempt to locate and free abducted Iraqi MP Taysir al-Mashhadani. The MP and her bodyguards remained missing. Iraqi National Security Advisor Mowaffaq al-Rubaie released a “most wanted” list of 41 known insurgents, based on data compiled by the security forces over the previous nine months. A suicide car bomb in Kirkuk killed a police officer and wounded two others. Two policemen were killed in a car bombing in central Baghdad. Police clashed with militias in several neighborhoods around Baghdad, apparently following a police entry into a Sunni mosque early in the morning, resulting the killing and wounding of an undetermined number of security forces and militiamen.
- **July 3, 2006:** The “bullet-riddled” bodies of five Iraqi policemen were found near a sanitation plant in Mandali near the Iranian border. Two soldiers and two policemen were wounded in an attack by a suicide car bombing in Baghdad. Four police officers and three civilians were killed by a car bomb in Mosul. The bodies of five Iraqi soldiers were recovered in Baquba, and a police officer’s body was recovered in Kirkuk one day after he had been captured amidst a gunfight with insurgents. A joint patrol of Iraqi police and army troops raided a farm compound west of Kirkuk and freed a police officer and a soldier who had been kidnapped on July 1. Coalition forces announced that Iraqi soldiers had raided a farmhouse west of Baghdad, capturing 14 al-Qa’ida foreign fighters.
- **July 4, 2006:** Allegedly out of fear that Iraqi forces won’t be able to provide security in the Muthanna province following its handover from British and Australian troops later in July 2006, the province’s Governor Mohammad Ali Hassan and Police Chief Mohammad Najim Abu Kihila were made to resign by the provincial council. The resignations occurred after 300 recently fired policemen stormed the provincial council and attacked council members to protest the loss of their jobs. The provincial council doubted the ability of Iraqi forces to secure Muthanna province independently. Three policemen were killed and three other wounded by a roadside bomb in eastern Baghdad. Gunmen dressed in security force uniforms kidnapped Raad Hareth, the Iraqi deputy electricity minister, and his 11 bodyguards on the outskirts of Baghdad, but all were released that evening with no explanation.
- **July 5, 2006:** US and Iraqi troops carried out a raid on the Saddam Hospital in Ramadi, which Coalition military spokesman Maj. Gen. William Caldwell said was being used as a haven for insurgents. Caldwell also noted that, due to a rise in the number of vehicle-borne bomb attacks, Iraqi security forces were being trained in “new techniques” to deal with them and were raiding suspected car bomb “factories.” Iraqi forces were also continuing operations in the search for abducted Sunni MP Taysir al-Mashhadani with “little success.” In Kirkuk, a roadside bomb killed

a security force member protecting oil facilities. A police officer was killed in Mosul when a suicide car bomb detonated near the police station.

- **July 6, 2006:** In an afternoon news conference, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said that the Facilities Protection Service, a branch of the security forces created to protect government buildings and installations, was “filled with criminals and murderers.” “It didn’t really protect the ministries,” he acknowledged. “On the contrary, it turned into a partner in the killing.” Insurgents wounded two police officers in an attack on the Ramadi hospital that Iraqi and US forces had raided and secured the previous day. A Mahdi militia commander, Adnan al-Unaybi, was arrested by Iraqi and US forces around Hillah, 60 miles south of Baghdad.
- **July 7, 2006:** Iraqi forces supported by US aircraft conducted an early morning raid on the Sadr City area of eastern Baghdad that US and Iraqi spokesmen said killed or wounded about 30 fighters and capturing an unidentified “extremist leader,” apparently a commander of the Shi’ite Mahdi militia. No Iraqi force or US casualties were reported. The raid was part of the ongoing search for kidnapped Sunni MP Taysir al-Mashhadani, abducted July 1. An Iraqi army officer said that American officials had given Iraqi forces a list of people to be arrested in the Sadr City raid.
- **July 8, 2006:** A roadside bomb targeting an Iraqi police patrol wounded one officer in Baghdad.
- **July 9, 2006:** Major Qahtan Adnan Abdul-Razzaq, an Iraqi army intelligence officer, was shot while driving in Karbala. A police officer was killed in a drive-by shooting in Karbala. One policeman was killed in eastern Baghdad when gunmen fired on a patrol. Iraqi forces cordoned off the Sadra Mosque, a center of radical Shi’ite Mahdi militia supporters, in Zafraniya southeast of Baghdad and the national police searched the mosque, detaining 20 people and confiscating six AK-47s. The Mosque described as a stronghold of the radical Shi’ite Mahdi militia. The *Los Angeles Times* reported on confidential Iraqi government documents that detail more than 400 investigations of Iraqi police corruption and brutality, including participation in insurgent and sectarian militia-led violence. Individuals of all police ranks within the Interior Ministry have been implicated in corruption and other violations. Prominent Sunni leaders criticized the Iraqi forces “for their inability to control violence” and links to Shi’ite militias after gunmen went on a killing spree in the western Jihad district of Baghdad inhabited mainly by Sunnis. A military cordon was established in the city shortly afterward.
- **July 10, 2006:** Five policemen were injured by a roadside bomb in central Baghdad. A roadside bomb in Hilla killed a police officer and wounded four civilian bystanders. Soldiers and police enforced a daytime curfew and kept the al-Jihad neighborhood of Baghdad cordoned off in the aftermath of an anti-Sunni killing spree by gunmen the preceding day, while violence against civilians by gunmen continued. Locals expressed concerns about the loyalty and capabilities of the military and police: “The security forces are not capable of maintaining security.”
- **July 11, 2006:** Britain’s defense secretary said British, Australian, and Japanese troops would hand over control of the southern Muthanna province to Iraqi security forces on Thursday July 12. The Maysan and Dhi Qar provinces were also being slated for coalition force withdrawals. In an address at CSIS in Washington, DC, US Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad reported that Iraqi security forces have increased over the past year from 168,000 to 265,000. He also claimed that by the end of summer 2006 about 75 percent of counterinsurgency operations would be led by Iraqi units and acknowledged that the security clampdown in Baghdad that started about one month previously had not met expectations that it would reduce violence.
- **July 12, 2006:** US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, speaking to US troops in Iraq, said that 267,000 Iraqi security forces were “trained, equipped, and gaining combat experience,” but that US forces would have to remain as the Iraqis’ “enablers” “for some period of time.” Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki told the parliament that he was optimistic that there are enough security forces to defeat the insurgents. US Gen. George Casey, the senior American commander in Iraq, said that

additional US troops might be needed in Baghdad to help quell the recent upsurge in sectarian violence.

- **July 13, 2006:** British and Australian troops officially handed over security responsibilities for the southern province of Muthanna to the Iraqi government and its security forces. Iraqi Prime Minister al-Maliki said it was “an important step toward the goal of full Iraqi responsibility for all 18 provinces by the end of next year.” British Maj. Gen. John Cooper, commander of British forces in southern Iraq, said his forces had trained and equipped 2,000 policemen and 1,000 soldiers to be based in the province. One police officer was killed and two others wounded in clashes in Baghdad between security forces and Shi’ite militiamen. A “postal policeman” was killed in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad. Gunmen stopped a car with four policemen from Karbala at a fake checkpoint in Baghdad and killed them. In Mosul, gunmen killed an off-duty police officer at a car-repair shop.
- **July 14, 2006:** Gunmen attacked a checkpoint south of Kirkuk, killing 12 Iraqi soldiers.
- **July 15, 2006:** A suicide bomber attacked a convoy of Interior Ministry commandos, wounding two while killing two civilians.
- **July 16, 2006:** A roadside bomb west of Kirkuk detonated as a convoy of Iraqi Army troops passed. Two soldiers and the Second Battalion commander Riyadh al-Danouk were injured.
- **July 17, 2006:** Three Iraqi troops were killed at a checkpoint in Mahmoudiya, a town south of Baghdad, as gunmen stormed the town market and proceeded to kill some 50 mostly Shi’ite civilians. Afterwards, Iraqi soldiers raided a nearby house, arresting two suspects and confiscating grenades and other weapons. Iraqi Shi’ite politicians walked out of a parliament session to protest the Iraqi security forces’ inability to stop the violence.
- **July 18, 2006:** Iraqi National Security Adviser Mouwafak al-Rubaie reported that a Jordanian militant, Diyar Ismail Mahmoud alias Abu al-Afghani, believed responsible for the killing of two captured US soldiers in June, had been killed in a clash with Iraqi security forces. Al-Rubaie also claimed that Iraqi forces had captured four leaders of the Omar Brigade, an al-Qa’ida in Iraq affiliated group. Police arriving at the scene of a major car bombing in the town of Kufa, south of Baghdad, were pelted with rocks and had to fire shots into the air to disperse the angry mob. In Kirkuk, six policemen were killed and one was injured by a roadside bomb. Gunmen wearing Iraqi army uniforms robbed a bank in western Baghdad. A police officer in Baqubah was killed on his way to work. Associated Press reported that 617 Iraqis, including 90 police and soldiers, had been killed since the beginning of the month and 1,850, including 267 security forces, had been killed since the new government took power on May 20. In statements published by an Iraqi newspaper, Iraqi National Security Adviser Mouwafak al-Rubaie said that “we do not have any concrete evidence of Iran’s direct involvement” in supporting insurgents and militias, while “there is no doubt the Syrian role in Iraq is a negative one” because it allowed foreign fighters to enter Iraq.
- **July 19, 2006:** An Interior Ministry General, legal adviser Fakhir Abdul-Hussein, was shot dead outside his home in the Mansur district of Baghdad. Many lawmakers said that a civil war in Iraq had already begun in the wake of sectarian attacks that killed 120 people over the previous two days. The Iraqi Interior Ministry, seeking to curb kidnappings by men in uniform, ordered its units to report their operations and told Iraqis to demand identification from law enforcement officials before complying with their orders. Four Iraqi police commandos were killed by a roadside bomb in southern Baghdad. One police officer was killed in a gun battle with insurgents outside the Yarmouk Hospital.
- **July 20, 2006:** In a bid to reduce violence and promote reconciliation, the Defense Ministry issued a call to enlisted soldiers and officers below the rank of major from the Saddam Hussein-era military to go to recruiting centers and return to service. Five Iraqi troops were wounded by a roadside bomb near Karbala. British forces in Basra arrested an Iraqi police captain for alleged terrorist activity. A roadside bomb in eastern Baghdad killed one policeman and injured five,

along with several civilians. A police officer in Fallujah was kidnapped and killed, while a police officer in Tikrit was killed while manning a checkpoint. Iraqi PM Nuri al-Maliki fired security officials in Mahmudiya in the aftermath of the July 17 massacre of Shi'ites by gunmen in the marketplace. US and Iraqi forces surrounded the towns of Hawija and Riyadh, just west of Kirkuk, in an operation to drive out al-Qa'ida suspected of numerous recent killings. Iraqi National Security Adviser al-Rubaie appeared on al-Sharqiyah TV and said, "The Iraqi armed forces and the multinational forces jointly carry out 35 operations daily against terrorism, rebellion and the enemies of Iraq. Ninety per cent of these operations are carried out jointly by the Iraqi and multinational forces. Part of them is carried out by the Iraqi command backed by the multinational forces. Only 10 per cent of them are carried out without the knowledge of the Iraqi security forces."

- **July 21, 2006:** According to the *New York Times*, the US military tallied 92 Iraqi police officers and soldiers killed and 444 wounded in the first four weeks of the Baghdad security operation launched on June 14. Daily attacks in Baghdad increased during that period from 23.8 to 25.2; the average number of daily attacks was approximately 24 in June and 34 in July. According to the US military, the Baghdad operation utilized 42,500 Iraqi security personnel and 7,200 US troops. Iraqi Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Abdul Aziz Mohammed Jassim said "one of the biggest problems the security problem faced was armed groups posing as police and army units." A weekly Friday ban on daytime traffic in Baghdad was extended to run from 11AM to 7PM, with the nightly 9PM to 6PM curfew remaining in effect. Iraqi security forces, supported by a US helicopter, counterattacked against Shi'ite gunmen in Mahmoudiya in a clash that left three policemen, four soldiers, and between five and eleven gunmen dead. The US military called the action an "effective suppression of an apparent death squad" that "shows exactly how security forces are working together to stop the violence." Sunnis rallied in front of a Baghdad shrine to demand that the Iraqi government replace the predominantly Shi'ite army battalion stationed in their neighborhood. General John Abizaid, head of US Central Command, said that the Baghdad security plan had not achieved the hoped-for results and that additional US troops would redeploy to Baghdad to help quell sectarian violence. Top US commander in Iraq General George Casey was meeting with Iraqi Defense Minister Abdel Kader Jassem al-Obeidi on a new plan to improve Baghdad security.
- **July 22, 2006:** The Iraqi government committee on national reconciliation met for the first time in Baghdad's Green Zone. Much of the time was spent debating whether Iraqis who had killed coalition troops would be pardoned. Three Iraqi soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb in Fallujah. In Baqubah, a bomb killed three police officers and wounded five. In Mussayib, a gun battle between coalition forces and Shi'ite militiamen left one Iraqi soldier and 15 militants dead. Another soldier was killed in Mussayib when a bomb exploded at his house. Police killed three gunmen in Mosul. A roadside bomb in Kut killed one soldier and injured four others. A police officer was shot to death in Amara.
- **July 23, 2006:** Dozens of civilians were killed in bombings in Baghdad and Kirkuk, as well as shootings in various regions, as sectarian violence continued.
- **July 24, 2006:** In an interview with BBC, Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, traveling for meetings in Britain and the US, denied predictions that foreign coalition troops would be in Iraq for decades, insisted that Iraq was not entering a civil war, and promised continued progress in the independent capabilities of the Iraqi security forces to secure the country. Police fought a running gun battle with gunmen in the streets of Baghdad, resulting in four officers killed and 36 wounded. Three roadside bombs in Baghdad wounded two soldiers and three policemen. A suicide bomb attack on an Iraqi Army convoy in Mosul killed five Iraqi troops and wounded four.
- **July 25, 2006:** A roadside bomb in Baghdad killed one policeman and injured three. Another roadside bomb in Mosul wounded three police officers on patrol. Gunmen killed a police officer in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad, and another policeman was killed as he headed for work in the town of Ishaqi. Expected topics of meetings included improving the Baghdad security plan and

progress on force development. Three police officers died and 14 were wounded in clashes with gunmen in three different Baghdad districts. US President Bush and Iraqi PM al-Maliki met in Washington, DC and gave a press conference confirming that about 4,000 additional Iraqi and 4,000 additional US troops would be deployed to Baghdad in an effort to quell sectarian violence.

- **July 26, 2006:** Gunmen kidnapped police brigadier Abdullah Hamood, director of residency office of Baghdad. A roadside bomb wounded a policeman in Mosul. In Baquba, a police officer was killed and one was wounded in a gun attack on their patrol. A raid by Iraqi security forces near Balad, north of Baghdad, resulted in the death of one insurgent and the capture of three others. Gunmen wearing police uniforms kidnapped 17 people from a central Baghdad apartment building hours after Bush and Maliki's announcement of renewed Baghdad security efforts.
- **July 27, 2006:** Two policemen were killed and two were wounded by a roadside bomb in Tikrit. In Debes, northeast of Kirkuk, a policeman and a soldier were killed when their patrols fired on each other. A police officer was shot to death in Mosul. One soldier died and an army lieutenant was injured in an attack by gunmen in Kirkuk. A high-ranking police general's body was found blindfolded, handcuffed, and bullet-riddled in eastern Baghdad, one day after he was kidnapped.
- **July 28, 2006:** Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, head of the Shi'ite SCIRI political party, said full control for security should be handed over to Iraqis and criticized the plan to add more US troops to the Baghdad security operation, calling for "handing over the security dossier to the Iraqi apparatus and stopping the interference in its work.
- **July 29, 2006:** The *New York Times* reported that Shi'ite militias had been "staking out" morgues in Baghdad to kill or kidnap Sunnis when they go to search for missing relatives. The Shi'ite militants were allegedly receiving tips from government facilities protection personnel with links to militias when Sunnis were arriving.
- **July 30, 2006:** Iraqi deputy prime minister Barham Salih and national security adviser Mowaffaq al-Rubaie said in a news conference that Iraq was a "frontline" in the global war on terrorism and therefore should receive more economic and military assistance for fighting international terrorists on its own soil. Interior Minister Jawad Bolani vowed to eliminate corruption and extremist political influence in the police forces with new investigative initiatives. Two police officers in Baghdad were wounded by a roadside bomb, while another bomb killed a police officer in Baqubah. Four policemen were killed by insurgents on the road between Kirkuk and Tikrit. In the town of Hawija, four policemen and a lawyer were beheaded at a roadblock. According to the *Los Angeles Times* report, over 3,000 police have been killed and 3,000 more wounded since the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime.
- **July 31, 2006:** The Iraqi Interior Minister faced calls for dismissal due to the poor security situation in Baghdad. Gunmen in military uniforms kidnapped an estimated 25 people from a mobile phone shop and a chamber of commerce in the upscale Baghdad district of Karradah. Four Iraqi soldiers were killed and six were wounded in a car bomb attack in Mosul. Col. Fakhri Jamil Salman, a senior intelligence officer, was killed in a drive-by shooting in Baghdad. Police found the bodies of two officers who had been kidnapped the previous night, while a third remained missing. An Iraqi officer was killed in an explosion in Iskandariya.
- **August 1, 2006:** 23 Iraqi soldiers were killed and 20 more were wounded by a roadside bomb while traveling in a bus between Tikrit and Baiji. The Iraqi government immediately imposed a curfew on the region as authorities searched for the perpetrators. A car bomb exploded in front of the al-Rafidein bank in the Karradah district of Baghdad, where security force personnel collect their paychecks at the beginning of each month. Iraqi police reported eight civilians, three soldiers, and three commandos killed in the attack. One police officer was killed in a bomb attack in Muqdadiya, while a roadside bomb in Kirkuk killed two policemen and wounded one more.
- **August 2, 2006:** Two off-duty police officers were among those killed by a roadside bomb in Hawija. A policeman on patrol was killed by a bomb in Mosul. Ahmed Abdel Hussein, chief of

the traffic police in Baquba, was shot and killed with his bodyguard. Two soldiers were wounded when a bomb exploded near their patrol in Diwaniya. The Iraqi army announced that it had arrested 26 “suspected insurgents” in the past 24 hours. Fifteen insurgents and three police officers were killed in a clash in the town of Madaen. Another four police were wounded in the wounded. Two traffic police were killed by gunmen in the town of Khalis in Diyala province. Iraqi and US forces swept Anbar University in Ramadi for insurgent presence. Iraqi President Jalal Talibani announced that he expected Iraqi forces to take control of security in all 18 provinces of the country by the end of 2006.

- **August 3, 2006:** In testimony before the US Senate Armed Services Committee, CENTCOM commander John Abizaid said sectarian violence in Iraq was “probably as bad as I have seen it,” with civil war a distinct possibility, and that the “operational and tactical situation in Baghdad is such that it requires additional security forces, both US and Iraqi.”
- **August 4, 2006:** Three policemen were among ten killed by a suicide car bomber who drove into a crowd at a soccer match in the town of Hadhar, south of Mosul. Another nine police were wounded in the attack. A senior police officer and his two bodyguards were killed by a car bomb in Mosul. A police officer and four militants were killed in clashes between security forces and insurgents in the city.
- **August 5, 2006:** A police officer was killed in the Sunni Adhamiya district in northern Baghdad. The Iraqi Defense Ministry announced that 64 suspected insurgents had been detained in operations across the country since the previous day.
- **August 6, 2006:** Iraqi troops clashed with Shi’ite militiamen near Sadr City in Baghdad and two soldiers were wounded. Two policemen were killed and five were wounded when gunmen ambushed their patrol in southern Baghdad.
- **August 7, 2006:** Six Iraqi soldiers were killed and 15 were wounded in a dawn attack on their checkpoint at Balad Ruz, southeast of Baquba. A police officer was killed along with a civilian in a bomb attack at a market in Khan Bani Saad near Baquba. US and Iraqi troops raided a “suspected death squad” in Sadr City, eastern Baghdad, resulting in two deaths and 18 injuries. Two policemen were killed in a drive-by shooting in Mosul. A suicide bomber drove a truck packed with explosives into a police commando headquarters in Samarra, killing 10 troops. Four Iraqi police officers were killed in an ambush in Sadr City. About 4,000 US troops, including the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, were deployed in Baghdad to bolster security.
- **August 8, 2006:** Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki condemned the joint US-Iraqi raid in Sadr City the previous day, saying such violent operations could undermine his efforts to promote national reconciliation. The bodies of seven Iraqi troops were found near the Iranian border. The Iraqi Army’s 4th Division was given lead responsibility for security in the northern Iraqi provinces of Nineveh, Salahuddin, and Tamim. Forward Operating Base Dagger near Tikrit was transferred to the Iraqi military. Five of the army’s 10 divisions had taken the lead security role in their areas of operations, and 48 of 110 US bases had been transferred to Iraqi control.
- **August 9, 2006:** The Baghdad morgue reported that it had received 1,815 bodies in the month of July. Coalition spokesman Maj. Gen. William Caldwell reported that over the previous week, US and Iraqi troops had “conducted operations against 10 death squads throughout Baghdad” and uncovered 222 roadside bombs. An Iraqi army colonel, Qasim Abdul Qadir, was shot and killed on his way to work in Basra. Police arrested two people in the act of planting a roadside bomb in Kirkuk.
- **August 10, 2006:** A policeman was shot to death in Fallujah. Two policemen were killed by a roadside bomb in Hawija, southwest of Kirkuk. Four police officers were killed and seven were wounded in a roadside bomb and mortar attack in Baquba. Three police commandos were killed and three were wounded in clashes with gunmen in southern Baghdad. Police and gunmen fought in western Baghdad. US and Iraqi troops sealed off the southern Baghdad neighborhood of Dora

to quell a spate of killings there. House-to-house searches resulted in 36 arrests and the uncovering of several weapons caches.

- **August 11, 2006:** A police officer was shot dead in Mosul.
- **August 12, 2006:** Two gunmen were injured and detained by police after participating in an attack on a police station in Mahmudiya. In Baquba, seven policemen were wounded by a roadside bomb and a police captain was killed by gunmen.
- **August 13, 2006:** Three police officers were wounded by a roadside bomb in Baquba. A colonel of the Oil Facilities Protection security organization was gunned down at a gas station in Tikrit. The governor of Mosul narrowly escaped assassination, while one of his bodyguards was wounded in the attack by gunmen. Four policemen were wounded during a clash with insurgents in Hilla. 30 suspected insurgents, including 16 allegedly planning to kill relatives of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, were arrested in a series of Iraqi military and police operations during which six policemen were killed.
- **August 14, 2006:** A bus carrying police recruits was hit by a roadside bomb on the main road between Baghdad and Baquba, killing one and injuring 10. Nine Iraqi troops were wounded by a suicide car bomb attack.
- **August 15, 2006:** One policeman was killed and two others wounded by a roadside bomb in Baquba. Three police officers were wounded by a roadside bomb in Huwayder, north of Baquba. A police lieutenant, Fadhil Uthman, was shot dead in Baquba. The Iraqi Defense Ministry announced that security forces had detained 48 suspected insurgents in the previous 24 hours. In Muqdadiya, 50 miles northeast of Baghdad, three bakers who supplied bread to the Iraqi army were killed by gunmen. A former Iraqi army officer was shot dead on a highway near Dujail. Two roadside bombs in Samarra wounded three Iraqi police commandos and destroyed one of their vehicles. In Karbala, Iraqi troops clashed with Shi'ite militiamen loyal to hard-line cleric Mahmoud al-Hasani after searching a mosque for weapons. After the clash, Karbala authorities imposed a vehicle curfew in the city. Three Iraqi soldiers were killed and four wounded by a roadside bomb in Jbala, near Mussayib. British forces were conducting training missions for Iraqi personnel in the Maysan province in preparation for the process of handing over security responsibilities in the province in September.
- **August 16, 2006:** Police fought with insurgents in Mosul, killing six and wounding seven. A roadside bomb killed one police officer and wounded three in Baquba. Iraqi forces backed by British troops fought attacks on government buildings by armed gangs in Basra, resulting in one dead and five wounded policemen. Iraqi security forces maintained a blockade around Karbala following clashes with Shi'ite militants the previous day. Two policemen were wounded by a roadside bomb in Kut. Gunmen assaulted an Iraqi Army checkpoint near Hilla, causing the soldiers to flee, and the gunmen stole their weapons.
- **August 17, 2006:** A suicide car bomb targeting Kurdish security forces killed five guards on a road in Sinjar, northwest of Mosul.
- **August 18, 2006:** Two policemen were killed and two more among the wounded when gunmen attacked police watchtowers in Baquba. Authorities set a curfew on the city following the attack. The police officers were wounded in a bomb attack in the Mansour district of Baghdad. An Iraqi soldier guarding oil fields was shot to death in Balad, north of Baghdad. The Iraqi government announced a two-day vehicle ban in parts of Baghdad ahead of a major Shi'ite religious festival that had previously been targeted by insurgents.
- **August 20, 2006:** Fadhil al-Magsusi, a colonel in the Facilities Protection Service, was killed by gunmen in Basra. Two off-duty members of the Interior Ministry Intelligence Service were killed by gunmen in Basra. Iraqi troops arrested two suspected death squad leaders in southern Baghdad.

- **August 21, 2006:** The Iraqi army announced that it had arrested 103 suspected insurgents across the country in operations in the previous 48 hours. Two policemen were injured by a roadside bomb in Iskandariya, south of Baghdad. The US military reported the “most successful recruiting drive yet” for police in Anbar province, taking in 500 new officers for a 30 percent increase in the region’s police force.
- **August 22, 2006:** One of the Anbar province governor’s bodyguards was killed in a drive-by shooting in Ramadi. Gunmen killed a police major and wounded his driver in an attack on his car in Baquba.
- **August 23, 2006:** Two policemen were killed in a series of shootings in Baquba. Eight policemen were wounded by a suicide bomber wearing a police uniform in Mosul. Three traffic police were among six people wounded by a roadside bomb in Fallujah. A police officer was killed by gunmen in Al-Hay, a small town south of Kut. The Iraqi army reported killing one insurgent and arresting 29 in operations across the country in the previous 24 hours.
- **August 24, 2006:** Two policemen were among nine people wounded by a suicide care bomb attack on a police station in eastern Baghdad. Four police officers were wounded in a car bomb attack on their patrol in northern Baghdad. Two policemen were killed and three were wounded by a roadside bomb in Baquba. Police Colonel Hussein Abdul Wahid, head of police patrols in eastern Baghdad, was the target of a car bomb attack on his motorcade, which injured five of his bodyguards but missed him. Four policemen were wounded, along with a civilian, by a car bomb in Baquba that they had been lured to by a false tip. Two police officers were wounded by a roadside bomb in Mosul. Police in Mosul said they arrested Abdul Rahman al-Aathari, the head of al-Qa’ida-linked groups in Mosul. Three policemen were killed by gunmen at a Balad checkpoint. Two policemen were wounded by a roadside bomb in Baghdad. Three policemen were among six people wounded by a roadside bomb in Baquba. Two top US generals, CENTCOM commander John Abizaid and commander of US forces in Iraq George Casey, said that the revamped Baghdad security operation was causing a reduction in violence and that they were “very optimistic that the situation will stabilize.”
- **August 25, 2006:** A car bomb in the Zeyouna district of Baghdad wounded five policemen. Three Iraqi soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb in Buhriz, north of Baghdad. A car bomb in Baquba killed three policemen. South of Baquba, a police officer was killed and four more wounded by a roadside bomb. A policeman was killed and another was wounded in a gun attack on their patrol.
- **August 26, 2006:** Sunni Iraqi MP Tayseer Najah al-Mashhadani, abducted by Shi’ite gunmen on July 1, was released unharmed to the Iraqi Prime Minister’s office. Looters ransacked a military base in Amara that British forces had vacated for Iraqi troops.
- **August 27, 2006:** Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki declared in an interview that “Iraq will never be in a civil war” and that the “violence is in decrease and our security ability is increasing,” on a day when a series of attacks claimed some 50 lives across the country.
- **August 28, 2006:** Approximately 20 Iraqi troops were dead after fighting with Shi’ite militiamen in Diwaniya, south of Baghdad. A suicide car bomb attack on the Interior Ministry in Baghdad killed 16 people including 13 police and wounded 62, 47 of them policemen. A police officer was killed and two were wounded by a roadside bomb in southern Baghdad. Gunmen killed three policemen and a former Iraqi army officer in separate attacks in Mosul. Two gunmen with a bomb in their car were arrested by police in Mosul. The Iraqi army announced that it had arrested 26 suspected insurgents in the preceding 24 hours countrywide. US military spokesmen revealed that about 100 mostly Shi’ite troops from the southern Maysan province refused to deploy to Baghdad, apparently due to unwillingness to confront fellow Shi’ites.
- **August 29, 2006:** One policeman was killed by a roadside bomb in Kirkuk.

- **August 30, 2006:** A bomb attached to a bicycle exploded in a crowd of men outside an army recruitment center in Hilla, killing 12. Nadia Mohammed, a Justice Ministry director general, and her driver and two bodyguards were killed by gunmen in the western Baghdad Nafaq al-Shurta area. Five policemen were among 21 people wounded by a car bomb at a petrol station in Baghdad. A crowd of men turned away from an army recruitment center in Samawa fought with police in a clash that killed one civilian and wounded nine people, including five policemen. Police battled insurgents in Mosul, wounding four civilians. The commander of US forces in Iraq, Gen. George Casey, said he envisioned Iraqi forces being capable of standing with minimal Coalition support in 12 to 18 months.
- **August 31, 2006:** Retired Lt.-Gen. Wajeeh Thirar Hneyfish, commander of an Iraqi air force base under Saddam Hussein's regime, was killed in Ramadi by unidentified gunmen. Four police commandos died in a bomb attack on their patrol in Baghdad. According to Iraqi television reports, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki said that Iraqi forces would take full control of the Dhi Qar province in September and suggested that by the end of the year Iraqis would be "running all but Baghdad and the violent Sunni region of Anbar." One member of the oil ministry's security service was killed and another was wounded by gunmen in a northeastern part of Baghdad.
- **September 1, 2006:** A Saddam regime senior intelligence officer was found shot to death near Dujail, outside of Baghdad. A roadside bomb in central Kirkuk seriously injured three policemen. Three police officers in Baghdad's southern Dora district were killed by a roadside bomb. In Numaniya, south of Baghdad, gunmen stormed a police officer's house and killed him. Figures compiled by the Health, Defense, and Interior Ministries tallied 769 Iraqi civilians killed in August, a drop of 28 percent (the July total was 1,065)
- **September 7, 2006:** After a ceremony today, the Iraqi government will officially take control of its major air, sea and land-based military commands by standing up the Iraqi Joint Headquarters. The relationship between Iraqi and Coalition forces will be spelled out in a formal agreement that provides the Iraqi military authority to employ its forces as needed, while the Coalition continues to assist in training, equipping and supplying.
- **September 11, 2006:** At least 13 Iraqi army recruits have been killed and one wounded in a suicide bomb attack on their minibus in Baghdad, officials said. The attack happened near the Muthenna recruitment centre which has been targeted by insurgents in the past. Describing Iraq as one of the most violent conflict areas in the world, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has warned that there is a "grave danger" of breakdown of the Iraqi State and "potentiality" of civil war
- **September 12, 2006:** In Kerbala, gunmen shot dead a former security officer, Colonel Abbas al-Nuaimi, while he was in police custody for Saddam-era crimes. In Baghdad, one policeman was killed and nine people, including three policemen, were wounded by a roadside bomb. Another Baghdad policeman was gunned down while he was leaving for work. In Mosul, gunmen killed a police captain. The Iraqi army killed two insurgents and detained 84 others in operations conducted across Iraq during the last 24 hours, according to the Defense Ministry
- **September 13, 2006:** Two car bombs targeting police killed 22 people, wounding another 76. The first killed 14 outside Baghdad's traffic police headquarters, a second targeted police guarding an electricity station in the east of the city. Two mortar shells landed on al-Rashad police station in southeastern Baghdad, killing a policeman and wounding two others. Another two policemen were killed when two mortar rounds landed near their station in Baghdad's eastern neighborhood of Mashtal. Three others were injured
- **September 14, 2006:** The deputy prime minister said the government would propose a law next month to disband militias. Interior Ministry forces killed the number-two leader of al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Jaafar al-Liby, in Baghdad along with four militants and captured two others alive, in an operation carried out in the past few days. The Iraqi army killed three insurgents and arrested 14 during the last 24 hours in different cities. Nine people were killed and 26 wounded when a car

bomb went off near a police patrol in central Baghdad. Gunmen killed a traffic police Colonel in Baghdad. Ten people were wounded and one killed in clashes between protesters and guards in Diwaniya. The protesters were demonstrating against U.S. forces' storming of an office of followers of Moqtada al-Sadr.

- **September 16, 2006:** In Baghdad, two Iraqi soldiers were killed and three wounded by a bomb. A suicide car bomb killed one civilian and wounded 22 outside a well-fortified police station in southern Baghdad. Iraqi police killed four members of the Albu Baz tribe along with a gunman who attacked them on Friday after they clashed in the city of Samarra. The Albu Baz tribe blamed al Qaeda militants for the attack. Police killed two insurgents after they repelled an attack by them on a checkpoint south of Kirkuk. Two policemen were wounded in the attack. Three policemen were wounded when their vehicle was struck by a roadside bomb in Mosul. Police found 47 bodies around the capital Baghdad. The Interior Ministry described plans to fortify exit and entry points into Baghdad to better control access to the capital
- **September 17, 2006:** 24 bodies, tortured and shot dead, were found in different areas of Baghdad. Two policemen guarding electrical infrastructure were killed and three wounded by a roadside bomb in Baquba. Gunmen killed two policemen in Taji. Two Iraqi soldiers and a civilian were wounded by a roadside bomb in central Baghdad. Two policemen were wounded when a roadside bomb went off near their patrol in northern Baghdad.
- **September 18, 2006:** Fourteen bodies, tortured and shot dead, were found in different districts of Baghdad. Three border guards were killed and six wounded by a roadside bomb near Kut. Three civilians were wounded by a roadside bomb in Mosul. A man and a child were wounded by several mortar rounds fired at a police station in Mosul. Four policemen were killed when insurgents ambushed them in Mosul. In Tal Afar, a bomber killed himself and 21 others, all but two of them civilians; 19 people were injured. In Ramadi, a car bomb killed 13 police recruits and injured 10. Basra police said they found the body of a counterterrorism unit police officer who had been kidnapped several days ago. Iraqi army killed two insurgents and arrested 36 suspected insurgents during the last 24 hours in different parts of Iraq. The Iraqi army with Anbar province tribal leaders killed 27 insurgents during the last week.
- **September 19, 2006:** A policeman was killed and six people, including four civilians, were wounded by gunmen in Baquba. A bomb attack in Ramadi at the Al-Hurriyah police station killed 13 people. 17 more bodies showing signs of torture and execution were found around Baghdad. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said that Iraq is in danger of sliding into civil war and its government and the international community must do more to pull it back from the brink. Parliament again delayed debate of a bill on federalism after a fresh wave of violence killed 50 people.
- **September 20, 2006:** 35 bodies were found in the last 24 hours in Baghdad. A suicide truck bomb at the entrance of an Iraqi police base killed four police officers, wounding 11 more in southern Baghdad. Three civilians were also wounded. A roadside bomb wounded one Iraqi soldier in Mahaweel. Hameed al-Hilaly, a member of Kerbala's governorate, escaped a third assassination attempt in Kerbala. Two of his bodyguards were wounded. The Iraqi army detained 45 suspected insurgents in the last 24 hours. The Iraqi government has named General Amir Amed Hassun as special envoy on counterterrorism to coordinate with his US and Turkish counterparts
- **September 21, 2006:** The Iraqi army arrested 67 suspected insurgents in the past 24 hours throughout Iraq. Police killed a suicide bomber in Tal Afar. Insurgents killed six policemen and wounded two others in western Baghdad. Gunmen killed three policemen in Baquba. A bomb killed three policemen guarding a local power grid and wounded four in southern Baghdad. Gunmen wounded a policeman and two civilians in western Baghdad. A roadside bomb killed two Iraqi soldiers and wounded four in Diwaniya. Iraq formally regained control of Dhi Qar province. A total of 38 bodies were recovered by police in Baghdad in the past day

- **September 22, 2006:** Gunmen shot and killed one civilian and wounded two policemen in Kirkuk. One civilian was killed and five people, including two policemen, were wounded by a bomb in Latifiya. Two policemen were killed while defusing a bomb in Iskandariya. Police found 10 bodies, including those of two women, in different parts of Baghdad. Most bore signs of torture and had been shot. Police found two bodies, one beheaded, in a western part of the city of Mosul. Police found a woman's body dumped on the side of the road in the small town of Taza.
- **September 23, 2006:** The Iraqi army captured a regional leader of the al Qa'ida-linked Ansar al-Sunna group, along with two aides, in a village near the town of Muqdadiya. Gunmen killed police Colonel Ismail Jihayan, deputy head of the Salahadeen province police headquarters, in Tikrit. Men at a checkpoint beheaded nine people, including some policemen
- **September 24, 2006:** Today is the start of Ramadan. Iraqi army troops have captured the head of the 1920 Revolution Brigades and seven of his associates in Diyala province. Parliament agreed to set up a committee of 27 members to draft amendments to the constitution, which will also allow a law to create autonomous regions after 18 months. The members of the committee will be named on Tuesday. It will have 12 members from the ruling Shi'ite religious bloc, five ethnic Kurds, four from the main Sunni Arab bloc and smaller numbers of others. The corpse of an Iraqi soldier who had been shot dead was found on Sunday on the main road between Baiji and Haditha. A total of six bombs targeted at police killed 11 people and wounded 35.
- **September 25, 2006:** The Iraqi army arrested 73 suspected insurgents during the last 24 hours in different parts of Iraq. The Iraqi army arrested Zuhair Kasar Saleh, a leader of the Ansar al-Sunna militant group, and a number of his associates in Abu Ghraib district in western Baghdad. British forces have killed Omar Farouq, a top lieutenant of Osama Bin Laden in Southeast Asia, in Basra. Police found 19 bodies in different cities today, including the decapitated head of police lieutenant Sameer Hazim, who was kidnapped on Sunday. 5 bombs incidents involving security forces killed 3 civilians and wounded 19 policemen and 9 civilians. Clashes between gunmen and police killed a civilian and wounded three policemen in Mosul. Gunmen kidnapped Abdul Kareem al-Talgani, the mayor of al-Zuhour district in northern Baghdad, and wounded three of his bodyguards. President Talibani said he would like to have U.S. military bases in his country for an extended period.

Operational Developments During Winter 2006-2007

"Securing the stability of the country has been more difficult than anticipated. Our ability to correctly assess the political, economic and security situation in Iraq has been lacking."

-Admiral William Fallon, Commander of CENTCOM, January 30, 2007.¹⁴¹⁴

In spite of Iraqi and MNF-I tactical successes during the summer and fall of 2006, the previous chapters have shown that the level of violence continued to climb, and that the MNF-I and Iraqi government strategy for dealing with the insurgency and civil conflict was not working. The ISF and Coalition forces continued to "win" but could not "build" or "hold," and the complex mix of elements shaping the civil war led to rising internal fighting and "cleansing."

In spite of some victories, and progress in some elements of the ISF, it was clear that the situation was growing steadily worse. American and world public opinion reflected a steady drop in support for the war. The November 2006 election gave the Democrats a majority in both houses of Congress, and pressure for the US to withdraw its troops and end the war grew serious for the first time. These developments, coupled to the failures of the Iraqi government discussed earlier, virtually forced the Bush Administration to find a new "strategy" for conducting the war, and a new approach to Iraqi force development.

Key Trends: October-December 2006

Late 2006 witnessed a continuation of the increases in sectarian conflict, and a general slide towards open civil war. Operation Together Forward was clearly a failure, due largely to the inadequacies of the ISF forces involved. The lack of security in Baghdad in turn helped to fuel the insurgency and the ethno-sectarian conflict. The Sunni insurgency continued unabated, however most of the violence affecting Iraqi's was of an ethno-sectarian nature. The steady trickle of Coalition casualties went on, while Iraqi civilian and ISF casualties reached unprecedented levels. Iraq was seen by many as "on the brink."

The pace of ISF development was uneven. There was no quick fix to the severe problems in ISF loyalty and operational readiness revealed during Operation Together Forward. The loyalty and readiness of MOI forces, and in particular the National Police, remained a major concern.

In America, increased attention was placed on the training of the ISF, as it became clear how important capable Iraqi military and police forces were. The Iraq Study Group report put great emphasis on the training of the ISF. As the Bush Administration discussed changes in its Iraq strategy in late 2006, many expected them to include increases in funding or manpower for the training of the ISF.

There were some clear successes in ISF development. By the end of 2006, MNSTC-I reported that it had equipped the Iraqi Army at 100% of its operational requirement. Furthermore, by the end of 2006 force generation goals had largely been met, and official manpower levels of the Iraqi Army were near 100%.¹⁴¹⁵ In several tough battles, the ISF performed admirably. Although there were vast differences between units, many showed

significant improvements, and the overall trend in the Iraqi Army was of gradual capabilities improvement.

However, myriad problems remained. Although official manpower levels were close to 100% for the Iraqi Army, the actual number of troops showing up to fight each day were significantly lower. Equipment for the Iraqi Army may have been procured by MNSTC-I, but much of it was not reaching the soldiers on the front lines. Furthermore, the Iraqi Army continued to lack heavy forces. Iraqi logistical and sustainment capabilities remained immature.

Iraqi Operational Successes in Early 2007

Examples of operational successes during early 2007 included the following examples:¹⁴¹⁶

- January 2: 1st Iraqi Army Division forces, with Coalition advisors, captured the suspected leader of an insurgent cell in Ramadi. The cell leader was allegedly responsible for trafficking weapons and improvised explosive devices used in attacks against Iraqi civilians and security forces. No civilian, Iraqi or Coalition forces casualties were reported.
- January 1: Soldiers from the 2nd and 4th Iraqi Army Divisions, with Coalition advisors, detained two suspects during a search for a suspected cell leader in Ash Sharqat, in the northern Salah Ad Din Province. The suspected cell leader was responsible for providing weapons and supplies to insurgents and al-Qaida in Iraq members, which helps them to carry out violent criminal activity against Iraqi civilians and security forces in the area.
- January 4-13: —Iraqi soldiers, with Coalition advisors, discovered several large weapons caches and destroyed insurgent forces throughout the Turki Village area this week. Having cleared over 200 kilometers of terrain, the Iraqi Army, with the support of the Coalition, unearthed approximately 20 weapons caches, killed more than 85 terrorists and detained 25 suspected terrorists. During one mission, Iraqi Army and Coalition forces engaged eight separate small insurgent elements with small-arms fire, mortars, artillery, Bradley fighting vehicles and close air support, resulting in the deaths of more than two dozen insurgents. The operation, which began Jan. 4. with a combined air and ground assault, continues to target insurgent elements that are believed to have tortured and executed more than 40 members of rival tribes in the area in November
- January 8-13: More than 1,000 Iraqi soldiers with assistance from Coalition advisors killed approximately 50 insurgent fighters and captured two dozen more during a week-long operation to clear Haifa Street from insurgent control in Baghdad. Iraqi soldiers swept through Haifa Street to gain control of the Sheik Marouf neighborhood located less than a mile from the International Zone in Baghdad. The soldiers were supported by Coalition ground and air units.
- January 9: Iraqi police and soldiers detained 47 insurgents during Operation Ar Bead in Fallujah. Charges against 31 of the detainees were filed, and charges filed against 16 others are pending. The combined operation was spearheaded by the Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army, while Coalition units provided support at the request of the police.
- January 10: A joint operation combining Iraqi national policemen and Coalition forces seized three weapons caches and detained 10 men. The men are suspected of committing sectarian murders and positioning roadside bombs in the Jaza'r neighborhood. The 2nd Battalion, 6th Iraqi National Police Brigade and Coalition forces began the operation by establishing an outer security perimeter, followed by a house-to-house search of the area. The operation was the result of tips from local citizens of possible insurgents and weapons caches in the neighborhood.

- January 15: 8th Iraqi Army Division forces captured the suspected leader of an improvised explosive device cell during operations with Coalition advisors in Hajjan, west of Al Kut.
- January 16: Soldiers from the 1st and 7th Iraqi Army Divisions captured two insurgent cell leaders during operations with Coalition advisors in Karabilah and Karmah. The two are alleged to have smuggled weapons and foreign fighters into Iraq to help facilitate their attacks against Iraqi civilians and security forces.
- January 24: Coalition and Iraqi Army soldiers detained 10 suspects and seized four caches in the Al-Doura district as part of Operation Wolverine Feast. The operation began as witnesses reported seeing several men load a mortar tube and ammunition into the trunk of a car. Iraqi soldier and Coalition advisors were alerted and cordoned off the target area. At the first objective they captured one wanted man with a 82mm mortar system, two AK-47 assault rifles, a 9mm pistol and two hand grenades. A sweep of a second targeted area uncovered six men with 10 120mm mortar rounds. The third cache found contained a 60mm mortar system and various rocket-propelled grenade launchers and RPG rounds. Three men were detained at this location. The last cache contained several RPG rockets and accelerators. The ten suspects detained in the operation are being held for further questioning.
- January 24: A tip from a local citizen to an Iraqi Army unit enabled them to stop an illegal checkpoint in the western Baghdad neighborhood of Ghazaliyah. An unidentified Iraqi phoned Iraqi soldiers stating that a number of men had set up an illegal checkpoint in a southern Ghazaliyah neighborhood. A patrol was dispatched to the area and upon arrival was engaged by AK-47 and pistol fire. The patrol returned fire but was unable to prevent the escape of the terrorists.
- January 26: Soldiers from the 2nd Iraqi Army Division captured the suspected leader of a terrorist bombing cell during operations with Coalition advisors in Mosul. The suspect is alleged to be responsible for coordinating and participating in multiple mortar, small arms and improvised explosive device attacks against Iraqi and Coalition forces.
- January 28: Iraqi police from Najaf discovered a sophisticated plan by a newly identified terrorist group to kill Shi'ite pilgrims and Shi'ite leadership during Ashura planning. Police surrounded a large compound in Kufu, a few miles north of Najaf, early in the morning demanding the group surrender. When the group refused and began attacking the police, the local police commander contacted the Iraqi National Police's Scorpion Brigade and Coalition Forces for assistance. Coalition Forces dropped leaflets encouraging the group to surrender. When that failed, the National Police commander contacted the Iraqi Commander in Chief (the Prime Minister) who ordered that either the group surrender or be disarmed by force. Units of the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces moved into the compound and immediately were subjected to heavy small arms and machine gun fire. Iraqi Security Forces were able to seize the compound after Coalition close air support was called in. Iraqi officials stated that the battle resulted in 120 confirmed terrorists killed and more than 360 terrorists wounded and captured. The operation, which lasted more than 24 hours, resulted in five Coalition and 4 Iraqi Security Forces casualties and extensive damage to the cult compound. More than 500 Ak-47 assault rifles, 11 complete mortar systems, several heavy machine guns, and rocket launchers were found in the fortified compound's more than 50 buildings.
- January 28: Iraqi soldiers were able to capture multiple terrorists accused of killing, kidnapping, and displacing Iraqi families in a successful operation in Diyala province. A terrorist leader who confessed to the killing of 33 people was also arrested during the operation.
- February 4: Iraqi Army forces killed a reported leader of rogue Jaysh Al-Mahdi violence and criminal activity within Diyala Province during operations near Baqubah. The suspect was killed during a raid by Iraqi forces, and Coalition. The suspect is believed to have facilitated and directed numerous kidnappings, assassinations and other violence targeting Iraqi civilians and Iraqi Police.

He is reportedly responsible for several attacks against Coalition and Iraqi Forces in the area. Reporting indicated he was directly linked to rogue JAM leadership in western Diyala Province and Baghdad.

- February 13: Iraqi Special Operations Forces captured a suspected weapons supplier and financier of sectarian violence conducted by rogue Jaysh Al Mahdi cells. The capture occurred during operations with Coalition advisors in Raminiya, in northern Baghdad.
- February 14: Iraqi Army forces killed four armed terrorists in a confrontation in al-Sina'a neighborhood in Ba'qubah. Four others were captured in al-Muqdadiya while emplacing improvised explosive devices.
- February 18: Iraqi Special Operations Forces captured two suspected members of a rogue Jaysh Al-Mahdi militia cell during operations with Coalition advisors Feb. 18 in southern Baghdad.
- February 20: During a combined operation, Iraqi soldiers and their Coalition counterparts targeted individuals in a cell responsible for creating and planting improvised explosive devices and other terrorist activity in Balour, Iraq. The cordon and search operation led the forces from 3rd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition advisors to detain seven suspected terrorists, one of whom is suspected of placing an IED at a cell phone shop in November 2006 which killed 12 people.
- February 24: Iraqi soldiers, in conjunction with Coalition advisors, conducted a cordon and search operation targeting improvised explosive device and insurgent cells in Titten, Iraq.
- February 24: Iraqi Special Operations Forces detained five suspected rogue Jaysh Al-Mahdi militiamen with Coalition advisors in Husayniyah, east of Taji.
- February 26: A Unit from the Iraqi Army, backed by Coalition forces, executed a security siege in al-Ghammas area (al-Nabhanv and al-Shuwarif) and raided several safe houses based on intelligence information which stated the presence of armed groups of the "Heaven's Soldiers" movement, resulting in the capture of 65 suspects. The soldiers also defused an IED.
- February 28: Iraqi army forces dismantled 15 improvised explosive devices in al-Latifi yah, al-Mahmoudiya, al-Youssifi yah, and al-Radwaniyah. During the IED disarming operations, Iraqi soldiers freed a kidnapped child in al-Mahmoudiya and captured two of the kidnappers.

The January 2007 "Surge" Strategy

On January 10th, 2007, President Bush announced a new security strategy for Iraq that attempted to respond to many of the ISF development and effectiveness problems outlined in this report. The new strategy called for a surge of additional American troops to help stabilize the situation in Iraq. The equivalent of five combat brigades, or 17,500 troops U.S. combat troops, was to be sent to Baghdad. A further 4,000 soldiers would be added to Anbar. The deployment of the full 21,500 troops would be dependant upon the Iraqis meeting certain benchmarks, including the sending of adequate Iraqi forces to the capital, and the willingness to carryout operations in Shi'ite neighborhoods and against Shi'ite militias.

The Bush strategy called for adding two brigades and some 7,000 combat troops to the force in Baghdad. This meant raising the 24,000 US troops then in Baghdad to a total of 31,000. Some three additional brigade equivalents were to be added in waves, with around 10,500 more troops slated to arrive in Baghdad in February and March. In March 2007, President Bush announced that an additional 2,200 soldiers, mostly military police and support troops, would be sent to Iraq. The extra troops were sent to help with the expected growth in detainees resulting from the Baghdad security operations.¹⁴¹⁷

Although this surge meant strengthening the Baghdad security forces, it would not be larger than previous troop commitments to Baghdad. There were close to 50,000 US troops in Baghdad during the peak of the fighting in 2004-2005, plus more than two brigades, covering an area about half the size of the one that the US now plans to clear. At most, the President's plan would provide 41,500. As retired col. Andrew Bacevich noted, "The 'surge' is actually quite small."¹⁴¹⁸

A US Force Build-up Leads the Way

The overall changes in US deployment plans involved retaining and moving forces already in theater as well as adding new forces. Their stated mission is to: "help Iraqis clear and secure neighborhoods while protecting the local population. These actions will build the capacity available to commanders to 20 brigade or regimental combat teams to assist in achieving stability and security and accelerate Iraqi Security Force development."¹⁴¹⁹

The overall changes in US deployment plans were complicated, since they involve retaining and moving forces already in theater as well as adding new forces, but involve some high capability Army and USMC units:

- 2nd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, based at Fort Bragg, N.C., and currently assigned as the call forward force in Kuwait, will move into Iraq and assume a security mission there.
- 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, Minnesota Army National Guard, will be extended in its current mission for up to 125 days and will redeploy not later than August 2007.
- The 4th Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, based at Ft. Riley, Kan., will deploy in February 2007.

Three other Army combat brigades were to deploy as follows:

- 3rd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, based at Ft. Benning, Ga., deploys in March 2007.
- 4th Stryker Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, based at Ft. Lewis, Wash., deploys in April 2007.
- 2nd Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, based at Ft. Stewart, Ga., deploys in May 2007.

The Marine Corps was to extend two reinforced infantry battalions for approximately 60 days. Additionally, the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) remained in Iraq for approximately 45 additional days. Other combat-support and combat-service-support units were to be deployed as necessary once new requirements are assessed. All of these troop increases were contingent upon the Iraqi government meeting vaguely defined benchmarks on security and political cooperation

Iraqis "In Charge" Under US Command

Baghdad was divided into 10 "Security Framework Districts," with an Iraqi brigade, partnered to a US battalion, in each.¹⁴²⁰ These 10 districts are identical to the older system dividing Baghdad into 9 districts, only with the Karadah district being divided in half.¹⁴²¹ Iraq, through the commander of Iraqi forces in the capital Lt. General Abboud Gambar, was to be technically "in charge" of the operation. However, in keeping with historical trends, it is likely that the most challenging missions will be conceived of and carried out by American troops.

Gen. David Petraeus was put in overall command of US forces in Iraq, and was confirmed by the Senate on January 23, 2007. Petraeus, who had directed much of the effort to create a new US Army field manual for counterinsurgency operations, was considered one of the military's foremost counterinsurgency experts. General Petraeus described his mission: "'I plan to ensure that some of our forces locate in the neighborhoods they protect.'"¹⁴²²

He also noted that the new strategy placed US soldiers in neighborhoods they had previously only sporadically patrolled. The soldiers were to isolate a neighborhood and then secure it, creating a "gated community"¹⁴²³ of safety and expanding out from there.

General Pace, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, in his testimony to the House Armed Service Committee provided further details of the strategy:

"in each sector, there will be three or four police stations that will serve as the hub of operations from which the forces that are located there -- which will be a mixture of Iraqi army, Iraqi national police, Iraqi local police and U.S. and coalition forces -- from which they will do their daily patrolling, the door-to-door work to let the population know that they're there, to take census-type information and to provide the street awareness and presence that allows security to come to fore. From those stations will be conducted the raids that may be necessary, and from those stations will be the quick reaction forces should some of the Iraqi forces get into trouble." ¹⁴²⁴

The strategy was modeled to some extent on the success of US operations in Tal Afar. Similar tactics were employed in there in 2004, resulting in large decreases in the level of violence. Col. H.R. McMaster is credited with devising the Tal Afar strategy that has since been expanded to Baghdad.¹⁴²⁵ The "gated community" approach to counterinsurgency warfare has a long history. It is essentially an update of the "Strategic Hamlet" strategy employed in Vietnam, which was a failure. However, the British successfully employed a similar strategy in Malaya in the 1950s.

The new US strategy called for both increasing US troop contact with Iraqi forces and Iraqi people and their potential vulnerability. American troops had been staying on in relatively secure military bases in and around Baghdad for most of the conflict before 2007. Units would leave for patrols or offensive operations, but would eventually return to the relative safety of their bases. They now were to be in much more intimate contact with Iraqi troops, police, and the Iraqi people, and dependent on the more than 40 ISF "joint security sites."

The new security plan also increased the chances of US and Iraqi units fighting protracted urban battles. This type of fighting has historically resulted in higher casualties for American forces in Iraq. Protracted urban fighting is generally something most commanders seek to avoid in conventional wars. However, the spiraling violence in Baghdad had left US commanders with little choice but to conduct major operations in urban areas.

The Iraqi Force Component and US Advisory Support

The President's plan also hinged on the successful cooperation of the Iraqi Security Forces and the addition of three Iraqi Army brigades to Baghdad. The plan called for an increase in Iraqi security force capacity – both size and effectiveness – from 10 to 13 Army divisions, 36 to 41 Army Brigades, and 112 to 132 Army Battalions. There are

42,000 men in these Iraqi forces in Baghdad. Sending in an additional two brigades will add at most 8,000 men, bringing the total to 31,000. “In effect, Bush is counting on Iraqis to pull our bacon out of the fire” stated retired Col. Andrew Bacevich.¹⁴²⁶

The President’s plan called for increasing the embedding of American advisers in Iraqi Army units – partnering a Coalition brigade with every Iraqi Army division, and giving US commanders and civilian’s greater flexibility to spend funds for economic assistance.

General George Casey, commander of US forces in Iraq until January 23, 2007, was explicit about the timing of the “surge” In a briefing to reporters on January 19th, he said that it should be possible within the next 60 days to 90 days to evaluate the effect of putting additional Iraqi and U.S. forces into Iraq's capital. However, as counterinsurgency tactics, in particular winning “hearts and minds,” takes considerable time, it is difficult to see how the strategy could be evaluated in so short a time frame. Gen. Petraeus, Casey’s successor, was less specific about timelines for the security plan.

Lt. General Abboud Gambar was chosen by the Iraqi government to command the overall security plan in Baghdad. He took command of Iraqi forces in Baghdad on February 5th 2007. Gambar was a relatively unknown officer who had not previously worked with American officials. He was chosen over the objections of US General George Casey. Gambar was a commander in the navy during Saddam Hussein’s reign, and was taken prisoner by American forces in the 1991 Gulf War. American commanders were concerned that Gambar would block attempts to arrest prominent members of Shi’ite militias. He had two deputy commanders, a Shi’ite and a Sunni, posted to either side of the Euphrates River in Baghdad.

The strategy announced by President Bush on January 10th also relied heavily on the 30,000 men in the Baghdad police forces. As already discussed, the loyalty of these forces is questionable – at best. These Iraqi forces were to operate from local police stations – conducting patrols, setting up checkpoints, and going door-to-door to gain the trust of Baghdad residents.

The President’s plan established 30 to 40 “joint security sites”, spread across the 10 military districts (or “beladiyah”) in Baghdad. A US battalion of 400-600 men will be embeds in each of the nine Military Districts in Baghdad.... Each “joint security site” was to have at least a platoon of US troops, with another platoon on patrol nearby as backup.

The Shortcomings of ISF Units Deployed to Baghdad

By April 2007, there were three brigade headquarters and nine battalions deployed to Baghdad. The number of IA forces had topped 4000, but the combat strengths of these units fluctuated on a daily basis as they report their present for duty numbers. These units retained a rear detachment at homestation and had about a quarter of the unit on leave at any one time. Lessons learned from previous deployments have been integrated into a “deployability training” concept which involved home station preparation, and deployment to Besmaya Training Center for up to two weeks of training before commitment to combat operations in FAQ.

Two of the three Iraqi brigades being brought into Baghdad were largely Kurdish. By late April, 2007, 2,100 Kurdish troops had arrived in the capital.¹⁴²⁷ These brigades were formed out of the Kurdish Peshmerga militia, and are recognized as some of the Iraqi Army's best-trained forces. The Peshmerga militia helped to maintain a quasi-independent Kurdistan in northern Iraq in the late 1990's, fighting the Iraqi army of Saddam Hussein for years. Many of its troops are veterans of that conflict.

The Kurdish brigades had undergone extensive training in urban warfare tactics, expecting to take on the Mahdi army in Baghdad. The commander of one of the brigades slated to go to Baghdad, Brig. Gen. Nazir Assem Korran of the 1st infantry brigade, 2nd Division, stated that his troops were also being trained in "how the army should act inside a city."¹⁴²⁸

There were, however, serious concerns about sending two Kurdish brigades to Baghdad (which is mostly Arab) as part of President Bush's "surge." Mahmoud Othman, a prominent member of the Iraqi Kurdish Coalition, stated: "There are fears that a fight like this, pitting Kurds against Arabs, is bound to add an ethnic touch to the conflict. I am against the move . . . and there are many in the Iraqi parliament who are against it too." Anwar Dolani, a former Peshmerga commander and commander of one of the two Kurdish brigades, stated: "The soldiers don't know the Arabic language, the Arab tradition, and they don't have any experience fighting terror."¹⁴²⁹

A lack of Arabic speakers in the Kurdish brigades was only one problem facing Iraqi commanders in Baghdad. There were serious concerns about the loyalty of the Kurdish units. Former US ambassador Peter Galbraith added that the Kurdish fighters "are ultimately loyal not to the national chain of command or the nominal chain of command, but to their political party leaders."¹⁴³⁰ Protracted urban fighting or a drop in Kurdish political support for deploying the Kurdish units to Baghdad may sorely test the loyalty of the two Kurdish brigades.

Despite these concerns, bringing in Kurdish dominated Iraqi units was seen by the US as the lesser of two evils, as it avoided the sectarian ties of Shi'ite-dominated units. It does, however, remain to be seen how effective the Kurdish units will be in Baghdad. On January 21, the Boston Globe reported that many soldiers in the 2 Kurdish brigades slated to go to Baghdad were deserting. Anwar Dolani, a Kurdish commander, stated: "I can't deny that a number of soldiers have deserted the army, and it might increase due to the ferocious military operations in Baghdad."¹⁴³¹

The sentiments of Ameen Kareem, a deserting Kurdish soldier from one of the brigades, reflect the problems of sending the Kurdish brigades to the capital: "I joined the army to be a soldier in my homeland, among my own people. Not to fight for others who I have nothing to do with." Another deserting Kurdish soldier, Faram Mohammed, added: "The fanatic Sunnis in Baghdad kill the Shi'ites and vice versa. Both of them are outraged at the Kurds. They will not hesitate to kill us and accuse us of being collaborators with the occupiers."¹⁴³²

According to Deputy Prime Minister Salam Z. al-Zobae, as of early February 2007, Iraq was not even "5- percent" ready to roll out the Baghdad security plan.¹⁴³³

Initial Developments in “The Surge”

“As we have surged, we find the enemy surging as well”

- Commander Multinational Division-Center and 3rd Infantry Division
Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, May 4, 2007¹⁴³⁴

In a response to the American buildup, the Mahdi Army Shi'ite militia was ordered by Moqtada al Sadr on January 14th to temporarily lower its profile in Baghdad. The Mayor of Sadr city, Rahim al-Darrajii, stated that a deal had been reached with political and religious groups to keep armed men off the streets, allowing the Iraqi army to be in charge of security.¹⁴³⁵ The militia stopped publicly wearing uniforms, hid most of its weapons, and abandoned its checkpoints in the week following Moqtada al Sadr's order.

One Mahdi Army official stated: “We have explicit orders to keep a low profile . . . not to confront, not to be dragged into a fight and to calm things down.”¹⁴³⁶ This strategy appeared to be a direct response to the imminent buildup of US forces in the capital. One Mahdi Army official even seemed to tacitly endorse the security plan for Baghdad, stating: “We will fully cooperate with the government to make the plan successful. If it is an Iraqi plan done by the government, we will cooperate.”¹⁴³⁷ These actions may in part be a response to the perception that the security plan for Baghdad will give US forces more leeway in confronting the Mahdi Army. On January 19th, US and Iraqi forces arrested a top aid to Moqtada al Sadr. An advisor to Mr. al-Maliki, however, denied that the government knew ahead of time about the arrest.¹⁴³⁸ This may indicate continuing reluctance on the Iraqi government's part to confront the Mahdi Army.

Furthermore, it was unclear whether Sadr's order to stand down demonstrates a genuine commitment to peace, or rather a temporary measure aimed at eliminating rivals. The Security plan for Baghdad risks employing American troops to attack the Sunni insurgents, while the Mahdi Army lies low and out-waits the American troops. According to Suha Azzawi, a professor of political science at Baghdad University, “He's [Moqtada al Sadr] ordered the militias to temporarily leave their positions. They will continue their activities after the crackdown.”¹⁴³⁹

By early February, there were already signs of the militia's plan to out-wait the American/Iraqi crackdown. Residents of Sadr City familiar with the Mahdi militia's operations, speaking anonymously, told of weapons being hidden in places like grocery stores, ice cream and soda kiosks, and underground.¹⁴⁴⁰ Additionally, as reports of internal divisions within the Mahdi Army increased in the winter of 2006-2007, concerns grew that Sadr might use the American forces to selectively attack rival groups within the Mahdi Army itself.

The extent of Sadr's willingness to stand down and support the Baghdad security plan was tested on January 20th. US and Iraqi troops arrested a top leader of the Mahdi Army, Sheik Abdul-Hadi Darraji. “Let the Americans know that in these provocative acts against the Sadr movement they are playing with fire,” stated a spokesman for the Shi'ite militia.¹⁴⁴¹ However, despite harsh words, there were no retaliatory strikes by the Mahdi army, nor any change in their policy of ‘standing down.’

Not surprisingly, Iraqi forces were slow in arriving in Baghdad to carry out the security plan. A senior Iraqi General noted in late January that, “preparations are not complete,” perhaps understating the lack of Iraqi preparations somewhat.¹⁴⁴² According to local Baghdad commanders, by late January, only 2,000 of the planned 8,000 Iraqi troops had reached Baghdad. Many of the units that did arrive were around half strength, keeping with historical manpower levels of Iraqi units deployed away from their home bases.¹⁴⁴³ There were reportedly 22,000 ISF troops already stationed in Baghdad before the security plan of 2007 went into effect, as well as 20,000 police and MOI officers.¹⁴⁴⁴

However, by March 7, 2007, 18 battalions of ISF forces had moved into Baghdad as part of the security plan for Baghdad, (dubbed Operation Imposing Law). Seven of the battalions deployed to Baghdad were only at 55 to 65 % of their end strength, and another 7 battalions were at 65 to 85%. Four battalions were deployed at 95% of their end strength. While not perfect, these deployment numbers represent a significant improvement over historical manpower rates for units deployed away from their home base.

This improvement in deployment rates was most likely due to policy changes enacted by the ISF after the failures of “Operation Together Forward.” In August 2006, the MOD formed a committee to investigate the deployability problem. Among many other problems, it was discovered that deployment rates were low in part because units left some troops home in order to guard their bases. The committee recommended creating: “a battalion from each Iraqi Army Division to serve as the rapid deployment force for that division, and provide incentive pay for soldiers who volunteer to serve in this elite battalion.” The committee also recommended using “a four-phase, 150-day deployment cycle that all units complete prior to movement from their home base.”¹⁴⁴⁵

Partially as a result of the stand-down of the Mahdi Army in Baghdad, and the slow pace of ISF deployment to the capital, “a growing number of Iraqis,” according to the New York Times, believed that the security plan for Baghdad had left Shi’ite neighborhoods more vulnerable. A massive bombing in the market of the Sedriya neighborhood of Baghdad, killing 135, on February 3rd, was widely blamed on the shortcomings of the 2007 Baghdad security plan.¹⁴⁴⁶ Tariq al-Hashimi, the Vice President of Iraq, called on the US to speed up its implementation of the “surge” in Iraq “because people cannot tolerate in fact this sort of chaos and the killing round the clock.”

On February 6, 2007, Prime Minister Maliki acknowledged that Iraqi forces were delayed in enacting the security plan. ““I feel that we are late. This delay is giving a negative impression and has led some people to say that we have already failed.”¹⁴⁴⁷ However, despite the delays in Iraqi deployments, the Iraqi officers in charge of the plan had all been chosen, and by early February a few new checkpoints were erected. The operational command center officially opened in the Green Zone next to the Prime Minister’s office on February 5th.¹⁴⁴⁸ On February 11th, Maliki publicly vowed to speed the deployment of Iraqi forces to the capital, although it was unclear how he would go about accomplishing this.¹⁴⁴⁹

The Iraqi government announced that as part of Operation Imposing Law (Operation Fardh al-Qanun in Arabic) all Baghdad residents who had illegally occupied vacant

houses were to be evicted. The move was seen as a response to the ethnic cleansing of many large neighborhoods in Baghdad. Again, it was unclear how the government would go about enforcing the order. By early March, 2007, as many as 1,000 families had moved back into their once-abandoned houses in Baghdad. It was unclear whether these families would be quickly forced out again, and a major resettlement of civilians seemed unlikely. Lt. Gen. Aboud Qanbar, on February 13th, announced several measures to restore order as part of Operation Imposing Law, including the closing of the borders with Iran and Syria, a later curfew for Baghdad, and the erection of several new checkpoints.¹⁴⁵⁰

In another positive sign, the first Joint Security Station opened in Sadr city in early March. The US also announced that by April 20, 2007, 3 “gated communities” were up and running in Ameriyia, Khadra and Adhamiyah.¹⁴⁵¹ By early May, 2007, 57 joint security stations had been set up across Baghdad, each staffed by 50 Iraqi soldiers and police officers.¹⁴⁵²

The increase in ISF and American troops in Baghdad, combined with the stand-down of the Mahdi militia, quickly led to a decrease in sectarian killings and civilian casualties in Baghdad. The Ministry of Defense announced on March 14th, 1 month into the Baghdad security operation, that civilian casualties were 265 in Baghdad between February 14th and March 14th, compared to 1,440 for the previous 4 week period. MoD civilian casualty counts usually underestimate civilian casualties by 50% when compared with independent studies.¹⁴⁵³ An Associated Press report found 1,586 civilians killed in Baghdad between February 14 and April 14, 2007, compared with 2,871 killed in Baghdad during the 2 months prior.¹⁴⁵⁴ However, January and early February had witnessed some of the highest civilian casualty rates of the war. , Regardless of the exact numbers used it was clear that a significant reduction in violence had occurred in Baghdad in February and March, 2007.

Despite the drop in violence in Baghdad, the overall levels of violence in Iraq did not fall. A trend emerged in March of attacks shifting from Baghdad to outlying regions. While Baghdad proper saw a lull in casualties and sectarian killings in February and March, the rest of Iraq, and particularly the “belt” of cities that ring Baghdad, all witnessed an increase in violence. Some smaller cities near Baghdad, such as Haswah, began to witness major violence for the first time in years.¹⁴⁵⁵ Civilian casualties across the country, fueled by several high profile bombings, climbed to 1,861 in March, from 1,645 in February according to an Iraqi government report.¹⁴⁵⁶ The Associated Press found 1,504 civilian deaths had occurred outside of Baghdad between February 14 and April 14, 2007, compared with 1,009 killed during the 2 previous months.¹⁴⁵⁷

In response to the increase in attacks outside of Baghdad, Maj. Gen. Benjamin Mixon, US commander for northern Iraq, requested reinforcements for Diyala province. On March 13, 2007, an Army battalion of 700 soldiers was transferred from Taji to Baqubah to help quell the rise in violence there..

The increase in American operations in Baghdad, combined with the new tactics of the Joint Security Stations and the “gated Communities,” led to an increase in US casualties in the city. The proportion of US combat deaths suffered in Baghdad rose from 24% to

36% for the first month of Operation Fardh al-Qanun.¹⁴⁵⁸ Sharply contrasting with the American surge, On February 21st, 2007, British Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that 1,600 British troops would be withdrawn from Iraq in the following months. Although not portrayed as a defeat by the British, the withdrawal acknowledges the fact that Southeastern Iraq has long been under the de facto control of SCIRI and Sadr factions. The Iraqi forces that Britain helped create in the area were little more than an extension of Shi'ite Islamist control by other means. The Iraqi police in areas like Basra were part of the problem, rather than the solution, with extensive police operations against Sunnis. The British won some tactical clashes in Maysan and Basra in May-November 2004, but Operation Telic's tactical victories over the Sadrists did not stop Islamists from taking steadily more local political power and controlling security at the neighborhood level when British troops were not present. Security conditions in the British controlled areas deteriorated in Winter 2006/2007. April, 2007 saw 11 British casualties, the highest monthly total since the invasion in 2003. British forces recorded an average of 20 significant attacks in the 4 provinces under their control during most of 2006. However, this number began to steadily rise after September, peaking at 90 incidents in February 2007. March and April saw 50 attacks.¹⁴⁵⁹

XIV. The Iraqi View of Iraq's Emerging Forces

Iraqi officials and officers provide an important additional perspective on the development of Iraqi forces. While there is no way to conduct a systematic survey of Iraqi officials and officers, e-mails, visits, and discussions from late 2004 through the fall of 2005 showed that many such officials and officers had a good picture of the problems involved, readily acknowledged that Iraqi forces still had a long way to go, and accepted the seriousness of the challenges they had to meet.

With some exceptions, senior Iraqi officials and officers understood the risks imposed by Iraq's ethnic and sectarian divisions; and the risks of civil war. They also saw the risks inherent in the election of a new, inexperienced, and Shi'ite dominated government; the uncertainties in being dependent on a US-dominated MNSTC-I aid program, and the problems of having to persuade the US to provide the aid and equipment necessary to create truly independent Iraqi forces that could stand on their own.

Iraqis have very different definitions of what unity means, and how to achieve it. Most of the officials and officers involved in Iraqi force development did feel, however, that both Iraqi politics and Iraqi forces has to be inclusive, and that dividing the country should be avoided at all costs.

This was certainly true of the top officials in Iraq's interim government. For all of their occasional failures, the top officials in the new interim government elected on January 30, 2005 made these positions public from the point they first took office, and consistently supported these positions through the summer of 2005 in spite of a series of bloody bombings designed to drive Iraq towards ethnic and sectarian conflict.

Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari gave a speech at the end of May in which he expressed what he considered to be 'Iraq's Three Pivots to Security.' First, Jafari stated that Iraq would seek to improve the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces through training, delivery of equipment, and improving readiness. Second, the prime minister stated that preventing terrorists from infiltrating Iraq, and the necessary coordination with bordering states, was another priority. Thirdly, Jafari stated that many attacks had been stopped by tips provided by Iraqi citizens and he encouraged them to continue to report such activity.

Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari went before the United Nations Security Council to formally ask that the MNF remain in Iraq. He stated, "We look forward to the day when our forces are able to assume full responsibility for maintaining our national security at which time there will be no need for the engagement of the MNF. Until then, we need the continued presence of the MNF in Iraq."¹⁴⁶⁰

In spite of the very real ethnic and sectarian problems in Iraqi forces that emerged in the months that followed, both the Minister of Defense and Minister of Interior have continued to stress the importance of developing forces that would maintain a rule of law, and respect for human rights – even in the face of a major counterinsurgency campaign.

They also stressed the need to fight corruption, and change the past culture of Iraq's military and police forces to stress professionalism and promotion by merit.¹⁴⁶¹

One example of such efforts is the statement that Minister of Defense, Dr. Sadoun Al-Dulaimi, made to an international forum in Brussels in July 2005,¹⁴⁶²

...it is not sufficient just to have successful and effective law enforcement Forces. These Forces must also be truly representative of all the peoples of Iraq. For Iraq to succeed in moving forward its law enforcement staff: Police, military and civilian, must put aside their sectarian and ethnic prejudices and work for the best interests of Iraq as a whole. In this regard, I am determined to work with the new Government to keep politics out of defence and security matters. Moreover, law enforcement more than anywhere else needs expertise from all quarters. There are many, including some Police and Military officers from the former regime whose hands are not stained with blood, who are already working against the terrorists and who, as individuals, have an important role to play in the new Iraq. We welcome them with open arms. There is, however, no room for tribal militia or special units in the modern, professional security Forces that we are now building.

There were Shi'ite and Kurdish exceptions, but most Iraqi officers stressed that Iraqi forces had to develop in ways that were both inclusive of all the sectarian and ethnic factions in Iraq, and compatible with the emergence of an Iraqi democracy. The official position was that this meant force development on the basis of the following six principles:

- Democracy
- Civilian control of the military
- Transparency
- Rule of law
- Responsibility and accountability
- Equality and justice among religions

Iraqis also, however, understood how difficult implementing such principles would be – particularly in the middle of a major counterinsurgency campaign, Iraq's many ethnic and sectarian differences, and Iraq's uncertain political process. There was optimism, but not confidence. Many officers also privately added three other principles: unity, anti-corruption, and effectiveness.

Developing Effective Ministries and “Governance”

Iraqi officials at many levels made it clear that Iraq was still in the process of developing an effective Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior, and lacked anything approaching a coordinated national security structure at the top. The development of effective structures to manage police and internal security forces at the governorate and local level was seen as even more of a work in progress. They estimated that it would take most of 2006, to evolve a stable and more comprehensive overall structure for handling the “governance” aspects of Iraq's military, security, and police forces.

Iraqi officials and officers were deeply concerned about the risk that the tensions between Sunni and Shi'ite; and the desire of the new Shi'ite dominated government to “purge”

even officials and officers with low level ties to the Ba'ath and Saddam Hussein's government; could potentially cripple Iraqi force development.¹⁴⁶³ The seriousness of such concerns was confirmed by warnings against such purges by top US officials, and a sudden visit to Baghdad by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to talk to Iraq's new president, Jalal Talibani, Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari, and other top officials.¹⁴⁶⁴

Iraqi officials and officers also felt that the three months of transition it took to form a new government between January 30, 2005 and April-May 2005 was a warning about what would happen in late 2005 and early 2006. The post-election transition had created much the same turbulence and uncertainty as had occurred when ministers had changed with the return to sovereignty in June 2004, although many were pleased with the choices of new ministers and saw them as improvements over their predecessors. They also felt that the effort to create a new constitution, and the transition to yet another new Iraqi government in late 2005 or early 2006 would create further turbulence within each ministry under the best of circumstances.

The three-month delay in forming a new government after the January 30, 2005 election left the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior without fully effective direction during this period, and worried that ethnic and sectarian divisions within the new elected government might create a series of problems indefinitely into the future. The new government to be elected on December 15, 2005 – and take office in January 2006 – might well take three to four months to fully organize and faced a host of major constitutional issues including federalism and redefining many of the roles of the central government. Even Iraqis actively involved in the process of Iraqi politics, governance, and force building made it clear they could not predict how new governments would behave over the course of 2005-2006, or how the constitutional process and the success or failure of efforts at political inclusion will change Iraqi security policy.

Moving Towards Iraqi Control of the Force Development Effort

Iraqi officials and officers acknowledged the limits to their ability to plan and manage Iraq's force development in any orderly way under the CPA and Interim Iraqi Government. As of October 2005, Iraqi officials and officers still operated in Ministries of Defense and Interior that were understaffed, weakly organized, lacking expertise, and lacking adequate staffs of advisers. Iraqi planners had never had a clear basis for force planning that could be tied to a real-world budget, and no way to predict the level and flow of US and other MNSTC-I aid. They also understood that even if the course of the insurgency was predictable, Iraqi military and security developments would have to be very much a matter of improvisation and uncertainty.

At the same time, they stated that cooperation among the Ministries had improved since the January 30th election, and felt this would continue if there were no purges of existing staffs on sectarian and ethnic lines. They noted that communications were somewhat better, and there was more experience in day-to-day coordination. They felt Iraqi government relations with the US and other MNF-I elements were good, and noted that the Iraqi government now had a national security coordination committee that is scheduled to meet twice a week as well as a higher level Joint Coordination Group at the Minister-Deputy Minister level. They also felt that the key ministries involved in national

security were gradually acquiring experienced civilian personnel, adequate facilities and equipment, and adequate communications.

The key uncertainty was what would happen after the December 15, 2005 election. Even those Sunnis taking part in the constitutional process remained dissatisfied as of the fall of 2005, as Shiite and Kurdish representatives to the drafting committee attempted to push through a version of the document that the Sunnis objected to on several grounds. On August 28, 2005, Sunni Arab negotiators, in a joint statement by the 15-member Sunni panel, rejected the Iraqi draft constitution and asked the Arab League and the United Nations to intervene.

Chief among Sunni objections to the document were the issue of a federal Iraq, which Sunnis believe would deprive the West of oil revenues, and exclusionary references to the Baath party, which many Sunnis see as an attempt to codify their political disenfranchisement. Another issue was the document's failure to enshrine Iraq's identity as 'Arab.' However, as of September 14, 2005, Shiites and Kurds agreed to amend the Constitution as it goes to UN print to cite Iraq as a founding member of Arab League, a nod to Sunni demands for national ethnic identity. Federalism clauses, however, were not removed, thus preserving Shiite and Kurds regional options.¹⁴⁶⁵ It was all too clear to the Iraqis involved that the future was "up for grabs."

Developing an Iraqi Force Plan

Iraqi officials stated that the Interim Iraqi Government had developed the outline of a national strategy for the next 5-7 years during the period between June 2004 and the January 2005 election. This strategy was based on the following elements:

- Threat analysis.
- Analysis of the interests of neighboring states, other nations, and the international community and the resulting diplomatic and security requirements.
- The strategy needed to develop armed forces and security forces, and the resulting requirements in terms of force size and equipment.
- Economic and social strategy.

The details of this plan underwent major changes after the new government took office in April 2005. Many of the detailed force goals that the new government worked out with the MNF-1 and MNSTC-I have been described in the previous chapter, and the Iraqi Minister of Defense described the following major challenges in July 2005:¹⁴⁶⁶

- Corruption and growing criminality.
- Foreign insurgents and anti-Iraqi terrorists that are trying to destabilize our country.
- Intelligence, particularly overcoming poor analysis and assessment capability.
- Institutional capacity, including leadership and professional skills.
- Filling out the force structure with Combat Support and Combat Service Support units.
- Strengthening our border security—with a total of 3,631 kilometers of external borders.
- Undertaking the infrastructure security mission.

- The whole issue of logistics and sustainment, particularly in the medium and long-term is a source of major concern.
- Rebuild the Navy, Air Force, and Special Operations Forces
- Continuous Iraqi Armed Forces transition, particularly the issue of the full integration of former National Guard units into the regular Army, the issue of militias...and the whole issue of establishing a sustainable cycle of training and exercises on our own.

Discussions with top level officials and officers made it clear that they were aware of the force development problems described in previous chapters, and they showed a great deal. Iraqi officials and officers were aware that sectarian and ethnic tensions could still tear the government apart, that nothing was stable in terms of current force plans, and that they had little ability to plan in terms of known budgets, and levels of aid. They also realized they remained dependent on the US and MNSTC-I for many aspects of funding and support.

On the one hand, they saw the need for longer term planning, and realized that the new government still had to develop the staffs and capability to make its own force development plans, deal with budget and resource issues, and plan and conduct operations. On the other hand, many felt that dependence on the Coalition, the uncertainties of Iraqi politics, and the changing dynamics of the insurgency placed severe limits on what the government could do before a new government was elected in late 2005 or early 2006.

Iraqi Intelligence

Iraqis understood that their intelligence capabilities were still limited, and they remained dependent on the US and MNF-I except at the local level or in the case of small unit operations in areas where units developed HUMINT contacts of their own.¹⁴⁶⁷ They acknowledged that they were penetrated by hostile agents and that this was likely to continue until the new government acquired far more popular legitimacy and Sunnis and Iraqi Islamists gave it more support – a matter that might well take years.

They acknowledged that current Iraqi counterintelligence capabilities were inadequate, and that vetting was often cursory and uncertain. Like senior US officers in Iraq, they acknowledged that the government and all elements of Iraqi forces were heavily penetrated by supporters of various insurgent groups, and that insurgent HUMINT was still much better than that of either Coalition or Iraqi forces.¹⁴⁶⁸

Iraqi officers and officials did feel, however, that Iraq was beginning to develop effective human intelligence capabilities. These intelligence capabilities were divided into three major groups: Military intelligence in the Ministry of Defense, the Police Intelligence Directorate in the Ministry of the Interior, and the Iraqi National Intelligence Services in the Prime Minister's office.

Military Intelligence was headed by the Director General – Intelligence and Security. This office was being developed as a key priority, and the Minister of Defense acknowledged in July 2005 that it, “is still in its early stages of formation. It needs to better focus its efforts on ‘hot spots’ to achieve best effect. But it also needs secure

nationwide communications and better training and equipment. There is a particular need for short-term improvements in its analytical and assessment staff and, in the longer-term, for bilateral arrangements to enable the exchange of intelligence products with our friends and allies.”¹⁴⁶⁹

Iraq hoped for extensive further training help from the intelligence sections of NATO countries. More broadly, both actionable operational intelligence and counterintelligence were seen as key priorities at every level, and Iraqi officers and officials make it clear that “good intelligence is more important than good weapons.” The MOI had also created a special intelligence section to support “quick intervention” operations and was attempting to improve intelligence and counterintelligence efforts in the field at the level of the security and police services.

There was, however, considerable debate within the new Iraqi government over one aspect of Iraqi intelligence. While military and counterinsurgency intelligence flowed to Iraqi forces from the US and MNF-I, and they received human intelligence at the tactical level in return, Iraqi national intelligence had been formed with the support of the CIA, which attempted to keep its operations compartmented away from the newly elected government.

According to press reports, the CIA refused to hand over control of this part of Iraq’s intelligence service and the head of the Iraqi Intelligence Service that the CIA had chosen at the time of the CPA continued to report to the CIA.

The history of this problem began when the CPA transferred sovereignty in June 2004. According to the press report, what was then the CMAD--the Collection, Management and Analysis Directorate--was split, with roughly half the agents going to the new interior ministry and the rest to work on military intelligence in the defense ministry. Both of these intelligence departments were led by Kurds, with pro-US backgrounds, that now reported to the Iraqi prime minister.

However, a key group of CMAD operatives was recruited into a third Iraqi intelligence agency, which became the secret police force or Mukhabarat. Its Iraqi director was Mohammed Abdullah Shahwani, a Sunni general whose sons had been executed after his involvement in a failed coup against Saddam in the mid-1990s. Reports indicate that Shahwani’s top deputy was a Kurd, and Shi’ites made up only 12 percent of the force.

Moreover, the CIA took the national intelligence archives of the past year and kept them in their headquarters in Baghdad where they could not be accessed by the new government.

CIA officials stated on background that they did so because it had evidence of Iranian attempts to penetrate Iraqi intelligence using the two strongest Shi’ite parties in the new government: SCIRI and Dawa, the party head by Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari. Members of those parties claimed the real reason was that the CIA was preventing them from knowing US intelligence collection on them before the election.

Hadi al Ameri, the commander of the Badr Brigade, formerly the armed wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, echoed such claims. SCIRI, claimed that Iraqi intelligence service “is not working for the Iraqi government - it’s working for

the CIA...I prefer to call it the American Intelligence of Iraq, not the Iraqi Intelligence Service...If they insist on keeping it to themselves, we'll have to form another one."

Laith Kubba, Jafari's adviser and spokesman, was reported as saying that the prime minister wanted to take on a bigger role in anti-terrorism efforts, but was impaired by the lack of a reliable, skilled Iraqi police force and military:

"The prime minister is very clear in his philosophy on governmental sovereignty and the will of the Iraqi people," Kubba said. "He knows all these institutions must be brought under Iraqi law and the Iraqi parliament ... But he's a realist and he is also aware that Iraq today faces a huge challenge with these attacks ... In the interim period, he has to make do with whatever he has at his disposal."

These press reports seem to be generally accurate and illustrated both the continuing problems Iraqis have with ethnic and sectarian divisions and the inevitable tensions between a truly sovereign Iraqi government and the US or any other power operating on its soil.

Manpower Issues Affecting Force Development

In spite of calls for further purges by some Shi'ite groups, Iraq officers and officials felt that the Ministry of Defense and armed forces were now open to all except hardliners and extremists. Although there were still serious problems with ethnic or sectarian differences, particularly in the security forces and police forces, many Iraqi officers and officials felt that that a deliberate effort should continue to be made to create a "national force" that included Shi'ites, Sunnis, Kurds, and other minorities. They also stated that De-Ba'athification should not be applied in ways that prevented the recruitment of qualified Sunni officers and other ranks, or men from military and other forces who were not directly involved in the repressive and violent acts of Saddam Hussein's regime.

The Shi'ites and Kurdish officers who commented on Iraqi force developments generally accepted the fact ex-Ba'athist officers and NCOs should play a critical role in every branch of the military, security, and police services; that many should be Sunni, and that the MoD and MoI had to recruit as many experienced personnel as possible which were also essential to creating effective Iraqi forces on anything approaching a timely basis. Only a few Shi'ites and Kurds talked about revenge or taking new steps to exclude Sunnis¹⁴⁷⁰

Sunni officers were generally more worried about the future, and purges of the armed forces and government. Few, however, felt this would halt progress, or divide the country. Many felt that more secular and more national governments and political parties were needed, but serving Sunni officers and officials were not pessimistic.

At the same time, Iraqis made it clear that no one really knew what the mix of different sects and ethnic groups existed in each force element, and how much of the evolving Iraqi force had been truly "national" in the sense of mixing such groups. The goal seems to consistently have been to limit the creation of tribal, sectarian, and ethnic forces in the regular military and elite security forces, but many units still became largely ethnic, particularly in the police and National Guard.

Iraqi officers and officials understood that they still had to deal with many other serious problems in the composition of some existing forces. Recruiting and composition of National Guard and police units had been local in the past, sometimes with little vetting other than the support of some local chief or political figure. This had often led to politically appointed leaders with little real capability and forces lacking the will, physical condition and/or literacy to be effective.

Iraqi officials and officers clearly wanted this situation to change, and noted that Iraq's various forces are being purged of low grade and suspect manpower, which is being retired or paid to leave. This process was still underway, however, and Iraqis noted that there was still a strong tendency to politicize senior appointments and to fail to remove incompetent and corrupt officials and officers for political reasons or because of family and ethnic ties.

Some Iraqi officers pointed out that force development had constantly been affected by the lack of security and Iraq's lack of economic development. One noted that personnel from other areas did not know the ground and local condition, stood out in Iraq's highly localized society, and were vulnerable for this reason. At the same time, local personnel had been subject to pressure or attacks on their families from local insurgents who almost immediately learned their functions and either attacked them or sought to use them for intelligence and infiltration. The fact that many Iraqis had been driven to volunteer out of economic pressure and desperation often produced recruits with little real motive to fight.

Pay and leave presented additional problems. Bases and casernes generally did not provide family housing, and this left families vulnerable. Many felt Iraqi personnel had to visit their families for social reasons and provide their pay in cash, and this meant that a high percentage of forces were constantly on leave. They were also worried that recruits and actives that go on leave have been vulnerable to pressure and intimidation. The lack of protected vehicles, uncertain discipline in taking leave, and a lack of experience made new volunteers especially vulnerable.

One Iraqi official noted that even though he was senior enough so that his family could be housed safely in a government area, he had reservations about what would happen to the rest of his extended family. He left his family in place, and concealed his duties from everyone in his hometown except family members and close friends.

Iraqi officials and officers did, however, seem to feel that many of these conditions would be temporary, and such threats would ease in late 2005 and during 2006. Like US officers, they noted the value of "critical mass:" As more and more trained and equipped Iraqi forces come on line, they felt the government would be able to establish a steadily better structure for force protection and a steadily better overall climate of security.

Many also felt that if currently hostile Iraqi Sunnis could be included in the government, the remaining native insurgents and all outside insurgents would become more isolated, and the areas in which they can operate would become steadily more limited. In short, they are optimistic enough to feel that time was on their side, and the insurgents will be much less effective in attacking Iraqi forces once they reach the numbers, quality, and experience planned for late 2005 and 2006.

Creating an Effective Iraqi Training Structure

Iraqi officers and officials often said that they were proud of what had been accomplished to date, but acknowledged that training, equipment, and creating combat ready forces remained serious problems that would take years to fully solve. In interviews early in 2005, they cited the fact that serious training efforts are “only 10 months old,” and noted that even when trainees complete their training, they still need leadership, experience, unit cohesion, and the support of experienced personnel.

These conditions were only beginning to exist in the various Iraqi forces in late-2005. Iraqi officers also understood that current training periods were generally too short. Those involved in Iraqi force development were also far less likely to praise the competence of the men trained under Saddam’s regime than Iraqis with no practical experience. They had seen how serious the training problem really was even with Iraqis that had had years of service under the Ba’ath regime.

The Minister of Defense noted some of these points in a formal speech in July 2005:¹⁴⁷¹

In training and equipping Battalions to meet the imperative of counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism operations, we must not forget the need to build Armed Forces that can, in the long run, sustain themselves. This means that we have to start to turn our attention to a whole range of issues from institution building, particularly leadership and command, to specialist skills such as personnel, finance, acquisition and contracting.

... The current training and equipment plan for our Armed Forces addresses only our short-term needs. As part of the longer-term objective to build a sustainable Force that meets the whole of the Defence requirement there is a need for an on-going program of continuous training and exercises. The Staff College at Al-Rustamayah will, with NATO’s much appreciated support, provide a superb environment for young Officers to learn their trade. It will serve our needs for many years to come. There is, however, a similar need with regard to a continuous program of all-arms training for soldiers and NCOs and, in due course, for more advanced training and for an annual program of exercises (including joint and combined exercises

Iraqi officials and officers noted, however, that Iraq did not have time to train its military, security, and police forces under ideal conditions in wartime, and that in-unit training could be more useful in any case. They felt that basic training was useful largely in instilling discipline and fundamentals, but that Iraqi military, security, and police forces in the field were constantly being forced to adapt to changes in insurgent and criminal behavior and found that this required them to “learn and relearn” from field experience and to meet real-world local conditions.

One officer commented that “our tactical conditions and training need to change constantly in terms of detailed requirements, sometimes in ways that mean training has to be revised on a monthly basis. One real problem that we all have is that much of our training – under Saddam and now – is for fighting conventional forces. We are only gradually developing effective training for counterterrorism and counterinsurgency.”

Iraqi recognition of the need for experienced cadres of leaders was a key reason Iraqi officers generally welcomed having experienced US and MNSTC-I officers embedded in new Iraqi units until such units developed the leadership and experience to act on their own (Iraqi officers did, however, express concern that US officers and personnel who

lack area skills and experience in working with Iraqis are often impatient and over-demanding, and tend to bully the Iraqis they are supposed to inspire and train). A key part of Camp Pendleton Marines' preparation for their third tour in Iraq since March 2003 was training teams that would be embedded with the emerging Iraqi units. As of November 2005, they were preparing 45 teams, each with 10 Marines and a Navy hospital corpsman, which were to be responsible to an Iraqi army battalion or similar-size unit trying to stem the flow of insurgents, money and weapons from Syria and Jordan.¹⁴⁷²

In December 2005, Lt. Col. Reggie Allen, a US Army planner, said that 230 teams of US soldiers – 30-40 percent more than the previous year – were now teaching Iraqi units. The Pentagon also planned to rotate more than half of the 3,500-soldier 1st Infantry Division at Fort Riley, Kansas into those teaching teams instead of combat roles.¹⁴⁷³

Facilities and equipment were seen as continuing problems, although more so by the officers and officials in the forces under the Ministry of the Interior. Effective forces require training, leadership, and unit cohesion, but they also require adequate equipment, secure facilities, and facilities in the right areas. Improvements were taking place in the three latter areas, but Iraqis felt such progress lagged badly behind requirements, and cautioned that all of the elements of force quality had to be brought into balance for each element of the military, security, and police services training efforts to be effective.

At the same time, Iraqi officials believed that real progress had been made in creating the kind of training organization and facilities that Iraqis needed. They felt the facilities for effective basic training were now in place, and that training time, and training in more advanced skills, could be expanded as force levels became more adequate and the immediate demand for personnel was less critical.

Iraqi officers pointed out that academies for more advanced training existed at the Joint Headquarters level. Past academies in Irbil and Sulaymania were back on line and had been modernized, and a new academy in Baghdad was coming on line. A former-regime training center in Tikrit had been reopened, initially with MNSTC-I support, but then with Iraqi training cadres. Iraq was beginning to create the kind of high-level training facilities it needed at the Ministry level, and planned to create a staff college, war college, and center for National Security Studies. Much depended, however, on getting MNSTC-I, NATO countries', and other outside support. "It will be at least several years before we have the skills to take over advanced training on our own."

Iraqi officers and officials were not in a rush to eliminate all outside training and advisors – in fact they welcomed most offers of training from new countries and most signs of outside support. They welcomed the help they have had from Egypt, the UAE, and Jordan in addition to the MNSTC-I countries, and hoped for new training contributions from Germany, Italy, Norway, and France. MSTC-I reported, "NATO provides a valuable function in screening (with their Iraqi counterparts) offers of training and donations of equipment. Some training offers have been refused, primarily for political reasons."

They felt such multinational contributions were highly useful – in spite of the potential problems in different training methods and interoperability. They did, however, recognize

the need for standardization and coordination of training efforts over time, and wanted to take over the overall leadership and organization of training as soon as possible.

While Iraqis did not use the term as such, they also noted that as Iraqi forces expanded to reach significant levels of capability, they would acquire the “critical mass” necessary to provide a far more effective overall training and leadership structure, less pressure and more time for training, and be able to take over far more of the mission from the US and MNSTC-I. Iraqi officials and officers hoped for such “full capability” in 2006, and President Talibani talked about 2007 early in his time in office, but Iraqis acknowledge they will need MNSTC-I aid and support in training, equipment, and other areas through 2010.

The Iraqi View of Force Development

Iraqi officials and officers discussed Iraqi force developments in general terms and did not provide detailed numbers or force descriptions. They saw Iraqi forces as in a constant state of development. They felt that it is unfair to judge such forces and their progress at this time, given the history of problems in Iraqi force development, but that many past problems were being rapidly overcome and most of the remaining problems will be overcome during the course of the coming year.

They questioned the value of the search in the US for the exact total manpower in “effective” Iraqi forces, and for exactly how many Iraqi forces were properly trained and equipped and could engage the insurgents. They pointed out that no Iraqi forces as yet had all of the strength in terms of armor, firepower, and support necessary to engage in main force combat without US support. They pointed out that Iraqi forces differed sharply in capability not only by force element, but also in terms of experience, capability, and leadership at the battalion level within each different branch of the Iraqi military, security, and police forces.

At the same time, they pointed out that virtually every established element of the military, security, and police forces could already perform some useful function in terms of improving security, although often in ways subject to very sharp limits. They felt that the situation was improving steadily as new and better trained/equipped Iraqi forces come on line; as Iraqi forces become better organized and manpower is better selected, and as Iraqi officers and other ranks gain experience. From their perspective, the issue was not whether the glass is two-thirds empty or one-third full, it was how rapidly it is filling.

They also pointed out that fully effective Iraqi forces with enough armor and/or counterinsurgency equipment to operate offensively against insurgent forces without extensive MNSTC-I support were just coming on line. As one Iraqi put it, “What do you want to count and what tasks do you want to judge it by? Why do you want to count what we are rather than what we are becoming?”

Iraqi officials and officers felt that they could not form stable force plans at this point in time. They felt that their force goals had to be in flux, and that equipment, deployment, and facility plans were almost certain to change. They understood the volatility of the Iraqi political climate, as well as the inability to predict their budgets and the level of MNSTC-I aid.

Iraqis also believed that some of the major challenges they faced at the Ministry, service, and unit level were to create an effective and cohesive C⁴I system (command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence); to create an effective intelligence system that could properly be integrated into Iraq's developing command, control, communications, and computer capabilities; and to provide the combat, service, and logistic support necessary to allow Iraqi forces to operate as full independent forces.

The Army

Iraqis felt that the Iraqi Army had advanced to the point where the Chief of Staff's office had an operating formal structure with Deputy Chiefs of Staff for Operations, Administration, and Training. Iraqi officers saw a number of major challenges in the development of the Army. One was to give it the training and equipment necessary to operate as a fully independent force and eventually replace MNF-I forces. A second was the need to redeploy Army units away from casernes and locations chosen for MNF-I convenience and security so the Iraqi armed forces can meet Iraqi government priorities and needs. The third was to create a more stable plan for force expansion, and one that takes into account the problems created by the merger of the Army and National Guard.

They also noted that the Ministry of Defense intended to create the command, control, communications, and combat support, and service support forces to allow Iraqi military forces to operate as fully independent forces. This means creating the following additional forces over the coming 18 months:

- Three division-level signal companies.
- 10 engineer companies.
- 3 intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance companies.
- 10 military police companies.
- 5 Motor Transport Regiments.
- Support Company for each battalion (Administration, Maintenance, Stores & Supplies, and Medical).

Strategic Infrastructure Battalions

In early 2005, the Iraqi Transitional Government directed the formation of four Strategic Infrastructure Battalions (SIBs) to protect critical oil pipelines and eventually to protect parallel electrical transmission lines. During the summer and fall of 2005, the SIBs were integrated into the Ministry of Defense (MOD) force generation plan and built on the standard Table of Organization and Equipment for an Iraqi infantry battalion. Training of these battalions utilizes a "train the trainer" model: Iraqi instructors are first trained; these instructors are then responsible for training of their individual companies.

The first four SIBs were manned and set to complete unit training in mid-October. MNSTC-I was providing mission-essential equipment to the SIBs, such as AK-47s, vehicles, Individual Body Armor, helmets and uniforms. The Iraqi government had begun fielding up to seven more SIBs as of September 2005, bringing the total authorized to eleven with a possible end-state total of 17 or more SIBs, but they are minimally

equipped and untrained. MNSTC-I has agreed to match MOD-provided funding up to \$35 million to fund start-up costs for the first four SIBs. Training for all SIBs will follow the same model. The SIBs are being assessed using the Transition Readiness Assessment system.

The new battalions were meant to offset a system of asset protection in which the ministries that own critical infrastructure are responsible for providing security for their facilities. As of the fall of 2005, the ministries were using a mix of their own ministerial guard forces and contracts with local tribal forces to carry out this function. Coalition forces provided security in some instances as well.

Merging the National Guard into the Army

Iraqis understood that merging the National Guard into the Army in early 2005 had presented serious problems. The National Guard was the successor to a low-grade force called the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC), which was recruited and vetted largely on a local level for glorified security guard duty. Training and equipment was limited; leadership often owed more to politics and regional needs than effectiveness, and much of the Guard's manpower lacked the necessary physical condition, education, and loyalty.

They noted that the National Guard had had six divisions of three brigades each, with three battalions of 3-4 companies each – most only had light infantry weapons. There were no mortars, though the Guard was authorized to maintain 32 heavy machine guns per battalion, an increase in authorization by 24 guns in 24. However, it is still not clear how many heavy machine guns are actually in the field. This made the Guard a large force on paper, but most of which had serious – if not crippling -- force quality problems if it had to be used in offensive operations.

Iraqis commented that the ICDC/Guard was created on the basis that each of the five MNC-I commands or regions essentially created a separate force, largely on the basis of recruiting by local leaders. Each MNC-I originally created National Guard companies at the MNC-I brigade level without any headquarters, and with very limited basic training. This produced rapid force expansion but without force quality.

Iraqis noted, however, that the National Guard was slowly being purged of its low quality leadership and manpower – which has been retired or paid to leave. Changes had also begun to take place in equipment, selection, training, and organization. It was initially organized largely at the company level. This was later expanded to battalions that became very large, sometimes reaching 1,000 men; A size too large to be effective.

Iraqis understood that the Guard would need major reorganization, more training, and better equipment. Iraqi officers could not, however, provide a clear plan for what the Guard would become as it is merged with the Army. Nevertheless, as one Iraqi Army officer put it, even the weakest Guard units could still be used for a wide range of security duties like manning checkpoints and providing area security in low to medium threat areas until their manning, equipment, and training improved.

The Air Force

Two years after the war ended, Iraq was just beginning to develop a new air force, and Iraqis were fully aware of the limits to its effectiveness. The Minister of Defense noted in July that, “The Iraqi Air Force is woefully inadequate to support a highly mobile modern army. There is an urgent need for (i) helicopter lift capability to enable rapid ground force deployment in support of the counter-terrorism mission, (ii) medium transport flight, including for safe transport of VIPs, senior officers, and journalists across Iraq, (iii) airborne reconnaissance and surveillance capability to support a range of missions including counterinsurgency, border security, and infrastructure security, and (iv) specialist staff training.”¹⁴⁷⁴

He also warned that, “The maintenance and long-term sustainment costs of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft can be very substantial and must form a part of any donation or (in the longer-term) assisted purchase if we are to make effective use of such capability. There is a real danger that inappropriate donations will either bankrupt the Ministry of Defense, or sit unused.”

The Air Forces did, however, now have a Major General in Command and a functioning headquarters and staff. It is acquiring C-130s for “strategic mobility,” and helicopters for transport, support, reconnaissance, and combat support missions. Helicopter gunships will be its initial combat weapon. It does not yet have clear force plans or plans to acquire modern fixed-wing combat aircraft.

Ministry of the Interior Forces

In general, Ministry of Interior officials and officers privately expressed much the same concerns about the quality of the Iraqi security forces and police discussed in previous chapters. While things were improving, they were worried about the impact of the militias, and ethnic and sectarian rivalries in Iraqi forces.

they felt locally recruited police still had low overall recruiting and training standards, was often corrupt, and could do little more than passively man police stations and carry out minimal police duties in relatively secure areas. The regular police were seen as slowly improving in such areas, but generally ineffective in dealing with levels of crime that are a major security problem in the areas where insurgents have little capability and impact. They acknowledged that local and sectarian or ethnic militias were often the de facto police in high crime areas.

The deepest divisions occurred between Iraqi Sh’ite and Kurdish officers and officials, and Arab Sunnis. Arab Sunnis expressed the growing concern and fears discussed in previous chapters.

Iraqi Sh’ite and Kurdish officers and officials generally claimed that that the Ministry of the Interior had created elite units that were carefully selected and trained, mobile, had adequate communications, and were working directly under the Ministry of the Interior. They claimed such forces had elements in Baghdad and every governorate by the spring of 2005. They felt the Iraqi Special Police Commandos, Public Order Battalions, Police Mechanized Brigade and Emergency Response Unit were all emerging as effective

paramilitary units, with the training, leadership, and equipment to provide security in medium to high threat areas. Iraqi traffic, immigration, and civil defense police were also felt to be getting better selection, leadership, training, and equipment.

Opinions were divided about the Border Police. Some felt they were slowly improving and now had better facilities, protection, and equipment. Other Iraqis felt they were still very weak and prone to desert or become inactive under limited pressure, and that it would be at least several years before the force could correct its leadership, selection, training, and equipment problems.

Iraqis Do not See the Past as the Defining Prologue to the Future

In spite of all the problems and uncertainties they faced, Iraqi officials and officers remained relatively optimistic about the future. Iraqi officials and officers felt that progress is now certain to be made if the new Iraqi government shows suitable leadership, cohesion, and inclusiveness, and did not purge the developing Iraqi force structure.

All wanted Iraq to take over planning and management of the Iraqi force development effort as soon as possible, but they exhibited little belief in the kind of conspiracy theories that blamed the US and MNSTC-I for deliberately keeping Iraqi forces weak and seeking a permanent occupation. If anything, Iraqi officials and officers were more worried that the US and MNF-I might not provide the continuing support they need. While some felt Iraqi forces might be able to largely stand on their own against the insurgents by the end of 2006, they also felt that they would still need support from US armor, artillery, air, special forces, and intelligence. Some felt that a major US and MNSTC-I advisory, training, equipment, and aid effort will be needed through 2010.

Iraqi officials and officers had considerable confidence in the US, British, and other MNSTC-I officers involved in helping Iraq to train and organize Iraqi forces. Iraqi officials and officers felt that most of the MNF-I and MNSTC-I teams they work with did have Iraqi interests at heart, and they felt the training effort was getting steadily better. None expected to get Western standards of advanced equipment and technology versus the kind of equipment better suited to Iraq. They also welcomed the recommendation of the Luck mission to insert US officers and NCOs into Iraqi units to provide leadership and unit cohesion and combat training as an essential next step in creating a transition to effective and independent Iraqi forces.

This does not mean that Iraqi officials and officers did not feel that changes were needed in the current MNF-I and MNSTC-I plans for Iraqi force development. There were serious criticisms of the MNF-I MNSTC-I effort. Iraqis were particularly critical at the level of equipment they are getting and do see Iraqis as being treated by a “dual standard” that left Iraqi forces much more vulnerable than US and MNF-I forces.

Several saw the following seven changes as necessary:

- First, developing and implementing plans to create Iraqi forces more quickly that are equipped and deployed to stand on their own.

- Second, developing common plans with the US and MNSTC-I to phase down the role of MNF-I forces according to common criteria and in ways where both sides have the same expectations, allowing Iraqis to predict the future level of MNSTC-I aid and remaining capability.
- Third, developing mid-term plans to create forces with enough support and heavy land and air weapons to eventually replace all MNF-I forces other than those remaining in an advisory and training role.
- Fourth, taking over the planning and command and control of operations at the local, then provincial, and then national level.
- Fifth, taking over the planning and management of the way in which aid funds and assistance were used so that Iraqis could integrate the aid and advisory effort into the overall operations of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior, and Iraqi national budget.
- Sixth, shifting the planning and management of the overall training effort into Iraqi hands, and relying on Iraqi trainers and Iraqi-developed course plans.
- Seventh, taking over the planning and management of the procurement and facility development effort, and having the MNF-I and MNSTC-I respond to Iraqi plans, rather than develop plans for Iraq.

Iraqis also noted that some of US and MNF-I combat forces they worked with had inadequate training for working with foreign forces. They felt some of their advisors rotated too quickly to acquire and exploit the expertise they need to work with Iraqis in the field, lacked adequate indoctrination into the current strengths and weaknesses of Iraqi forces, and sometimes treated them unfairly and not as partners -- and as partners who had to take over the lead role as soon as possible.¹⁴⁷⁵

Conclusions

Iraqi force development faced the challenge of an insurgency that continued to show it could strike at the sectarian and ethnic fault lines in Iraq, and could exploit the lack of an effective Iraqi government and leadership to push the country towards civil war. At the same time, sectarian and ethnic militias and security forces became a steadily more serious problem, rivaling the insurgency as a threat to Iraqi security.

During these developments, the Iraqi regular military forces under the Ministry of Defense steadily expanded in size and capability, and expanded their military role. They remained largely unified and “national” in character. The lack of an Iraqi government did, however, allow a continuing drift in setting clear Iraqi force goals, and in creating plans that would create forces that could both sustain themselves in combat and eventually acquire enough major weapons and combat equipment to deter foreign threats and defend the country.

The situation was far more difficult in the case of the forces under the Ministry of Interior, including the special security units and police. Some elements of these forces became tied to Shi’ite militias, attacks on Sunnis, and other abuses. This forced the reorganization of all of the forces under the MOI, and it is still unclear how successful this reorganization will be.

MNF-I and the Iraqi government seem to be committed to giving Iraq effective internal and security police forces that will serve the nation, not given sects and ethnic groups.

There has been no in-depth reporting about progress in this effort, and it faces major challenges in the form of militias, police, and other security forces that are effectively under the control of regional or local leaders, most with ties to given sects and factions.

The “Year of the Police” that MNF-I and a number of Iraqi leaders called for in late 2005 has to some extent been delayed by political instability. The broader issue affecting Iraqi progress, however, is that Iraqi force development can only succeed if Iraqi political leaders can create effective and lasting political compromises that bring Arab Shi’ite, Arab Sunni, Kurd, and other Iraqi minorities together in a coalition government and create the political forces necessary to engender political unity.

Equally important, Iraq must make progress in two other critical areas that are not directly related to Iraqi force development, but are critical to giving it meaning. One is to show that the Iraqi government can establish a lasting presence throughout Iraq, provide government services, and support its security efforts to deal with the insurgency with equal efforts to deal with militias, private and local security forces, and crime. One key to such success is to deploy both effective police forces and a working criminal justice system.

The second factor is that the government must be able to create a climate where economic progress can and does take place, where real jobs are created, where investment is made and new businesses actually start to operate, and where the government maintains effective services and infrastructure.

Without these steps, the new government will lose momentum and credibility, the country will drift back into increasing sectarian and ethnic violence, Iraqi forces will increasingly divide along sectarian and ethnic lines, and the nation may well devolve into civil conflict or sectarian and ethnic “federalism.”

Finally, the creation of a full Iraqi government raises two other issues. One is the future status of US and Coalition forces relative to Iraq forces in terms of command, status of forces arrangements, and operational planning. The second is the need for far more concrete plans to create Iraqi forces balanced and heavy enough to allow the departure of most MNF-I forces by some period in 2008, or as soon as feasible.

XV. What the US and Coalition Can Do To Sustain the Iraqi Force Development Effort and Help Iraq Building Its Future

There is no easy conclusion to this analysis of Iraqi force development, and the situation is very much in flux. Iraq is making progress in creating effective forces and it has strong MNF-I and MNSTC-I support. The Coalition continues to strengthen such efforts, and groups like NATO are making important new contributions. The fact remains, however, that Iraq, the US, and other members of the Coalition, face serious challenges in overcoming the legacy of past neglect and failure.

The insurgency remains is a major threat, and one that presents a serious challenge to the effort to create effective Iraqi forces. Iraq’s political process could fail and lead to intense

sectarian conflict between Iraqi Arab Shi'ite and Iraqi Arab Sunni. It faces a serious threat from outside Sunni Islamists, and remains divided between Arab, Kurd, and other minorities. There is a real risk that such tensions and clashes can escalate to a serious civil war.

Political, economic, and social progress present equally important challenges. Iraq is at best “a work in progress,” and it is unclear when, if ever, it can meet the five tests of “victory” outlined at the beginning of this analysis:

- Establishing a pluralistic Iraqi government capable of both governing and providing security to the people of Iraq, and finding a new balance of political power acceptable to Arab Shi'ite, Arab Sunni, the Kurds, Turcomans, and other minorities. This means effective governance at the local, regional, and national level.
- Creating effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces capable of bringing security to the entire country, of eventually replacing all Coalition forces, and capable of conducting effective operations while winning the support of the vast majority of the Iraqi people.
- Providing effective aid, debt and reparations relief, and Iraqi economic reform efforts that – coupled with effective security – move the nation onto the path to stable economic development where wealth and economic growth are distributed in ways that meet the needs of all of Iraq's people.
- Developing a new national consensus that legitimizes Iraq's post Saddam government and social structure, and that can find a “golden mean” between the different goals and expectations of its different ethnic and religious elements.
- Finding a new balance of relationships with Iraq's neighbors that will ensure that they do not threaten Iraq, or interfere in its affairs, while making it clear that Iraq no longer poses a threat to any neighboring state.

Defining “Victory” and “Defeat”

This analysis documents positive trends, but also shows that Iraq, the US and its allies, and the world can “lose” the struggle in Iraq as well as win it. Such a defeat is not *probable*, but it is *possible*. There is no one variable that could produce such a “defeat,” and there is no agreed definition of what “victory” or “defeat” mean. The previous chapters have shown, however, that a “defeat” could take the following forms: A war of attrition whose cost and casualties eventually meant the Bush Administration lost the public and Congressional support necessary to go on fighting.

- The open failure of US efforts to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces and any ability to phase down the US and MNF presence at an acceptable rate.
- A large-scale Iraqi civil war -- where some combination of Arab Sunni versus Arab Shi'ite, Arab versus Kurd, secularist versus theocrat, or struggle for authoritarian rule made continuing the Coalition presence purposeless or untenable.
- The collapse of effective Iraqi governance because of divisions between Shi'ite, Sunni, and Kurd.
- The creation of a religious state without the pluralism and tolerance critical to a US definition of victory.
- The creation of open or de facto divisions in Iraq that allied the Iraqi Shiites with Iran and created the equivalent of a Shi'ite crescent divided from the Sunni part of the Arab and Islamic world.

- The continued failure of US aid and Iraqi economic development to meet the needs and expectations of the people and the destabilizing impact of long-term, large-scale unemployment.
- The failure to meet popular expectations regarding personal security, reductions in crime, availability of key services like water and electricity, and education and medical care.
- Demands by an Iraqi government that US forces leave on less than friendly terms.
- Domestic US political conditions that lead to the enforcement of some “exit strategy” that made the US leave before a stable Iraq can be created.
- The isolation of the US from its regional and other allies, most remaining members of the Coalition and the support or tolerance of the UN.

The variables in this list are interactive and can combine in a wide range of ways to produce different real-world scenarios for “defeat.” Furthermore, the cases on this list are simply the key candidates; there are many more scenarios that might possibly occur.

“Winning” is equally hard to define. Iraq will be unstable for at least the next 5-10 years, and what appears to be “victory” could become a “defeat” if later political and economic upheavals created a hostile regime, chaotic country, or state with a theocratic or strong man regime so far from democracy that it made our current fight futile. The most likely “best case” outcome is now the kind of “victory” that produces an unstable, partially dependent state, with a unified and pluralistic regime but one that is scarcely an American client.

In any case, Iraq, the Coalition, and friendly outside states can only succeed if they recognize that the level of progress required to produce any meaningful definition of “success” or “victory” in all of the necessary areas will be a matter of years, if not a decade. No matter how impatient policymakers may be, history still takes time. It is certain that there will be reversals, even if the ultimate result is success.

The Broader Context of Success: A Nation for Iraqis and by Iraqis

Nation building in Iraq involves a mix of requirements and risks that progress in each area and which is interactive with progress in the others. This has particular importance for an assessment of Iraqi military, security, and police forces. Even the most effective defeat of terrorists, insurgents, and large-scale criminal violence cannot be a substitute for pluralist government, a new national consensus, economic progress and development, and stable foreign relations. At the same time, no combination of successes in these other areas of progress will be adequate without security. Indeed, security is the precondition for most other forms of success.

No analysis of Iraqi force developments can ignore the fact that there is a long list of political, military, and economic uncertainties beyond the process of Iraqi force development that will shape the outcome of the insurgency and the success of the force building effort. Iraqi internal politics are a major uncertainty, and it is too soon to predict how well Iraqi forces can or cannot supplement and eventually replace Coalition forces. The nation building aspects of the “war after the war” remain a struggle in progress, and

there still is no way to know whether the light at the end of the tunnel is daylight or an oncoming train.

Victory or defeat will ultimately be determined by the Iraqi political process and has become an Iraqi responsibility. Counterterrorism and counterinsurgency require political and economic, as well as military, solutions. At least as much depends on Iraqi capability to build on the foundation provided by outside aid, and to create the right kind of political and economic context for military success. Serious problems have emerged from the inability of the Iraqi Government to follow up on US and Iraqi military and security efforts and to establish effective governance at both the central government level and in the field.

Iraqis must work out a form of power sharing that can include Arab Shi'ite, Arab Sunni, Kurds, Turcomans, and Iraq's smaller minorities. The politics of ethnic and sectarian tension and rivalry cannot be resolved by force in any stable or lasting way. Only the Iraqis can bridge the gaps between Sunni and Shi'ite, Arab and Kurd, and various Shi'ite factions. Only Iraqis can find the proper way of sharing the nation's oil wealth, and find the right balance between a secular and religious state.

Economic progress is now slow, unemployment is extremely high, and this affects security as well. Dollars can have as much impact on this kind of struggle as bullets. The reprogramming of US aid to serve military and security interests in 2004 has made a vital start, but it is still unclear that a broader plan exists to recast the US economic aid effort to achieve the security and stability that is a critical precondition to longer term aid efforts. As was noted in Chapter III, the increase in the insurgency raised the security costs of USAID funded aid projects from 4.2 percent of the total cost from March 2003 to February 2004, to 22 percent during the final nine months of 2004, and the total "security surcharge reached 50 percent in some areas by April 2005.¹⁴⁷⁶

Iraqi Sovereignty Means Iraqi Responsibility

Much of the burden of success will, and must, fall on the new Iraqi government. Many key challenges are already clearly the province of Iraqis and the new Iraqi government. It is the Iraqis who must now come to grips with the following broad challenges in nation-building:

- Deal with the transition to yet another new government between late 2005 and mid-2006, with possibly new sets of Ministers of Defense and Interior, plus different political leaderships and goals.
- Adapt to any new laws, mandates, federalism, and sharing of national revenue growing out of the creation of a new constitution.
- Cope with ethnic and religious tensions.
- Find ways to integrate militia elements into the regular forces/police forces, and have the rest go back to civilian life; implement the now largely abandoned CPA plan.
- Find some way to get stable and predictable budgets and levels of aid; negotiate at least a predictable level of medium-term aid.

- Create fully effective ministries, limit corruption, and purge low quality and passive leaders, officials, and officers.

Iraqi Responsibility for Taking Over the Security Mission

Outside powers can only do so much. Iraqi ability to create an inclusive political structure, find an Iraqi solution to pluralism and “federalism,” and establish effective governance is now up to the Iraqis. The most the US, other nations, the UN, and the international community can do is to provide aid and advice. At the same time, the ability of Iraqi forces to replace US and other Coalition forces will be an increasing test of the perceived legitimacy of the Iraqi government.

At the same time, day-to-day security and governance are essential to survival. Accordingly, the ability and willingness of Iraqi forces to increasingly stand on their own in meeting these latter challenges is a *sine qua non* for success in nation building.

Iraqis must take over responsibility for meeting the following challenges in the security dimension:

- Cope with aggressive insurgent and extremist attacks, and efforts to split Arab Sunni, Arab Shi’ite, Kurds, and other minorities.
- Implement a force development plan for the armed forces and manage the integration of the Army and National Guard.
- Create effective intelligence, counterintelligence, and C⁴I capabilities.
- Develop and implement plans to acquire more adequate equipment, force protection, and facilities.
- Begin a systematic transition to forces that can operate without MNSTC-I support.
- Redeploy Iraqi forces to meet Iraqi, rather than MNF, needs.
- Restructure, train/retrain, and purge the police forces to make them both effective crime fighters and an aid in counterinsurgency and counter terrorism.

Creating Effective Iraqi Military, Security, and Police Forces

Even if Iraq can deal with all of its other problems, there is no promise that efforts to create effective Iraqi forces will succeed. Serious problems remain in every aspect of the Iraqi force development program, and the effort to create effective Iraqi forces may well fail -- particularly *if* Iraq’s Sunnis cannot be integrated successfully into its government, economy, and forces; *if* major friction takes place between Shi’ite and Kurd; or *if* the Shi’ites should divide and armed factions like Sadr’s militia again become active.

Shi’ite splits are possible, as are sectarian and ethnic splits. Basra was effectively taken over by a local government after the January 30, 2005 election that was much more of a Shi’ite fundamentalist government than the mainstream of al Dawa or SCIRI. The local police were intimidated or pushed aside by such elements in May, and Shi’ite militia joined the police and took over. While some of those accused of being involved -- such as police Chief Lt. Colonel Salam Badran --were affiliated with SCIRI in the past, most such “Islamists” seem more fundamentalist than SCIRI’s leadership. There have been reports of threats, beatings, and killings affecting liquor stores, male doctors who treat

women, and even barbers cutting hair in “non-Islamic” ways. Individuals in plain clothes have also made threats and put pressure on local businesses. Even if such cases do not divide Iraq’s Arab Shi’ites – and serious issues do exist about how “Islamic” the future government should be in Shi’ite terms and who should rule – they may well cause even greater fear among Sunnis and increase the risk of civil conflict.¹⁴⁷⁷

Divisions among Shi’ite groups could put new burdens on Iraq’s forces, and/or potentially paralyze or divide key elements of the government. It is not clear that Sadr and other Shi’ite elements will hold together, or that other splits will not occur during 2005. Iraq must deal with forging and approving a constitution and with moving towards general elections at the end of the year without any clear picture of what political leaders, political parties, and power sharing arrangements will emerge in the process.

The risk also exists that the Kurds and Shi’ites might split in ways that could lead to civil conflict or that Shi’ite politics may begin to react far more violently to Sunni insurgent bombings and attacks, and striking back at the Sunnis rather than seeking to include them. Shi’ite political leaders have generally been careful to avoid this so far, but the preaching in mosques has become more polarized, and popular tension is growing. Attacks like the bombings in Karbala and Najaf on December 20, 2004 have been followed up by many similar anti-Shi’ite attacks since the elections. At least some Sunni Arab and Islamist extremist insurgents are certain to continue to try to provoke sectarian Sunni versus Shi’ite rift using any means possible, no matter how bloody and violent.

Yet, the more one considers the history of the efforts to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces described in this report; the more it is clear that pursuing the right program consistently and with the right resources that the Coalition can still succeed in solving the security aspects of the nation building problem in Iraq.

The previous analysis shows that the US has corrected many aspects of its initial mistakes. The key questions from a policy viewpoint are now whether the United States and its allies are moving quickly enough to create forces that can provide real security and deal with the insurgency problem in time to meet the needs and expectations of the Iraqi people. Iraqi forces will remain a fraction of what is needed through at least mid-2005 and probably deep into 2006. Many critical elements of Iraqi army, security forces, and police development may not be complete by the end of 2007—and this assumes a high degree of continuity and consistency in Iraqi force development efforts, and a move towards united national forces, rather than ethnic and sectarian divisions. Iraqi forces will not have airpower, significant armor, or modern IS&R support for years to come. Creating Iraqi forces that can be fully effective in both dealing with continued insurgency and terrorism, and capable of defending Iraq against any active threat from its neighbors, will not be a matter of sudden “tipping points,” it will be a process involving “tipping years.”

All of these points reinforce the need to create larger, more effective, and “National” Iraqi forces than mix ethnic and sectarian manpower as soon as possible, and to give them full force protection and counterinsurgency capability. Yet, there will be serious tradeoffs in Iraqi force quality if the training, force building, and equipment effort is rushed. The end result could be a failed force.

Both the Coalition and Iraqis must continue to find ways to work together to find the fastest pace at which new Iraqi forces can be developed without losing their effectiveness in the process. At the same time, the US and its allies must work out longer-term plans and force goals with the new Iraqi government to scale up a larger training and equipment program that can both give Iraq the forces it needs to stand alone as a truly sovereign nation and also be affordable and self-financed in future years.

The Future Role of the US and Coalition, and of US and Coalition Forces

Allied support for a long Coalition presence has never been strong, and US popular support and Congressional support is waning. According to a poll conducted by Newsweek in early August 2005, only 26 percent of Americans said they supported keeping large numbers of U.S. military personnel in Iraq for as long as it takes to achieve US goals there; 38 percent said they would support keeping troops there less than a year; 13 percent said one to two years; and 12 percent said that troops should be brought home now.¹⁴⁷⁸ This type of political pressure at home forced the issue of troop withdrawal to the fore.

Any US plans for troop reductions are, however, anything but concrete. In a classified briefing to senior Pentagon officials in July, top American Middle East commander Gen. John Abizaid outlined a plan that would gradually reduce American forces in Iraq by perhaps 20,000 to 30,000 troops by spring 2005. However, Gen. Abizaid also warned that it is possible the Pentagon might have to keep the current levels of about 138,000 American soldiers in Iraq throughout 2006 if security and political trends are unfavorable for a withdrawal.

Plans called for an increase of US troop presence to 160,000, up from 138,000 during the period before the December 15, 2005 elections. This would be a temporary measure to secure the elections. That number would gradually decline back down to 138,000 troops initially, and then by another 20,000 or 30,000 troops by late spring of 2006, according to senior Pentagon officials.¹⁴⁷⁹ However, no set timetable for withdrawal had yet been established.¹⁴⁸⁰

On August 20, 2005, US Army Chief of Staff Peter Schoomaker indicated that the US may have to keep over 100,000 troops in Iraq into 2009. On September 12, 2005, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani said that the United States could withdraw 40,000 to 50,000 troops by the end of the year, declaring there were enough Iraqi forces trained and ready to begin assuming control in cities throughout the country. Talabani said the number of “well-trained” Iraqi security forces stood at 60,000 and would reach 100,000 by the end of the year. All told, there about 190,000 Iraqis enlisted in the military or local security forces.¹⁴⁸¹

Meanwhile, the air mission in Iraq has become a study in contrast between the heft of US support and the meager reality of Iraqi air capabilities. In September 2005, Iraq’s air force consisted of 38 aircraft, including three C-130E transports, 16 UH-1 Huey helicopters, and two Australian SB7L-360 Seeker propeller aircraft. At this time, the US

Air Force was doing all of the reconnaissance, all of the close air and light attack support, and is using its C-17 and C-130s to transport Iraqi troops.

CENTCOM tactical air commander Lt-Gen Walter Buchanan – who commands about 330 Air Force, Navy, and Coalition aircraft in the Persian Gulf – predicted in September that the US could continue to fly missions against insurgents in Iraq for another five years. His inside estimate for a viable Iraqi Air Force was three years, with the caveat that five was more likely. The Air Force has more than 205 aircraft in the region, including more than 35 F-16 fighters, more than 20 B-52 bombers and A-10 Warthog ground attack craft, over 35 reconnaissance and intelligence craft, and over 55 transports. The Navy supplies an additional 127 aircraft.¹⁴⁸²

Whatever the US and its allies do, they must not ignore the fact that Iraq must take over responsibility for Iraq in no way means that that US and its allies are free of future responsibility to Iraq and to the Iraqi people. This is particularly true of the US. Regardless of how well the US can maintain the Coalition, or broaden the international effort to support Iraq through the UN and measures like contact groups, the US-led invasion has left it with a deep moral and ethical responsibility, and it still has much to do.

Iraqi success will depend on US and Coalition willingness to provide sustained military support and a broad-based aid program for at least several more years. The US also cannot plan now for withdrawal or some fixed ceiling to its military effort. There may be periods like the elections scheduled for the end of 2005 when new surges of US and other Coalition troops are necessary.

Foreign Troops and Iraqi Legitimacy

The answer cannot be adding more US and other coalition troops as a substitute for effective Iraqi forces. Temporary surges and reinforcements to US and British forces may be necessary, but they are at best a short-term expedient, and one that inevitably will have political costs that offset their military impact.

There are no clear sources of significant forces from other countries, it would take very large forces to make a difference, and foreign countries will be reluctant to deploy troops to remote areas. Moreover, small, isolated deployments would rapidly become targets, while staying in large bases would be pointless. As various Coalition partners end their role in Iraq, some say they will be willing to turn their forces from combat to training. It may be realistic to preserve some contributions that are now planned to decline, but it is unrealistic to assume that any such forces would not go to “hot” like the border.

The nature of both the insurgency in Iraq and Iraqi politics make it all too clear that only Iraqi forces can minimize the anger and resentment at US forces, give the emerging Iraqi government legitimacy, and support efforts to make that government and the Iraqi political system more inclusive. Even the segments of Iraqi society that tolerate Coalition forces as a necessity today want them out as quickly as is practical.

Even the best possible new elections, restructuring of the government, and efforts to create a constitution cannot by themselves make the new Iraqi government legitimate in

Iraqi eyes unless that government provides security with Iraqi forces. Iraqis need to be seen as steadily taking over the security role by their countryman, the region, and the world. Poll after poll has shown that Iraqis see physical security as one of the most important single issues in their lives, generally followed by economic and educational security. The same polls show that they want Coalition forces to leave as soon as possible -- and often long before Iraqi forces can be ready.

The visible presence of US and Coalition forces must decrease over time, not increase, and any sustained deployment of thousands of additional US or other foreign troops can only make the Iraqi government less legitimate. At the same time, no amount of improvement in US intelligence and area expertise can substitute for effective Iraqi support. As one US Major General noted in March 2005, "The real things that are so absolutely critical in the fight we're in today on the streets of Baghdad is an understanding of the city, an understanding of the culture and the ability to speak the language, and Iraqi forces bring that to the street."¹⁴⁸³

General George W. Casey Jr., the top US commander in Iraq, spoke to this point in late January 2005. He stated:

Can I sit here and look you in the eye and say that the Iraqi security forces, guaranteed 100 percent, are going to be able to defeat this insurgency themselves? Of course not....[But] we cannot stay here forever in the numbers that we are here now; I firmly believe that. The Iraqis have to take ownership of this.¹⁴⁸⁴

The presence of more US and other Coalition military personnel in Iraq without the consummate area skills, experience, specialized abilities, and ability to provide effective training can only be counterproductive. The more untrained and inexperienced forces on the street or in contact with Iraqis, the greater the hostility of the Iraqi people and the greater the likelihood of a tactical error that inflames the populace.

NATO, UN, and Regional Forces Are At Best a Temporary Expedient

The search to broaden international support for Iraqi nation building is important both to meet Iraq's needs and establish the legitimacy of Iraq's new government. It is not a way to achieve a successful "exit strategy" for either Iraq or the United States. It is all too easy to try to shift the burden of creating effective Iraqi forces, and creating security in Iraq, to other nations or to international organizations.

It is certainly desirable to seek such aid to supplement the role that the US and other MNSTC-I states must play, and to "internationalize" the nation building effort in Iraq at the political and economic level. The fact that more US forces are not a substitute for Iraqi forces, however, does not mean that the US can find substitutes for the US forces that Iraq still needs.

The Role of NATO and European States

The NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) is helping to build the Iraqi Security Forces with training and advisory support to middle- and senior-level leaders at locations such as the National Joint Operations Center, Ministry of Defense Headquarters Joint

Operations Center, and the Iraqi Staff College. A key role of the NTM-I is to assist in the development of the new Staff College. NTM-I completed instructor training for 24 Iraqis in July 2005. The class included nine Iraqi colonels and 15 lieutenant colonels. Eighty-eight Iraqi students started pilot Joint Staff College courses on September 25.¹⁴⁸⁵

The effort to create effective Iraqi forces is one that the US can only delegate in limited ways. NATO can play a significant role in some critical aspects of training and has already begun to do so. There is no practical chance, however, of significant numbers of additional European or NATO combat forces being added to the equation despite French concerns that the presence of NATO military trainers would open the door to combat troops.

The US Department of Defense announced on September 22, 2004, that NATO would provide further training to Iraqi security forces at the request of the Iraqi Interim Government. The training began with the creation of a permanent training center at Ar Rustamiya to train mid-level and senior security personnel. NATO dual-hatted US General David Petraeus to lead this effort, as well as the MNSTC-I, and there has since been real progress:

NATO began its first eight-week training program for Iraqi security personnel on October 2, 2004. The course took place at the Joint Warfare Center in Norway and currently involves the training of 19 mid and upper-level Iraqi officials from the military, Ministry of Defense, and the Ministry of the Interior.

- On October 4, General James Jones, NATO's top commander, announced that up to 3,000 NATO troops could be involved in the training of the Iraqi security forces. The trainers, however, are unlikely to arrive prior to the Iraqi elections. Five days later, NATO committed to sending 300 trainers but not until the end of the year.
- This agreement was formalized on December 9, 2004, with Poland, Hungary, and the Netherlands agreeing to send military trainers. France, Belgium, Greece, Spain, and Luxembourg refused to send any trainers to Iraq. This 300-man team will slowly create academies in Baghdad and Zahko near Turkey. This effort should strengthen the inchoate Staff and War Colleges. The Staff College instructors were scheduled to begin training in late April 2005.
- On February 22, 2005, each NATO member country pledged to contribute to the training effort. At this point, 16 NATO countries had troops on the ground in Iraq and almost all of them had senior officers involved at the NATO training mission in Baghdad. France agreed to provide money for one of the trust funds being established for the Iraqi military and security forces. The NATO Joint Warfare Center in Stavanger Norway also had begun to train Iraqi leaders and the second course began in March 2005.¹⁴⁸⁶
- Overall, NATO announced its intention to train 1,000 Iraqi officers by the end of 2005. NATO also renewed its pledge to open a military training academy at Ar Rustamiya, on the outskirts of Baghdad. NATO indicated that it would continue its training efforts in Norway and at the NATO Defence College outside of Rome. NATO seemed responsive to a call earlier in February for more trainers and more funds, particularly for the creation of the Training, Education and Doctrine Center, by Lt. Gen. Petraeus.

Germany, France, Belgium, Spain, and Greece continued to refuse to train Iraqi soldiers in Iraq, but agreed to do so elsewhere. Belgium already trains Iraqis at a facility in the UAE while France agreed to train troops in France. Lt. Gen. Petraeus indicated in early

February 2005 that NATO equipment contributions had been significant and were important to the continuing effort.

NATO delivered some 9,000 weapons in time for the January 30th elections. Hungary agreed to donate 77 T-72 tanks to the Iraqi military, though the details concerning shipment, who would pay for the shipment, and the date of delivery all remain unclear.¹⁴⁸⁷ Such donations do, however, often create the problem that countries willing to donate equipment will not provide support or sustainment, and that donations of different types of equipment force the creation of separate maintenance and support cycles.

During 2005, NATO member countries provided over \$115 million in supplies and equipment to the Iraqi armed forces:¹⁴⁸⁸

- Denmark donated more than 100 9mm pistols, which arrived in January 2005. The shipment also included magazines, ammunition, holsters, and cleaning kits.
- Estonia's contribution included thousands of AK-47 rifles, small arms and ammunition.
- Romania made two shipments of thousands of AK-47s and hundreds of RPK light machine guns, RPG-7 grenade launchers. The shipment also included thousands of rounds of ammunition that went to Iraqi police units.
- Donations from Slovenia arrived in nine shipments in April, funded by Iceland. In all, 11,640 AK-47s, 10,080 helmets, and 3,979,000 rounds of ammunition worth about \$35 million were delivered.
- Latvia made a donation of small arms and ammunition in June.
- On November 11, Hungary delivered 77 T-72 tanks and four tank-recovery vehicles, as well as 38 BMP personnel carriers and several containers of parts and weapons. The donation was worth about \$80 million.

NATO's most serious contribution, however, may be the creation of Iraqi staff colleges and advanced training efforts for Iraqi officers in Iraq. MNSTC-I described these contributions by NATO as follows in mid-2005:¹⁴⁸⁹

Although currently composed of only 116 personnel, the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) provides significant contributions to the mission of training and equipping the Iraqi Armed Forces. Perhaps because so many of its personnel are senior officers, their contribution is far beyond that expected from such a small organization. One of its most valuable is helping with development of the institutional capacity – the professional military education underpinnings – of the Iraqi armed forces. Both junior and senior staff college classes will start this fall in Ar Rustimiyah because of NTM-I leadership.

Iraqi officers manning the national, military and MOI operations centers have received the benefit of NATO-provided information technology education, other training and mentorship in actual operations. In the longer term, NTM-I will start War College classes next year, will probably take over assistance at the military academy and will eventually produce something roughly equivalent to U.S. TRADOC [US Army Training and Doctrine Command]. Another important line of operation for NTM-I is coordination of foreign equipment donations and out-of-country training offers, a task that is of great consequence to the overall training and equipping effort.

On September 27, 2005 Dr Ibrahim Jaafari, Prime Minister of Iraq, and Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, Secretary General of NATO, opened a new staff college for the Iraqi army, in Rustimiyah in southeast Baghdad. They were accompanied by the Iraqi Interior Minister Bayan Jaber, the head of the Iraqi armed forces, Gen Babiker Zebari and the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, US Marine General James Jones. The College began courses that day for 90 trainees drawn from the rank of major and lieutenant colonel in the Iraqi army. The courses were being given by Iraqi trainers supported by NATO trainers.

NATO is now in the process of creating a full National Defense College, and such an effort will be critical to creating the kind of modern military elite Iraq will need in the future.

In a February 2005 meeting of NATO, all 26 Allies agreed to contribute to NATO's training of the ISF, either in Iraq, outside of Iraq, through financial contributions, and/or by donations of equipment. NATO has declared that the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) has reached initial operating capability.¹⁴⁹⁰ But there are also limits to the amount of training Iraqis require outside Iraq. As of August 2005, Iraq had at least 10 major training facilities, the better part of a training brigade, special skill training elements/schools, and countless ranges, shooting houses, and other training facilities – and they prefer to train their troops at home, as it's cheaper, done by Iraqis, and avoids expensive/dangerous movements.

There already were typically well over 3,200 Iraqis out of country in training at any given time. Iraqis are taking advantage of training offers that are fully funded and provide the training they really want and can't do for themselves yet (such as the German training of Iraqi engineer unit cadre and trainers – which now train Iraqis at Tadjil – in the UAE). They have other individuals all over the world in short and long courses. But the movement of large elements is costly, difficult and time-consuming to the Iraqis.

Limited additional increases might be possible, but the result might outweigh any benefits in terms of problems in interoperability and men simply seeking good foreign assignments. Any apparent cost savings would probably be mythical in the case of Egypt or Jordan; they would end up being paid for by other aspects of US foreign aid.

The United Nations and International Community

The world would be a better place if commentators and analysts stopped talking in vague terms about the "international community." In practice, the real world "international community" that can participate in nation building consists of a relatively small number of organizations and NGOs with limited and overcommitted resources. Calling for the "international community" to substitute for US action, or the action of any other country, is meaningless unless that call can be tied to the identification of specific organizations and specific resources that can credibly be allocated to a given task or mission.

On November 8, 2005, the UN Security Council unanimously agreed to extend the mandate of the US-led multinational forces in Iraq for one more year, to December 31, 2006, unless the Iraqi government requests that it leave sooner. US Ambassador to the

UN John Bolton lauded the move as “a vivid demonstration of broad international support for a federal, democratic, pluralist, and unified Iraq.”¹⁴⁹¹

However, in the case of Iraqi security, the United Nations has no military forces, and is unable to recruit new forces at a scale that could begin to replace US and British forces. The United Nations as a whole lacks the support needed for such a mission and it has no readiness to become involved in a counterinsurgency campaign. Moreover, Iraqis do not want to replace one set of “occupiers” with another.

The United Nations could, however, perform missions that do not fall within the core competencies of Coalition military forces like delivering humanitarian aid. These could include missions affecting aspects of civilian life varying from providing electricity and water to basic education. Incorporating the United Nations in humanitarian settlement and assistance would also minimize the friction between Iraqi citizens who require the provision of basic services, and the Coalition forces who lack the expertise, time and resources to create and maintain them. The United Nations and international organizations did play an important role from May to August 2003, when significant humanitarian activity by international organizations in Iraq took place.

The key problem is security. Insurgents have already driven the UN and most NGOs out of Iraq once. Other recent experiences in international operations indicate that the vulnerability of UN workers to attacks is an obstacle that will have to be resolved if the UN and NGOs are to function in environments where there is a significant terrorist threat or any faction that feels it can gain from attacking such “easy” targets.

The question is whether any “Blue Helmet” approach to security is practical and/or the US military structure can be made more interoperable with non-military international actors in conflict zones. The contributions of international organizations to post conflict settlements should not be abandoned in Iraq or any other troubled region. Their experience and efficiency in humanitarian aid makes them a significant asset that should be seen as a supplement to military operations, and not as an additional weight on them.

General John M. Shalikashvili, the former Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, recognized the need for good cooperation as he said, “What’s the relationship between a just arrived military force and the NGO and PVO that might have been working in a crisis torn area all along? What we have is a partnership. If you are successful, they are successful; and if they are successful, you are successful. We need each other.”

The Unified Task Force (UNITAF) in Somalia, The Civil Military Operations Centre for Rwanda and NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR - Operation Joint Endeavour) also provide examples of constructive cooperation between international armed forces and the UN. The most relevant and recent case for such cooperation is the joint effort under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). ISAF witnessed substantial collaboration between the UN and military forces, both at strategic and operational levels.

Clearly there are differences between these UN mandated military operations and the US led Coalition operations in Iraq. However, if the goal is to maximize the utility of military forces and achieve the highest level of consequence management and humanitarian assistance, then the US military should develop ways to integrate interoperability with

international aid organizations into military strategy. Efforts such as NGO and military sponsored seminars and military training exercises such as Prairie Warrior at the Command and General Staff College and Purple Hope at the Joint Forces Staff College should be expanded in number and content. More joint training is essential for improved mutual understanding between these two entities to increase effectiveness of complex military interventions.

The Potential Role of Regional Forces

Neighbouring countries are not a solution. They cannot provide the necessary combat-ready forces in a sustainable form. The presence of neighbouring countries' troops would present serious internal political liabilities. Troops from Iran could inflame the Shi'ite issue, Saudi Arabia is dealing with its own bout of insurgents, Syria would present Sunni and Ba'ath Party conflicts, Turkey would be problematic due to the Kurdish question, and Jordan is already doing what it can without openly supporting the US and inviting internal turmoil given the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Even if the Iraqi political repercussions were less severe, other Arab and Islamic forces cannot deploy with the necessary speed and also lack the ability to sustain their forces in the field. Once more, such efforts would inevitably be seen as efforts to bail the US out of a war that had no public supporters. The domestic outcry within these countries would be intense, to say the least.

Ongoing Changes in US Force Development Strategy

Any effort to address the future changes that need to be made in the US effort to create effective Iraqi forces must take account of the progress MNSTC-I has already made and the ongoing changes the US is already considering. For all its initial mistakes, the US-led effort has steadily improved and adapted, and further improvements seem to be under way.

One of these changes is the growing emphasis on creating effective Iraqi forces, rather than direct Coalition defeat of the insurgents, touched upon in previous chapters. MNSTC-I envisions that the Iraqi security forces will gradually be weaned off direct US support. According to MNSTC-I:¹⁴⁹²

Through coalition mentorship and assistance, the ISF eventually get to the point where they only need *support* from coalition forces, then to the point where they can conduct operations *independent* of coalition forces. MNF-I's training and readiness system will measure just where ISF units fall on that readiness spectrum.

Another change is the understanding that no training program, no matter how good, can make up for a lack of experienced leaders and proven units and combat teams. Training, equipment, and facilities are vital; they also are not enough.

Seeking Success Rather than an "Exit Strategy;" Changing the Main Mission of US Forces

As the previous chapter have shown, President Bush has sought to implement a success strategy and avoid being pressured into an exit strategy. In fact, the term "exit strategy" has become a synonym for finding some reason for withdrawal, rather than a strategy for

some form of victory. Far too often, it is tied to calendar deadlines that have nothing to do with whether the time is right for withdrawal, and to a political effort to disguise defeat. At this writing, the conditions in Iraq not only do not justify such an approach, they would be a betrayal of Iraqis who still have the chance to create the conditions for a far better Iraq than existed under Saddam Hussein.

President Bush made it clear in November and December of 2005 that the US had changed its strategy to focus on creating effective Iraqi forces as both a key to some form of “victory” and to eventually reducing the US and Coalition presence in Iraq as Iraqi forces take over the security mission. This development, however, was anything but new.

Lieutenant General John R. Vines, the commander of the 18th Airborne Corps, made this point shortly after he assumed command of US ground forces in Iraq in February 2005. In an interview, Vines asserted that the main mission for the US military following the January 30th elections is to train Iraqi military and security forces. To this end, Vines suggested that up to 10,000 US military advisers could be assigned to Iraqi military and police units.¹⁴⁹³ The commander of US forces in northern Iraq, Brig. Gen. Carter Ham, stated that, “The shifting of emphasis to developing Iraqi security forces as the first priority seems right. Shifting primary responsibility for conduct of counter-insurgency operations to Iraqi forces is necessary and proper.”¹⁴⁹⁴

It is all too clear, however, that no valid timetable can be established for reductions in Coalition forces until Iraqi forces are available in much larger numbers, and the trends in their performance is clear. In fact, reports of such timetables have led to a wide range of contradictory reports, and to more speculation than insight.

For example, Secretary Rumsfeld noted in March 2005 that the US presence in Iraq was dropping from a peak of 152,000 at the time of the election to around 135,000, and Iraqi forces were expected to rise from 145,000 to around 200,000 by the end of 2005 -- though he was careful to note that US forces might have to build up to over 150,000 again to secure Iraq’s next election, which was then scheduled for December 2005.¹⁴⁹⁵

US officers gave lower numbers in April 2005, stating that US strength might drop from elements of 17 brigades, and 142,000 personnel that month to 13 brigades and 105,000 personnel by early 2006.¹⁴⁹⁶ At the same time, Jane’s Defense Weekly reported that the US had adopted a three-phase strategy developed by General George Casey, the commander of MNF-I, to pave the way for major drawdowns in US force by the end of 2005 very similar to the one the President supported at the end of the year:¹⁴⁹⁷

- Phase One, which was said to have begun on April 15, 2005, and which was to be completed by August, was said to focus on manning, training, and equipping individual Iraqi Army units at the individual and platoon level to create Iraqi units capable of independent platoon with minimal US supervision, and transition to having the Ministry of Defense pay Iraqi troops.
- Phase Two was to partner each Iraqi Army battalion with two company-sized US Army units to give Iraqi Army battalions the capability to operate independently at the battalion level by October 2005.
- Phase Three involved having Iraqi Army battalions certified by their partnered US advisors as being capable of battalion-sized operations and being assigned specific battle spaces occupied by US units. US company-sized units were to provide a quick response force through December

2005. Each battalion was to have a US Military Transition Team of roughly 60 men, with a major or senior captain and experienced NCOs, to help prepare the Iraqi unit.

More reports about such plans also emerged during the summer of 2005. In early July 2005, a British newspaper printed a classified British government study signed by Defense Secretary John Reid on the feasibility of drawing down British troop strength from 8,500 to 3,000 by the middle of 2006. The memo stated that the British perceived that the US military was hoping that they could reduce their troop presence and hand over security responsibilities for 14 of the 18 provinces to the Iraqis by early 2006.¹⁴⁹⁸

President Bush continued to reiterate that the US had a “success strategy” and not an “exit strategy,” would not set a timetable for withdrawal, and that US soldiers would ‘stand down as Iraqi soldiers stood up.’

On July 27, 2005, General Casey stated that. “I do believe that if the political process continues to go positively and if the development of the security forces continues to go as it is going, we’ll still be able to take some very substantial reductions in the spring and summer of next year.” Casey also said that while car bomb attacks had reached a peak of 143 in May, that they had since declined and that. “The level of attacks they’ve been able to generate has not increased substantially here over what we’ve seen in the last year...This insurgency is not progressing...what you are seeing is a change in tactics to more violent, more visible attacks against civilians and that is a no-win strategy for the insurgency.”¹⁴⁹⁹

That same day, Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari said that the departure of U.S. forces should take place as quickly as possible, but that while “we desire speed, “this should depends on how quickly Iraq could train, equip and field its own soldiers and police to take over security duties. “We do not want to be surprised.”

It is important to note that such statements by Iraqi politicians – even during the campaign before the December 2005 elections -- have rarely attempted to set deadlines or specify the rate and level of Coalition withdrawal. This reflects the reality that any such “plans” should depend on how quickly Iraqi forces become effective and how quickly the insurgency fades. US officers in the field also have consistently been less optimistic about such deadlines than politicians and reports in the media, and cite problems in the Iraqi police training effort, and delays in deploying Iraqi forces into combat, when they feel are likely to lead to delays in any such transition.¹⁵⁰⁰

Regardless of the form it takes, the transition will not be easy. In addition to Iraqi politics and military success, much depends on the future quality of the advisors the Coalition embeds in Iraqi troops, security, and police units—the latter of which still had shortages of advisors in mid-2005. There is a need for better language and area skills and providing advisors with the proper training and combat background, has proved to be a serious problem. It is unclear how many advisers will come from forces not yet deployed in Iraq. Some of the estimated 10,000 soldiers could be part of an increase in US personnel levels, although a substantial part of US forces in Iraq could be shifted to take on the training and support role within US forces.¹⁵⁰¹

The Search for “Critical Mass”

One key uncertainty is when Iraqi forces will achieve “critical mass” in terms of their ability to take over key missions and replace MNF-I forces. As of early 2005, the Iraqis took part in about 1,200 patrols with US forces a week, while US-led Coalition forces lead 12,000 patrols a week.¹⁵⁰² These figures are changing because the US Department of Defense wants the Iraqis to assume the bulk of those patrols as quickly as possible, but Iraqi forces continue to have major problems with leadership, desertions, and effectiveness.

General Petraeus gave the following assessment of Iraqi forces in early May 2005:¹⁵⁰³

With hindsight, we apparently reached the “critical mass” point (i.e. the point at which the combination of rebuilt infrastructure – especially for training and bases, equipment, Iraqi trainers, Iraqi leaders, and life support, etc. all supported generation/training of forces at multiple locations simultaneously) in late January, it appears, and the chain reaction since then has been substantial.

As an example, three divisions that were struggling in terms of strength back in November due to casualties, intimidation, etc., are now at 88 percent, 102 percent, and 102 percent respectively, with the former headed to 100 percent in the next couple of weeks (based on recruits/former soldiers already completing training) and the latter two headed to 110 percent in the week ahead (based on former soldiers/recruits that have already completed training). And the one at 88 percent would be over 100 percent had the authorization not changed (from 3 line companies per battalion to 4).

There is still a huge amount of work to be done and daily drama in a host of areas, but the ISF is hanging tough and steadily getting stronger. Have scrubbed numbers hard by the way, taking some 8,000 out of the police trained/equipped numbers (in provinces hit hardest during tough times in Oct – Jan) over the past 4 months (since we ID’d to the GAO the challenges in personnel accountability with regular police), and still the numbers of MOI trained/equipped have grown steadily.

It is now clear, however, that it will be mid-2006 at the earliest, however, before it is really clear whether Iraqi forces can reach the level of “critical mass” where they become effective enough to take over virtually all of the missions in dealing with the insurgency. Serious problems may remain in the quality of the police force in our dependence on largely Shiite or Kurdish units, and in the existence of independent militias and local forces. Much will depend on the economic and political situation, and the speed at which Iraqi forces are given the armor, airpower, firepower, and sustainability to operate without American support.

Maintaining an Emphasis on Force Quality

The Coalition must continue to focus on the quality of the Iraqi troops as opposed to just the pure numbers of Iraqi troops in uniform. While it is important for the Iraqi forces to continue to grow in size, the soldiers must be able and willing to effectively stand and fight. US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld highlighted this focus in his testimony before the Senate Armed Service Committee on February 17, 2005. He stated, “Beyond numbers, it seems to me the capability is what really is important. And capability is a function ... partly of numbers, to be sure, but it’s also of training, equipment, leadership, mobility, sustainability, access to intelligence, experience.”¹⁵⁰⁴

The Coalition has given more priority to developing new ways to better determine the capabilities of the Iraqi units in development, and initial efforts have now been implemented. Lt. Gen. Petraeus made this point in an interview in February 2005, "We are going to have to move to a way where we can start tracking the capability."¹⁵⁰⁵ Far more needs to be done, however, and suggestions like developing the equivalent of the US Mission Essential Tasks Lists (METLs) -- a common measurement used in the US to judge performance and identify key tasks for training -- had not been implemented as of June 2005.

Keeping the Police Effort in Balance

As the previous chapters have shown, the Coalition and Iraqi government must give a high priority to the development of both military forces, and effective security and police forces. It is tempting to focus on the insurgents, but the present effort is the correct one. Effective police and security forces are critical to day-to-day security against both insurgents and criminals, and to giving the Iraqi government the public face of legitimacy -- something that extended deployments of Iraqi military forces simply cannot accomplish. The MSTC-I advisory effort has also been limited in this area. As of May 2005, MNCSTC-I J-5 (Future Plans) had a staff of 15, but only one person detailed to work with the police force.¹⁵⁰⁶ Many elements of the Iraqi police also needed more expert civilian advisors and civilian agencies like the Department of Homeland Security, which often gave such efforts low priority and left key training elements undermanned.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that senior officers like General Abizaid warned during a speech in Washington on May 18, 2005 that Iraqi police units were not cohesive enough to mount an effective challenge to insurgents which would allow American forces to begin phasing out of the fighting. Abizaid warned that the Iraqi forces had fallen "behind" in developing the capability to shoulder a major role in combat, and blamed a tendency among Iraqi police to operate as individuals rather than in cohesive units as both a major part of the problem, and as a factor making them more vulnerable to intimidation.¹⁵⁰⁷

The police and the Ministry of the Interior...are...behind in terms of sophistication, chain of command, cohesion of leadership...It delays the Ministry of Defense forces going out and doing the internal security mission and that keeps American embedded trainers and embedded transition teams in the field longer.

These problems can easily become much more severe in late 2005, and during 2006, as Iraq struggles to decide on a constitution, elects yet another new government, and then actually try to govern on the face of sectarian and ethnic differences, and insurgent efforts to provoke civil war. This is also an area where Coalition and other foreign forces are even less able to substitute for Iraqi forces than in the case of the military. Effective training and advisory efforts are critical, particularly in ensuring that the police become a competent proactive and investigative force, rather than a passive presence. Outside aid and advice is necessary to create effective command and communication links, reduce corruption, and train the kind of gendarmerie forces that can deal with insurgent attacks without repeating the violence and repression used by Saddam's security forces.

CPATT has made major progress, and has developed plans to provide the support Iraqi police forces need. Yet, it is still unclear that a similar program to embed Coalition advisors and forces in the Iraqi police in the field will be put fully in place. This is a significant problem as the Iraq police are under constant harassment and intimidation and units have completely dissolved in Samarra and Mosul when put under pressure.

The Need to Provide All the Necessary Support and Resources

The US has every possible incentive to create effective Iraqi military, security, and police forces. This is the only practical way to “win” in Iraq, cut the size of US commitments, and establish a government the Iraqis see as legitimate. The US certainly understands this at the command level in Iraq and in MNSTC-I, and seems to now understand it at the policy and command level in Washington as well.

What is not clear is whether all the necessary resources are really being provided, and whether a comprehensive and realistic plan exists in Washington to ensure that Iraqi military, security, and police forces develop as they should. General Luck’s plan to strengthen Iraqi forces with American advisors is a useful step, but only if it leads to Iraqi forces that become fully independent and which can replace US and other Coalition forces.

As yet, there is no public plan that shows the US will give Iraqi forces the heavier equipment they need to fight and survive, the facilities they need to be protected, the communications required, or any of the other essential tools that will create truly independent and self-sufficient forces. Experts may argue over how much armor and heavy weapons are needed, and their priority relative to improvement in support and logistics capabilities. There is also the risk the coalition could end up arming forces that will fight each other in a civil war. However, such a plan is critical to an effective Coalition strategy and plan for Iraq, and to maintaining Iraqi confidence in the Coalition.

Problems still exist in the coordination of the Department of State and Department of Defense efforts, particularly in their operations in Washington, and these problems are compounded by uncertain support from other civilian agencies. These problems have had a particularly important impact on the development of the police force, both in terms of trainer and mentors and field advisors. There has been an excessive emphasis on coordination, reporting, and committee meetings in Washington to handle functions that should be under a clear single line of authority in the US country team in Iraq, with equally clear lines of authority for other Coalition partners and the Iraq government. By and large, this exists at the military level, but it is significantly less effective at the level of regular and elite police forces.

The Problem of Affordability, National Defense, and Transfer to the Iraqi Government

In an ideal world, the US, Coalition, and Iraqi government would not have to look beyond the immediate need to defeat the insurgency. Wars don’t occur in ideal worlds, however, and mid and long-term force development issues cannot be ignored. Unless the US is prepared to provide a series of massive new aid programs and maintain a major presence in Iraq for far longer than either Iraqis or Americans want, there is an immediate

need for much more detailed plans and programs to eventually turn all of the force development and training effort over to the Iraqi government. In practice, this means having the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior take over as many present MNF-I and MNFSTC-I efforts as quickly as possible, and letting Iraqi take over responsibility for longer term planning even before it can manage such programs.

Near, mid, and long-term affordability are already major issues. Iraq does not have the income to pay for the force posture that it and the Coalition are creating. Investment for counterinsurgency equipment and forces must come at the cost of not investing in the kind of military forces needed to defend Iraq's borders, and the kind of police and security forces best suited to peacetime. This means hard trade-offs have to be made between existing and future missions, and cost-containment and affordability are already major issues for every aspect of force development.

More generally, the Iraqi people and Iraqi politicians need to understand that security too has become an Iraqi responsibility. The US and its allies may still provide advisory teams and aid for years to come, and the US and Britain may offer some kind of "over-the-horizon" guarantees, but Iraq stability and inclusiveness depend heavily on the perception that Iraq will be truly sovereign, foreign combat troops will leave, there will be no permanent bases, and that Iraqi forces will eventually be able to deal with threats or military pressure from nations like Syria, Turkey, and Iran.

The Need for An Integrated Strategy

Iraq, the Coalition, and the US not only need a workable strategy and plan for the development of Iraqi forces that can operate independently and replace US and other Coalition forces as soon as is feasible, but they need one that is integrated into an overall plan for every aspect of military, advisory, and aid activity in Iraq.

This need for a coherent stability and nation building strategy, and detailed plans to implement it, is a key lesson of the US experience in both Afghanistan and Iraq. No one can ignore the ad hoc nature of dealing with the day-to-day changes imposed by the reality of war, but this is no rationale for failing to tie all US government efforts together around some common Interagency effort and maintain a focus on a common plan and strategy.

It is interesting to note in this light that some of those working at the MNF and MNSTC-I contrast the fact that detailed transition and force development plans were created for Afghanistan, against the fact that the MNF was slow to create a detailed plan and strategy. One former MNSTC-I staff officer put it this way--though it is important to note his impressions are dated and MNSTC-I now has such plans:

There is no plan at MNSTC-I for the development of Iraqi security forces. While training and equipping are ongoing, they are ad hoc in a sense. We have timelines for how quickly we expect forces to be ready, we have PowerPoint briefings galore, we have ideas being implemented, but those are not based on any sort of plan. At no point has MNSTC-I sat down and identified a desired end state, a basic set of assumptions, possible complications and constraints, or any of the other things that happen during a planning process....MNSTC-I J-5 (Future Plans) was overmanned and it would not have taken any additional resources to develop a plan for the command.... LTG Petraeus was aware that a plan would be helpful, as he told the director of J-

5...in December 04 to “get out of the weeds” and start thinking long-term (J-5’s primary function was instead preparing briefings).

In January 05, three days before GEN Luck, arrived, (we were) told to start developing a plan for the command... (and) started on a “mission analysis,” which is the first step in planning. In February, ... another team start(ed) again using a different methodology... a third mission analysis was done and was presented to ... in April, but nothing had been done with it yet. Bare in mind, this is only the first step.

Of course, ... having a plan on the shelf (does not) guarantee success, (and no) military command will be able to strictly follow a plan. However, going through the planning process allows you to ask the questions you need to ask and identify potential pitfalls in advance so you can find ways to work around them. When things change and you have to adjust, at least you have something to adjust rather than shooting from the hip every time something unexpected happens. Also, a command plan would help get all of the J-sections, as well as CMATT, CPATT, and JHQ-AST, onto the same sheet of music instead of each going in their own direction. MNSTC-I does not have any sort of common vision regarding its mission.

Integrating a Political, Economic, and Security Strategy

At the same time, an integrated strategy cannot simply be a US or Coalition strategy. A successful US and Coalition strategy must be tied to a strategy that either is developed in coordination with the Iraqi government or developed by it. The time has passed when, if ever, the US and MNSTC-I could impose order on Iraq. Iraqi decisions will now determine Iraq’s fate, and only Iraqis can forge political unity or federalism, establish effective governance, establish effective Iraqi forces and security, and move Iraq back towards economic development.

No US, Coalition, or *Iraqi* strategy and approach to nation building or security can survive Iraq dividing along ethnic and sectarian lines, or continued economic failures and a lack of day-to-day personal security. It cannot survive mistakes like failing to create an inclusive government or purging the Iraqi forces and civil service of everyone suspect of being a “Ba’athist.” Iraq cannot survive on the basis of a foreign vision of the future; it can only survive if Iraqis have the vision to create the future they need.

The Economic Aid Dimension

Iraq can only deal with its problems over the next 3-5 years if it gets large amounts of continuing economic aid. The many failures in the US and Coalition effort to create effective Iraqi forces documented in the earlier chapters of this book have at least been largely overcome. The same cannot be said of the aid effort. The initial ideological bias of the CPA, and the illusion that the US had the competence to create a new Iraqi economy out of the mess left by Saddam Hussein in a country his wars had effectively bankrupted in 1984 is only part of the story.

In broad terms, the US simply did not know what to do, and how to go beyond classic project aid to dealing with insurgency. The reprogramming of aid to meet short term goals – adding dollars to bullets – had to be forced on the system largely by the US Embassy team in Baghdad and the US military. A State Department report showed that as of June 29, 2005, \$ 13.6 billion (74% of the 18.4 billion provided in the IRRF) had been obligated, and \$ 6.35 billion had been disbursed.¹⁵⁰⁸ This level of US funding for Iraq

represents America's largest assistance effort in a single country since the Marshall Plan that helped transform Europe following World War II.

Yet USAID and the Department of Defense proved incapable of conducting effective surveys of requirements, establishing valid contracts, administering contracts, ensuring that projects could be carried out in threatened areas, and assessing success and failure with any objectivity. The CPA Inspector General's Audit Report dated July 2004 states that "Project and Contracting Office (PCO) faces challenges in ensuring that tasks performed under these contracts fully meet the US Government's requirements and are economically and efficiently executed".¹⁵⁰⁹ Inspector General Bowen's report states the "detailed systemic management failings, lax or nonexistent oversight and apparent fraud and embezzlement on the part of the US officials charged with administering the rebuilding efforts".

As Figures 53 and 54 show, spending lagged far behind the rates needed to have an impact. Reprogramming has led to accelerated spending in the security and law enforcement areas, and the initial spend-out rate on the electricity sector, oil infrastructure, justice and civil society, democracy, education and governance, health care, transportation, and water resources was dismal. Despite the more than \$ 6 billion disbursed out as of June 2005, the country's electricity supply is far from meeting demand, oil production is below prewar levels and barely half of Iraqis report having access to safe, stable supplies of potable water. Unemployment remains between the 25 to 50 % margin and food and fuel subsidies have resulted in a significant budget deficit.¹⁵¹⁰

While the reprogramming of aid to meet short-term security needs has served a vital purpose in substituting dollars for bullets, and some projects have been successful, far too much money has been spent and is being spent on US-conceived efforts that pour money into US and foreign contracts, spend that money outside Iraq or on overhead and security, and do not lead Iraq towards effective economic development. Brig. Gen. Bill McCoy, for instance, stated that the security costs were initially factored in at 9% level during budgeting of most infrastructure projects. He maintained that the increase in the cost of security, sometimes up to 25% caused downsizing in most projects. As of August 11, 2005 \$3 billion was taken out of water and \$500 million out electricity construction he said¹⁵¹¹. James Jeffrey, senior advisor on Iraq for the State Department, stated during a House Appropriations subcommittee on foreign operations hearing that "we [the US] scaled back out projects in many areas, we do not have the money"¹⁵¹².

This spending has failed to create jobs and investment activity that has a meaningful macroeconomic scale or that will act to meet the needs of key sectors and governorates. The USAID and Department of Defense aid planning and contracting effort is a self-inflicted wound that needs to be replaced by Iraqi planning and management as soon as possible. The US aid picture seems to be one where reconstruction is almost entirely under the control of USAID, IRMO, DoD and PCO whose employees are exclusively confined to the Green Zone and do not speak Arabic. Almost all Iraqis are excluded from the economic development of their country. There are many competent Iraqis at the central and local level who can participate in determining the type of project their country

needs, numerous Iraqi companies that can be hired to carry out reconstruction projects, and millions of Iraqi young men and women who can provide the labor for the foundations of new Iraq.

Reliance on US contractors, and non-Iraq contractors also compounded the security problems as well as wasting vast amounts of money on expenses that never reached Iraqis or improved their lives. While some contractors showed courage and dedication, many simply took the money and “hid” in secure areas, and corruption was endemic in many aspects of the aid effort.

At this point in time, it is too late to fix the US management and planning structure that has wasted so much of the past aid effort, and there is no meaningful chance of the level of outside aid from other donors necessary to substitute for US funds. What is needed is the same kind of effort for aid that has gone into creating effective Iraqi forces. It is to let the Iraqi government make its own plans, manage its own efforts on Iraqi terms, and spend the money in Iraq. The US Embassy team should certainly vet each project, insist on suitable reporting and accounting, and blow the whistle on corruption. It is brutally clear, however, that the talent to plan and manage an effective effort simply does not exist in Washington, and outsiders may be able to advise in transforming the kind of “command kleptocracy” that existed under Saddam Hussein, but do not have the skills necessary to run that transformation themselves.

XVI. Strategic and Grand Strategic Lessons

If one looks beyond Iraq, and at its broader lessons for the future, there is much to learn. The US and other nations that become involved in major military and humanitarian operations in other nations have much to learn from the Coalition's experience in Iraq and no lesson of the Iraqi force development effort is more important than the need to accurately assess the full nature of the grand strategic situation in going to war, and to act decisively and comprehensively in every dimension of war that its essential to victory. Any strategic or military doctrine that focuses purely on the military dimension of war, particularly in conventional warfighting terms, is mindless to the point of being a recipe for self-defeat.

Much has been made of the intelligence failures in assessing Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. These failures pale to insignificance, however, in comparison with the failure of US policy and military planners to accurately assess the overall situation in Iraq before engaging in war, and for the risk of insurgency if the US did not carry out an effective mix of nation building and stability operations. This failure cannot be made the responsibility of the intelligence community.

Making the right strategic assessments in going to war is a policy level responsibility. In the case of Iraq, it was the responsibility of the President, the Vice President, the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. All had the responsibility to bring together policymakers, military planners, intelligence experts, and area experts to provide as accurate a picture of Iraq and the consequences of an invasion as possible. Each failed to exercise that responsibility. The nation's leading policymakers chose to act on a limited and highly ideological view of Iraq that planned for one extremely optimistic definition of success, but not for risk or failure.

War Planning Means Planning for Stability Operations and Nation Building

No civilian policymaker or senior military officer can ever be excused for focusing on warfighting and ignoring the political dimension of war. This is especially when a war does not affect national survival and is optional. Defeat of the enemy is always a means to an end. It also has meaning if it can be translated into a lasting political success and grand strategic outcome.

The President, the National Security Council, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and other senior policymakers and military officers failed to meet this responsibility at a fundamental level. There was no real planning for stability operations. Key policymakers did not want to engage in nation building and chose to believe that removing Saddam Hussein from power would leave the Iraqi government functioning and intact. Plans were made on the basis that significant elements of the Iraqi armed forces would turn to the Coalitions' side, remain passive, or put up only token resistance.

It was not until 2004 that a seed corps of training nation-builders was instituted with the creation of the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization in the State Department. The 55-person shop was manned largely by personnel on loan from the DoD, the CIA, and other agencies, and was tasked with anticipating the next global hot spot. Finances, however, were tight, with members on both sides of the aisle in Congress continuing to worry that elevating the importance of nation-building would divert funds and attention from the nation's ability to wage all-out war. IN 2005, the White House asked Congress to chip in \$17 million for start-up expenses, but got only \$7.7 million. The Bush Administration then asked for \$124 -- \$24 million for staffing and the beginnings of a first response team, and the remainder for to establish an emergency crisis fund. Instead, lawmakers gave the Pentagon the authority to transfer \$100 million of its budget to the new office in the event of a crisis, effectively keeping the office on a shoe string.¹⁵¹³

No real effort was made to ensure continuity of government or stability and security in Iraq's major cities and throughout the countryside. Decades of serious sectarian and ethnic tension were downplayed or ignored. Actions by Saddam Hussein's regime that had crippled Iraq's economic development since the early years of the Iran-Iraq War – at time when Iraq had only 17-18 million people were ignored. Iraq was assumed to be an oil wealthy country whose economy could quickly recover if the oil fields were not burned, and transform itself into a modern capitalist structure in the process.

The nation's most senior military commanders compounded these problems by planning for the conventional defeat of the enemy and an early exit from Iraq, by making a deliberate effort to avoid "Phase IV" and stability operations. The fact they did so to minimize the strain on the US force posture, and the "waste" of US troops on "low priority" missions played a major role in creating the conditions under which insurgency could develop and flourish.

The intelligence community and civilian and military area experts may not have predicted the exact nature of the insurgency that followed. Analysis is not prophecy. They did, however, provide ample warning that this was a risk that Iraqi exiles were often failing to provide a balanced or accurate picture, and nation building would be both necessary and extremely difficult. The nation's top policymakers choose to both ignore and discourage such warnings as "negative" and "exaggerated," and to plan for success. They did so having seen the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the sectarian and ethnic problems of Afghanistan.

Planning for Failure and Not Just for Success

Iraq reiterates a lesson that has been consistent since the US army's first military engagements, and dramatic defeats in its initial battles with Native Americans. To succeed, the US must plan for failure as well as success. It must see the development or escalation of insurgency as a serious risk in any contingency were it is possible, and take preventive and ongoing steps to prevent or limit it.

This is an essential aspect of war planning and no Secretary of Defense, service secretary, senior civilian policy official, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, service chief, or unified and

specified commander can be excused for failing to plan and act in this area. Responsibility begins directly at the top, and failures at any other level pale to insignificance by comparison. The fact that failure can always be explained is irrelevant at this level of policymaking and command, it can never be excused.

This is even truer in Iraq because top-level policymakers failed to recognize or admit the scale of the problem as it developed. Their failures were as much failures of reaction as prediction or contingency planning, and failures to accurately assess and react to ongoing events are far less excusable. There were no mysteries involving the scale of the collapse of the Iraqi government and security forces within days of the fall of Saddam Hussein. The reaction was slow, inadequate, and shaped by denial of the seriousness of the problem.

This situation did not improve until more than a year after the fall Saddam's regimes, and at least six months after it became apparent that a serious insurgency was developing. Major resources did not flow into the creation of effective Iraqi forces until the fall of 2004. The US aid effort behaved for nearly a year and a half as if insurgency was truly a small group of diehards or "terrorists." Even in late 2005, top US civilian policymakers split hairs over semantics to try to even avoid the word insurgency, fail to perceive that many Sunni Arab Iraqis see such an insurgency has legitimate causes, and choose to largely publicly ignore the risks of civil conflict and the developing problems in Shi'ite forces and political structures.

The US denied risks and realities of the Vietnam War. European powers initially denied the realities that forced them to end their colonial role. Israel denied the risks and realities of striking deep into Lebanon and seeking to create a Christian-dominated allied state. Russia denied the risks and realities of Chechnya in spite of all the brutal lessons of having denied the risk and realities of Afghanistan.

The failure to learn the need for accurate characterization of the nation and region where counterinsurgency may -- or does -- exist seems to be a constant lesson of why nations go to and stay at war. The failure to plan for risk and failure as well as success is equally significant. Ruthless objectivity is the cheapest solution to be preventing and limiting insurgency, and planning and deploying for the full range of stability operations and nation building is an essential precaution wherever the stakes are high and the risk is significant.

Partnership versus Changing the Nation and the Culture

Iraq -- like Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia -- is a warning that even the best planning for stability and nation-building will not be enough unless they take place in the right context. The US must plan from the start to treat host countries as partners and not as clients or "experiments." This means avoiding the kind of procounselor operation the US established in the CPA, making the creation of effective local governance and authority a key grand strategic priority, and giving the same priority to the creation of local military, security, and police forces. It should be clear before the US fires the first weapon that it will treat the nation that emerges from a war as a partner, not a people to be occupied. It

should be equally clear that the US will not seek to establish bases or a lasting presence, and will transfer all forms of authority as soon as possible.

At the same time, the US cannot afford to have illusions about restructuring cultures and nations in its own image. Force development efforts do not occur in a vacuum. They must be part of a much broader effort to deal with a foreign population -- with different religions, ideologies, goals and cultural values -- on terms that population wants. "Relativism" is inevitable and must be tailored to the political, ethnic, and sectarian divisions within a given nation. Under most conditions, the US will be perceived by a significant percentage of the people as an invader, occupier, neo-colonial power, "crusader," or simply as selfishly serving its own strategic interests. Language alone presents serious problems, and American public diplomacy is too ethnocentric to be effective.

The US can encourage political, economic, and social reform, but cannot demand implement it. Like Iraqis, people must find their own leaders, political structures, and methods of governance. The US must also recognize that it lacks basic competence in the economics of nation building in societies whose economic structures, ability to execute reforms and projects, and perceived values differ significantly from the US. Different cultures, human rights practices, legal methods, and religious practices can be influenced to evolve in ways the US sees as positive, but there are no universal values, and the US cannot shape a different nation, culture, or religion.

In many cases, the sheer scale of the problem will be a major factor. Force development is difficult enough and it must be tied to political, economic, and social goals that the host country wants and the US can credibly achieve as a "partner" and not an occupier. Demographic, ethnic, and sectarian problems can take a generation or more to fully solve. Decades of economic failure, neglect, and discrimination can take a decade or more to fix. A lack of rule of law, working human rights, pragmatic and experienced leaders and political parties cannot be fixed by a few years of outside aid and education.

This does not mean that the US cannot exert tremendous influence, or that the US should not seek reform and change. But, the swamp will almost always be undrainable unless a host government and power-set of local political movements drives the process. Religious, cultural, and ideological reform must come largely from within. The local populace must see the reason for economic reform, and believe in it enough to act. Governance and security must be largely local to be perceived as legitimate. Equally important, if the swamp can be drained, the process will generally take so long that a US counterinsurgency campaign will be lost or won long before the process is completed.

Force Development Must be Tied to As Broad a Structure of Alliances as Possible

Iraq, like so many other serious Post-WWII insurgencies, shows that successful counterinsurgency means having or creating a local partner that can take over from US forces and that can govern. Both Vietnam and Iraq show the US cannot win an important counterinsurgency campaign alone. The US will always be dependent on the people in the host country, and usually on local and regional allies. And to some extent, will be

dependent on the quality of its operations in the UN, in dealing with traditional allies and in diplomacy. If the US can't figure out a way to have or create such an ally, and fight under these conditions, a counterinsurgency conflict may well not be worth fighting.

This means the US must do far more than creating effective allied forces. In most cases, it find a ways to help its partners reshape their process of politics and governance so that the development of security forces is matched by the steady development of governance, and a matching civil presence and the provision of effective government services.

Economics and Counterinsurgency: Dollars Must Be Used as Effectively as Bullets

Force development must take place under conditions where the US is prepared to use aid and civic action dollars as well as bullets, and the US military has done far better in this area in Iraq than it has in the past. Unfortunately, the history of the insurgency shows that the same cannot be said for USAID in Washington, or for any aspect of the economic planning effort under the CPA. The US ignored the economic and related political and cultural realities of nation building going into Iraq and ignores the economic realities now.

Every independent assessment of the US aid effort warns just how bad the US performance has been in these areas -- even in critical areas like the oil industry. The US has now spent or committed its way through nearly \$20 billion, and has virtually no self-sustained structural economic change to show for it. Most aid projects spend more money on overhead, contractors, and security than gets to Iraqis in the field. It can't protect most of its aid projects; for too much of post-March 2003 Iraqi economic "growth" has been illusory and comes from US waste and wartime profiteering.

Iraq is also a warning that self-congratulatory measures of achievement are mindless regardless of whether they report on force development or the other US actions necessary to achieve a grand strategic outcome. The way in which the US lied to itself during the early phases of the Iraqi force development effort -- and focuses on the number of units created, the total number of men in service, and total forces deployed -- showed such numbers are meaningless unless they are tied to clear measures of success and effectiveness.

Similarly school buildings completed is irrelevant unless there are books, teachers, furniture, students and security, and the buildings go to troubled areas as well as secure ones. Bad or empty buildings leave a legacy of hostility, not success. Empty or low capacity clinics don't win hearts and minds. Increasing peak power capacity is meaningless unless the right people actually get it.

Warfighting, Stability Operations, and Nation-Building Lessons

Finally, this analysis of the Iraqi force development effort raises lessons about the way in which forces should be developed from a military perspective.

- o **First, warfighters must focus relentlessly on the desired outcome of the war and not simply the battle or overall military situation.** The development or improvement of allied forces and counterinsurgency or counterterrorism forces should be part of a broad set of political and grand

strategic goals for the war. This may not be direct responsibility of war fighters or military advisors, but shaping such efforts at the command level must ask is whether the US is actually moving toward a strategic outcome that serves the ultimate interests of the US? If warfighters don't know, they should not spend the lives of American men and women in the first place.

More broadly, the US military, and any military force that may be engaged in counterinsurgency warfare and armed peacemaking, should be taught at every level that stability operations and conflict termination are the responsibility of every field-grade officer. (And, for that matter, every civilian.) Warfighters need to act on the principle that every tactical operation must have a political context and set of goals. The US needs to tie its overall campaign plan to a detailed plan for the use of economic aid at every level, from simple bribery to actually seeking major changes in the economy of a given country.

- o **Second, US military planning and operations in major counterinsurgency and counter terrorist campaigns should be based on the principle that the best “force multiplier” will be effective allies, and interoperability with a true local partner, are both a means and precondition to serious counterinsurgency warfare.** Even when US forces can dominate the battlefield in conventional or asymmetric warfare, this can only shape the broader political and strategic struggle.

The US can only win most counterinsurgency campaigns if it creates strong allies, and the US must act decisively on this principle. US tactical victories will often only be a means to this end. The real victories will come when the US has allied troops that can operate against insurgents in the field, and a friendly government to carry out nation building and civil action activities at the same time. Furthermore, creating a real partnership with allies means giving respect and treating them as true partners; it does not mean using allied force to create proxies or tools

- o **Third, stability operations, counterinsurgency, armed peacemaking, and many aspects of nation building must focus on creating effective local military, security, and police forces as a primary objective from the initial planning for military operations to their completion.** The creation of effective host country forces must be given the same priority as effective operations by the invading or occupying force. Providing the proper resources in terms of training teams, equipment, facilities, and money is an essential aspect of planning and operations, and officers and officials who do not act on this principle should be removed from command.

The time in which occupying forces could act independently is over, particularly in countries and areas with different religions, ideologies, cultures, political systems, and values. Political legitimacy and stability will almost inevitably depend on the level of success in creating effective national forces. So will political and operation acceptance and support by the people in the country where operations take place. To ignore this reality, is to breed insurgency and resistance, and cede a fundamental advantage to opponents in asymmetric warfare or efforts to go from peace enforcement to internal stability.

- o **Fourth, creating effective forces means creating effective security/paramilitary forces and police forces, not simply local military forces.** The US must recognize that creating the conditions for effective governance and police are as important as the military. Military forces can defeat insurgents, but security forces and specially trained police are the key to securing “liberated” or “pacified” areas, providing day-to-day local security, and establish local legitimacy for the government the US is seeking to aid.

In virtually all cases, this means that the effort to create effective police and security forces must take place simultaneously with the creation of local military forces, and must be given the same priority. Planning and strategy must similarly see the deployment of police and paramilitary security functions as an essential part of military operations, “pacification,” and winning hearts and minds. Advisory efforts and funding must be shaped accordingly.

- o **Fifth, success requires effective political structures and governance.** Military and security success require matching success in the military, political, economic, and governance dimension.

They also require the creation of effective civil ministries to take over local military, security, and police forces.

Success in both counterinsurgency operations, and the development of effective local forces, can only come in a broader political and economic context. Victory cannot be imposed on a people by either US or local forces. Moreover, national politics will generally be less important than establishing effective governance at the national, regional, and local level. Government must be present and provide effective services at the local level for the same reasons that effective local police forces are critical to perceptions of legitimacy and winning hearts and minds.

- o **Sixth, creating effective local forces also requires the creation of effective ministries to command, manage, and fund them.** Iraq shows all too clearly that both creating effective local forces and creating political legitimacy requires effective civil control at the level of the ministry of defense and ministry of the interior, and effective fiscal management by the ministry of finance.

The exact names and functions of such ministries may differ by war, but local forces cannot be developed in isolation from civil authority and political control, and all of the key ministries must be functional if all forces are to achieve balanced effectiveness, by subject to reasonable levels of fiscal control and honesty, and create a transition to full local sovereignty.

- o **Seventh, in practice, this means the US must carry out an integrated advisory effort under the Department of Defense with a unified command in the field.** The US cannot afford to rely on interagency coordination in shaping allied forces in serious counterinsurgency, or attempt to manage such efforts from Washington versus the field. It cannot afford to attempt to split the force development effort between a Department of Defense-led effort to shape military forces and a Department of State-led effort to shape police and security forces.

The overall structure of the US effort at counterinsurgency, stability operations, and nation-building should be directed and coordinated by an ambassador heading a strong country team that directly integrated civil and military command. However, as long as there is the reality or a major risk of insurgency or large-scale terrorism, the Department of Defense and the military command and advisory team should shape the overall force development effort as part of an integrated effort to create and deploy the necessary mix of military, security, and police forces. The time may come in which creating a civil police force will have priority and require a different approach, but this is only after the defeat of the insurgency or terrorism.

- o **Eighth, the advisory and force development effort must focus from the start on creating forces that will unite the country, and avoid become part of ethnic, sectarian, and other divisions. It must create a force trained to see human rights and the rule of law as an essential part of counterinsurgency and counter terrorism.** Insurgency and terrorism are often bred by national ethnic, sectarian, tribal, and racial differences. Insurgents and terrorists may not be legitimate but the causes that create or encourage them often are. Defeating them requires forces that will unite the country, have a balance that does not make them the tool of divisive interests, and which will respect the rights of ordinary citizens and understand the need for restraint and winning hearts and minds.

The US and Coalition may have made mistakes in shaping Iraq's forces, but they were correct in recognizing these needs from the start and the need for a "culture" within Iraqi forces focused on national interests, inclusion, and the restrained and focused use of force. Internal political factors made this far more difficult in the case of the Special Security Forces and police than the regular military, but such political problems will be typical of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism operations, as well as stability operations and nation-building. Overcoming as many of such problems as possible will be critical to establishing the legitimacy of the local government and forces, creating trust and winning hearts and minds, and ensuring that operations do not create new opponents as they defeat old ones.

Even from the narrow perspective of operational priorities, the issue is not human rights in any theoretical or ideological sense. It is that unfocused operations that deny the populace security, and the innocent such rights, will often be inherently self-defeating.

- o **Ninth, the training and force development effort must become a local and national effort as soon as possible.** Effectiveness, perceived legitimacy and victory are all dependent on having local forces taking over as much of the force development and training effort as soon as possible. This means plans to train the trainers must be a high priority from the start, and that foreign or foreign-led training efforts should become a supplement to local efforts as soon as possible.

This is also a key element of making vetting successful, training forces to be national and not factional, and to assume responsibility, rather than deferring to US or other foreign elements and passing responsibility outwards. In many cases, creating successful national training facilities will also be a key to changing the culture and operational values of local forces. This can only take place if such change is institutionalized in local training facilities at every level.

- o **Tenth, the force development effort must focus on giving local forces responsibility and visibility as soon as they can become effective.** Legitimacy is a matter of visibility and perception. Local populations need to see their own forces on the ground; they need to see their own government as establishing control. Moreover, even the most skilled US forces can never have the HUMINT capabilities, language skills, cultural sensitivities, and ability to distinguish friend from foe or neutral, of effective local forces. There are key operational, as well as political, advantages to this lesson.

- o **Eleventh, it is not enough to train and equip local forces. They must be assisted in deploying into the field, given increasing responsibility at rates they can accept, have embedded advisory teams until they can assume responsibility for their own battle space, and be paired with US or allied units until they can largely fight on their own.**

This analysis describes these efforts in detail, and they are scarcely new lessons of war. New or reorganized forces need more than basic training and equipped. They need patience, time to transition, support in combat, and the benefit of experience. This is particularly true in countries and cultures where initiative has been discouraged, there is no strong NCO corps, corruption and phantom manpower are common, and far too many officers and officials have led from the rear.

- o **Twelfth, the US must devote the necessary resources from the start.** Much of the problem in Iraq during the first years of the Iraqi force development effort occurred because the US attempted to “nickel and dime” the resources it provided, and to judge the cost-effectiveness of given plans from the year and without any operational experience. The US has paid a high price in blood, time, and dollars for these mistakes. Allied force development must have the proper funds, advisory manpower, and be given the proper priority.

- o **Thirteenth, interoperability and effectiveness require proper support in terms of equipment and facilities, and the proper level of US aid.** The US was far too slow in recognizing the need for proper equipment and facilities. Even now, US advisors may still be underequipping Iraqi forces in terms of protection and some aspects of firepower, having made a present virtue out of past necessity. The proper equipment must not lag local force training, deployment, and operations.

At the same time, the US military needs to tailor its equipment, netcentric warfare capabilities, intelligence and battle management efforts, and training and doctrine, to working with local forces at the level of interoperability they can actually achieve. It is not the responsibility of local forces to catch up. It is the responsibility of the US military to ensure that no matter how advanced its warfighting capabilities may become, they can always adapt to allied needs -- even at relatively unsophisticated levels.

- o **Fourteenth, the force development effort must move as quickly as possible towards a balanced and self-sustaining force with the capability to transition out of counterinsurgency and counterterrorism to peacetime operations. There must be a long-term plan.** Any force

development effort will require constant change and priority must be given to immediate operational needs. But, far too much of the effort in Iraq focused initially on total manpower, and then on rushing combat battalions into the field without the necessary headquarters, combat and service support, maintenance and logistics to operate as balanced and independent forces. This situation is being corrected, but it should not be repeated.

There also needs to be a clear plan that convince local forces and political leaders that the US and its allies plan to leave, prepares them to change the role and mission of their forces as internal stability is established, ensures that military forces will transition to securing the nation against foreign enemies, and the police will become regular police. The force development effort must define the meaning of victory in practical force planning terms, and set goals that can end in successful conflict termination.

- o **Fifteenth, US military forces must have the proper training and skills to perform the mission.** The US military has a long history of relearning the need for area expertise, language skills, cultural sensitivity, and force development efforts the hard way. It does not play easily with others, particularly if they do not have the same degree of professionalism and effectiveness, and cannot operate at technological levels close to US forces.

The US cannot focus solely on asymmetric warfare, counterinsurgency and counterterrorist operations, nation-building, and stability operations. It cannot afford, however, not to retain and expand the skills it has learned from Iraq and Afghanistan and institutionalize them as a key element and career path within US forces. Improvisation should not be a necessity; its cost is measured in body bags.

- o **Sixteenth, the US needs to have a functional interagency process. and partner its military with effective civilian counterparts.** Iraq has shown that political leaders and senior military cannot afford to bypass the system, or to lack support from the civilian agencies that must do their part from the outset. The US needs to begin by deciding on the team it needs to go to war, and then make that team work. It is one of the oddities historically that Robert McNamara got his largest increase in US troops deployed to Vietnam by bypassing the interagency process. The Bush Administration began by going through an interagency process before the war, but largely chose to ignore it after January of 2003.

This is the wrong approach. Counterinsurgency wars are as much political and economic as military. They require political action, aid in governance, economic development and attention to the ideological and political dimension. The US can only succeed here if the interagency process can work.

At another level, the US needs civilian risk-takers. It needs a counterpart to the military in the field. There is no point in supporting the staffing of more interagency coordination bodies in Washington unless their primary function is to put serious resources into the field. The US is not going to win anything by having better interagency coordination, and more meetings, unless the end result is to put the right mix of people and resources out in the countryside where the fighting takes place.

The US needs to put a firm end to the kind of mentality that overstaffs the State Department and intelligence community in Washington, and doesn't require career civilians to take risks in the field. Foreign Service officers should not be promoted, in fact should be selected out, unless they are willing to take risks. The US can get all of the risk takers we want. There already is a flood of applications from qualified people. It can also ensure continuity and expertise by drawing on the brave group of people already in Iraq and Afghanistan -- a remarkable number of whom are already contract employees -- and giving them career status.

In the process, the US also needs to "civilianize" some aspects of its military. It needs to improve both their area and language skills, create the added specialized forces it needs for stability and nation building operations, and rethink tour length for military who work in critical positions and

with allied forces. Personal relationships are absolutely critical in the countries where the US is most likely to fight counterinsurgency wars. So is area expertise and continuity in intelligence.

Counterinsurgency needs a core of military and civilians who will accept 18 month to 24-month tours in key slots. The problem today is often that the selection system does not focus on the best person but rather on external personnel and career planning considerations. Moreover, it fails to recognize that those who take such additional risks should be paid for it in full, and be given different leave policies and promotion incentives. Today, a soldier who is only a battalion commander is *only* a battalion commander. The key officers are those with area and counterinsurgency skills that go beyond the combat unit level. Those officers need to have more diverse skills, and deal adequately with the broader dimension of war, and stay long enough to be fully effective.

- o **Seventeenth, information operations must make local force building a key focus:** Iraq is yet another example of the importance of information operations focused on local values and perceptions. No matter how well the US and its allies attempt to justify and explain their behavior, some form of local resentment, fear, and conspiracy theories are inevitable. US forces operating in nations with different religions, cultures, ideologies, and values are likely to be seen as “occupiers,” or as supporting rival factions. Defeating these perceptions must be a major goal of US information operations in maintaining local support, dealing with neutral or undecided local nationals, and winning over hostile nationals.

The key to success will often be to convince the local populace that the US is making the best effort possible to develop local forces, and these forces will be national and inclusive in character, rather than serve US or factional interests. This will do much to establish the legitimacy of the national political structure the US is seeking to create, to convince local nationals and others the US plans to leave and do so as soon as this is feasible, and reduce the hostilities and fears that feed insurgency. Like many aspects of information operations and public diplomacy, the key to success will not be “selling” US values and goals, but convincing the local populace, the region, and outside world that the US is seeking to achieve local values and goals and will not be an occupier or seek bases and strategic influence that does not represent the legitimate desire of the nation involved.

- o **Eighteenth, local force development takes as long as it takes.** Iraq is a clear warning that there is no present way the US can predict how long it will take to create effective local forces, or set deadlines and calendar dates for such efforts. In many cases, the initial effort may take years of continuing advisory support, and US forces may have to provide air support, transportation, intelligence aid, and emergency combat support for years after local forces take over most responsibilities. US political and military leaders need to accept this reality as the price of engagement and going to war.

The Basic Lesson for Future Conflicts

The subtext of all of these points is that the US must adopt a fundamentally different approach to counterinsurgency and large-scale counterterrorist operations than the one it used in going to war with Iraq. The goal of such battles is not to win US military victories, but rather to shape nations that can begin to win such battles on their own and emerge as reasonably stable and function entities that serve the broad interests of their peoples.

This means that building capable local forces is not a luxury or afterthought, or a means of aid US forces, but a key grand strategic goal. It must be an integral aspect of plans and operations from the start, and the feasibility of such efforts must be a key consideration in deciding whether to commit US forces. In the case of Coalition operations, this means they must also be a key part of Coalition planning and operations from the outset.

This requires a top down change in priorities and attitudes from the President to the battalion commander in the field. It requires a commitment at the level of the National Security Advisor, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense to make such efforts real and effective, and to accepting their cost as a price of US operations. It inevitably requires interagency coordination, but this is a hollow goal unless it leads to effective interagency action in the field. The purpose of such interagency efforts is to support operations, not micromanage or discuss them.

A basic change is needed in US military thinking, attitudes, and operations. This change may already be underway. A combination of the US experience in Afghanistan and Iraq has taught the need for specialized forces with area and language skills and the fact that nation-building and stability operations are now aspects of the military profession that no competent officer can ignore. The new Department of Defense directive on stability operations issued in the fall of 2005 is a vital step in making such efforts part of US doctrine. US military training is adapting both to counterinsurgency operations and the need to work with allied forces.

Much will depend, however, on just how far the US military can learn to look beyond war fighting to grand strategic outcomes, and become effective in both creating allied forces and seeing the political dimension of victory. It is fair to say that many previous failures to deal with conflict termination and stability operations began at the highest policy levels.

The uniformed military are, however, the professionals and policymakers come and go, with very different levels of practical experience. At a minimum, military officers have the responsibility to plan and advise for every element of victory, to be capable of every necessary element of operations, and to see “jointness” in grand strategic terms. The officer who cannot see this necessity, and act upon it with full professional competence, is unfit to serve.

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²⁵ Robert M. Perito, "The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Public Security in Iraq," Washington, US Institute of Peace, Special Report, 137. April 2005, pp. 6-7.

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⁴⁵ CPA report "Working Papers: Iraq Status," July 13, 2004. p. 15. The budget data imply, but do not explicitly state, that such "projects" are actually operating expenses.

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⁵⁰ Robert M. Perito, "The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Public Security in Iraq," Washington, US Institute of Peace, Special Report, 137. April 2005, pp. 6-7.

⁵¹ MNSTC-I chart entitled "Historical Perspective on ISF Reporting," MNSTC-I Baghdad, June 2005.

⁵² Whatever the mistakes of the CPA, the status of the effort to create effective Iraqi forces became progressively more uncertain after the transfer of sovereignty. The totals issued by the US government as of 13 July 2004 suddenly began to count both manpower fully trained in academies or with full military training, and manpower in the rushed programs that can be a matter of days or a few weeks as being part of the same total.

The US stopped issuing meaningful public information on the equipment and training effort, and cut the content of the Iraq Weekly Status Report to the point where it had limited value without providing meaningful data at the MNSTC-I web site (<http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil>). The end result is that there is no way to relate what was happening to a meaningful picture of actual requirements and the measures of accomplishment that were provided became the kind of empty, self-congratulatory statements typical of public relations exercises.

As for total manning and equipment levels, the US initially provided reasonably detailed data on progress in training and equipping Iraqi forces. As time went on, however, such breakouts were eliminated from public US reporting from the Embassy, Department of Defense, and Department of State. The only heading in the Weekly Status Report became "Trained/On-Hand," a heading that seems almost deliberately misleading since it is really just total active strength without the slightest regard to training.

The new figures for trained manpower overstated the training levels for the police and for the border service (DBE), and ignored the fact that the facilities protection service-training program has virtually no training at all. At the end of the day, a far less honest reporting system was established, and one that exaggerated the actual level of training.

⁵³ GAO, Rebuilding Iraq: Resource, Security, Governance, Essential Services, and Oversight Issues, Washington, General Accounting Office, June 2004, GAO-04-902R, pp. 50-70.

⁵⁴ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, pp. 1-2.

⁵⁵ The full text of NSPD-36 can be found in Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, pp. 63-65.

⁵⁶ Robert M. Perito, "The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Public Security in Iraq," Washington, US Institute of Peace, Special Report, 137. April 2005, pp. 6-7.

⁵⁷ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, p. 9.

⁵⁸ E-mail to the author by a US official, July 27, 2005.

⁵⁹ See Robert M. Perito, "The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Public Security in Iraq," Washington, US Institute of Peace, Special Report, 137. April 2005, pp. 12-13.

⁶⁰ Doug Struck, "Iraqi Security Has Come Far, with Far to Go," Washington Post, August 1, 2004, p. A18.

⁶¹ Robert M. Perito, "The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience with Public Security in Iraq," Washington, US Institute of Peace, Special Report, 137. April 2005, pp. 6-7.

⁶² Carol J. Williams, "Iraqis More Eager to Help Police," Los Angeles Times, July 23, 2004.

⁶³ Doug Struck, "Iraqi Security Has Come Far, with Far to Go," Washington Post, August 1, 2004, p. A18.

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⁶⁴ Based on detailed delivery data as of April 23, 2004.

⁶⁵ Figures take from the Iraq Weekly Status Report for this period, and from an interview with an official in OSD(Public Affairs).

⁶⁶ Statement of Joseph A. Christoff, "Rebuilding Iraq: Preliminary Observations on Challenges in Transferring Security Responsibilities to Iraqi Military and Police, General Accounting Office, Washington, DC, March 14, 2005, GAO-05-43IT, p. 4.

⁶⁷ See GAO, Rebuilding Iraq: Resource, Security, Governance, Essential Services, and Oversight Issues, Washington, General Accounting Office, June 2004, GAO-04-902R, pp. 50-62.

⁶⁸ This history and text is based on materials provided in interviews, and modified from GAO, Rebuilding Iraq: Resource, Security, Governance, Essential Services, and Oversight Issues, Washington, General Accounting Office, June 2004, GAO-04-902R, pp. 63-71

⁶⁹ Office of the Inspector General, Coalition Provisional Authority, "July 30, 2004 Report to Congress," Appendix, Table E.1.

⁷⁰ Edward Wong, "Leaders of Iraq Back Militias, Widening Rift with Sunnis," New York Times, June 9, 2005; Tom Lasseter, "Militia Backed By Iraqi Leaders Accused in Attacks," Philadelphia Inquirer, June 10, 2005, p. 1.

⁷¹ Quoted in Edward Wong, "Leaders of Iraq Back Militias, Widening Rift with Sunnis," New York Times, June 9, 2005.

⁷² Quoted in Jonathan Finer and Naseer Nouri, "Sectarian Divide Widens on Iraq's Constitutional Panel," Washington Post, June 9, 2005.

⁷³ GlobalSecurity.org, "Mogtada al-Sadr," <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/al-sadr.htm>

⁷⁴ Quoted in Ann Scott Tyson, "Iraqi Insurgency is Weakening, Abizaid Says," Washington Post, March 2, 2005, pg. 5

⁷⁵ <http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/mission.htm>

⁷⁶ Department of Defense, Iraq Weekly Status Report, September 22, 2004.

⁷⁷ The money allocated to total obligations had only put \$2,325 million into the start of the pipeline. Office of the Inspector General, Coalition Provisional Authority, Report to Congress, October 30, 2004. p. 59.

⁷⁸ The Deputy DoD OIG for Inspections and Policy is about to being a joint project with the DoS OIG to cover all phases of the training effort for the Iraqi police forces. This should be extended to cover Iraqi military and security forces.

⁷⁹ "Telling the Fallujah Story to the World," IMEF and MNC-I-I Effects Exploitation Team, 20 November 2004 (Third cut); Bill Gertz, "Foreign Terrorists in Fallujah," Washington Times, December 14, 2004, p. 3.

⁸⁰ Department of Defense, Iraq Weekly Status Report, November 3, 2004 and information provided from MNSTC-I..

⁸¹ Karl Vick, "Insurgents Kill 17 Iraqi Civilians; U.S. Army Site Targeted; Soldiers, Guardsmen Slain Elsewhere," Washington Post December 6, 2004. p. A-18.

⁸² USCENTCOM, News Release, November 13, 2004.

⁸³ http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/facts_troops.htm, accessed November 11, 2004 and December 18, 2004.

⁸⁴ Quoted in "Wave of Suicide Blasts Kills at Least 25," posted on www.cnn.com, January 19, 2005.

⁸⁵ Rowan Scarborough, "Sunni Role in Military in Iraq Falls Short of Goal," Washington Times, January 24, 2005, p. 1.

⁸⁶ <http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/press.htm>, 5-12-04

⁸⁷ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3."

⁸⁸ Dan Murphy, "Iraqi Police Take Brunt of Attacks," The Christian Science Monitor, January 11, 2005.

⁸⁹ See http://usinfo.state.gov/mena/middle_east_north_africa/new_iraq.html

⁹⁰ Iraq Weekly Status Report, Department of Defense, Iraq Weekly Update -20041208.pdf

⁹¹ MNSTC-I response to inquiry.

⁹² Anthony Shadid, "Troops Move to Quell Insurgency in Mosul," Washington Post, November 17, 2004, p. 1.

⁹³ Tom Squitieri and C. Mark Brinkley, "Long Way to Go Before Iraqis Take Over Security," USA Today, December 14, 2004, p. 1.

⁹⁴ Quoted in Bassem Mroue, "Top Iraqi General Says Bush Misinformed About Soldiers," Associated Press, December 26, 2004.

⁹⁵ Tom Squitieri and C. Mark Brinkley, "Long Way to Go Before Iraqis Take Over Security," USA Today, December 14, 2004, p. 1.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Stephen Farrell, "Iraqi Forces Find Harsh Boundary Between Rehearsal and Reality," London Times, December 6, 2004.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Tony Capaccio and Jon Steinman, "U.S. Commander Says Iraqi Training Behind Schedule," Bloomberg News Service, December 7, 2004.

⁹⁹ Statement by the Minister of State for National Security Affairs Dr. Qassim Dawood on December 2, 2004 and conveyed by the Government Communications Directorate.

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in Tony Capaccio and Jon Steinman, "U.S. Commander Says Iraqi Training Behind Schedule," Bloomberg News Service, December 7, 2004.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in Bradley Graham, "Commander Sees Shift in Role of US Troops; Force Would Focus on Training Iraqis," Washington Post, December 7, 2004, p. A-01.

¹⁰² Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Ann Scott Tyson, "Iraqi Insurgency is Weakening, Abizaid Says," Washington Post, March 2, 2005, pg. 5.

¹⁰⁴ Steven Weisman and Joel Brinkley, "Rice Sees Iraq Training Progress But Offers No Schedule for Exit," New York Times, January 19, 2005, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3." and US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 5

¹⁰⁷ Josh White, "Iraqis' Readiness Disputed in Hearing," Washington Post, January 20, 2005, p. A04.

¹⁰⁸ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3." and US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 5

¹⁰⁹ Data found in MNSTC-I/State Department Iraq Year in Review 2004 Fact Sheet.

¹¹⁰ US Embassy in Iraq, Iraq Year in Review, 2004 Fact Sheet, "Iraqi Security Forces-3." and US Department of State, Iraq Weekly Status Report, January 12, 2005, p. 26.

¹¹¹ Josh White, "Deaths of U.S. Contractors Probed; Man Killed with Colleague Complained About Lack of Payment," Washington Post, January 21, 2005, p. A12.

¹¹² Bassem Mroue, "Iraqi Commander: Troops Ready in 6 Months," The Associated Press, January 27, 2005.

¹¹³ Dexter Filkins, "Mystery in Iraq as \$300 Million is Taken Abroad," New York Times, January 22, 2005, p. A1.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Dexter Filkins, "Mystery in Iraq as \$300 Million is Taken Abroad," New York Times, January 22, 2005, p. A1.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Dexter Filkins, "Mystery in Iraq as \$300 Million is Taken Abroad," New York Times, January 22, 2005, p. A1.

¹¹⁷ John Diamond, "Pride, Pickups Help Forge New Model Army," USA Today, March 9, 2005, pg. 8.

¹¹⁸ Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹¹⁹ Quoted in John Hendren, "U.S. to overhaul Training of Iraqi Forces," Los Angeles Times, January 20, 2005.

¹²⁰ Bassem Mroue, "Iraqi Commander: Troops Ready in 6 Months," Associated Press, January 27, 2005.

¹²¹ AFP News Agency, Baghdad Bureau, January 24, 2005.

¹²² Quoted in John F. Burns, "5 Bomb Attacks Kill 26 as Vote by Iraqis Nears," New York Times, January 20, 2005, p. A1.

¹²³ John F. Burns, "Tape in Name of Leading Insurgent Declares 'All-Out War' on Iraq Elections and Democracy," New York Times, January 24, 2005, p. A10.

¹²⁴ Jonathan Frank and Bradley Graham, "US Urges Iraqi Leaders to Answer Violence," Washington Post, May 14, 2005, p. A12.

¹²⁵ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, pp. 9-10.

¹²⁶ Iraq Weekly Status Report, 11 May 2005, p. 7.

¹²⁷ See Jonathan Frank and Bradley Graham, "US Urges Iraqi Leaders to Answer Violence," Washington Post, May 14, 2005, p. A12.

¹²⁸ "New Iraqi Army (NIA) Equipment," GlobalSecurity.org, available at: <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/nia-equipment.htm>

¹²⁹ Iraq Weekly Status Report, 9 February 2005, released by the US Department of State and available at www.defendamerica.mil; Additional data provided by MNSTC-I and US Embassy in Baghdad.

¹³⁰ Iraq Weekly Status Report, July 27, 2005.

¹³¹ MNSTC-I planners understood that the December total might lower due to the extension of the police basic course from eight to ten weeks, one of several initiatives to raise the quality of the police and military forces.

¹³² John Diamond, "Pride, Pickups Help Forge New Model Army," USA Today, March 9, 2005, pg. 8.

¹³³ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, p. 36.

¹³⁴ Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹³⁵ Robert Burns, "U.S. General: Iraq Insurgency on Decline," The Associated Press, March 17, 2005.

¹³⁶ Hannah Allam, "Iraq Arms Scandal Unfolds," Philadelphia Inquirer, July 15, 2005, pg. 1.

¹³⁷ Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq" of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, July 20, 2005.

¹³⁸ Ashraf Khalil, "Tough Times for 5th Brigade of Iraq's Army," Los Angeles Times, July 12, 2005.

¹³⁹ Michael Moss, "Lack of Armor Proves Deadly for Iraqi Army," New York Times, p. 1, October 30, 2005.

¹⁴⁰ "Iraq: Insurgents infiltrate police." CNN Online, September 21, 2005, available at: <http://www.cnn.com/2005/WORLD/meast/09/21/iraq.britain0840/index.html>

¹⁴¹ MNSTC-I response to inquiry.

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¹⁴³ Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹⁴⁴ Iraq Weekly Status Report for February 25, 2005. Available at www.defendamerica.mil.

¹⁴⁵ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>. This series of excerpts takes key points from the entire 96-page report, and rearranges them to provide a clear picture of the key problems the report mentions.

¹⁴⁶ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, pp. 26-27.

¹⁴⁷ Iraq Weekly Status Report for February 25, 2005. Available at www.defendamerica.mil.

¹⁴⁸ For the comments of CPATT and other Coalition advisors, and discussion of possible changes, see Appendixes G, H, and I to Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>. The key recommendations of that report are still worth noting, both in judging Iraq's future progress and as lessons for any future options involving the creation of large-scale police and security operations in nations where insurgency and terrorism present serious problems:

Recommendation 1: Coalition authorities should plan and implement training focused on qualitative standards rather than on the numbers of trained IPs. This redefinition of objectives should be made explicit in a revised mission statement for CPATT. (Action:

MNF-I in coordination with MNSTC-I and Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 2: Coalition and Mission Iraq officials should support and encourage efforts by the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) to strengthen MOI control over the IPS through re-centralization of administrative processes and development of relevant SOPs. (Action: MNSTC-I and Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 3: A working group of qualified instructors, specifically to include Iraqi representation, should design a range of courses suitable to the training needs of inservice IPS personnel. Mutually established parameters for candidate selection should be integral to this process. Changes in curricula for IP training must be negotiated in advance with the MOI and be implemented only after Iraqi agreement to such changes. (Action: MNSTC-I in consultation with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior.)

Recommendation 4: Coalition authorities should pursue agreement with the MOI to incorporate the existing Emergency Response Unit, Bureau of Dignitary Protection, and provincial SWAT units into the Public Order Battalions, Special Police Commando Units, and Mechanized Brigades. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 5: Appropriate parties need to explore the merits, feasibility and conceivable sources of any U.S. Government funding to cover MOI salary shortfall during the current fiscal year. This determination should take into account possible outyear implications for such support. (Action: MNF-I in consultation with MNSTC-I and Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 6: A joint Coalition/MOI assessment should be conducted to determine operation and maintenance costs of Coalition-built and/or renovated training facilities and to determine how and whether those costs can be sustained. (Action: MNSTC-I in collaboration with Embassy Baghdad and in consultation with the MOI.)

Recommendation 7: Coalition and MOI leaders/trainers should identify a mutually agreeable target number or percentage of IPS trainees who demonstrate ambition and talent for subsequent leadership training. (Action: MNSTC-I in consultation with the MOI.)

Recommendation 8: A joint committee of Coalition and MOI officials should screen and select officers for advanced training based on mutually established qualification standards. (Action: MNSTC-I in conjunction with MOI.) **Recommendation 9:** The Coalition recruiting program should be placed under the direction of the MOI, with MNC-I and CPATT providing assistance. (Action: MNF-I in consultation with MNC-I, MNSTC-I, and Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 10: Coalition authorities should assess the extent and quality of Iraqi Ministry of Interior's records relevant to the vetting process, and then conclude a nonbinding memorandum of agreement with the Ministry on access to and utilization of such material. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with Embassy Baghdad and consultation with the MOI.)

Recommendation 11: Coalition and Iraqi authorities should establish a non-binding agreement that states the MOI is responsible for vetting candidates for Coalition-sponsored police training. (Action: MNF-I in consultation with MNSTC-I and Embassy Baghdad and in collaboration with MOI.)

Recommendation 12: Coalition planners, in coordination with the MOI, should require that cadets first graduate from one of the police academies prior to entering Public Order Brigade (POB) or Emergency Response Unit (ERU) training. An in-service police training program should be developed for "currently serving" POB and ERU members who are not graduates of a police academy. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with the MOI.)

Recommendation 13: Contractual arrangements with expatriate instructors should specify that individually devised training courses will be submitted in advance for consideration and possible approval by MNSTC-I and CPATT. (Action: MNSTC-I.)

Recommendation 14: A non-binding agreement should be negotiated by the U.S. Government with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior that specifies that only applicants in possession of MOI-issued identification cards, explicitly stating that the bearer is a member of the IPS, will be accepted for training by the Coalition. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 15: Tables of Organization and Equipment should be developed for police stations and deployable police units throughout the country. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with MOI.)

Recommendation 16: Coalition authorities should establish internal controls to track transfer and accountability of equipment to the IPS. (Action: MNF-I in coordination with MNSTC-I and MNC-I and in consultation with MOI.)

Recommendation 17: Coalition resources, in close coordination with counterparts in the MOI and IPS, should develop an operational IPS Readiness Reporting System for the MOI. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with MOI.)

Recommendation 18: Coalition commanders should conduct a requirements analysis to determine the number of International Police Liaison Officers (IPLOs) who can be gainfully engaged under prevailing circumstances and adjust the number of these mentors accordingly. (MNSTC-I in consultation with Embassy Baghdad and INL.)

Recommendation 19: Standard operating procedures should be developed for the IPLOs, to define the relationships and responsibilities among the police liaison officers and military police. (Action: MNSTC-I in consultation with Embassy Baghdad and INL.)

Recommendation 20: The Department of State must keep Coalition governments apprised of developments at JIPTC, specifically those that relate to provision of training staff at that facility. (Action: Department of State's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs in consultation with INL.)

Recommendation 21: The Department of State should decide whether and where an ILEA should be established in the Middle East. If Jordan is selected as a venue, negotiations for such a transformation of JIPTC should proceed quickly. (Action: Department of State's Bureau for Near Eastern Affairs in consultation with INL.) **Recommendation 22:** Coalition commanders should obtain from the Iraqi Ministry of Interior a written commitment to assume responsibility for direct payment of the salaries of Iraqis trained by the Coalition at JIPTC. (Action: MNF-I in coordination with MNSTC-I and Embassy Baghdad and in consultation with MOI.)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Baghdad should work with the Iraqi Ministry of Interior to define areas in which Coalition advisors can play useful roles. (Action: Embassy Baghdad in collaboration with IRMO and MOI and in consultation with MNSTC-I.) **Recommendation 24:** Top priority should be given to recruiting '3161' personnel qualified to fill positions as defined jointly by Embassy Baghdad and the Iraqi Ministry of Interior, then to assigning a full complement of such advisors to the Ministry of Interior. (Action: Embassy Baghdad through IRMO.)

Recommendation 25: Embassy Baghdad should obtain from the MOI a written commitment to assure Coalition authorities can access data relevant to tracking and mentoring IPS personnel trained in U.S. Government-funded programs. (Action: Embassy Baghdad in consultation with MNSTC-I.)

Recommendation 26: Coalition and MOI officials should develop standard operating procedures for personnel administration of the Iraqi Police Service. (Action: MNSTC-I in coordination with Embassy Baghdad.)

Recommendation 27: The Department of State should assign one or more INL officers to work directly within CPATT to ensure INL perspectives are considered in the development of the IPS. (Action: Department of State in coordination with Embassy Baghdad and MNSTC-I.)

Recommendation 28: MNSTC-I should perform an assessment of security and IPS infrastructure development by province to identify opportunities where additional responsibility for IPS training can be transferred to Provincial Police. (Action: MNSTC-I in consultation with the MOI.)

Recommendation 29: The Department of State should propose that the National Security Council establish an inter-agency working group with representatives from the Departments of State, Defense, and Justice. The working group should identify issues to be addressed for the transfer of police training responsibilities from DoD to DoS. (Action: Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in consultation with Embassy Baghdad, MNF-I, MNSTC-I, and INL.)

Recommendation 30: The Departments of State and Defense, in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), should prepare a memorandum of agreement (MOA) to define funding arrangements for future U.S. involvement in Iraqi Police Service-related programs. (Action: Department of State's Bureau of Resource Management (RM) and Department of Defense's Office of the Under Secretary for Policy in consultation with OMB.)

¹⁴⁹ "Report to Congress, Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq," submitted pursuant to the section entitled "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq" of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, July 2005.

¹⁵⁰ Gerry G. Gilmore, "General Will Assess Iraqi Training, Not War Strategy," Armed Forces Press Service, January 7, 2005.

¹⁵¹ Peter Spiegel, "US Looking at Rethink of Strategy in Iraq," Financial Times, January 10, 2005.

¹⁵² Condoleezza Rice, Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Confirmation Hearing for the position of Secretary of State, January 18, 2005, time code 3:25 to 3:37 p.m.

¹⁵³ Condoleezza Rice, Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Confirmation Hearing for the position of Secretary of State, January 18, 2005, time code 3:25 to 3:37 p.m.

¹⁵⁴ Eric Schmidt, "General Seeking Faster Training of Iraqi Soldiers," New York Times, January 23, 2005, 04:45; also see Bradley Graham, "Army Plans to Keep Troop Level Through 2006," Washington Post, January 25, 2005, p. A-1.

¹⁵⁵ Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹⁵⁶ Jim Garamone, "Multinational Security Command Trains, Equips Iraqi Forces," American Forces Press Service, January 21, 2005. The 98th will be replaced by the 80th Division in the fall of 2005. The 100th Division is due to replace the 80th a year later, by the 100th is so undermanned that members of the 98th were asked in the spring of 2005 if they would volunteer to return and serve in the 100th.

¹⁵⁷ Greg Jaffe, "Change of Command; A Marine Captain Trains Iraqi Colonel to Take Over Fight," Wall Street Journal, February 24, 2005, p. A1.

¹⁵⁸ Eric Schmitt, "US Commanders See Possible Cut in US Troops in Iraq," New York Times, April 11, 2005, p. A11.

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in Ann Scott Tyson, "Iraqi Insurgency is Weakening, Abizaid Says," Washington Post, March 2, 2005, pg. 5. General Richard A. Cody made similar comments on March 18, 2005. See Washington Post, March 18, 2005, p. A20.

¹⁶⁰ Even at the top of these Ministries, a single Coalition advisor might have to deal with four offices, when the advisor effectively had a full time job dealing with just one.

¹⁶¹ John Hendren, "U.S. to overhaul Training of Iraqi Forces," Los Angeles Times, January 20, 2005.

¹⁶² For an independent verification of the value of such efforts in operational practice, see Mike Dorning, "Trainer Leads from the Front," Chicago Tribune, April 8, 2005, C1.

¹⁶³ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, p. 37.

¹⁶⁴ Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, July 20, 2005.

¹⁶⁵ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, p. 37.

¹⁶⁶ Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹⁶⁷ Iraq Weekly Status Report, July 20, 2005.

¹⁶⁸ The text of the UN report was forwarded to the author by ABC News. The MNSTC data are taken from http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/facts_troops.htm, as accessed on May 14, 2005.

¹⁶⁹ Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, July 20, 2005.

¹⁷⁰ Department of Defense, Report to Congress Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq, report to Congress is submitted pursuant to the section entitled “Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq” of House Conference Report 109-72 accompanying H.R. 1268, Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for Defense, the Global War on Terror, and Tsunami Relief, 2005, Public Law 109-13, July 20, 2005.

¹⁷¹ “Rebuilding Iraq: Preliminary Observations on Challenges in Transferring Security Responsibilities to Iraqi Military and Police,” Statement of Joseph A. Christoff, Director of International Affairs and Trade at the Government Accountability Office, submitted to the US House of Representatives Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Relations on March 14, 2005, pg. 13.

¹⁷² Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, p. 28.

¹⁷³ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, pp. 29-30.

¹⁷⁴ MNSTC-I response to inquiry.

¹⁷⁵ Adapted from briefing on MNF-I priorities of the commanding general, May 15, 2005.

¹⁷⁶ Report by the Offices of Inspector General of Departments of State and Defense, July 25, 2005, <http://oig.state.gov/documents/organization/50145.pdf>, p. 13.

¹⁷⁷ To review the press archives by day, see <http://www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil/advisor.htm>.

¹⁷⁸ Eric Schmitt, “Many Iraqi Troops Not Fully Trained, U.S. Officials Say,” New York Times, February 4, 2005, pg. 8.

¹⁷⁹ Interview, May 12, 2005.

¹⁸⁰ “Commander Gives His Take,” Houston Chronicle, January 29, 2005, pg. 29. This is a print version of questions presented to Abizaid by the editorial board of the Chronicle.

¹⁸¹ Greg Jaffe, “Change of Command; A Marine Captain Trains Iraqi Colonel to Take Over Fight,” Wall Street Journal, February 24, 2005, p. A1.

¹⁸² Greg Jaffe, “Change of Command; A Marine Captain Trains Iraqi Colonel to Take Over Fight,” Wall Street Journal, February 24, 2005, p. A1.

¹⁸³ “Rebuilding Iraq: Preliminary Observations on Challenges in Transferring Security Responsibilities to Iraqi Military and Police,” Statement of Joseph A. Christoff, Director of International Affairs and Trade at Copyright CSIS, all rights reserved. All further dissemination and reproduction must be done with the written permission of the CSIS

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¹⁸⁴ Quoted in Ann Scott Tyson, "Iraqi Insurgency is Weakening, Abizaid Says," Washington Post, March 2, 2005, pg. 5

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Four-hundred-fifty-eight sampling points were distributed proportionate to population size in each of Iraq's 18 provinces, then in each of the 102 districts within the provinces, then by simple random sampling among Iraq's nearly 11,000 villages or neighborhoods, with urban/rural stratification at each stage.

Maps or grids were used to select random starting points within each sampling point, with household selection by random interval and within-household selection by the "next-birthday" method. An average of five interviews were conducted per sampling point. Three of the 458 sampling points were inaccessible for security reasons and were substituted with randomly selected replacements.

Interviews were conducted by 103 trained Iraqi interviewers with 27 supervisors. Just over half of interviews were back-checked by supervisors – 28 percent by direct observation, 14 percent by revisits and 10 percent by phone.

In addition to the national sample, oversamples were drawn in Anbar province, Sadr City, Basra city and Kirkuk city to allow for more reliable analysis in those areas. Population data came from 2005 estimates by the Iraq Ministry of

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Planning. The sample was weighted by sex, age, education, urban/rural status and population of province. The survey had a contact rate of 90 percent and a cooperation rate of 62 percent for a net response rate of 56 percent. Including an estimated design effect of 1.51, the results have a margin of sampling error of 2.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

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Conventional shaped charges are constructed with a charge case, a hollow conical liner within the case, and a high explosive material positioned between the liner and case. A detonator is activated to initiate the explosive material to generate a detonation wave. This wave collapses the liner and a high velocity metallic jet is formed. The jet pierces the well casing and geologic formation, and a slow moving slug is simultaneously formed. The jet properties depend on the charge shape, the energy released, and the liner mass and composition. A Monroe-effect shaped-charge warhead can be expected to penetrate armor equal to 150-250% of the warhead diameter."

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