Area of Operations of engineer units effectively establish engineer work lines between the command- ers of the Army and the Navy engineer forces. However, engineers from both services, as well as the Air Force, worked on projects throughout the country.

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**Transition to Diplomacy**

**BY LT. COL. JOHN BUSE, PE, M.SAME, USAFR AND COL. JOEL CROSS, PMP, M.SAME, USA**

Transitioning the U.S. government’s lead role in Iraq from the Department of Defense to the Department of State (DOS) during 2011 posed significant challenges for joint engineers serving in United States Forces-Iraq (USF-I). In addition to transitioning the remaining 80 bases to the Government of Iraq, joint engineers also had to manage a $524 million construction program to transform 11 of those bases into sites supporting the enduring diplomatic mission encompassing DOS and the Office of Security Cooperation –Iraq (OSC-I).

With the expiration of the 2008 security agreement between the United States and Iraq, the military construction program in Iraq is led by United States Mission-Iraq (USM-I) through DOS’s U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. With approximately 16,000 personnel, it is the largest diplomatic mission in the world.

In late 2010, the U.S. Embassy identified five of a possible 11 sites supporting the enduring diplomatic mission to serve as consulates, support centers and annexes in support of Iraq’s continued development in a variety of sectors such as energy, trade and law enforcement.

Fewer than 200 active duty troops remain as military advisors under OSC-I to perform security cooperation and assistance including managing $13 billion in U.S. arms sales to the Iraqi military under the Foreign Military Sales program. To provide maximum support, OSC-I identified the remaining six sites where FMS-related sales and training with the Iraqi military was ongoing.

The 11 USM-I enduring sites required construction to collapse security perimeters, upgrade force protection and relocate essential facilities and infrastructure. The goal was to complete construction by Oct. 1, 2011, to ensure these sites were Mission Capable, with facilities and infrastructure in place to operate independently from USF-I. This would allow U.S. forces sufficient time to transfer responsibilities, repurpose and redeploy in accordance with USF-I Operations Order 11-01.

**COMPLEX CHALLENGES**

Five factors illustrate why construction was so unique and challenging:

- schedule constraints;
- interagency coordination and responsiveness;
- defining end-user requirements;
- differing construction standards between DOH and DOS; and
- high demand for limited resources.

DOS managed the program for their five sites and divided their program into four phases based on method of execution. Phase I construction was performed using USF-I troop labor and Phase II construction amounted to $25.8 million using Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP). Phases III and IV comprised mostly permanent facilities and infrastructure, construction worth $363 million and managed back in Washington D.C. by the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations.

The OSC-I construction program, meanwhile, was divided into two phases. Phase I consisted of 33 projects totalling $6.5 million, generally below the $750,000 military construction (MILCON) threshold and critical to a site achieving mission
JOINT ENGINEER CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

An Enduring Legacy in Iraq

The Iraqi Security Forces construction program was massive in scope and skill—and will continue on, even as American soldiers leave the country.

BY MAJ. CHRISTOPHER EYLE, M.SAME, USAF, CAPT. RODNEY MOORE, CEC, M.SAME, USN, AND TECH. SGT. STEPHANIE HOLMAN, M.SAME, USAF

Though the mission of United States Forces-Iraq (USF-I) has drawn to a close, numerous tasks continue on a higher level under the Office of Security Cooperation-Iraq (OSC-I), with the Department of State (DOS) in the lead. One particular mission that will continue is construction in support of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), which started in earnest in 2005 under the purview of Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I). Between 2005 and the end of 2011, U.S. forces executed 2,457 construction projects to enable development of ISF capability. The sheer enormity of this multi-billion dollar construction effort in support of the Government of Iraq required involvement from numerous construction agencies, funding sources, and program management organizations.

Responsibly drawing down these vast legacy programs within the OPERATION NEW DAWN operational framework presented seams and gaps, and increased competition for reduced resources. This coupled with emerging construction requirements to support enduring sites and leaner force repurposing, base transitions and special operations, necessitated a theater construction fusion cell solution to integrate and synchronize construction efforts. This led to the Iraq Joint Operations Area (IJOA). Lessons were learned and best practices developed that helped improve construction delivery in this challenging operational environment.

INCREIBLE SCOPE

Since 2005, more than $6.89 billion worth of construction projects were administered in support of the Iraqi Ministries of Defense and Interior—from ministerial headquarters to local police stations and tactical units, all of which varied greatly in size, complexity and location. Iraqi Army projects included new maintenance depots, training facilities, regional command company compounds and base support facilities. The Iraqi Air Force was the beneficiary of new base support and flight operations facilities, training centers, hangars and runway repairs. The Iraqi Navy received new infrastructure as well—including base support facilities, a pier and seawall, a clinic, and a training facility. But, improving the capability of the Iraqi military was not the only goal. In order to maintain the rule of law and provide internal security, border security and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) capabilities were imperative. More than 60 percent of the construction projects, totaling $2.72 billion, were executed on behalf of the Iraqi Ministry of Interior. Various elements of the Iraqi police apparatus benefited from new and refurbished police stations, training centers, vehicle maintenance facilities, headquarter compounds, forensic labs, criminal investigative facilities, and special weapons and tactics compounds.

Considerable time was given to improving the government’s ability to secure and control its borders. Border forts, road systems and ports of entry were constructed, primarily along the Syrian, Jordanian and Iranian borders. Regional EOD compounds were constructed to provide local explosive hazards response capability, thereby enhancing the protection and safety of Iraqi citizens.