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Iraqi Force Development and the Challenge of Civil War:

Can Iraqi Forces Do the Job?

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Executive Summary

Iraq is already in a state of limited civil war. What began as a small resistance movement centered around loyalists to the Ba'ath and Saddam Hussein has expanded to include neo-Salafi Sunni terrorism, become a broadly based Sunni insurgency, and now a broader sectarian and ethnic conflict.

The current combination of insurgency, Sunni Arab versus Shi'ite Arab sectarian conflict, and Arab versus Kurdish ethnic conflict could easily escalate to the break up of the country, far more serious ethnic and sectarian conflict, or violent paralysis.

If Iraq is to avoid this, it needs to forge a lasting political compromise between its key factions: Arab-Shi'ite, Arab Sunni, and Kurd – while protecting other minorities. Political conciliation must also address such critical issues as federalism and the relative powers of the central and regional governments, the role of religion in politics and law, control over petroleum resources and export revenues, the definition of human rights, and a host of other issues.

Iraq must establish both effective governance and a rule of law; not simply deploy effective military, security, and police forces. Legitimacy does not consist of how governments are chosen, but in how well they serve the day-to-day needs of their peoples. Security cannot come through force alone. It must have the checks and balances that can only come when governments and courts are active in the field.

Over time, Iraq must also address its economic and demographic challenges. A nation cannot convert from a corrupt, state-controlled “command kleptocracy” in mid-war. It cannot survive unless it makes such a conversion over time and puts an end to a hopelessly skewed and unfair distribution of income, ends full and partial unemployment levels of 30-60%, and becomes competitive on a regional and global level.

The present reality is that progress is slow or faltering in each of the areas necessary to make Iraqi force development successful:

- **Political conciliation:** Iraq's leaders still seek national unity and compromise, but talk has not been followed by substance. Prime Minister Maliki's conciliation plan has not taken hold, and the new government has not shown it can implement such plans or bring Arab Sunnis back into an effective political structure.
- **Governance:** The national government cannot even spend its budget, much less demonstrate that it now has an effective ministerial structure or the ability to actually govern in many areas. Actual governance continues to default to local authorities and factions.
- **Legal system and rule of law:** There is no real consensus on what legal system to use, courts do not exist in many areas and are corrupt and ineffective in many others. Legal authority, like governance, is devolving down to the local level.
- **Politics:** The election in late 2005 effectively divided Iraqis by sect and ethnic group, with only a small minority voting for truly national parties. No clear national party structure has emerged since that time. The Shi'ite parties increasingly demonstrate the rivalry between the three main Shi'ite parties. The Kurds are unified but tensions exist over “independence,” dealing with the PKK, and past tensions between the PUK and KDP. Sunnis are just beginning to acquire a true political identity and the two main Sunni parties are divided and divisive.
- **The Role of the Constitution:** The creation of a new constitution has done nothing to establish consensus and much to divide the nation. It leaves more than 50 areas to be clarified, all of which

involve potentially divisive debates between sectarian and ethnic groups, and most of which could lead to added tensions over the role of religion in the state.

- **Economic Development:** Increases in macroeconomic figures like the total GDP disguise massive problems with corruption, the distribution of income, and employment, particularly in troubled Sunni areas and the poorer parts of Iraq's major towns and cities. Young men are often forced to choose between the ISF, insurgency, and militias for purely economic reasons. The real-world economy of Sunni areas continues to deteriorate, and investment in even secure Shi'ite areas is limited by the fear of crime and insurgency. Only the Kurdish area is making real progress towards development.
- **Aid:** Iraq has largely spent the flood of US and other aid provided after the fall of Saddam as well as its oil food money. Large portions of this aid have been spent on corruption, outside contractors and imports, security, and projects with poor planning and execution which now are unsustainable. Iraq will, however, desperately need major future aid to construct and develop if it can achieve political conciliation and security. The US committed \$20.6 billion of \$20.9 billion in aid funds as of September 20, 2006. It had obligated \$20.1 billion, and spent \$15.8 billion.
- **Energy and Oil:** Iraq continued to produce less than 2,5 million barrels of oil per day (2.3 MMBD in September), and exported well under 2 million barrels a day. It was dependent on imported fuel and gasoline for more than 50% of its total needs. No major rehabilitation of Iraq's oil fields and facilities have taken place. Waterflooding and heavy oil injection continued to be major problems, and the ability to recover oil from producing fields average less than two-thirds of the world average.

It was clear that many Iraqis still had hope in the future in spite of these problems, and still have a strong sense of national identity. The pressures that divided Iraqis, however, did continue to increase.

Iraqi Force Development if Things Go Well

The development of effective Iraq forces is only one of the steps necessary to bring stability and security, and roll-back the forces that can lead Iraqi towards more violent forms of civil war. It is, however, one of the critical elements of success. There is no way to predict Iraqi future or the role Iraqi forces will play over the coming months and years. If things go well, Iraqi forces will steadily improve with time and play a critical role in bring the level of security Iraq needs to make political compromise and conciliation work.

Iraqi forces will replace Coalition and other foreign forces, at most seeking aid and limited assistance. Iraq's military will shift its mission from counterinsurgency to defense of the nation against foreign enemies, Iraq's National Police will defend the nation's internal security interests and not those of given ethnic and sectarian groups, deal with counterterrorism rather than counterinsurgency, and focus on crime and corruption. Iraq's other police and security forces will act like the police and security forces of other nations, focusing on crime, local security issues, and providing border security against smuggling and low-level infiltration.

Things can only go well, however, if US and other outside powers will have the patience and will to support Iraq as it develops into such a state for at least two to three more years of active fighting. They will provide massive additional economic aid to help Iraq unify and develop. Major assistance and advisory programs will be in place until at least 2010, and probably 2015.

Iraqi Force Development if Things Go Badly

The present odds of such success are at best even. In fact, Iraq is somewhat more likely to have one of three far less positive futures:

- ***Years of turmoil: No one side will truly win.*** The nation will not devolve into all out civil war or open forms of division or separation. The result will be an agonizing extension of the status quo in which real political conciliation will fail and every new compromise will be the source of new tensions and fighting. Warring sectarian and ethnic groups will struggle for local control and dominance, dividing the country internally by city and governorate.

The Iraqi people will lose faith and hope, struggling only to survive. The military, National Police, regular police and other instruments of government will become an awkward mix of sectarian and ethnic enclaves and struggles for power and control. The economy will splinter, with a few secure ethnic and sectarian enclaves, but largely dominated by internal tension, insecurity and crime. The US and other outside powers will stay in Iraq and seek to maintain a partial state of order, but every effort to produce lasting solutions and true national unity will collapse.

- ***Internal separation, ethnic cleansing, and the façade of unity:*** Civil conflict will lead to the de facto separation of the nation into Arab Shi'ite, Arab Sunni, and Kurdish enclaves. The nation will maintain the appearance of unity, but the reality will be a level of soft and hard ethnic cleansing that divides most governorates on sectarian and ethnic lines, and most cities into sectarian and ethnic neighbourhoods.

Most governorates and major cities will be dominated by Shi'ite or Kurdish control. An impoverished Sunni enclave will exist in the West, continuing to present at least low-level security challenges. Every "national" decision will be an awkward and unstable compromise. Compromises over key issues like development and modernizing Iraq's energy industry and infrastructure will be sectarian and ethnic nightmares with Shi'ite, Sunni, and Kurd all seeking their own advantage and that of their respective enclaves.

The Iraqi people will be forced into clear sectarian and ethnic divisions, each tending to aid the extremist elements in each group. The military, National Police, regular police and other instruments of government will be divided into clearly defined sectarian and ethnic enclaves. The economy will splinter, with a. The US and other outside powers withdraw all or virtually all forces, and reduce aid to token levels. Iraq will become the "sick man" of the Gulf, and the scene of constant outside struggles for influence between Turkey, Iran, and the Arab Sunni states.

- ***Outright division with at least continuing sectarian and ethnic fighting:*** The central government will diminish to total impotence and/or collapse under the pressure of civil conflict. The softer forms of sectarian and ethnic cleansing that take place in the previous scenario will be replaced by vicious fighting for control of given governorates and cities, mass killings, mass forced relocations and migrations, and the ruthless control of remaining minorities.

Iraq will have openly split into three parts, dominated by Shi'ite or Kurdish control, or a Shi'ite-Kurdish federation of convenience whose reality will be the same. An impoverished Sunni enclave will exist in the West, struggling to survive, continuing to present at least low-level security challenges, and dependent on outside aid from Sunni states. Economic development and efforts to modernize Iraq's energy industry and infrastructure will be clearly divided on sectarian and ethnic lines, with the possible exception of pipelines and some limited infrastructure that crosses Shi'ite, Sunni, and Kurdish zones. Export capabilities, ports, and water will all be continuing sources of contention.

The Iraqi people will be again forced into clear sectarian and ethnic divisions, each tending to aid the extremist elements in each group. The military, National Police, regular police and other instruments of government will be divided along clearly defined and possibly warring sectarian and ethnic lines. The economy will The US and other outside powers withdraw all or virtually all forces, and reduce aid to token levels. Iraq will become the "sick man" of the Gulf, and the scene of constant outside struggles for influence between Turkey, Iran, and the Arab Sunni states.

The Present State of Iraqi Security Forces

These trends and scenarios are driven by the fact the Iraqi nation continues to drift towards more intense civil war. The process of political conciliation is nascent at best and probably faltering. Sectarian and ethnic fighting is growing worse, and past efforts at economic aid have had limited success at best and are running out of funds.

The effort to create effective Iraqi military, national security, and police forces is marginally more successful than Iraq political and economic efforts, but scarcely the level of success the US planned even at the beginning of 2005.

- **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 regular army, air force, and navy (130,000 claimed to be operational; real number unknown):** Army (128,230 men) merging as a real force at the infantry battalion level with some light mechanized and armored elements. Beginning to emerge as real divisions and brigades, 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 (740 men) is at best a small cadre of forces with token reconnaissance and air transport capability. Navy (1,130 men) is slowly emerging as capable of carrying out own patrol missions, but is severely limited in operational capability with little real support capability.

Efforts that say the regular Iraqi forces are taking the lead, and that turnover command to Iraqi forces are not cosmetic. The regular military and some paramilitary National Police units are making real progress – although most units are severely undermanned, have critical problems in officer and NCO quality and leadership, are too lightly equipped and poorly facilitated, and many are Shi'ite or Kurdish dominated.

Iraqi forces will, however, 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.
- **The National Police (24,400 claimed to be trained and equipped; real number unknown):** 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 (27,510 claimed to be trained and equipped; real number unknown):** 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, underequipped, badly-led, and corrupt. Many are poorly facilitated.
- **The Regular Police (120,190 claimed to be trained and equipped; real number probably under 100,000):** Underpaid, underequipped, badly-led, and corrupt. Many will not fight or act if face a local threat. Desertion and absence rates high. Generally only function where security exists for other reasons, or are tied 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:** Underpaid, underequipped, badly-led, and corrupt. Generally only function where security exists for other reasons, or are tied to sectarian, ethnic, and tribal forces.

The US and MNF-I plans that called for Iraqi forces to allow significant Coalition troop reductions in 2006 have failed, and 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. Major US and allied troop reductions need to be put on hold indefinitely.

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.

Looking Ahead

There is no way to summarize Iraqi force development in simple terms, particularly because so much depends in the near term on whether Iraqi efforts at political conciliation, effective governance, and a government presence in the field do or do not succeed. The ISF development effort cannot succeed without major progress in all of these areas, any more than they can succeed without the creation of effective Iraqi forces and Iraqi popular belief that MNF-I forces will leave as soon as possible and Iraq will be truly sovereign.

The one critical punchline that does emerge from this analysis, however, is that there is no near term prospect that Iraqi force development will allow major reductions in MNF-I forces, and that ISF force development can only succeed if the MNF-I provides active combat support well into 2008 and major advisory and aid support through 2010. Every element of ISF development still requires years of effort and support, and any successful policy towards Iraq that offers serious hope of avoiding massive increases in sectarian and ethnic violence, and continued insurgency, requires an honest recognition of this fact.

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Introduction

There is no way to predict Iraqi future or the role Iraqi forces will play over the coming months and years. The problems shaping Iraqi stability and security go far beyond the narrow bounds of the insurgency, rising sectarian and ethnic violence, and the size and capability of Iraqi forces. The present reality is that progress is slow or faltering in each of the areas necessary to make Iraqi force development successful:

- **Political conciliation:** Iraq's leaders still seek national unity and compromise, but talk has not been followed by substance. Prime Minister Maliki's conciliation plan has not taken hold, and the new government has not shown it can implement such plans or bring Arab Sunnis back into an effective political structure.
- **Governance:** The national government cannot even spend its budget, much less demonstrate that it now has an effective ministerial structure or the ability to actually govern in many areas. Actual governance continues to default to local authorities and factions.
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- **The Role of the Constitution:** The creation of a new constitution has done nothing to establish consensus and much to divide the nation. It leaves more than 50 areas to be clarified, all of which involve potentially divisive debates between sectarian and ethnic groups, and most of which could lead to added tensions over the role of religion in the state.
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If Things Go Well

If things go well, Iraqi forces will steadily improve with time and play a critical role in bring the level of security Iraq needs to make political compromise and conciliation work.

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The US and other outside powers will have the patience and will to support Iraq as it develops into such a state for at least two to three more years of active fighting. They will provide massive additional economic aid to help Iraq unify and develop. Major assistance and advisory programs will be in place until at least 2010, and probably 2015.

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The present odds of success are at best even. In fact, Iraq is somewhat more likely to have one of three far less positive futures:

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The Iraqi people will lose faith and hope, struggling only to survive. The military, National Police, regular police and other instruments of government will become an awkward mix of sectarian and ethnic enclaves and struggles for power and control. The economy will splinter, with a few secure ethnic and sectarian enclaves, but largely dominated by internal tension, insecurity and crime. The US and other outside powers will stay in Iraq and seek to maintain a partial state of order, but every effort to produce lasting solutions and true national unity will collapse.

- ***Internal separation, ethnic cleansing, and the façade of unity:*** Civil conflict will lead to the de facto separation of the nation into Arab Shi'ite, Arab Sunni, and Kurdish enclaves. The nation will maintain the appearance of unity, but the reality will be a level of soft and hard ethnic cleansing that divides most governorates on sectarian and ethnic lines, and most cities into sectarian and ethnic neighbourhoods.

Most governorates and major cities will be dominated by Shi'ite or Kurdish control. An impoverished Sunni enclave will exist in the West, continuing to present at least low-level security challenges. Every "national" decision will be an awkward and unstable compromise. Compromises over key issues like

development and modernizing Iraq's energy industry and infrastructure will be sectarian and ethnic nightmares with Shi'ite, Sunni, and Kurd all seeking their own advantage and that of their respective enclaves.

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- ***Outright division with at least continuing sectarian and ethnic fighting:*** The central government will diminish to total impotence and/or collapse under the pressure of civil conflict. The softer forms of sectarian and ethnic cleansing that take place in the previous scenario will be replaced by vicious fighting for control of given governorates and cities, mass killings, mass forced relocations and migrations, and the ruthless control of remaining minorities.

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Trends in Attacks and Violence and Their Impact on Iraqi Force Development

The growing increase in insurgent and sectarian violence was all too clear during the course of 2006. Despite of a variety of new options in Baghdad and the country as a whole during the summer the average number of weekly attacks continued to increase. Attacks against Coalition forces, the ISF, the civilian population, and infrastructure, increased 15% between May 2006 and the beginning of September, and Iraqi casualties increased by 51% compared to the previous quarter.¹

The majority (63%) of the attacks over this period 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.

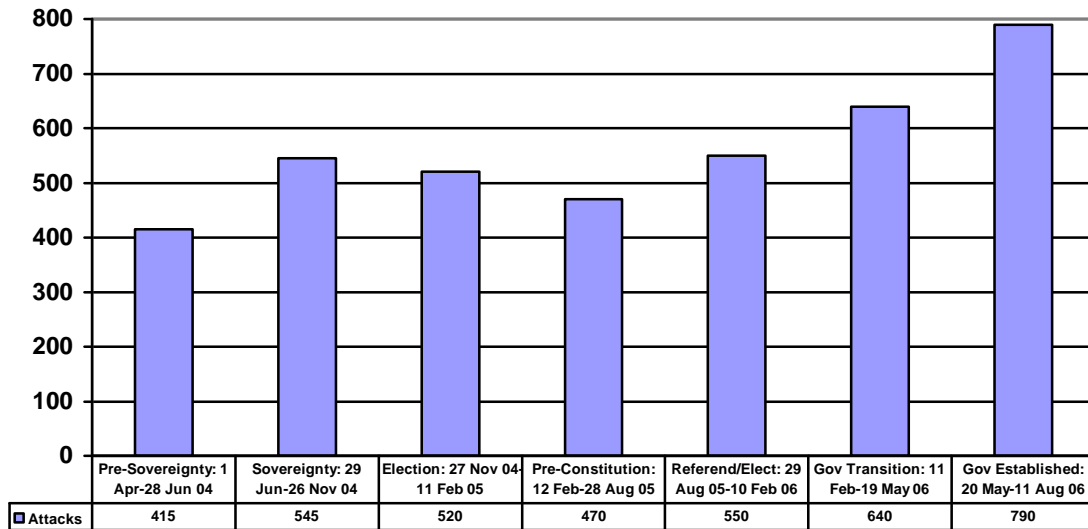
Baghdad and Anbar continued to be the most volatile provinces accounting for 55% of attacks.² According to a June 2006 UN report, an increasingly complex armed opposition continued to be capable of maintaining a consistently high level of violence across Iraq. The worst-affected cities were Baghdad, Ninewa, Salahuddin, Anbar, and Diyala, while other areas, particularly Basra and Kirkuk, saw an increase in the number of violent incidents.³

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 2005.⁴

Figure 75 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.

Figure 75:
Average Weekly Attacks by Time Period 1 Apr 04-11 Aug 06



Source: MNC-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 31; Note: +/- 5% margin of error .

Rising ISF and Iraqi Civilian Casualties

ISF and Iraqi civilians suffered the majority of casualties even though they only received a a minority of the overall number of attacks, the **Figure 76** illustrates the ever increasing number of Iraqi casualties, even as the Coalition casualties stabilized. Overall, Iraqi casualties increased by 51% over the previous quarter. Additionally 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.⁵ 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 come to 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.

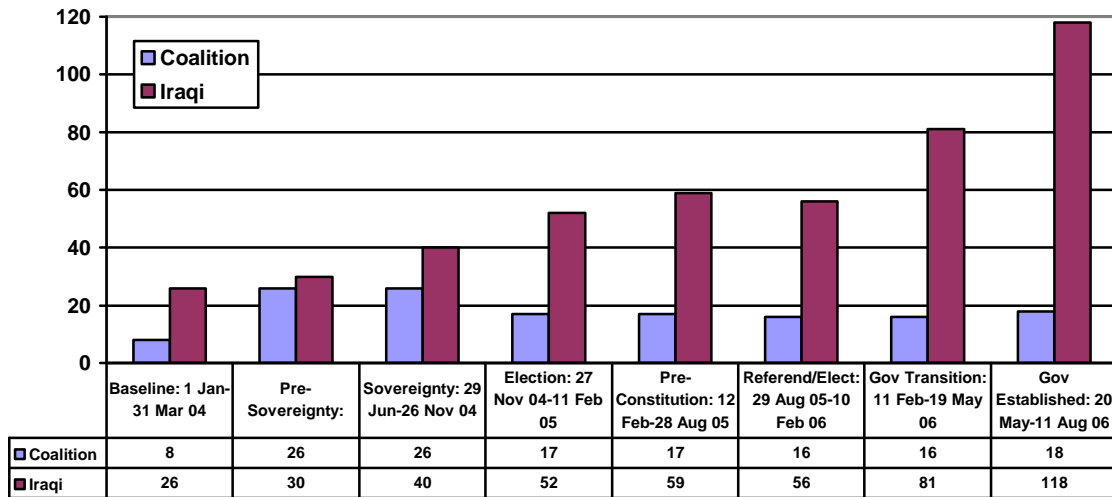
Some American officials said that the morgue's numbers were inflated. In addition to the record number of civilian deaths, 3780 Iraqi civilians were wounded in July (number estimated) and 4,309 in August, marking a 14% increase. While the numbers decreased from July to August in Baghdad, casualty figures climbed in other areas, notably in Diyala and Mosul, and "further increases were evident towards the end of the month in Baghdad and other governorates."

The US military initially claimed that new security measures had caused a significant drop in civilian murders in Baghdad during August. However, it later admitted that these numbers did not include mass attacks in either months count, which when included showed less improvement in the overall number of civilian deaths in the capitol for July

and August. Casting further doubt on the existence of significant improvements in the numbers of civilian casualties, the report suggested that while the many deaths occurring in Baghdad were relatively well reported, the numbers reflect a low count of casualties for areas outside the capitol because of data collection difficulties. Anbar Province, for example, which includes Fallujah and Ramadi, reported no deaths in July.⁶

Figure 76

Average Daily Casualties*-Iraqi (including ISF) and Coalition 1 Apr 04-11 Aug 06



*Casualty data reflect updated data for each period and are derived from unverified initial reports submitted by coalition elements responding to an incident; the inconclusivity of these numbers constrains them to be used only for comparative purposes.

Source: MNC-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 32; Note: +/- 5% margin of error

Torture, Kidnappings, and Disappearances

Torture a 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.”⁷ 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 problem in political and economic spheres. 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.⁸ 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.⁹

Increasing Sectarian Violence

What had become a Sunni insurgency during 2005 increasingly became a sectarian struggle between Sunni and Shi'a factions during 2006. Much of the violence was concentrated on controlling the capital leading to the overwhelming majority of casualties being reported in Baghdad. However increasing violence between Sunni and Shi'a extremists, violence between Kurds and Arabs took place in virtually every mixed area in Iraq.¹⁰

Moreover, the increase in sectarian violence led not only to death and injury but also to further displacement. The UN estimated that about 150,000 Iraqis had fled from their homes as of June 30, 2006, primarily because of direct or indirect threats against them or attacks on family members and their community. Because internally displaced persons' were competing for limited services, their plight could lead to further intercommunal animosities and generate further displacement.¹¹

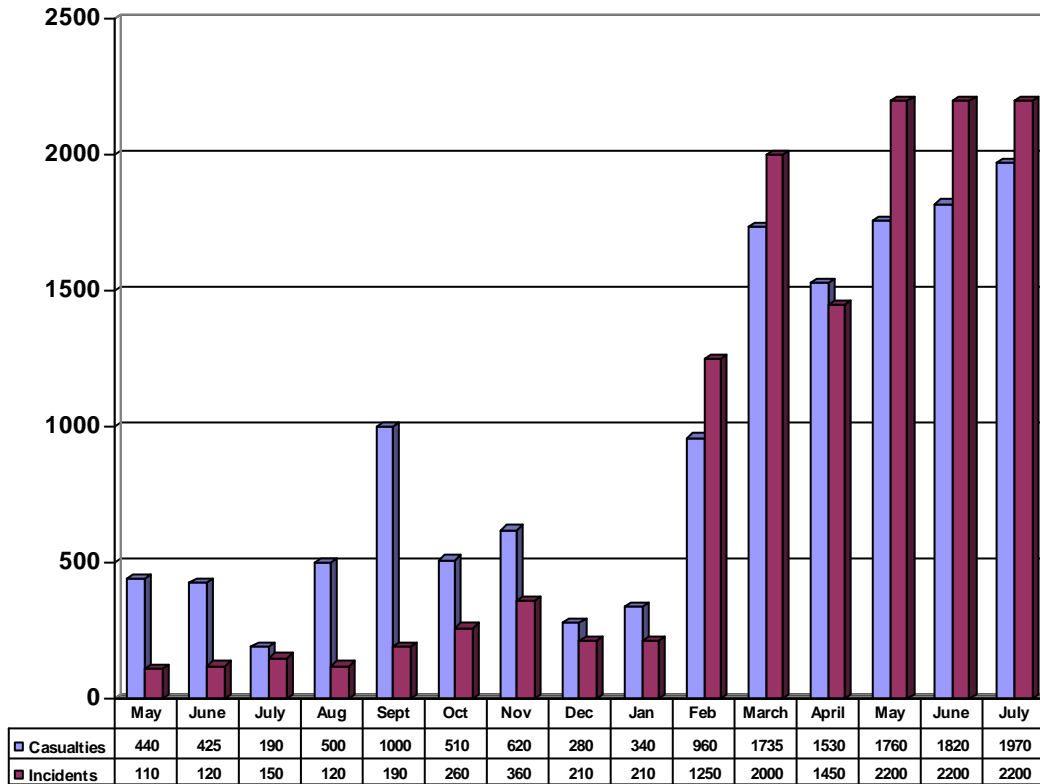
In its August report to Congress on stability and security in Iraq, the Department of Defense acknowledged these trends noting:

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-Qaeda 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.¹²

In an interview with The Associated Press 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."¹³

Figure 78:

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 inconclusivity of these numbers constrains them to be used only for comparative purposes.

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

Sectarian and ethnic conflicts were only part of the problem. According to a July 2006 State Department report, the Sunni insurgency remained a pressing problem, even after the death of Abu Musab al Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq. DoD reported that al-Qaeda remained capable of conducting operations due to its resilient command structure of semi-autonomous cells.¹⁴

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.¹⁵

Infrastructure Attacks

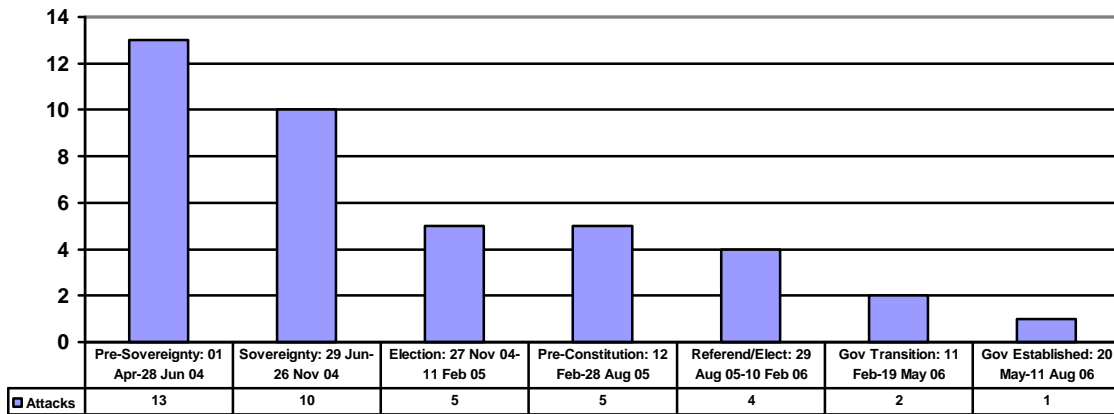
Poor security conditions continued to hamper efforts to rebuild Iraq’s economy. Indicators include the following:

- 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)
- 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 continuing decrease in the number of infrastructure attacks that can be see in **Figure 77**, 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. To combat these problems, the US planned on focusing efforts on strengthening the Strategic Infrastructure Battalions.¹⁶

Figure 77

Infrastructure Attacks Weekly Average* by Time Period 1 Apr 04- 11 Aug 06



*Average rounded to nearest whole number

Source: MNC-I, from US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 33.

Shiite Militias: Open Challenges, Police Infiltration, and Underground Death Squads

Shiite Militias of varying sizes played a steadily growing role in the violence in Iraq from mid 2005 to the fall of 2006. A according to the CENTCOM commander, they became the largest contributors to sectarian violence in the country.¹⁷ They targeted Sunnis, mostly civilians, both in retaliation for insurgent attacks and for sectarian reasons. Sunnis in mixed-sect neighbourhoods in turn formed local “neighborhood watches”.

Shi'ite Militias and Links to the ISF

The two most influential Shi'ite militias -- Muqtada 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.¹⁸ 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.¹⁹ Sadr's office in Diwaniyah claimed that the arrests had not been made, as usual, by Iraqi police, but by Army units without warrants.

The two largest Shi'ite militias were also major players in Iraqi national politics: Muqtada 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.²⁰

Moreover, Shiite militias operated underground death squads and appeared to be infiltrating both the police and the army.²¹ 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.²² One day later, US ambassador Zalmay Khalizad put the percentage of sectarian violence at 77%.²³

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 in stolen uniforms. He claimed that death squads mainly emerged from private security services, such as the Facility Protection Service.²⁴

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.²⁵

It is difficult to precisely attribute such killings to specific ISF and police units or distinguish which were performance by elements of the ISF and by underground groups, but police were probably culpable for 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.²⁶

Shi'ite Militias and Links to Iran

Some Shi'ite groups had ties to to the government of Iran. 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.²⁷

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 Shiite 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 Shiite extremist groups in Iraq.

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 Shiite 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.²⁸ It is also important to note that British forces operating near the Iranian border did not find evidence of Iranian infiltration or arms transfers.²⁹

Sunni Reprisals Against the Militias and ISF

Sunni groups were also reported to target Shiites collaborating with the police.³⁰ According to the August 2006 DoD report, however, Sunni Arabs had not yet formally organized militias, relying instead on neighborhood watches, Sunni insurgents, and increasingly, al-Qaeda in Iraq.³¹

The UN reported in March 2006 that the deteriorating security situation was evidenced by increased levels sectarian strife and the sectarian nature of the violence, particularly in ethnically mixed areas. The following figure, taken from the September 2006 GAO report, shows Iraq's ethnic distribution. Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul, and southwest of Basra are key ethnically mixed areas.

11, 2006, p.13

Although US and UN officials recognize the importance of demobilizing the militias, Ambassador Khalizad stated that it depended on a reduction in the Sunni insurgency. The Ambassador stressed the need for an integrated demobilization involving all sides. This idea was complicated by the fact that both Shi'ite militias and Sunni insurgents increasingly saw themselves as their respective communities' protectors. DoD in August 2006 reported a self-reinforcing cycle of violence.³² Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, under pressure from the national government, had publicly called for an end of sectarian violence and the general disbandment of militias in the country. For Sadr, however, the dissolution of his militia or its integration into the regular security forces would not have been in his interest.³³ Meanwhile, there were calls by US and Iraqi military officers for the government to officially order militia disarmament:

Until the government comes out and says, 'Disarm the militias,' it's a very ambiguous situation. (...) If there was an announcement by the government, there would be not more ambiguity."(Col. Doug Heckman, US Army)³⁴

In mid-June, Coalition and Iraqi forces had started to clear Baghdad of militia forces, but this mission was still not completed by the end of August.³⁵

The Uncertain Role of Kurdish Security Forces and Militias

Israeli security contractors 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.³⁶

Operational Developments: Summer and Fall 2006

It is important to note that Iraqi forces had a number of tactical successes in spite of these pressures, and growing sectarian and ethnic tension and clashes. These operational successes during in the late summer and early fall of 2006 included the following examples:³⁷

- July 29: Iraqi Security Forces detained an Iraqi police colonel who had allegedly been involved in numerous illegal and insurgent activities in the Al Kut province.
- July 30: Iraqi and Coalition soldiers detained two terrorists and discovered bomb-making materials south of Baghdad. Elements of the 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition forces captured Baghdad's third highest most-wanted terrorist during an operation in Adhamiyah. He was believed to be the leader of criminal elements responsible for roadside bomb attacks on Iraqi and Coalition troops, as well as sectarian murders and kidnappings. That same day, soldiers from the 2nd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division found a cache of 18 82mm mortar rounds in a trash can in Adhamiyah. Meanwhile, soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division and Coalition forces freed an Iraqi man held hostage in Tikrit.
- August 2: Iraqi National Police and Coalition forces captured eight suspected terrorists during a joint operation in the Doura neighborhood, near the center of Baghdad. The soldiers detained seven suspected terrorists, and seized weapons, bomb-making materials, and propaganda, as well as two vehicles.
- August 6: Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division detained six terror suspects and seized a large cache of weapons during a raid on the Al Hassana'n Mosque in southwest Baghdad. The cache included four PKC machine guns, 13 AK-47 assault rifles, two rocket-propelled grenade launchers, three rocket-propelled grenades, four rocket-propelled grenade fuses, five 60mm mortar rounds, a 60mm mortar tube, a box of mortar cartridges, a flare gun, various bomb-making materials and terrorist propaganda.
- August 7: Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 4th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, along with Coalition troops, searched a group of 20 buses at a checkpoint in Iskandariya, uncovering 13 AK-47 rifles, 36 magazines of Ak-47 ammunition, two RPK machine guns, four 9mm pistols, a 45-caliber pistol, a sniper rifle and two hand grenades. One suspected terrorist was detained in connection with the weapons.
- August 8: Soldiers from the 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division foiled a kidnapping attempt by two men northwest of Baghdad. At a checkpoint, the soldiers heard noises coming from the trunk of a stopped vehicle. Upon inspection, they discovered a man, tied up and beaten, in the trunk. The two kidnappers were detained for questioning.
- August 16: Iraqi Security Forces captured a known terrorist cell leader during a raid in the Rasheed District of Baghdad. The individual, known to have been a former Ba'ath Party member, was suspected of leading a terrorist cell in the Doura neighborhood of Baghdad.
- August 20: Iraqi Security Forces conducted simultaneous raids on three objectives in Baghdad, capturing two insurgent leaders. Both men were believed to control death squads in the Al Doura, Al Sahha, and Abu D'Shair districts. The insurgents were captured without incident. Iraqi soldiers of the 5th Special Troops Company, 9th Iraqi Army Division detained five more terror suspects the same day during a permissive entry of the AL Fadly Mosque north of Baghdad.
- August 23: Iraqi police and Coalition forces thwarted an attack on a Mosul police station. After a terrorist dressed as a policeman injured six officers when he detonated his suicide bomb vest, two other attackers opened fire on the station. Iraqi Police and Coalition forces engaged the attackers, killing them both.

- Iraq soldiers from the 9th Iraqi Army Division seized a large weapons cache while searching the Al Nida Mosque in northern Baghdad. The cache consisted of 20 AK-47 assault rifles, 55 Ak-47 magazines, a PKC rifle, and 600 PKC rounds.
- September 3: Iraqi Police killed, Sadam Shihab Ahmad, one of the most wanted insurgents in the city of Rawah during a counterinsurgency operation. Ahmad was suspected in the beheading of an Iraqi police officer earlier in the year, and was believed to play a key role in other insurgent activities.
- September 2-4: During counterinsurgency operations in the restive Al Anbar province, ISF and Coalition soldiers detained 30 confirmed insurgents and 38 suspected insurgents. A cache of 120mm rockets, 155mm rockets, and 122mm rockets was also discovered during the course of operations.
- September 10: Iraqi police conducted a raid on a known terrorist hideout north of Musayyib, finding a large weapons cache and detaining one terror suspect. Upon searching the residence, police found 300 hand grenades, a bag of high-explosive pellets, and two tanks prepped for use as IEDs.
- September 14: Iraqi Army units liberated a man who was being held and tortured by members of an illegal armed group in the Ad Diwaniyah area of Baghdad during an early-morning raid. The man was immediately treated by medical personnel.

More broadly, however, the drift toward ethnic and sectarian conflict, and civil war forced significant changes in the operations of both Iraqi and MNF-I forces, and increased the pressures and demands on Iraq's new forces. At the same time, 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 impact of these challenge to Iraqi force development, as well as many of the strengths and weaknesses in Iraqi forces, emerged during the course of a wide range of operations during the summer and fall of 2006.

The Battle for Baghdad

The new Iraqi government may have been late in coming to office, but it was able to 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. The size and complexity of the security situation meant that *Amaliya Ma'an ila Al-Amam* would take months to complete.³⁸

As part of this effort, Iraq's national unity government and MNF-I devised a Baghdad Security Plan, comprised of three principal components:³⁹

- *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 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.

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.

Efforts at political conciliation had some limited success. 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 August 26-27, drawing several hundred tribal leaders.⁴⁰

Iraqis also did not lose hope. **Figure 78** illustrates that overall confidence remained high in the future ability of the army and the police to improve the situation in Iraq. However,

the data from the Kurdish areas suggests that geography and 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 further suggests that confidence is divided along sectarian lines. Since they are the largest ethnic group and showed the highest participation in governmental programs it is unsurprising that the south shows the greatest confidence in the government.

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.

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.⁴¹

As of late August, the Iraqi Ministry of Defense reported that the crime rate in Doura had been reduce by 80%. Tribal⁴² 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.⁴³ 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.⁴⁴

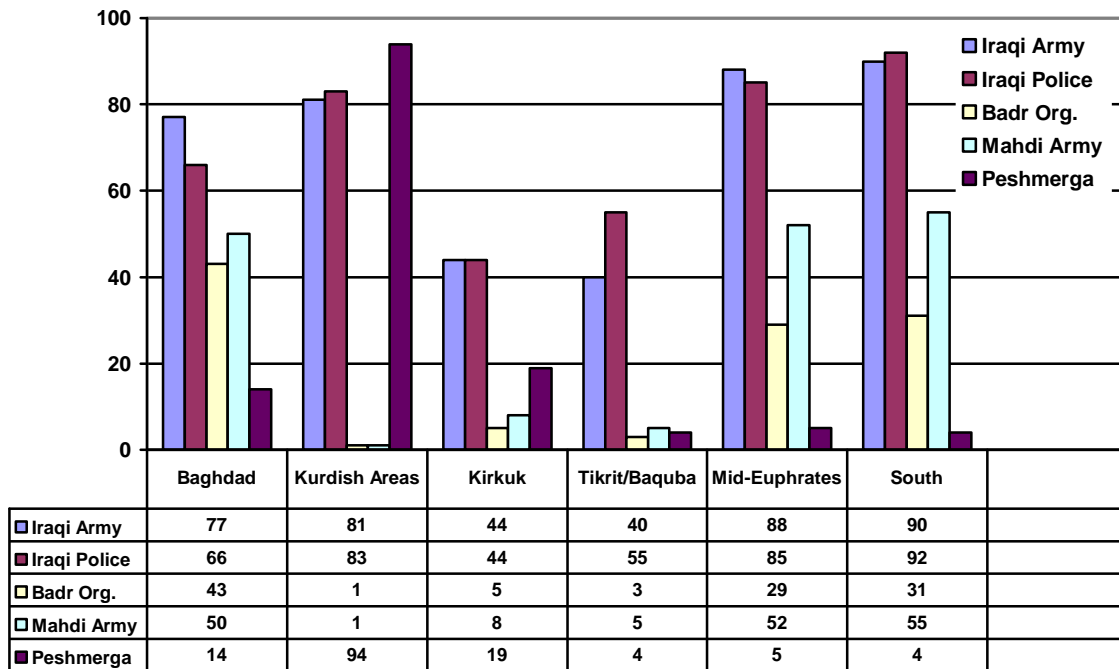
By mid-September, Iraqi and Coalition forces had searched 52,000 buildings in the Doura, Amiriyah, Ghazalia, Shula, and Adhamiya neighborhoods. According to US Army Maj. Gen. William Caldwell, spokesman for MNF-I, at a September 14 press briefing, these searches resulted in the seizure of 32 weapons 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.⁴⁵

As of early October, the battle of Baghdad was still very much a work in progress. 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.

Figure 78

% Expressing confidence in ability to improve the situation in Iraq*



* Data from Mosul is not included in this chart. It was determined to be unreliable.

Source: Department of State, Office of Research, June 21-July 6, 2006, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 38; Note: +/- 4% margin of error, but varies among regions

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. Parts of his assessment were leaked by the *Washington Post*, and several military officials familiar with the document disclosing 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.⁴⁶

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 Qaeda in Mesopotamia, which is predominantly made of native Iraqis, as an "integral part of the social fabric" of Anbar.⁴⁷

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 easily 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 Falluja 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.⁴⁸

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. 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.

Yet again, this did not mean that Iraqi forces could not succeed over time, particularly if Iraqis made real progress towards political conciliation. 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.

Securing Ramadi

One 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 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 a 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 admits 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 Shiite-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.⁴⁹

ISF Operational Successes and Human Intelligence

One area where MNF-I experts did feel that ISF forces were becoming 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.⁵⁰ 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.

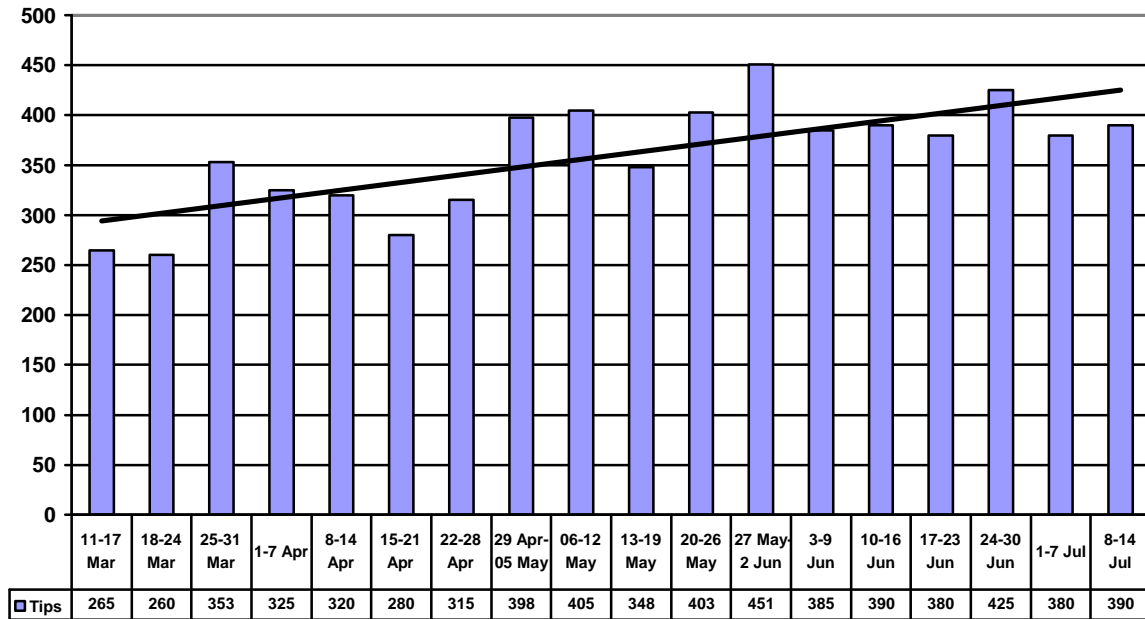
Other ISF successes in obtaining actionable Human Intelligence in the late summer and early fall of 2006 included:⁵¹

- 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-borne 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-Qaeda 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-Qaeda 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.⁵²

Figure 79 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 79
Total Actionable Tips



Note: Data includes tips reported to multiple sources.

Source: MNF-I, as adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 39; Note: +/-5% margin of error.

Other Operational Developments

The scale of the problems Iraqi forces had to deal with becomes even clearer from a detailed timeline of the major daily interactions between ISF forces and what some now call “anti-Iraqi” actors:

- 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. Coalitions 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 councilmembers 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 Sadrain 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 Riyad 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-Qaeda 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 gunbattle 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 Falluja. In Baqubah, a bomb killed three three police officers and wounded five. In Mussayib, a gunbattle 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 gunbattle 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 police men 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 Talabani 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 Muqadadiya, 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 hardline 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 Qaeda-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 south-east 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 Talabani said he would like to have U.S. military bases in his country for an extended period.

In August 2006, Iraqi army and police units partnered with Coalition forces in 140 operations, killing 17 insurgents and detaining 300 suspects.⁵³

Iraqi Force Development

Iraqi force building continued to have high priority during the summer and fall of 2006. The total cost US financial assistance for Iraqi security grew from \$3.24 billion in January 2004 to about \$13.7 billion in June 2006.⁵⁴ Most of these funds for rebuilding the military and security forces 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.⁵⁵

The Pentagon 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.⁵⁶

While many of the resulting assessments remained classified, it was clear that previous plans for Iraqi force development no longer fit the challenges imposed by Iraq's steadily growing security problems. 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 consensus s the end of the summer of 2006 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 numbered some 298,000 as of late August, and was expected to grow to 325,000 by year's end. However, the Maliki government was clearly seeking to raise this number.⁵⁷

In late August 2006, the MNF-I reported that while the US was helping Iraq deal with its current security problems, the Iraqi government was developing a long-term plan to shape the type of armed forces needed 5 to 10 years from now.⁵⁸ Further details of the plan remained classified as of October 2006.

Overall Progress in the Recruiting, Training and Deployment

By August 2006, approximately 277,600 Iraqi soldiers and police had completed their initial training and equipment. This was an increase of 14,000 over the totals of three months earlier. On paper some 84% of the eventual strength of the Ministry of Defense (MOD) forces had been trained and equipped. As the August 20006 Quarterly Status report made clear, however, large numbers of men were absent, had deserted, or left. Much of the equipment was missing and could not be accounted for. This was especially true of the regular police and other MOI forces.

Progress was best in the army, although discussions with MNF-I experts indicate that major manning and equipment shortfalls existed in given battalions and units. Roughly

92% of the authorized Iraqi Army battalions had been created, and the force building efforts to train and equip forces now focused on combat support forces.⁵⁹ Toward this goal over 65% of authorized personnel in the Iraqi Army support forces were trained and equipped. The following figures indicate the sizes of different components of both the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior.⁶⁰

There are severe problems in much of the reporting on Iraqi forces because no clear distinction is made between the number of men who went through the training process and the number still on service, and because rising totals conceal so many critical problems in given elements of the ISF order of battle. Gross numbers grossly exaggerate capability. Nevertheless, many trends did reflect at least some possible progress:

- **Figure 80** shows MOI and MOD force levels according to the US Department of State, as of September 2006.
- **Figure 81** shows the progress in training and equipping the MOI forces, by component, as of the August 2006 DOD report to Congress.
- **Figure 82** shows MOD and MOI trained and equipped figures as of September 2006, according to the Government Accountability Office.

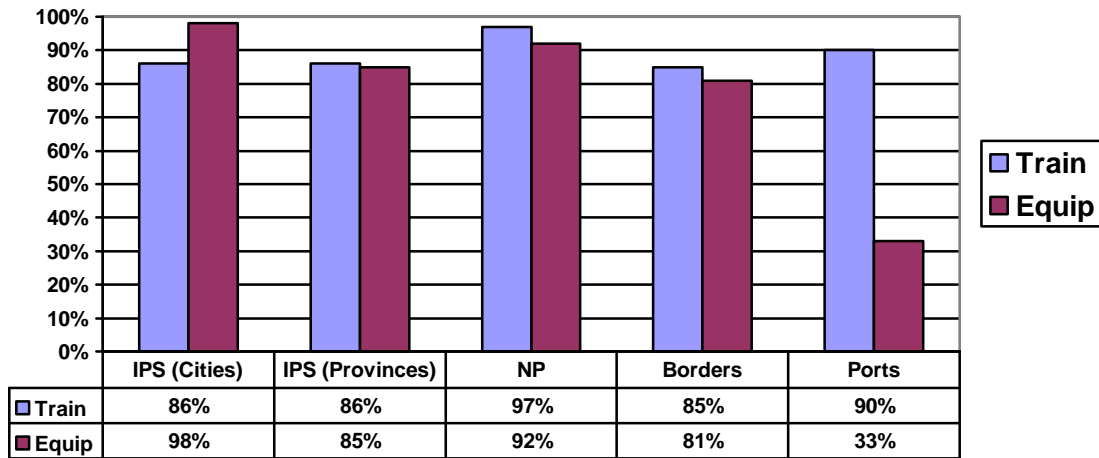
The Department of Defense notes to Figure 80 provide important warnings about their accuracy. The same is true of the GAO data in Figure 82. According to GAO, the State Department reported the number of trained and equipped Iraqi security forces to have increased from about 174,000 to 294,000 from July 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.⁶¹

**Figure 80:
MOI and MOD Force Levels as of September 2006:**

Ministry of Interior Forces		Ministry of Defense Forces	
COMPONENT	TRAINED & EQUIPPED	COMPONENT	OPERATIONAL
POLICE	~120,190***	ARMY	~128,230***
NATIONAL POLICE	~24,400	AIR FORCE	~740
OTHER MOI FOCES	~27,510	NAVY	~1,130
TOTAL	~172,100**	TOTAL	~130,100

*Ministry of Interior Forces: Unauthorized absence personnel are included in these numbers; **Ministry of Defense Forces: Unauthorized absence personnel are not included in these numbers; ***Army numbers include Special Operations Forces and Support Forces. Source: Department of State Weekly Iraq Updated, date as of September 13, 2006.

Figure 81
Training and Equipment of individual MOI Forces



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.

Figure 82
GAO Figures for Trained and Equipped Troops

Ministry and Component		July 2005	January 2006	August 2005
Ministry of Defense Forces	Army	78,200	105,600	127,200
	Air Force	200	500	700
	Navy	700	800	1,100
	Subtotal	79,100	106,900	129,000
Ministry of Interior Forces	Police	64,100	82,400	115,500
	Other forces	30,700	38,000	49,600
	Subtotal	94,800	120,400	165,100
	Total	173,900	227,300	294,100

Source: Government Accountability Office, "Stabilizing Iraq: An Assessment of the Security Situation," September 11, 2006, p.17

Sectarian and Ethnic Composition: Seeking More Sunnis

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:⁶²

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 Iraqi government did, however, take continuing initiatives to recruit more Sunnis and to correct some of the earlier problems in de-Baathification 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 follow:⁶³

- Former Officers: 1,366
- Non-Commissioned Officers: 628
- Soldiers: 9,700

The recruitment of former officers and NCOs from the former region was particularly significant. Leadership issues and an ineffective and unfilled officer corps remained serious issues in late 2006, with some naming the outright disbanding of the former regime's military in 2003 as a contributing factor to the void of trained personnel for leadership positions.

Continuing Success in Recruiting

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. However, the ISF continued 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.⁶⁴

Progress in the Transfer of High Level Command and US Bases

There were growing successes in transferring command of Iraqi forces to the new Iraqi government. 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 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.⁶⁵

The Four Step Transfer Process

This security transition is defined as a four phased process that emphasized the role of the Iraqi government and visibility to the Iraqi people: Implement partnerships, Iraqi Army Lead (IAL), Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC), and Iraqi Security Self-Reliance.⁶⁶

- **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.

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.

Control of Muthanna province was transferred to the Provincial Governor and the civilian-controlled Iraqi Police Service on July 13th.⁶⁷ 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.⁶⁸ This paved the way for the departure of most of Italy's 1,600 troops by the end of 2006.⁶⁹ 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.”

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.⁷⁰

Similar transfers took place in other areas. 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.

This was intended to be only the first of an ongoing process of such transfers. 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.”⁷¹

Although this did not yet involve formal Iraqi control, by late August, half of Iraq's 10 army divisions were de facto in charge of their own territories or in the process of taking over from Coalition forces.⁷² In addition to transferring control of territories Coalition forces continued to hand over Forward Operating Bases to Iraqi personnel.

Transfer of Bases

By early August, the Coalition had closed 48 of their 110 Forward Operating Bases, handing over 31 to different Iraqi security forces, and 17 to the Ministry of Finance. Thirteen more Forward Operating Bases were scheduled for closure and handover by January 2007. The Department of Defense reported in August that,⁷³

MNF-I will efficiently consolidate its footprint in Iraq to reduce its military basing requirements progressively. The MNF-I basing strategy is an integral part of the Campaign Plan. MNF-I uses a conditions based process to synchronize basing requirements with Coalition force structure and projected command and control structure. Several factors are considered when employing this process, including cost-effective use of resources, maintaining security presence where required by the mission and maintaining only those bases required, transition of operations to the ISF as

they continue to assume the lead in security operations, and other factors. 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.

Transfer of Detainees

The US also reported that that MNF-I has 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 83**.⁷⁴

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.

MNF-I is currently in Phase 1. Significant challenges exist to ultimately meeting these criteria. The Iraqi Corrections System has not demonstrated the capacity to effectively resource and run a major facility, such as Camp Bucca. Additionally, based on the composition of the guard force, serious questions remain as to whether they would be able to maintain 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.

On September 7, the Iraqi government started to formally take control over the highest echelons of the command 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.⁷⁵ 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).⁷⁶

Real-world Dependence Through 2010

MNF-I sent mixed signals as to how successful this process really was. Most of its public statements did not tie transfer to effectiveness, did not explain the level of continuing Iraqi dependence, and did 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.

Gen. Casey speculated in late August 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”⁷⁷

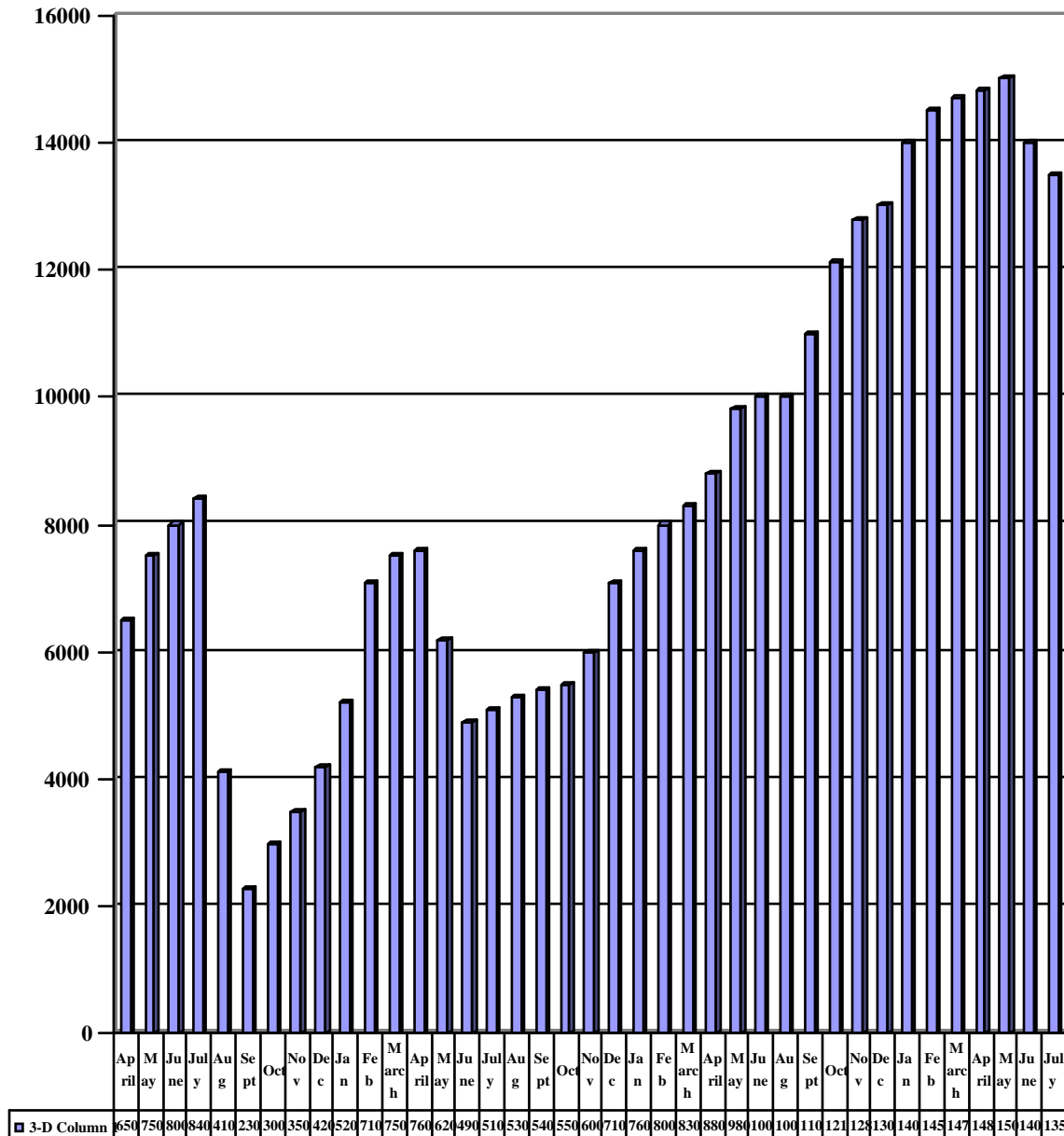
In September, President Talabani suggested a similar schedule, saying that the Iraqi Army would be ready to face its challenges on its own “within two years”.⁷⁸ In an early September meeting with visiting British Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett, Iraqi President Jalal Talabani predicted a shorter timeline, 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.⁷⁹

In the real world, however, a passage buried deep in the Department of Defense status report for August noted that,⁸⁰

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.***

Figure 82. 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

Progress in Assuming Leadership in Field Operations

As the number of Iraqi units grew, they also took a larger role in field operations.. As of August 2006, 115 Iraqi army units were said to have assumed the lead for counterinsurgency operations in specific areas.⁸¹ Such claims were often more cosmetic than real, and many units “in the lead” had little real mission responsibility or capability, and were extremely dependent on MNF-I command, planning, and support.

Nevertheless, the MNF-I reported that approximately one-third of company-sized operations in Iraq from May until August 2006 were conducted independently by Iraqi Forces. During this period there was a 35% increase in the number of Iraqi Army battalions that assumed the lead for counter-insurgency operations.

Among MOI forces, all 27 National Police battalions conducted counter-insurgency operations, and two battalions had the security lead in their areas of responsibility.⁸² Additionally, 10 Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) were transferred to the Government of Iraq during May through August, bringing the total to 48 of a total 110 FOBs under Iraqi control.⁸³

By August 7, 2006, a total of 5 Iraqi Army divisions, 25 brigades, and 85 battalions and 2 National Police battalions were said to have assumed the lead responsibility for their respective areas of operation. By this time the Iraqi Army had 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. The August 2006 Quarterly Status report to Congress stated:⁸⁴

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.

The September 2006 GAO report provided the additional data shown in **Figures 83**, which compares figure from January 2006 to August 2006 for Iraqi units taking the lead on security operations. This figure draws on on DoD and State Department reports and the GAO noted that DoD reported more detailed information on security transition in a classified format. 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. Developing these capabilities and certify Iraqi units as fully independent would take time since this involved the further development of logistical elements, ministry capacity and capability, intelligence structures, and command and control.⁸⁵

Figure 83**Iraqi Units Leading Operations and Provinces with Security Responsibility**

Type of Security Transition		January 2006	August 2006	Goal
Iraqi army units leading counterinsurgency operations in specific areas	Divisions	2	5	10
	Brigades	8	25	36
	Battalions	37	85	114 (includes Iraqi army and special operations battalions)
Number of Provinces that have assumed security responsibility		0	1	18

Source: General Accounting Office, "Stabilizing Iraq: An Assessment of the Security Situation," September 11, 2006, p.17

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. These data are summarized in **Figure 84**, which shows assessed MOD force capabilities at the unit level as of August 2007: units not yet ready, units fighting side by side with Coalition force, and units in the lead with Coalition enablers or fully independent.

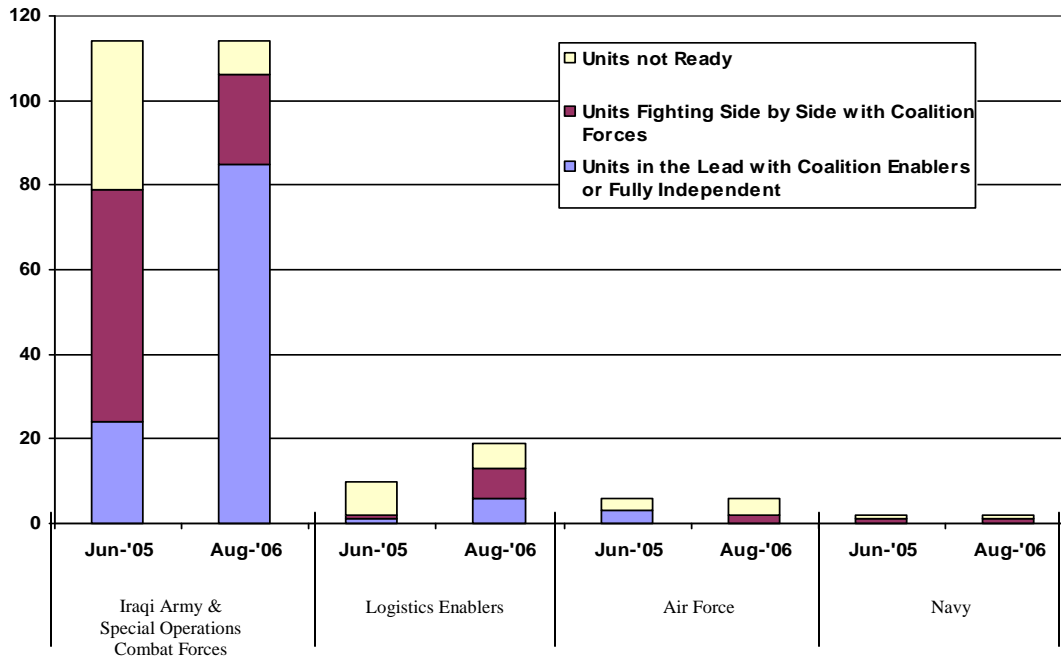
DoD did not provide unit-by-unit data, which would have provided a clearer overall picture since the individual unit reports contain readiness assessments in several sub-categories (personnel, command and control, training, sustainment/logistics, equipment, leadership) as well as a narrative assessment 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.

The GAO mentioned three key reasons why an accurate assessment of ISF readiness and progress could only come from the unit-by-unit reports:⁸⁶

- 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.⁸⁷

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.⁸⁸

Figure 84
MOD Forces' Assessed Capabilities



Data as of August 7, 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

Issues with Junior Officers and NCOs

A continuing 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 junior leadership positions. In addition to the schools, Coalition Military Transition 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.⁸⁹

The Department of Defense summarized the situation as follows:⁹⁰

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?”⁹¹

Another problem was links between Shiite militias and high-level officers at military headquarters as well as government officials, who cancelled a number of operations, protecting friends or certain neighborhoods.⁹²

Like the problems in the MOD, the loyalty and competency of those in MOI leadership positions continued to be of 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.⁹³

Educating the Overall Force

By mid-2006, the ISF had completed the construction, staffing, and equipping of most of its educational facilities, and Iraqi instructors were taking over in many areas.

Continued progress took place in turning over the training mission of Iraqi soldiers to Iraqi trainers. In July and August, 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.⁹⁴ 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.

On August 10, 2006, 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.”⁹⁵ 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.⁹⁶

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 advisers 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.⁹⁷

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 the parts quickly became virtually uninhabitable.

Developments in the Ministry of Defense: Summer and Fall of 2006

The appointment of a new Minister of Defense on June 8th brought an end to nearly half a year without clear leadership, but scarcely create 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 Sunni Minister of the Interior, Jawad al-Bulani, 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.

Weaknesses in the MOD

The advisory effort was strengthened. 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.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the Ministry continued to present serious problems in producing effective plans and policy, making proper appointments, helping to break down sectarian rivalry in the Ministry and armed forces, and in halting corruption. It is also interesting to note that the Defense Department requested US\$151 million in the FY2007 Budget Amendment request to sustain the Ministry of the Interior, but did not ask for funding to sustain the Ministry of Defense.

By August, a number of Shi'ite leaders were already calling for the dismissal of both the Minister of Defense and Minister of the Interior. Prime Minister Maliki resisted such efforts at least through September. 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.

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.⁹⁹ The fact remained, however, that the civil side of Iraqi force development had made little real progress and did not win the confidence of either the public or a wide range of Iraqi political leaders.

Ongoing Sectarian Issues in MOD Forces

Sectarian issues presented a broader set of problems. 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.¹⁰⁰

Sectarian lines within the armed forces remained drawn 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. Due to greater military experience among Sunnis and Kurds, these groups were slightly over-

represented in senior leadership positions. Shi'ites were adequately represented at the battalion level, but less-so at higher echelons. The reason 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 nationally recruited divisions are otherwise 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 tend to be ethnically and religiously representative of their region, not of Iraq as a whole.¹⁰¹

Army and Special Operations Forces: Increasing, but Mixed Capabilities

The Iraqi Army grew from 4 brigades and 23 battalions in November 2005, to 25 brigades and 85 battalions that had assumed responsibility in August 2006.¹⁰² The Iraqi Army included approximately 115,000 trained and equipped combat soldiers, including SIB personnel and about 9,600 support forces. The Iraqi Special Operations Forces (ISOF) were composed of 1,600 soldiers making up the Iraqi Counter-Terrorism Task Force, the Iraqi Commandos, a support battalion, and a special reconnaissance unit.¹⁰³

By the summer and fall of 2006, Ministry of Defense Forces consisting of the Army (including Special Operations Forces), Air Force, and Navy (including Marines) had a force development goal of bringing the total Objective Counter-Insurgency Force up to a level of 137,500 personnel.¹⁰⁴

The Army was to be composed of 9 infantry divisions and 1 mechanized infantry division, and would make up the bulk of this force. Support would be provided by nine Motorized Transportation Regiments, 5 logistics battalions, 2 support battalions, 5 Regional Support Units (RSUs), and 91 Garrison Support Units (GSUs). The Taji National Depot was to provide higher level supply and maintenance.

Additionally each battalion, brigade, and division headquarters was to be supported by a Headquarters and Service Company providing logistical and maintenance support. Finally the Army was to include 17 SIBs and a Special Operations Forces Brigade consisting of two special operational battalions. The target for the Air Force was to be six squadrons and the Navy two squadrons and a Marine battalion.¹⁰⁵

Gen. John Abizaid stated in early September attested that while Iraqi army forces were fighting, they were not yet capable of ensuring Iraqi security.¹⁰⁶ He also said that Iraqi and MNF-I efforts to increase the independence of Iraqi Army units continued to focus on combat enablers.

The three planned Iraqi Training Battalions had now 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.

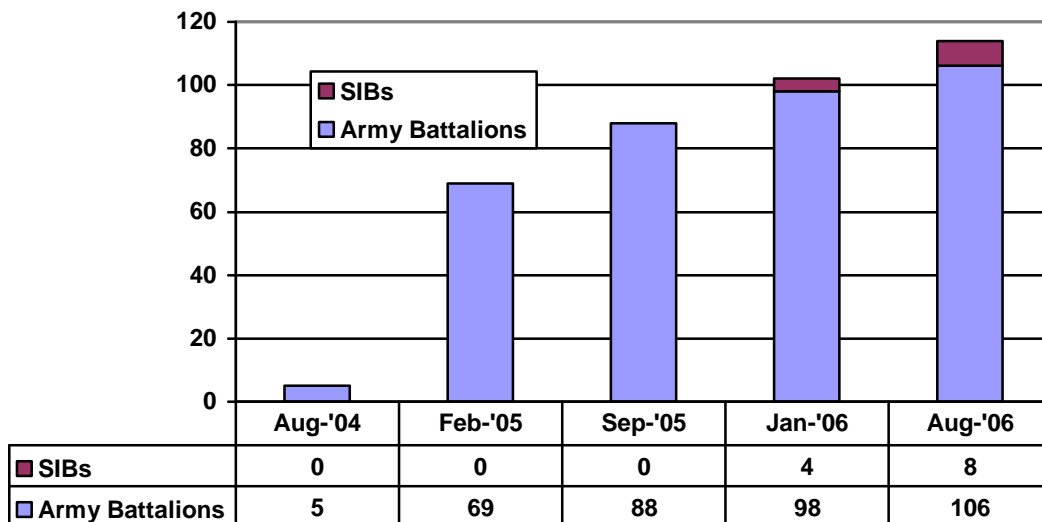
Training for service and support officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) was provided by the Iraqi Armed Service and Supply Institute (IASSI) at Taji. By August 2006 IASSI had trained more than 5,000 officers and NCOs.¹⁰⁷

Although the Motorized Transportation Regiments (MTRs) were approaching full operational capability, a continued lack of competent maintenance personnel hindered their ability to reach full capability. As of August, approximately 80% of planned HSCs had been formed, a third were operational and the remaining HSCs were scheduled to be completed by December 2006.¹⁰⁸ Seventeen Special Operations Forces (SIBs) were in the process of being trained and equipped. The Iraqi Army was in control of the SIBs, but only 1 SIB was capable of independent operation and all 17 required Coalition logistical support.¹⁰⁹

- **Figure 85** compares the number of SIBs and Iraqi army battalions in combat as of August 2006.
- **Figure 86** shows the number of combat operations being carried out at the company level and above from December 2005 through August 2006.

Both figures show a steady rise in Iraqi readiness and capability, although it must be stressed that many units were seriously undermanned, underequipped or under facilitated, and lacked experience and capable leadership. The steady rise in the percentage of ISF operations shown in Figure 86 also ignored the need such units had for external support, the often undemanding nature of ISF operations, and continued dependence on cadres of MNF-I advisors.

Figure 85
Iraqi Army Battalions in Combat



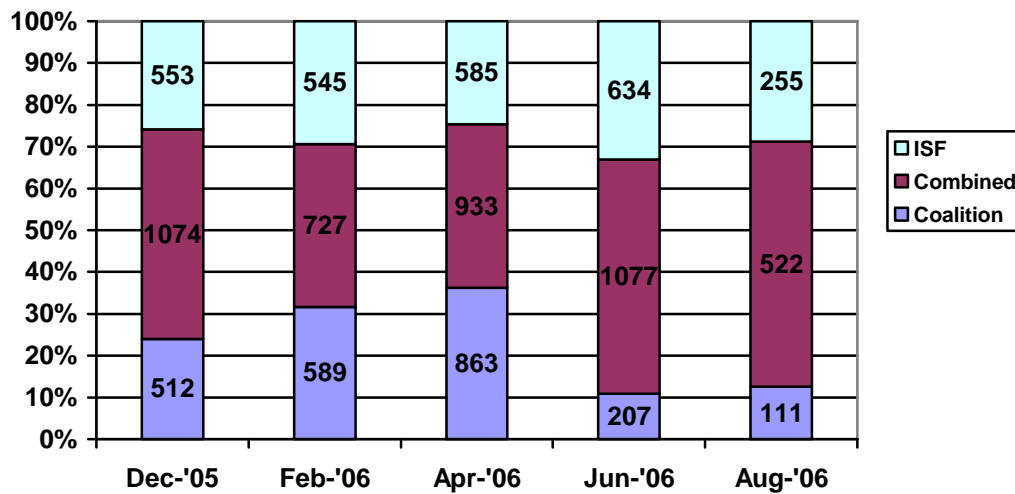
NOTE: Includes special operations battalions and Strategic Infrastructure Battions, but does not include combat support and combat service support units.

Data as of August 7, 2006

Source: Adapted from: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p.52;

Note: +/-5% margin of error

Figure 86
Combat Operations (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 August 15, 2006
 Source: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p.53.

Readiness, Desertions and Mission Capability

Iraqi army forces had other problems. According to US advisers to Iraqi forces, both soldiers and officers remained reluctant to initiate contact with the enemy.¹¹⁰ CENTCOM commander Gen. John Abizaid drew a more detailed picture in early September, praising special operations forces as “some of the best units anywhere in the Middle East,” but admitting disappointment in other units.¹¹¹

During initial training, approximately 15% attrition was the norm. 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.¹¹² According to Jane’s Defense Weekly, however, many reports from Iraq suggest higher figures.¹¹³ 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.¹¹⁴

Iraqi Army leaders in Al Anbar province complained about desertion rates in some units being as high as 40%.¹¹⁵ 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.¹¹⁶ 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.¹¹⁷

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.¹¹⁸ During the last weekend in August, 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.¹¹⁹

Mixed Levels of Effectiveness and Sectarian and Ethnic Issues

In general, Kurdish units were still regarded as the most effective because of their experience as guerrilla forces who have retained their officers and cohesion.¹²⁰ Also, the 205th Iraqi Army Battalion, or "Tiger Battalion", had been noted 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, Iraqi Army First Division, operating in Fallujah was another unit 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 2004.¹²¹

At the same time, some of the best-motivated and best-equipped forces were also those most heavily implicated in the 2005 prisoner torture scandal.¹²² 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, such as the Scorpion, 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.¹²³

The August quarterly report of the Department of Defense took a somewhat muted view of these problems, but noted that,¹²⁴

Institutional leadership courses are complemented and reinforced through partnership with Coalition Military Transition Teams. These teams, embedded with every Iraqi battalion, brigade, and division, provide daily guidance and mentorship. In addition, Iraqi units are partnered with Coalition force units. These partnerships, combined with the expertise and leadership taught through the institutional base, are critical for development of both unit proficiency and leadership essential to increased operational effectiveness. The importance of ethics, human rights, and leadership in the Iraqi Armed Forces has engendered a concept for a Center for Ethics and Leadership to provide institutional oversight for ethics education, training, and assessment.

A promising trend is that military leadership has become more involved with civic leaders and sheiks in their areas of operation. This activity will continue to reinforce and establish the importance of Iraqis leading and taking responsibility for their own security and interests.

The Role of US Special Operations Forces in Training Iraqi Security Forces

Much depended on the quality of the MNF-I training effort and the support of embedded training teams and partner units in the field. The level of continued ISF dependence on MNF-I advisors is indicated by the fact that total of 3,768 US Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and Air Force combat controllers were operating in Iraq in 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:¹²⁵

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.¹²⁶

The quality of MNF-I trainers had a major impact on the quality of the forces they trained: 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.

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.¹²⁷

Equipping the Force: Summer and Early Fall 2006

The US continued to provide personal equipment such as body armor sets, and also up-armored Humvees and tracked M113 armored personnel carriers. According to Col. Brian Jones, commander of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, significantly shored up the confidence of Iraqi soldiers.¹²⁸

In general, however, Iraqi army forces increasingly complained about the lack of armor, protected vehicles, and artillery. The constant uparmoring of MNF-I forces help reinforce such complaints as did the fact that stepping up Iraqi operations in the field steadily exposed their lack of protection and firepower.

Support Capabilities and Requirements

The Multinational Command-Iraq continued to provide logistical support to Iraq's armed forces. Despite progress in Iraqi Army logistical capabilities, much work remained to be done in institutional development. 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.

The August 2006 report by the US Department of Defense summarized the situation as follows:¹²⁹

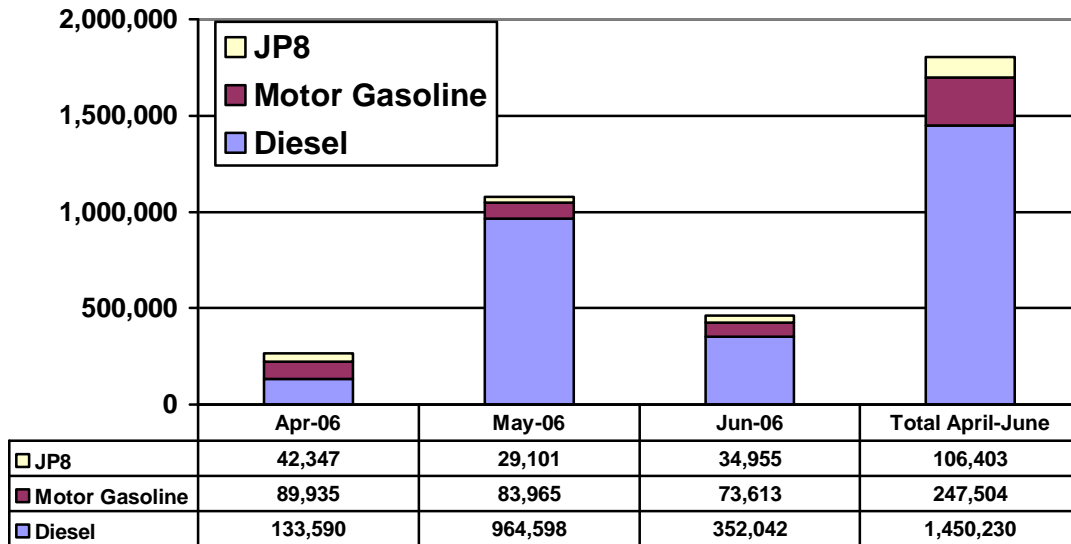
MNC-I continues to provide logistical support to the Iraqi Armed Forces where the established system falls short. Although there has been some success with Iraqi Army units using their own processes, there is still a great deal of institutional development remaining. MNF-I is working with both MNC-I 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.

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 personnel¹³⁰, while the Garrison Support Units were not expected to be functional until March 2007.

Figure 87 provides data on Coalition support to Iraqi Army units in terms of fuel supply through June 2006.

Figure 87
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.

Iraqi Navy: Late Summer and Early Fall 2006

Iraq's navy continued to have had its main base at Umm Qasr. It was tasked with the defense of Iraq's small shoreline and its offshore oil loading facilities. Its strength was around 1,000 sailors and marines, organized into two patrol and assault boat squadrons and a marine battalion.

MNF-I summarized the current state of the Iraqi Navy as follows:¹³¹

The Iraqi Navy is tasked with defending Iraq's coast, territorial waters, vital ports, and offshore oil platforms. The Iraqi Navy has more than 1,100 trained and equipped sailors and marines organized into an operational headquarters, two afloat squadrons, and five Marine companies. The Iraqi Navy is developing independent capabilities for surface surveillance, maritime interdiction, oil terminal protection, and support operations.

The Iraqi Navy Training Department continues to develop unit-level refresher training and naval skills improvements, including basic seamanship and maritime security operations. In June 2006, the Training Department independently conducted basic training and successfully graduated 324 naval recruits. Its training efforts range from mentorship, as conducted by the Naval Transition Team, to active skills training, as conducted by Coalition Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard Forces.

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.¹³²

Figure 88 provides details on Iraqi naval assets, according to *Jane's Defence Weekly*, as of July 2006.

Figure 88
Iraqi Naval Capabilities

Patrol boats	Rigid inflatable boats	Fast Assault Boats	Offshore patrol support vessels	Al-Faw-class patrol boats
5	10	24	Purchase planned	Purchase planned

Source: Ripley, Tim, "Country Briefing Iraq," Jane's Defence Weekly, July 5, 2006, p.28

Iraqi Air Force: Late Summer and Early Fall 2006

Iraq's air force remained small with 750 personnel. Increasing the size of the force continued to be a problem, because of the difficulty in finding qualified applicants. However, both the Seventh Squadron—consisting of five CompAir 7SLs and based at Kirkuk Air Base—and the 70th Squadron—consisting of two Seekers and six CH-2000s and based at Basrah Air Base – were performing operational missions. These missions mostly consisted of patrolling oil pipeline infrastructure in their respective areas.

The MNF-I summarized progress in creating the IAF as follows:¹³³

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 are currently 750 personnel in the Iraqi Air Force, with development plans calling for a concentrated recruitment effort over the next 18 months to at least double the personnel by the end of December 2007. This effort is intended to provide a satisfactory corps of professionals as a foundation for future growth.

The Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance aircraft at Kirkuk Air Base (7th Squadron with five CompAir 7SLs) and Basrah Air Base (70th Squadron with two Seekers and six CH-2000s) are performing operational missions. These aircraft are primarily deployed to patrol oil pipeline infrastructure in the north and south, with occasional missions conducted in support of Iraqi Army units.

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.

Helicopter operations from Taji Air Base in central Iraq are still in their infancy, but the next six months should see a marked improvement. The 2nd Squadron is expected to receive the first 6 of 16 Huey IIs from a modification factory in the United States by the end of January 2007 and the remainder before April 2007. The 2nd Squadron will primarily be used for casualty evacuation. It is expected to reach initial operational capability by the third quarter of FY2007.

Three C-130Es from 23rd Squadron at New Muthanna Air Base round out the Iraqi Air Force fleet. Early complications with low mission capable rates have been solved, and fleet-wide readiness was measured at 72% in July 2006. The Iraqi Air Force has requested an additional three aircraft from the U.S. Government to bring the fleet total to six. These additional aircraft reflect the Coalition Air Force Transition Team's force generation plan and efforts are under way to identify additional funding to meet this request.

By the end of January 2007 the 2nd Squadron based at Taji Air Base was expected to receive its first 6 Huey IIs and were expected to use them mostly for casualty evacuation. Finally the 23rd Squadron located at the new Al-Muthanna airbase in Baghdad, consisted of three C-130Es.¹³⁴

Overall the air force largely concentrated on reconnaissance, battlefield mobility and air transport. The control of Iraqi airspace remained a US responsibility, and the Ministry of Defense had not developed plans to procure its own combat aircraft.

Figure 89 provides details on Iraqi air force assets, according to *Jane's Defence Weekly*, as of July 2006.

Figure 89
Iraqi Air Force Capabilities

	C-130E Hercules transport aircraft	CH-2000 observation aircraft	SB7L-360 Seeker	Mil Mi-8 battlefield helicopters	Bell 206 Jet Ranger helicopters	Bell UH-1 helicopters
# of aircraft	3	6	2	8 (more expected 2007)	5	16 (upgraded during 2006 in US to Huey II standard)
Role	Air Transport	Patrol oil pipelines and other critical infrastructure facilities	Patrol oil pipelines and other critical infrastructure facilities	Troop transport	Basic rotary-wing training	

Source: Ripley, Tim, "Country Briefing Iraq," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, July 5, 2006, p.28, and US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 54

Developments in the Ministry of the Interior: Summer and Fall 2006

More reports surfaced about a possible reshuffling of the cabinet in early September. While Prime Minister Maliki did not elaborate on what ministries were being discussed, inside sources said discussions had focused on Interior Minister Jawad Bolani's position. Bolani's case is interesting because he was picked for the exact qualities that came to haunt him: Although he was a Sunni, 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.

The August status report of the Department of Defense took a broader view of the MOI's problems:¹³⁵

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.

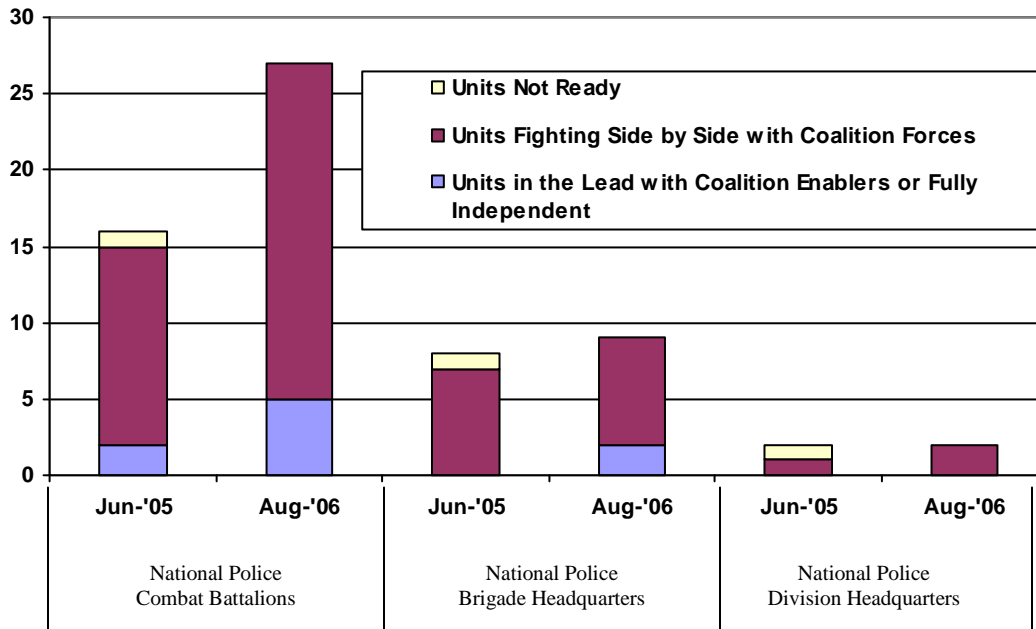
The Growth of MOI Forces

The number of Ministry of the Interior forces that MNF-I defined as trained and equipped grew from approximately 93,000 trained and equipped in November 2005 to more than 160,000 in August 2006.¹³⁶

- **Figure 90** contrasts DOD assessed capabilities for the National Police Service, June 2005 and August 2006, at the combat battalion, brigade, and division level.
- **Figure 91** provides a force generation timeline, with information on manning and training as well as equipment deliveries, as of August 2006.

It should be stressed, however, that MOI forces were generally less ready and reliable than their regular army counterparts, that they often had more severe manning and equipment problems, that officers and NCO presented more problems, corruption was a greater problem, and they were more likely to support Shi'ite operations and militias.

Figure 90
MOI National Police Forces' Assessed Capabilities



Data as of August 7, 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.

Problems in Manpower and Personnel Management

As of August the MOI did not have an effective system for keeping track of personnel and therefore was unsure how many of the trained recruits remained with the MOI or how many of the 146,000 IPS personnel on payroll had been CPATT trained and equipped. CPATT estimated that the attrition rate would be at least 20% per year in the following years.

In addition to the uncertainties in the overall number of trained police officers on duty there continued to be problems with distribution 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.¹³⁷

The National Police suffered similar problems, having 29,000 officers on payroll but not knowing how many of these had been trained and equipped. 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.¹³⁸

Ongoing Sectarian Issues

There was a continuing effort to ensure the ethnic diversity of the MOI forces. 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.¹³⁹

In addition to the above concerns the problem of 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. Additionally in July further transition teams were deployed to help limit infiltration by militias and criminal activity by members of the police.

Corruption in the MOI

Corruption remained a major problem although some progress was made. During 2005 the MOI Inspector General (IG) conducted 790 corruption investigations. Of these, 472 (60%) were closed. Of the closed investigations 118 (25%) were forwarded to the CPI or to a court. However, 350 (74%) were closed because of "insufficient evidence," and 4 (1%) were handled internally.

In order to improve the IG's capabilities, the Specialized Advance Training Unit at the Baghdad Police College was scheduled to begin training new investigators, a process that was expected to take 18 months. It was clear, however, that it would take years to eliminate a level of corruptions that affected both the Ministry and National Police and which was endemic in the regular police.

The Year of the Police Does Gather Some Momentum

It is important to note that while the MNF-I did not always fully publicize these problems, and its press releases tended to relentlessly "spin" a totally misleading picture of MOI capabilities, it was address the "year of the police" with 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:¹⁴⁰

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.

National Police

The reorganized National Police was now organized 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 had supposed reached 99% of their authorized equipping and manning levels by July 2006, and were expected to complete force generation by December 2006. Overall, 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..

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, and 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.

By August the National Police had supposed received 92% of their authorized equipment. They were expected to reach 96% by the end of November, falling short of the goal of reaching 100% by that time. They were supposed to be fully equipped by the end of December.¹⁴¹

The National Police continued to have problems with unprofessional and criminal behavior in some units. To combat these problems there were 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 touched on the problems involved, although it scarcely fully addressed them:¹⁴²

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.

Iraqi Police Service

By August 2006 the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) had trained and equipped approximately 113,800 Iraqi Police Service (IPS) personnel, an increase of 12,600 over the three months prior. Although the force was expected to reach the targeted strength of 135,000 by December 2006, it was expected that there would continue to be shortages in some areas and excesses in others and the real world personnel situation was radically different from the largely meaningless totals of “trained and equipped” reported in MNF-I press releases.

The August report of the Department of Defense was far more frank:¹⁴³

.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 paying 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 Ninawah 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.

This did not mean that many aspect of the police development effort were not improving. By July 24, 2006, 71,324 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. By August 2006 41,051 officers had graduated from the TIP and OTIP programs.

In an effort to ensure that MOI personnel were committed to the new regime 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.

Unfortunately, this 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. 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.

While the full details are unclear, Moayad X Abdullah of ABC News reported in late September that 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 out side 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 IPS personnel also were poorly equipped. Much of the equipment they were supposed to have was not delivered or was somehow lost. At best, they were 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.

Equipping was lacking even in terms of the size of the deliveries units were supposed to have had. In Baghdad and the nine other key cities the IPS personnel were supposedly equipped at 99% of their authorized equipment by the end of June 2006 and were expected to be fully equipped by mid-August. Overall, however, in the 18 provinces the IPS was only equipped at a 66% rate by June, and were not expected to be fully equipped until the end of the year.¹⁴⁴

Department of Border Enforcement and Department of Ports of Entry

As of early August 2006, the Coalition had funded the construction of 258 border forts throughout nine Iraqi provinces. Projections called for an additional three forts located in the Anbar and Sulaymania provinces to be built by the end of September. The forts were seen as critical to ensuring the Iraqis' ability to assume responsibility for 3,161 kilometers of Iraq's borders. According to US Army Lt. Gen. Martin Dempsey, MNSTC-I commanding general, responsibility for border protection would initially follow 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. As of August 2006, there were 25,951 border police assigned to border forts throughout Iraq.¹⁴⁵

The Department of Border Enforcement (DBE) had 23,900 trained and equipped personnel by August 2006 an increase of 1,800 since May of 2006. These personnel were organized into 5 regions, 12 brigades, 38 battalions and the staff for 258 border forts. The DBE forces were trained in three academies each with the capacity to train approximately 800 recruits at a time.

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 August 2006. The DBE and POE were expected to have 28,360 trained and equipped personnel by November 2006.¹⁴⁶

The DBE and POE were equipped with AK-47s, medium machine guns, body armor, medium pick-up trucks, mid-size SUVs, generators, and radios. The DBE had received 81% of their authorized equipment by August and were expected to be at 97% by the end of the month, falling short of the goal of being 100% equipped by this time. By the end of September the goal of being fully equipped was expected to be achieved. The POEs were expected to be fully equipped by the end of December 2006.¹⁴⁷

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. In June an Iraqi training team took over responsibility for training future PSD personnel.

In addition to the regular MOI forces, an estimated 145,000 personnel served in the Facility Protection Service (FPS) working directly for the 27 ministries. The FPS forces were used as security guards for governmental buildings and compared to other MOI forces were minimally trained and equipped.

As the Department of Defense status report for August 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.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, corruption, theft, and favoritism were common. Many elements operated on tribal, ethnic, and sectarian lines and there was significant insurgent infiltration.

MOI Capacity Development

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 2006.¹⁴⁹

Figure 91
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.		

Part II: Equipment

- 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 comms equipment resolved; equipment inbound
- Pistol purchase contract challenged causing delay in manufacture and delivery

9+ CITIES	% Eqpd	Overall	Key Shortfall
Baghdad	98	99%	AK-47s
Fallujah	100		
Ramadi	99		AK-47s
North Babil	96		PKM
Mosul	100		
Tal A'Far	100		
Najaf	100		
Baqubah	100		
Basrah	93		AK-47s
Kirkuk	100		
Samarra	100		
National Police	92		92%

18 PROVs	% Eqpd	Overall	Key Shortfall
Baghdad	98	66%	AK-47s
Anbar	43		Personnel
Dahuk	16		All. Priority
Irbil	53		Comms
Karbala	73		PKM, Comms
Najaf	86		PKM, Comms
Sulymaniyah	13		All. Priority
Wasit	68		Glocks, PKM, Comms
Babil	72		Glocks, PKM, Comms
Basrah	71		AK-47s, PKM,
Dhi Qar	82		Glocks, PKM, Comms
Diwala	57		AK-47s, PKM,
Maysan	82		Glocks, PKM
Muthanna	91		Glocks, PKM

DDE	81	56%	PKM, Vehicles	Ninewah	62	Weapons, Body Armor
				Qadisivah	75	Glocks, PKM, Comms
POE	32		Glocks, Body Armor,	Salah Ad	68	AK-47s, PKM,
				Tamim	79	PKM, Comms

Equipment Timeline 2006:

- Iraqi Police Service:
 - June: 99-100% in key cities
 - August: 100% (the meaning of this figure from the August 2006 DoD report to Congress is not clear, given the 100% training goal in key cities and the provinces of December 2006)
 - December: 100% for the key cities IPS and the provincial IPS
- National Police:
 - July: 92%
 - November: 96-100%
 - December: 100%
- Department of Border Enforcement (DBE), Department of Ports of Entry (POE)
 - July: 81% DBE
 - August: 97-100% DBE
 - September: 100% DBE
 - December: 100% of DBE and POE

Data as of July 15, 2006

Source: US Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, August 2006 Report to Congress, p. 56 and 49.

The Criminal Justice System

One further major problem shaping progress in the ISF is the lack of an effective criminal justice and prison system, 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 in progress to date as follows:¹⁵⁰

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 U.S. Department of Justice estimates that Iraq needs 1,500 judges, yet only about 740 judges are currently serving. The Iraqi Ministry of Justice's (MOJ) Judicial Training Institute has enrolled a new class of 180 students (40 judges and 140 prosecutors) in a 2-year program to train new judges and prosecutors. When this class graduates in the fall of 2007, there will still be a significant shortfall in judges. To help address this need, the Iraqi Chief Justice recently nominated 200 lawyers to serve as investigative judges. If these judges are confirmed, the number of judges will rise to 940. By the fall of 2007, approximately 980 judges will be serving in Iraq, an increase of 32%, but still well short of the requirement.

...The MOJ is responsible for imprisoning convicted criminals and insurgents in Iraq. MOJ prisons generally meet international standards, but 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 Baladiyah, 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 Baladiyah 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 reality was that Iraq did not have an effective criminal justice system or rule of law in much of the country, 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. Like the lack of political conciliation, effective governance, and a government presence in the field, the ISF faced problems that went far beyond its own capabilities. These problems were particularly critical in the case of the police which often had to try to operate in a legal vacuum.

Looking Ahead

There is no way to summarize Iraqi force development in simple terms, particularly because so much depends in the near term on whether Iraqi efforts at political conciliation, effective governance, and a government presence in the field do or do not succeed. The ISF development effort cannot succeed without major progress in all of these areas, any more than they can succeed without the creation of effective Iraqi forces and Iraqi popular belief that MNF-I forces will leave as soon as possible and Iraq will be truly sovereign.

The one critical punchline that does emerge from this analysis, however, is that there is no near term prospect that Iraqi force development will allow major reductions in MNF-I forces, and that ISF force development can only succeed if the MNF-I provides active combat support well into 2008 and major advisory and aid support through 2010. Every element of ISF development still requires years of effort and support, and any successful policy towards Iraq that offers serious hope of avoiding massive increases in sectarian and ethnic violence, and continued insurgency, requires an honest recognition of this fact.

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