

## CHAPTER 6: THE IRAQI NAVY

The Iraqi Navy operates in an area of responsibility with significant strategic value, bordered by countries with which Iraq has difficult political relationships. The Navy is responsible for supporting ongoing counterinsurgency operations and for the security of the key Iraqi infrastructure that enables the shipping of nearly all Iraq's oil, which constitutes the majority of national revenue. In just a few years, the Iraqi Navy has made significant progress, has embarked on an ambitious training and acquisition program, and has implemented a sophisticated planning process. It continues to develop solid leadership as it works with its Coalition partners toward independent operation in its area of responsibility. This progress notwithstanding, the Iraqi Navy remains dependent on Coalition assistance and faces significant challenges in a number of areas.

### Overview of the Iraqi Navy

Founded in 1937 with just four ships, the Iraqi Navy has generally remained a small part of Iraq's overall military capacity. The Iraqi Navy played almost no part in the Iran-Iraq War, but it did pose a threat to U.S. forces during the Gulf War, primarily through its large arsenal of naval mines. By the conclusion of Operations Desert Shield and Storm, more than 100 Iraqi naval vessels had been destroyed and the Navy was largely devastated. By 2002 the Iraqi Navy was in a meager state of readiness, with remaining units barely operational and crews largely untrained.<sup>109</sup>

The Coalition began working with Iraqis to rebuild the Navy in 2004. Challenges at that early stage included lack of personnel and appropriate vessels, the need to establish working relationships between the Iraqi Navy and Joint Headquarters, a legacy of no central planning or budgetary continuity, and poor relations with the Coast Guard.<sup>110</sup> In January 2004 the Coalition established the Iraqi Coastal Defense Force, whose volunteers attended eight weeks of basic training alongside Army trainees. They then pursued special maritime training in Umm Qasr, concentrating on more advanced seamanship, sea rescue, maritime law, first aid, and visit, board, search, and seizure (VBSS) training.<sup>111</sup> The Iraqi Coastal Defense Force was later renamed the Iraqi Navy, and the new Iraqi Navy training pipeline began in January 2005.<sup>112</sup>

The Iraqi Navy area of responsibility is very small but strategically important, as it includes the al Basra and Khor al Amaya oil terminals and Iraq's only deep water port (Umm Qasr), all of which are vital to Iraq's economy. Thus despite the Iraqi Navy's small size, its mission is significant—protection of these crucial assets, Iraq's territorial seas, and its economic exclusion zone; protection of the shoreline and inland waterways from insurgent and criminal infiltration; force protection; surface surveillance; point defense of offshore oil loading facilities; and visit, board,

---

<sup>109</sup> "Saddam's Navy," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/navy.htm>.

<sup>110</sup> Interview with senior Iraqi Navy official, July 2007.

<sup>111</sup> The Coalition Provisional Authority, "Briefing on the Iraqi Coastal Defense Force," news release, April 19, 2004; available at [http://www.cpa-iraq.org/pressreleases/20040419\\_coastal\\_defense.html](http://www.cpa-iraq.org/pressreleases/20040419_coastal_defense.html).

<sup>112</sup> "Iraqi Navy," GlobalSecurity.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/cdf.htm>.

search, and seizure interdiction operations.<sup>113</sup> However, the Navy's development has lagged behind that of the other services, perhaps two to three years behind that of the Iraqi Army.

The new Iraqi Navy is commanded by Rear Admiral Muhammad Jawad Kadhim at the Ministry of Defense headquarters in Baghdad and by an operational commander, Commander Ahmed Maarij, in Umm Qasr; its leadership reports to the Iraqi Joint Headquarters. Today the Iraqi Navy consists of almost 1,300 personnel, with plans to expand to 2,500.<sup>114</sup> It is organized into an operational headquarters, a patrol squadron, an assault squadron, and four marine battalions. As the Iraqi Navy's area of responsibility is in the country's south, the Navy's personnel are predominantly Shi'a; but most other ethnic and religious groups, including Kurds, Christians, and Sunnis, are represented. Furthermore, one of the Iraqi Navy's major successes has been in remaining nonsectarian; it has put significant emphasis on instilling a sense of overarching loyalty to the Navy and the central government—not to tribal and religious affiliations.<sup>115</sup>

The current naval fleet is not adequate to execute the Navy's mission. It consists of Predator class patrol boats, Italian river boats, Al Faw patrol boats, and fast assault boats. Some of these assets are of such poor quality that they can at best be cannibalized for spare parts, or perhaps used for basic ship handling and navigation training. In addition, the fleet as a whole is plagued by poor maintenance practices.<sup>116</sup> Accordingly, a large part of current planning is an extensive and ambitious acquisition program to build the fleet to contain 15 patrol boats, 4 patrol ships, 2 offshore vessels, and up to 50 fast assault boats. These vessels will provide security for the oil terminals; patrol the Northern Arabian Gulf, the Iraqi territorial waters and economic exclusion zone; and provide command and control and forward support.<sup>117</sup> The contracts for the offshore support vessels, patrol ships, and three of the patrol boats are completed—though they have been delayed over negotiations regarding exchange rates and taxes—and the purchases were made with Iraqi money.<sup>118</sup>

At present the Iraqi Navy is using a road map formulated in conjunction with Coalition forces. The Maritime Services Transition Team encompasses many different Coalition components, including U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, Multi-National Forces–Iraq, Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq, the Joint Headquarters Transition Team, Combined Task Force 158 and Combined Task Group 158.1,<sup>119</sup> the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team, and the Naval Transition Team. The Maritime Services Transition Team works closely with the Iraqi MOD, Joint

---

<sup>113</sup> Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, February 2006, p. 44 (reports of this title, submitted to Congress in accordance with section 9010 of various Department of Defense appropriation acts, are cited hereafter as 9010 Report).

<sup>114</sup> 9010 Report, June 2007, p. 42.

<sup>115</sup> Briefing with Maritime Services Transition Team official, July 2007.

<sup>116</sup> Meeting with Naval Transition Team official, July 2007.

<sup>117</sup> Iraqi Navy Information Brief, July 2007.

<sup>118</sup> 9010 Report, June 2007, p. 42.

<sup>119</sup> Combined Task Force (CTF) 158 operates in the northern Persian Gulf, also known as the northern Arabian Gulf (NAG), under a separate chain of command from that of the Naval Transition Team. Task Force 158 is the maritime contribution to Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and is executed by Coalition forces of the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom working alongside elements of the Iraqi Navy and the Iraqi Marines. Task Force 158's mission is to protect Iraq's vital oil infrastructure in the NAG, to conduct maritime security operations (MSO) in the NAG, and to contribute to the development of the operational capability of the Iraqi Navy and Marines so that Coalition forces may withdraw in due course.

Headquarters, the Iraqi Navy, and operational elements at Umm Qasr as it provides advice and training. It should be noted that a primary player in this process is the Royal Navy, which provides the bulk of personnel and the senior liaison officers, including the principal advisor to Rear Admiral Jawad. The commander of the Naval Transition Team in Umm Qasr, who also serves as the principal advisor to Commander Ahmed, the Iraqi operational commander, is a member of the Royal Navy as well.

Although this structure is complex, in general it functions as follows: Multi-National Force–Iraq and the Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq advise the MOD and Iraqi Joint Headquarters. The representative of the naval component of the Joint Headquarters Transition Team in turn advises the head of the Iraqi Navy. The commander of the Naval Transition Team at Umm Qasr provides force training and mentoring to the Iraqi operational commander at Umm Qasr, who also receives training feedback from the Combined Task Group 158.1. At the same time, the operational commander is the Iraqi force provider to the Combined Task Group 158.1.<sup>120</sup> Combined Task Group 158.1 and Combined Task Force 158 also provide operational assistance and on-scene training to the Iraqi Navy in protecting the oil terminals and in conducting visit, board, search, and seizure operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf.

## Challenges Facing the Iraqi Navy

As a part of its assessment, the Commission interviewed five senior Coalition officials from the Maritime Services Transition Team structure, the Naval Transition Team, Combined Task Force 158, and the Combined Task Group 158.1, as well as two senior officials from the Iraqi Navy.<sup>121</sup> The Commission also traveled to the Umm Qasr Naval Base and, via Iraqi patrol boat, to the al Basra and Khor al Amaya oil terminals in the Iraqi Navy's area of responsibility. These meetings and site visits made clear that although the new Iraqi Navy is making progress, it faces challenges raised by its low profile within the MOD, the complexity of its mission, the highly restricted maritime battle space in its area of responsibility, poor logistics and maintenance, and poor relations with the Coast Guard.

## Ministry of Defense

***Finding:** The low profile of the Iraqi Navy within the MOD, as well as the ministry's inadequate budget allocation and execution, significantly impede Iraqi naval operations and development.*

The Iraqi Navy has never enjoyed a high profile within the Ministry of Defense, although this situation is changing somewhat with increased recognition of the Navy's strategic importance, not only in the role it plays in Iraq's economic well-being but also in maintaining the country's territorial integrity by protecting Iraq's economic exclusion zone. Iraqi naval officers told the Commission that they confront two main types of challenges: external threats to the nation and a weak internal relationship with the Ministry of Defense. The Iraqi Navy frequently has problems

---

<sup>120</sup> Iraqi Navy Information Brief, July 2007.

<sup>121</sup> The Commission also spoke informally with many more Iraqi Navy and Coalition officers during extensive site visits.

working with the MOD on issues related to budget execution, contracting, and planning.<sup>122</sup> For example, because of the long lead time required to procure naval assets, the head of the Iraqi Navy recommended budgeting on a five-year cycle, but the MOD has not embraced this idea of planning further into the out years.

Like many other components of the Iraqi Security Forces, the Iraqi Navy fails to spend much of what has been appropriated for it (and what it greatly needs) because the MOD refuses to delegate budget execution authority and insists on complex bureaucratic procedures requiring multiple signatures. Senior Iraqi Navy officers also told the Commission that the Iraqi Navy does not receive sufficient funding to conduct daily operations. At present, the Iraqi Navy operational commander in Umm Qasr has a monthly operations and management budget of only \$2,000. Although this figure does not include wages and fuel costs, it is insufficient to cover priorities such as routine maintenance and the purchase of spare parts, let alone such basics as buying office supplies and running the sick bay.<sup>123</sup> Maintenance remains drastically underfunded, largely because of budget execution problems.<sup>124</sup> This lack of delegation authority extends even to basic equipment and training. For example, MOD M-7 (the Training Directorate), rather than Navy operational commanders, determines how much training ammunition to allocate. Currently MOD M-7 allocates only 10 training rounds per year, per person—an amount considered wholly inadequate by both Iraqi Navy operational commanders and Naval Transition Team advisors.<sup>125</sup>

Some senior Iraqi Navy leaders believe that these challenges are due in part to what they see as the MOD's inability to fully understand or value the Navy's role. The MOD, which is focused more on ground forces given the current security environment, may not understand the nature of naval operations, the maintenance they involve, or their need for spare parts. Iraqi naval leaders feel that the MOD will always prioritize other components of the ISF over the Navy when facing budgetary pressures. Absent a reasonable operations and management budget, as well as sufficient access to spare parts, ammunition, and other necessities, no amount of Coalition training or support will enable the Iraqi Navy to operate independently.

**Recommendation:** *Coalition advisors must assist the Iraqi Navy leadership in advocating budget priorities within the MOD. The strategic importance of the Iraqi Navy must be better articulated to the Government of Iraq, in terms both of maintaining Iraq's territorial integrity and of providing the security needed to ensure the efficient flow of exports. Larger issues of poor ministerial capacity and poor budget execution must also be addressed with Coalition support, as detailed more extensively in the discussion on MOD capacity (Chapter 4).*

## **Iraqi Navy Area of Responsibility**

**Finding:** *The Iraqi Navy area of responsibility is small, complicated, and of vital strategic importance. Relations among the nations bordering the area of responsibility and their respective navies and coast guards are fragile at best. Furthermore, the international maritime borders with Iran and Kuwait are*

---

<sup>122</sup> Interview with senior Iraqi Navy officer, July 2007.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Meeting with Naval Transition Team official, July 2007

*contested and not clearly demarcated. These issues warrant greater attention from both the MOD and the Coalition.*

The Iraqi Navy and its Coalition partners operate in an extraordinarily small and confined maritime battle space that is bordered by both Iranian and Kuwaiti waters and that includes two oil terminals. These terminals are among the most important infrastructure assets in Iraq. The al Basra oil terminal (ABOT) alone accounts for roughly 85 percent of the Government of Iraq's revenue, with more than \$12,000 worth of oil running through it for export every second. This terminal can handle four tankers at a time and pump 1.2 million barrels per day, with the potential of pumping 2.2 million barrels daily. The Khor al Amaya oil terminal (KAAOT), which sits very close to the Iranian border, has only recently returned to limited operations after a serious explosion and fire; it is in a state of serious disrepair and has a much smaller capacity. It can handle about one tanker a week, pumps about 200,000 barrels per day, and brings in about 5 percent of Iraq's revenue.<sup>126</sup> Since it has no metering capability, many suspect that much of the oil shipped from this terminal ends up on the black market, with revenues going to local criminal elements. Together these two terminals not only are vital to Iraq's economy but are of strategic importance to the international oil market.<sup>127</sup>

Although the Iraqi Navy has completed some small-scale exercises with Coalition navies, including the Kuwaiti Navy, there are several challenges to overcome in Iraqi-Kuwaiti naval relations, mostly stemming from the lack of clear demarcation of international borders and territorial waters.<sup>128</sup> For example, the Kuwaiti government sometimes objects to dredging and maintenance work done on the channel near Umm Qasr that is critical to maintaining oceangoing access. It also stops fishing vessels, and when it judges them to be violating Kuwaiti waters it asks them to change their flags or detains the fishermen, often confiscating their boats and fishing gear. The Iraqi naval operational commander expressed a desire to meet with the Kuwaiti side to discuss and resolve political issues, but to date such a meeting has not occurred.<sup>129</sup> Combined Task Force 158 is also trying to encourage engagement with Kuwait on issues of mutual interest, including dredging, normalizing water space, infrastructure investments, and consequence management.<sup>130</sup> Consequence management in the face of a major oil spill or other such maritime disaster is a major concern, as neither the al Basra nor Khor al Amaya oil terminals have sufficient plans or assets in place for such an eventuality. For example, because of the currents, any oil spill would quickly reach the intakes of Kuwaiti and Saudi water desalinization plants.<sup>131</sup> It would also threaten their oil platforms and likely cause a significant boost in maritime insurance rates.

Even more is at stake in the relationship between the Iraqi Navy and its Iranian counterpart, yet apparently no strategic policy exists with respect to their maritime interactions. The Iraqi-Iranian

---

<sup>126</sup> Naval Transition Team Briefing, July 2007.

<sup>127</sup> ABOT has been repaired with Coalition funding and is now a world-class facility. However, some Coalition officials told the Commission that they believe Iraq's Southern Oil Company would like to turn off ABOT's metering device to obscure from the Iraqi central government the amount of output from the platform. In theory, doing so would give Southern Oil Company the opportunity to take additional profits. KAAOT remains unmetered; it also lacks a surge dampener, and that absence increases operational risk.

<sup>128</sup> Interview with senior Iraqi Navy officer, July 2007.

<sup>129</sup> Interview with senior Iraqi Navy officer, July 2007.

<sup>130</sup> Briefing with CTF 158, July 2007.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

demarcation lines remain contested, and there is a significant Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy presence in the area.<sup>132</sup> Further complicating the battle space is an old sunken Iraqi barge crane, now claimed and occupied by Iran, that rests in the disputed waters about one nautical mile from the Khor al Amaya oil terminal. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy uses it for surveillance. From the vantage point of the crane, it is possible to closely observe Iraqi Navy and Coalition naval activities as well as Combined Task Group 158.1 Headquarters, which is located on a barge attached to the Khor al Amaya oil terminal.<sup>133</sup> No action has been taken to remove the Iranians from their new perch.

***Recommendation:** Absent clearly defined territorial seas, the Iraqi Navy's battle space will be further complicated. Although the Commission realizes that resolving this issue is made more difficult by long-standing animosities between these nations and may not be feasible in the near term, it is important that the profile of this issue be raised within the Government of Iraq and the country team.*

## Coast Guard

***Finding:** The Iraqi Navy does not have a collaborative relationship with the Iraqi Coast Guard, though the two services operate in close proximity and have complementary missions. This lack of coordination has the potential to create vulnerable seams in a critical strategic environment.*

The Iraqi Coast Guard patrols the river waterways along the Iraqi coast and focuses on smuggling interdiction.<sup>134</sup> The Coast Guard operates in a region heavily infiltrated with largely pro-Iranian Shi'a militia. For example, the port of Umm Qasr itself has fallen under strong Jaysh al-Mahdi influence. The Coast Guard has been trained to tactical proficiency by the Royal Navy, and is capable of taking on smugglers during encounters. Coast guardsmen tend to focus on commercial smuggling, particularly large-scale oil smuggling, though they have taken casualties.

Iraqi Naval officers appear wary of Coast Guard operations. Coalition advisors told the Commission that the coast guardsmen appeared rarely to capture smugglers they pursued or to confiscate seized weapons. It is not clear whether the Coast Guard would engage smugglers more effectively if its personnel were better armed or if its alleged poor performance indicates infiltration or cooperation with militias in the area.<sup>135</sup>

Because the Iraqi Navy and Coast Guard operate in such close proximity, they need to work well together. Today the relationship between the Iraqi Navy and the Iraqi Coast Guard is problematic. The Iraqi Navy and Coast Guard operate under separate chains of command, with the Coast Guard reporting to the Ministry of Interior and the Navy reporting to the Ministry of Defense. To date, there has been little formal contact between the two forces, though some Coalition advisors are pushing for more such interchanges. A further complication in the relationship is that many Coast Guard personnel are former Navy officers and petty officers who failed to pass through the

---

<sup>132</sup> Interview with senior Iraqi Navy officer, July 2007.

<sup>133</sup> Briefing with CTF 158, July 2007.

<sup>134</sup> Interview with CTF 158 official, July 2007.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

vetting process as the new Iraqi Navy was being formed, and old resentments obviously could create tensions between the two forces.<sup>136</sup>

**Recommendation:** *The Coalition should work with the MOD, Iraqi Navy, and Coast Guard to examine the feasibility and potential advantages of merging the Navy and Coast Guard into a single service with responsibility for coastal maritime security. If unity of command cannot be attained by combining both forces under the MOD, then better cooperation and coordination has to be developed to prevent a serious gap in security.*

## Overview of Current Status

**Finding:** *The new Iraqi Navy has made significant progress over a very short time period, particularly in planning, but it remains heavily reliant on the Coalition for training, logistics, and maintenance support.*

Planning is one area of real progress in the Iraqi Navy. Not only does the Navy have a multiyear transition road map, but Rear Admiral Jawad has started inviting officers to semiannual naval planning days at which the road map is explained and discussed.<sup>137</sup> There is also a semiannual Navy board that convenes in August and December; the December 2007 board will likely approve the Navy plan for 2008. In addition, every four to five months—most recently in May 2007—U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and the Coalition meet to take stock of the Iraqi Navy’s progress. Rear Admiral Jawad himself is taking additional small but important steps, such as codifying, printing, and distributing standardized rules of engagement.<sup>138</sup>

The Iraqi Navy’s road map includes an ambitious acquisition plan that necessitates an equally ambitious and effective technical and leadership training program.<sup>139</sup> Such efforts are well under way, under the auspices of the Coalition advisory structure outlined above. The Naval Transition Team works closely with the Iraqi Navy operational commander in Umm Qasr, and in general its representatives characterized the Iraqi Navy’s progress toward identified milestones, its recruitment levels, and its attitude as very good. The basic Naval Transition Team mission is to mentor the Iraqi Navy in order to make possible a successful transition, and it focuses on operational capability and sustainability. The Naval Transition Team in Umm Qasr consists of 55 people from the United Kingdom and the United States. They are divided into six functional areas: operations, logistics, training, military training, engineering, and naval base construction. The Naval Transition Team, headed by a Royal Navy captain, is taking a “leading from behind” approach so that Iraqis gain a sense of ownership of their responsibilities, decision making, and progress. This captain also stressed that because of the high level of turnover (Royal Navy tours last only six months), establishing the personal relationships necessary to move forward can be challenging—particularly since building rapport before tackling daily operational issues is critical to success.<sup>140</sup>

---

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> Rear Admiral Jawad is set to attend the International Sea Power Symposium in Newport, Rhode Island, in October 2007. The event is hosted by the U.S. Chief of Naval Operations.

<sup>138</sup> Interview with senior Iraqi Navy officer, July 2007.

<sup>139</sup> 9010 Report, June 2007, p. 42.

<sup>140</sup> Meeting with Naval Transition Team official, July 2007.

The Naval Transition Team commander identified several problem areas for the Iraqis undertaking the transition. For example, the Iraqis are having trouble with the command and control portion of the road map, which eventually calls for strategic command from the Joint Headquarters in Baghdad, operational control from the naval headquarters at Umm Qasr, and tactical command from commanders on vessels in the Northern Arabian Gulf. Naval Transition Team officials characterized leadership as variable, though they consider the operational commander in Umm Qasr to be highly competent. Training is progressing well (including a good program in visit, board, search, and seizure operations), and in general the Iraqi Navy is making progress in acquiring new ships. At the tactical level, the Naval Transition Team commander cited good spirit and morale and improved base security.

The issues of poor maintenance and a weak supply chain surfaced repeatedly as major impediments to the Iraqi Navy's development. In particular, a tendency toward fixing breakdowns rather than performing preventive maintenance is a significant problem, as is the difficulty of getting funding released that can be devoted expressly to maintenance and other support operations. In fact, the Naval Transition Team Commander informed the Commission that maintenance is one of the Iraqi Navy's pressing problems. In addition, lack of access to sufficient fuel stocks and reliance on generators are problematic.<sup>141</sup> These issues also strongly indicate the need for continued Coalition assistance.

**Recommendation:** *An ongoing Naval Transition Team presence in Umm Qasr is essential and should be continued.*

It is vital that the Iraqi Navy retain the support of its Coalition partners, both to sustain current progress and to address new priorities. Among the Naval Transition Team's future priorities are creating an Umm Qasr naval base action plan with an operational focus (building command and control, improving communications, formalizing a planning process), developing consistent and competent leadership, and, ultimately, effecting the transition. The most difficult choice will likely be regarding the extent to which Naval Transition Team should step back and allow the Iraqis to take on greater responsibility, balancing their need to learn to take risks against the need to complete the transition. The central tension may be between attempting to achieve Coalition standards and encouraging the Iraqi Navy to find Iraqi solutions to its problems.<sup>142</sup> In the very near term, the focus may have to be placed more on the integration of Coalition forces with Iraqi naval forces than on transition.<sup>143</sup>

**Conclusion:** The Iraqi Navy is small and its current fleet is insufficient to execute its mission. However, it is making substantive progress in this early stage of development: it has a well-thought-out growth plan, which it is successfully executing. Its maturation is hampered by the Ministry of Defense's understandable focus on ground forces and counterinsurgency operations, as well as by bureaucratic inefficiency. The Iraqi Navy will continue to rely on Coalition naval power to achieve its mission for the foreseeable future.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> Briefing with CTF 158, July 2007.

## CHAPTER 7: THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR

A central challenge confronting the development of effective civil security forces in Iraq is the dysfunctional and sectarian Ministry of Interior (MOI) itself. In contrast to the Ministry of Defense, the MOI is rife with political and sectarian intrigues and is struggling to be even partially effective as a government institution. In most areas of administrative function, the MOI has some nascent capability, but progress is extremely slow. There is very little sense of momentum in transitioning greater responsibilities to the MOI. The ministry's physical presence—its multiple floors reportedly controlled by different factions, its location near Sadr City, and its multiple security checks and heavily armed occupants—is in itself a symbol of its dysfunction, sectarian character, and ineffectiveness. Whether the Iraq Police Service—which over time will be critical to Iraq's ability to maintain internal stability and deny terrorists safe haven—can ultimately become effective is heavily dependent on whether the MOI can become a far more functional ministry.

### Overview of the Ministry of Interior

Under Saddam Hussein, the Ministry of Interior essentially was the intelligence arm of the Ba'ath Party, acting as the country's secret police. Despite the MOI's ignominious roots, the Coalition Provisional Authority did not dissolve it as it did the Ministry of Defense; instead, it sought to retain the MOI so that it could quickly transfer responsibility for policing and internal security to an Iraqi institution.<sup>144</sup> The Coalition Provisional Authority invested considerable effort into restructuring the MOI, but focused largely on the physical reconstruction of the ministry building itself. Although some attempts were also made at this time to develop the MOI's administrative capabilities, progress was slow because advisory staff and their Iraqi colleagues spent most of their time managing short-term crises and could devote little energy to longer-term developmental efforts.

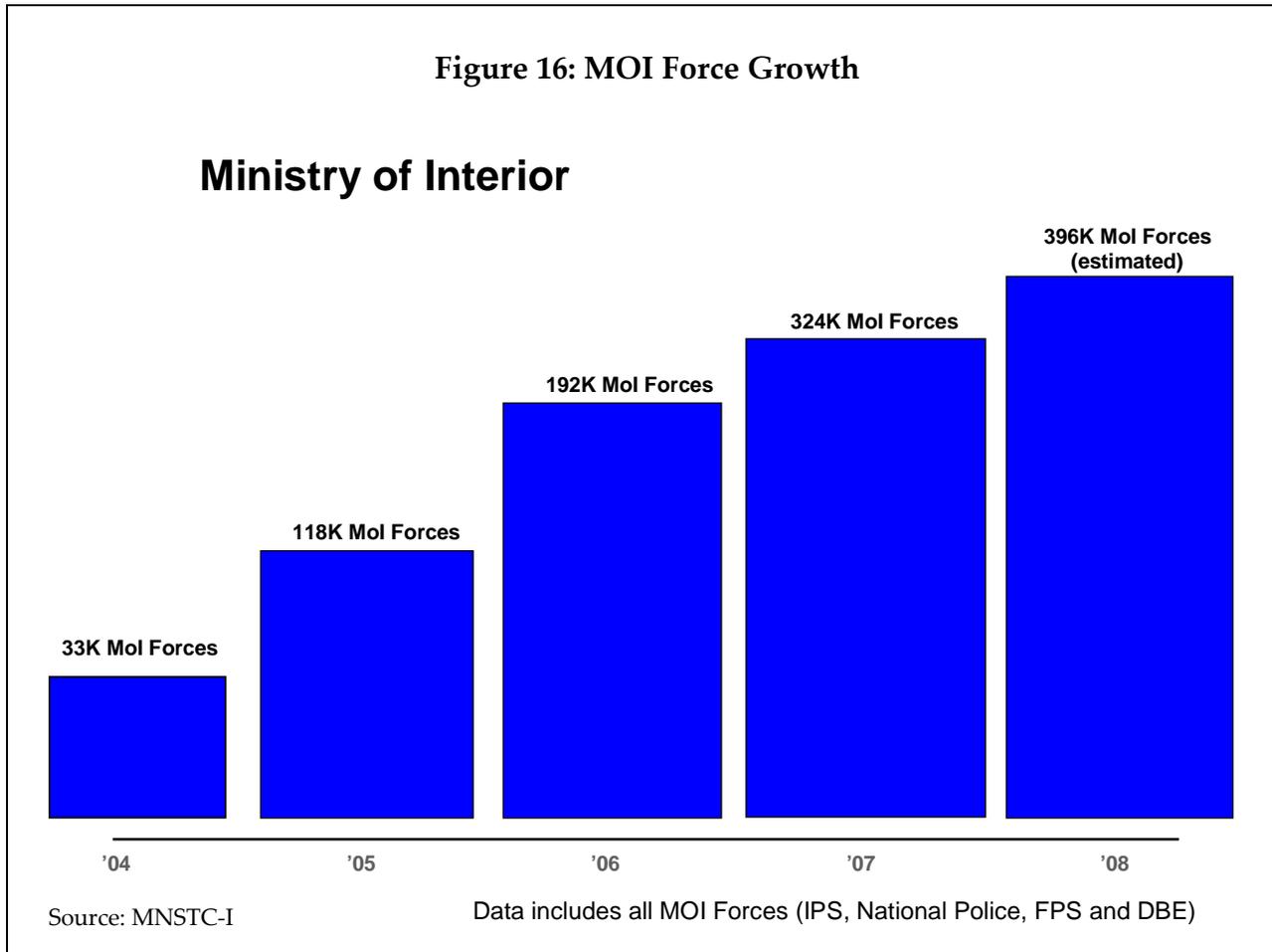
The current Minister of Interior is Jawad al-Bolani, a Shi'a who served in the Iraqi Air Force for more than 15 years. The ministry has five deputy ministers who are responsible for running its five primary departments, eight independent directorates reporting directly to the Minister, and several senior supporting advisors. A plan has been developed to consolidate ministry functions into a more streamlined organization, but it is not clear when that restructuring process will be complete.

Coalition assistance to the Ministry of Interior and its civil security forces is provided largely by the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team (CPATT), which was established in 2004. Recognizing the MOI's administrative weaknesses, the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team established a 90-person Ministry Transition Team to work in various offices within the MOI to mentor senior officials, build internal capacity, and advise on policy and technical issues. A brigadier general from the United Kingdom leads this transition team and personally visits MOI offices several times each week. The transition team's overall goal is to develop the MOI's administrative capacity so that it can sustain Iraq's civil security forces, which number more than

---

<sup>144</sup> Andrew Rathmell, Olga Olikier, Terrence K. Kelly, David Brannan, and Keith Crane, *Developing Iraq's Security Sector: The Coalition Provisional Authority's Experience*, MG-365-OSD (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), p. 42.

300,000 as of July 2007 and are composed primarily of the Iraqi Police Service, National Police, and border enforcement forces (see Figure 16).



### Challenges for the Ministry of Interior

During its assessment of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), the Commission met with officials at the departments of Defense and State involved in efforts to further develop the Ministry of Interior. The Commission also met with the Honorable Samir Shakir Mahmood Sumaida'ie, Iraq's Ambassador to the United States, who had served in 2004 as Minister of Interior. While in Iraq, the Commission held discussions with numerous Iraqi and American officials working for and with the MOI. In addition to meeting with senior officials working at the MOI level, the Commission also visited many Iraqi Police Service, National Police, and Department of Border Enforcement sites to gain a field-level perspective on the ministry.

It is clear from the Commission's extensive interviews and site visits that despite painstaking work, especially during the past year, the Ministry of Interior remains a highly sectarian organization that is partially effective at best and is in danger of losing ground in some administrative areas. If it is to continue to make progress, the MOI must deal more successfully with

sectarianism and corruption, administration, logistics, and budgeting, as well as the status of the Facilities Protection Service.

## Sectarianism and Corruption

***Finding:** Sectarianism and corruption are pervasive in the MOI and cripple the ministry's ability to accomplish its mission to provide internal security for Iraqi citizens.*

Under the previous Interior Minister, Bayan Jabr, who is now the powerful Minister of Finance, the Ministry of Interior became politicized. Jabr was a member of the Badr Organization and a member of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), the largest Shi'a political party. He gave key ministry posts to members of the Badr Brigade, and Badr Brigade militia infiltrated Iraqi police units in many areas of the country. Although current Interior Minister Jawad al-Bolani wants to reform and professionalize the ministry, this is his first senior government position; he reportedly has no political affiliation or natural political constituency, and he lacks personal experience in managing police units.

Many experts outside the U.S. government have decried the present state of the Ministry of Interior.<sup>145</sup> It has been described as an "11-story powder keg of factions" that is plagued by battles for influence among political parties, religious groups, the existing government, and tribes and families.<sup>146</sup> The security environment at the MOI is so dangerous that when Western officials visit the ministry they frequently wear body armor and move only under heavily armed escort.

Although Minister al-Bolani has attempted to address the sectarianism and corruption in the MOI—steps taken include removing the commanders of 7 of the 9 National Police brigades and 17 of the 27 National Police battalions—the fundamentally sectarian nature of the ministry endures. For example, a former National Police general continues to work at the MOI, despite his having been implicated in a covert detention center operation in 2006; the Interior Minister blocked his arrest warrant. MOI employees have been arrested for smuggling explosives into the ministry, and according to some reports may have been Sunni insurgents or followers of Muqtada al-Sadr. In the past year, three of the ministry's longest-serving Sunni generals have been killed.<sup>147</sup> The Commission surveyed the Coalition's senior field commanders to obtain their on-the-ground assessment of the status and progress of the Iraqi Security Forces. Asked to rate the progress made by MOI forces toward ending sectarian violence and achieving national reconciliation, all four respondents rated progress as unsatisfactory.

The Commission was struck by the refrain of negative statements it heard about the MOI when it visited civil security force facilities in the provinces. Iraqi Police Service officials in particular complained bitterly about the sectarian behavior of the ministry, noting instances when the MOI simply does not pay police because they are Sunni or Kurdish, as well as cases when the MOI

---

<sup>145</sup> Robert M. Perito of the United States Institute of Peace, Dr. Olga Oliker of RAND Corporation, and Dr. Anthony H. Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies have all written in numerous publications about capacity problems and sectarianism within the Ministry of Interior.

<sup>146</sup> Ned Parker, "Interior Ministry Mirrors Chaos of a Fractured Iraq," *Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 2007.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

allegedly rejected lists of police recruits because they were perceived as being from “the wrong sect.”

The MOI Transition Team is also working closely with oversight directorates in the MOI, particularly the Internal Affairs Division, to combat the pervasive climate of corruption within the ministry; but in these areas, as in combating sectarianism more broadly, there are real limits to the progress the Coalition can make, especially in the short term.<sup>148</sup>

## Administration and Logistics

***Finding:** The MOI lacks sufficient administrative and logistics capability to support the civil security forces it controls.*

Put simply, the Ministry of Interior lacks administrative capability and capacity in most areas. As is true of other government ministries in Iraq, this deficiency stems in part from the de-Ba’athification process, which prevented many of Iraq’s experienced bureaucrats from working in the government. The MOI is highly centralized and resistant to the delegation of authority, and it has very little ability to conduct long-term planning. The planning staff in the MOI is very small. The ministry also lacks systems—particularly those for tracking equipment and personnel—to enforce accountability in its administration.

The MOI has plans to streamline its organizational structure from five deputy ministers to three, though many “direct reports” to the Minister will remain even under the proposed new structure. While this restructuring may help Minister al-Bolani manage the MOI more strictly and oversee reforms, his effectiveness is limited by his physical distance from the ministry building. Because the MOI is located in the Red Zone near Sadr City, a dangerous neighborhood in Baghdad, Minister al-Bolani for the most part runs the ministry from a palace in the Green Zone.

Like the Ministry of Defense, the MOI lacks a layered bureaucracy with systems in place to get resources (e.g., uniforms, ammunition, and fuel) to the field in a timely fashion, but the logistics challenge in the MOI is much more pronounced. Without functioning systems to sustain Iraq’s civil security forces in the provinces and major cities, the Iraqi Police Service, much less the National Police and other MOI civil security forces, cannot be effective.

***Recommendation:** The MOI, with the support of the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team, must reform its organizational structure, develop a five-year strategic plan, and build sufficient administrative capacity to sustain Iraq’s civil security forces in the field in a manner that is free of real or perceived sectarian favoritism.*

---

<sup>148</sup> Interviews with senior international police advisers in Iraq, July 2007. See also the prepared statement of Robert M. Perito before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, 110th Cong., 1st sess., March 28, 2007. Perito specifically notes that the transition team provided the head of the Internal Affairs Division with a fingerprinting system that the division chief used to identify and remove police with criminal records.

There is no substitute for the slow and often frustrating work of reforming the MOI, and the MOI Transition Team is an important source of advice to guide this process. As part of the planned MOI restructuring, one of the deputy ministers should have a robust strategic planning capacity and take the lead in developing a five-year strategic plan for the ministry and its civil security forces. This plan needs to be tied to budgetary requirements and should be developed in partnership with the 18 provincial police chiefs and other provincial civil security force officials. Although the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team can play a critical role in advising the strategic planning effort, Iraqi officials in the MOI must lead the effort so that the ministry's leadership will have a vested interest in implementing the plan when it is complete.

It will be critical for the Deputy Minister for Administration and Finance to establish functioning systems for logistics and maintenance of the civil security forces and to facilitate effective, centralized tracking and accountability of the equipment that is issued to Iraqi forces. The Government Accountability Office recently published its finding that the United States did not begin to employ a centralized distribution system for the provision of Coalition-issued ISF equipment until December 2005.<sup>149</sup> Given the level of sectarian infiltration within the Ministry of Interior, as well as the decentralized nature of the Iraqi Police Service, the concerted efforts of ministry officials and Coalition advisors will be required not only to develop and implement a system that is able to accurately account for issued equipment but also to foster a culture of accountability within the MOI.

## Budget

***Finding:** The MOI cannot execute its budget, a failure that undermines the effectiveness of the civil security forces in the field.*

The ministry suffers from several problems in the area of budget and finance. The MOI cannot execute its annual budget because of rigid constraints in budget categories and requirements to approve all expenditures at multiple layers of the bureaucracy and because there are rigid constraints on budget categories. The MOI's budget in 2007, which exceeded \$3 billion, was underspent by \$1 billion.<sup>150</sup> In some cases this underspending is an expression of the power struggle between the central government in Baghdad and the provincial authorities. For example, a senior budget official in the MOI withheld 50 percent of the overall police budget in 2007 because of her concern about corruption in the police force and the MOI's lack of insight into how police funds are spent in the provinces.<sup>151</sup> A major component of the MOI Transition Team's capacity-building program is working with MOI officials to develop sufficient funding mechanisms to support the MOI's forces in the field.

***Finding:** The Ministry of Interior and provincial authorities share responsibility for management and payment of the Iraqi Police Service. Serious deficiencies in these efforts have led to pay and morale problems and have heightened tensions between the central government and the provinces.*

---

<sup>149</sup> Government Accountability Office, *Stabilizing Iraq: DOD Cannot Ensure That U.S.-Funded Equipment Has Reached Iraqi Security Forces*, GAO-07-711: July 2007, p. 9.

<sup>150</sup> Briefing from MNSTC-I CPATT in Iraq, July 2007.

<sup>151</sup> Interviews with CPATT officials, July 2007.

The MOI's bifurcated system for administration and compensation of police creates particular problems in the budgeting and finance arena. Authority to hire police personnel is vested in the provincial police departments, but the payroll for the police is centralized with the MOI. The MOI also sets overall authorizations for the number of police each provincial government can hire, but provincial authorities feel they have a better understanding of local needs and in several cases have exceeded their authorized level of hires. Serious payroll problems and delays have resulted; police in some provinces claimed they have not been paid in months.<sup>152</sup>

MOI's inability to directly pay *shurtas* (new police recruits) and police officers is a major part of this problem. Under the existing system in Iraq, the Ministry of Finance (not the MOI) disburses funds to the provincial police chiefs, who in turn distribute salaries to line police. This indirect pay system provides little transparency for MOI officials attempting to monitor how funds are actually spent, and it creates many opportunities for corruption and the misuse of funds. Provincial police payrolls often include "shadow police"—individuals who are just names on the payroll but who do not report for duty, or former police who have been killed or who have deserted. It is not uncommon for police leadership at the provincial, district, and local level to use the "salaries" of shadow police for other purposes or to simply pocket the funds. These practices heighten budgetary tensions with the MOI in Baghdad.

**Recommendation:** *The MOI Transition Team should continue to work with MOI officials to establish workable mechanisms to better manage and resolve pay problems affecting police forces. This should be done in coordination with provincial authorities.*

As part of the MOI reform effort, the ministry should establish a process to determine provincial police requirements in coordination with provincial authorities, effectively enforce the requirements that are set, and pay police directly. Direct pay for police would give the MOI greater insight into management of the police forces at the provincial level, reduce corruption, and strengthen the identification of police throughout Iraq with the national government.

## Facilities Protection Service

**Finding:** *The MOI has little control of the forces that make up the Facilities Protection Service (FPS). The allegiance of many Facilities Protection Service personnel has been to individual ministries, parties, tribes, and clans rather than to the central government, and such division of loyalties undermines their ability to provide security.*

The Facilities Protection Service is designed to provide protection for the personnel and facilities of the various ministries. Many of the individuals hired into this service are associated in one way or another with their respective minister and demonstrate loyalty to that minister, a political party, a tribe, or a clan. There has been no vetting or formal training of these forces at the national level. In response to this lack of control over the hiring or training of the approximately

---

<sup>152</sup> The relatively recent creation of provincial security forces in provinces like Anbar has complicated the issue: in many cases, Iraqis are forming neighborhood watches filled with individuals who view themselves as police and expect to be paid accordingly, even though they are not actually on the provincial police payroll.

140,000 people serving in the Facilities Protection Service, in December 2006 the Prime Minister directed that all FPS personnel be consolidated and come under the supervision of the MOI. Despite this new policy mandating consolidation, most ministries are resisting the change. Some ministries are reluctant to relinquish control of their FPS forces, and the Ministry of Finance has not transferred funding to the MOI to administer oversight of the Facilities Protection Service.

Until FPS personnel can be vetted, trained, and equipped under a central, national set of standards, the threat of sectarian violence delivered at the hands of FPS personnel will remain.

***Recommendation:** The Coalition should support consolidation of the Facilities Protection Service by encouraging the establishment of national implementing orders. As consolidation proceeds, the Coalition should assist the MOI to ensure that the Facilities Protection Service personnel can be properly vetted, trained, and equipped.*

**Conclusion:** The Ministry of Interior is a ministry in name only. It is widely regarded as being dysfunctional and sectarian, and suffers from ineffective leadership. Such fundamental flaws present a serious obstacle to achieving the levels of readiness, capability, and effectiveness in police and border security forces that are essential for internal security and stability in Iraq.

## CHAPTER 8: THE IRAQI POLICE SERVICE

The Iraqi Police Service (IPS), Iraq's local and provincial police force, is fragile throughout Iraq.<sup>153</sup> On the one hand, training for the Iraqi Police Service is improving, and in some areas the police are patrolling neighborhoods more regularly, manning security checkpoints, and working with the Iraqi Army and Coalition forces to combat insurgent groups. On the other hand, the Iraqi Police Service faces many challenges. The Ministry of Interior (MOI), which supports the Iraqi Police Service, is highly dysfunctional. Infiltration of the Iraqi Police Service by militia members, insurgents, and criminals is widespread in some parts of Iraq. The police are not sufficiently equipped to combat their enemies, nor do they have the support and sustainment systems to function effectively. The Iraqi Police Service lacks investigative capabilities and sufficient intelligence and information systems, and it operates in an environment without a strong foundation in the rule of law. The Iraqi Police Service is an important part of the long-term solution for stability in Iraq, but it will be at least a few more years before the police can contribute significantly to bringing real security to the provinces. In the interim, they will continue to rely on the Coalition to provide key enablers such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

### Overview of the Iraqi Police Service

During the years of Saddam Hussein's rule, Iraqi police were at the bottom of the hierarchy of security forces. Although there were more than 60,000 police in the force, they were poorly trained and equipped. In addition, they were often brutal and corrupt, and as a result they were widely feared by the Iraqi public. Reflecting that public distrust, looters targeted and destroyed many police stations, vehicles, and pieces of equipment in the wake of the 2003 invasion.<sup>154</sup> In an effort to begin reestablishing security in Iraq, the Coalition Provisional Authority called the Iraqi police back into service; and in May 2003, the Department of Justice determined that the Iraqi Police Service needed to be significantly reorganized, retrained, and reequipped in order to be effective.

Six months later the United States began a recruiting and training program for the police, relying on 500 police advisors reporting to the Department of State. By early 2004, however, it was clear that the State Department-led police training program was not sufficiently effective, primarily because of the challenging security situation. In March 2004, President Bush assigned responsibility for the police training effort to the Department of Defense. This was unprecedented; historically, the departments of Justice and State have taken the lead in training indigenous police forces. Placing the military in charge does ensure that police trainers are more secure, but it also has resulted in greater emphasis on counterinsurgency operations than on civil policing and more traditional law enforcement activities.

---

<sup>153</sup> The most solid example of civil policing the Commission saw in Iraq was in the Kurdish province of Sulaymaniyah, but it must be noted the Kurdish provinces have benefited from years of being a virtually autonomous area in Iraq.

<sup>154</sup> Interviews with Iraqi police officials in Baghdad, July 2007. See also Robert M. Perito, "Reforming the Iraqi Interior Ministry, Police and Facilities Protection Service," Testimony before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, 110th Cong., 1st sess., March 28, 2007.

Today there are more than 230,000 police in the Iraqi police force. The U.S. Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team (CPATT), the military-led organization within the Coalition with responsibility for mentoring and advising the Iraqi Police Service, has trained approximately 164,000 police, but the Department of Defense estimates that only 40 to 70 percent of these Coalition-trained recruits are still serving in the police force.<sup>155</sup> However, the existence of ghost payrolls makes it difficult to generate reliable estimates of the precise number of personnel available for duty. It now is clear that tens of thousands of Iraqi police have entered the force without going through the Coalition training program; rather, they have been directly hired by provincial authorities, often at the urging of local sheikhs or other tribal elders.

The Iraqi Police Service falls under the Ministry of Interior, led by Minister Jawad al-Bolani. The police force is organized into provincial police departments with district chiefs, as well as into police departments in the major cities. The provincial directors of police (PDoPs) report to the provincial governors and are typically selected at the provincial government level from a pool of candidates validated by the Ministry of Interior, a process that is more art than science. Most provincial, district, and major city police forces include patrol police, station police, traffic police, and highway patrol police. There are some specialized units for forensics and criminal evidence, but in general the forensic and investigative capabilities of the Iraqi Police Service range from quite weak to nonexistent. The provinces also have Emergency Response Units (ERUs) that are similar to SWAT (special weapons and tactics) teams in the United States.<sup>156</sup>

Training and equipment for the Iraqi Police Service have improved markedly in the past few years, but significant challenges remain in both areas. Today there are three police academies that train police officers (mainly front-line supervisors such as sergeants and lieutenants) and six regional training centers throughout Iraq that offer a 10-week training course for new police recruits, known as *shurtas*. This basic training for Iraqi *shurtas* includes courses on defensive tactics, patrolling, democratic policing, and firearms, as well as other subjects. Many classes are conducted by Iraqi instructors. Police who have not gone through the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team training pipeline do typically receive at least 80 hours of very basic training. Recognizing the need to standardize training, the Coalition has a long-term plan to put all police on the MOI payroll through the 10-week course as soon as possible. In addition to the 10-week basic training for *shurtas*, newly recruited police officers attend a 9-month training course at one of Iraq's training academies. The police colleges also offer a three-year advanced course for police officers. Training for the more specialized Emergency Response Units takes place at the Camp Dublin Specialized Training Center in Baghdad.

Although on average the Iraqi Police Service has received more than 80 percent of the basic equipment deemed essential for its mission, many police stations still lack uniforms, weapons, and

---

<sup>155</sup> Coalition forces have trained just over 164,000 police as of August 2007, according to information from CPATT officials in MNSTC-I. See also Department of Defense, *Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq*, March 2007, p. 31 (reports of this title, submitted to Congress in accordance with section 9010 of various Department of Defense appropriation acts, are cited hereafter as 9010 Report).

<sup>156</sup> There is also a national-level Emergency Response Unit in the National Police, containing about 600 personnel.

vehicles, as well as spare parts and ammunition.<sup>157</sup> Iraqi police are authorized to be equipped with two uniforms, a pistol, an AK-47, sets of flexible handcuffs, and individual body armor. Police use high-frequency radios and typically patrol in unarmored Nissan pickup trucks or midsize sport utility vehicles.

Led by a two-star U.S. general, the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team oversees about 900 senior police advisors and works closely with Coalition Police Transition Teams (PTTs). The Coalition began using Police Transition Teams in 2006 to develop closer partnerships with the Iraqi Police Service and to provide day-to-day advising and mentoring of the Iraqi Police Service. Today more than 220 Police Transition Teams throughout Iraq are working side by side with Iraqi police at the provincial, district, and police station levels.<sup>158</sup> Like the Military Transition Teams, the Police Transition Teams report to Multi-National Corps–Iraq (MNC-I), led by Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno. Police Transition Teams are typically composed of 11 to 15 individuals and are led by military personnel who range in rank from staff sergeants to lieutenant colonels, depending on the level of the station that the team mentors. The deputy leaders are senior international police advisors, and the rest of the team is made up of a mix of military police and civilian police advisors. There are about 1,200 police stations in Iraq, and because the number of Police Transition Teams is not large enough to partner or monitor every station, the Coalition generally has insight into about 25–30 percent of them (for the Operational Readiness Assessment level definitions for the Iraqi Police Service, see Figure 17).<sup>159</sup>

**Figure 17: Iraqi Police Operational Readiness Assessment Level Definitions**

-  **A Level 1 unit is capable of planning, executing, and sustaining independent law enforcement operations.**
-  **A Level 2 unit is capable of planning, executing, and sustaining independent law enforcement operations with ISF or coalition support.**
-  **A Level 3 unit is partially capable of conducting independent law enforcement operations in conjunction with coalition units.**
-  **A Level 4 unit is forming and/or incapable of conducting independent law enforcement operations.**

Source: MNSTC-I

<sup>157</sup> 9010 Report, March 2007, p. 31. See also CPATT, “Iraqi Police Service,” briefing provided in July 2007. While the national average for basic equipment is 80 percent, some provinces in Iraq are still experiencing shortfalls in particular categories of equipment. These shortfalls vary from province to province in size and type.

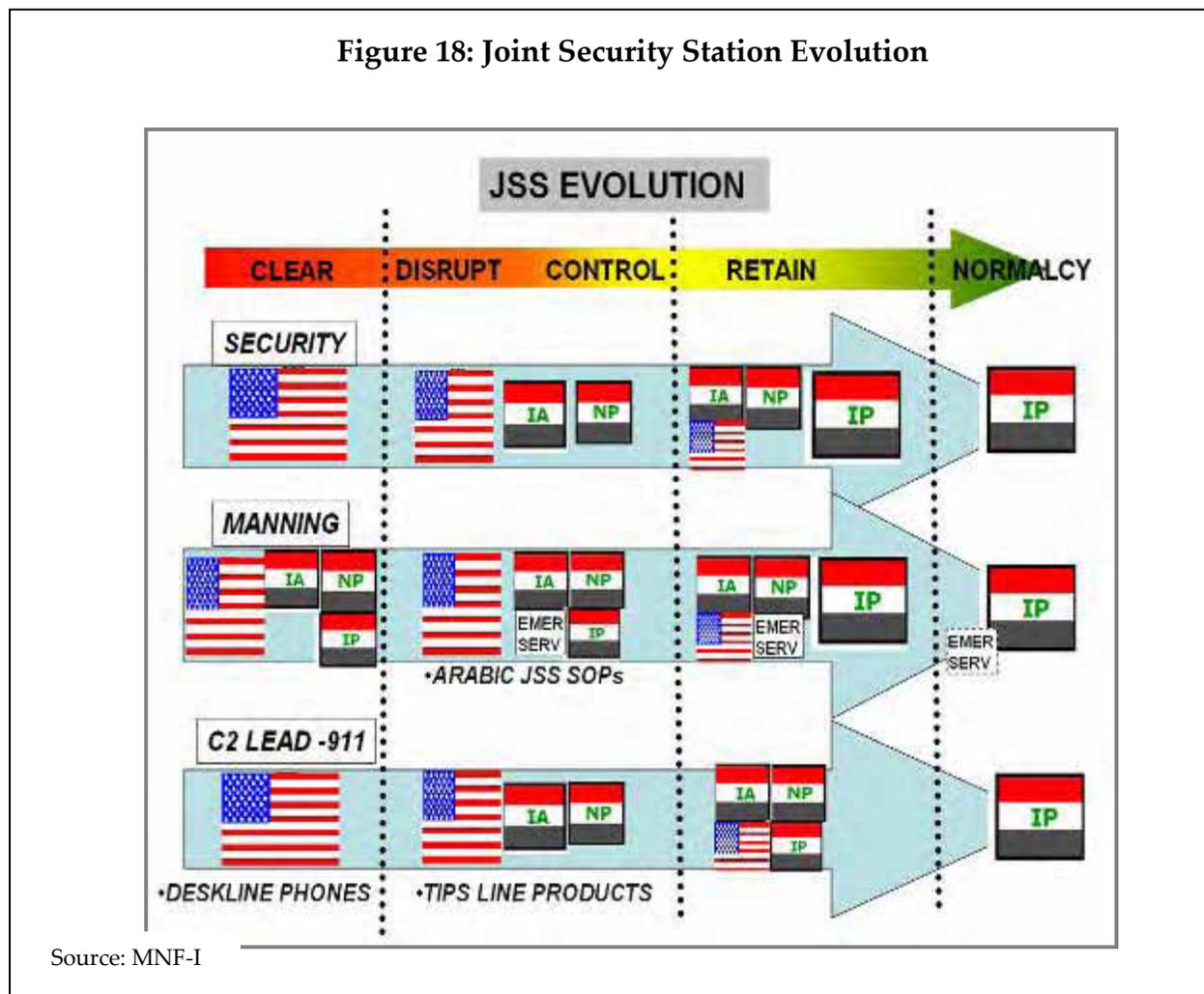
<sup>158</sup> CPATT briefing, July 2007. Currently there are 10 provincial PTTs, 65 District PTTs and 148 station PTTs; see 9010 Report, March 2007, p.32.

<sup>159</sup> CPATT briefing, July 2007. Four hundred of the almost 1,200 police stations are in areas under Provincial Iraqi Control. Of the remaining 800 stations, 200 are too dangerous for PTTs to visit. There are sufficient PTTs to visit just over half of the remaining 600 stations in the country.

## Challenges for the Iraqi Police Service

Though 2006 was to be “the Year of the Police,” it is widely viewed as having been less than successful.<sup>160</sup> At the same time, it is clear that in the past year, the Iraqi Police Service has made some progress. The police in the Kurdish region are relatively solid and are providing basic security in the three Kurdish provinces. Not only are they policing their own neighborhoods, they also have opened the police training center in Sulaymaniyah to police recruits from across the country, and the region has accepted internally displaced persons from other parts of Iraq with relatively few ensuing security problems. In Habbaniyah in Anbar province, efforts to recruit police locally are thriving, and the training being conducted at the Habbaniyah regional training center is encouraging. Finally, while the sectarian influences on the police are far greater in ethnic and religiously mixed areas like Baghdad, even there the joint security stations have demonstrated that the police can begin to establish a more meaningful neighborhood presence if Coalition forces provide mentoring and oversight (for a snapshot of the transition plan for Joint Security Stations, see Figure 18).

Figure 18: Joint Security Station Evolution



Source: MNF-I

<sup>160</sup> Perito, “Reforming the Iraqi Interior Ministry, Police and Facilities Protection Service.”

During its assessment, the Commission met with officials at the departments of Defense and State involved in efforts to develop the Iraqi Police Service. While in Iraq, the Commission held discussions with more than 20 American officials and 25 Iraqi officials directly involved with the Iraqi Police Service. Commissioners visited 15 police-related facilities throughout Iraq, including police stations, joint security stations, and a number of police training centers and colleges.

It is clear from the Commission's extensive interviews and site visits that the Coalition and the Government of Iraq (GOI) have invested significant effort and resources into the development of the Iraqi Police Service, but considerable challenges remain in a number of areas—notably, in recruiting, training, equipment, information sharing, investigations and forensics, and the creation of a justice system.

## Recruiting

*Finding: The emphasis on local recruiting and assignment in the Iraqi Police Service is showing promise in establishing security at the local level; strong personnel vetting processes will remain vital.*

The Commission was struck by the fact that there is no shortage of Iraqis who wish to volunteer for service.<sup>161</sup> Despite many bombings of police recruit queues, and a suicide bombing at the Baghdad Police College in 2005 that killed more than 27 recruits, Iraqis continue to sign up for the Iraqi Police Service. Their actions, in part, are undoubtedly driven by economic necessity, but it also seems to suggest that these Iraqis perceive a stake in bringing security to their communities.

Local recruiting for the police has emerged as a focal point in the overall development of the Iraqi Police Service, reflecting the professional law enforcement view that policing is most effective when performed at the neighborhood level by people with ties to the local community. The most visible example of this emphasis on local recruiting has been the “Anbar Awakening” movement in the western Sunni stronghold of Anbar province, but it was widespread in each province the Commission visited.

One benefit of local recruiting is that recruits know their communities and are known themselves in turn, but the need for robust vetting efforts to ensure that local police forces are not infiltrated by militia, terrorists, or criminals remains strong.<sup>162</sup> Though the vetting of police recruits is improving, it is still a challenge.<sup>163</sup> When an Iraqi seeks to join the Iraqi Police Service, as either a shurta or an officer, he now is required to provide a retinal scan and set of fingerprints. The biometric results are then provided to the MOI for a criminal history check. Candidates who have a previous criminal history are reviewed by the MOI Internal Affairs Division. Criminal history checks are more complicated in Iraq than in many other places because of the sizable number of Iraqis who were unfairly charged with crimes by Saddam's regime. If a criminal record appears to be largely a result of political activity or perceived crimes against the state, candidates are given the

---

<sup>161</sup> The large numbers of willing recruits are encouraging, but the Commission also notes that this abundance can contribute to problems in quality if recruits are not sufficiently vetted and trained, as discussed in more detail later this chapter.

<sup>162</sup> Vetting is also critical to ensure that local recruits meet physical fitness and literacy standards.

<sup>163</sup> Interviews with CPATT officials, July 2007.

opportunity to explain their backgrounds rather than being automatically barred from the police service. In addition to providing the biometric information, police recruits also fill out a questionnaire similar to that used for a basic background check in the United States. If recruits do not have a known criminal record and if they pass the literacy and physical fitness requirements, they must pass a vetting interview before entering the training center or police academy.

***Recommendation:** The MOI and the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should work closely with provincial authorities to ensure that established vetting procedures are used consistently throughout the country to combat militia, criminal, and terrorist infiltration of the Iraqi Police Service.*

The MOI now has a process in place to vet police recruits, but many perceive this vetting process as selecting and rejecting candidates along sectarian lines. Infiltration of the police service by militia and other criminal elements is widespread in some areas, particularly in the south. Some but not all of this infiltration can be attributed to the relative immaturity of the Iraqi databases used for background checks and to police departments' having begun only recently to collect biometric data. Efforts by local tribal authorities to generate recruits for the police service are encouraging, but to ensure that this cooperation is beneficial for Iraqi security it is crucial that provincial police chiefs and local commanders be required to emphasize universal and consistent application of established vetting procedures.

Establishing provincial police selection boards with appropriate representation among ethnic and sectarian groups, as well as various aspects of the Iraqi Police Service community, could help formalize this localized vetting process. In particularly difficult cases, it may be appropriate to require candidates to submit to a polygraph test. Even if rarely used, the possibility of having to take such a test may prove a powerful incentive for recruits to be more transparent about their associations and allegiances.

## **Training**

***Finding:** Police training in Iraq is improving, particularly in areas where training is led by Iraqi instructors partnered with civilian police advisors.*

Training for police in Iraq has improved considerably in the past two years, but the progress is fragile. The regional police training center in Habbaniyah appears to be a model for police training in Iraq, as was the training center the Commission visited in Sulaymaniyah. At the Habbaniyah center, the 10-week training class for Iraqi shurtas covered a wide range of basic policing subjects as well as specific challenges, such as the threat of suicide bombers. Iraqi instructors lead most of the training, and the students appear very eager to learn. Progress was less evident at the Baghdad Police College, where most if not all of the training courses are led by American instructors. Not surprisingly, Iraqi recruits appear more receptive and attentive in courses taught by fellow Iraqis, but it is not clear there are sufficient numbers of qualified Iraqi personnel to staff all six regional police training centers and three police academies.

The continuing instability of the security environment in many parts of Iraq creates problems for military and civilian Coalition trainers as they try to do their jobs. In some areas, trainers have difficulty getting to training sites safely, and in a few cases, they have actually come under attack while conducting training. Finally, though the basic training program for shurtas and police officers is now in place, there also is a need for police command staff training, including first-line and mid-level manager training, to develop the leadership cadre of the Iraqi Police Service over the long term.

***Recommendation:** The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should continue transitioning the lead for training to the Iraqis wherever possible and should consider instituting a “train the trainers” program throughout the provinces to facilitate this process.*

Having Iraqi instructors direct police training courses is clearly the most effective and desirable way to train incoming recruits. The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should accelerate its efforts to put Iraqi instructors in the lead at all training centers throughout the country. Establishing a robust “train the trainers” program would facilitate this effort and potentially free up civilian police advisors—who are already in scarce supply—to serve in larger numbers on Police Transition Teams.

***Finding:** U.S. military officers rather than senior civilian law enforcement personnel lead the Coalition training effort for the Iraqi Police Service; this arrangement has inadvertently marginalized civilian police advisors and limited the overall effectiveness of the training and advisory effort.*

Because security conditions in Iraq were becoming difficult by 2004, National Security Presidential Directive 36 placed the Department of Defense in charge of the Coalition effort to train the Iraqi police. While it was clear to the Commission that the military has not intentionally sought to minimize the role of civilian police advisors in Iraq, in practice the Coalition’s efforts to help develop the Iraqi Police Service have not been fully effective. Military leaders in the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team do not have backgrounds in civilian law enforcement. In addition, the military leadership of the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team changes about once a year; five different generals have commanded the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team since it was established, and none of them have been military policemen by military occupational specialty. Although the Coalition program to train the Iraqi police has been ongoing for four years, one advisor noted to the Commission that “we have not had four years to implement a training plan; we have implemented a one-year training plan four times in a row.”

Civil policing is fundamentally different from military policing. In civil policing, the police depend on the “consent” of those they police; it therefore requires spending considerable time building relationships with the communities being served. Civil police are trained to use defensive techniques, and to use deadly physical force only as a last resort. In contrast, military police are focused on force protection, intelligence gathering, and support of combat soldiers and combat operations.

Civilian police advisors do not have the lead role in Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team programs. In many cases, the international police advisors working within the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team feel marginalized and unable to make contributions commensurate with

their experience. This perceived marginalization is even more frustrating for the police advisors because they are better positioned to have influence in the Iraqi culture, which favors age; while most of the international police advisors are either retired or very senior law enforcement professionals, most military officers leading Police Transition Teams are captains or majors who are too young to merit their Iraqi partners' respect.

***Recommendation:** Leadership of the Coalition Police Assistance Training Team and the Police Training Teams should be transferred to senior civilian law enforcement professionals.*

The departments of Defense, State, and Justice should move quickly to establish a revised division of labor for the Iraqi police training program that would enable a senior civilian law enforcement officer with professional experience comparable to that of a two-star general to lead the Coalition Police Assistance Training Team. The level of violence in Iraq dictates that the police training programs remain indivisible from the broader military Coalition effort in Iraq in the near term; at least initially, therefore, the civilian leader of the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should continue to report to the Commanding General, Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq.

The key reform needed at this time is to ensure that a senior civilian law enforcement official is providing the day-to-day leadership of Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team activities. A major responsibility for the civilian head of this organization should be to work in close partnership with the MOI on developing and approving a strategic plan for civilian policing that includes the phased transition of the police development process to full Iraqi control.

Consistent with shifting leadership of the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team from the military to the civilian law enforcement community, Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq should also work with Multi-National Corps–Iraq to put international police advisors in charge of the Police Transition Teams in the field. Today the Police Transition Teams are led by military officers, with civilian international police advisors serving as deputies. In the future, Police Transition Teams should be led by civilian international police advisors, with military police officers serving as deputies. Because many areas of Iraq remain dangerous, Coalition forces should continue to provide force protection for the civilian police training effort and the Police Transition Teams.

As part of the recommendation above, and to assist the overall Coalition effort to train and mentor the Iraqi Police Service, the Commission recommends establishing an international advisory board to monitor the civilian police transition program, track its progress, and make recommendations to the Government of Iraq and the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team. This advisory board would be composed of senior civilian law enforcement personnel with experience establishing and training indigenous police forces. Not only would this body provide an additional perspective on civil policing issues for the Iraqi government and the Coalition, it also could help ensure that lessons learned from past experiences are properly brought to bear as Iraq continues to develop its police force.

Over the longer term and if the security situation in Iraq improves sufficiently, it would be appropriate to transfer lead responsibility for police training in Iraq out of the Department of

Defense entirely. The departments of State and Justice both have extensive experience with civilian policing and the training of indigenous police forces. Ideally, the lead agency with responsibility for police training in Iraq would be determined after careful study of the utility of making a single agency in the U.S. government responsible for this task. During this study, consideration must be given to the ongoing and future tasks that address the rule of law, such as upgrading Iraqi courts, strengthening the Iraqi prison system, and training an Iraqi marshals system.<sup>164</sup>

***Finding:** The number of civilian international police advisors is insufficient to the task of training the Iraqi Police Service.*

When Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq was initially established in 2004 and envisioned training a force of about 135,000 Iraqi police, the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team requested funding for 6,000 police advisors for that training effort. Congress provided authority and funds to hire only 1,000 personnel. Today there are more than 230,000 police in the Iraqi Police Service, and it appears likely that the force will continue to grow in the foreseeable future. To assist the Ministry of Interior with development and training of this force, the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team relies on just over 900 international police advisers and approximately 3,500 military personnel serving in Police Transition Teams.

The number of international police advisors currently working in Iraq is simply insufficient to the task. The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team’s emphasis on placing advisors out in the field wherever possible and on partnering advisors with police at police colleges and training centers is significantly improving the quality of the Iraqi Police Service and is facilitating the transition of responsibility to Iraqi police trainers. However, there are not enough police advisors to establish these partnerships in the depth and breadth that is needed to support the development of a 230,000-person force in a country as large as Iraq.

***Recommendation:** The Coalition – not just the United States – should fund and recruit the requisite number of international police advisors.*

Fielding more international police advisors is essential to the police training effort. The White House and the Department of State should aggressively encourage Coalition partners to fund and recruit at least another 2,000 advisors as part of a broader effort to support reconstruction efforts. To create momentum, the U.S. Congress and Department of State should work closely to fund at least 1,000 of those 2,000 additional police advisors positions, drawing more extensively than in previous years on the very large pool of law enforcement officials in the United States.

***Finding:** Training programs to date have emphasized quantity of police trained over quality of training, thereby undermining the long-term effectiveness of the force in favor of force generation efforts.*

---

<sup>164</sup> The Iraq Study Group and well-known international policing experts such as Robert M. Perito have recommended that the Department of Justice be made the lead agency. See Iraq Study Group (James A. Baker, III, and Lee H. Hamilton, co-chairs), *The Iraq Study Group Report: The Way Forward – A New Approach* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006), pp. 81–82.

Since 2004, there has been considerable focus on building up the Iraqi Police Service as quickly as possible. Reporting by the Department of Defense on the Iraqi Police Service has emphasized the numbers of police trained by Coalition forces—even after it became clear that neither the Coalition nor the Ministry of Interior knew how many of those Coalition-trained police were remaining in the force. The Iraqi Police Service has grown dramatically as provincial chiefs of police have become more independent from the central government, hiring thousands of recruits directly into the force at the provincial and local levels. In discussions with Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team officials, it was clear that balancing the police force's goals for quantity and quality is a constant struggle. This balancing act is made more difficult by the significant shortage of police force leaders, a result of the passive police culture under Saddam and the more recent de-Ba'athification process. Meanwhile, there are too few international advisors to establish field training officer programs and other similar quality initiatives on a large scale.

***Recommendation:** Particularly in light of a significantly high number of personnel in the Iraqi Police Service who have not yet undergone Coalition training, the Ministry of Interior and Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should seek higher-quality police recruits and vet them more carefully as they continue to address the training backlog.*

Emphasizing quantity over quality of police recruited and trained is likely to result in a less effective Iraqi Police Service over the long term. The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should work closely with the MOI and provincial authorities to establish a plan for putting the more than 65,000 direct-hire police through the 10-week shurta training course. In discussions with Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team officials, Commissioners noted several instances in the past two decades when major urban police departments in the United States responded to short-term security needs by deciding to emphasize quantity of police over quality. In each case cited, the short-term emphasis on numbers resulted in weak vetting and training of recruits, and those weaknesses in turn led directly to major police scandals years later that had lasting negative effects on those police departments and on their effectiveness in their communities. To ensure that quality is the focus in developing the Iraqi Police Service, the Coalition may want to consider a comprehensive audit of the police training program that will clearly establish its breadth, depth, and consistency.

***Finding:** The Iraqi Police Service lacks a formal police leadership academy, a deficiency that impedes leadership development.*

The Commission observed that most if not all Iraqi police leaders are former military officers and have no formal training or experience in civil policing. The absence of any leadership training for these senior officers is significantly slowing the development of a corps of strong, capable leaders in the Iraqi Police Service. This lack of senior leaders with training in civil policing is impeding the effectiveness of the service as a whole. A particular shortfall is the absence of a training program to develop first-line supervisors (generally officers at the sergeant level in the United States). First-line supervisors are invaluable to any police force and provide a vital bridge between senior police leadership and junior officers.

**Recommendation:** *The Iraqi Police Service should work with its Coalition advisors to establish a formal Iraqi Police Academy that is focused on developing civil policing skills in senior officers and includes a separate first-line supervisor training program.*

A leadership academy focused on providing training for senior Iraqi police officers would complement the existing police academies offering nine-month and three-year programs for entering police officers and would enable the more rapid development of a leadership corps across all levels of the Iraqi Police Service. A program aimed specifically at developing first-line supervisors would be an important part of the curriculum for such an academy and would ensure continuity of leadership from junior officers all the way up to senior police leaders. All such advanced courses should incorporate a clear set of standards that outline what the Iraqi people can expect from the Iraqi Police Service. This set of behaviors will become the foundation of a disciplinary code, based on a fundamental respect for human rights, and will help to promote confidence in the Iraqi Police Service overall.

## Equipment

**Finding:** *The Iraqi Police Service is underequipped to combat the threats it faces and suffers persistent shortfalls in vital equipment.*

There is a stark contrast between the lightly outfitted Iraqi police and the Coalition patrols that move around cities like Baghdad in armored Humvees or Stryker vehicles manned with soldiers outfitted in 60–80 pounds of full body armor and bristling with weapons. Reflecting this contrast in equipment levels, members of the Iraqi Security Forces, including the Iraqi Police Service, are killed at three times the rate of Coalition forces in Iraq. The day the Commission met with the Baghdad chief of police, two policemen had already been killed; and the day before, police in five patrol vehicles were killed. This casualty rate, which would make national headlines in the United States, was clearly not unusual for Baghdad.

Not only are the Iraqi police ill-equipped in the face of heavily armed terrorist groups and sectarian militias—particularly in Iraq’s urban areas—but in many areas they have not received all of their basic equipment and supplies and lack sufficient spare parts to keep equipment in working order. The Baghdad police chief told the Commission that more than 50 percent of his vehicles are non-operational at any given time. At the Habbaniyah police training center, the local police chief and international police advisors told the Commission that requests to the MOI for ammunition for marksmanship training had gone unanswered for months.<sup>165</sup> Because the Ministry of Oil routinely fails to provide required fuel to the Ministry of Interior, many police departments are not able to conduct vehicle patrols. Many of these shortfalls are linked to the lack of administrative capacity in the MOI—particularly the absence of systems to track personnel and their equipment—that was discussed in the preceding chapter. They could be resolved if the MOI established a more capable sustainment system.

---

<sup>165</sup> Interestingly, one day before the Commission’s visit to the training center, 200,000 rounds of ammunition arrived.

**Recommendation:** *Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq should work with the Iraqi government to provide adequately armored vehicles and heavier weaponry to the Iraqi Police Service, particularly to police stations in urban areas or other areas where improvised explosive device (IED) and explosively formed penetrator (EFP) attacks are prevalent.*

Culturally, Iraqi police are far more tied to the station house than are American police. To establish security in Iraqi neighborhoods, the shurtas will have to leave the stations and go on patrol. Iraqi police will be more inclined to conduct patrols if they feel protected, and they will be far better protected in armored vehicles than in Nissan trucks. Many mid-level Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team officials and Police Transition Team leaders told the Commission that they had recommended the provision of armored vehicles for the police and expressed uncertainty as to why these recommendations had not yet been acted on. Similarly, as long as Iraqi police are confronting rocket-propelled grenades, mortars, and other forms of indirect fire, Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq should move quickly to find a mechanism to get far more armored vehicles and at least some quantity of heavier weapons to the Iraqi Police Service.

## Information Sharing

**Finding:** *Quality intelligence is central to the ability of the Iraqi Police Service to take the lead for security, but intelligence supporting police operations is limited and information sharing with other security agencies is weak.*

The Iraqi Police Service has its own intelligence system, but it is largely confined to the tactical level. There is very little understanding in the Iraqi armed forces or in the Ministry of Interior (where many senior officials are former military officers) of how to use intelligence effectively to support policing operations. Information sharing between the Iraqi Police Service and other elements of the security forces in Iraq—primarily the Iraqi Army and the National Police—is spotty due to security concerns (fueled by deep and long-standing mistrust) and the absence of a solid information technology infrastructure to enable secure communications.

Establishing Police Transition Teams and Military Transition Teams to work with the Iraqi Army has helped the flow of information from Coalition forces to the Iraqi Police Service, but this information flow is largely internal within each province. There is very little communication between police forces in different provinces, a lack that is particularly troublesome in light of the need to conduct effective counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations and to track organized and other criminal activity.

The joint security stations in Baghdad and the partnering of Coalition forces with security forces in the provinces have significantly strengthened intelligence operations, but in many areas the general public remain reluctant to cooperate with the Coalition or Iraqi security forces. Tips hotlines are now widely advertised throughout the country, but they are not always widely used. At one joint security station in Baghdad, police and local community leaders highlighted the distribution of tips hotline cards; however, U.S. military police noted privately that most people in the neighborhood were far too fearful of retribution from Jaysh al-Madhi (often referred to as JAM or the Madhi Army) to use the hotline.

**Recommendation:** *All Iraqi security agencies and the Iraqi Police Service must work together to establish information-sharing systems, practices, and protocols that meet their requirements. The MOI should work with the provinces to establish mechanisms to share information from the national level down.*

The ministries of Interior and Defense, with assistance from the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team and the Coalition Military Assistance Transition Team, need to work together to develop the means to share intelligence with the Iraqi police in a way that protects operational security but retains information that will be useful to local police. This is not an easy problem to solve, as the United States itself has recently been reminded—the events of September 11 have spurred a renewed focus on the best ways to share information between the military, national intelligence services, and the police. That said, information sharing in Iraq between the military, the intelligence services, the police, and Coalition forces is rudimentary at best. It needs to be significantly developed and strengthened if the Iraqi police are ever to be the main providers of internal security for Iraq.

The MOI and the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team also need to work with the provinces to establish mechanisms to share information among the provincial police departments. Today it is almost impossible to track criminal activities from one province to another, or to verify trans-province patterns of activity. Iraq will not be able to establish a mature policing system in the absence of mechanisms to share information between provincial departments of police. Creating these mechanisms would also contribute to a sense of a national policing effort in Iraq.

## **Investigations and Forensics**

**Finding:** *The Iraqi Police Service has extremely weak investigative and forensic capabilities that greatly limit its effectiveness.*

The Commission was struck in its interviews and site visits by the weakness of the Iraqi Police Service's investigative and forensic capabilities. The day before the Commission arrived in Iraq for its first visit, a suicide vehicle bombing in Irbil killed more than 150 people—yet it was not clear in interviews what organization within the Iraqi Security Forces had the responsibility to investigate the crime, or even whether the crime would be investigated at all.

When Iraqi police are on patrol, or are called to a crime scene, they have very little ability or legal authority to secure a crime scene; collect, secure, and analyze evidence; and question witnesses or suspects. A partial explanation for their relative powerlessness is that in the Iraqi criminal justice system, unlike the American criminal justice system, the lead role in criminal investigations is held by the judiciary rather than by the law enforcement community. Moreover, the Iraqi criminal justice system traditionally puts tremendous emphasis on securing a confession in order to convict an individual of a crime, which in turn encourages the use of torture to avoid acquittals. Because confessions are seen as all-important, there is almost no appreciation for the value of physical evidence or corroborating witness statements.

The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team is working with the MOI to change this cultural bias, but it is a slow process and the need for enhanced investigative training is urgent. The Baghdad Crime Lab was devastated in the wake of the invasion in 2003, but it has rebuilt some of its explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), ballistics, and fingerprint database capabilities with support from the British. In addition, the Baghdad Police College now offers courses in criminal investigation that cover subjects ranging from the basics of securing a crime scene to analyzing physical evidence such as footprints. The criminal investigation training facilities that the Commission visited at the Baghdad Police College and police training center at Sulaymaniyah in the north were comparable to many facilities in the United States. The challenge for the future is clearly going to be putting sufficient numbers of police through these training courses so that the Iraqi Police Service can quickly and dramatically improve its ability to investigate and analyze crime scenes.

An impressive example of the Coalition's efforts to enhance the investigative capabilities of Iraq's civil security forces is the Major Crimes Task Force in Baghdad. Following a wave of high-profile murders in 2004 and early 2005 that essentially went uninvestigated, the U.S. Department of Justice approached the MOI and proposed a joint U.S.–Government of Iraq task force to build an indigenous capacity to investigate and prosecute these types of high-profile assassinations. The task force is composed of 12 American law enforcement agents and 11 vetted Iraqi officers, as well as five translators. One Iraqi investigative judge is assigned to the task force full-time. The Task Force has successfully investigated a number of very high profile murder cases and has broken up a number of covert, unsanctioned interrogation centers. It is highly professional, but it does not have the capacity to handle the volume of cases generated in Baghdad, much less the entire country. Moreover, the high visibility of the task force's investigations has forced all of its Iraqi personnel to live inside the International Zone, and it has become apparent that they cannot safely resettle in Baghdad when their tenure ends.

***Recommendation:** As the Iraqi Police Service continue to develop, Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq should work with the MOI to increase the investigative and forensic capabilities of the police service by expanding the Major Crimes Task Force, increasing the number of crime lab facilities in major cities, increasing training courses for criminal investigators, and establishing an investigator rank within the police service.*

No police force can be effective if it cannot secure and investigate crime scenes. The Ministry of Interior, with support from the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team, needs to make development of investigative and forensic skills within the Iraqi Police Service a major area of emphasis and must give the police greater authority to conduct investigations. The Major Crimes Task Force should be expanded significantly so that it can at least begin to handle the large volume of cases in Baghdad. Ideally, each province would have its own Major Crimes Task Force, equipped with an automated database to track criminal activity and facilitate information sharing. In light of the substantial history of terrorists using criminal activity to fund acts of terror, the Major Crimes Task Force should also expand its efforts into investigating significant criminal financial activities, as well as murders and other violent crime. Finally, the Iraqi Police Service should create an investigator rank so that it can begin training police to specialize in investigative and forensics skills.

## Creation of a Justice System

***Finding:** The Iraqi Police Service is but one element of a broader justice system that is not yet well established in Iraq.*

The Commission did not conduct a detailed assessment of the overall judicial system in Iraq as such an investigation was beyond the scope of its mandate, but interviews made clear that a major challenge to effective policing is the absence of a well-developed judicial system. To establish lasting security in Iraq, the police must be linked to a functioning court and prison system. Police must be able to put suspects in jail while they await trial; sufficient numbers of investigative judges need to be able to conduct investigations thoroughly and without fearing for their lives; and when the legal system succeeds in convicting a suspect, criminals need to be able to serve out their sentences in well-run prisons. Iraq currently lacks this kind of coherent judicial framework. Fundamentally, the rule of law does not yet exist in Iraq. Police and judicial officials often view each other with mutual suspicion, jails are woefully overcrowded, investigative judges and their families are often targets of intimidation and violence, and courthouses are run down and poorly secured.

***Recommendation:** The Government of Iraq, particularly the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice, should collaborate to create and implement a framework to enable the rule of law in Iraq. The Coalition should continue to strongly support these efforts.*

Like the Iraq Study Group, the Commission strongly recommends that the Government of Iraq launch a major initiative to establish a functioning judicial system in Iraq, and that the Coalition strongly support that program.<sup>166</sup> A new focus on developing the rule of law in Iraq could build on ongoing Coalition initiatives, such as the relatively new rule of law compound that establishes a “safe zone” for members of the judiciary and their families, as well as the European Union rule of law mission in Iraq (EUJUST LEX) that has trained almost 1,500 senior Iraqi criminal justice officials. Establishing the rule of law will require expanding the number and improving the quality of detention centers, rebuilding courthouses and improving their physical security, training many more prosecutors and judges, providing for the safety of judicial system officials and their families, and establishing mechanisms to root out corruption and political influence in the judicial system.

## A Long-Term Vision for Policing in Iraq

***Finding:** The police are central to the long-term establishment of security and stability in Iraq. Today, the Iraqi Police Service is incapable of providing security at a level sufficient to protect Iraqi neighborhoods from insurgents and sectarian violence.*

Although today the Iraqi Army has a considerable role in providing internal security in Iraq, ultimately the Army will focus on external defense of the country and it will be the Iraqi police who will safeguard the country’s internal security. The Iraqi police today are operating in what is essentially a battlefield environment while trying to prepare for the day when more traditional civil

---

<sup>166</sup> See Iraq Study Group, *The Iraq Study Group Report*, p. 83.

policing is possible. Given this challenge, the Iraqi policing strategy will likely need to follow an evolutionary process, much like the police experience in Northern Ireland.

At the height of The Troubles, the police in certain parts of Belfast were restricted to responding to calls from the public and conducting limited patrols. As many as 16 British Army soldiers were required to support just two police officers on patrol, when under normal conditions these police would patrol alone. Over time, as the security situation began to improve, police officers conducted patrols in groups of two armored vehicles with three officers in each. Later, police could patrol in armored SUVs, and today police officers are starting to patrol on bicycles in what used to be the most dangerous neighborhoods. This transformation did not happen quickly; the British Army only recently ended its support to police activities in Northern Ireland after 38 years of military operations. Reductions in the military presence supporting police activities in Northern Ireland were linked to increased security on the ground, which in turn was the result of increasing political stability over time.

***Recommendation:** The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should work closely with the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense to develop a detailed strategic plan to transition primary responsibility for internal security in Iraq from the Iraqi Army to the Iraqi Police Service.*

Working closely with the ministries of Interior and Defense, the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team should help the Government of Iraq develop a detailed plan to shift primacy for Iraq's internal security from the Iraqi Army to the Iraqi Police Service. This plan should outline core policing principles as well as milestones for the evolution of the policing process. One core principle should be the requirement that an Iraqi police officer is always the face of a patrol for the public, and is in charge of the patrol, regardless of the size of the military escort. Another core principle should be that the military provides a secure platform to enable police to execute their primary function of upholding the rule of law until that secure platform is no longer necessary. This kind of strategic plan would include benchmarks to assess the evolution of policing away from the Army and toward the Iraqi Police Service. Such benchmarks might include the ability to replace Army units with police personnel without loss of control over an area, or the ability to rely on military capabilities only for specialized functions such as helicopter support. Whatever the milestones, a central concept in the policing plan needs to be the establishment of civil policing as the standard. Even if for many years this civil police force can function only with substantial military support, as was the case in Northern Ireland, the concept of a civil police force responsible for public security must be instituted from the outset as a societal norm.

**Conclusion:** The Iraqi Police Service is incapable today of providing security at a level sufficient to protect Iraqi neighborhoods from insurgents and sectarian violence. The police are central to the long-term establishment of security in Iraq. To be effective in combating the threats that officers face, including sectarian violence, the Iraqi Police Service must be better trained and equipped. The Commission believes that the Iraqi Police Service can improve rapidly should the Ministry of Interior become a more functional institution.

## CHAPTER 9: THE NATIONAL POLICE

Despite efforts to reform the Iraqi National Police, the organization remains a highly sectarian element of the Iraqi Security Forces and one that for the most part is unable to contribute to security and stability in Iraq. The Iraqi National Police is almost exclusively Shi'a. Trained for counterinsurgency operations, the force is constituted largely of former soldiers. The National Police suffers from significant quality problems and a lack of clarity about whether it should be a paramilitary or a police organization.

### Overview of the Iraqi National Police

In addition to the Iraqi Police Service, Iraq also has just over 25,000 National Police, organized into two divisions. Intended to serve as a bridging force between the Iraqi Police Service and the Iraqi Army, the National Police is widely viewed as highly sectarian and is mistrusted by the Iraqi Police Service, the Iraqi Army, and the Iraqi public.

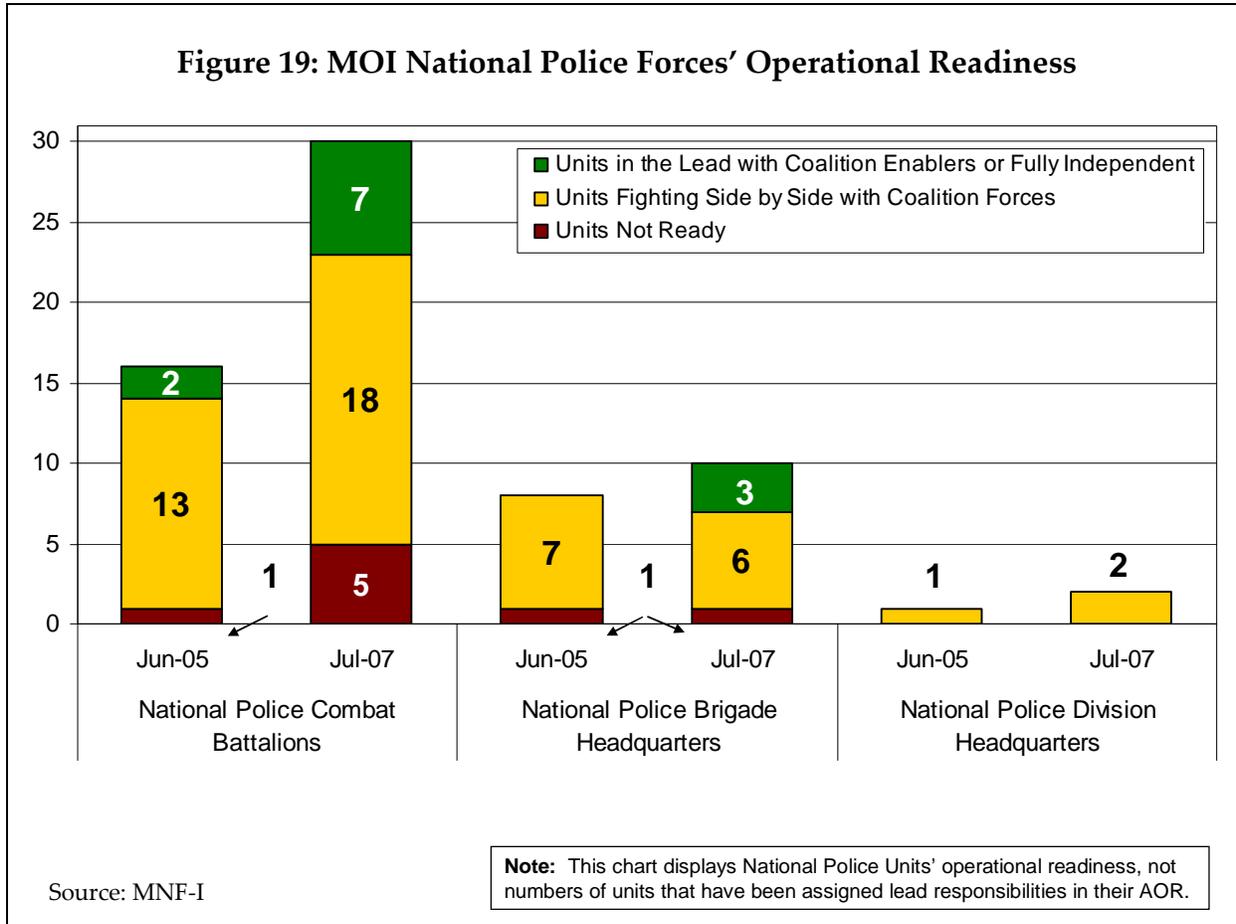
The roots of the National Police are varied. As the insurgency in Iraq grew more violent toward the end of 2003, the Coalition decided to create what it called "heavy police units" using former Iraqi soldiers. These public order battalions and the Emergency Response Unit (ERU) were composed largely of Sunnis and reported to the Ministry of Interior (MOI). In September 2004, under the leadership of Interior Minister Bayan Jabr, the MOI created Special Police Commandos that were largely Shi'a units; then in January 2005, the MOI created the 1st Special Police Mechanized Brigade.<sup>167</sup> In April 2006, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq persuaded the MOI to combine all of these different units into a single organization, the National Police. The Shi'a-dominated Special Police Commandos became the 1st National Police Division, and the public order battalions became the 2nd National Police Division.

Like the Iraqi Police Service, the National Police is part of the Ministry of Interior. The National Police Commander is Major General Hussein al-Awadi, who reports to Minister of Interior Jawad al-Bolani. The National Police today comprises eight brigades organized into two divisions, a single mechanized brigade, a quick reaction force battalion, and a national-level Emergency Response Unit containing about 600 personnel. The Coalition has trained more than 31,000 National Police, but it appears that only about 25,000 are still serving. National Police missions include counterterrorism and counterinsurgency operations, military assistance for civil disturbances, and protection of high-level dignitaries. The original concept for the National Police was to use it as a reinforcement force for the Iraqi Police Service. If an incident in a province could not be adequately addressed by local police, the MOI could deploy a National Police brigade to assist and bring the situation under control. If the National Police and the police combined still could not bring the situation under control, the MOI could request deployment of Iraqi Army forces. In this way the National Police was conceived as being employed domestically in a fashion somewhat similar to

---

<sup>167</sup> Some experts assert that the various units created by Minister Jabr were made up of fighters from Shi'a militia organizations. See Robert M. Perito, "Reforming the Iraqi Interior Ministry, Police, and Facilities Protection Service," testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, 110th Cong., 1st sess., March 28, 2007.

how the National Guard can be used in the United States, but it is not clear whether the National Police in its current form can execute this kind of mission effectively (for its operational readiness, see Figure 19).



The National Police achieved 100 percent of its authorized equipment levels at the end of 2006. National Police personnel are outfitted with small arms, medium machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades, and body armor. National Police units have light, medium, and heavy pickup trucks, as well as sport utility vehicles. In recognition of the need for heavier equipment, given National Police involvement in counterinsurgency operations, plans have been made to up-armor more than 1,300 of the SUVs and trucks.<sup>168</sup> The 1st Mechanized National Police Brigade has approximately 60 M-1117 armored security vehicles, 50 Ukrainian armored personnel carriers derived from the Soviet BTR-80, and 115 South African-made Reva armored personnel carriers. In the future, the National Police aspires to have rotary wing aircraft, cargo planes, more armored vehicles, mortars, mine detectors, and unmanned aerial vehicles, but it is not clear when or whether this equipment will be acquired.

<sup>168</sup> Walter Pincus, "US to Armor Plate Iraqi Police Vehicles," *Washington Post*, December 16, 2006.

Until late 2006, training for the National Police was not standardized, and it focused largely on counterinsurgency and paramilitary operations. In October 2006, the Coalition removed the entire 8th Brigade of the 2nd National Police Division from operations and arrested its officers, who were implicated in the kidnapping of 26 Sunnis and the death of 7 of those individuals. This incident made clear the need for standardized training and reorientation of the National Police. Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq launched the National Police Transformation Program, which in its initial stages included limited vetting and three weeks of traditional police training—the first police training that any members of the National Police had received.

The National Police Headquarters, in cooperation with the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team, now operates three major training facilities. New recruits undergo six weeks of basic training at the National Police Academy in Numiniyah. Basic, officer, and noncommissioned officer training is offered at Camp Solidarity, located in northern Baghdad. Finally, more specialized training, such as SWAT (special weapons and tactics) training and Emergency Response Unit training, is offered at Camp Dublin, just south of Baghdad. The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team started a mandatory four-week training course to address concerns about National Police activities after the 8th Brigade was taken out of operations. This process, sometimes referred to as “re-bluing,” is a month-long basic training program in policing skills, such as human rights training and policing in a democracy, as well as tactical training, such as patrolling and checkpoint operation.<sup>169</sup> All nine National Police brigades will have completed the re-bluing training by early October 2007.

Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq and Multi-National Corps–Iraq provide important technical advice, training, and mentoring to the National Police. The Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team plays a key role in National Police training and capacity building within the MOI to support the National Police. Multi-National Corps–Iraq is responsible for 41 National Police Transition Teams, 38 of which are partnered with National Police battalions, as well as 2 teams that are partnered with the division headquarters, and 1 team assisting National Police Headquarters. Fourteen international police advisors work with the National Police. The National Police Transition Teams work with National Police units on a daily basis, providing mentoring and assistance in the field. A major recent focus for the Civilian Police Assistance Transition Team and the National Police Transition Teams has been implementing the first two phases of the four-phase National Police Transformation Program. Under Phase 1, the National Police Transition Teams conducted technical inspections of each of the National Police battalions to identify deficiencies in areas such as personnel accountability, uniforms, fuel supplies, spare parts, and maintenance capabilities. The teams also conducted quick-look inspections and command climate surveys to get a more qualitative assessment of the National Police units.

## Challenges for the National Police

The National Police is the subject of considerable concern both inside and outside Iraq. The Commission was struck by the almost universally negative descriptions of the National Police

---

<sup>169</sup> “Department of Defense Bloggers Roundtable with Colonel Mark R. French,” [http://www.defenselink.mil/home/blog/docs/20070730\\_French\\_Transcript.pdf](http://www.defenselink.mil/home/blog/docs/20070730_French_Transcript.pdf).

voiced by Iraqi police, Army officers, and members of the general public. The National Police has been regularly accused of sectarian abuse and illegal activities. Reports of Iraqi security forces' involvement in death squad activities have most frequently been traced to this organization, particularly its former commando units.<sup>170</sup> Members of the National Police were also heavily implicated in the 2005 prisoner torture scandal, and the most recent former Commanding General of Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq, Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey, remarked in late 2006 that “the National Police is the biggest worry, about 20 to 25 percent of them probably need to be weeded out.”<sup>171</sup> The Commission also observed that the Coalition’s sheer need for large numbers of security forces to bring the fight to al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI) and the militias may be hindering its ability to consider, in partnership with the Government of Iraq, what makes the most sense for the future of the National Police.

***Finding:** In its current form, the National Police is not a viable organization. Its ability to be effective is crippled by significant challenges, including public distrust, sectarianism (both real and perceived), and a lack of clarity about its identity—specifically, whether it is a military or a police force.*

## Sectarianism

National Police members are largely recruited from Baghdad and the largely Shi’a southern provinces of Iraq. Efforts to recruit Sunni men into the National Police have generally been unsuccessful. As a result, the National Police force is 85 percent Shi’a, 13 percent Sunni, and 2 percent other affiliations; given its composition and past activities, it is widely perceived as highly sectarian.

In an effort to curb sectarian behavior, the National Police Commander has recently replaced 8 of 9 brigade commanders and 17 of 27 battalion commanders—but serious perception problems remain. As part of the Baghdad Security Plan that began in February 2007, two National Police battalions were supposed to deploy to Baghdad, one from the northern part of Iraq and another from the Tikrit/Samarra region, but ultimately political resistance prevented their transfer.<sup>172</sup>

The Commission heard police chiefs and senior police officials describe the National Police as “very sectarian,” “making daily mistakes with the Iraqi people,” “a burden on the MOI,” and “not a national force at all.” Even with the re-bluing training largely completed, sectarianism in the National Police may still be more than just a perception problem. The MOI is seeking to establish an additional National Police brigade in Samarra; but while the National Police leadership has proposed that its composition be 45 percent Sunni and 55 percent Shi’a, the Office of the

---

<sup>170</sup> Olga Olikier, “Iraqi Security Forces: Defining Challenges and Assessing Progress,” testimony before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, 110th Cong., 1st sess., March 28, 2007, p. 5; available at [www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2007/RAND\\_CT277.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2007/RAND_CT277.pdf).

<sup>171</sup> U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Stand Up and Be Counted: The Continuing Challenge of Building the Iraqi Security Forces*, 110th Cong., 1st sess., July 2007, pp. 87–88.

<sup>172</sup> CPATT briefing, July 2007.