A map of the Middle East region with Iraq highlighted in yellow. The rest of the map is light beige. The Persian Gulf is shown in light blue to the east of Iraq. The text is overlaid on the map.

Iraq Weekly Status Report

February 6, 2008

**Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
US Department of State**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

HIGHLIGHTS	3
POLITICAL	
• Governance & Legislation	4
• Provincial	6
SECURITY	
• Situation Update	9
• Security Transition	10
ECONOMIC	
• Economic & Government Capacity Update	12
• Oil	14
• Electricity & Water	18
• Financial Indicators	20
DIPLOMATIC	
• Political Engagement	23
• Economic Engagement	24
• Coalition	25
Notes, Source Citations and Contact Information	26



HIGHLIGHTS

- Prime Minister Maliki resided over the first hoisting of Iraq's new national flag over the Iraqi Parliament February 5. **(POLITICAL, page 4)**
- The Law on Accountability and Justice, allowing many Saddam Hussein-era officials to return to government jobs, was passed February 3. **(POLITICAL, page 4)**
- MNC-I chief of staff announced that attacks in Baghdad have dropped to their lowest levels since 2005. **(SECURITY, page 9)**
- Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi told the Iraqi Embassy in Amman that he plans to request that Iraqis leaving Jordan be offered an exemption on exit fees. **(DIPLOMATIC, page 23)**
- The UN has transferred \$161 million from the closed oil-for-food program to a development program for Iraq. **(DIPLOMATIC, page 24)**



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

Iraqis Fly their New National Flag:

- Iraqis hoisted their new national flag over the Iraqi Parliament for the first time February 5. Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki presided over the flag-raising ceremony attended by cabinet members and dignitaries. Remarking on how Iraq's adoption of the new flag represents a symbolic break with the memory of Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime, Maliki said, "It erases the impact of the past." The temporary national flag will fly for one year before a permanent one is chosen.

Presidency Council Approves De-Ba'ath Law:

- The Iraqi Presidency Council approved the Law on Accountability and Justice by default February 3. The legislation will allow thousands of Saddam Hussein-era officials to return to government jobs and is one of several key provisions before the GOI that Washington considers central to Iraqi national reconciliation. The bill will become law once it is published in the Official Gazette.

U.S. Striving to Meet Annual Refugee Goal:

- According to a February 4 statement by the State Department's special coordinator for refugees from Iraq, 375 Iraqi refugees arrived in the U.S. in January, taking to 1,432 the total admitted since October. The number represents a quicker pace of absorption than in fiscal year 2007, but still lags behind the pace needed to meet the 12,000 targeted for fiscal year 2008. According to the statement, the U.S. government plans to conduct 5,500 interviews in the second quarter of 2008 and 8,000 interviews in the third quarter. The increase in refugee interviews will allow the U.S. to reach their goal of 12,000 admitted by the end of fiscal year 2008.



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

U.S. and GOI Officials Discuss Security Arrangements:

- GOI official Ali al-Dabbagh confirmed February 4 that the U.S. and Iraq will begin talks later in February on a long-term strategic relationship between the two nations. PM Maliki, President Jalal Talabani, the two Iraqi vice presidents and the leaders of major political blocs met February 3 to discuss the issue. He said the talks would begin the third week of February, but did not give an exact date. Brett McGurk, the U.S. coordinator for the strategic framework agreement, stated, "The purpose of the agreement is to provide basic authorities and protections for U.S. military and civilian personnel serving in Iraq beyond Dec. 31, 2008, when present U.N. authorizations are set to expire, and establish a basic framework for economic, diplomatic and security relations."

Gates Calls on Congress to Approve 2008 War Funds:

- Defense Secretary Robert Gates called on Congress February 4 to approve \$102.5 billion from a 2008 war funds request. Approval is being delayed in Congress by disagreement over the conduct of the Iraq war. "Delay degrades our ability to operate and sustain the force at home and in theater, and makes it difficult to manage this department in a way that is fiscally sound," Gates said. The same day President Bush requested \$70 billion in his 2009 budget to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan for the initial months of the new fiscal year that begins October 1.



POLITICAL - Provincial

Najaf Private Bankers Discuss Requirements to Operate Banks:

- Reconstruction Team Leader and PRT officers met with individuals representing five private banks at FOB Endeavor January 28. The purpose of this initial meeting was to become acquainted and to identify and discuss issues concerning the local private banking sector. Topics discussed included addressing security concerns, operating with an inconsistent electricity supply, lack of adequate fuel for generators, and issues related to improving the Iraqi banking system, such as training employees, acquiring new equipment, and operating Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs).



POLITICAL – Government of Iraq

Coalition Affiliation (at time of appointment)
United Iraq Alliance
Kurdistani Alliance
Iraqi Accord Front
Iraqi National List
Other / Independent

(F) = Female

*Formerly Tawafuq

**Formerly Sadrist/UIA

***Formerly Iraqiya

Prime Minister

Nuri al-Maliki

President

Jalal Talabani

Deputy President

Tariq al-Hashimi

Deputy President

'Adil 'Abd al-Mahdi

Deputy Prime Minister

* Vacant

Deputy Prime Minister

Barham Salih

Minister of Agriculture

Ali al-Bahadeli

Minister of Communications

*** Vacant

Minister of Culture

* Vacant

Minister of Defense

Abdul Qadir Muhammed
Jasim al-Mufraji

Minister of Displacement & Migration

Abd al-Samad Rahman
Sultan

Minister of Electricity

Karim Wahid

Minister of Education

Khudayyir al-Khuza'i

Minister of Environment

Narmin 'Uthman (F)

Minister of Finance

Bayan Jabr

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Hoshyar Zebari

Minister of Health

Saleh al-Hasnawi

Minister of Higher Education

* Vacant

Minister of Human Rights

Wijdan Mikha'il (F)

Minister of Industry & Minerals

Fawzi al-Hariri

Minister of Interior

Jawad al-Bulani

Minister of Justice

*** (Safa al Safi
acting)

Minister of Housing & Construction

Bayan Daza'l (F)

Minister of Labor & Social Affairs

Mahmud Muhammad
Jawad al-Radi

Minister of Oil

Husayn al-Shahristani

Minister of Planning

Ali Baban

Minister of Trade

Abd al-Falah al-Sudani

Minister of Science & Technology

Ra'id Fahmi Jahid

Minister of Municipalities & Public Works

Riyad Ghurayyib

Minister of Transportation

** Vacant

Minister of Water Resources

'Abd al-Latif Rashid

Minister of Youth & Sports

Jasim Muhammad Ja'far

Minister of State for Civil Society

* (Wijdan Mikha'il
Acting) (F)

Minister of State for National Dialogue Affairs

Akram al-Hakim

Minister of State for National Security Affairs

Shirwan al-Waili

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

* Vacant

Minister of State for Governorates Affairs

Sa'd Hashim

Minister of State for Tourism and Antiquities

** Vacant

Minister of State for Women's Affairs

** (Narmeen Othman Acting)

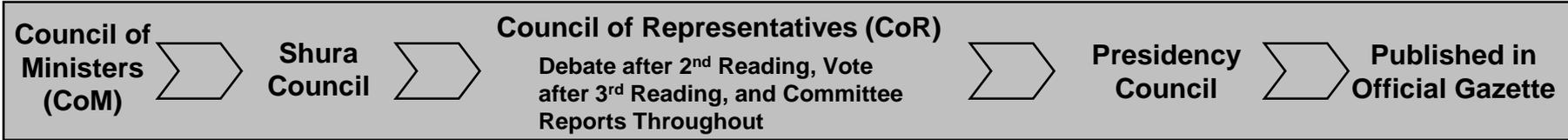
Minister of State for CoR Affairs

Safa al-Safi



POLITICAL – Key Legislation and Refugee Update

Legislative Process



Provincial Powers

Major political blocs within the GOI are working on a compromise on the level of authority over provinces allocated to the central government

Elections

The Prime Minister's Office is currently drafting the law, which will set the legal basis and structure of provincial and national elections

Hydrocarbons (Package of 4)

The level of control allocated to the central government in the July 2007 draft version of the Framework Law (currently in CoR Committee) is the key point of disagreement; there may be more progress on the Revenue Management Law, currently with the Shura Council, in the coming months

General Pardon Law (Amnesty)

Had its first reading in the CoR January 2008

Pensions Amendment

PASSED: Published in the Official Gazette December 2007

De-Ba'athification Reform

PASSED: Approved by default by the Presidency Council February 2008 (must still be published in the Official Gazette)

Refugee Update

Refugees in the region: 2-2.4 million

Internally displaced persons in Iraq: 2.2-2.4 million

Total number of Iraqi refugees admitted to the U.S. during to date in FY07-FY08: 3,165

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SECURITY - Situation Update

Baghdad Attacks Down to Two-Year Low:

- Attacks in Baghdad have dropped to their lowest levels since 2005. The Baghdad security districts have seen numbers comparable to attack levels in 2005; the security improvement derives primarily from local resident cooperation. Coalition forces -- in part because of Operation Phantom Phoenix, the January offensive aimed at driving AQI fighters out of their strongholds -- are also finding and clearing more explosive devices than they have in previous years.

Female Suicide Bombings in Baghdad:

- Two females blew themselves up January 31 as part of a growing trend of female suicide bombers in Iraq. The most destructive of the two explosions occurred in a busy pet market in Baghdad, killing at least 46 people and wounding 78 in the deadliest bombing in Baghdad since the "surge" began. The second suicide bomber detonated her explosives 20 minutes after the initial attack in southeast Baghdad, killing 18.
- Reports indicate that the two women may have been mentally handicapped and used unwittingly by AQI in the attacks because they did not understand what was happening and, because of their condition, were less likely to be searched.



SECURITY – Security Transition

U.S. and Iraqi Troops Partner to Build Outpost in Mosul:

- U.S. Army and Iraqi Security Forces are working to cement security gains in Mosul by building an outpost in the eastern part of the city. The outpost will decrease response time, increase interactions with local people, and increase the security presence in a city now viewed as an insurgent center since the “surge” began. The outpost will house a large number of Iraqi troops with a smaller U.S. presence to provide support.

Hundreds of Iraqi Police Graduate from Training Course:

- The Iraqi Police (IP) saw 493 new officers graduate February 2 in an effort to strengthen the security situation in Baghdad through an expansion of the Iraqi Police. The training session was conducted entirely by other IP, representing a new step forward in the security relationship between U.S. and Iraqi forces.



SECURITY - Iraqi Security Forces

Iraq Security Forces as of January 1, 2008 ^a			
Component	Current Authorized Personnel ^b	Assigned Personnel ^c	Total Trained Personnel to date ^d
Ministry of Interior (MoI) Forces ^e			
Iraqi Police Service ^f	288,001	275,300	155,248
National Police ^g	33,670	32,389	41,399
Border Enforcement	38,205	39,649	27,959
Total MoI	359,876	347,338	224,606
Ministry of Defense (MoD) Forces ^h			
Army	186,352	159,938	174,940
Support Forces	17,369	18,794	19,750
Air Force	2,907	1,305	1,370
Navy	1,483	1,115	1,194
Total MoD	208,111	181,152	197,254
Counter Terrorism Bureau			
Special Operations	4,857	3,126	3,485
Total Iraqi Security Forces	572,844	531,616	425,345

a Numbers do not include ministry staffs.

b Numbers reflect Government of Iraq (GOI) authorizations.

c Numbers are based upon GOI payroll data and do not reflect present for duty totals.

d Numbers reflect assigned personnel that have received training.

e Numbers reflect total ISF personnel trained to date, some of which are no longer assigned due to casualties, AWOL, and normal separation.

f MoI strength does not reflect investigative and administrative forces, the MoI HQ, MoI Forensics, Dignitary Protection, or contracted guards.

g MoI Police Support Unit, Provincial Security Force, and Emergency Response Unit personnel are part of the Iraqi Police Service and does not include other Ministry FPS.

h The MoD strength are derived from Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOEs).



ECONOMIC – Economic & Government Capacity Update

Agility, Ltd., Expands Its Iraq Presence:

- According to a press release from Agility, a global logistics provider, the company has completed a joint partnership that will expand its operations in Kurdistan. Agility Kurdistan Limited is made up of Agility and Kurdistan Capital Investment. The venture will invest in the construction of warehouse facilities and exploring real estate activities. These new facilities will provide storage and transportation services for Agility customers. Agility's CEO for the Middle East and Africa noted that "Agility Kurdistan Limited gives us the opportunity to reinforce our presence in Iraq with a new foothold in the North, where there is a huge potential for business growth. We are very excited about the opportunity to diversify our customer base and strengthen our brand name in Iraq."

CBI Building Suffers Fire:

- Iraq's central bank building was severely damaged by fire January 29. There were no casualties reported. The top four floors of the building suffered the most damage and many documents were lost. Iraqi lawmaker Sabah al-Saadi said a section containing important budget documents was destroyed. Additionally, Saadi said that a large amount of money had been evacuated from the building. There has been no cause released for the fire.



ECONOMIC – Economic & Government Capacity Update

Changes to Private Investment Law Discussed:

- The Babil Provincial Reconstruction Team is participating in a project led by State-owned Enterprise and Small Business advisors to evaluate legal hurdles to be overcome in establishing a joint public-private enterprise with the Hillah textile factory. Local attorneys, including the Vice President of the Babil Bar Association, were brought in this past week to discuss the status of the private investment law in Iraq, and examples of similar existing projects in Babil. The PRT members discussed the possibility of commissioning a legal treatise from Iraqi lawyers, the Bar Association, or the Babil University Law School on the present status of Iraqi investment law to assist potential foreign investors.

Microfinance Institute Issues 122 Business Loans in December:

- The Baghdad Microfinance Institute (MFI) issued 122 loans in December. After addressing loan capital issues during the past summer and fall, MFI is now disbursing loans at much greater levels. The MFI broke the 100 loans issued mark in November. The 122 loans issued in December totaled over \$170,000. MFI, an Iraqi company supported by the USAID private sector development program Izdiyar, began operation in September 2006. Since that time they have issued more than 700 loans totaling over \$1 million.



ECONOMIC – Oil

Crude Oil Update:

Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$87.022/ barrel

Dated Brent at \$91.864/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$91.134/ barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$84.338/barrel

Revenue estimates:

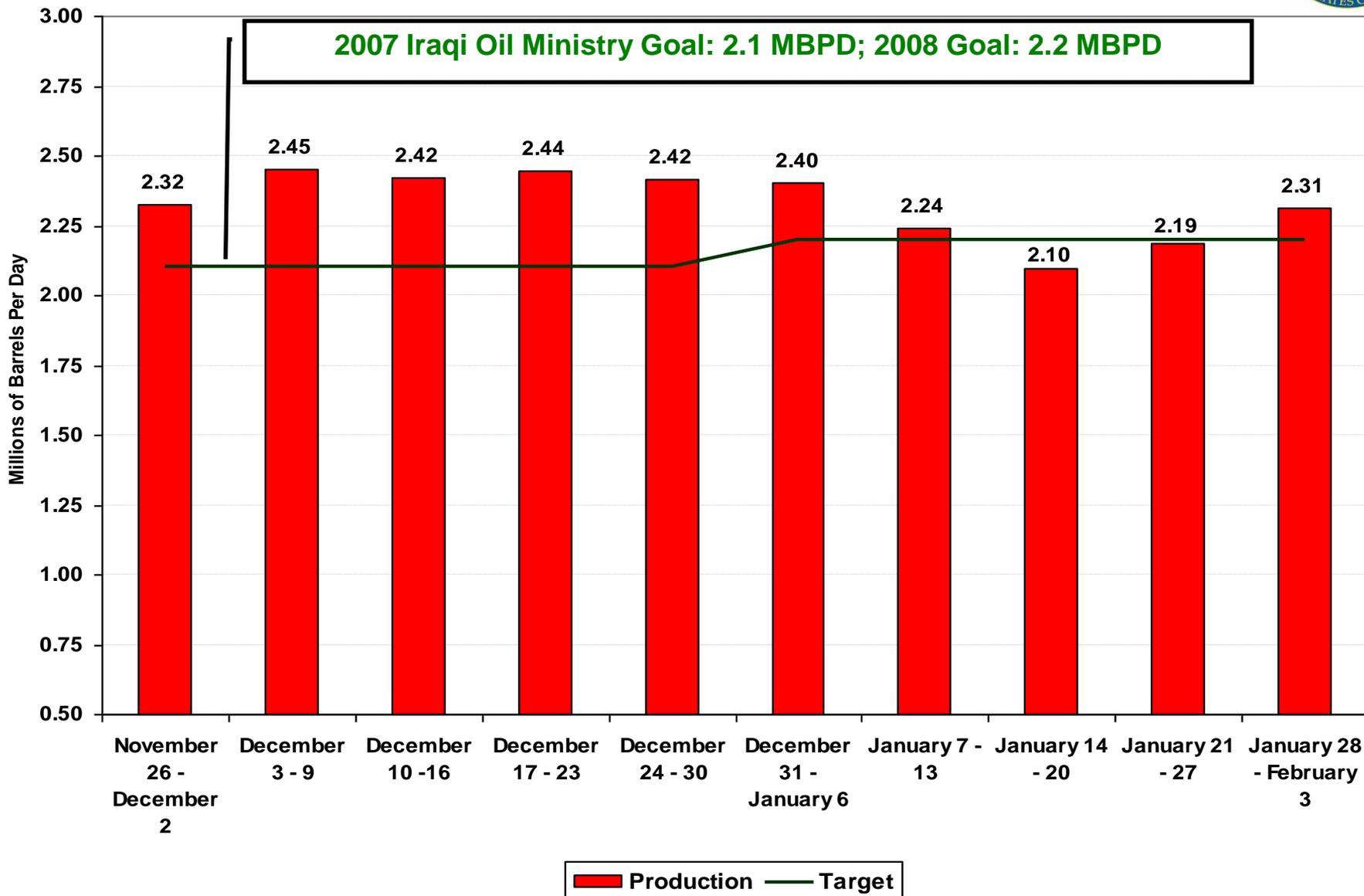
2006: \$31.3 Billion

2007: \$34.4 Billion (estimated)



ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Production

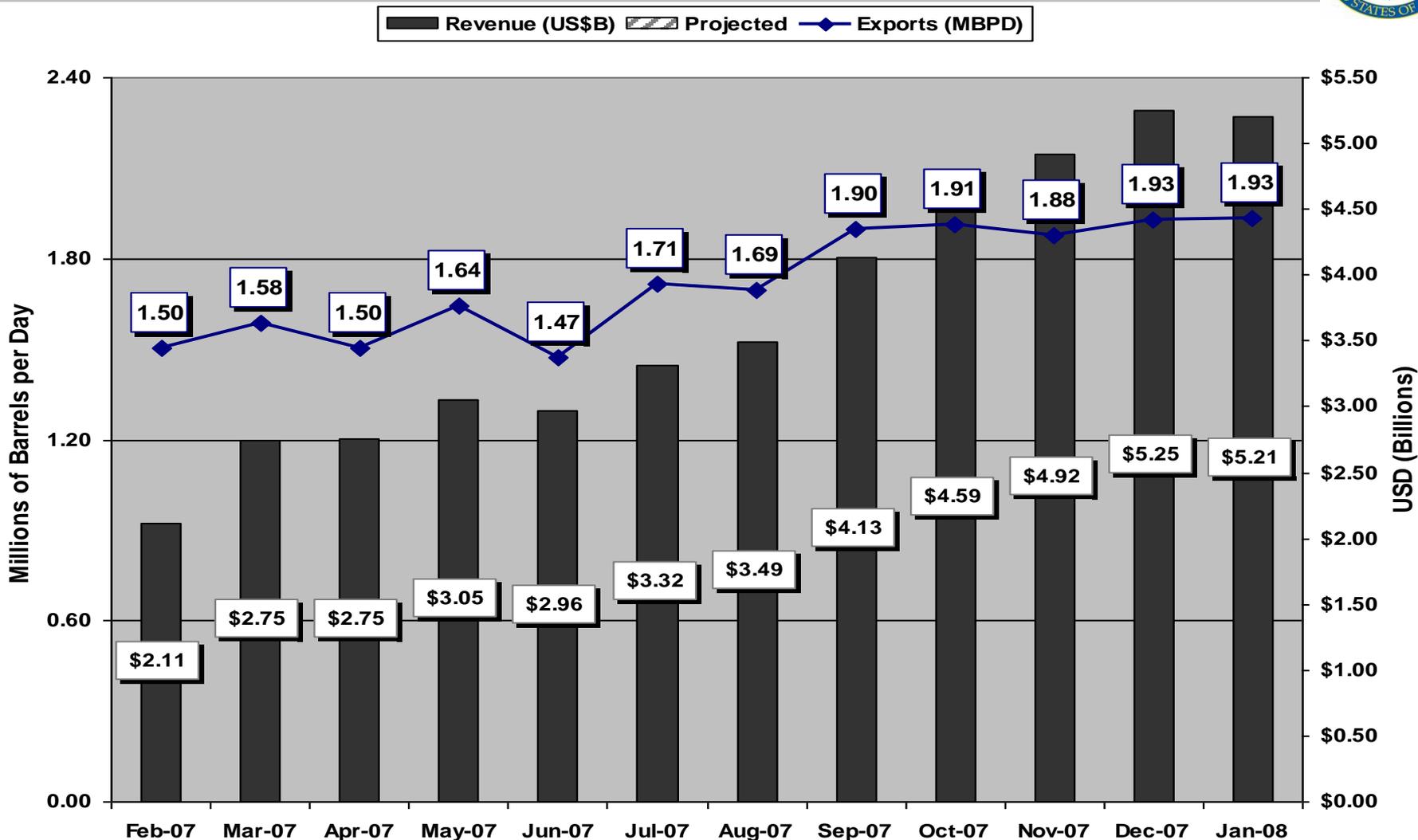
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ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Export

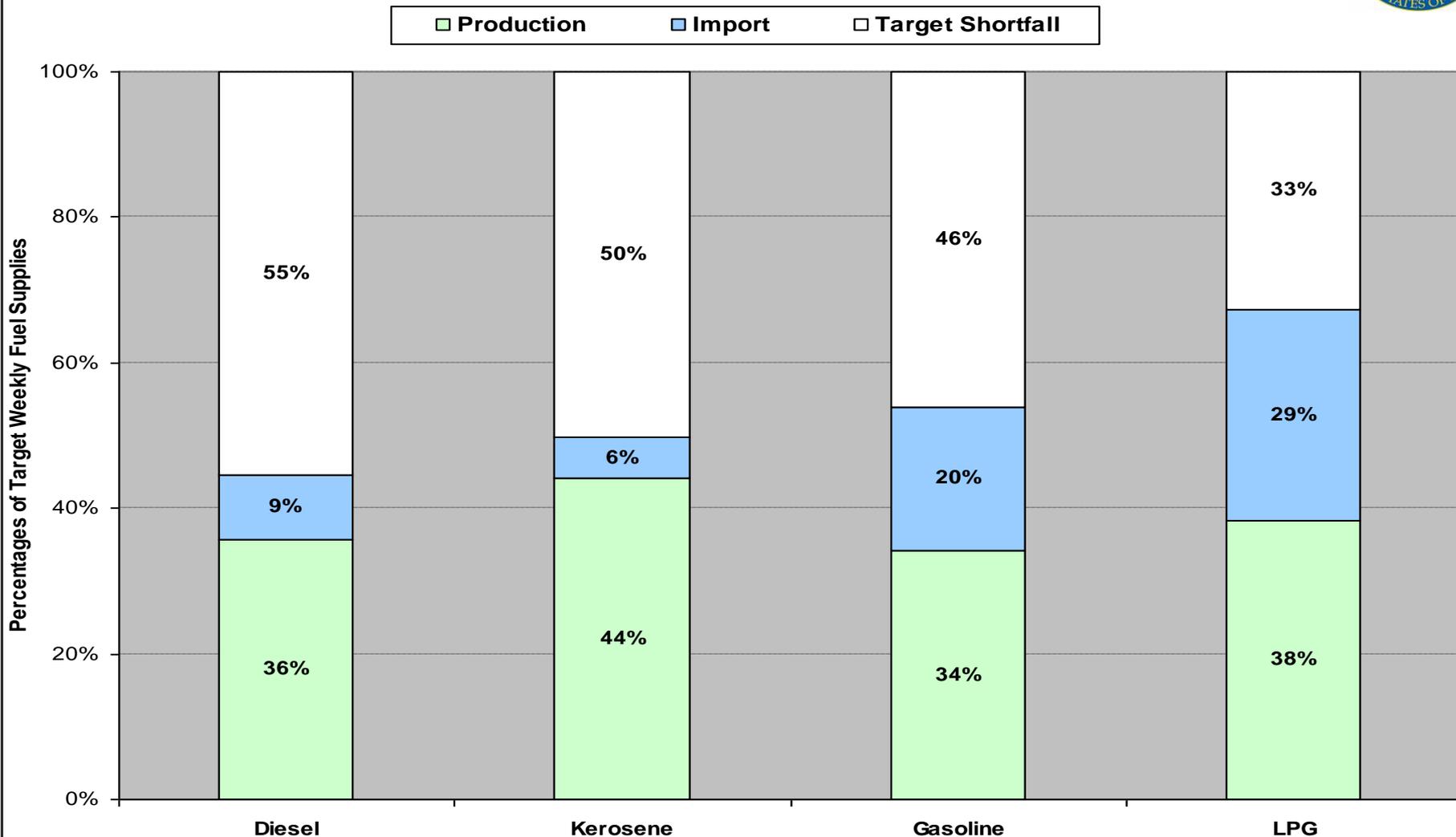
DEPARTMENT OF STATE



- 2006 Revenue Estimate: \$31.3 Billion
- 2007 Revenue Estimate: \$41.0 Billion
- 2008 Revenue Estimate: \$5.21 Billion (ytd)



ECONOMIC – Total Critical Refined Product Supplies



Note: This is a daily average for January 28 – February 3

- Diesel: 10.9 ML supply of 24.5 ML target
- Gasoline: 14.4 ML supply of 26.8 ML target
- Kerosene: 7.3 ML supply of 14.6 ML target
- LPG: 3,436 tons supply of 5,100 tons target

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ECONOMIC – Electricity & Water

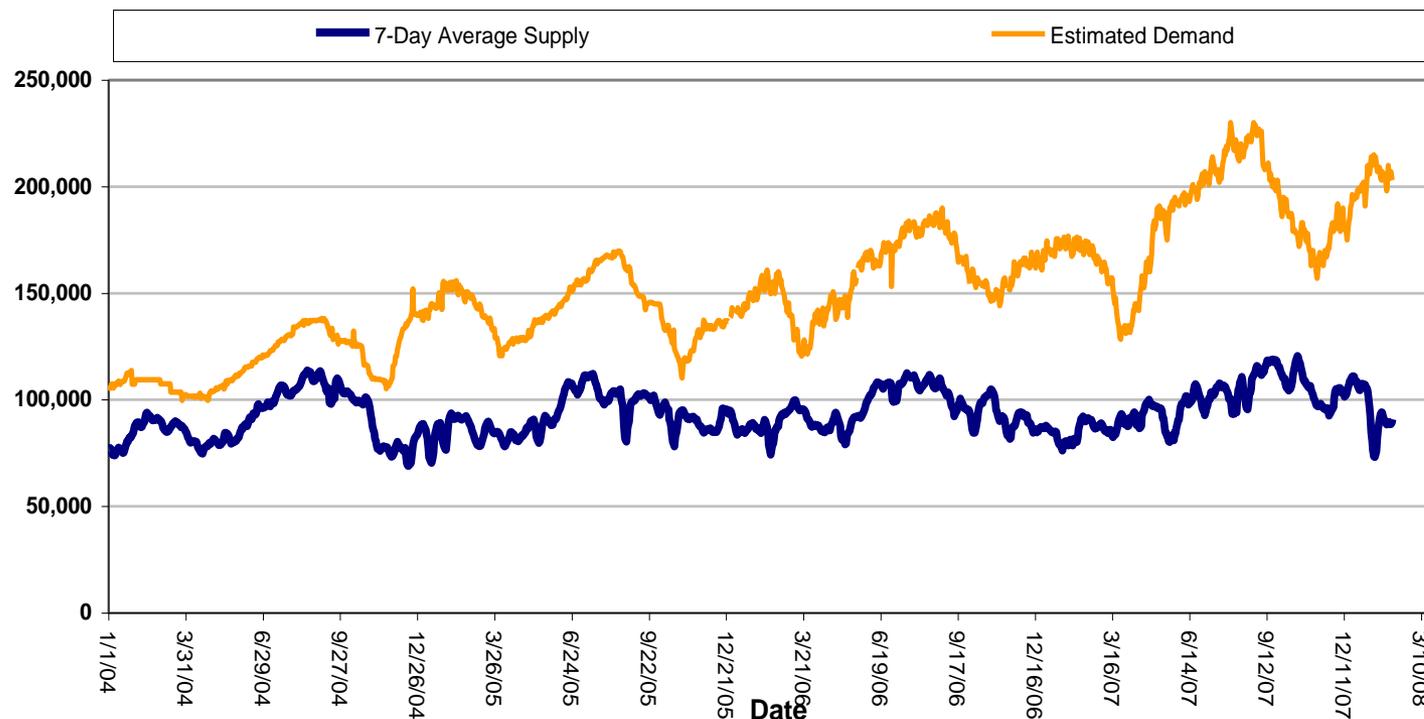
Officials Highlight Baghdad Sewage and Power Problems:

- Tahseen Sheikhly, civilian spokesman for the Baghdad security plan, delivered an assessment of Baghdad services recently. “Sewage, water, and electricity are our three main problems,” said Sheikhly. According to Sheikhly, of the three Baghdad sewage treatment plants, one is out of commission, one is functioning at a diminished capacity, and a pipe blockage at the third is causing a large “lake” of sewage. Additionally, many neighborhoods are not receiving adequate supplies of water due to the age and disrepair of existing water pipes and pumps. Sheikhly added that the Baghdad security plan has allowed for the restoration of some services and that many problems date back to the Hussein regime when basic infrastructure was neglected.
- Brigadier General Jeffrey Dorko of the U.S. GRD stated that demand for electricity would be more than supply for several years due to damage to Iraqi power stations, coupled with increasing demand. Demand is increasing, according to Dorko, due to the improving security situation and the resulting increase in electrical appliance purchases by the public. When asked if the current power situation could take a decade to fix, Dorko responded that he did not think that it would. BG Dorko further stated that Baghdad has 21 new health clinics and that nationwide 1,885 new schools have been constructed and 1,604 refurbished.



ECONOMIC – Electricity

Daily Electricity Supplied and Estimated Demand in Iraq Since January 2004

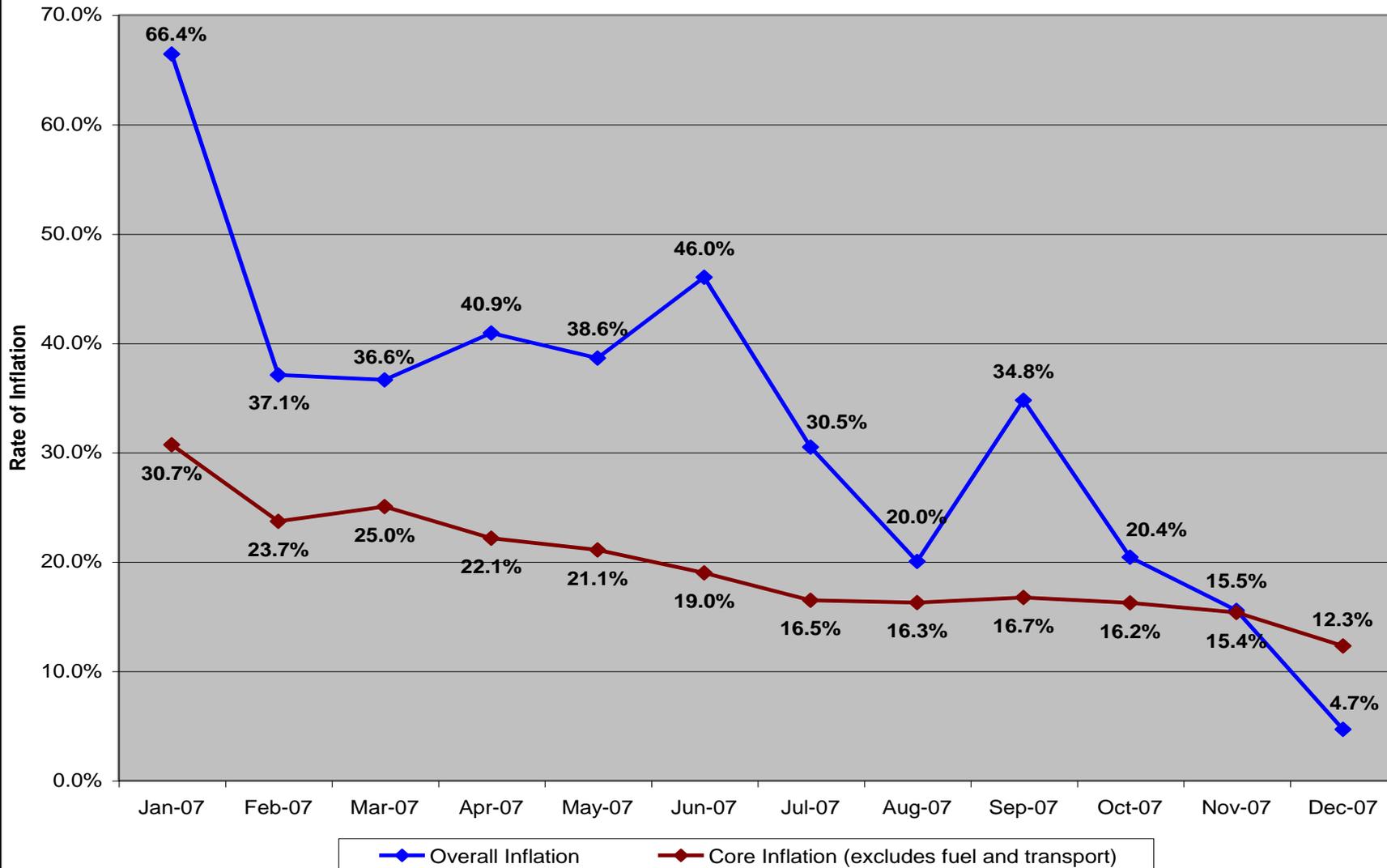


- For January 30-February 5, daily electricity demand was 18% above the same period last year. Daily supply from the grid was 3% above the year-earlier period and met 44% of demand, compared with 51% for the year-earlier period.
- For January 30-February 5, average hours of power via the electricity grid after meeting demand from essential services: Baghdad 6.7 and nationwide 8.5. Year-ago levels were Baghdad 5.4 and nationwide 9.0.



ECONOMIC – Financial Indicators

Year-on-Year Inflation



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ECONOMIC – Financial Indicators

Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
Iraqi Commercial Bond Sales				
Price (USD)	\$67.60	\$66.89	\$66.76	\$62.82
Yield	9.43%	9.54%	9.56%	10.16%
Central Bank's USD Currency Auction				
USD Sold	N/A	\$77,911,250	\$107,435,278	\$66,957,492
NID Exchange Rate	N/A	\$1,213	\$1,214	\$1,254.00
Total Employed by USG Programs				
	95,609	93,814	111,922	N/A



ECONOMIC - Iraq Relief and Reconstruction Fund (IRRF) 1 and 2

Sector	Allocated	Un-allocated	Committed			Obligated			Disbursed		
			Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change
Security and Law Enforcement	\$4,985	\$20	\$4,961	\$4,961	\$0	\$4,961	\$4,961	\$0	\$4,856	\$4,856	\$0
Justice, Public Safety and Civil Society	\$2,264	\$44	\$2,253	\$2,253	\$0	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$0	\$2,145	\$2,145	\$0
Electricity Sector	\$4,201	\$25	\$4,068	\$4,068	\$0	\$4,048	\$4,048	\$0	\$3,735	\$3,736	\$2
Oil Infrastructure	\$1,714	\$11	\$1,614	\$1,602	-\$12	\$1,607	\$1,602	-\$5	\$1,559	\$1,559	\$0
Water Resources and Sanitation	\$2,084	\$18	\$1,983	\$1,981	-\$1	\$1,972	\$1,971	-\$1	\$1,763	\$1,770	\$7
Transportation and Communications	\$454	\$3	\$451	\$451	\$0	\$451	\$451	\$0	\$399	\$399	\$0
Roads, Bridges and Construction	\$332	\$1	\$318	\$318	\$0	\$318	\$318	\$0	\$241	\$242	\$1
Health Care	\$813	\$10	\$784	\$784	\$0	\$775	\$775	\$0	\$716	\$718	\$2
Private Sector Development	\$821	\$2	\$821	\$821	\$0	\$821	\$821	\$0	\$802	\$806	\$4
Education, Refugees, Human Rights, Governance	\$426	\$10	\$423	\$423	\$0	\$423	\$423	\$0	\$394	\$395	\$1
Admin Expense (USAID, STATE)	\$213	\$0	\$210	\$210	\$0	\$210	\$210	\$0	\$210	\$210	\$0
Total	\$18,306	\$143	\$17,884	\$17,872	-\$13	\$17,835	\$17,829	-\$6	\$16,819	\$16,834	\$15
IRRF II Non-Construction	-	-	\$7,936	\$7,932	-\$3	\$7,915	\$7,911	-\$3	\$7,654	\$7,659	\$6
IRRF II Construction	-	-	\$9,429	\$9,420	-\$10	\$9,401	\$9,398	-\$3	\$8,649	\$8,659	\$9
IRRF II Overhead	-	-	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$516	\$516	\$0
IRRF I Total	\$2,475	\$0	\$2,291	\$2,291	\$0	\$2,232	\$2,232	\$0	\$2,139	\$2,139	\$0
Grand Total IRRF I & II	\$20,781	\$143	\$20,175	\$20,163	-\$13	\$20,067	\$20,061	-\$6	\$18,958	\$18,973	\$15

DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement



Iraq to Ask Jordan to Exempt Refugees from Fines:

- Jordan hosts approximately 450,000-500,000 Iraqi refugees. When leaving Jordan, illegal residents are required to pay a heavy fine, approximately \$760, for each year they resided in the country. Some Iraqi officials have charged that this practice makes it more difficult for refugees to return to Iraq. In an interview February 6, an Iraqi official reported that Iraqi Vice President Tariq al-Hashemi has told the Iraqi Embassy in Amman that he plans to “personally ask King Abdullah II to exempt the Iraqis from paying fines.”



DIPLOMATIC – Economic Engagement

UN Transfers Millions from Oil-for-Food:

- The United Nations has transferred \$161 million from the closed oil-for-food program to a development program for Iraq, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said February 4. In a letter to the Security Council, Ban said the U.N. will continue to transfer "unencumbered funds" to the Development Fund for Iraq as it continues the process of terminating the oil-for-food program, which has been found to be riddled with corruption. The program, which ran from 1996 to 2003, was aimed at easing Iraqi suffering under U.N. sanctions imposed after Saddam's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. It allowed Iraq to sell oil, provided the bulk of the proceeds were used to buy food, medicine and other humanitarian goods and pay war reparations.

EU-Iraq Agree to Closer Energy Ties:

- European Union and Iraqi officials agreed January 31 to pursue closer energy ties. EU External Relations Commissioner Benito Ferrero-Waldner said the EU was keen to see Iraq link into the Mashreq Arab pipeline project from Egypt to Jordan, near the Syrian border. The natural gas pipeline, which is still under construction, will extend through Syria to Turkey, where European customers will be able to tap into supplies from Egypt and other countries along the line. Iraqi Oil Minister Shahrastani said the GOI was forging ahead with plans to develop the Akkas gas field near the Syrian border, which could eventually ship gas into the pipeline in the next two to three years.



DIPLOMATIC – Coalition Contributors

26 Countries with forces in Iraq (including U.S.)

Albania	Denmark	Korea	Romania
Armenia	El Salvador	Latvia	Singapore
Australia	Estonia	Lithuania	Tonga
Azerbaijan	Georgia	Macedonia	Ukraine
Bosnia-Herzegovina	Japan	Moldova	United Kingdom
Bulgaria	Kazakhstan	Mongolia	
Czech Republic		Poland	

TOTAL ~ 10,604 Forces

32 Countries and NATO*
 (including the U.S.)
Support Iraqi Stability Operations

*32 includes the U.S., the 25 countries listed above, and six non-MNF-I countries: Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Turkey

Note: Fiji and New Zealand, participating as a part of the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), are not included.



CONTACT INFORMATION

- This brief draws from multiple sources. References are cited on the following pages.
- Please forward all questions and/or comments to:
NEA-I-IPOG-DL@state.gov



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Slide 15:

- Department of State, NEA-I-ECON, 202-647-9885

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- Department of State, NEA-I-ECON, 202-647-9885

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- Department of State, NEA-I-ECON, 202-647-9885

Slide 18:

- February 4 – The Australian - www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,23155378-12335,00.html

Slide 19:

- POC Department of State, NEA-I ECON, 202-647-9815
- The chart shows average daily power production in megawatt hours (MWh). 120,000 MWh goal equates to 20 hours at 6000 MW average supplied load or 24 hours at 5000 MW average supply load.
- Oil Prices are sourced from Bloomberg

Slide 20:

- Department of State, NEA-I-ECON, 202-647-9885

Slide 21:

- ITAO Weekly Status Report – February 6, 2008
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Slide 22:

- ITAO Weekly Status Report – February 6, 2008

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