

Iraq Weekly Status Report

January 9, 2008

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



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HIGHLIGHTS

- The Iraqi Red Crescent reported that 45,913 refugees returned to Iraq from Syria between mid-September and the end of 2007. (**POLITICAL, page 4**)
- President Bush met with PRT leaders about recent progress in Iraq, including the opening of the Fallujah Business Development Center in Anbar, a regional security summit in Taji, and the opening of an agricultural bank in Ramadi. (**POLITICAL, page 6**)
- MNC-I Commander, Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno announced the beginning of Operation Phantom Phoenix directed at pursuing and neutralizing remaining AQI elements in northern Iraq. (**SECURITY, page 9**)
- The UN World Food Program will provide \$126 million in nutritional assistance to displaced Iraqis through December 2008. (**ECONOMIC, page 12**)
- An explosion at the Bayji Oil Refinery, the largest in Iraq, January 7 caused 2,650 metric tons of liquefied petroleum gas to erupt, injuring dozens of workers and killing four others. (**ECONOMIC, page 13**)
- Turkish President Abdullah Gul visited the White House January 8 and discussed Iraq and the threat posed by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). (**DIPLOMATIC, page 23**)



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

Refugee Returns: Numbers Up, but Support Lacking:

- An Iraqi Red Crescent December 30, 2007 report states the 45,913 refugees returned to Iraq from Syria between mid-September and December 27. The IRC's latest figures are significantly higher than what it had reported earlier, but markedly lower than GOI figures – illustrating the difficulty of gathering reliable statistics on displacement and returns. A looming issue with refugee returns remains the provision of relief supplies and services. Iraqi Minister of Displacement and Migration Abd al-Samad Rahman Sultan stated his agency has funds to support internal returns, but none to assist refugees returning from the region.

Maliki Assures the Safety of Iraqi Christians:

- Maliki told the Vatican's ambassador to Iraq, Monsignor Francis Assisi Chullikatt, January 8 that his government is committed to the safety of Iraq's Christians. The announcement followed weekend bombings of Christian churches in Mosul, which led to a statement by Pope Benedict XVI expressing concern for Christians in Iraq. "Christians and Muslims are united in the face of terrorists and outlaws," Maliki said. Bombs also exploded outside two churches in Kirkuk January 9, injuring three people. Cardinal Emmanuel III Delly, the spiritual leader of Iraq's Catholics, said January 8 that recent attacks on churches in Baghdad and the northern city of Mosul were aimed at showing Iraq was not at peace rather than singling out Christians for persecution.



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

Amended De-Ba'ath Law Submitted to CoR for Review:

- The Law on Accountability and Justice (also known as De-Ba'athification Reform) has been amended in the Committee of De-Ba'athification and will need to be read in the CoR.

Pension Law Published in Official Gazette:

- The First Amendment to the Unified Retirement Law (a.k.a. the Pension Law) was published in the Official Gazette December 27. Publication in the Gazette is the final step toward enacting the law. The law extends coverage to former Ba'athists, which will help facilitate the implementation of De-Ba'athification reform.



POLITICAL - Provincial

President Bush Meets with PRTs:

- President Bush received an update January 8 from Iraq PRT leaders and Brigade Combat Team (BCT) Commanders on the progress they are making in Iraq. The President was joined by Vice President Cheney, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, Joint Chiefs Chairman Admiral Mike Mullen, Ambassador Ryan Crocker, and Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England, as well as PRT and BCT leaders from around Iraq. Highlights cited in the exchange included the opening of the Fallujah Business Development Center in Anbar, a regional security summit in Taji sponsored by an ePRT located in Baghdad, and the opening of an agricultural bank in Ramadi by an ePRT located in Anbar Province. President Bush commented that: "The men and women of our PRTs are serving on the front lines in the war on terror. These are courageous souls. They could be doing a lot of other things. But they chose to go to the front line where they can make a difference in world peace."

Iraqi Protests in Diyala Province:

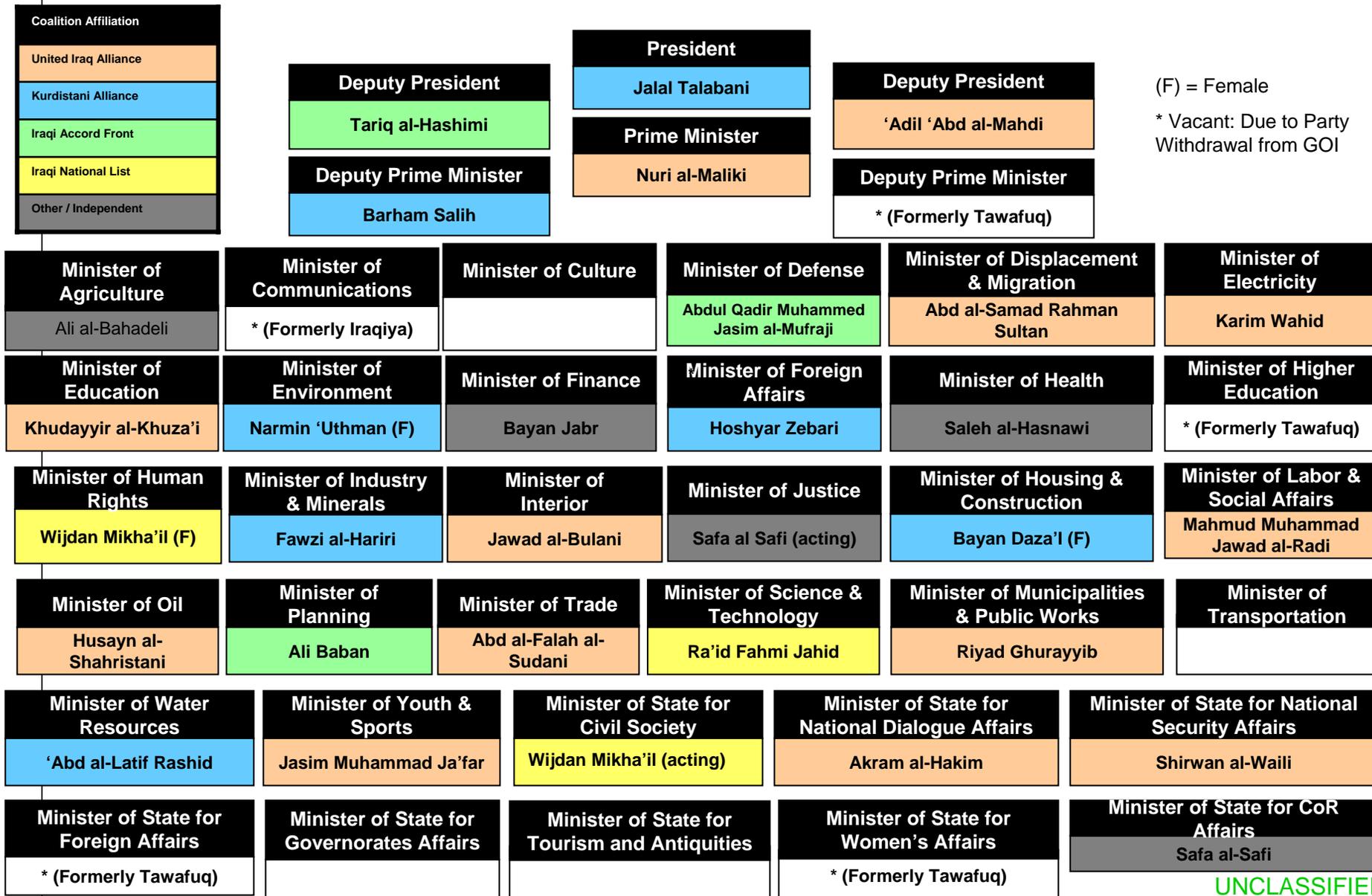
- Hundreds of protesters walked the streets of Baqubah, Muqdadia and Buhriz, angered by allegations that U.S. forces have detained at least two members of a local Awakening Council. The protests followed a decision by ISF to impose a vehicle ban January 4 in Baqubah due to continued violence in the city. Brig. Gen. Mohammed Abid Bressem, police chief of Muqdadia, has reported that two Awakening Council members were among seven people stopped on the road to Baghdad. U.S. security forces have neither confirmed nor denied the reports.

Al-Hakim Voices Support for CLCs:

- Speaking in Najaf January 3, ISCI leader Abdul Aziz al-Hakim acknowledged the role played by concerned local citizen (CLC) groups in reducing violence across Iraq, stating that ISCI believes in the "necessity of continuing with this strategy." Al-Hakim's statement of support comes against GOI remarks last month that the groups would be disbanded once the security situation calms. Al-Hakim also noted progress in Sunni-Shia reconciliation at the popular level and criticized the Iraqi government for not doing more to help displaced Iraqis return home.



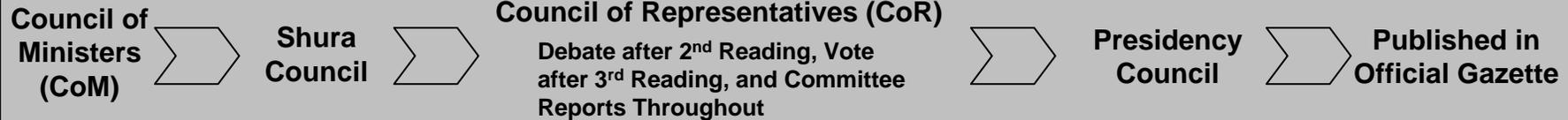
POLITICAL – Government of Iraq





POLITICAL – Key Legislation and Refugee Update

Legislative Process



De-Ba'athification Reform

The CoR Committee submitted an amended version to the CoR this week; the law had its second reading in December 2007

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 i 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) Approved by the CoM in December 2007 and sent to the CoR

Pensions Amendment

PASSED: Published in the Official Gazette in December 2007

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 FY07-FY08: 2,665



SECURITY - Situation Update

Multi-National Corps – Iraq Commences Operation Phantom Phoenix:

- Lieutenant General Ray Odierno, commander of MNC-I, announced the beginning of Operation Phantom Phoenix January 6. The operation is a series of joint Iraqi and Coalition division- and brigade-level operations to pursue and neutralize remaining al-Qaida in Iraq (AQI) and other extremist elements. U.S. commanders say AQI fighters have shifted to northern Iraq, especially Diyala and Ninewah provinces, after being chased out of Baghdad by the "surge." Phantom Phoenix will synchronize lethal and non-lethal effects to exploit recent security gains and disrupt terrorist support zones and enemy command and control. "Working closely with the Iraqi Security Forces, we will continue to pursue al-Qaida and other extremists wherever they attempt to take sanctuary," Odierno said. "Iraqi citizens continue to reject extremist elements. We are determined not to allow these brutal elements to have respite anywhere in Iraq."

30,000 Iraqis Travel Safely to Mecca for Hajj:

- Pilgrims traveling from Iraq to Mecca in the annual observance of the Hajj experienced a peaceful travel period this year with no reported violent incidents. At the conclusion of the Hajj travel period, more than 30,000 Iraqi pilgrims traveled to and from Mecca by air and ground. The Hajj plan developed by the GOI focused on two primary factors: assist pilgrims passing peaceably through Iraq to Saudi Arabia for Hajj rituals, and provide security for pilgrims in assembly areas and along transportation and transit routes. Iraqis traveled through six ports of entry during the annual pilgrimage, from December 11 through January 7. Some pilgrims traveled by air from Baghdad, Irbil, Mosul and Basrah while others moved by ground transportation from Safwan and Ara'r. In preparation for Hajj travel, the Mosul airport reopened after being closed for several years.



SECURITY - Security Transition

Besmaya "Unit Set Fielding" Facility Graduates Iraqi Army Brigade:

- The Iraqi Army's 2nd Brigade, 11th Division graduated from the Besmaya Training Facility January 2. The brigade is fully equipped and trained because of Unit Set Fielding, a process that takes an entire army brigade and gives the soldiers the equipment and training they will need. Iraqi Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji attended the event and stated, "The people of Iraq have taken money from their pockets to make sure the Iraqi Army has the weapons needed to fight." Al-Mufriji toured the Besmaya Range Complex, viewing the range's new medical facility and the equipment supplied to each brigade participating in Unit Set Fielding.

Iraqi Army and Iraqi Security Volunteers Strengthen Unity:

- Key leaders from the Iraqi Army and the local volunteer security force in Baghdad's Adhamiyah neighborhood held a summit January 3 to discuss coordination efforts. The meeting was attended by Major General Mushir, commander of the 11th Iraqi Army (IA) Division, and Colonel Riyadh al-Samarrae, the contractor in charge of the local Iraqi Security Volunteers (ISV). The meeting was called in partnership to bring unity among the groups, form a stronger relationship, and resolve their differences. The relationship between the ISV and the IA remains strong.



SECURITY - Iraqi Security Forces

Iraq Security Forces as of December 1, 2007 ^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	271,850	269,199	176,126
National Police ^g	33,861	31,835	36,504
Border Enforcement	38,000	38,972	31,431
Total MoI	343,711	340,006	244,061
Ministry of Defense (MoD) Forces ^h			
Army	186,352	153,871	173,545
Support Forces	17,369	17,252	18,208
Air Force	2,907	1,221	1,286
Navy	1,483	1,109	1,194
Total MoD	208,111	173,453	194,233
Counter Terrorism Bureau			
Special Operations	3,967	3,187	3,485
Total Iraqi Security Forces	555,789	516,646	441,779

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

UN to Provide Food Assistance to Displaced Iraqis:

- Displaced Iraqis who are unable to meet basic nutritional needs will soon receive help from the UN. The UN World Food Program will begin to operate a special program until December 2008 that provides food assistance to the most vulnerable displaced Iraqis. It is expected to assist 750,000 people inside Iraq as well as 360,000 in Syria. The emergency operation will cost \$126 million and will provide wheat flour, white beans, and vegetable oil. This aid will be directed to persons unable to take part in Iraq's Public Distribution System due to location or system delays. The 750,000 targeted recipients are out of an estimated 2.2 million displaced persons in Iraq. The Syria program will provide food rations of rice, vegetable oil and lentils. While 360,000 is the targeted goal, the program is expected to initially reach 155,000 persons.

Iraq Cell Phone Companies Bought by Kuwaiti Firm:

- Zain, a Kuwaiti cell-phone operator, bought and consolidated two Iraq cell entities, MTC Atheer and Iraqna. There are an estimated 7 million users who will be directly affected by the merger, while total Zain users will rise to approximately 50 million. Re-branding will allow Iraqi customers to use Zain's extended network while not being subjected to surcharges when using the service in selected neighboring countries. Zain expects to extend its service plans to Jordan, Bahrain, and Saudi Arabia by the summer of 2008.



ECONOMIC – Oil

Crude Oil Update:

Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$90.065/ barrel

Dated Brent at \$96.46/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$98.90/ barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$91.33/barrel

Revenue estimates:

2006: \$31.3 Billion

2007: \$34.4 Billion (ytd)

Bayji Refinery Blast:

- The Bayji Oil Refinery, the largest in Iraq, had an explosion January 7. A storage tank containing about 2,650 metric tons of liquefied petroleum gas erupted, injuring dozens of workers and killing four others. Fire-fighters spent two hours extinguishing the fire. An engineer at the refinery claimed a technical fault and not an attack caused the blast. The Bayji Refinery processes crude oil for domestic consumption for several northern governorates and the area of the Kurdistan Regional Government.



ECONOMIC – Oil

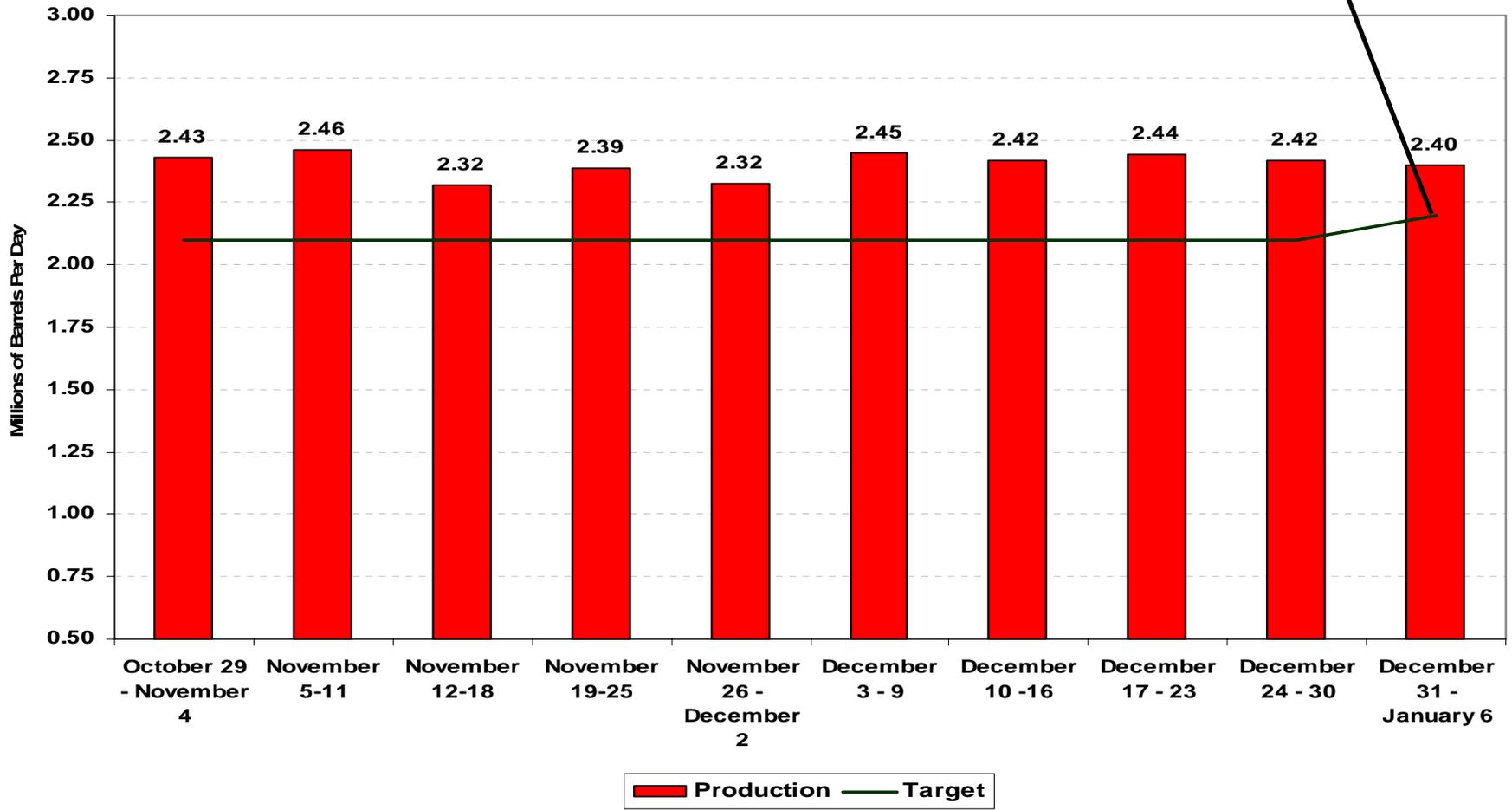
Kirkuk Oil Exports to Turkey:

- Last week exports were shutdown between Kirkuk and Ceyhan, Turkey. A source from the North Oil Company blamed the halt on the fact that Ceyhan's oil reservoirs were too full to except more Iraqi crude. The temporary delay does not appear to result from interdiction or attack. Historically, exports have been between 150,000 to 200,000 barrels per day. Since the restart, however, the average has been closer to 72,000 barrels per day.
- Iraq's State Oil Marketing Organization is predicting 400,000 barrels per day will be exported beginning in January. Oil prices have been set, by SOMO, for Iraq crude sold at Ceyhan. Iraq crude will go for \$3.75 less than the Dated Brent price to European buyers, and U.S. buyers can expect crude at \$6.00 less than the West Texas intermediate price.



ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Production

2008 Iraqi Oil Ministry Goal: 2.2 MBPD

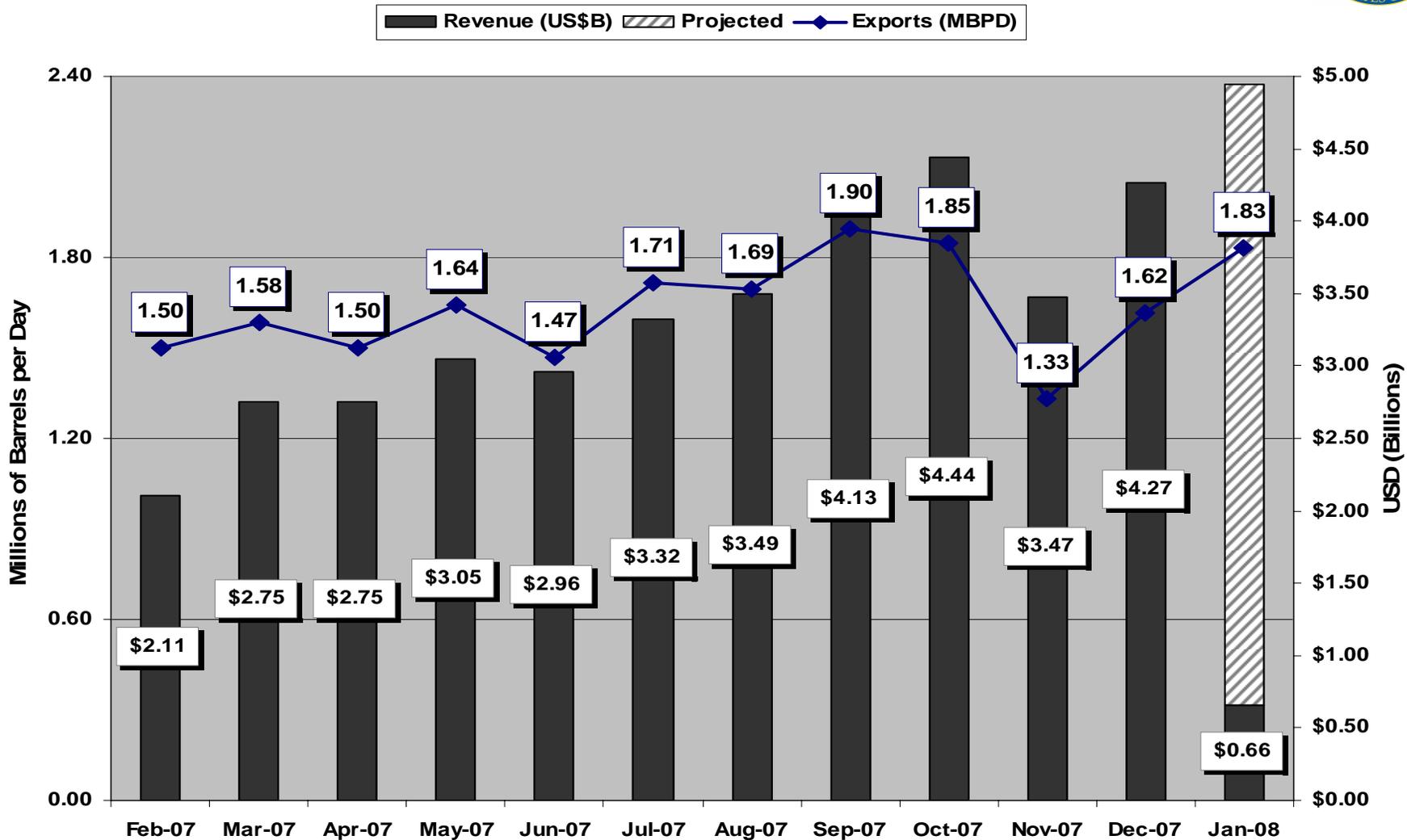


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ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Export

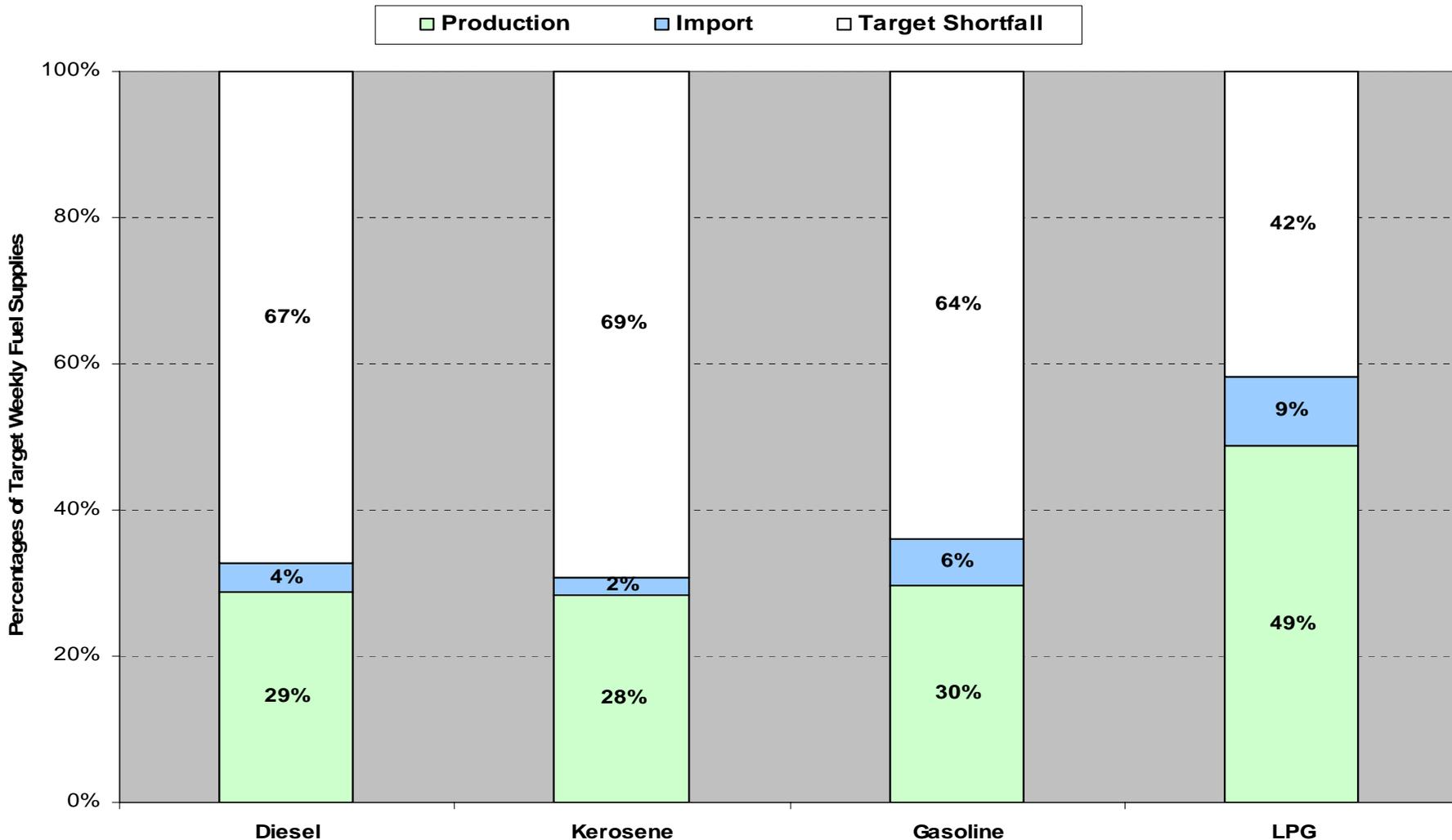
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- 2007 Revenue Estimate: \$38.7 Billion
- 2008 Revenue Estimate: \$0.7 Billion (Year to Date)



ECONOMIC – Total Critical Refined Product Supplies



Note: This is a daily average for December 31 – January 6

- Diesel: 8.0 ML supply of 24.5 ML target
- Kerosene: 4.5 ML supply of 14.6 ML target
- Gasoline: 9.7 ML supply of 26.8 ML target
- LPG: 2,971 tons supply of 5,100 tons target

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ECONOMIC – Electricity

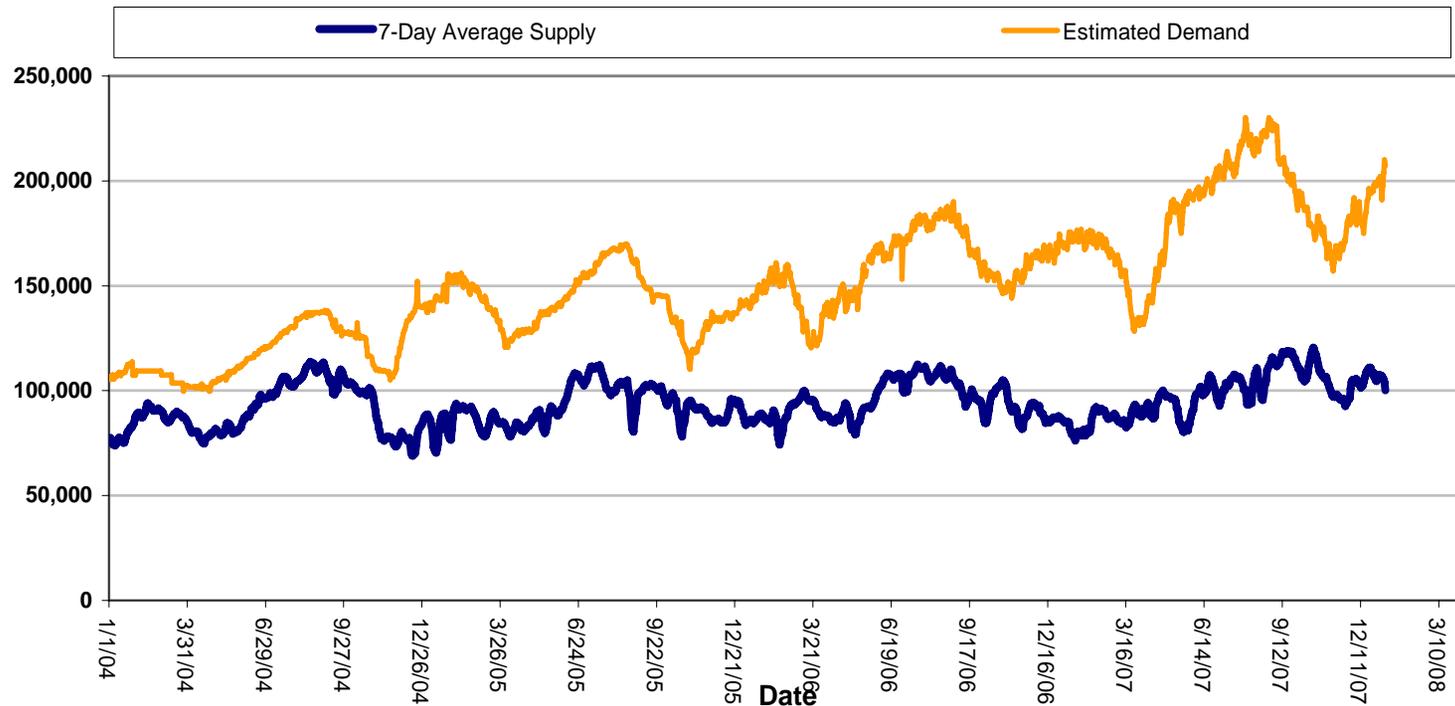
Power Disruptions:

- A technical failure in an oil field supplying gas to generators in Mosul, Kirkuk, and Bayji resulted in a reduction of electricity supplied to those areas. Ministry of Electricity spokesman Aziz al-Shimari stated that a technical failure occurred December 5 and maintenance on a power line from Turkey has further reduced the electricity supply. He placed the current reduction at about 40%. “The Iraqi network lost a total of 500 megawatts because of the Turkish-Iraqi line three days ago due to maintenance works on the Turkish side which led to the lost of about 200 megawatts.”
- Additionally, UPI reported an electrical tower suffered an attack December 5 that resulted in a loss of power between Bayji and areas west of Baghdad.



ECONOMIC – Electricity

Daily Electricity Supplied and Estimated Demand in Iraq Since January 2004

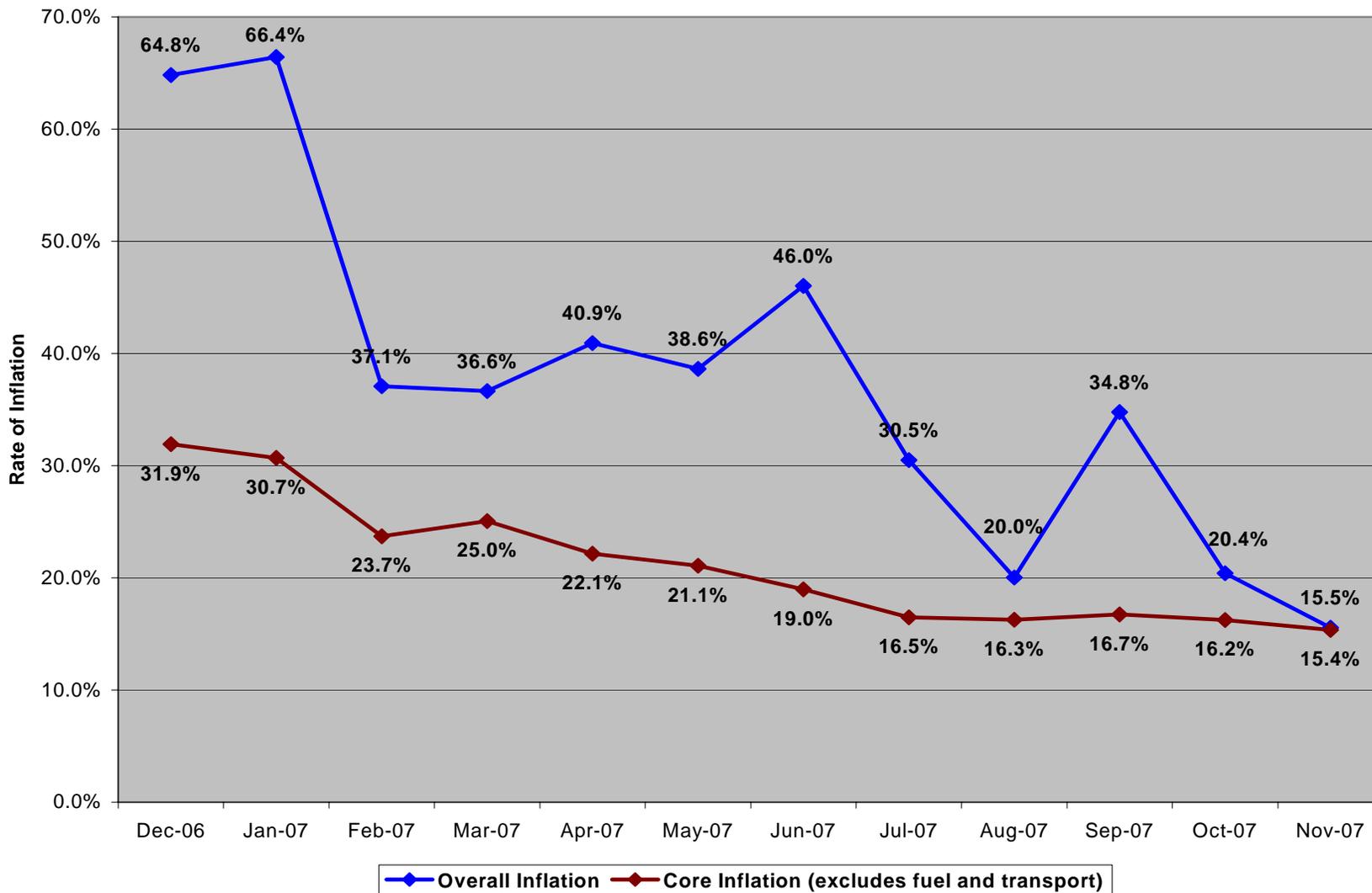


- For January 2-8, daily electricity demand was 21% above the same period last year. Average daily supply from the grid for the period was reduced by a nationwide outage January 8. Supply was 4% below the year-earlier period and met 50% of demand, unchanged from the year-earlier period.
- For January 1-7, average hours of power via the electricity grid after meeting demand from essential services: Baghdad 9.0 and nationwide 10.7 Year-ago levels were Baghdad 4.9 and nationwide 9.0.



ECONOMIC – Economic Indicators

Year-on-Year Inflation





ECONOMIC – Economic Indicators

Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
Iraqi Commercial Bond Sales				
Price (USD)	\$66.47	\$66.47	\$65.81	\$62.82
Yield	9.60%	9.60%	9.70%	10.16%
Central Bank's USD Currency Auction				
USD Sold	\$150, 408	\$49,266,667.0	\$39,299,333	\$66,957,492
NID Exchange Rate	\$1,215	\$1,216	\$1,217	\$1,254.00
Total Employed by USG Programs				
	111,976	111,922	110,481	N/A



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

Sector	Allocated	Unallocated	Committed			Obligated			Disbursed		
			Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change
Security and Law Enforcement	\$4,985	\$20	\$4,964	\$4,964	\$0	\$4,961	\$4,961	\$0	\$4,850	\$4,855	\$5
Justice, Public Safety and Civil Society	\$2,264	\$44	\$2,258	\$2,258	\$0	\$2,252	\$2,252	\$0	\$2,131	\$2,144	\$14
Electricity Sector	\$4,201	\$25	\$4,066	\$4,066	\$0	\$4,044	\$4,046	\$2	\$3,675	\$3,690	\$14
Oil Infrastructure	\$1,714	\$11	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$0	\$1,599	\$1,599	\$0	\$1,551	\$1,553	\$2
Water Resources and Sanitation	\$2,084	\$18	\$1,975	\$1,975	\$0	\$1,971	\$1,971	\$0	\$1,755	\$1,758	\$4
Transportation and Communications	\$454	\$3	\$451	\$451	\$0	\$451	\$451	\$0	\$396	\$396	\$0
Roads, Bridges and Construction	\$332	\$1	\$318	\$318	\$0	\$318	\$318	\$0	\$239	\$241	\$2
Health Care	\$813	\$10	\$791	\$791	-\$1	\$775	\$773	-\$2	\$710	\$712	\$2
Private Sector Development	\$821	\$2	\$821	\$821	\$0	\$821	\$821	\$0	\$802	\$802	\$0
Education, Refugees, Human Rights, Governance	\$426	\$10	\$421	\$421	\$0	\$421	\$421	\$0	\$390	\$392	\$2
Admin Expense (USAID, STATE)	\$213	\$0	\$210	\$210	\$0	\$210	\$210	\$0	\$208	\$208	\$0
Total	\$18,306	\$143	\$17,873	\$17,873	\$0	\$17,823	\$17,822	-\$1	\$16,706	\$16,751	\$45
IRRF II Non-Construction	-	-	\$7,932	\$7,933	\$0	\$7,914	\$7,912	-\$1	\$7,621	\$7,641	\$21
IRRF II Construction	-	-	\$9,421	\$9,421	-\$1	\$9,389	\$9,390	\$1	\$8,570	\$8,594	\$24
IRRF II Overhead	-	-	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$515	\$515	\$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	\$20,164	\$20,164	\$0	\$20,055	\$20,054	-\$1	\$18,845	\$18,890	\$45



DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement

Turkish President Gul Visits White House, Discusses PKK with President Bush:

- During his January 8 visit to the White House, Turkish President Abdullah Gul discussed Iraq and the threat posed by the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), among other things. President Bush called the PKK a "common enemy" and said that the U.S. would continue to work with Turkey to confront the PKK. He also encouraged Turkey to work towards a long-term political solution to the problem.

KRG Condemns Latest Terror Attack in Turkey:

- On January 5, KRG PM Nechirvan Barzani condemned the January 3 bomb attack in Diyarbakir, Turkey that left five people dead and 68 injured. "There is no reason or explanation that can justify this type of terrorism and we join the world in condemning this senseless act of violence," Barzani said. No group has claimed responsibility for the blast, but the Turkish Government said the attack bore the hallmarks of the PKK.



DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement

President Bush Begins Week-Long Trip to Middle East:

- President Bush began a week-long trip to the Middle East on January 8. The itinerary includes Israel, the West Bank, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. The trip provides the opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the U.S. to the security of friends and allies in the Middle East and to discuss issues of mutual concern, including the future of Iraq.

UN Launches Appeal for \$261 Million in Aid for Iraqi Refugees:

- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees launched an appeal for \$261 million to fund its humanitarian assistance efforts for displaced Iraqis in 2008. Funds will also be allocated to help resettle up to 15,000 returning families; however, the UNHCR stressed that it is neither promoting nor encouraging Iraqis to return home under current conditions of security and essential services. The U.S. has announced that it plans to contribute generously to the appeal.



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 ~ 10,314 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



NOTES AND SOURCE CITATIONS (1 of 2)

Slide 4:

- NEA Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov
- January 7 – AFP
- January 9 - Reuters

Slide 5:

- NEA Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov

Slide 6:

- January 8 - White House Press Office
- January 5 – LA Times
- NEA Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov

Slide 7:

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Slide 9:

- January 8 – MNF-I Press Release
- January 8 – http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20080108/wl_mideast_afp/iraqunrest
- January 8 – MNF-I Press Release

Slide 10:

- January 2 – MNF-I Press Release
- January 6 – MNF-I Press Release

Slide 11:

- DoD Input to Iraq Weekly Status Report January 9, 2008

Slide 12:

- January 5 - www.arabianbusiness.com/press_releases/detail/10652?ln=en
- January 7 - <http://www.arabianbusiness.com/507638-zain-re-brands-its-iraqi-operations?ln=en>



NOTES AND SOURCE CITATIONS (2 of 2)

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- Slide 13:
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- Slide 14:
- January 8 - <http://tvnz.co.nz/view/page/411366/1536937>
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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
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- January 3 - www.upi.com/International_Security/Energy/Briefing/2008/01/08/power_in_iraqs_
- Slide 19:
- POC Department of State, NEA-I ASSIST, 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:
- Information regarding the Employment Update was sourced from the ITAO Weekly Report – January 9, 2008.
 - ITAO Weekly Status Report – January 9, 2008
 - Iraqi Bond Prices sourced from Bloomberg
- Slide 22:
- ITAO Weekly Status Report – January 9, 2008
- Slide 23:
- NEA Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov
 - January 7 - http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080108/ap_on_re_eu/un_iraq_refugees
- Slide 24:
- NEA Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov
- Slide 25:
- DoD Input to Iraq Weekly Status Report January 9, 2008