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

Iraq Weekly Status Report

May 28, 2008

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



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Iraq's politicians continued to debate the provincial elections law, warning that ongoing disputes could delay provincial elections targeted for October 1. **(POLITICAL, page 4)**
- Attack levels in Iraq reached a four-year low, on par with levels in March 2004. **(SECURITY, page 9)**
- The government of Iraq is providing funding to the World Food Programme for outreach benefiting IDPs and refugees. **(ECONOMIC, page 15)**
- Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt said his country had shouldered too much of the refugee burden and urged the United States and European countries to step up and admit more Iraqis. **(DIPLOMATIC, page 25)**



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

Iraqi Security Council: Status of Forces Agreement Should Promote National Interest:

- Iraq's Political Council for National Security, headed by Iraqi President Jalal Talabani, asked Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki to ensure that the Status of Forces Agreement being negotiated between the US and Iraq promote Iraq's national interest. The agreement describes the conditions for a US presence in Iraq beyond 2008, when the current UN mandate authorizing the Multi-National Force-Iraq expires. "The Political Council for National Security recommended continuing negotiations between the two sides to reach a result that is satisfactory to the people of Iraq and does not harm its interests," an Iraqi government statement said.

Iraqi Politicians Continue to Debate Provincial Elections Law:

- Iraqi politicians continue to debate the provincial elections law and warned that ongoing disputes over the bill could delay provincial elections, which will determine the governing councils within Iraq's non-regional provinces. The provincial elections are targeted for October 1 and Iraq's Independent High Electoral Commission said that an elections law must be passed by June 1 for it to be able to organize, prepare, and conduct elections by the October deadline. A delay would require the Council of Representatives to pass a separate law pushing back the election to a later date.



POLITICAL - Governance & Legislation

US NGO to Deliver Services to Refugees in Syria:

- On May 25, the International Medical Corps (IMC) launched its first primary health clinic in Syria, which will provide low-cost health care services to Iraqi refugees and low income Syrians and Palestinians. IMC is the first American non-governmental organization to sign a memorandum of understanding with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent – the organization designated by the government of Syria to coordinate international humanitarian assistance in the country.

Iraqi Parliament Holds Second Reading on UN Convention against Torture:

- The Council of Representatives (CoR), Iraq's parliamentary body, conducted a second reading of a law to ratify Iraq's participation in the UN Convention Against Torture on May 25. The law enjoys strong support in the CoR, which will vote on the law after a third reading. If approved, the law will then go to the Iraq Presidency Council for final approval.

Al-Sistani Meets with Prime Minister Maliki:

- On May 22, influential Shia cleric Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani met with Prime Minister Maliki in the city of Najaf. The Associated Press reports that Sistani has recently issued several 'fatwas,' or religious edicts, declaring that armed resistance against foreign troops in Iraq is permissible. The edicts were issued verbally and in private according to Shia officials in communication with the Associated Press. Sistani has also recently opposed disarming Muqtada Al-Sadr's Mahdi Army as demanded by Maliki, according to the same sources. An aide to Maliki said he was not aware of the fatwas.



POLITICAL - Provincial

National Workshop to Improve the Selection of Capital Investment Projects:

- With the support of USAID/Iraq's Tatweer Project, the Iraqi Ministry of Planning hosted a 2-day workshop May 18-19 to "Improve the Selection of Capital Investment Projects." The workshop was led by the Minister of Planning and his deputies and focused on the many difficulties with the process of investment project design and development, stressing in particular the need for better feasibility studies and standardized and accepted selection criteria. In addition, the conference addressed the need to clarify the respective roles of line ministries, provincial governments, the Ministry of Planning, and the Ministry of Finance in the process.



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

Hoshiyar 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)

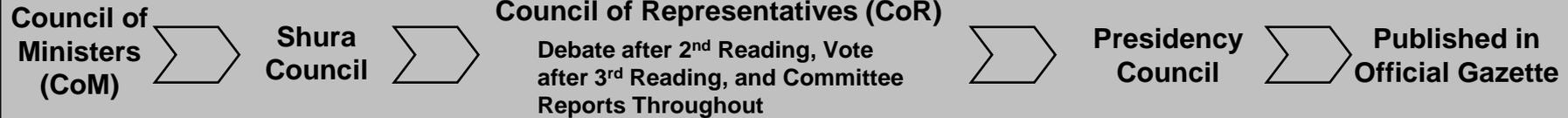
Minister of State for CoR Affairs

Safa al-Safi



POLITICAL – Key Legislation and Refugee Update

Legislative Process



Provincial Elections	The CoR is currently considering reviewing the law, which will set the legal basis and structure of provincial elections.
Hydrocarbons Package	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.
Amnesty Law	PASSED: CoR approved the law on February 13; the law was signed by the Presidency Council February 26 and was implemented March 2.
Pensions Amendment	PASSED: Published in the Official Gazette December 2007.
De-Ba'athification Reform	PASSED: Approved by default by the Presidency Council February 2008. Published in the Official Gazette in mid-February.
Provincial Powers	PASSED: CoR approved the law on February 13; the law was vetoed by the Presidency Council February 26. The veto was rescinded on March 19, allowing the law to take effect.

Refugee Update

Refugees in the region: 2-2.4 million

Internally displaced persons in Iraq: 2.4-2.7 million

Total number of Iraqi refugees admitted to the U.S. during to date in FY07-FY08: 6,164



SECURITY - Situation Update

Attack Levels Reach Four-Year Low:

- Attack levels in Iraq have reached a four-year low, according to US and Iraqi officials. “The number of security incidents in Iraq last week was the lowest in over four years,” with the trend seeming to continue, according to General Petraeus. Weekly attacks in Iraq are at March 2004 levels, when there were about 300 attacks a week. General Petraeus attributes the security gains to recent Iraqi government offensives in Baghdad, Basrah, and Mosul. Coalition forces have played a supporting role in each case.

Iraqi Army (IA) Maintains Presence in Sadr City:

- The IA is maintaining its presence in Sadr City, focusing on finding weapons caches and securing the area. On May 26, Iraqi soldiers uncovered several caches, including explosively-formed penetrators, rocket-propelled grenades and launchers, rifles, machine guns, ammunition, grenades, and improvised explosive devices.

Amnesty Points Encourage Citizens to Surrender Caches:

- Fear of retribution by AQI forced many residents of the Maderiyah area, 25 kilometers south of Baghdad, to hold on to weapons caches. AQI obliged residents to hide caches under threat of torture or death, but a new amnesty drop-off point allows residents to turn in those caches without fear of arrest by Coalition troops or – given improved security conditions – retaliation by AQI. Weapons are turned in daily, mainly consisting of RPGs, mortars, grenades, munitions, and rocket primers. The program has resulted in 40 caches being turned in over a period of two weeks.

SECURITY – Security Transition



Ministry of Interior (MOI) Receives Police Vehicles:

- The MOI has received over 2,000 police vehicles this year, which it purchased from US stocks through the Foreign Military Sales program. A shipment of pickup trucks received May 24 brings the total to 2,054. The vehicles are sent to police stations or other MOI directorates; the coordination for all shipments and receipts is currently being transitioned to the MOI.



SECURITY - Iraqi Security Forces

Iraq Security Forces as of March 31, 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	291,497	171,312
National Police ^g	33,670	37,685	45,019
Border Enforcement	38,205	40,329	28,978
Total MoI	359,876	369,511	245,309
Ministry of Defense (MoD) Forces ^h			
Army	154,757	165,437	193,159
Support Forces	15,583	18,275	20,569
Air Force	2,907	1,409	1,501
Navy	1,893	1,288	1,415
Total MoD	175,140	186,409	216,644
Counter Terrorism Bureau			
Special Operations	4,733	3,477	3,709
Total Iraqi Security Forces	539,749	559,397	465,662

**The decrease in authorized MoD forces from the April 30 report reflects a change in a temporary GOI policy to increase front line units to 120% of authorized end strength to maintain present-for-duty totals at 100% while soldiers took leave. This change will make ISF reporting consistent with standard military personnel accounting practices in other countries and provide a clearer representation of ISF manning levels.

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 MoD strength is derived from Modified Tables of Organization and Equipment (MTOEs).



ECONOMIC – Economic & Government Capacity Update

Iraq Inflation Rises Slightly in April:

- According to the GOI's April Consumer Price Index, year-on-year core inflation (which excludes 'fuel and electricity' and 'transport and communications' prices) rose to 15.9% in April, up from 12.1% in March. At the same time, year-on-year headline inflation fell slightly, from 5.8% in March to 5.5% in April. Global food price pressures were much more apparent in April than previous months – food prices increased 13.6% for the month.

Deputy Prime Minister Seeks Debt Relief:

- Deputy Prime Minister (DPM) Barham Saleh spoke with pan-Arab daily Asharq-al-Awsat and said that the world should offer more assistance to the GOI in the form of debt relief. DPM Saleh's comments come just ahead of the first annual review of the International Compact with Iraq. The conference takes place May 29 in Stockholm, Sweden. Prominent leadership from the USG and the GOI will attend, as well as international partners in Iraq's reconstruction.



ECONOMIC – Oil

Crude Oil Update:

Price averages in world markets closed with the following prices:

Basrah Light at \$119.718/barrel

Dated Brent at \$127.894/barrel

WTI Cushing at \$130.098/barrel

Oman/Dubai at \$124.438/barrel

Revenue estimates:

2006: \$31.3 Billion

2007: \$41.0 Billion

2008: \$27.3 Billion (ytd)

GOI Repairs Baghdad Pipelines:

- Repair teams have begun work on pipeline infrastructure in an attempt to connect the Baiji oil refinery to Baghdad. These repairs will allow for the distribution of more refined products to the Iraqi people and increase the volume of crude oil available for refinement. These pipelines will allow crude oil to move from the north to Doura refinery in Baghdad, increasing the supply of refined products to the capital. The increased crude to Doura will enable the refinery to operate near capacity and meet the needs of its increased capacity expected in the future.



ECONOMIC – Oil

GOI Replaces Oil Officials:

- The GOI has made strategic changes in the state-owned oil companies in southern Iraq. It has replaced the head of the South Oil Company, the South Gas Company, and the Iraqi Oil Tankers Company. Anonymous local officials claim that the GOI made these moves in an attempt to weaken the Fadhila party, a powerful Shia faction. The officials also say that the replacements are tied to Prime Minister Maliki's Dawa Party. The moves have not been limited to the oil sector, as the head of the Basrah airport has also been replaced. Fadhila formally withdrew from the United Iraqi Alliance, a coalition of Shia parties, in 2006 when its request for the Ministry of Oil was denied. It has, however, maintained considerable influence in the South. The Basrah Provincial Council is protesting the changes, saying it was not consulted prior to the moves.



ECONOMIC – Essential Services

GOI Funding World Food Programme Support:

- The GOI is providing funds to the World Food Programme (WFP) to aid the organization's outreach to displaced Iraqis. The GOI has provided \$40 million in funding to the WFP for a program, begun in early 2008, that focuses on 1.2 million Iraqis displaced within Iraq and in neighboring Syria. The portion of the program focused on those displaced in Iraq is now 85% funded. Many displaced Iraqis that cannot take part in the government's food distribution program because they are not currently living in the area where they registered will be able to take part in the WFP initiative.

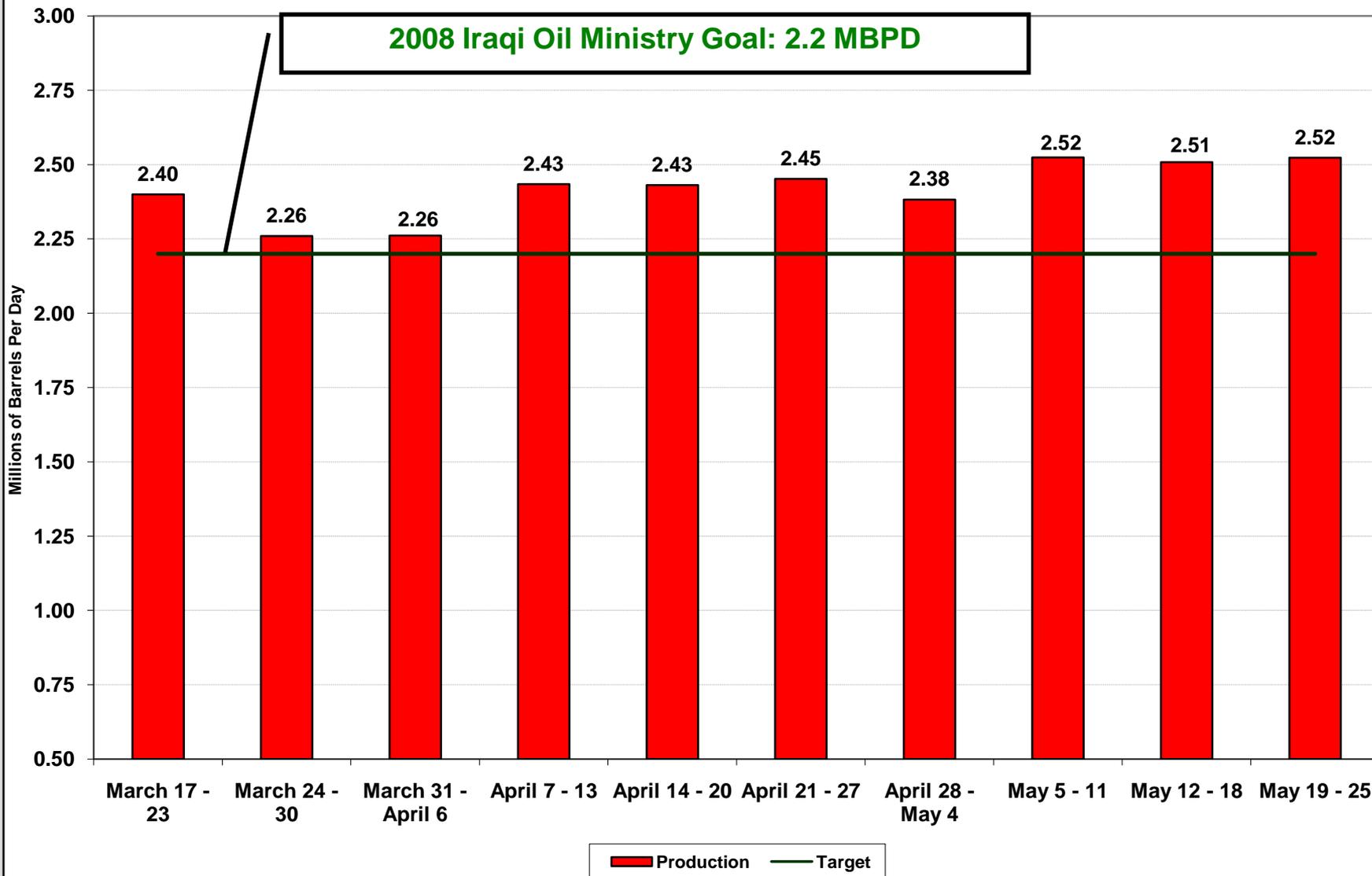
GOI Ministries to Collaborate on Planning:

- The GOI Ministries of Oil and Electricity have agreed to conduct joint expert level strategic planning workshops. The sessions will provide an opportunity for ministry staff to tackle "real life" obstacles by working together to overcome stumbling blocks to essential services energy project implementation. The joint workshop will address specific requests from the ministries, provide hands-on mentoring support on actual business cases and resolve problems that hinder budget execution. This workshop is a first step toward collaborative energy planning between the two ministries.



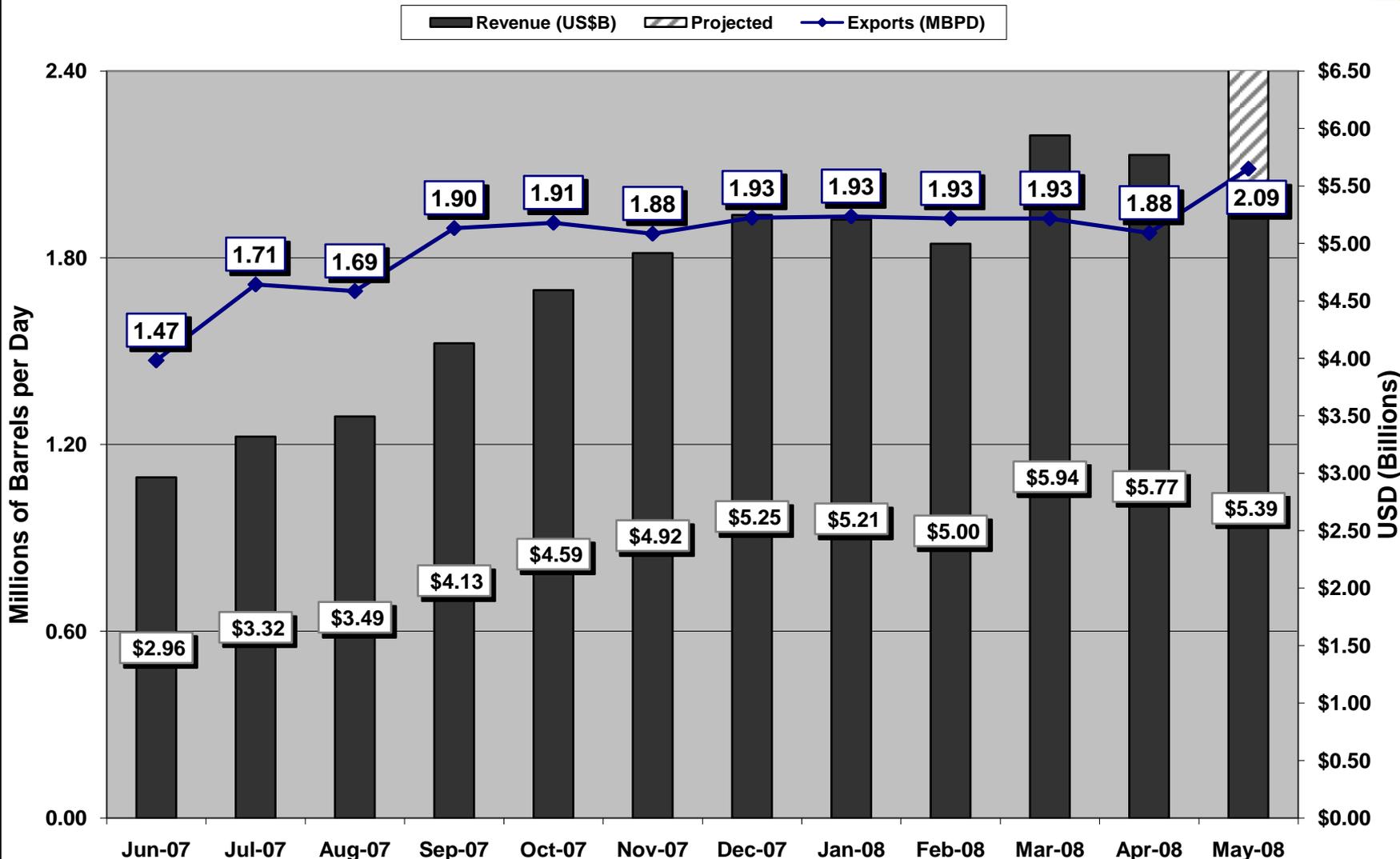
ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Production

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ECONOMIC – Crude Oil Export

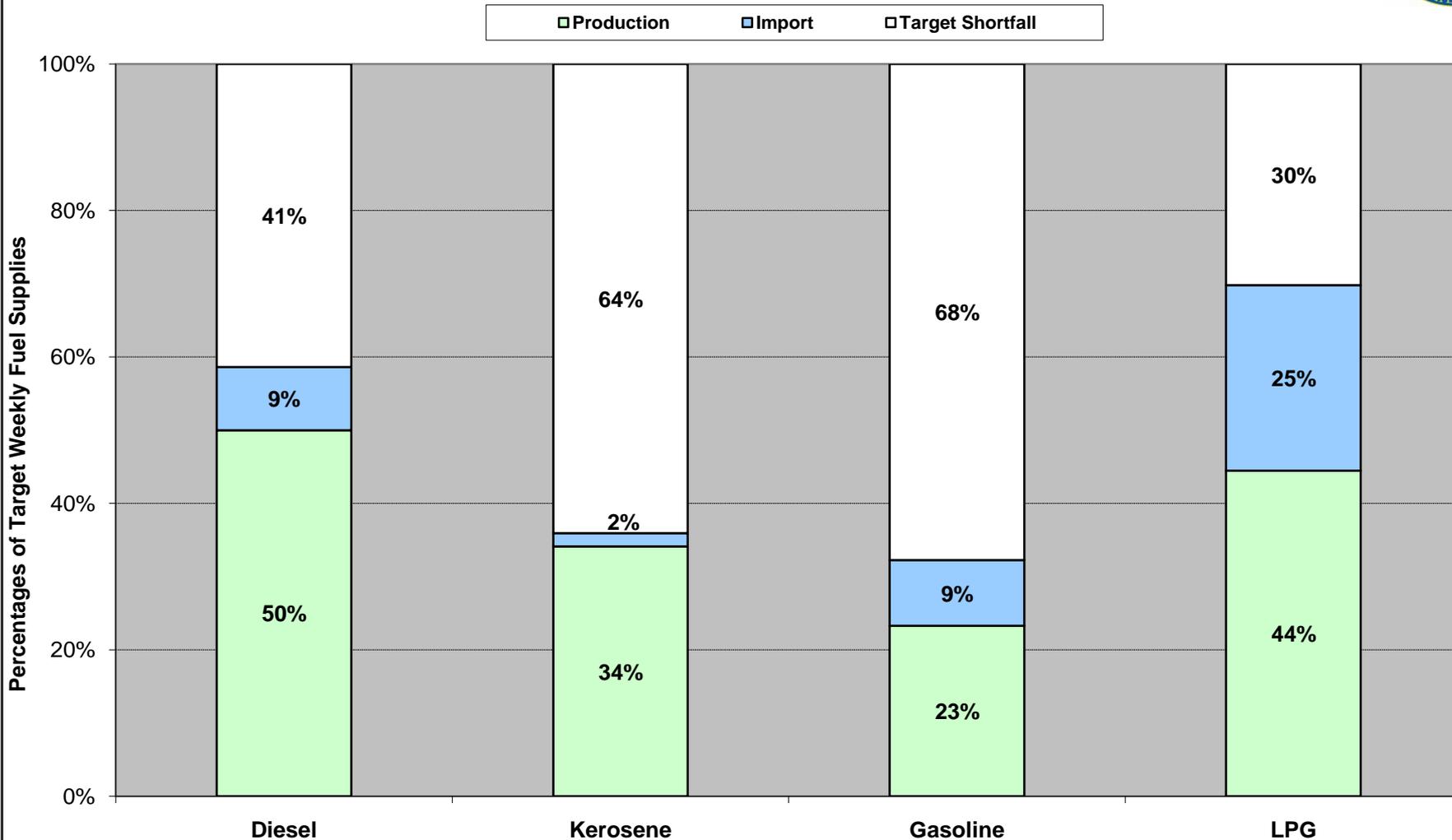


- 2006 Revenue Estimate: \$31.3 Billion
- 2007 Revenue Estimate: \$41.0 Billion
- 2008 Revenue Estimate: \$27.3 Billion (ytd)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE



ECONOMIC – Total Critical Refined Product Supplies



Note: This is a daily average for May 19 – 25

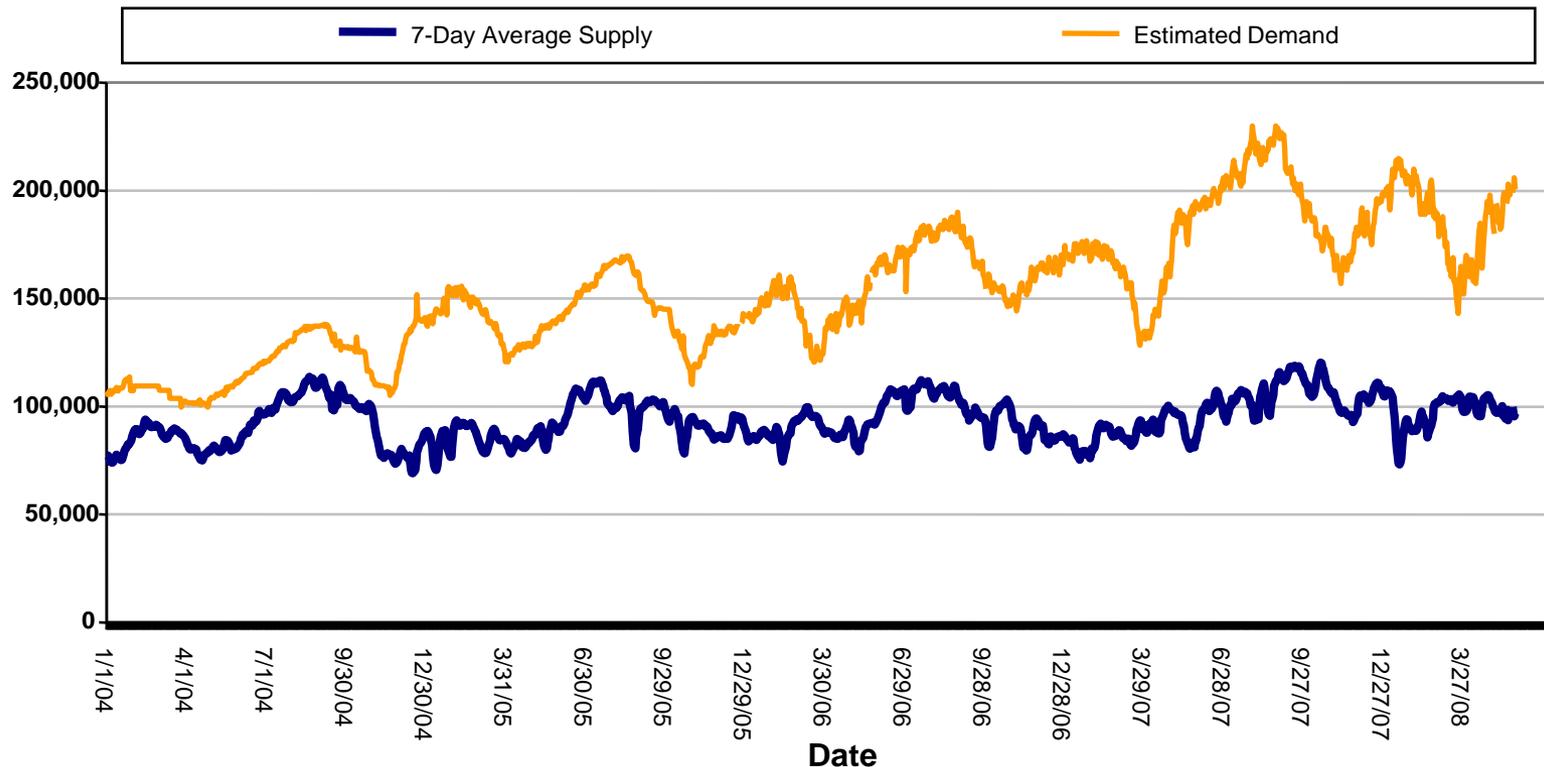
- Diesel: 14.7 ML supply of 24.5 ML target
- Kerosene: 3.4 ML supply of 14.6 ML target
- Gasoline: 9.0 ML supply of 26.8 ML target
- LPG: 3,830 tons supply of 5,100 tons target

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ECONOMIC – Electricity

Daily Electricity Supplied and Estimated Demand in Iraq Since January 2004

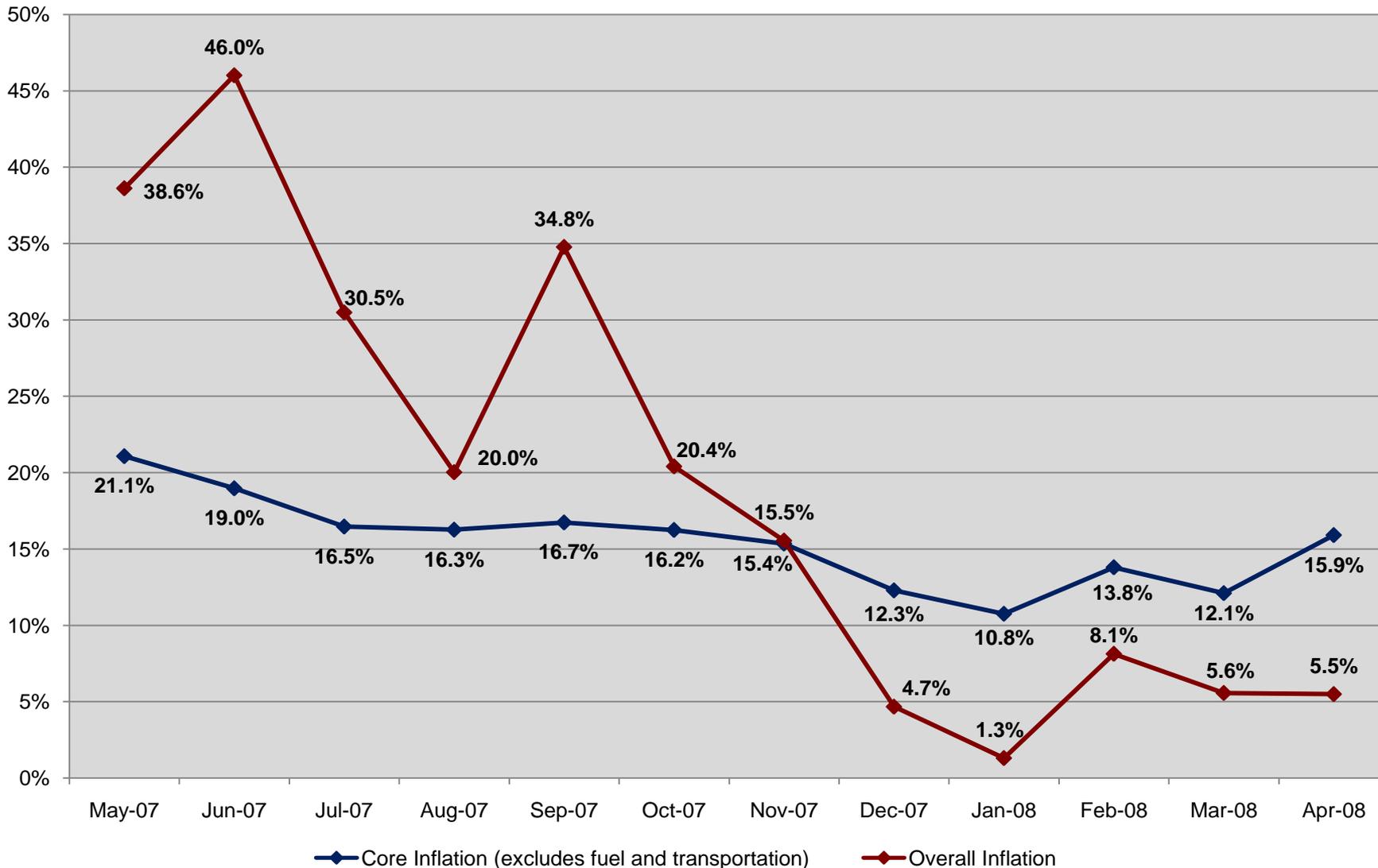


- Daily electricity demand May 20-26 was 5% above the same period last year. Daily supply from the grid was 14% above the year-earlier period and met 48% of demand, compared with 43% for the year-earlier period.
- For May 20-26, average hours of power from the grid after meeting demand from essential services were Baghdad: 7.1 and national 10.0. Year-ago levels were Baghdad 3.6 and national 9.3.



ECONOMIC – Economic Indicators

Year-on-Year Inflation



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ECONOMIC – Economic Indicators

Economic Indicator	This Week	Last Week	Last Month	Last Year
Iraqi Commercial Bond Sales				
Price (USD)	\$73.10	\$70.78	\$70.44	\$62.82
Yield	8.67%	9.00%	9.04%	10.16%
Central Bank's USD Currency Auction				
USD Sold	\$73,322,000	\$88,844,000	\$100,056,190	\$66,957,492
NID Exchange Rate	\$1,199	\$1,200	\$1,204	\$1,254.00
Total Employed by USG Programs				
	132,169	132,169	117,699	N/A



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

Sector\Status			Committed			Obligated			Disbursed		
	Allocated	Un-allocated	Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change	Last Week	Current	Change
(Millions of USD)											
Security and Law	\$4,967	\$11	\$4,946	\$4,946	\$0	\$4,946	\$4,946	\$0	\$4,864	\$4,864	\$0
Justice and Civil Society	\$2,304	\$15	\$2,262	\$2,262	\$0	\$2,257	\$2,256	\$0	\$2,171	\$2,171	\$0
Electricity Sector	\$4,188	\$25	\$4,069	\$4,068	-\$1	\$4,055	\$4,054	-\$1	\$3,837	\$3,844	\$7
Oil Infrastructure	\$1,718	\$7	\$1,601	\$1,601	\$0	\$1,597	\$1,600	\$3	\$1,576	\$1,579	\$3
Water and Sanitation	\$2,062	\$23	\$1,978	\$1,973	-\$6	\$1,947	\$1,946	\$0	\$1,809	\$1,811	\$2
Transportation and Comm\	\$462	\$2	\$458	\$458	\$0	\$458	\$458	\$0	\$412	\$412	\$0
Roads, Bridges and Const\	\$324	\$4	\$317	\$315	-\$2	\$317	\$315	-\$2	\$252	\$252	\$0
Health Care	\$810	\$9	\$787	\$787	\$0	\$777	\$777	\$0	\$733	\$733	\$0
Private Sector Development	\$838	\$1	\$820	\$820	\$0	\$820	\$820	\$0	\$814	\$814	\$0
Edu\, Refugees, Human Rights	\$460	\$0	\$431	\$431	\$0	\$431	\$431	\$0	\$407	\$407	\$0
Admin Expense (USAID,DoS)	\$220	\$0	\$218	\$218	\$0	\$218	\$218	\$0	\$208	\$208	\$0
Total IRRF II	\$18,352	\$97	\$17,887	\$17,879	-\$8	\$17,821	\$17,821	\$0	\$17,081	\$17,094	\$12
IRRF II Non-Construction	-	-	\$7,959	\$7,960	\$0	\$7,945	\$7,945	\$0	\$7,725	\$7,727	\$1
IRRF II Construction	-	-	\$9,408	\$9,399	-\$9	\$9,357	\$9,356	\$0	\$8,839	\$8,850	\$11
IRRF II Overhead	-	-	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$520	\$520	\$0	\$517	\$517	\$0
Total IRRF I	\$2,475	\$0	\$2,291	\$2,291	\$0	\$2,232	\$2,232	\$0	\$2,139	\$2,139	\$0
Grand Total IRRF I & II	\$20,827	\$97	\$20,178	\$20,170	-\$8	\$20,053	\$20,053	\$0	\$19,220	\$19,233	\$12

DIPLOMATIC – Economic Engagement



IRRFI-Donors Visit to Dhi Qar:

- The Italian Co-Chair of the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRRFI) hosted a donors site visit to Dhi Qar May 18-19. The Italian-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) hosted US, Danish, Japanese, and EU donor representatives as well as UN agency implementers. Participants were able to meet the Dhi Qar governor, Police Chief, Army Division Commander, Provincial Council members, and local NGOs at events organized by the PRT. Participants focused on ways to improve donor coordination, urged UN agencies to relocate to Baghdad from Amman, Jordan, and emphasized co-financing of development activities.



DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement

UK Defense Secretary Visits Basrah:

- UK Defense Secretary, Des Browne, made a surprise visit to Basrah May 22. He toured the city center for nearly an hour, where he drank tea in a café and chatted with locals stating that “it was clear to everyone that Basrah is a transformed city.” He praised both the British military and the Iraqi Army for the successes they have achieved saying he “felt an enormous sense of pride in what the Iraqi forces have achieved with our help.” Browne also said it was now time to consolidate gains made by pushing forward on reconstruction, good governance and economic development.

Syria Seizes Stolen Iraqi Artifacts from Smuggler:

- Syria seized 40 stolen Iraqi artifacts from a smuggler May 21 and promised to return the rare glassware and clay tools. The artifacts were discovered at the al-Tanaf border crossing between Syria and Iraq. It was the third smuggling attempt broken up by Syrian authorities in less than two months. The suspect, an Iraqi, was arrested.



DIPLOMATIC – Political Engagement

Sweden Urges US and EU to Admit More Iraqi Refugees:

- In an interview in advance of the May 29 International Compact with Iraq meeting in Stockholm, Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt said his country had shouldered too much of the refugee burden and urged the United States and European countries to step up and admit more Iraqis. Reinfeldt said: “Sweden has done very much of the job and less has been done by others, and I think that basically that’s wrong.” Noting that Sweden has taken in some 40,000 Iraqis since 2003, in comparison to just over 1,600 by the US, Reinfeldt added, “I think it is [fair] to say they [Washington] should take their responsibility in this circumstance” and that the “EU has said that we should have [a] common asylum system already by 2010 ... That needs to be shown with more even burden-sharing already.”



DIPLOMATIC – Coalition Contributors

25 Countries with forces in Iraq (including US)

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

TOTAL ~ 9,907 Forces

31 Countries and NATO*
 (including the US)
Support Iraqi Stability Operations

*31 includes the US, 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)

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- US Department of State, May 25
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Slide 6:

- Department of State, NEA/I Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov

Slide 7:

- Department of State, NEA/I Political Section, NEA-I-POL-DL@state.gov

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Slide 14:

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- US Embassy Baghdad, May 20

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Slide 17:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 18:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 19:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov
- 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.

Slide 20:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov

Slide 21:

- Department of State, NEA/I Economic/Assistance Section, NEA-I-ECON-DL@state.gov
- Iraqi Bond Prices sourced from Bloomberg

Slide 22:

- ITAO Weekly Status Report, May 29, 2008

Slide 23

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- AP: http://www.bulletinnews.com/state/index_main.aspx?d=080522&doctype=2&s=46

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- AP, May 28: http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/S/SWEDEN_IRAQI_REFUGEES?SITE=CAANR&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

Slide 26:

- DoD Input to Iraq Weekly Status Report, May 28, 2008