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Iraqi Mech brigade moves toward initial ops

By U.S. Navy Journalist Joe Kane,
MSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq—The Iraqi government has announced the forming of a mechanized brigade of about 3,000 soldiers to be stood up by early next year.

The new brigade, called the Iraqi 1st Mechanized Brigade is being entirely funded, trained and equipped by the Iraqi Ministry of Defense.

“You can say it is 100 percent Iraqi,” said Brig. Gen. Mahmoud Bashar, project manager of the new brigade. “Not everything is made in Iraq but most of it is made in Iraq; the tanks and the personnel carriers and many of the tools and uniform items will come from Iraq.”

The brigade’s primary mission will be to augment the current counterinsurgency operations, in areas where a mechanized capability is required. U.S. Army Col. David Styles, 1st Mech Brigade’s project officer with Multina-



Iraqi Mechanized Brigade will eventually be upgrading their current T55 tanks to the more advanced T72 like the one pictured here. Photo courtesy of the Center for Defense Information

tional Security Transition Command – Iraq said that the unit represents Iraq’s mobile reserve of the future.

“Right now all of Iraq’s forces are light infantry units,” said Styles. “So this represents a

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NATO training forces now under Multinational command

By U.S. Army Sgt. Jared Zabaldo, MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The Multinational Security Transition Command – Iraq and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization announced the structure of the Iraqi Security Forces joint training, mentoring and equipping assistance effort, Friday, at a press conference in Brussels, Belgium.

The formal NATO commitment to the MNSTC-I mission assisting the Iraqi government to stand up a military and police security force in the country will fill gaps in the overall effort.

“What we are doing and what the NATO mission has and will do, is help Iraqis – not do it for them,” MNSTC-I Commander, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus said. “The contribution that the NATO training mission will make will be substantial.”

The agreement designates Petraeus as the “dual-hatted” commander of MNSTC-I and NATO forces in Iraq and their training mission. NATO’s role will be instructional, not placing alliance forces in offensive missions.

“We have already, for example, helped the Iraqis reestablish their military academy,” Petraeus said. “We were not able, however, to help them reestablish their staff college or their war college or however they want to conceive them. The NATO mission will take the lead in this endeavor,” he said.

Officials also said NATO will help Iraq establish a training education and doctrine command.

Royal Netherlands Air Force Maj. Gen. Karel Hilderink will serve as deputy commander of the NATO force. Ultimate force numbers for the mission have yet to be established.

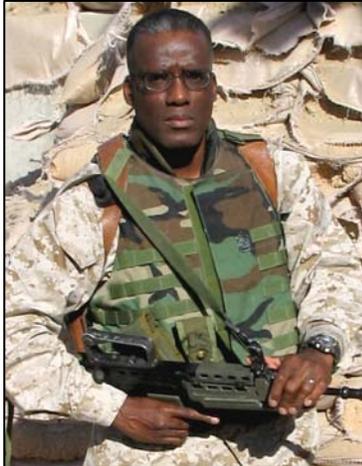
Physical Fitness



Warrior Business

A prime factor of success in combat, key to better performance at work

Sgt. Maj. Claudio Brown
MNSTC-I Command Sgt. Major



Numerous clinical studies have found many benefits from engaging in physical fitness. Among these benefits are lowering high blood pressure, managing both physical and emotional stress, and reducing the risk of heart disease. The American Heritage Steadman's Medical Dictionary defines the word fitness as; *"A stage of general mental and physical well-being."*

As members of the Coalition forces here in Iraq, we represent our Armed Services with pride and honor, and we believe in our warrior standards and ethos. Adhering to our warrior ethos requires us to be physically fit.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), obesity is increasing worldwide and is rapidly becoming the world's biggest health problem. Obesity may soon undertake smoking as a serious health risk becoming the leading preventable cause of death for Americans. In the United States, 58 million adults are overweight; 40 million are obese and three million suffer from life threatening obesity. Furthermore, eight out of 10 adults over the age of 25 are overweight. In addition, there has been a 76 percent increase in type II diabetes (adult onset) in the United States in the past 10 years.

Being overweight and out of shape can have long-term detrimental effects on civilians; for military personnel, being in poor physical condition can be deadly. Poorly conditioned military personnel are less able to complete their assigned tasks, are slower to react, have much less stamina, and are more prone to illness and the detrimental effects of wounds than their fit counterparts.

Being fat and out of shape will make you an easier target to hit in a firefight. It will make you less able to keep up with your peers if rapid and sustained movements are necessary. It will turn you into a "drag" for the unit as a

whole, and can lead to other members of your team being wounded or killed as they try to compensate for your poor physical performance. Also, poorly conditioned troops are less likely to take aggressive action against an enemy. As the famous football coach Vince Lombardi once said, "Fatigue makes a coward of us all." The same logic applies in combat. Poorly conditioned troops are sheep; troops in good shape are lions.

Being physically fit also helps you ward off the effects of environmental conditions here in Iraq. People who are in shape are much less likely to suffer ill effects of excessive heat than those who are overweight or out of shape.

In addition, as you have seen, Iraq is a haven for insects, many of which carry diseases. While being in good physical condition will not immunize you from these illnesses, you will most likely recover faster if you are in good shape when you become infected.

One advantage of being deployed is that it provides each one of us with an opportunity to establish a physical fitness program, to achieve realistic goals, and to see improvements in work performance. The most challenging step in this process is getting started. The following are some general tips that will get you on the right path:

- Establish realistic goals to include a mission statement
- Make time to exercise (use the battle friend concept to motivate each other, it's easy to make excuses on your own).
- Stay motivated. (Working out by yourself is both dangerous and demotivating)
- Do not make excuses. The days you don't feel like working out are the days you really need it.
- Eat healthy foods. Avoid fats and processed foods if possible.
- Start out slow before pushing your limits.
- Warm up before exercise and cool down after.
- Avoid smoking.
- Combine cardio, and strength – training exercise.
- Challenge your muscles by mixing up your routine.
- Focus on exercises that benefit major muscle groups.
- Stay hydrated.

"One of the advantages of being deployed is that it provides each one of us with an opportunity to establish a physical fitness program, to achieve realistic goals, and to see the improvement of our performance at work. The most challenging step in this process is to get started."

Sgt. Maj. Brown

It is never too late to begin an exercise routine. What is vital in Iraq, proper physical conditioning, will also be important when you return home. If you are exercising regularly, keep it up, and add to your routine. If you are not exercising, start today. Being physically fit makes you a better Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine, and makes your overall quality of life better.

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unit that is able to have its own organic mobility to rapidly deploy to anywhere it's needed in Iraq.

"For instance when we had the uprising in Najaf the Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi regular army units performed magnificently," Styles said. "But they also needed a mechanized capability and thus we also had our tanks and Bradleys from the [U.S. Army] and from the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force there because the Iraqi armed forces have no mechanized capabilities right now. With this mechanized capability they will have the armored vehicles that provide their infantry and their other crews the armored protection and mobility that's often needed when you're in a higher intensity level combat."

Styles said that initially the brigade will use vehicles and equipment that belonged to the former Iraqi army including personnel carriers and tanks.

"The vehicles they have right now have not been used very much and are in pretty good condition, so with a minimal effort they are ready to be used almost immediately," Styles said. "Right now they have some MTLBs, [multi-purpose armored vehicles] which are personnel carriers that can be used in multiple situations. It's a very flexible vehicle and can have an array of various weapons system added to it. On the tank side they will be using the T55 until the government brings online its tank depot factory in Taji, at which time they will be refurbishing some T72s and then they will replace the T55s with the better tanks the T72."

Bashar said the brigade will be just the start and will represent the nucleus of what could potentially be an expanded force.

"I want it to be a division. When we complete the organization of the brigade we hope this will be the start of a whole division," Bashar said. "We are trying to build a new army, and the people are expecting many things from this army. They want peace. They know that the army is a powerful friend when used correctly."

Full strength the mechanized brigade will be about 3,000 people and

"MECH" (Continued on page 8)

Once a Marine Always a Marine!



Marines from the Multinational Security Transition Command – Iraq show their support for one of their own at Phoenix Base, Baghdad, Oct. 3. The Marines gathered in front of a HUMVEE which has an Indianapolis, Ind. police badge affixed to the front of the windshield. The memorial gold badge sticker, in the center of the picture, was created by the Fraternal Order of Police in Indianapolis and sold to raise funds for the daughter of Police Officer Timothy "Jake" Laird, an Indianapolis police officer killed in the line of duty Aug. 18 by an armed assailant. The sticker was sent to MNSTC-I by friends of Laird with a request that the Marines pose with it in a photo. Laird served in the Marines before he joined the police department. Photo by U.S. Army Capt. Steve Alvarez

Public Order Battalions begin training

By U.S. Navy Chief Journalist Joe Kane,
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD, Iraq—The newest element in the Iraqi security forces' arsenal began training last week in An Numaniyah south of Baghdad. Approximately 1,500 people were recruited to make up the first three battalions of the Iraqi Police Service's Public Order Battalions, (POB) one of two branches in the new Civil Intervention Force. The other branch of the CIF will be the Special Police Regiment, which is scheduled to begin training in November.

According to U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Greg Kleponis, program manager for the CIF, training of the POBs commenced Oct. 1 at An Numaniyah Military Base with the arrival of 1,500 candidates from which three, 400-man POBs and a 60 man command and control cell will be selected. The Civilian Police Assistance Training Team (CPATT) will train six battalions of public order police

over two consecutive six-week training blocks for a total of 2,400 personnel.

"Our responsibility is primarily to train and equip these Civil Intervention Forces like the Public Order Battalions, which will then augment the civilian police during times of crisis," Kleponis said. "These guys will be used in times of national emergencies, but they are not the emergency response unit, they are specialized for riot control and other situations like that."

Kleponis said the Iraqi Ministry of Interior plans to use the CIF to counter large scale civil disobedience and insurgency operations throughout Iraq. CIF will eventually be comprised of nine Public Order Battalions (400 personnel per Battalion) and two Special Police Regiments (600 personnel per regiment) with a light armor capability.

"The Public Order Battalions are going to be dispersed around the country in various provinces, two locations here in Baghdad and seven other

"POBs" (Continued on page 6)

Iraqi border forts strengthen security at more than 300 locations

By U.S. Navy Chief Journalist Joe Kane,
MNSTC-I Public Affairs

BAGHDAD – Iraq’s Department of Border Enforcement is beefing up its border defenses with a plan to build or reconstruct more than 300 border forts. Included in the plan is the construction of a command and control structure including 12 brigade headquarters, four sector headquarters, and the national headquarters in Baghdad.

According to officials, the Multi-national Security Transition Command – Iraq is working closely with representatives from the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in Baghdad, major subordinate command border enforcement representatives, and Iraqi Department of Border Enforcement officials to precisely identify fort locations that improve border control effectiveness. The resulting plan lays out border fort construction locations in Suly, Diyala, Wassit, Maysan, Basrah, Muthanna, Najaf, Anbar, and Ninewa provinces and directly supports the national elections by helping to stem the flow of anti-Iraqi forces, money and weapons into the country.

“Securing the border of Iraq is a complex problem,” said U.S. Air Force Major James “Monty” Greer, of the MNSTC-I engineering section. “But working closely with the Iraqi border en-

forcement and leadership from around the country has reduced that complexity. We have been able to come to agreement in every case, and ultimately will improve the situation around the border through personal relationships and cooperation.”

Funding is currently available for approximately 200 forts, with future funding for an additional 100 forts. There are 151 forts contracted for construction, 75 forts currently under construction and 41 forts already operational.

The MOI has pledged to support

in efforts as diverse as design, quality assurance, and construction, and the number is growing weekly.

In addition to the border fort construction, a project to modernize the many points of entry between Iraq and its neighbors is underway. Modernization includes the incorporation of security technology that will allow border officials to scan and screen nearly all the cargo that passes through the points of entry. This technology allows border enforcement officials to better control the flow of commerce in and out of Iraq.

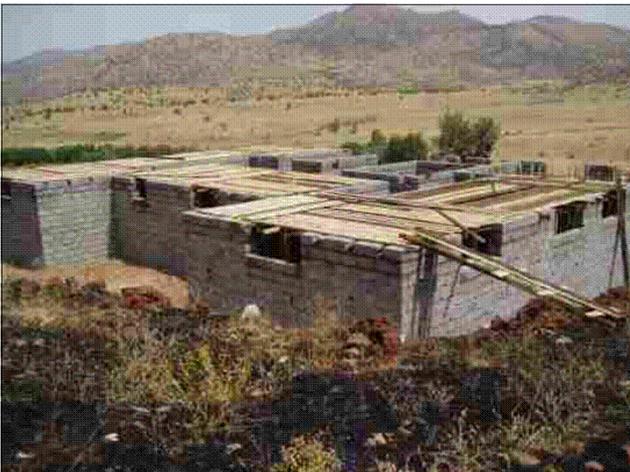
At a border enforcement graduation in Jordan last month, U.S. Army Lt. Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general, Multi-national Security Transition Command – Iraq said that the border enforcement department would grow in the coming year.

“The Ministry of Interior and our team recently completed a manpower analysis that concluded that the Department of Border Enforcement is significantly under strength for the formidable task of securing Iraq’s 3,600 kilometers of borders and its ports of entry,” Petraeus said. “Over the next year, Iraq will double the size of the border enforcement – first expanding to 24,000 and then to 32,000 members. Iraq needs the right 32,000 people for this important job. Your loyalty must be to protecting the new Iraq.”

“Over the next year, Iraq will double the size of the border enforcement – first expanding to 24,000 and then to 32,000 members. Iraq needs the right 32,000 people for this important job. Your loyalty must be to protecting the new Iraq.” - Lt. Gen. David Petraeus

forcement efforts by stationing border enforcement officers at construction sites to provide site security and to begin patrolling the border from the construction locations.

The construction team is comprised of the Air Force Center for Environmental Engineering, Army Corps of Engineers, Navy Seabees, and Parsons of Delaware, a construction company. In all some 1,500 Iraqi engineers, project managers, and construction workers from around the country are currently employed



An example of border fort renovation is shown here in the Penjwin district of Sulaymaniyah province. Before and after border fort construction photos courtesy of MNSTC-I Engineering section



An Iraqi construction worker makes his way through scaffolding inside the gymnasium at the new Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah near Baghdad Oct. 7. The refurbishment of the gym is one of the many ongoing projects to prepare the base for upcoming cadets. Photo by U.S. Navy Chief Journalist Joe Kane

Iraqi Military Academy opens at Al Rustamiyah

By U.S. Navy Chief Journalist Joe Kane, MNSTC-I Public Affairs

The Iraqi Ministry of Defense swore in 43 cadets Oct. 7, beginning a 90-day officer training course at the Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah (IMAR) near Baghdad. The cadets are former military academy students who had finished 24 months of a planned 36-month training course under the old regime.

According to U.S. Army Lt. Col. Peter Ott, Coalition Military Assistance Training Team director of education, the new Iraqi army leaders thought it would be a good idea to give the cadets the benefit of additional training before returning them to their duties.

“IMAR is doing this one three-month session then they will begin their own mission of a 12-month academy program recruiting civilians with post high school degrees,” Ott said. “They will work on a trimester system recruiting 275 [cadets] each term working up to about 750 a year. This will be a non-branch all service academy.”

The commander of IMAR a brigadier general (name withheld for security reasons) said the main goal of the academy is to create a training program to teach young officers to be lead-

ers for the new Iraqi armed forces, using what was good from the past and adding in new knowledge to improve the curriculum.

“We looked at the lessons from the old academy and kept the good things for the new academy but we got rid of all the things that we thought were not good for the new army,” he said. “They will still get basic training, along with more advanced training and everything else you would expect at a military school. We have coordination with other military academies around the world, so we are just like an academy anywhere else, but with our own Iraqi traditions and customs. Above all we ask them to be good leaders for their country.”

The syllabus for the new training regimen aims at accomplishing the following objectives:

- To develop commanders who possess the courage, will-power and temperament to take decisive action to achieve the mission in difficult and dangerous circumstances.
- To foster attitudes of integrity, commitment, self-sacrifice and mutual trust that result in standards of behavior that promotes military effectiveness.

“IMAR” (Continued on page 6)

IMAR

(Continued from page 5)

- To enable officer cadets to think and communicate as commanders and to foster a deep interest and care for soldiers under their command.
- To achieve a grounding in military doctrine and understand its significance in all forms of conflict.
- To encourage the analysis of strategic and war studies as a foundation to military thought and wisdom.
- To train cadets in the basic skills and battlefield disciplines of soldiering.

The principles to be taught throughout the training include:

- Respect for Iraqi democracy
- Respect for human rights
- Integration of all elements of society
- An intellectual and academic approach to training in addition to the military leadership training

With a curriculum including topics like; leadership, doctrine, the principles of war, marksmanship, map reading and navigation, tactics, signals/communications, management, military administration and logistics, military laws, physical training and combat fitness, organization of the state, state and international affairs, human rights and civil affairs, military history and more.

The 90-day initial course runs from October through December.



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The logo for the Iraqi Military Academy Al Rustamiyah. The academy aims to teach officer cadets principles including the respect for democracy, respect for human rights, the integration of all elements of society and an intellectual and academic approach to training in addition to the military leadership training. The academy starts the first class this month with additional classes starting in January 2005.

POBs

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locations that will be determined at a later date," Kleponis said. "Special police regiments will be stationed in Baghdad as well, but right now we are working on getting them trained and ready to go."

Kleponis said CPATT will start out training the POBs, but that job will soon be handed over to Iraqi trainers once they completed the course and have been selected for special training as instructors.

"It's a six-week course," Kleponis said. "But we'll identify individuals within the initial classes who are excelling in some way and we'll put them through specialized courses to 'train the trainers.' Our job is only to get them started and then once we get rolling we're going to put Iraqis in charge of this thing and it will be run by them."

The training regimen will focus on individual skills like weapons usage, cuffing techniques, physical apprehension restraint techniques and other basic law enforcement techniques, said Kleponis.

"Everything is cumulative," said Kleponis, "meaning that everything they learn in one area will be able to be applied in another area. In a nutshell we're going to go into operating in small units, we'll show them how to use batons, we'll show them how to use shields – how to hold them and how to restrain someone with those items - and then we'll put them all together as a unit and practice those skills as a unit, and we'll get into usage of the equipment within a larger group."

In addition to the physical training and equipment skills Kleponis said there will be intensive classroom training to familiarize the students with a new way of thinking about law enforcement.

"They'll get classes like civil ethics, what the role of police officers is, non-lethal weapons training, and the philosophy of the usage of non-lethal techniques to control a crowd;" Kleponis said.

Kleponis said most of the battalions will be recruited from the areas where they will be assigned.

The deputy commander of the Public Order Battalions, Iraqi Brig. Gen. Aziz Ibrahim, said the POBs will be a great tool in ensuring Iraqis can be free and safe.

"We are honored, all of us to be asked to serve the Iraqi people in this new unit," Ibrahim said. "In past times, demonstrations were naturally forbidden. We support the freedom of the Iraqi people to demonstrate as in all democracies. Our commitment is that they have the ability to do it safely while not losing public order."

Combined Federal Campaign kicks off

It's that time of year. Each section should identify a representative and see Capt. Monty Fontenot, coordinator for the CFC at MNSTC-I located at Phoenix Base room 14. Or email fontenotm@mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil

There are many charitable institutions to which individuals may donate. Remember, 100 percent contact is the goal.



Discovering Columbus Day Commentary

By U.S. Navy Chief Journalist
Joseph Kane



Why do we celebrate Columbus Day? Or actually, I was thinking, why *don't* we celebrate Columbus Day? Is it because people don't know how to celebrate that particular day? We don't put up Columbus trees or wake up early to see if the Columbus Bunny came during the night; and I can't remember ever seeing fireworks on Columbus Day Eve.

Even the date we observe Columbus Day is flexible - whatever Monday happens to be close is good enough. Maybe that's part of the problem. The day hasn't been defined properly and formalized in rituals and traditions well enough for us to catch the spirit of the day. Did you ever wake up on Oct. 12 and shout, "Woo hoo! Columbus Day is here!"

I have. But that's because I was tricked. Columbus Day is my birthday. When I was a kid I thought the three-day weekend was because I was born on Oct. 12. It turns out there was a universe already in existence prior to my arrival in this world.

Anyway, once I got over my disappointment at having to share *my* birthday with some Italian Sailor, who by sheer chance was around before me, I decided to find out more about Christopher Columbus and why he gets a designated day.

I learned that Columbus has been mistreated, and even misplaced by some modern historians, who say he didn't discover America since there were already people there, and that he was the bringer of genocide to the Native American population. But more often than these dubious and conflicted accounts you will hear *nothing at all* about Columbus. He's fallen out of favor and been erased from many books. Not to mention his status in popular culture. Think about when the last time you heard a talk among your friends and neighbors about the importance of Columbus Day?

I've concluded that we have lost -- or never had -- focus about what Columbus represents. It's up to us to have a re-birth of Columbus Day spirit, so here is my stab at what we should be celebrating and how it should be done.

First, Columbus Day is about the spirit of heroic achievement. We're talking about a guy who got in a boat not much bigger than an SUV and set off where no one had ever dared to go... and he did it

without a compass. If you have ever been on the ocean when you can't see land you may have an appreciation for what that means.

Second, Columbus Day represents a belief in man's ability to overcome ignorance, superstition, fear and even nature itself. Most people, including the majority of Columbus' crew, believed they were either going to fall off the edge of the earth or be eaten by giant sea monsters. Columbus knew better. He had studied astronomy and science and knew the idea of a flat earth was ridiculous. He had to keep a fake ship's log in addition to his real log so that he could show his crew they were not "too far" from land, but he proved himself correct even if he never got to his intended destination, the east coast of Asia.

And third, Columbus Day represents the value of Western civilization. Despite the problems that accompanied the initial exploration and settling of the newly discovered lands, the most important thing Europeans brought with them were the ideals of reason, freedom, science, and respect for human life. The norm in the Americas at that time was endless bloody warfare between tribes, no technology to speak of (not even the wheel) and an average lifespan of less than 35 years.

Without Columbus the freest country in the history of the world, the United States, may never have come into being. Sure, someone would have eventually found the New World, but it may have happened in a much different way and with a less desirable outcome.

To help you commemorate Columbus Day this year, here are a few suggestions. Take leave and go to Genoa, the birthplace of Columbus. Learning a little about the man who discovered the New World fits right into the "spirit of discovery" that Columbus represents. Okay, not likely, right? How about going online and ordering a book about Columbus? I recommend "The Journal of Christopher Columbus" so you can read about him in his own words; or if you want other insight there are many other books available.

As a Sailor I like to go down to the sea on Columbus Day. I like to stand at the edge of the water, smell the salt and think about how a man with no charts and nothing but his own judgment to guide him found the courage to point his boat toward the setting sun and say, "sail on." With no sea close by I guess I will set my camp chair up on a piece of sand somewhere and imagine myself at the beach, or better yet, I'll go to the palace pool (in my "free time").

If, after all my suggestions, you are still unsure how to celebrate Columbus Day this year, come find me at the pool, I'll be happy to sing a Columbus Day carol with you in celebration of the day.

*"Following the
light of the
sun, we left
the Old World
behind"*

- Christopher Columbus

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will have all the specialties of a mechanized brigade; infantry, armor, artillery, engineers and logistics sections like medical, maintenance, supply and other specialties required to run a brigade, said Styles.

“The Brigade will be built like you would build a brick house; one piece at a time. We’ll build the brigade; three thousand people over three phases. Each phase will add a thousand people,” Styles said. “The first phase we’ll activate in November with approximately a thousand people in it. The second phase, which will be the next thousand people, we will activate in the February/March time-frame. The final phase, phase three, will bring the brigade to its full structure somewhere around the May/June timeframe.”

Styles said many of the recruits are from the mechanized forces of the former Iraqi forces and will go through a three-week refresher basic training. Because the soldiers have some experience they don’t have to be taught the rudiments. The trainers will be Iraqis who have gone through the training themselves with the Iraqi training battalion, and they will come back and take the role as trainers for the brigade.

“The initial capability is small. The initial capability is a mechanized battalion and its logistic support. But what it gives them is a vision of the future,” Styles said. “This Iraqi brigade is going to be clothed in uniforms made in Iraq, operating equipment from Iraq, wearing boots made in factories in Iraq. It’s really initially very symbolic. It is a brigade that is an Iraqi idea; it is funded completely through Iraqi funds, it is going to be trained completely by Iraqi trainers and deployed completely by Iraqi orders under Iraqi leadership.”

Styles said initial operating capability should be possible by the end of January at the basic squad and platoon level.

Faces of Operation Iraqi Freedom 2

