

Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Program Helps Iraq Transition to Security Self-Reliance

BG Michael J. Terry

The U.S. Army Security Assistance Command (USASAC) is assisting the government of Iraq (GOI) as it builds security forces and moves Iraq toward self-reliance. A key element of that assistance is the sale of critical materiel and services through FMS. The FMS program is providing more than just units; it is building Iraq's capability. As a commander, a Soldier, and a U.S. citizen, few issues compare in importance to a well-equipped and trained Iraqi defense force capable of securing Iraq and allowing our Soldiers to return home.

An Iraqi gunner from the Iraqi Army's 5th Brigade, 6th Division, stands in the turret of an up-armored HMMWV during the brigade's operational environment transition of authority ceremony with the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, at Forward Operating Base Honor. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Jason Dangel.)

By partnering with USASAC, the U.S. Army Materiel Command's (AMC's) proponent for FMS, the Iraq security ministries have made significant strides toward Iraq self-reliance. The Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MOD), Ministry of Interior (MOI), and Counter-Terrorism Bureau have fully embraced the U.S. FMS program as a major component of defense strategy.

The FMS Process

In the 1960s, the U.S. FMS program replaced the earlier U.S. Grant Aid Program, known commonly as the

Military Assistance Program. FMS operated relatively unchanged from the end of the Vietnam War until Sept. 11, 2001. In the aftermath of 9/11, the program's mission changed dramatically as our military adapted to a wartime operational tempo, built coalition forces, and, eventually, outfitted new Iraqi defense and police forces.

By 2003, USASAC saw a surge in requirements to support coalition forces. The Army FMS community outfitted a complete multinational division with troops from 16 countries. USASAC, in

coordination with the entire Army security assistance community, provided uniforms, small arms, ammunition, communications gear, body armor, vehicles, and night vision equipment — all of which were obtained, delivered, and fielded in just 3 months. All requirements had one thing in common: they were urgent.

The peacetime FMS process was accelerated to meet demand. As the coalition expanded to more than 30 member nations, so did the Army's FMS support. This support ranged





Iraqi MAJ Ahmed, the General Transportation Regiment (GTR) Training Officer, talks about fuel handler training classes with BG Michael J. Lally, Commander, 3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary). The GTR is a new unit created by the Iraqi MOD for the purpose of transporting all classes of supplies throughout Iraq. (U.S. Army photo by SSG Bryant Maude.)

from providing weapons to individual Soldiers to procuring sophisticated support equipment.

Although the U.S. Army's sale of materiel to Iraq began with the purchase of equipment and services for the GOI and coalition nations using U.S. monies, the program has evolved to such a degree that equipment is now purchased by Iraq for its own MOD and MOI forces. By the middle of FY07, FMS purchases by Iraq equated to 70 percent of the U.S.

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Army sales to Iraq; purchases using the Iraqi Security Forces Fund (i.e., DOD funds) were down to 30 percent. In FY06, the MOD signed agreements for purchases totaling \$750 million, and the MOI agreed to purchases of \$169 million.

Today, sales to the Iraqi army are roughly \$3.5 billion (FY08), and that figure is expected to increase. U.S. Army FMS support has enabled Iraq security forces to expand in number, increase in quality, and establish effective organizational structures outfitted with modern U.S. equipment.

To develop and execute this capability, all requirements from the MOD and MOI are coordinated through the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I). According to its official Web site, MNSTC-I was established in FY04 under the Multi-National Force-Iraq Command "to assist the Iraqi government in the organization, training, equipping, and sustainment of Iraqi security forces and ministries capable of defeating terrorism and providing a stable environment in which representative government, individual freedom, the rule of law, and the free market economy can evolve and which, in time, will contribute to Iraq's external security and the security of the Gulf region."

Intensive Management Office (IMO)

USASAC, recognizing that expedited service is the reality for all Iraq requirements and the program value and number of cases would grow exponentially, established the IMO as the focus for Army FMS actions with MNSTC-I. The IMO Director, COL Dave Dornblaser, served in MNSTC-I as the USASAC liaison officer (LNO) before his current position with the IMO. His experience in Iraq has been immensely helpful because he can provide real-world insight into the needs of FMS customers in MNSTC-I and the GOI. "Our personnel are energized to look for innovative ways to ensure success," said Dornblaser. "They have the required sense of urgency and realize the importance of their efforts."

This focused effort by the IMO has yielded positive results. FMS case processing for Iraq averaged 62 days in FY08. This almost cut in half the standard case processing goal of 120 days established by the DOD security

assistance community. This is a truly extraordinary feat, considering the complexity of some cases.

The Army has applied innovative measures when executing the Iraq program. One example was the transfer of M1114 up-armored High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) to the GOI. In December 2007, the Army determined that the most cost-effective way to rapidly equip the Iraqi security forces with armored maneuver capability was to repair and transfer displaced HMMWVs. As the U.S. ramped up production and fielding of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles in Iraq, the Army initiated a program to refurbish the HMMWVs to fully mission-capable-complete status for direct transfer to Iraqi forces.

This program satisfied an urgent Iraqi requirement and avoided a major retrograde and the expense of returning the vehicles to the U.S. As of October 2008, 4,244 HMMWVs had been transferred to MNSTC-I; 2,999 of those had been transferred to Iraq ownership. The remaining 4,256 vehicles (for a total of 8,500) will be refurbished upon completion of the original case.

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Most FMS case requests by the Iraq security ministries are allocated as either Iraq security force generation (Force-Gen) or Iraq security force modernization (ForceMod). Force-Gen requires rapid case response, acquisition, and delivery of basic items,

such as pickup trucks, security vehicles, rifles, side arms, uniforms, and tents. Sustainment planning is



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Iraqi MOD Jawad al-Bolani and MNSTC-I CG LTG Frank Helmick cut the ribbon at the opening of an Iraqi MOI weapon card/identification card facility. (MNSTC-I photo by William Lovelady.)

Life-Cycle Management

USASAC ultimately has life-cycle management responsibility for all the Army FMS cases for materiel and services, from the time the requirement is identified through completion. The USASAC IMO is the conduit to the AMC Life Cycle Management Commands (LCMCs) that execute materiel acquisitions. The FMS program would not be successful without the direct link to the LCMCs' program managers and security assistance management directorates. The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Defense Exports and Cooperation (DASA (DE&C)), the Army organization that oversees the development, coordination, and implementation of Army security cooperation programs, has also been instrumental in expediting actions.

In Iraq, USASAC's LNOs Robinson and Josephine Polanco are embedded with MNSTC-I to provide the technical capability to quickly and effectively coordinate requirements with everyone in the process. They work with the IMO to enhance the Army's ability to initiate cases; obtain accurate price and availability data; and coordinate with the DASA(DE&C) to gain required security releases, policy, and technical clearances — all of which result in the delivery of quality FMS cases for GOI acceptance and implementation.

paramount for the eventual transfer of Iraq security to the GOI.

ForceMod is more heavily concentrated on weapon systems. Requirements are designed for future expansion capability through intense consultation among the Iraq security ministries, MNSTC-I, and the Army FMS program. Tanks, armed helicopters, tactical radio and communications systems, mortar systems, and other modern U.S. equipment will be vital to Iraq's self-sufficiency. According to COL Harvey Robinson, USASAC LNO, "The FMS equipment is part of the unit set fielding process. The process is building an entire Army brigade and giving Iraqi soldiers the equipment and training they need to fight."

Iraq's large-scale use of FMS to equip and train a fighting force benefits the U.S. national security policy. It creates long-term ties between our nations. U.S. products, services, and

weapon systems are the foundation for Iraq's reformed security forces. This becomes more important as the remainder of the original coalition partners withdraw and under the recently signed status of forces agreement between the United States and the GOI, signed Nov. 17, 2008, which reflects Iraq's capability to sustain its own security. Well into the future, the Army FMS community will remain tied to the Iraqi government as we continue to provide sustainment support for their forces.

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