Evolution of the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan

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Commanded by MG John M. Urias, the Joint Contracting Command-Iraq/Afghanistan (JCC-I/A) has established a cohesive “Joint Contracting Team” to support the Combined Joint Operational Area (CJOA) Iraq and CJOA Afghanistan.* The JCC-I/A mission is to “provide responsive operational contracting support to the Chiefs of Mission (Iraq and Afghanistan), Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) and Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan (CFC-A) to efficiently acquire vital supplies, services and construction in support of the Coalition Forces and the relief and reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan.” Though finally achieving the goal of centrally coordinating all contracting within the area of operations (AO) at the theater level, JCC-I/A has evolved by incrementally assimilating contracting organizations that were providing piecemeal support to Coalition Forces.


Here, local nationals help a U.S. Soldier offload food and supplies at a hospital. (U.S. Army file photo.)
**The Evolution**

In the beginning, there was no unity of effort with regard to contracting throughout CJOA Iraq and Afghanistan. This was especially true in the early phase of pure contingency contracting. Under the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), DOD set up early-entry contingency contracting operations in Iraq. The first agency, the Iraq Program Management Office, provided contracting support for both reconstruction and Coalition Forces as early as January 2003. By the summer of 2003, there were numerous contracting agencies operating independently of each other with little interaction and coordination between the organizations. Among these were the Coalition Joint Task Force, 24 military contracting personnel supporting 120,000 U.S. forces; the CPA's Project and Contracting Office, focusing on Iraq's reconstruction contracting effort; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, working construction and civil engineering projects; the Defense Contract Management Agency, coordinating Logistics Civil Augmentation Program support; and Special Operations contracting teams, working various missions throughout the country.

“Addressing existing and emerging contracting challenges, as assessed in the February-March 2004 time frame, could not be effectively managed without a dramatic shift in the manner in which contracting operations were organized and conducted,” wrote LTC Jack L. Cunnane in his summer 2005 article, “The Evolution of Contracting in Iraq March 2003-March 2005,” *Journal of Contract Management*.

Within 18 months, reconstruction contracting responsibilities transferred to the U.S. Department of State, Chief of Mission-Iraq. Then, in November 2004, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) Fragmentary Order (FRAGO) 09-668, Contracting and Organizational Changes, Nov. 12, 2004, created the JCC-I as a major subordinate command (MSC) of the MNF-I. The consolidation’s focus in the contracting organization and reporting relationships was to create unity of effort in providing contracting support to better leverage contracting resources and expertise for efficiency across the entire theater.

To facilitate contracting efficiency, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology Claude M. Bolton Jr., having already been designated the DOD Executive Agent for contracting in Iraq, established the Commander JCC-I as the Head of Contracting Activity (HCA) for Iraq reconstruction and Coalition Forces contracting support.

JCC-I was established Jan. 29, 2005, and immediately set out to build the then nascent command and integrate itself as an MSC under MNF-I. In July 2005, CENTCOM issued FRAGO 09-790 Contracting and Organizational Changes, July 2, 2005, bringing contracting in the CJOA Afghanistan under JCC-I/A HCA authority. JCC-I/A has continued to make a tremendous impact throughout both theaters of operation by providing diverse contracting support to many customers. The success of
JCC-I/A’s diversity can be attributed to the two Principal Assistants Responsible for Contracting-Forces (PARC-F) and -Reconstruction (PARC-R).

**The PARCs**

Each PARC’s fundamental responsibility is to provide operational contracting support to their respective customer base. However, each PARC’s customer base is vastly different. PARC-F supports MNF-I, Multi-National Corps-Iraq, CFC-A and Combined Joint Task Force-76-Afghanistan: the Soldiers, Marines, Airmen and Sailors on the ground fighting the fight. PARC-F also supports the Office of Security Cooperation-Afghanistan, which is responsible for training and equipping the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police. PARC-R provides contracting support to the U.S. Chief of Mission-Iraq as he provides for the relief and reconstruction of Iraq. PARC-R also provides contracting support to the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) as it rebuilds Iraq’s security forces.

PARC-R is segregated into five major sectors: Security and Justice, Facilities and Transportation, Public Works and Water Resources, Oil and Electricity. In addition to the five sectors, there are four Regional Contracting Offices (RCOs) located throughout Iraq — in Baghdad, Hillah, Kirkuk and Basra — to support local contracting requirements in each respective region. The Security and Justice sector directly supports MNSTC-I and specializes in contracting for life support services and training for Iraqi army, police service, border enforcement, and fire and emergency services. The Facilities and Transportation sector is responsible for contracts in the construction and/or repair of hospitals, healthcare clinics, Iraqi government buildings, prisons, firefighting stations, border forts, courthouse and training facilities, and warehousing and distribution of reconstruction supplies. The Public Works and Water Resources, Oil and Electricity sectors are the primary contracting entities for rebuilding and/or repairing the infrastructure within their respective areas, including water supply and distribution and wastewater treatment; oil drilling, transportation and refining; and power generation facilities, substations and installation of transmission lines.

Just one sample of the myriad contracts that have been awarded for Iraqi reconstruction with the assistance of JCC-I/A’s PARC-R is the successful IRR from Umm Qasr to Baghdad Railroad Central. JCC-I/A contracted with...
IRR at a cost of $210,000 per one-way trip. The first transport moved $1.1 million worth of freight consisting of new pickup trucks, excavators, hospital beds and forklifts. The total freight shipping cost was $13,800. To ship the same freight via highway would have cost $74,000, a cost savings of $60,200 just with the first shipment alone. The railway will increase efficiency and will play a large role in the Iraqis rebuilding their economy and nation.

PARC-F is equally credited with the success of the JCC-I/A. Throughout the evolution of JCC-I/A, PARC-F’s primary mission has increased with continual persistence in improving customer support. PARC-F provides operational contracting support for rapid fulfillment of all warfighting requirements, including life support services, force protection, minor construction and combat support services.

The key to PARC-F’s success has been centralized planning and decentralized execution of contracting support. In addition, through the centralized planning process, PARC-F has identified commodities and services where theater support contracts can provide more efficient support to the forces versus numerous individual purchases. Critical among these centralized efforts is an effort for installing six bottled water plants around Iraq. The result of this effort will be a savings of $8 per case of water, 20 percent reduction in convoy traffic and countless lives saved from the threat of improvised explosive devices and roadside bombs. There are 10 Regional Contracting Centers (RCCs) strategically located throughout Iraq, another four RCCs in Afghanistan with one RCC in Pakistan providing earthquake and disaster relief and humanitarian aid. RCCs are generally located in the regions of the countries with access to vendors who can supply or get access to required goods and services. It’s from these more populated parts of the country that the RCCs support the warfighting units within their geographical area. PARC-F supports the troops with a diverse mix of commodities, services and minor construction.

JCC-I/A and HCA

Under MG Urias’ leadership, JCC-I/A has evolved into the successful contracting command that it is today, providing contracting support across two AOs. In FY05, the command accomplished more than 25,000 contractual actions valued at approximately $8 billion. The JCC-I/A is dedicated to supporting the purpose of the FRAGOs that established them — efficiently acquire essential supplies and services for the warfighter in Iraq and Afghanistan and for the relief and reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan. The endstate for JCC-I/A, quoted from both FRAGOs, is twofold:

- Through unity of effort, achieve economies of scale that exemplify best business practices and serve as a model for commerce in CJOA Iraq and CJOA Afghanistan.
- Through synergy with economic activities in local private and public sectors, be a catalyst for economic growth and the resulting peace.

MG Urias’ focus for establishing a self-reliable Iraq is illustrated through close coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MoD). One of the key elements that are enabling JCC-I/A to reach this required endstate is the contracting advisors that they have embedded into the MoD. JCC-I/A advisors, along with coalition advisors, continue to assist MoD officials with building self-sufficient procurement systems and processes.

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