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Transition to Stability Operations in Iraq

Final Report

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The Transition to Stability Operations study team conducted over 200 interviews with key military and civilian leadership throughout Iraq.

Without the expertise and support of these organizations and leaders, JCOA could not have conducted the comprehensive data-collection required for this study.



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Background and Methodology

In October 2009, GEN Raymond Odierno, Commanding General, Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I, later to become US Forces–Iraq [USF-I]), requested that US Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) conduct a study on the transition from counterinsurgency (COIN) to stability operations in Iraq to focus on the following:

- How US forces and the civilian-military team adjusted to the shift in the operational environment, and
- How significant challenges impacting the transition were overcome or mitigated.

In response to this request, the JFCOM Joint Center for Operational Analysis (JCOA) developed a phased data collection plan that included multiple study team deployments and a comprehensive continental US (CONUS) collection effort. Over 150 interviews were conducted with key leaders from USF-I, US Embassy Baghdad, US Divisions (USDs), Special Operations Forces (SOF), Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), Advisory and Assistance Brigades (AABs), and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). In addition, over 70 CONUS interviews were conducted with key leaders from US Special Operations Command (SOCOM), National and Joint Readiness Training Centers, Combined Arms Center (CAC), national and theater SOF, Department of State (DOS) Near East Asia Iraq Desk, and various redeployed units. In all, over 200 interviews of key leaders were conducted; their insights provided the foundation for this study, *Transition to Stability Operations* (TSO).

Introduction

US Forces–Iraq transitioned from COIN to stability operations during the period 1 January 2009 (the signing of the Security Agreement) through 31 August 2010 (the end of combat operations).¹ While there were many factors that complicated the transition, success was predicated upon the USF-I and civilian-military organizations becoming adaptive learning teams and leaders leading change — all while drawing down in size by approximately 100,000 troops.

The stability operations mission undertaken by USF-I consisted of three primary tasks: advising and assisting the Iraqi security forces (ISF), building Iraqi civil capacity, and conducting partnered counterterrorism (CT) operations. US forces focused on setting the conditions for the ISF to achieve minimum essential capabilities prior to the end of 2011, while supporting US Embassy efforts to build Iraqi civil capacity at local through national levels. Partnered CT operations enabled the transition by maintaining pressure on insurgent and terrorist networks. A detailed look at USF-I's efforts in accomplishing each of these three tasks follows.

¹ President Obama announced that, "By August 31, 2010, our combat mission in Iraq will end... Our mission will change from combat to supporting the Iraqi government and its security forces as they take the absolute lead in securing their country... We will retain a transitional force...made up of 35-50,000 US troops." Speech at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, 27 February 2009.

Primary Tasks for Stability Operations

Task 1: Advising and Assisting the Iraqi Security Forces

Resources for manning, training, and equipping the ISF were prioritized based on operational assessments of the minimum capability desired by the end of 2011. The analysis and planning process employed by the Deputy Commanding General for Advising and Training (DCG A&T) projected where ISF capability would be by the end of 2011 and identified where shortfalls were likely to occur. This allowed USF-I to prioritize and allocate available resources to enable ISF to achieve minimum essential capabilities. In support of this, US divisions were able to redirect and target their resources to help the ISF in specific needed areas.

“We’ve got two years to get the Iraqis to the point of minimum essential capabilities for internal security and lay the foundational capabilities for defense against external threats ... what do we need to do, what can we do, and where do we put our resources to get us there? So we went through a pretty rigorous analysis to identify what those capabilities are and then what the Iraqis needed to have as far as training, equipping, skills.”²

ISF development included both internal security capabilities and a foundation for defense against external threats. The combination of strong partnerships with the ISF, accurate assessments of capabilities, and realistic capability projections all helped create and sustain a coherent effort in ISF development.



US Army LTG Michael D. Barbero, DCG A&T, participates in an M1A1 tank roll-out ceremony at the Iraqi Defense Ministry Headquarters on Camp Iraqi Heroes in Baghdad, 14 October 2010. Many US and Iraqi military leaders attended the event in which the Iraqi Army received 35 of 140 M1A1 tanks that Iraq is purchasing from the US. (US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Yarnall)

The US approach to partnering with the ISF evolved and had to be redefined over time, based on the capabilities of the ISF, the changing operational environment, and the implementation of the security agreement. In the first years of COIN, US forces were in the lead, teaching

² LTG Barbero, Deputy Commanding General for Advising and Training (DCG A&T), USF-I, interview by JCOA, 12 February 2010.

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combat skills and instilling confidence. As the ISF's capability and the operational environment improved, the ISF began to take the lead, with US forces providing support and enablers. As the operational focus moved toward and into stability operations, the partnership continued to evolve as US forces took an increasing advisory and assistance role.

"As we looked at the Security Agreement and picked it apart, it became clear to us that in order to continue to operate 'full spectrum,' we were going to have to redefine partnering. So we committed ourselves to the notion that our ultimate success would be defined by the quality of our partnering with ISF. It's inconvenient, it's hard, it's manpower intensive, everything takes longer, there are cultural issues and professional issues, but the thing I am proudest of most is how every leader ... committed to it, and I think it made all the difference."³

Over time, the example of US forces, through the combination of mentoring and partnered operations, began to change ISF operational paradigms. Partnered operations were doing much more than just building capabilities; they were also beginning to create some major shifts within the Iraqi military culture. LTG Barbero stated that the areas of most notable change included the noncommissioned officer corps, demand-driven logistics, democratic policing, and evidence-based warrant processes.

Task 2: Building Civil Capacity

In 2009, USF-I's *Guidelines for Achieving Sustainable Stability* directed US forces to synchronize their efforts with interagency partners to strengthen Iraqi political, economic, diplomatic, and rule of law institutions while avoiding temporary "quick fixes" that could undermine long-term institutional viability.⁴ Working with US Embassy Baghdad, USF-I embedded personnel at the US Embassy to reinforce planning capacity where it was critically needed. The subordinate commands and civilian organizations such as Multi-National Corps–Iraq (MNC-I) and US divisions worked with the US Embassy's Office of Provincial Affairs (OPA), while the divisions and brigades worked with the provincial reconstruction teams. This helped to ensure unity of effort in developing coherent and achievable goals and synchronizing short- and long-term civil capacity development.

US forces worked to expand the reach and reinforce the capacity of the PRTs. The division-brigade-PRT civil-military team helped the Iraqi provincial governments, local governments, and ISF connect with the population to better understand local issues and concerns. Efforts included facilitating and building relationships amongst the Iraqis themselves (government officials, ISF, and the people). In addition, the US forces' security and logistics assets provided transportation for PRT members

³ LTG Jacoby, Commander, I Corps (DCG-O, USF-I), interview by JCOA, 12 February 2010.

⁴ GEN Odierno, Commanding General, MNF-I, "Guidelines for Achieving Sustainable Stability," 3 May 2009.

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to participate in numerous regional, provincial, and local government meetings and conferences.⁵ These efforts to build “connective tissue” served as catalysts for further demands for good governance:

"[We are] creating a demand in the population for good governance. That demand from the population, if we get this right, will be a continuing influence that years of future Iraqi governments, both local and national, are going to have to contend with. So what they are doing is creating an expectation in the people of Iraq for what a government does. And long after we are gone, if we can get this right, governments of Iraq are going to have to satisfy that demand."⁶

By working to develop Iraqi processes, the PRTs helped increase the capacity of provincial governance, enabling enhanced public services and economic opportunities for the population. There were numerous examples where division and brigade specific expertise (engineering, legal, medical, etc.) were used to reinforce PRTs and enhance civil capacity building. One technique that worked well involved demonstration projects such as green houses, center-pivot and drip irrigation, and grain silos to allow the Iraqis to see for themselves the advantages of certain concepts and technologies.



US Army MG Terry Wolff, Commander, 1st Armored Division, meets with Baghdad Governor Hussein Al Tahhan and the Dean of the Abu Ghraib Agricultural College, Baghdad, 1 April 2010.

(US Army photo by Spc. Venessa Hernandez)

In addition, US forces aligned their efforts with interagency, international, and nongovernmental organization (NGO) efforts. With the US Embassy in the lead, USF-I supported and reinforced civil- capacity assessment and planning efforts. The Joint Campaign Plan (US Mission–Iraq [USM-I] and USF-I) and the Unified Common Plans (PRT and brigade or division) facilitated a “whole of government” approach and unity of effort among the interagency organizations involved. In addition, USF-I provided critical logistics, security, and movement of United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) personnel, enabling humanitarian, reconstruction, development, human rights, and political assistance missions.

⁵ Ms Malzhan, North Baghdad ePRT Lead, interview by JCOA, 3 February 2010 and Mr. Escobar, PRT Lead, Kirkuk PRT, interview by JCOA, 4 February 2010.

⁶ Deputy Director Political–Military Affairs Iraq Desk, Department of State, interview by JCOA, 9 July 2010.

Task 3: Conducting Partnered Counterterrorism Operations

Partnered CT operations supported and enabled the successful transition to stability operations in Iraq. These operations maintained pressure on the violent extremist networks (VENs), providing the time and space necessary for continued political maturation, civil capacity development, and the growth and maturation of ISF capabilities.

The development of an Iraqi CT enterprise was integral to the success of the partnered operations. The CT enterprise included those institutional functions and capacities that “kept terrorists off the streets,” and thus involved the legal, judicial, and correctional systems, as well as police and investigative systems related to CT operations.

During the transition period, the Government of Iraq (GOI) continued to gain confidence and exert its sovereign authority, necessitating continuous US innovation and adaptation to sustain pressure on the terror networks. Successful partnered CT operations were achieved through extensive collaboration and information sharing at all levels.⁷

“In 2004, ISOF [Iraqi Special Operations Forces] was assisting US Special Forces [USSF] prosecute the war against insurgents and violent extremists in Iraq; by 2009, roles had reversed, USSF were now assisting ISOF ... As the US mission in Iraq evolved over the years, so too have the capabilities of ISOF. ISOF is poised to become a self-sustaining, national counterterrorist command that can independently and successfully plan, prepare, and execute counterterrorist operations in a synchronized and coordinated effort.”⁸

Understanding and Shaping the Operational Environment

In order to successfully accomplish the three stability operations tasks described above, USF-I had to continue to fully understand and shape the operational environment. This required USF-I to:

Maintain Situational Awareness (SA): Innovative approaches were used to maintain situational awareness despite reduced resources and decreasing access resulting from the drawdown in US forces.

Retain Influence with the Iraqis: Partnerships and personal relationships were crucial to retaining necessary influence and enabling continued progress in building ISF and civil capacity.

Execute Non-lethal Targeting: Non-lethal targeting was used to solve complex problems encountered in the operational environment and affect drivers of instability.⁹

⁷ The intent for partnered CT operations was that there would be no independent operations without GOI approval.

⁸ “Iraqi Special Operations Force, An Overview,” paper, April 2010, UNCLASSIFIED.

⁹ Drivers of instability included: communal/factional struggle for power and resources, insufficient GOI capacity, violent extremist groups, and external interference.

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Conduct Mission Preparation: Mission preparation focused on training and changing the mindset of US personnel who were returning to Iraq as part of an AAB conducting stability operations (as opposed to previous missions conducting major combat or COIN operations). Through a combination of home station training, joint and Service training, and in-theater training, units were mentally and physically prepared to conduct stability operations.

Master Transitions: Mastering transitions proved critically important to the civil-military teams in Iraq as they continuously planned, executed, assessed, and adjusted to the changing, complex operational environment.

A discussion of each of the aspects of understanding and shaping the operational environment follows.

Maintain Situational Awareness

US forces developed innovative approaches to better understand the constantly changing political, military, economic, cultural, and social environment. It was through this holistic understanding that US forces were better able to identify, assess, and develop solutions that mitigated the drivers of instability within their areas of operation. Partnerships and relationships with a wide range of organizations and entities were used. Additionally, media monitoring, polling, and information fusion were important capabilities that US forces used to keep informed of immediate news events, gauge atmospherics, and bring together multisource information for analysis.

Partnership with ISF coordination centers, headquarters, operational commands, and command and control (C2) nodes enhanced situational awareness. Furthermore, a more accurate understanding of the Iraqi perspective was gained through routine interaction with Iraqi counterparts. Using US resources to support Iraqi priority intelligence requirements (PIRs) and other shared priorities increased information sharing and situational awareness, as well as continuing to build trust.

Division staffs combined information from many sources to develop operational environment assessments and to support the targeting process. For example, in US Division–Center (USD-C), the Environmental Effects Cell integrated PMESII (political, military, economic, social, information, and infrastructure) information from various sources, including ISF, PRT, and command staff. The Combined Information Data Network Exchange (CIDNE) was used by US forces throughout Iraq to allow ready access to data and tools for analysis and presentation. CIDNE continued to evolve to support the mission, increasingly incorporating access to information like key leader engagement (KLE) reports.

Retain Influence with the Iraqis

The challenge for military and civilian leadership was in retaining the level of influence necessary to help shape and sustain progress, while tactfully "backing off" and allowing the Iraqis to increase their capacity by doing more themselves. During the transition from COIN to stability operations, the level of influence retained was derived directly from the strength of partnerships and relationships. Built on cultural knowledge and respect, these personal relationships allowed development of the trust, transparency, and confidence that were crucial to influencing and enabling continued ISF and civil capacity progress. USF-I, the US Embassy, and their subordinate organizations worked as a team, enhancing each other's relationships with their respective Iraqi military and civilian counterparts.

"Now we have to retain influence not with the number of tanks and airplanes, but with the contributions to civil capacity and governance and finishing the job of buttressing the legitimacy of the GOI, and deterring nefarious, aggressive neighbors."¹⁰

The Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA) was fundamental to achieving success. The SFA established seven areas of cooperation including political, defense and security, cultural, economic and energy, health and environment, information technology and communications, and judicial. With these agreed upon areas of cooperation, USF-I and the US Embassy were able to retain access with key Iraqi ministries. Over time, this access resulted in the GOI recognizing the genuine desire by the US to support continued Iraqi development.

At the local level, the AABs' emphasis on partnership enabled strong relationships and influence. The AAB mission focus on stability, organizational structure designed for such operations, and augmentation with the stability transition teams (STTs), allowed unity of effort in partnering with ISF units. This greatly facilitated multiple touchpoints and growing trust with the ISF. Providing regular secure transport for the PRT, the AAB had frequent engagements with the local and provincial leaders, helping build trust and relationships. Brigade leadership indicated that the relationship with their ISF counterpart was the primary "pacing item" for enabling ISF progress.

"Every principal on the staff, every commander, every sergeant major, every company commander, they all had a partnered unit, a partnered person. There was a 10th Iraqi Army G3 and there was a Maysan Operations Center G3, so those two staff colonels were my partners. You have to spend a lot of time getting to know them personally and trying to help them professionally, which can be difficult."¹¹

¹⁰ LTG Jacoby, DCG-O, USF-I, interview by JCOA, 12 February 2010.

¹¹ S3, 4/1 AD, interview by JCOA, 12 May 2010.

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Finally, as US forces drew down, the importance of “information activities” (e.g., key leader engagement and information operations [IO]) became even more crucial to extending influence and shaping perceptions across various audiences. Information activities helped shift perceptions in desired directions and counter malign influences. As part of the partnering process, US forces assisted their ISF counterparts in recognizing the importance of information on the battlefield and in developing their own practices and capabilities. In commenting on the importance of information as part of the transition plan, GEN Odierno stated:



Members of a Human Terrain Analysis Team (HTAT) survey Iraqi civilians in Basra province, Iraq, 7 July 2010. The HTAT, Iraqi police, and US Soldiers with 354th Military Police Company, in support of 1st Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, conducted surveys of the population and culture in villages in the region.

(US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Lynn Friant)

“I would argue that as we reduce the size of our force in Iraq, the importance of IO grows. Again, because we want to influence and we want to have a strategic communications plan that talks about why we are drawing down. We need an influence operations campaign that says al-Qaida is still bad, and you need to reject Iranian influence ... IO will continue to play a big role. All of our statistics tell us that we have been very successful in changing mindset ... it is almost counter-intuitive, but as we reduce our forces we’ll need more ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] and we’ll need more IO. It is a cheaper way for us to mitigate our risks as we draw down our forces and turn over responsibility to the GOI.”¹²

Further reinforcing the importance of strategic communications and the critical role played by senior leaders, BG Rossi, J33, USF-I, commented:

“You are in an influence game here, that is what our role is ... The most potent weapon system we have is the number of stars on a guy’s shoulders that go into a meeting to convince a leader ’cause the Iraqi’s operate on instructions from higher, so you have got to hit them at all levels on the totem pole. A lot of times, the lower level guys [Iraqi ISF] will agree with you, but they will not act until they are told to... The way you move anything forward here is with KLE.”¹³

¹² GEN Odierno, Commanding General, USF-I, interview by JCOA, 23 June 2009.

¹³ BG Rossi, J33, USF-I, interview by JCOA, 18 August 2010.

Execute Non-lethal Targeting

US forces adapted their targeting processes, often employing non-lethal means to solve complex problems and affect drivers of instability. Non-lethal targeting involved determining the drivers of instability or, as GEN Odierno described, “Understanding the why.”

“And then, lethal versus non-lethal ... One of the things that I’ve been trying to stress (and it’s combat, but it’s more reflected in stability operations) is first you have to understand why there is a problem. You have to answer that question, ‘Why?’ Once you know why, you know what tools are available for you to fix it. Most of the tools now are non-lethal tools.”¹⁴



US Army LTG Bob Cone, center, Deputy Commanding General of Operations for USF-I and commander of III Corps, accompanied by MG Anthony Cucolo, left, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division, visit US and Iraqi military leaders following a senior working group meeting in Arbil, Iraq, 19 October 2010. The officials held the meeting to discuss the security situation in Iraq.

(US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Daniel Yarnall)

To understand “why” required a profound knowledge of the operational environment, often developed from strong relationships among US forces, the interagency, and their Iraqi counterparts. These relationships were used to influence and leverage key Iraqi decision makers in solving problems through non-lethal approaches. It was critical that Iraqi decision makers were brought into the process of addressing and solving these problem sets, thereby creating “buy-in.”

“There is no problem [here] that you will tackle that is strictly a military problem. They are all interagency problems ... Everything is convoluted and tied together. It’s a matter of creating that combined, joint, interagency cabal of people. It does involve Iraqis ... My job ... was to bring people together to solve a very complex problem.”¹⁵

Key to effectively addressing the drivers of instability was getting the right people around the table to discuss and understand the problems and tools available to help solve them. In that regard, information activities such as KLE and IO proved to be useful tools for non-lethal targeting and affecting the drivers of instability.

¹⁴ GEN Odierno, Commanding General, USF-I, interview by JCOA, 21 August 2010.

¹⁵ Commander, 4/1 AD, interview by JCOA, 11 May 2010.

Conduct Mission Preparation

“This is an army that changes every year and passes brigade areas of operations to new brigades, divisions to new divisions, and Corps to new Corps. This is unbelievable what is going on here and people wouldn’t understand it unless they saw and lived it. How a unit, for over a year, will prepare itself for this mission and develop its capacities and its intellectual understanding of the battlefield, and will seamlessly transition from one organization to the next. It’s an Olympic handoff, and no other army in the world could do it. Every now and then, we ought to remind ourselves of that.”¹⁶



US Army Col. Peter A. Newell, commander of 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division, visits Sheik Ali at Ali’s home in Dhi Qar, Iraq, 13 June 2009.

(US Army photo by Staff Sgt. Brendan Stephens)

Home station training gave commanders the opportunity and flexibility to tailor their pre-deployment training based on unit needs and specific areas of operation. Commanders leveraged non-traditional training partners to assist in training stability operations tasks. Local universities, city resources, border patrol agents, and the Foreign Service Institute were used to educate staffs in understanding the breadth and complexity of civil-military operations. At the same time, units began “battle tracking” from home station months in advance of the deployment. Pre-deployment site surveys (PDSS) provided opportunities to incorporate the most current operating conditions into the home station training plan and strengthened communications between incoming and outgoing units.

Exploiting electronic connectivity, commanders were able to collaborate and “battle track” with their in-theater counterparts in preparation for relief in place/transfer of authority (RIP/TOA). As an example, MG Wolfe, as the incoming Commanding General for USD-C, had Command Post of the Future (CPOF) on his desk, viewing the same common operating picture as his counterpart in Iraq. The ability to access the in-theater unit’s portal and listen to briefings and meetings contributed significantly to units’ pre-deployment preparation.

¹⁶ LTG Jacoby, Commander, I Corps (DCG-O, USF-I), interview by JCOA, 12 February 2010.

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The combat training centers (CTC) placed an emphasis on remaining current and integrating lessons learned into rotational training. This was achieved through extensive dialogue with deployed units, routine video-teleconferences (VTCs) with senior commanders, deploying teams to Iraq to observe the environment first hand, and placing a premium on bringing in observer trainers (O/Ts) with recent combat experience. These efforts enabled the CTCs to shape training and scenarios to more closely reflect the current operating environment. Integration of role players, to include Iraqi Army commanders, local Iraqi leaders, and Western and Arabic media, further enhanced the realism and complexity of the training environment.¹⁷

"I'm trying to look back to the MRX [Mission Rehearsal Exercise] and what we've learned in the first 30 days in theater to see if there's anything substantially different. I ask that question all the time to the battalion and brigade commanders. 'What did you have to do differently or adjust dramatically once you got here that you didn't practice or train on when you were on your MRX?' And surprisingly, I haven't found anybody who has told me they didn't train on the tasks that they needed to train on to be ready, capable, and competent to do what they're doing right now."¹⁸

Finally, the in-theater training by the COIN and Stability Operations Center (COINSOC) provided units with regionally-focused training, to include dialects and cultural nuances, as well as functional training such as rule of law. Commander driven, the COINSOC experience also served as a civil-military team-building event between the AABs and their respective PRTs and STTs, providing a forum for standard operating procedure (SOP) development and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned. This forum also provided the opportunity to receive guidance directly from senior leaders of both USF-I and the US Embassy, promoting a better understanding of the commander's intent and increased potential for unity of effort.

Master the Transitions

From the beginning of the implementation of the Security Agreement on 1 January 2009 through the end of combat operations on 31 August 2010, there were multiple critical transitions taking place simultaneously and sequentially. These transitions were related to the evolving mission, the ever-changing operational environment, bilateral agreements between the US and Iraq, normal rotational unit RIP/TOA events, redeployment of a significant portion of the force, consolidation of headquarters staffs, and the election and seating of new GOI officials. While many of the transitions were time-based, USF-I worked diligently to create the conditions required to make the transitions seamless.

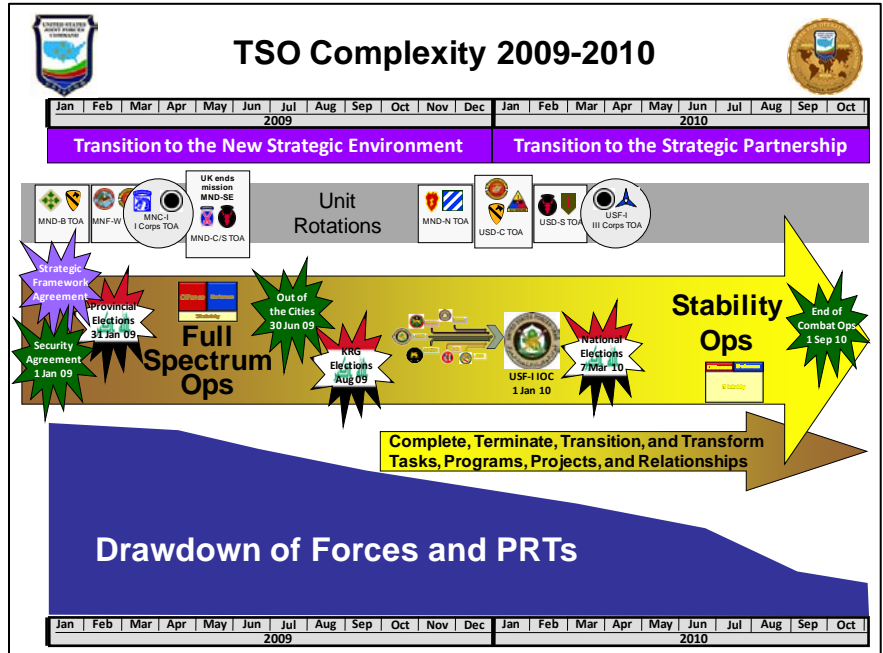
The conditions and drivers of instability differed from region to region necessitating varying transition timelines. Deciding when to initiate transition was as much an art as a science — Iraqi capabilities, personal relationships, theater enablers, political agreements, and other

¹⁷ Plans Chief, National Training Center, interview by JCOA, 2 February 2010.

¹⁸ BG Ralph Baker, interview by JCOA, 2 February 2010.

considerations might make today’s successful transition impossible or counterproductive yesterday or tomorrow. Further complicating this was the need to project second- and third-order effects arising from implementation — as these effects would shape subsequent timeline decisions. This challenge required detailed yet flexible planning by the civil-military team.

USF-I strategic guidance and operational orders established transition priorities. Planning documents and orders highlighted transition tasks with leaders prioritizing efforts and focusing resources to attain the desired outcomes. Military staffs, working jointly with the US Embassy, ensured detailed plans were fluid enough to be adjusted in the midst of the evolving strategic environment. Each line



of operation in the Joint Campaign Plan was analyzed, and the civil-military team determined whether each task, program, project, or relationship would be terminated, completed, transitioned to the GOI, or transformed into a US Embassy responsibility. These efforts identified over 1,500 functions/activities for transfer to other entities.

Conclusion

The transition from COIN to stability operations in Iraq was a success story. Whether the result is an enduring success still remains to be seen. While there were many factors that complicated the transition, success was predicated upon the USF-I and civilian-military organizations becoming adaptive learning teams with leaders leading change.

Shortly before departing Iraq, GEN Odierno reflected on the transition journey:

“... One of the things that’s been most gratifying to me has been the performance of our forces, how our forces have adapted and learned, how our leaders have adapted and learned and adjusted to very difficult situations. And I’m pretty proud of that, of the young men and women who’ve been able to do that.”¹⁹

As the transition period came to a close, USF-I’s success could best be summarized by a 22 August 2010 interview with LTG Cone, who quoted the head of the Iraqi Federal Police as saying:

“My God, we have no idea how you went from over 100,000 to 50,000 [forces] — we never saw it, we never felt it ...”



US Army GEN Odierno, CG, USF-I, walks with Iraqi Army LTG Hassan Karim, CG, Ninawa Operations Command, from Mosul Airfield to the Ninawa Operations Command Center upon Odierno’s arrival in Mosul, Iraq, 12 June 2010. Odierno was in Mosul to meet with US Army, Iraqi Army, and Iraqi Police leadership to discuss future plans for the Ninawa province of Iraq.
(US Marine Corps photo by Staff Sgt. Guadalupe M. Deanda III)

¹⁹ GEN Odierno, Commanding General, USF-I, DOD news brief from the Pentagon, 21 July 2010.