

## 18<sup>th</sup> Engineer Brigade (Combat) Task Force SWORD



### SWORDS UP!

The 18<sup>th</sup> Engineer closes in on its thirteenth month in Iraq. As the Iraq political situation shifts closer to Coalition Forces departing major cities, the Brigade has increasingly focus on putting Iraqis in the lead for Reconstruction and Engineer Operations. One of three highlights this month is the Mosul Rubble removal and Trash cleanup project. Below is a snapshot of the Rebuild Mosul weekly program currently in development to be aired on local Iraqi TV.

**REBUILD MOSUL WEEKLY**

**الله أكبر**

**Week#1 23 MAY 09:  
Rubble Removal and Dumpster Emplacement**

The Mosul Municipalities conducted rubble removal throughout Mosul. This work was a coordination with the newly elected government and the Iraqi Security Forces. Municipalities workers and professional contractors removed rubble from the Al Saha neighborhood and emplaced new "Keep Mosul Clean" dumpsters at 7 Nissan and Rashadiya. This a start of many projects ongoing to rebuild Mosul. Tune in next week and call in to let us know how we are serving you.

**Call Municipalities ###-##-####**



The reason this project is so critical to Mosul is because the project provides an immediate and positive connection between the population and its newly elected government. When we arrived in February, one of the chief complaints coming from the Mosul residents was that the government was unable to provide essential services. Insurgents were using the government's failures to recruit members. The population needs a reason to turn away from the "Enemy of the Nation". To do this they must have confidence in their government. When residents see their

government cleaning rubble and trash around the city, they quickly recognize that the government is doing something good for them.

That is what this dumpster and rubble removal project is all about. Not only is the project putting a system in place to clean up the city, but it is creating jobs. Because we are using local companies to procure the new dumpsters and remove rubble, approximately 150 new employees are being hired a month. We anticipate this positive employment trend to continue for at least six to twelve months. The best part is the Mosul Government gets all the credit. This is the Director General (DG) of Municipalities project. We are just assisting. We make every effort to ensure the population receives that message.

Our Civil Affair Teams are doing a phenomenal job helping facilitate these projects in an advisory role. For the first time since we arrived, there is a "buzz" on the street that residents are happy to see Municipalities cleaning up their neighborhoods. With the reduction of rubble on the streets, some business owners are happy to see a reduction of traffic. However, by no means does this mean that all is well in Mosul.

Reconstruction of a city is a long and complicated process. So it's very easy for residents to get frustrated and lose confidence in its government. You can't fix water and sewer lines without tearing up roads and rerouting traffic for example. Rebuilding Mosul will take a long time because much of the infrastructure is severely damaged. Plus, Mosul is still a dangerous place to do construction. Fortunately, the Mosul Government is taking on numerous long term projects to rebuild the city, but for now, its trash and rubble removal. Therefore we will continue to make this project one of our top priorities. As long as progress is made, we believe the population will eventually turn away from insurgents.

Another highlight this month was a combined bridge repair mission shown below on a local TV storyboard. For the first time Iraqi Engineers led from the front on a bridge mission. More importantly activities were broadcasted on the local TV and radio. We have discovered that one of the keys to getting local residents to gain confidence in their Government and Security Forces is to get Iraqi media involved. As the security situation improves, media stories of Iraqi Military Engineers is catching on and it is well received. For many residents Coalition Forces pullout is not as scary as it seems. They see their military stepping up.



The fourth division Iraqi army engineering battalion conducts maintenance work on the Alfatha floating bridge. This work was in coordination with the American Engineering Battalion in Salah al Din province. Units were conducting the maintenance to repair the approach to the bridge that was effected by a sudden increase of water flow at the temporary bridge site in Ba'ajah - AISHIRQAT district. This temporary bridge is the alternative to the main bridge linking the two parts of Al SHIRQAT district.

As seen on SaD TV broadcasted Saturday 09 MAY 2009 at 20:00 and 1200 p.m.



Finally there is our continued partnership training on route clearance and construction as pictured in the storyboard below. Iraqi Army Engineers still face some challenges with Equipment fielding, but this shortfall is overcome by their willingness to train hard and conduct independent Engineer Operations whenever possible. More frequently, Iraqi Army Engineers are taking charge of their training and operations. We advise, we partner, and we mentor.

**IA Engineer Route Clearance and Construction Partnership Training**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Field Engineering Regiment (FER) was initially formed as a company. Towards the end of 2008, it reflagged as a Field Engineering Regiment. The 2<sup>nd</sup> FER is task organized into many units including a headquarters company, a bomb disposal unit and other engineering units that perform construction and route clearance. Initially, the regiment had only very few Lieutenants leading route clearance patrols but through hard work, dedication, and training over the last 8 months, there are twice as many officers capable of leading route clearance patrols. The route clearance soldiers plan missions, operate the vehicles, provide security and are to reduce most IEDs found in the road. If the IEDs are too advanced, the bomb disposal unit Soldiers reduce the IED. The Soldiers are getting better at their job everyday. They train at every opportunity. Their job has many positive effects on the city. They keep the roads safe, which allows the National Police and Iraqi Police to patrol the streets. This in turn, protect the citizens from looting and store owners from extortion. Keeping the roads safe also allows the Iraqi Government to send electricians, plumbers, and engineers to the city to rebuild. The 2<sup>nd</sup> FER risk their lives everyday and will continue to do so by finding and destroying the IEDs appropriately in order to keep the city functioning and safe.



Feel free to contact TF SWORD Non-lethal Effects Cell on related topics.

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