



**Commission on Wartime Contracting
In Iraq and Afghanistan**

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Wartime Contracting team on fact-gathering mission in Iraq and Kuwait

ARLINGTON, VA, Nov. 3, 2009 – Four professional staff from the federal Commission on Wartime Contracting are in Iraq and Kuwait for a week-long series of interviews and briefings on the challenge of managing the huge contractor workforce that supports U.S. operations in Southwest Asia.

U.S. Central Command reported last month that more than 126,000 contractor employees are working in Iraq for the Department of Defense, the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and other federal entities. That count—mostly comprising foreign nationals—nearly matches the 128,000-person strength of U.S. military personnel currently in Iraq.

The United States has agreed with the Iraqi government that U.S. troops will be entirely out of Iraq by the end of 2011, and President Obama has directed that the troop strength in Iraq be drawn down to 50,000 by August 2010.

“Managing the Iraq drawdown will involve many contractors in closing hundreds of bases and processing more than three million pieces of U.S. property,” said commission executive director Robert B. Dickson. “We are interested in the adequacy of the planning, management, and oversight of a major contractor effort. The welfare of the troops, the achievement of U.S. objectives, and good stewardship of taxpayers’ money require it.”

The commission team’s agenda includes meeting with in-theater officials of the Joint Forces Acquisition Review Board, the Defense Contract Management Agency, the Joint Contracting Command for Iraq and Afghanistan, the Department of State, the 402nd Army Field Support Brigade, and with some of the contracting officer’s representatives who oversee vendor performance.

Dickson said information gathered in the theater trip will feed into the commission’s congressionally mandated studies, hearings, special reports, and the final report to Congress due by mid-summer 2011.

THE COMMISSION

Congress created the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2008 (Public Law 110-181) to research federal contracting for reconstruction, logistical support, and security functions, and to recommend improvements.

Members are co-chairs Michael Thibault and Christopher Shays, plus Clark Kent Ervin, Grant Green, Robert Henke, Charles Tiefer, and Dov Zakheim. One seat is currently vacant pending a Congressional appointment.

For more information, including the Commission’s June 2009 Interim Report to Congress and its special reports, see www.wartimecontracting.gov.