

**Testimony of David B. Blackshaw  
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**Office of Security**

**U.S. Agency for International Development**

**“Private Security Contractors In Iraq: Where Are We Going?”**

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**Before the Commission on Wartime Contracting In Iraq and Afghanistan  
Dirksen Senate Office Building  
June 21, 2010**

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Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of this Commission,

Thank you for extending me the invitation to appear before you today. I believe it’s appropriate for me to state up front that my role as a division chief within the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Security limits my policy issuance authority to matters involving staff and operations of the Division, not the Agency. I hope that my testimony today clarifies my middle-management role within USAID’s Office of Security (SEC) and the informal advisory role my division has with USAID missions working with implementing partners, i.e., the Agency’s prime contractors or grantees, operating in Iraq and Afghanistan who have contracted for the services of Private Security Contractors (PSCs). Many of the Agency’s implementing partners operating in Iraq and Afghanistan have independently decided to subcontract with PSCs to protect their employees and assets in those countries while working on USAID’s missions.

Mr. Chairman, unlike the State Department’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Department of Defense, who have legislative authority to direct individuals and entities operating within their jurisdiction, USAID’s Office of Security has no such authority. Accordingly, the role of the USAID’s SEC’s International Security Programs Division, as it relates to PSCs hired independently by the Agency’s prime contractor or grantee as subcontractors, is limited to advice and counsel.

With this said, Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to answer questions related to the limited advisory role my division has on behalf of the Agency with its missions in Iraq and Afghanistan regarding PSCs hired by USAID’s implementing partners to protect their employees and assets abroad while working on USAID’s missions. My level of expertise in these matters is the result of meetings I have attended and discussions I have participated in concerning the Agency’s assistance role in Iraq during combat operations.

Additionally, Mr. Chairman, I am aware that the USAID Inspector General conducted audits on March 4, 2009 and on May 21, 2010, respectively. The audit reports were

entitled “Oversight of USAID/Iraq and USAID/Afghanistan Private Security Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan” (reports # E-267-09002-P, March 4, 2009 and 5306-10-009-P, May 21, 2010). I would note that the audit findings and recommendations were endorsed by management within these missions. Corrective actions to alleviate shortcomings are now being taken.

In recognition of the limited information I may have to offer this distinguished Commission, I would be more than willing to assist the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan as it relates to follow-on questions concerning “Private Security Contractors in Iraq” by taking un-answered questions from this Commission to the appropriate policy authorities within USAID for review and comment.

In closing, I thank you again for inviting me to appear before you today. I am happy to take any questions you may have regarding my non-prescriptive role as advisor to the Agency’s missions in Iraq and Afghanistan when USAID’s implementing partners render corporate level risk-based decisions to subcontract with PSCs.

Thank you.