



Commission on Wartime Contracting In Iraq and Afghanistan

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Inspectors General in the spotlight at first hearing of Commission on Wartime Contracting

ARLINGTON, VA, Jan. 28, 2009 – A new report from the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction will be featured in the Feb. 2 initial hearing of the federal Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan (CWC).

The CWC hearing in the Russell Senate Office Building in Washington, DC, will coincide with the public release of the SIGIR's "Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience" report on five years of investigating waste, fraud, and abuse in the reconstruction effort in Iraq.

The hearing, "Lessons from the Inspectors General: Improving Wartime Contracting," will open with testimony from three U.S. Senators who have been involved in investigations and reforms of federal acquisition and contracting: Senator Susan Collins (R-ME), Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO), and Senator James Webb (D-VA). Senators McCaskill and Webb were the original Senate cosponsors of the legislation that created the CWC.

After Special Inspector General Stuart Bowen discusses his new SIGIR report, the Commissioners will hear from a panel of three witnesses representing the inspector-general functions of the Departments of Defense and State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development. All three agencies are involved in wartime contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan.

CWC Co-Chair Michael Thibault will preside at the hearing and offer an opening statement on behalf of himself and Co-Chair Grant Green.

The Feb. 2 session will be the first of several hearings to be conducted as the CWC carries out its statutory mandate. Future hearings will include a review of the work of the recently appointed Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. The CWC's work also includes outreach to other government agencies, public-interest groups, academic and research organizations, and the contracting community, as well as independent research and investigations by the CWC's professional staff.

The Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan was created by Congress in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181). The CWC has a broad mandate to research and investigate federal-agency contracting for reconstruction, logistical support and security functions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The CWC will develop findings and recommendations on issues including the extent of reliance on contractors

in wartime settings, contractor performance and accountability, federal contracting and management systems and practices, contractor use of force, and potential violations of law. The CWC will issue an interim report May 1 and a final report in the summer of 2010; other reports will be issued as appropriate.

The law provides for eight appointed CWC commissioners to direct the staff's work and decide upon ultimate findings and recommendations. Besides Co-chairs Thibault and Green, the commissioners are Clark Kent Ervin, Robert Henke, Linda Gustitus, Charles Tiefer, and Dov Zakheim. There is one vacancy. The commissioners bring a wide range of experience in government, law, the military, education, and business to the CWC's work.

Additional information, including biographical notes on the commissioners, may be found at the Commission's Web site, www.wartimecontracting.gov.

The Feb. 2 hearing will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the Senate Caucus Room, #325 in the Russell Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill. That chamber is the same room that Senator Harry S. Truman of Missouri used in 1941 to open a long-running investigation of the efficiency and effectiveness of federal defense spending.

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