Traveling to Iraq

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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I. INFORMATION PERTAINING TO TRAVEL TO IRAQ

1. Are U.S. citizens permitted to travel to Iraq?

Yes, U.S. citizens are permitted to travel to Iraq, however, the State Department continues to warn against unnecessary travel to Iraq. Please refer to the Travel Warning for Iraq at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/iraq_warning.html. Entry requirements may differ if you are a U.S. Government employee, military, contractor, or civilian traveling for business. It is important for visitors to continually consult the U.S. State Department's Consular Information Sheet for Iraq at: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/iraq.html. Information may also be found on the website of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/. For more detailed information on visa requirements, please consult question #4 below.

2. Is it safe to travel to Iraq?

The security environment in Iraq remains volatile and unpredictable. Although the restrictions on the use of U.S. passport travel to, in, or through Iraq have been lifted, travel to Iraq remains extremely dangerous. The U.S. Department of State continues to strongly warn U.S. citizens against travel to Iraq.

Updated information on travel and security in Iraq may be obtained from the State Department's Iraq Travel Warning page (http://travel.state.gov/travel/iraq_warning.html) and the Consular Information Sheet (http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/iraq.html), or by calling the Department of State Overseas Citizen Services at 1-888-407-4747 within the United States, or 1-317-472-2328 from overseas. More general information about services provided by the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad may be found at: http://baghdad.usembassy.gov.

U.S. citizens who plan to travel to or remain in Iraq despite this Travel Warning should register with the United States Consular Office when traveling to Iraq. To do so, contact the United States Consular Office at: USConsulBaghdad@state.gov or register online at: https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp. The consular office is now located in the Embassy Chancery Building. It is open for American Citizen Services Sunday through Thursday 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and for Official Iraqi and/or U.S. Government-sponsored visas from 9:00a.m. to 11:00a.m. General public inquiries may be addressed to USConsulBaghdad@state.gov, or by telephone at 240-553-0584, ext. 4354 or ext. 4342. Although this telephone number is a U.S. Maryland based number, it connects to the consulate office in Baghdad, Iraq. American citizens may also obtain the latest security information via the U.S.

Embassy's website: http://iraq.usembassy.gov. The Embassy's after-hours number is 1-914-822-5493.

3. Which security firms operate in Iraq?

Certain security firms can provide bodyguards, hardened cars, due diligence on property and potential Iraqi business partners, and security for goods and buildings. The State Department's website provides a list of such firms at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/iraq_securitycompanies.html.

4. Do you need a visa or permit to enter and travel through Iraq?

Visa regulations differ depending on whether or not you are working on a reconstruction contract/sub-contract or not. At this time, the information below is current pending the issuance of final procedures by the Iraqi Interim Government. It is important for visitors to continually consult the U.S. State Department's Consular Information Sheet for Iraq at: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/iraq.html. Information may also be found on the website of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/ and the Iraqi Embassy in Washington, D.C. at: http://consul.iraqiembassy.org/. Travelers should contact the Iraqi Embassy in Amman, Jordan or Washington, DC before planning any trip to the region.

Reconstruction Contractors:
The new visa requirements for any employee, regardless of nationality, of a firm working on a U.S. contract or sub-contractor to one of these primary contractors, require the employee to carry multiple copies of an entry letter approved and tracked by the U.S. Embassy, to present to Iraqi immigration officials at points-of-entry. The letters can be obtained by the contracting agency. Upon presentation of the letter and the traveler's passport, immigration officials will collect the letter and stamp a visa into the passport. No fee will be charged. (Absent an immigration visa, possession of the letter with passport for the moment should provide sufficient documentation for contracting personnel in country.)

The Iraqi Interim Government has agreed to this interim procedure in order to facilitate reconstruction work during the time necessary to design and implement its permanent immigration procedures.

The key to success of these procedures is communication between contractors and the responsible office within the Mission. The system is designed to give contracting offices within the Mission authority over the contractors they are responsible for.

Other Travelers:
For non-contractor business travelers, the system is in a state of flux. Although some people in the past have been able to enter Iraq without a visa and get one at the airport, their success has been inconsistent. Guidelines for

all travelers to Iraq may be found at the website of the Iraqi Embassy in Washington, D.C. at: http://consul.iraqiembassy.org/.

The current procedures require an applicant to have a passport that is valid for at least 6 months, the applicant has a letter, in duplicate, on the employer's letterhead that details the purpose for entering Iraq, the location the work will take place, address and phone number in Iraq, and the duration of the applicants stay. If a contractor, the contract reference number shall be included on the letter and the applicant should be in possession of a copy of their contract. The letter must also contain the individuals name, date and place of birth, title, passport number, expiration date and permanent address.

The applicant shall present the letter and passport to the immigration officer and a visa will be stamped on both items and returned to the applicant. No fee is required and a copy of the letter will be retained at the port of entry for reference purposes should any problems arise at a latter date. It appears that immigration agents are issuing 30-day entry visas and stamping the letters.

Guidelines for all travelers to Iraq and a visa application form are available online on the website of the Iraqi Embassy in Washington, D.C. at: http://consul.iraqiembassy.org/. Again, please note that these visa regulations are subject to change. The Department of Commerce's Iraq Investment and Reconstruction Task Force recommends that you contact the Iraq embassy in Washington, DC, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Bahrain, UAE or Paris, France before planning any trip to the region. For more specific information please see questions 6 and 7 on travel to Iraq from specific countries

A visa application form is available online on the website of the Iraqi Embassy in Washington at: http://consul.iraqiembassy.org/. Again, please note that these visa regulations are subject to change. The Department of Commerce's Iraq Investment and Reconstruction Task Force recommends that you contact the Iraq embassy in Washington, DC, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Bahrain, UAE or Paris, France before planning any trip to the region. For more specific information please see questions 6 and 7 on travel to Iraq from specific countries.

It is important to remember that visas are required for U.S. citizens to gain entry into Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Syria. American citizens may apply for entry into Kuwait or Jordan at any Kuwaiti and Jordanian Port-of-Entry without a visa. Most Americans entering Kuwait will be stamped into the country for 30 days each time they arrive. No invitation or supporting documentation is required for U.S. citizens to obtain a visa upon arrival in Kuwait or Jordan. There is no fee for the Kuwaiti visa, but visas authorizing stays in excess of 30 days will be subject to one Kuwaiti Dinar (approximately $3.42 USD) fee per 30-day increment. Normally, extensions may not exceed 2 months, for a total stay of 3 months.

5. What is the status of Iraq's airports?

Due to the security threat to air operations around the airports in Iraq and the massive reconstruction requirements for navigational and visual aids on the airfields, the airports are operating at minimum levels and restricted to military operations and approved Department of Defense (DoD) non-military flights. The three major airports Baghdad, Basra, and Mosul require major infrastructure repairs and the installation of visual and navigational aids to bring them up to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards. The pre-war facilities used for air traffic control at the airports were destroyed and must be replaced. In addition, the power in Iraq at present is unreliable. The power grid within Baghdad International Air Port (BIAP) must be rebuilt in order to sustain the new navigational and radar facilities. At present, BIAP is open for daytime operations only for civil aircraft approved under DoD contract and other reconstruction purposes. Night operations are restricted to military aircraft only. The earliest that BIAP could be expected to meet ICAO standards for commercial operations will be spring 2005.

There is limited commercial passenger service to the Baghdad airport. Reportedly, Jupiter Airline, Ishtar Air, and Air Horizon are all offering flights to Baghdad from the UAE. For more information, contact Royal Jordanian Airlines located in the Baghdad Convention Center in Iraq at 703-270-0167, at the Royal Jordanian office in the Baghdad Royal Meridien Hotel at 914-360-3362, or at any of their ticketing offices worldwide.

For general flight information, you may contact the Iraqi Assistance Center's Air Movements Operations Cell at 1+ 703-270-0184, DSN: 318-239-0184, cell: 1+ 914-360-9247; or email at: iac.moveops@baghdadforum.com.

AirServ, working on a grant from the U.S Agency for International Development (USAID), has offered flights from Kuwait and Amman to Baghdad for USAID and contractor personnel as well as other humanitarian and diplomatic organizations. For further information, please visit AirServ's website at: www.airserv.org/.

According to the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre, SkyLink is also carrying passengers and cargo from Kuwait into Iraq and that Heston/SAFAIR is running passenger and cargo flights from Amman. For more information visit http://www.heston.net/aviation/aviation.htm.

6. Where are the major points of entry into Iraq?

There are several land ports of entry into Iraq. A list of some official entry points follows. More information on land routes to Iraq can be found in question 7. Land travel into and within Iraq is considered to be extremely dangerous. Please consult the State Department's Travel Warning at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/iraq_warning.html.

From Turkey:	Ibrahim al-Khalil (Turkey) Silopi, Turkey/Zakho, Iraq
From Saudi Arabia:	Ar'ar, Saudi Arabia/Ar'ar, Iraq
From Jordan:	Karameh, Jordan/ Trebil, Iraq
From Kuwait:	Abdali, Kuwait/ Safwan, Iraq Umm Qasr, Kuwait/Military (Tampa Gate) **Note there are special requirements for use of this entry point. See more details in question #7.*
From United Arab Emirates:	Ferry from Dubai to Umm Qasr runs 4 times a week carrying passengers and cargo run by Naif Marine Services (in Dubai +971-4-345-7878 fax: +971-4-345-5570, www.naifmarine.com, info@naifmarine.com).
From Syria:	Al-Tanf, Syria/Al Walid, Iraq Abu Kamal, Syria/Al-Qaim, Iraq Al-Yaroubiyeh, Syria/Rabiah, Iraq Faysh Khabour

International airports:

Baghdad International Airport
Basra
Kirkuk (cargo)

Seaports:

Umm Qasr
Basra

7. What should I keep in mind when traveling by vehicle to Iraq?

The Iraqi Ministry of Oil has created a rationing system that allows automobiles to refuel at government and privately owned pumps on alternate days depending on whether their license plates are odd or even-numbered. Security troubles, strikes and hoarding have caused distribution crises in Baghdad recently. On February 28, 2005, the prices for Benzene (Gasoline) in Baghdad were:

1 Liter regular gasoline sells for 20 IQD (1$=1460 IQD) at government gas stations. Currently, there are many such stations operating in Baghdad. Waiting times at the pumps stations about 1 hour. The purchase limit is 50 Liters.

Premium gasoline is currently available at government stations and sells for 50-100 IQD/L. Waiting times at the pumps range from 1 to 3 hours. The purchase limit is 50 Liters.

Privately owned pumps: Limit of 50 Liters. Price is 30 IQD per Liter regular gasoline, 100 IQD per Liter for Premium gasoline.

Gasoline is prevalent on the black market where it can sell for as little as 150 to 250 IQD per Liter, and as much as 2000 IQD to 3000 IQD per Liter. Regular gasoline costs between 150 IQD/L and has been reported for as much as 2000 IQD/L, and premium costs between 250 IQD/L and has been reported for as much as 3000 IQD/L, dependent upon multiple factors such as availability, demand, and season. In May of 2005, the IIRTF received notification that limits placed on gasoline/benzene purchases had been removed and that waiting times for gasoline/benzene purchases had shortened dramatically in most areas of Iraq. Gas prices in both public and private stations also showed parity at 20IQD/L (Regular) and 50 IQD (Premium), and black market prices generally remained in the 125 IQD/L (Regular) to 150 IQD/L (Premium) range. However, the major element seeming to affect pricing remains delivery of electricity, with wait times for gasoline increasing dramatically when electrical power delivery decreases. This is attributed to the widespread use of gasoline-powered generators to provide power for Iraqis when electrical power is unavailable.

From Jordan:
Highway 1 from Jordan is a high-quality four-to six-lane road. Travel time is about 10 hours from Amman to Baghdad (4-5 hours from the border). The route is extremely dangerous and may be closed if there is military activity in Fallujah. Always travel in convoys. Private security firms may be utilized for travel along any route. Although fuel and convenience stores at rest stops on Highway 1 generally function, travelers should plan to carry extra water, food and fuel to avoid non-critical stops.

From Turkey:
The most convenient method of travel is to fly into either Istanbul or Ankara, then take a connecting flight on Turkish Airlines to the southeastern Turkish city of Diyarbakir. A bus service is available to take passengers to the Iraqi border (approximately a four-hour drive) and then onto Baghdad via Erbil and Kirkuk. Travel from the north to Baghdad by road is extremely dangerous. To assist with arrangements, contact travel agencies in Turkey.

From Kuwait:
The known method of travel from Kuwait to Basra is by private vehicle (approximately a three-hour drive). Public bus service does not appear to be available. The two official border-crossing points that are open in Kuwait are Abdali/Safwan and Umm Qasr. The roads from Safwan to Baghdad are extremely dangerous. Individuals traveling to Iraq should consult the State Department's Consular Information Sheet for Iraq at: travel.state.gov/iraq.html.

Travelers should note that the following was true as of the time of the revision of this document. Changes to the process below could occur at a moment's notice and thus the following should act as a guide to help the traveler better understand the overall visa situation. The following instructions detail the procedure for obtaining an Iraqi visa from Kuwait:

Travel to Iraq from Kuwait requires permission to leave Kuwait for Iraq and an Iraqi visa in order to be allowed past the Kuwaiti checkpoint. To obtain permission and a visa the local company in Kuwait needs to write a letter to Kuwait Immigration requesting permission for the individual(s)/ employee to enter Iraq. The letter should mention the purpose of travel for the individual, name, nationality and passport number. It is then taken to the Kuwait Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) to be signed; and finally, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Consular section to be notarized. The letter is then taken to the Iraqi Embassies in Amman, Jordan or Manama, Bahrain so a visa can be granted. Due to the fact that there is presently no Iraqi Embassy or Consulate in Kuwait, the Iraqi Embassies in Bahrain and Jordan are handling visa issuance procedures. The procedures are in flux, therefore unanticipated changes may occur at any time.

Once the visa has been obtained, the individual may enter via Bahrain or Jordan or the individual may return to Kuwait and drive through the border provided they have been cleared for departure from one of the three entities stated below. This permission to leave Kuwait is critical since if one leaves illegally, one may be unable to reenter Kuwait. Note that Kuwaiti citizens are prohibited from leaving Kuwait for Iraq at this writing.

There are three offices where you may obtain permits to enter Iraq from Kuwait Immigration

1. Head of Businessmen Department - Ministry of Interior
Colonel Bjad Al-Mutairi / Ministry of Interior (MOI)- Department of Immigration, Kuwait
Tel: (965) 434 4221
Fax: (965) 434 0017

2. Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC)

Colonel Kazem Mahussein/ Administration and PR
Tel: (965) 482 5350
Cell: (965) 633 0054
Fax: (965) 482 5171

3. Kuwait Ministry of Information
Located in Kuwait City and responsible for media related Iraq-entrance procedures.

There are two border crossing points: Abdali/ Safwan (Civilian Gate) and Umm Qasr/ Military (Tampa Gate)

Civilian Gate:
When using the Civilian Gate, Abdali is the first checkpoint reached. At Abdali, individuals are asked for their Iraqi visas and the Kuwaiti permits to enter Iraq from one of the three entities mentioned above. Then they drive approximately 5 kilometers to Safwan, Iraq, where a secondary check may be requested. This applies to all nationalities leaving Kuwait.

The Iraqi border is several meters away from Safwan and there's a yellow brick line that indicates the separation between Kuwait and Iraq, so anyone not authorized to cross should be very careful not to step beyond that point. The Iraqi border security handles operations on that end and must see the Iraqi Visa.

Important:
The Civilian Gate follows an independent procedure than the Military Gate, therefore if an individual crosses through the Military Gate and attempts to return through the Civilian Gate, there will be NO RECORDS showing that he/she ever left Kuwait and they will face difficulty. Some have been denied entrance and asked to return to Iraq and return to their original gate of entry.

Military Gate:
The Military Gate is called Tampa, and is about one mile west of the civilian gate. The Kuwaiti and U.S. militaries (either U.S. Army or civilian contractors) control Tampa. It is for use by all personnel with U.S. Department of Defense ID cards, either military or civilian, who may authorize other individuals such as diplomats or subcontractors to use this gate. Travelers with business for the U.S. military need to confirm their legal status in Kuwait and in Iraq. To avoid, or at least reduce, all manner of potential problems when confirming your status include the transit permission, time in country, method of travel, usage of military or civilian entry-point, access to U.S. military facilities, insurance coverage and ability to ride with official convoys, among others. Typically, civilians of any nationality wishing to enter Iraq on private business would not be permitted entry through Tampa, but would be referred to Abdali.

Kuwaiti Visas:

Nationals of only thirty-four countries (including the U.S.) can be issued Kuwaiti visas at any port of entry into Kuwait. They are instantly given 30-day visas. Violation of this stay period is 10 Kuwaiti Dinars/ day (approx. 33 USD). An extension may be requested through a local sponsor, hotel, entity or company prior to the completion of 30-day stay. For every additional month increment, the fee is 1 Kuwaiti Dinars/ month (approx. 3.30 USD) for the stamps. Normally, extensions may not exceed two months, for a total of three months' stay. The Government of Kuwait is currently reviewing a proposal to extend the duration of stay from 30 days to 3 months. It has not yet been finalized and approved.

8. What health precautions should I take before traveling to Iraq?

The U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following vaccines:

- Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG);
- Hepatitis B, if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay longer than six months, or be exposed through medical treatment;
- Rabies, if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation;
- Typhoid, particularly if you are visiting developing countries in this region; and
- As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria and measles, and a one-time dose of polio for adults. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11–12 years who have not completed the series.

Please visit the CDC website at: www.cdc.gov to obtain the latest information. You may obtain information about medical care in Iraq by reading referencing the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/citizen_services/medical_info.html. A list of public hospitals may be found at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/medical_facilities.html. Information may also be available through the following email address: usconsulbaghdad@state.gov.

II. INFORMATION WHILE STAYING IN IRAQ

9. Are hotels open in Iraq?

Hotels are open and operating on a cash-only basis (U.S. dollars or Iraqi dinars). Hotels in Baghdad have been targeted for attack by insurgents. Many hotels provide their own security services. Visitors are advised to check with hotels on their security provisions. Taxi drivers can be expected to know their locations. Some hotels have onsite restaurants. The following hotels are located in Baghdad (unless noted), with approximate prices in U.S. dollars:

- Sheraton: $70-80
- Al Hamra Hotel: $70/night, tel.# Country Code (Ex. U.S. 011) +964 1 778 1805
- Palestine Hotel: $70/night, tel.# Country Code (Ex. U.S. 011) +964 1 747 0675
- Babylon Hotel: $64/single and $84/double, tel.# Country Code (Ex. U.S. 011) +964 1 778 1964
- Al Hammurabi: $50
- Kindeel: $45-50
- Cedar Hotel: $90 for a flat
- Coral Palace: $90/single and $100/double, tel.# Country Code (Ex. U.S. 011) +88 216 2112 4455
- Sultan Palace: $45-55
- Rimal Hotel: $130
- Sebel Hotel: $60
- **Kirkuk**: Qasr Kirkuk: $40

10. Who can provide on-the-ground support with accommodations, logistics and transportation?

Many of the security firms listed on the State Department's website, http://travel.state.gov/travel/iraq_securitycompanies.html, provide complete logistical services, including lodging in secure compounds within Iraq.

11. Are credit cards accepted?

Most hotels and shops accept only cash. Some small shops and restaurants will accept Visa credit cards by swiping the card onto a paper form. Foreign travelers must take caution: criminal elements are aware that they may be carrying comparatively high levels of cash.

12. What are the electrical frequency and current requirements for Iraq?

Iraq uses the 220 Volt and 50 or 60 Cycle. Iraq also uses a European plug configuration.

13. Are consular services available to U.S. citizens visiting Iraq?

The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad opened on June 29, 2004. The Embassy operates Sunday through Thursday, from 8:00am until 4:30pm. Currently, all consular services, including U.S. citizen services, are available at the Embassy. U.S. citizens who plan to travel to or remain in Iraq despite any Travel Warnings should register with the United States Consular Office when traveling to Iraq. Registration may be done Sunday through Thursday between 1:00 and 4:00p.m. or online at https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/home.asp. See the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad website at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/ for more details or email at usconsulbaghdad@state.gov. The office is now located at C-135, the Chancery (on

the ground floor of the U.S. Embassy). It may be reached for general inquiries at the following U.S. numbers that ring in Baghdad: 240-553-0584, ext. 4354 or ext. 4342.

The Embassy may also be reached via the following contact information:

Mailing Address: Embassy of the United States
APO AE 09316
Baghdad, Iraq

Press Office: Tel: 00-1-703-343-7604/8202/8204/8205/8207
Arabic is available on 7604 and 8202

Consular Office: Tel: 00-1-240-553-0584 x.4354

You may obtain updated travel and security information on Iraq by visiting the Department of State website at: http://travel.state.gov/travel/iraq.html or by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States, or, from overseas, 1-317-472-2328.

14. Who should I call in case of an emergency?

In an emergency while traveling abroad, U.S. citizens should contact the Consular Affairs office in that country. Consular Affairs in Baghdad may be reached from Iraq at 07901-732-134 or 07901-916-165 or if calling from the U.S., 240-553-0584, ext. 4354 or 4342, or 914-822-5493.

15. What medical facilities are available?

Travelers should not assume that their insurance coverage is valid in Baghdad. Travelers are encouraged to verify the extent and validity of their insurance coverage while in Iraq prior to travel.

Medical care is available in Iraq through 240 public hospitals and 70 private hospitals, though Western standards are largely absent. All fees must be paid in cash.

According to the U.S. Consular Office in Baghdad, the best public hospitals in Baghdad are Al-Yermouk in Mansour, Al-Kindi on Palestine Street in 7th Nissan, and Al-Shaheed Adnan on Baba Muadham Street in Rusafa.

Private hospitals in Baghdad normally provide better care and service than public hospitals, but they have no emergency rooms and charge a higher fee. The best private clinics in Baghdad are al-Hayat on 52 Street in Karada, al-Rahebat in Karada, and Karkh hospital for surgery.

The best-known and well-stocked pharmacies in Baghdad with English-speaking pharmacists are Hunnudi and Al-Shaiklee.

More information may be obtained by reading the website of the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad located at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/citizen_services/medical_info.html. A list of public hospitals may be found at: http://iraq.usembassy.gov/iraq/medical_facilities.html. Information may also be available through the following email address: usconsulbaghdad@state.gov.

Please visit the CDC website at: www.cdc.gov to obtain the latest information on vaccinations and health information on traveling to Iraq.

16. Are telecommunication services available?

There are currently more total telephone subscribers (combined land and cell service) in Iraq than there were before the war. The three major cell phone companies in Iraq (Asia Cell, Iraqna, and Atheer in the North, Central, and South respectively) continue to enroll new cell phone subscribers. The majority of local landline telephone service is now operational in Baghdad. It is anticipated that full local service in Baghdad and nationwide landline connectivity will soon be restored. It is possible for international callers to reach most Iraqi telephone numbers, but there is limited international phone service from Iraq at this time.

The northern Iraqi cities of Dahook, Erbil and Sulaimaniya have reliable landline systems and very good mobile networks; though neither have international calling capability. The city of Kirkuk has a reliable landline system that connects to Baghdad.

International calling capability is being added to landline systems. The Thuraya and Iridium satellite systems are available for international telecommunications links. The Thuraya network has offices in Iraq.

Internet service is increasingly available through Internet cafes and hotels.

For business information on the telecommunications sector, please reference the U.S. Department of Commerce's Business Guide for Iraq at: http://www.export.gov/iraq/bus_climate/sector_overview.html#telecommunications.

17. What local or land transportation services are available in Iraq?

Many taxis are available in Baghdad. Army protocol recommends hailing a taxi that is passing by, not waiting (unless approved by the hotel). Try to

retain the same taxi for return travel. Hotels can provide the names and phone numbers of legitimate car and driver services.

In northern Iraqi cities, taxis are widely available, reliable and inexpensive. They are available both as curb service and by dispatch. The average fare is $1 per kilometer, with most destinations in town costing no more than $2. Car rentals are also available in the northern cities on a monthly lease basis. In Kirkuk, daily car rentals are available for $50 per day.

Petrol stations in Baghdad have gas, but wait times for gas vary depending upon season, availability, demand and the performance of the electrical sector. Wait times range from virtually nonexistent to upwards of five hours dependent upon the aforementioned factors. There is a thriving black market for gasoline.

Related information is available in the State Departments Consular Information Sheet for Iraq at http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/iraq.html.

18. What currencies are accepted in Iraq?

As of October 15, 2003, new Iraq dinars replaced both the “Saddam” dinars used in southern Iraq as well as the “Swiss” dinars used in the north. The exchange period for the old currency concluded on January 15, 2004. The Iraqi dinar has been permitted to float in the international currency markets. As of May 2, 2005, 1,460 Iraqi Dinars were equal to approximately 1 U.S. dollar, where it has traded for much of the time since May 2004.

To guard against political or government interference, CPA Order #18 authorizes the Iraq Central Bank to set credit and monetary policies without requiring approval from the Ministry of Finance.

19. Can I wire money into Iraq?

Yes. Wiring money to Iraq can be done with any international bank with a correspondent relationship with an Iraqi bank. One bank, the Credit Bank of Iraq has opened an account with National Bank of Kuwait in New York City. Thus, funds can be transferred to Iraq by wiring funds to the Credit Bank's account in New York City. The Credit Bank will receive confirmation of the deposit and can immediately credit an account in Baghdad. Using this method, a prime contractor can wire funds to the Credit Bank of Iraq’s New York City account, upon confirmation the deposit will be credited to its account in Baghdad. In turn, the prime contract can deposit these funds into an Iraqi subcontractor’s account at the Credit Bank of Iraq where the subcontractor can then draw down its funds as required.

Also, Citibank in Amman offers a service that delivers cash to the doorstep of the beneficiary in Iraq (tel. # Country Code (U.S. it is 011) +962 6 567 5100).

Some U.S. Army personnel and foreign officials use the Export & Finance Bank (tel. # Country Code (U.S. it is 011) + 962 6 569 4250) in Amman, Jordan, which provides money transfer services in cooperation with Baghdad Bank.

Visa International entered into an agreement with Rafidain Bank to allow the bank to make electronic fund transfers among its branches throughout the country. A list of private banks operating in Iraq and possibly providing this service is available from the CPA website at: www.iraqcoalition.org. However, Iraq's creditors preclude banks, Rafidain and Rasheed, from international transactions because their offshore assets are subject to attachment.

20. Where can I find maps of Iraq?

Several options exist for finding maps on Iraq. Maptech provides information at: www.maptech.com. The company sells electronic maps that include "Iraq Road Network and Street Maps".

GlobalSecurity.org also maintains extensive internet-accessible maps of Iraq, ranging from topographical to political, demographic and historical maps. These maps are available at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/iraq/maps.htm.

III. INFORMATION PERTAINING TO IRAQI TRAVEL TO THE U.S.

21. Can Iraqis travel to the United States?

Effective July 25, 2004 the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy has begun processing diplomatic ("A") and international organization ("G") category visas in Baghdad. Completed applications may be submitted to the consular section Sunday through Thursday from 9:00a.m. to 11:00a.m except U.S. and Iraqi holidays. Applications for other visa categories for Iraqis whose travel is funded by the U.S. or Iraqi governments (such as B1 Business Visas, B2 tourist visas, and J educational and cultural exchange visas) must be submitted to a diplomatic post outside of Iraq. The bulk of these visas continue to be facilitated by the Consular Section and adjudicated in Amman, Jordan.

The U.S. Embassy in Baghdad is not yet processing visa applications for the general public. Iraqi citizens and Iraqi nationals living abroad must apply for a U.S. visa at any U.S. diplomatic post outside of Iraq where the citizen/national is able to appear in person. For more information on applying for a visa to the United States, please see the following web address: http://usembassy.state.gov/iraq/consular.html.

IV. GUIDE TO ACRONYMS

BIAP: Baghdad International Airport

CDC: Center for Disease Control
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a U.S. government agency that is tasked with protecting the health and safety of people at home and abroad, providing credible information to enhance health decisions, and promoting health through strong partnerships. CDC serves as the national focus for developing and applying disease prevention and control, environmental health, and health promotion and education activities designed to improve the health of the people of the United States.

CPA: Coalition Provisional Authority
The CPA was established by coalition forces to manage the governing of Iraq after the fall of the Hussein regime. The CPA was led by Ambassador L. Paul Bremmer and issued 100 different CPA Orders that now make up a significant portion of Iraqi commercial law. The CPA was dissolved when sovereignty was passed to the Iraqi Interim Government on June 28, 2004.

DOD: United States Department of Defense

ICAO: International Civil Aviation Organization

ID: Iraqi Dinar
The Iraqi Dinar is the new currency that was issued after the fall of Sadam Hussein to replace the "Swiss Dinars" used in the north of the country, and the "Sadam Dinars" used in the rest of the country.

UAE: United Arab Emirates

UNJLC: United Nations Joint Logistics Centre

USD: United States Dollar

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