

BASRAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT INITIAL AIRPORT MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT (CLIN 001)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

The Initial Airport Management Assessment was carried out at Basra International Airport between April 24 and April 27, 2003 by a team of four experienced airport professional engineers and a liaison officer.

At the time of the assessment, the airport had already been occupied for the previous four to five weeks by elements of the British forces under the command of RAF Group Captain Lock, who had set up a Deployment Operations Base (DOB). There were more than 1,000 military personnel accommodated at the airport including the RAF, HQ I Division of the British Army, the Royal Engineers and the Joint Helicopter Force.

The airport was accommodating significant helicopter operations and occasional fixed-wing operations under VFR conditions. An Initial Operations Capability had already been achieved, and a Full Operations Capability was then being established together with an IFR capability. On May 1, 2003 the first civil aircraft landed at Basrah—a B747 operated by Virgin Atlantic.

The immediate impression gained by the assessment team was of an airport that had been well designed but poorly maintained since the commissioning in the mid-1980s. Airport buildings and airfield pavements were in remarkably good condition, and exhibited little war damage.

Airport services and utilities, however, were in a serious state of disrepair. There was no mains power to the airport and limited emergency power was provided by one of three emergency generators. There was no running water and the sewage collection system was out of service.

With no power supply to the airfield systems and equipment it was not possible to accurately assess serviceability. The visual inspections over the four-day assessment period, however, revealed that much of the mobile and fixed equipment was either obsolete, looted, vandalized or had been removed for use at other airports. A detailed survey and operational assessment of all airport components is included in the main body of the report.

Indicative capital cost estimates have been prepared to make airport improvements in two phases: an initial phase to accommodate limited civil aviation operations; and a second phase to achieve full CAT II capability. It has been assumed in the estimates that the resources used by the British forces in achieving Full Operating Capability would not be included in the budget.

The capital costs to achieve limited civil aviation operations with a precision approach capability and a basic passenger and cargo handling capability were estimated at \$29 million. These improvements would take approximately 6-12 months to implement.

The additional costs to achieve full CAT II capability and to realize the full design capacity of the airport was estimated at an additional \$27 million. The full program would take approximately 24 months to implement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The initial airport management assessment report has been prepared and submitted within two weeks of commencement of the assessments on-site. In the process a large number of assumptions have been made regarding operational capability and the scope of required improvements.

The recommendations below are intended to highlight specific issues that the second assessment team will have to address under Task CLIN 002 – Planning implementation of airport improvements.

It is critical to establish the role of Basrah International Airport in both the short and long term. Certainly in the short term the airport will be operated as a joint military/civil installation, and it is important to ascertain how the future role might evolve. In the next phase of the work under CLIN 002 the following issues need to be addressed:

- The level and type of traffic anticipated in the short and medium term. Among other issues this will have a direct bearing on the scope of the required improvements, as well as the projection of aviation fuel storage requirements.
- The optimum timeframe for handover of civil aviation management functions from the DOB Command to the USAID contractor.
- Organizational structure to permit joint military and civil aviation use of the airport, likely for an extended timeframe;
- The disposition of fixed and mobile equipment installed or to be installed by the DOB command, after handover to the USAID contractor;
- The availability of trained Iraqi nationals who are expected to return to the airport once the environment is suitable

TECHNICAL REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Terms of Reference

The Statement of Work issued by USAID comprises three tasks to be completed for each of five airports to be selected by USAID:

- CLIN 001: Initial Airport Management Assessments
- CLIN 002: Planning Implementation of Airport Improvements
- CLIN 003: Direct Operation of Airports

This report contains the Initial Airport Management Assessment of Basrah International Airport. The material included in the report has been prepared in response to the Statement of Work issued by USAID.

1.2. The Assessment Team Deployment

The assessment team deployed by Skylink Air and Logistic Support (USA) Inc. (Skylink) consisted of four professional engineers experienced in airport planning, design, construction, management and operations, and a Project Liaison Officer.

The team received Accreditation Orders for Training, dated March 19, 2003. Under these orders the team was processed through the CONUS Replacement Centre (CRC) at Fort Benning, Georgia, during the period March 30, 2003 through April 3, 2003, where they received their equipment issue, vaccinations, briefings and training.

The assessment team was subsequently deployed to Kuwait City on April 17, 2003 and then on to Basrah, Iraq on April 24, 2003 when a permissive environment was declared by USAID. The assessment on-site at Basrah International Airport was carried out over four days, after which the team returned to Kuwait City on April 27 returning to North America on April 28, 2003.

1.3. Meetings and Interviews

On arrival at Basrah International Airport the team met Deployment Operations Base (DOB) Commander Group Captain Lock of the Royal Air Force. More than 1,000 British forces personnel from the RAF, Joint Helicopter Force, HQ 1 Division, the Royal Engineers and other elements of the British Army presently occupy the airport.

During the assessment period the team was afforded virtually unrestricted access to all areas of the airport and was in constant consultation with the DOB Commander, his technical and management staff, and with the Royal Engineers. Unclassified information such as initial assessment reports, preliminary organization charts, and a number of

