

# Multi-National Division - South

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## Iranian border Cargo Transload Area improves security and commerce for Iraq

By Pfc. Bethany L. Little, 172nd Infantry Brigade

**ZURBATIYAH POINT OF ENTRY, Iraq** – Iraq worked to improve commerce and security as the Cargo Transload Area opened along the border following a ribbon cutting ceremony here, Sept. 26.

The project is a combined effort through the Border Transition Team 4351, Task Force Drifter, Point of Entry team, Iraq Ministry of Finance, Civil Customs, Army Corps of Engineers and Iraqi Security Forces. The area allows for commerce and safe trading between Iraq and Iran.

“I am very thankful for all of the help Coalition Forces have provided for us to create this area,” said Maj. Gen. Isam Salih Yaseen, Zurbatiyah Port Director, Department of Border Enforcement. “We now have the ability to be more proficient and provide better security between Iraq and Iran.”

The CTLA process starts at the Iranian border. Trucks are weighed and backed up to the 50-lane transload area. Where goods are then put on the concrete pier and inspected by customs police. When the all clear is given, the goods are then transferred into Iraqi trucks and taken to the final inspection area in Iraq.

Inspection includes searching for useable products or unfit for consumption produce, improvise explosive device material and drugs.

Anywhere from 200-500 cargo trucks pass through the CTLA on a daily basis and approximately 5,000 people are processed through the point of entry.

“This project provides an opportunity for customs police to see what is transferred through the two countries and provide security for both countries,” said Maj. David W. Gordon, Zebatiya POE Team Chief, BTT 4351, Task Force Drifter.

“Iraqis are now able to help protect themselves from illegal items being smuggled into the country,” said Col. Kenneth E. Downer, Commander, BTT 4351, Task Force Drifter and native of Alexandria, V.A.

The POE is equipped with a dining area, office workspaces, armory, living quarters, bathrooms and showers for the personnel manning the facility.

The construction cost of the CTLA was \$5.3 million, but through taxes, tariffs and fees the CTLA brings in approximately \$40,000 or 40-50 million Iraqi Dinar.

Key leaders such as Maj. Gen. Richard J. Rowe, Director of Iraq Training and Advisory Mission, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, and Brig. Gen. Jerry Lang, Deputy Commander, 34th Infantry Division, attended the ceremony and toured the facility.

“This project shows how the trade between Iraq and Iran will continue to grow and commercialize in a good way,” said Yaseen. “It is a major responsibility to take on this area, but it will help us better our security and strengthen our economy.”



**090926-A-9898L-0172 ZURBATIYAH POINT OF ENTRY, Iraq** – Maj. Gen. Isam Salih Yaseen, Zurbatiyah Port Director, Department of Border Enforcement, cuts the ribbon to represent the opening of the Cargo Transload Area between the Iraq and Iran border here, Sept. 26. The CTLA is a border facility that enables safe commerce between Iraq and Iran. (U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Bethany L. Little)



**090926-A-9898L-0090 ZURBATIYAH POINT OF ENTRY, Iraq** – Maj. Gen. Richard J. Rowe, Director of Iraq Training and Advisory Mission, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, talks to Maj. Gen. Isam Salih Yaseen, Zurbatiyah Port Director, Department of Border Enforcement prior to the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Cargo Transload Area here, Sept. 26. Rowe was one of several key leaders to attend the ceremony. (U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Bethany L. Little)



**090926-A-9898L-0045 ZURBATIYAH POINT OF ENTRY, Iraq** – People wait in line to go through customs inspection and cross into Iraq. There are 200-500 cargo trucks that pass through the CTLA on a daily basis and approximately 5,000 people are processed through the point of entry. (U.S. Army Photo by Pfc. Bethany L. Little)

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