



3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

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Sustainers advise, train Iraqi Soldiers at Al-Kasik

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AL-KASIK, Iraq –Soldiers of the Al-Kasik logistical training assistance team, 16th Sustainment Brigade, met with Iraqi Army Soldiers, 3rd Division at Al-Kasik on Nov. 22 as part of their embedded support of Iraqi Army logistics reconstruction.

Chief Warrant Officer Rodney Hughes Sr., team chief, Al-Kasik LTAT, 16th Sustainment Brigade, leads a group of U.S. Soldiers that work with Iraqi Army Soldiers at Al-Kasik, a divisional Iraqi Army base of Iraq's 3rd Division in northern Iraq.

The LTAT provides logistical mentorship and training for the Al-Kasik Location Command to assist in achieving overall transferability and self-sustainment in third-line maintenance and logistical operations, Hughes said.

The LTAT is one of several types of teams that the U.S. has embedded with Iraqi security forces. Other teams focus on areas such as basic military operations, and police, border patrol and port of entry issues. Hughes' LTAT focuses on warehouse operations, vehicle maintenance, generator repair and other logistical issues.

“The U.S. is solving a lot of problems that the Iraqi Ministry of Defense doesn’t know how to solve,” said Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Tahssen Hassan Osman, commanding general, LOCOM, Al-Kasik, during a meeting with Hughes Nov. 22.

The general said the LTAT has been very valuable to Soldiers in his command.

“The Iraqi Army is a new army,” Osman said. “It’s supposed to have schools for vehicle maintenance, generator repair, warehouse operations and other logistics, but we lack the schools. So if there is any training we can get from the U.S. Army it’s good for the Iraqi Army.”

Hughes, a 41-year-old from Milwaukee, Wis., said that despite some challenges like the language gap and scheduling conflicts, the training is worthwhile.

“It’s important because we’re trying to help the Iraqi Army become self-sufficient,” Hughes said. “It gives you a sense of satisfaction knowing that you’re making a difference.”

Hughes said working with Iraqis requires a unique approach.

“The Iraqis are committed to making this work, but there are a lot of cultural differences,” said Hughes. “No means no, but yes means maybe. You have to build rapport. Until you build a relationship, it’s hard to do the job.”

Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Emad Abdullah Dhaher, a maintenance officer who works with the 16th Sust. Bde. LTAT at one of the two warehouses at Al-Kasik said the cooperation has been very beneficial.

“We’ve learned a lot from them,” said Dhafer, a 20-year-old from Mosul, Iraq, through a translator. “For example, we’ve learned to put parts on shelves with tracking numbers and keep a computer database.”

The maintenance officer was confident that his Soldiers could now manage the warehouse successfully, thanks to the help of the LTAT, but was non-committal.

“Sure, we know how to do our job,” he said. “But I don’t know, as God wills.”



Chief Warrant Officer Rodney Hughes Sr., team chief, Al Kasik logistical training assistance team (LTAT), 16th Sustainment Brigade, discusses training issues with Iraqi Army Brig. Gen. Tahssen Hassan Osman, commanding general, Al Kasik Location Command, during a meeting at Al Kasik LOCOM headquarters Nov. 22. Hughes' team works with Iraqi Army Soldiers in warehouse operations, vehicle and generator maintenance, and small arms repair and maintenance at the division-level Iraqi base in northern Iraq. "The U.S. is solving a lot of problems that the Iraqi Ministry of Defense doesn't know how to solve," said Osman, during the meeting with Hughes. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)



Staff Sgt. Ronald Jean-Louis, Al Kasik logistical training assistance team (LTAT), 16th Sustainment Brigade, shows Iraqi Army Spc. Saleh Taktook, a warehouse specialist, how to input repair-parts tracking numbers into a computer database at the Motorized Transportation Regiment warehouse at Al Kasik Nov. 22. Jean-Louis and the others on his team have worked with Iraqis at the divisional base to automate and streamline warehouse operations at the base. (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)



Sgt. 1st Class Josue Martinez (right), Al Kasik logistical training assistance team (LTAT), 30th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, and Staff Sgt. Ronald Jean-Louis, Al Kasik LTAT, 16th Sust. Bde., reiterate to Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Emad Abdullah Dhaher, the importance of tracking every part and filling out all of the required paperwork, at the Iraqi Motorized Transportation Regiment warehouse at Al Kasik Nov. 23. “We’ve learned a lot from them,” said Dhaher, a 20-year-old from Mosul, Iraq, through a translator. “For example, [we’ve learned to] put parts on shelves with tracking numbers and keep a computer database.” (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt. Keith M. Anderson)

PHOTOS AND STORY BY SGT. KEITH M. ANDERSON, 16 SB PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

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