

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

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### 18TH MILITARY POLICE BRIGADE APPLIES ENHANCED 'SYSTEMS' APPROACH TO IMPROVING IRAQI POLICE

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18th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs Office

**BAGHDAD, Iraq** -- Iraqi Police expansion and improvement in Baghdad has reached an all-time high in the past six months, coalition officials say, with new recruits filling police ranks in Baghdad provinces by the day.



SGT DANIEL BLOTTENBERGER

An interpreter helps Capt. Vaughan Byrum of the 18th Military Police Brigade's Police Transition Team (left) and brigade operations officer Lt. Col. Thomas Lombardo (right) discuss enhanced Police Transition Team methods with Brig. Gen. Safaa, deputy commander of the Iraqi Police Patrol Headquarters, in Baghdad, Iraq Feb. 6.

As 18th Military Police Brigade Police Transition Teams assess improvements in the number of IPs and rule of law operations at the police station level, the brigade is beginning a transition to a "systems approach" while moving the Iraqi Police headquarters to the next level of performance -- the enhanced Police Transition Team, or ePTT.

The brigade's ePTT is composed of staff representatives from the military police, logistics,

communications and personnel arenas who have been developed to focus on the sustainment operations of the Iraqi Police force in Baghdad.

"We are energizing the leadership to take responsibility and support their stations," said Lt. Col. Thomas Lombardo, the 18th's operations officer.

The brigade is doing this by sending staff experts to the Iraqi Police provincial leadership in Baghdad to support IP efforts in improving their sustainment systems. The new approach is looking at the Provincial Director of Police headquarters as well as other provincial levels such as the Criminal Investigations Department, Provincial Police Patrol Headquarters and Traffic Headquarters.

The brigade is supporting logistics, personnel management, maintenance, budget, police operations, training, leadership and judicial integration sections.

"You can have all these systems in place, but if you don't have good leadership, none of these things will work. Leadership makes things work," said Lombardo, who has worked directly with the IP leadership in Baghdad since the unit deployed from Germany in October.

Lombardo said the IP leadership is very proactive and receptive to the new approach being introduced by their coalition counterparts.

"The stations here in Baghdad are good," said Lombardo. "We can make them better, if we can get the IP leadership to take responsibility of their stations and take charge."

Over the past month, the brigade staff has worked with all provincial levels of leadership in Baghdad to understand the IP systems and see how the ePTT can help improve IP director methods of operation.

The brigade sent staff experts from each section of operations into the upper echelons of the Iraqi Police to learn and assess the Iraqi Police systems.

"Iraqi Police have grown in numbers. Now their systems need to grow to match their numbers," said the 18th's 1st Lt. David Delong, a communications officer who recently looked over some of the IP's communication systems.

"The Iraqi Police were very happy to have someone who knows communications to come talk to them and lend some advice," said Delong.

The lieutenant said he was impressed with the IPs' knowledge of their communications systems, and where they wanted to go with their systems in the future. Internet communications, which Delong said is vital for sharing information between IP elements, is a major focus of IP and ePTT efforts.

The ePTT teams are helping distribute necessary communication supplies from the Ministry of the Interior to the IPs and set up contracts to get internet connectivity. They are also starting to train experienced communications personnel at the IP stations so they can train other officers at the stations.

Master Sgt. Thomas Francis, a maintenance supervisor for the 18th, spent several days observing IP maintenance systems at the Central Maintenance Facility in Baghdad.

"The IP have a good system in place," said Francis, who has been working in maintenance facilities for 20 years.

"The IP work (well) with what they have," he said, referring to Iraqi vehicle mechanics at the CMF.

"They are very organized and have good accountability of their parts, which they often recycle to get the most out of their equipment," Francis added.

The PTT plans to help the mechanics procure modernized equipment and training, and has recommended ways to move mechanics and spread them out at the different IP organization levels to capitalize on their experience.

"There are a lot of mechanics in training, and once they graduate, we will help them distribute the new mechanics to all levels in Baghdad," said Francis.

The new mechanics and equipment will help speed up the process of recovering damaged IP vehicles, enhancing their mission capability, said Francis.

The ePTT approach is in its initial stages, but Lombardo said he feels confident that the brigade is moving in the right direction. IP leadership is taking the advice from the ePTT and responsibility for their stations while improving IP systems in Baghdad.

"Enhanced PTT is a strategy to build on, and in the future we will hand this off to future brigades to continue," the colonel said.

"This system helps us move to our end state, in which (the IP) move to enforce the rule of law independently," said Lombardo.

The 18th MP Brigade is a U.S. Army Europe unit headquartered in Mannheim, Germany.



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