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Special Briefing

**Office of the Spokesman**

Via Teleconference Call

October 23, 2007

## **Ambassador Patrick F. Kennedy on the Report of the Secretary of State's Panel on Personal Protective Services in Iraq**

[Implementation of Recommendations from the Secretary of State's Report on Personal Protective Service Details](#)

**MR. MCCORMACK:** Thanks for joining us, everybody. I'll just make a couple brief remarks at the top and then I'll turn it over to Patrick Kennedy and he can talk a little bit about the [report](#) and the recommendations that the Secretary has ordered to be implemented immediately.

I also wanted to draw your attention to an announcement we just put out and that is on an appointment of a Senior Advisor to the Deputy Secretary for Iraq Management Issues. Ambassador Steve Browning is going to fill that job on a temporary basis. He's going to work closely with John Negroponte on management issues related to Iraq. He's also going to be working very closely with David Satterfield.

So let me turn it over to Pat. He is going to, at the top of this, run through the list of recommendations that the Secretary has ordered to be implemented immediately. These are recommendations internal to the State Department that we can act on without regard to any further consultation with outside entities. You'll see in the report that there are some other recommendations. Those, in our judgment, are going to require some further consultation, but the Secretary is committed to acting on these recommendations in some form or fashion in a prompt manner.

So with that, I will turn it over to Pat Kennedy.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Good afternoon. The Secretary has received the report and has decided to move ahead on the recommendations which are, as Sean said, within her purview to act on immediately. And the first is that an Assistant State Department Regional Security Officer will be accompanying every motorcade movement that is -- that contract security personnel are involved in.

And as I might note, some of these you may have heard already because they are -- as you recall, there was an interim report also rendered to the Secretary after 96 hours. And so some of those -- obviously, those recommendations have been carried forward and she's reiterating her support for them.

Second recommendation is that the State Department's contract for worldwide protective services is going to be amended to provide the resources for the contractor to engage a limited number of Arabic language staff to be used as needed in convoy movements.

The third one is additional training modules are going to be added to the mandated training under the contract to provide for enhanced cultural awareness for assigned personnel to acquaint them better with diplomatic structures and procedures and to familiarize them with Multi-National Force-Iraq tactics, techniques and procedures.

The fourth one is to tighten the ground rules for the use of deadly force and to work towards greater parallelism with the CENTCOM rules on the use of force by contracted security personnel in Iraq. The U.S. Mission firearms policy is going to be revised without limiting the inherent right to take action for self-defense to say that if an authorized employee must fire his or her weapon, he or she must fire only aim shots, fire with due regard for the safety of innocent bystanders, and make every effort to avoid civilian casualties. These are not, in effect, changes to the policy, i.e. we're not saying that employees were doing that. We're just putting this specifically in a reformulation of the written document.

The next one is the Regional Security Office is going to be installing video recording equipment in each security vehicle, installing audio recording equipment in the tactical operations center that'll record all radio transmissions and is going to be adding a computer patch to something that's called Blue Force Tracker. Blue Force Tracker is, for a non-technician like me, a GPS type device that tracks the movement of every vehicle. And so by installing this equipment, not only will we know, as we do now, where every vehicle is, but we will be able to go back retrospectively and find out or confirm that at a given point in time, a vehicle was at a certain location. Should there be any question about involvement of a State Department motorcade, we'll know where exactly the motorcades were over and above the paper record we already maintained.

The Regional Security Office is also going to install a vehicle identification number on the rear of every vehicle. Lots of vehicles are moving in Iraq. Not all of them are identifiable, so if someone saw a vehicle, they wouldn't necessarily be able to identify what the vehicle was or whose it was, but by putting a number on the back, there will be an ability to say that yes, this was or this was not a State Department vehicle.

In order to be more responsive, the Regional Security Office is also being directed to establish what is being called a Go Team -- that's g-o, t-e-a-m, picking up all of language used in other government agencies. And what the responsibility of the Go Team is, is to proceed as soon as possible to the scene of any weapons discharged to gather information and materiel and provide an analysis of what happened and why and prepare a report. The plan is for this team to work with representatives of the Government of the Iraq and the U.S. military unit responsible for the area that the incident has taken place.

The next -- the Embassy will establish a Joint Incident Review Board that will review all incidents involving the use of deadly force, which are known or asserted to have caused injury, death or other serious consequences. The board is going to be chaired by the Deputy Chief of Mission and membership would include the regional security officer, a U.S.

Government civilian employee from another agency other than State or Justice who has a law enforcement background, and then a military officer designated by the commander of the Multi-National Force Iraq.

The board would hear from the assistant regional security officer who was in the motorcade, review statements provided by security personnel as well as the protectee, review the Go Team report and then make a recommendation to the Ambassador on whether or not the use of force appears justified. If the team does not feel that it was justified -- I'm sorry, the Incident Review Board does not feel that it was justified, the Department would then be notified to notify the Department of Justice.

The regional security office and the Multi-National Force Iraq will establish a permanent working group to develop commonly agreed operational procedures, enhance the current liaison elements, exchange information, share optimal situational awareness and assure that any issues that are arised have a forum so they can be discussed and quickly resolved.

And we're suggesting that three issues that should be put on the plate immediately is ensuring that the information that is currently flowing from the State Department's tactical operations center to MNFI goes more widely throughout the MNFI arena, that the reports that are being generated by the RSO's office are shared more widely with the military, and that the State Department has access to military radio frequencies. In that regard, the State Department has already purchased and is expediting delivery of a particular model of radio that is fully compatible with the military radio system so that coordination can be enhanced.

And next, when the Go Team is not engaged in activities, the Go Team will be tasked to engage in what can be best described as pattern analysis. The RSO's office will be provided with a database that is essentially a relational database. You plug data in and the report can generate a variety of different aspects of it, look at places where incidents occur, look at what vehicles might have been involved to see if they can discern, rather than just manually as they're doing now, patterns that would be useful in order to reduce the number of incidents and maintain high security. Those reports would be then generated and they would also be shared with Washington that can follow up as well.

We're also -- the Secretary is also requiring that additional direct channels of contact be made between the RSO and senior police and security officials on the Iraqi side in Baghdad and any other city where the State Department is represented. This we think is a major step to ensuring that there is a flow into the State Department of any incidents that we might not be aware of.

And lastly, in accordance with Iraqi custom, the Go Team is also going to be charged with working with the U.S. military unit responsible for an area in which an incident may have occurred to visit with the families of civilians who might have been killed or injured, whose property has been damaged to express condolences and offer appropriate compensation. And those are the recommendations and those are the ones that the Secretary has ordered that be immediately implemented. And that is the end of the recommendations.

**MR. MCCORMACK:** Okay, why don't we go ahead and take some questions.

**OPERATOR:** Okay. We will now begin the question and answer session. If you would like to ask a question, please press \*1. Please unmute your phone and record your name clearly when prompted. Your name is required to introduce

your question. To withdraw your request press \*2. Again, press \*1 to ask a question. One moment, please for the first question.

Our first question comes from Warren Strobel. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** Hi, Pat. Blackwater -- and I understand this is not just a report about Blackwater, but Blackwater in particular has gotten a lot of flak for being overly aggressive in its escort operations. But I've already talked to one or two people around the State Department today who are concerned that by changing the risk here that you might, in fact, put U.S. diplomats at more risk. Did you sort of talk about that at all in your report?

And secondly, did you find any issues where you think there was any -- people should be -- how do you put it, any wrongdoing or any sort -- anybody needs to be reprimanded?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Okay. First of all, I know the entire report has just been made available to you. I think on balance we felt that the -- as the report says, that the protective security operation has been highly effective. I mean, the finding, number one, was the Department security operations in Iraq have been highly effective in ensuring the safety of mission personnel. So there is no plan to denigrate -- to denigrate safety.

When you have an operation that is well choreographed and it has a number of rules involved, there's rules for the use of force, there's rules on the escalation of force, there are five or six steps that one takes before one is authorized to use deadly force, all of that being true there are still always improvements that one can make to processes and procedures to achieve a better overall result and that is what the recommendations are driving at. It's not a question of lessening or increasing risk. It's -- the issue is to do the job in such a way as that you minimize the risk to both the protectees and to any innocent Iraqis who happen to be in the area where a convoy is moving through.

And lastly, no, we did not find any actions that we thought called out for disciplinary action, but I remind you that this report was a report on policy and procedures and structure and not on any particular activity, though we did review lots of paper and talked to lots of people. We did not find anything that would cause us to write up a finding of fault.

**QUESTION:** Thanks.

**OPERATOR:** Our next question comes from Farah Stockman. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** Hi, thanks for having this call. I didn't hear you say that contractors would now be required to report incidents, the use of deadly force. Did I miss that? Is that now required? And if there is this review panel set up to review incidents of deadly force, won't that -- won't it be quite busy if people do, in fact, start reporting these incidents?

And I guess the last question is, you talked about the Justice Department and that this panel would have the power to review -- to report things to the Justice Department. There seems to be -- can you just get us up to date on whether or not the Justice Department now has the power to prosecute contractors who -- there seems to be a lot of question marks about that.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Okay. First of all, any discharge of a weapon is already -- is reported -- reportable. It is in

the contract that -- and it is part of the obligatory standard operating procedures. So there are -- the Regional Security Officer -- Office already receives all the reports of the use of force and conducts an internal review already.

And so we are just saying that in -- two things. Really, in order to make sure that you have fuller -- fuller oversight and accountability, we're adding a State Department-trained special agent, a Diplomatic Security Office special agent to every convoy, every motorcade so that he or she is an onsite officer in charge and observer and to be able also to report. The review panel will review those reports, any -- will review any incidents. As I mentioned, we'll look at those. They're already now being looked at by the Regional Security Office, but we've decided that in the interest of greater oversight and transparency, we'll just -- we'll have a wider represented -- wider membership on the panel.

As to the question about reporting, the panel would recommend to the ambassador that the ambassador forward their work on to the Department of Justice if they believe that malfeasance or misfeasance had occurred. And I am not a lawyer, so I'm just using those terms as -- in the common parlance.

As to the issue now, we believe that the State Department has -- as you know, has already referred two -- made two referrals, in effect, to the Department of Justice: one that took place at the end of 2006 and one that took place in September. So the State Department has already made referrals to Justice.

**QUESTION:** Can I just follow up really quickly?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Sean, your call. Go ahead.

**QUESTION:** Real quickly, I'm sorry. Are you expanding the -- so you're expanding the regional security office that already exists? You're not creating a new tier. And secondly, has the Department of Justice to date ever taken action against a contractor?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** The regional security -- we are in effect -- now all the reports reviewed by the staff of the regional security office. We're saying that if there is an incident that involves the use of deadly force, we are going to have the incident reviewed by the regional security officer and this joint incident review board, which will be composed of two State Department officers, a civilian from another government agency out there --

**QUESTION:** Okay. So it's a second body.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** -- and a military officer. So it -- one could say it's another layer. It's a wider review.

**QUESTION:** Okay.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** And any questions about what the Department of Justice may or may not have done would have to be asked of the Department of Justice.

**QUESTION:** Okay, thanks.

**OPERATOR:** Our next question comes from Brian Bennett. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** Hi, this is Brian Bennett from *Time* magazine. I'm wondering in these reviews -- why this review wasn't done earlier, complaints about contractor conduct have been relayed to Ambassador Khalilzad, tocharge d'affaires Margaret Scobey, to Ambassador Crocker. And I'm wondering if in looking into this you had found any communiqués that have gone out of the Embassy into main State in the months prior to the September 16th incident about concerns about contractor conduct and why wasn't - why it took an event like September 16th for these concerns to be addressed?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** We -- when you look through the report you'll see that we interviewed a large number -- large number of individuals. We did not find any, I think, significant pattern of incidents that had not -- that the Embassy had suppressed in any way. No one told us that they had -- that they had made reports to the Embassy that had been suppressed.

Hello, hello.

Hello, any other questions?

**OPERATOR:** Our next question comes from Elise Labott. You're next.

**QUESTION:** Hi, thank you. I'm hoping you can talk a little bit more about the rules of engagement and how you said they'll line up with the military rules of engagement on the ground. And whether you found that there was a kind of culture among contractors that led to something -- to situations that would affect the larger mission in Iraq, if you could talk a little bit more about how the rules of engagement that have been used in the past might have given this perception that the U.S. contractors were insensitive or something because I see that you're instituting more awareness training and sensitivity training.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Well, the awareness and sensitivity training is cultural sensitivity in order to simply expand the potential effectiveness. People always benefit from greater sensitivity.

On the rules of engagement -- the rules of engagement for the Department of Defense contractors and the Department of State contractors are very, very similar. The military uses, effectively, three steps which is shout, show, and shoot, which is, you know, you shout warnings to oncoming vehicles or personnel. You display your weapon and then you shoot. The State Department has relatively the same thing. We spell -- we sort of break the steps down a little further. They shout, they display a warning visually with their hands, they show their weapons, they -- the State Department fires what are called pen flares. It's a small device about the size of a large fountain pen that launches a very, very small light, you know, like a flare in the direction of the vehicle that's approaching as an attention-getter. They've also been known to throw empty water bottles at an approaching vehicle. And then the next step is you fire into the motor, into the grill of the car that's approaching in an attempt to disable it. And then only after all those steps or things do you fire into the passenger compartment.

Now, obviously, if a vehicle is approaching you at 60 miles an hour, the timeline gets very, very compressed between those things. And I also should mention that the vehicles that we use run with lights on the grills and they also carry spotlights, handheld spotlights, you know, at times, in terms of dusk or dark, to flash lights at the vehicle. So those

are the rules of engagement.

What we did find is that in the written documentation, the military -- either State Department spelled out its rule, its tiering, its escalation of force rules, more widely than the military did. The military, you know, I just described three steps; we describe more. On the other hand, so you could say the State Department had better rules. But the military also had a better description about not when you use force, but how you use force. They even know -- we believe that our people were trained this way. They spelled it out more specifically about specifically saying, make sure you fire only aim shots, although State Department regulations prohibited the firing of warning shots, and then make sure that you take particular attention to the safety of innocent bystanders and avoid civilian casualty.

You had two sets of rules, each one of them very, very strong but we saw additional protections and safeguards in the DOD rules that were not in the State rules, so we recommended and the Secretary has approved adopting them.

**QUESTION:** But just very quickly, what about the idea that some of these incidents and the magnitude of them are contributing to affecting your larger mission in Iraq?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** The whole goal here is to protect diplomats without having any adverse effect on the political dynamic there. That has always been the State Department's goals. For those of you who have been out there, getting into a numbers game is something that I am just very, very hesitant to do and I -- but I read numbers in the newspapers all the time.

But recall that the State Department is moving thousands of moves and every move is preceded by an advance team, so you have the advance team goes out, the advance team comes back, the motorcade with the protectee goes out, the motorcade with the protectee comes back. There may or may not be a quick reaction force prepositioned and so, when you say -- as we said, as I think has been reported, they're -- just in the Baghdad area alone in the first nine months or so of the year, there were 1800 moves. Well, that's really 7200-plus moves when you say out and back for both the advanced team and the reg -- you know, the motorcade with the protectee. And then add some quick reaction force, you're talking about 7500 moves.

And yes, there have been incidents, but this is a very, very dangerous environment to be moving people in and our goal is to move people safely with nobody getting hurt on the part of innocent bystanders.

**QUESTION:** Thanks.

**OPERATOR:** Our next question comes from John Broder. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** Hello, Ambassador Kennedy. I'm with the *New York Times*.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Yes, John.

**QUESTION:** Did you, as part of this review, consider doing away with private security contractors, specifically Blackwater, entirely? And if so, why did you decide to keep them and if not, why didn't you consider that option going either with State Department DS officers or military people?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** As you will see in the report, the full report, we did consider that. There are -- I believe it's 1450 -- 1492 Diplomatic Security special agents in the entire world. If you consider the fact that there is almost 700 protective security contractors in Iraq, plus we have protective security contractors in other countries as well, it would mean essentially that the Diplomatic Security Service would either all be in Iraq or all getting training to go there or just have gotten back.

The Diplomatic Security Service is simply not small enough to do this mission without assistance and that is why the State Department has been using personal security service contractors for a number of years in Haiti, in Liberia, and Afghanistan. So this road is a road the State Department has been down before. Given the limited size of the Diplomatic Security Service, it -- by having this combination of federal agents and contractors, we feel that's the right balance.

Secondly, though, you ask about the U.S. military. The U.S. military is a force projection entity. It is not -- its specialty is not personal protection. There are a small number of personnel who are trained, either uniformed military or military/civilian working for the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division or the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or the U.S. Navy. So there are simply not enough trained personnel.

If you go back to 2003 when the civilian administration, the CPA, was under DOD auspices, as the security threat came up, the issue was raised about how do we provide additional protective services support for the then-administrator, the CPA, and for other senior civilians and distinguished visitors. And it was DOD that made the determination that they did not have enough trained personal protective services personnel within DOD and they dispatched contractors to Iraq then and as the requirement is even greater now than it was in 2003, the U.S. military does not have the personnel to take on the task.

And we interviewed, as you will see in the report, a large number of senior U.S. military officials and that question was specifically asked and not one of them believed that the U.S. military had the resources to undertake that. In fact, there's a finding, and you'll see this when you read the report, "The U.S. military in Iraq does not consider it feasible or desirable under existing conditions in Iraq for the Department of Defense to take on the responsibility for provision of PPS, Personal Protective Security services support, to the Embassy."

**QUESTION:** Okay, thanks.

**OPERATOR:** Our next question comes from August Cole. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) play? Can you talk a little bit about that? I mean, is this a situation where they're in command of a convoy?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** I'm sorry, your voice started in the middle of a sentence.

**QUESTION:** Sure, I'll start over. The role that the Diplomatic Security agents will play in the convoys?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Yeah, they are the officer in charge.

**QUESTION:** So they are the officer in charge. Are they going to carry weapons like the security details? Would they be expected to --

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** They are sworn federal special agents. Yes, they will carry weapons.

**QUESTION:** And to the expectation, then, that they will command these small groups or units, if you want to call them that?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Yes, they're the officer in charge.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Thank you.

**OPERATOR:** The next question comes from Daniel Doby. Your line is open.

**QUESTION:** Thank you, Ambassador. Ambassador, I just wanted to kind of make clear what beyond the guidance to the agents and the -- and setup of new structures-- is deviated? Because after all, we've already had the report that the agents from Diplomatic Service -- Security will be traveling with the convoys and we've already had the cameras and so on.

What would you (inaudible) answer the actual changes on the ground, given that what they're saying really in some of the guidance is a reiteration and clarification of rules that were already operating anyway?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Well, I think there's several things. First of all, we're going to be putting in additional training modules, as I mentioned, to increase cultural awareness in hope and -- because we always believe additional training helps to produce a better product. We have put in place the Joint Incident Review Board, which we believe is important to make sure that there are firm reviews of everything, firm -- I should say fair and open reviews of everything just so that there is no -- that there is no doubt that the reviews are all-encompassing. We think that the additional liaison that's being established between the Regional Security Office and the Multi-National Force-Iraq will be of a significant benefit in order to make sure that they have full coordination there. And we believe that establishing direct channels between the Regional Security Officer and Iraqi police and security officials will also lead to a greater exchange of information.

So taken as a collectivity, those are -- I think those are positive changes, but I fully agree. I mean, the Secretary also reviewed the interim report and has ordered those to be implemented as well. So it is a combination of both the interim and the final. But she takes this very seriously, which is why she had the team go out there, and because she wanted to move as expeditiously as possible, she asked for an interim report and then a final report. And one reads the two pieces as one.

**QUESTION:** And if I could just follow up on that, Ambassador. There has been some talk that perhaps one final -- one final way of dealing with this would be to put contractors under the DOD's authority, so -- not obviously have soldiers -- U. S. soldiers putting (inaudible), but firmly under (inaudible) authority.

This is an alternative to that, isn't it? This is putting them more clearly under State's authority and having clearer structures, isn't it, (inaudible) putting it under the Army's authority?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Well, I mean, I have seen articles in the paper and I can't comment on articles that no one has discussed with me. But I think the team thought that these were good recommendations that provided additional rigor, additional oversight, additional accountability, additional coordination. And it is always a good thing to be able to bolster any system you have.

No system you put in place is ever going to be absolutely 100 percent perfect and over the course of time and when you pull together a panel of people with a variety of expertise, you find them coming up with ways to take a situation and improve upon it. And so I think this is what the report is, to take something and improve upon it.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**OPERATOR:** Next question comes from Matthew Lee.

**QUESTION:** Hello? Hello?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Yes, go ahead, Matthew.

**QUESTION:** Well, I can't -- I've gotten -- I'm getting nowhere here. Can you hear me now?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Yes, I can hear you now.

**QUESTION:** Great, okay. Listen, who are on these Go teams? These aren't going to be Blackwater or part-contractors on the Go teams --

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** No.

**QUESTION:** -- are they? Because that would be the same --

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** No, no, the Go teams are composed of State Department employees from the Regional Security Office.

**QUESTION:** Okay. And the -- just the other thing is that, you know, how many -- can you -- how many of these recommendations have actually already been implemented? It sounds like quite a few.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Let's see. I didn't count them that way. I think there are a total, if you read the report, of 19 recommendations total and the interim report had 11 recommendations.

**QUESTION:** Okay. So this is adding eight. And then just the last thing is that you talk about the -- you know, the cultural awareness and that kind of thing, but -- and this may be a stupid question, but it doesn't say that that cultural awareness is for the Iraqis?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** No.

**QUESTION:** Is it, in fact, for the Iraqis or is it so that these guys can be -- the contractors can become attune to State Department diplomatic culture?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** No, it's -- it has a tri-fold purpose. It is to -- so that they are more in tune with Iraqi ways of thinking and operating, secondly that they also understand the diplomatic environment that they're in, and then lastly, that they understand the military environment that they're operating in. So it's -- the increased awareness is threefold, but the principal one is increase their understanding of the situation and the environment in Iraq.

**QUESTION:** And how do you respect that that would have changed the situation that we saw on the 16th of last month?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** I am not -- we, as a --

**QUESTION:** Or sorry, maybe -- then let's go back to the incident on -- you know, on Christmas Eve. How exactly have incidents that have happened now led you to believe that these contractors are not culturally aware or sensitive of --

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** We don't say that they're not culturally aware and sensitive. We're saying that we're going to enhance and that there are -- there is training that goes on already when they arrive at posts. We are just going to expand that and move that to -- move that back to the pre-deployment.

**QUESTION:** Okay. And then just -- and I swear this is the last one. When you mentioned that two cases have been referred to Justice so far, one in -- one -- the Christmas Eve one and then one in September, which -- I'm not aware that -- I've been gone for a little bit, but what's the one in September? Is that the 16th incident?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Has that been referred to Justice?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Well, the -- yes, the F -- I mean, the FBI is investigating it.

**QUESTION:** Oh, yeah, okay, you're --

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** And so I'm including the FBI as part of the Department.

**QUESTION:** Okay. It hasn't been referred for prosecution, though, that you know of?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** No, no, no, because the investigation is ongoing.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Thank you.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** You're welcome.

**OPERATOR:** Next question comes from Sue Fleming.

**QUESTION:** Yes, hi, Sue Fleming with Reuters. You mentioned that there are not enough Diplomatic Security agents in Iraq to do the job. How many more do you think are needed? And I'm sorry if you've already answered this question.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** I'm not going -- what we said was there are not enough agents in Iraq to have -- there were not enough of our agents in Iraq to have one accompany every movement. So we -- the agents are already flowing into Iraq to do that. We don't discuss -- I'm not going to discuss the specific numbers of agents that we have deployed there. It's not something that we do.

**QUESTION:** And have you already called in Blackwater and the other two key security contractors to give them these new guidelines?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** We are in the process of -- we are in the process -- the Secretary has made her decision today. We briefed her yesterday. She's made her decision today and the Diplomatic Security Service will be calling in the contractors and working with the State Department's contracting arm to amend the contracts and provide the additional requirements and guidance.

**QUESTION:** Okay. Thank you.

**MR. MCCORMACK:** All right, everybody. We have time for two more questions.

**OPERATOR:** Next question comes from Viola Gienger.

**QUESTION:** Ambassador -- Ambassador Kennedy, this is Viola Gienger from Bloomberg News. I wanted to see what your thoughts were about the coordination with Department of Defense forces on the ground, a little bit more about -- just overall, how you see the coordination as it has gone so far overall and, you know, how much does that need to be improved.

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** The fact that information that the State Department was providing was not getting to all levels of DOD, that needs to be fixed. We also need to get State -- its obligation to the State Department and the radios have been ordered and delivery is expected momentarily. We need to put military radios that will operate on the military frequencies in all of our vehicles. That will achieve coordination.

There has not been a standing group composed of the appropriate operating officials from DOD and the State Department's Regional Security Office. There have been lots of ad hoc discussions continually. That is important, but a standing body is good. There have been Department of Defense representatives in the Diplomatic Security Service's tactical operation center. That -- the military is going to be augmenting that presence. So there has been -- there has been coordination. It just has not risen to the levels that the panel felt was appropriate given the circumstances. So what you have in the recommendations are: here are the things that need to be augmented and added to.

**QUESTION:** Thank you.

**OPERATOR:** The next question comes from Gary-- Kevin Whitelaw.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, hi, thank you, Ambassador. Two quick questions. One, can you describe at all, sort of, the level of oversight that you saw from beforehand when it came to some of these incidents and, you know, was this something that was done only in Baghdad? Was there some work back in Washington? Were people really paying attention to the aftermath of these incidents or, you know, can you characterize that?

The other thing is, in the report, it looks like you're saying that the legal framework for overseeing the work of these contractors is inadequate given that there's -- the panel is unaware of any basis for holding non-DOD contractors accountable under U.S. law, so what's the point of referring it to DOJ?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** Taking -- let me take them in the order. We found that there were incident reports being filed. We found that they were being read and reviewed. But we just thought that there -- that additional steps had to be taken. There were -- for example, there are incidents that come up where it's evident that State Department contractors were not involved even though they were believed to be involved. There were a couple of those.

And so the addition of a State Department professional on every move, the addition of cameras, the addition of other monitoring devices, I think, creates simply an expanded level of oversight that will enable us to fully investigate and resolve any incident that should take place and also be able to say with all clarity if someone said there was an incident at this location and you were involved, and with the expanded both personal and technical add-ons that we put into place, we will be able to say with certainty, no, there was not a State Department convoy involved. As it says in the report, there are -- there is just a huge number of private security or quasi-public security entities operating in Iraq. And we -- the State Department's goal is to have rigorous operating procedures, rigorous enforcement which leads to clarity.

On the second point, on the legal framework, the panel had four lawyers -- four non-lawyers on it. And so the statement is the statement of four non-lawyers that says that we don't see the clarity and we want to make sure that the Department of State and the Department of Justice are working on it. As non-lawyers, non-jurists, we cannot render an absolute finding, but we're saying that we -- we are unaware of this and therefore, the Department of State and the Department of Justice must address this.

**QUESTION:** So, I mean, the -- so there's a suggestion here, though, then, that referrals to DOJ might not result in anything more than an investigation?

**AMBASSADOR KENNEDY:** No, there is no suggestion of that. It's just saying that this is a question. As we work through it and talk to a variety of people, we're calling on Washington to make sure that there is legal clarity here.

**QUESTION:** Thank you very much.

**MR. MCCORMACK:** All right, that will do it. Thanks, everybody.

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