

DoD Inspector General Report

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Report No. D-2008-060

(Project No. D2006-D000LQ-0254.000)

SUBJECT: Audit of Potable and Nonpotable Water in Iraq

Objective. The overall objective of the audit was to determine whether the processes for providing potable and nonpotable¹ water to U.S. forces in Iraq were adequate. We conducted the audit at the request of Senator Byron L. Dorgan, Chairman of the Democratic Policy Committee. Specifically, Senator Dorgan requested that we review an alleged failure of the contractor, Kellogg, Brown, and Root (KBR), to provide safe nonpotable water to U.S. forces in Iraq. Because the processes for providing potable and nonpotable water overlapped, we expanded the audit scope to include the processes for both.

Scope and Methodology. We performed audit work in Iraq and the continental United States from September 2006 through November 2007 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. The scope of the audit covered water operations in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom from January 1, 2004, through December 31, 2006. According to documentation provided by KBR and the Multinational Corps–Iraq (MNC-I) Preventive Medicine office, as of February 25, 2007, there were 59 U.S. water production (treatment) sites in Iraq composed of 37 sites operated by contractors and 22 sites operated by the U.S. military. We judgmentally selected and visited six sites; four operated by U.S. contractors and two operated by the U.S. military. We reviewed water production operations and associated records at Camp Ar Ramadi, Camp Ali, Camp Q-West, Logistical Support Area (LSA) Anaconda, Camp Liberty, and Camp Victory. The six sites provided water for about 56,000 U.S. forces. The selected locations were all under the command and control of the Multinational Force–Iraq (MNF-I) with operational control provided by MNC-I. We reviewed the processes for water production, distribution, storage, and oversight by examining production and oversight records; researching military medical databases;² reviewing government oversight of contractor operations; and researching operational requirements for military field water. We interviewed military and contractor personnel responsible for water operations at the operational, supervisory, and managerial levels. Personnel interviewed included those deployed during the audit fieldwork as well as previously deployed personnel. After completing the audit fieldwork, we issued a response letter to Senator Dorgan on May 23, 2007, with a summary of the alleged failure. Subsequently, the Majority Counsel for the Senate Armed Services Committee requested we conduct additional interviews of Military Service members who served in the area of Camp Ar Ramadi during the alleged failure, October 2004 through May 2005 (see report section titled “Survey of U.S. Forces at Ar Ramadi”).

¹ Potable water is safe to drink and does not contain harmful chemical, microbiological, radiological, or other contaminants. Nonpotable water is unsafe for human ingestion, but used for other purposes including laundry and personal hygiene.

² Medical databases researched included those used by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM), Air Force Institute of Operational Health (AFIOH), and Joint Medical Work Station (JMEWS).