



15 July 2004

### Flashpoints

Baghdad, Beiji, Tikrit, Kirkuk, Haditha, Karbala, Ramadi

**The following highways and routes should be considered extremely hostile:**

The route from Saudi Arabia to Baghdad has been dangerous in recent days

The route from Syria to Mosul in the north of Iraq has also proven dangerous in the past week

The roads from Baghdad to Fallujah have reopened although they remain extremely dangerous.

A number of checkpoints have also been erected on the routes and are being manned by both Coalition Forces (CF) and the Iraqi police.

The Baghdad to Amman Highway remains particularly dangerous and should be avoided if at all possible.

The route to Baghdad International Airport (BIAP) is extremely dangerous. Restrictions have been applied to this route.

While these routes have been highlighted, it should be noted that transit throughout Iraq is **dangerous** and no route can be guaranteed as being safe.

### Projections

Following the announced withdrawal of the Philippine military and police presence in Iraq, further hostage taking can be anticipated. Although the Philippine force was small its participation in the "coalition of the willing" was nonetheless significant. Further attacks by militants seeking to push foreign forces out of Iraq will occur in the coming days and weeks. These will most likely target foreign nationals, from states that are perceived to be susceptible to militant pressure or who are going through an electoral process.

It is clear that the Iraqi administration of Iyad Allawi has focused on targeting insurgents, terrorists and criminals. The transitional government of Iraq has made clear that it will react harshly towards those who continue to carry out attacks and incidents of violence. This is likely, certainly in the short to medium term, to ensure further bloody clashes between Iraq's security forces and militants. Personnel are reminded that Iraq's security apparatus is a highly attractive target to militants and criminals no matter their political objectives and as such caution and vigilance should always be demonstrated in their presence.

In particular, violence could occur on 17 July to mark the anniversary of the rise to power of the Ba'ath Party in 1968.

### Summary

The 14 July, the anniversary of the overthrowing of the monarchy in 1958 commonly known as Republic Day, passed comparatively peacefully with only the car bombing in Baghdad possibly marking the event. Nevertheless, attacks still occurred across Iraq particularly in the north and northern central region.

Iraq's oil infrastructure has been damaged once again in the past 48 hours in northern Iraq. The refusal of some Asian oil companies to dock in the south to export oil because of security concerns is worrying, especially given the threat they are acting upon may not have been made in the first place (see below).

The specific targeting of Iraqi police, government officials and Iraqis deemed collaborators by militants has continued in the past 48 hours.

Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) have remained a favoured weapon of insurgents throughout the

country and IED attacks have often been followed by Small Arms Fire (SAF). Information received suggests an increasing sophistication in weaponry, particularly bombs. Explosive devices constructed by person(s) with evident training have been uncovered. These magnetic bombs are attached to the underneath of vehicles and set on timers to detonate. It is imperative that all personnel check their vehicles thoroughly (inside and out). Sources indicate that the devices are blast only and while armoured vehicles may withstand the blast, the vehicles' electrical circuit would not and personnel could find themselves trapped.

#### **Areas of continued concern**

- All facilities relating to the energy industry in Iraq remain at risk of attack, including offices and vehicles. Personnel are also at risk.
- It is feared that Mosques are potential hot spots for demonstrations, and possibly suicide and other explosive attacks in the coming days and weeks.
- Hotels remain at risk of attack, particularly those providing residence to Western personnel, including those in the 'Green Zone', despite increased security .
- Police stations, local government and Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) facilities continue to be the target of demonstrations and suicide attacks.

#### **The following other buildings and facilities are consistently at risk:**

- Any building, element of infrastructure or machinery involved with the reconstruction effort (particularly the energy industry)
- Coalition facilities of all nationalities (inhabited by contractors, NGO workers, diplomatic and military personnel)
- Civic buildings, particularly police stations, diplomatic offices and those of NGOs and media organizations
- Any convoy/vehicle carrying personnel from the media/NGOs or indeed contractors and diplomatic staff is at risk of attack at all times.











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## AKE risk ratings

	1-9	Generally stable and secure
	10-19	Instability
	20-29	Hostile
	30-39	Highly unstable
	40-49	Widespread militancy
	50-59	Low intensity conflict
	60-69	Advanced guerrilla war/civil war
	70-79	Limited conventional war
	80-89	Regional war
	90-100	Total war (sub-nuclear)

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