

Weather

Today: Partly sunny.
High 83, Low 64.
Tuesday: Mostly sunny.
High 87, Low 67.
Details, B6

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M1 M2 M3 M4 M5 V1 V2 V3 V4



COURTESY OF WRC-TV / NBC4.COM

A semi remains in the water after the crash on the bridge's eastbound span.

Truck Driver Dies In Bay Bridge Crash

Two Other Motorists Are Injured; Incident Creates Traffic Nightmare

By DONNA ST. GEORGE and MICHAEL BIRNBAUM
Washington Post Staff Writers

Beachgoers and other motorists spent several frustrating hours stuck in traffic backups of more than 10 miles on both sides of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge yesterday in the aftermath of a deadly crash that sent a tractor-trailer hurtling through a concrete Jersey wall and into the water below, killing the truck driver. The three-vehicle crash, shortly before 4 a.m., also sent two women in a 1997 Chevrolet Camaro to a hospital, officials said. It closed down the older, two-lane eastbound span of the bridge during popular beach-commute hours and raised safety questions about the 56-year-

old structure. Officials reopened one lane of the eastbound bridge about 8:15 p.m., but almost three hours later, long backups remained. Officials said motorists should expect delays during this morning's rush hour. The damaged Jersey wall, with its 10- to 15-foot gap, was being repaired, with a more permanent restoration to come later. Investigators with the National Transportation Safety Board arrived at the scene yesterday as state engineers worked to inspect the bridge's structural integrity, said Cpl. Jonathan Green of the Maryland Transportation Authority Police.

See BRIDGE, A4, Col. 1

Money as a Weapon

A modest program to put cash in Iraqis' hands stretches its mandate with big projects.

By DANA HEDGPETH and SARAH COHEN
Washington Post Staff Writers

In the five-year struggle to finish the war in Iraq, military leaders and their troops have said a particular weapon is among the most effective in their arsenal: American cash. Soldiers walk the streets carrying thousands of dollars to pay Iraqis for doorways battered in American raids and limbs lost during firefights. Sheiks appeal to commanders to use larger pools of money locked away in Humvees and safes at military bases for new schools, health clinics, water treatment plants and generators, knowing that the military can bypass Iraqi and U.S. bureaucratic hurdles. Army documents show that \$48,000 was spent on 6,000 pairs of children's shoes; an additional \$50,000 bought 625 sheep for people described in records as "starving poor locals" in a Baghdad neighborhood. Soldiers ordered \$100,000 worth of dolls and \$500,000 in action figures made to look like Iraqi Security Forces. About \$14,250 was spent on "I Love Iraq" T-shirts. More than \$75,000 sent a delegation to a

ON WASHINGTONPOST.COM

DATABASE: Search individual project records from the Commander's Emergency Response Program.

ONLINE DISCUSSION: Staff writers Dana Hedgpeth and Sarah Cohen will host an online discussion with Col. John Charlton about the program today at 11 a.m.

Online at washingtonpost.com/cepr

women's and civil rights conference in Cairo. And \$12,800 was spent for two pools to cool bears and tigers at Zawra Park Zoo in Baghdad. The money comes from the Commander's Emergency Response Program, which has so far spent at least \$2.8 billion in U.S. funds. It is not tied to international standards of redevelopment or normal government purchasing rules. Instead, it is governed by broad guidelines packaged into a field manual called "Money as a Weapon System."

See RECONSTRUCT, A8, Col. 1

Georgia Retreats, Pleads for Truce; U.S. Condemns Russian Onslaught

By PETER FINN
Washington Post Foreign Service

OUTSIDE TSKHINVALI, Georgia, Aug. 10 — The Georgian army, suffering massive casualties in the face of overwhelming Russian firepower, retreated from the breakaway region of South Ossetia on Sunday. Georgian leaders' recent expressions of defiance turned increasingly into pleas for a cease-fire and Western support in the face of a

military debacle. Russia ignored calls for a truce and continued to bomb targets deep in Georgia, with little apparent opposition, drawing new condemnation from the United States and other Western countries. President Bush spoke of his "grave concern about the disproportionate response," and the White House warned of serious setbacks in rela-

tions with Russia if the onslaught against a close U.S. ally did not end. Russian airstrikes Sunday evening hit the international airport and a military factory in the capital, Tbilisi, as well as Georgian-held positions in Abkhazia, another breakaway region on the Black Sea. Russian warships were reported to be blockading a Georgian Black Sea port and to have sunk a Georgian

gunboat. It remained unclear Sunday how far Russian troops intended to advance. Georgian villages just outside South Ossetia were shelled Sunday, clouds of smoke and burning fields visible on the horizon as artillery barrages echoed loudly. Georgians fled the villages, bedding loaded into the backs of their cars. Residents of one village outside

■ **Bush calls Russian response "disproportionate."** | A12

See GEORGIA, A12, Col. 1



BEIJING OLYMPICS

Chinese fans cheer a soccer game between Belgium and China. Officials had worried that Chinese wouldn't know how to behave at the Games.

Rah-Rah Diplomacy: Win or Lose, Chinese Are a Cheerful Bunch

By MAUREEN FAN
Washington Post Foreign Service

BEIJING, Aug. 10 — For months, Olympic officials here fretted about Chinese fans. The fans might boo athletes from countries perceived as unfriendly to China, or maybe they won't know when to cheer, the government feared. Officials went so far as to draft 210,000 retired state employees and teach them the right way to hoot and holler. But Chinese officials needn't have worried. At Sunday night's U.S.-China men's basketball game, the host country's fans cheered wildly for both teams. They whooped it up when Yao Ming, the towering Houston Rockets center who is China's pride and joy, hit an opening three-point shot. And they thundered applause when Kobe Bryant threw down a two-handed windmill jam during layup drills and later when he was introduced at the beginning of the game. "We're cheering for both countries because China welcomes the U.S.," said Qin Li, 40, a housewife jumping up and down in her seat next to her husband and son. The Chinese, it turns out, are going wild over the Games. Through two days of full competition in Beijing, Chinese spectators have displayed just the sort of enthusiasm that officials hoped to see — and virtu-

See FANS, A11, Col. 1



BY DAVID GRAY — REUTERS

More Coverage

« **Swimming:** Phelps wins second gold in 4 x 100 meter relay. **E1**
Security Issues: Recent violence shows how hard it is to secure a country as vast as China. **A10**
Elder Statesman: George H.W. Bush reflects on diplomacy and his time as U.S. envoy to China. **C1**

For complete coverage, see Sports, Pages E1 and E7-13

Monday's Highlights

A guide to following today's Olympic events on washingtonpost.com or on TV:

- SWIMMING**
Four finals, including Michael Phelps in the 200-meter freestyle.
Online: Results by 11:30 p.m.
TV: Live on WRC-4, WBAL-11 (8 p.m.-12:30 a.m.)
- MEN'S KAYAK**
Bethesda's Scott Parsons begins his chase for slalom gold.
Online: Results by 7 a.m.
TV: Taped on WRC-4, WBAL-11 (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)
- MEN'S BEACH VOLLEYBALL**
After first-round upset, U.S. pair try to get back on track
Online: Results by 11 a.m.
TV: Live on WRC-4, WBAL-11 (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

For a list of today's events on washingtonpost.com, see E8

INSIDE

STYLE »

Soul Singer Isaac Hayes Dies at 65

The Oscar winner was found at his home outside Memphis. The musical personification of black manhood in the 1970s won a Grammy for "Theme From Shaft." **Appreciation, C1** **Obituary, B4**

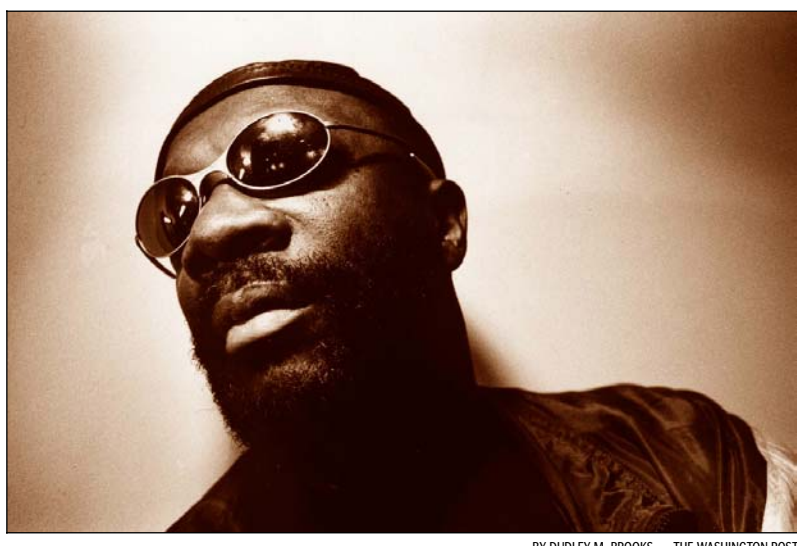
- Virgin Fest:** Two-day music festival stays eclectic. **C1**
- Media Notes:** The John Edwards affair. **C1**

WASHINGTON BUSINESS

Waiting for Tenants in NoMa
After rapid development in the D.C. neighborhood, 880,000 square feet of office space sits vacant. **D1**

SCIENCE

Brown Tree Snakes Affect Forest Growth in Guam
Thousands of snakes may cause substantial thinning and clumping of trees in the years ahead. **A7**



BY DUDLEY M. BROOKS — THE WASHINGTON POST

CAMPAIGN 2008

For Those Once Behind Bars, A Nudge to the Voting Booth

By KRISIAH WILLIAMS THOMPSON
Washington Post Staff Writer

TALLAHASSEE — Herbert Pompey had gone through rehab, stayed sober, held a job, married and started a landscaping business in the two years since he walked out of Taylor Correctional Institution. But what Pompey hadn't done — and what he assumed a string of felony drug and DUI convictions would keep him from ever doing again — was vote. So his pulse quickened when civil rights lawyer Reggie Mitchell called to tell him that his rights had been restored. "You're eligible to vote now, Mr. Pompey," Mitchell said, calmly relaying the

news. "Can I bring you a voter-registration card?" Pompey whispered, "Lord, you was listening." Mitchell smiled — he had gotten another felon back on the rolls. Mitchell is a leader of a disparate group of grass-roots Democrats and civil rights activists who are trying to register tens of thousands of newly eligible felons. They have taken up the cause on their own, motivated by the belief that former offenders have been unfairly disenfranchised for decades. Despite massive registration efforts, the presidential campaigns of Sens.

See FELONS, A6, Col. 1

From Page One | Money as a Weapon

The 'De Facto Reconstruction Guys' of Iraq

RECONSTRUCT, From A1

The program is intended for short-term, small-scale "urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction." But as the broader \$50 billion effort to rebuild Iraq with big infrastructure projects runs dry, CERP is by default taking on more importance as a reconstruction program, something it may not be equipped to do in a coordinated, nationwide way.

A review by The Washington Post of a government database detailing more than 26,000 CERP records, along with congressional documents and audits, plus interviews with troops and their commanders who have worked on the projects, reveals a program that has evolved beyond its original goals. It has often been used for large projects that can take years to complete, is largely divorced from other reconstruction efforts and lacks the structure needed for overseers to know how well the program works.

About \$1 billion of the money spent so far has gone to 605 projects that exceed the Army's definition of "small scale," or more than \$500,000 each. And \$880 million was spent on projects that took longer than 6 months, considered the definition of "short term" by many commanders.

Government auditors have also found problems with record keeping. In one case, the Army couldn't fully account for \$135 million in CERP payments. Auditors and other experts complain that they are unable to judge whether CERP is effective.

Soldiers and their commanders say the program works because there is little red tape, allowing them to fill immediate needs in their assigned towns and cities. On Capitol Hill and in the Pentagon, the program has become a "sacred cow," as one government auditor calls it. Few will openly criticize the popular program for fear of alienating the troops. CERP was recently given an additional \$1.2 billion — to be split between Iraq and Afghanistan — according to a July report by the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction. That money brings the program's total to \$3.5 billion. Lawmakers also have proposed to exempt it from restrictions on the spending for large reconstruction projects in Iraq in the future.

But after reports last week that the Iraqi government is running a budget surplus of up to \$50 billion, two U.S. senators — John W. Warner (R-Va.) and Carl M. Levin (D-Mich.), chairman of the Armed Services Committee — have asked the secretary of defense to review CERP oversight and regulations and said they want Iraq to shoulder more of the rebuilding costs. Warner said he is particularly concerned about a \$33 million hotel, office and retail complex at Baghdad International Airport, a project that he said is "far exceeding the purpose" of CERP.

"We never had in mind that it would be for major development," said Warner, who was one of the original supporters for funding CERP. "This was to help our troops fight the counterinsurgency and to help civilians get on their feet. It is looking like it is a bank for development."

Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, who is vice chief of staff for the U.S. Army and in 2006

served as commanding general of the Multi-National Corps — Iraq, said that he and commanders in the field have all seen violent incidents in certain areas decline when CERP spending goes up.

He said CERP is, in fact, a reconstruction program in addition to being a counterinsurgency weapon. After the fire-fights of the initial invasion, Chiarelli said, "you've then got somebody coming around to a commander, handing him a bag of \$25,000 cash and saying to go rebuild Iraq."

But Chiarelli added that the military may not be equipped to maintain the schools, clinics and water projects it builds with CERP money. In one case in 2005, he said, he brought water to 220,000 houses in the Sadr City section of Baghdad using CERP funds. But when he went back a year later to check on whether the program had been expanded to more houses, it hadn't. "The problem is follow-through," he said.

Hearts and Minds

When Army Gen. David H. Petraeus led the 101st Airborne Division's occupation of Mosul and northern Iraq in 2003, posters hung in barracks reading, "What have you done to win Iraqi hearts and minds today?" Then he and his troops started spending money — \$58 million from an early CERP fund that came from seized Iraqi assets.

Petraeus, now the top U.S. commander in Iraq, was well-schooled in the use of money in counterinsurgency. He wrote his Princeton University dissertation on the lessons of Vietnam, where the U.S. military used a tool for "pacification" that looked a lot like CERP.

At the start of the U.S. occupation, many of Iraq's villages experienced few results from the large-scale rebuilding efforts managed from Baghdad. But a quick influx of cash from soldiers to fix urgent problems brought goodwill, military leaders and experts said.

"You can't shoot yourself out of an insurgency," said Marine Col. John A. Koenig, who oversaw \$160 million worth of CERP projects in Anbar province last year. "A rifle only gets you so far. It shows you have some force. CERP allows you to develop our answer to al-Qaeda."

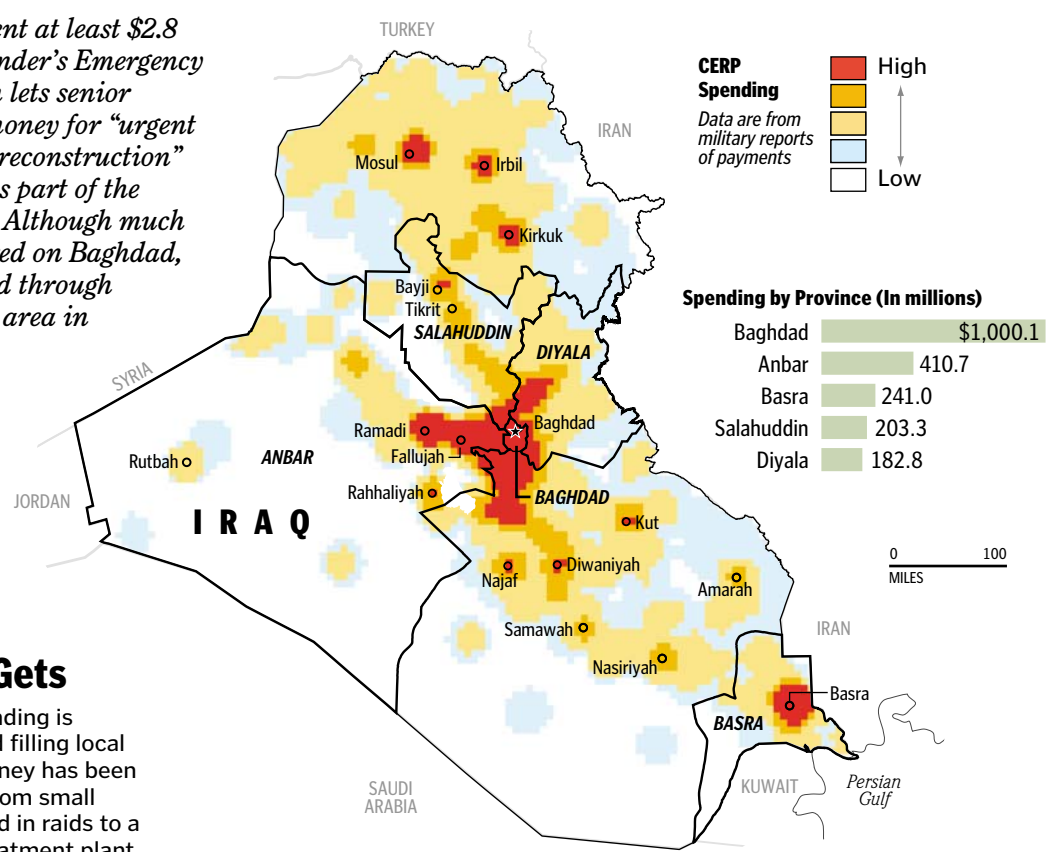
The program gives military leaders the flexibility to move quickly in an unstable, cash-only war zone. One litmus test, according to the field manual, which covers CERP and other military spending programs: "Would use of funds embarrass [the Defense Department] if shown on '60 Minutes'?" There are some restrictions, but by design, officers have broad discretion for small purchases.

Since the beginning of the program, CERP money has also been used to help compensate for the damage of war. The military calls these "condolence" payments and says they are "symbolic gestures" to families of Iraqis killed or injured in the war. The military is quick to say it is not accepting blame and is not trying to place a value on life.

Maj. Dana Hyatt, a fifth-grade social studies teacher in Connecticut who served

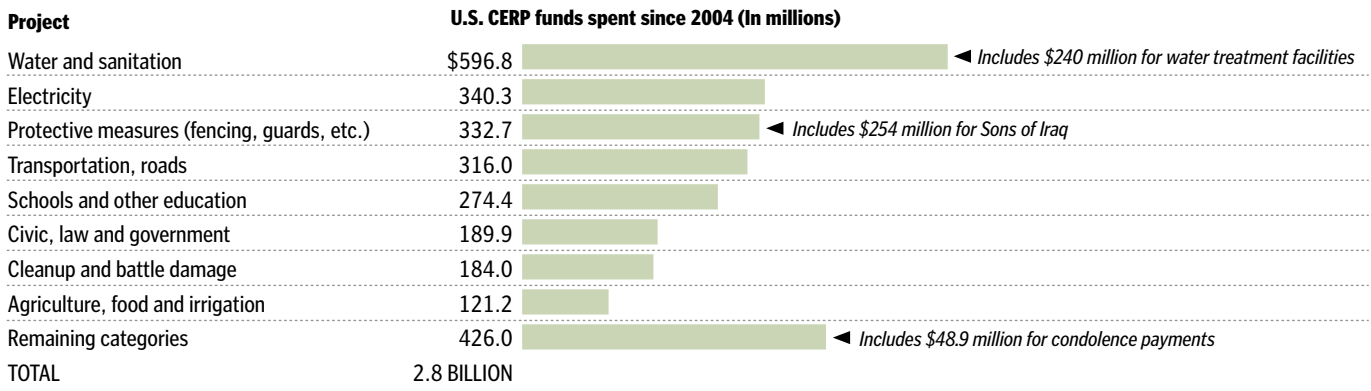
Where the Projects Are

The United States has spent at least \$2.8 billion under the Commander's Emergency Response Program, which lets senior military officials spend money for "urgent humanitarian relief and reconstruction" with minimal oversight as part of the counterinsurgency effort. Although much of the program has centered on Baghdad, the money has been spread through virtually every populated area in the country.



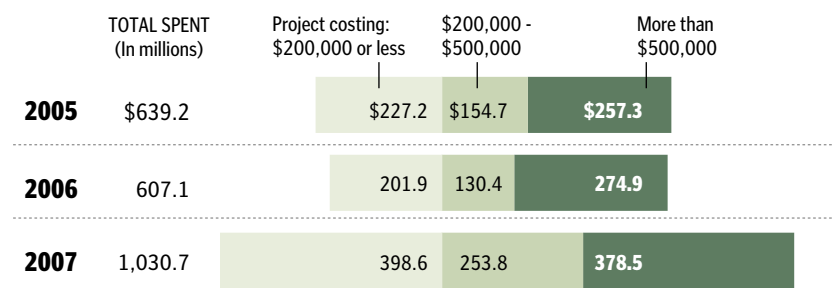
What the Money Gets

Military leaders say the spending is focused on creating jobs and filling local needs. As a result, CERP money has been spent on projects ranging from small payments for doors damaged in raids to a multimillion-dollar water treatment plant.



The Small and the Large

More than \$1 billion, or nearly 40 percent, of CERP funds have been spent on projects larger than the "small scale" efforts originally envisioned. The program has grown from a small fund for commanders paid for by seized Iraqi assets to \$1.2 billion this year. The Defense Department has asked for another \$1.5 billion for next year's budget.



NOTE: Records for 2004 and 2008 are incomplete.

SOURCE: Iraq Reconstruction Management System, as of June 2008

in Haditha two years ago as a Marine reservist, said he was permitted to pay \$500 for the loss of a leg or an arm. He paid up to \$2,500 for a death — a value that was written in the regulations.

Once a week, usually Tuesday afternoons, he walked from the military's operating base to the main intersection near the Euphrates River to hear Iraqis' stories. He'd spend the next day squaring the complaints with hospital and military records. On Thursdays, Hyatt and three armed Marines returned with banded stacks of American cash in plastic Ziploc bags.

"We'd set up shop," said Hyatt, who was a civil affairs officer for the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. "They knew I was the money guy." He gave \$100 to a father who said his young son had fallen off a curb and broke his leg when U.S. planes swooped in low.

So far, nearly \$50 million in condolence payments has gone to the families of killed and injured Iraqis. Last year, the United States paid \$1.6 million to families of those injured in what documents call a "horrific" improvised explosive device attack in central Baghdad, documents show.

Property damage has brought smaller payments. Col. Joe Rice, an Army reservist who has served three tours in Iraq, said soldiers in his unit peeled off \$50 for a ruined door of an Iraqi's house. A couch or window was worth \$25. Residents "were amazed we would help them," Rice said of his most recent tour, in Baghdad. "They just weren't used to someone taking care of them, helping them."

The tactic was similar to the way Hezbollah operates in Lebanon, said Koenig, who was an adviser to one of the Marine generals in charge of large-dollar CERP projects. "Hezbollah shows up after an Israeli airstrike with cash and fixes the neighborhood," he said. Iraqi insurgents, including al-Qaeda in Iraq, "never did that," he said. "They would come in and take charge of an area, but they didn't come back and say, 'We're going to help you out here.'"

Paying outright bribes is prohibited. But in Iraq, nepotism is a common practice and can help keep projects and troops safe.

Now-retired Army Lt. Col. John A.

Nagl, who served in Khalidiyah in 2004, hired a local contractor for \$20,000 to build a new barracks for the Iraqi national guard. But the project was repeatedly bombed, and workers couldn't finish it. Nagl said he told an Iraqi commander of his problem.

"He tells me: 'It so happens my brother is a contractor. You hire him; my soldiers will provide the security,'" Nagl said. He hired the commander's brother, Iraqis guarded the site while it was under construction, and it was finished. "I didn't have to have as many Americans out there," said Nagl, who later went on to write the forward to the Army's new counterinsurgency manual. "The barracks got built. You're using cash in a way that kept American soldiers alive."

But when CERP funds have been used for far bigger projects, the results can be problematic. Management and accountability of large contracts can be difficult for military personnel who are fighting a war, said James "Spike" Stephenson, a former U.S. Agency for International Development director in Iraq. "Their major job became not just fighting the war but becoming the de facto reconstruction guys. But they're not trained to run and sustain them. They are learning it on the battlefield."

Outside Kirkuk, in northern Iraq, an \$8.3 million water treatment project completed in February with CERP funds took more than two years and was \$1.7 million over budget — and it is not far from another water treatment system that USAID paid \$4.1 million to build two years ago, according to a top State Department official involved in the broader reconstruction efforts. He spoke on condition of anonymity because he did not want to undermine his relationships with his colleagues.

When auditors for the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction examined 173 projects of all sizes from 2006, they could find only 122 files. Many of the rest were missing key documents. In May, Pentagon auditors said they couldn't fully account for how \$135 million of CERP money, mostly funds funneled through South Korean and Polish coalition forces, was used. It often takes months to enter CERP projects in the database that is supposed to track them. That database is missing key elements for one-sixth of the money, such as the year, location or the amount actually spent.

"You have this question of what is the money really trying to achieve," said Ginger Cruz, principal deputy inspector general for Iraq reconstruction. "When it was a little money, that was one thing. Now that we're talking \$3.5 billion with another pot of \$1 billion coming down the road, that's a lot of money."

Creating Jobs

With unemployment hovering at 60 percent in some areas of Iraq, CERP's highest priority is creating local jobs.

Along the highway leading to Baghdad International Airport, long considered one

See RECONSTRUCT, A9, Col. 1



Marines account for CERP cash in Haditha, Iraq. The program disburses reparation money to Iraqis and creates local jobs.

COURTESY OF DANA HYATT

From Page One | Money as a Weapon

In Ramadi, a Counterinsurgency in Cash

Program Fed \$87 Million To Violence-Plagued City

By DANA HEDGPETH
and SARAH COHEN
Washington Post Staff Writers

One example widely cited as an effective use of the Commander's Emergency Response Program is Ramadi, the capital of the western Anbar province and a corner of the Sunni Triangle.

The city's long-running violence began to calm by late spring 2007. Local sheiks had agreed to side with Iraqi and U.S. forces and encouraged young men to join the police and military as insurgent attacks were waning. A new counterinsurgency handbook had institutionalized CERP's role, and military leaders told commanders to treat the money as ammunition.

"You had to win their trust," said Army Col. John Charlton, who oversaw U.S. forces in Ramadi at that time. "They see you catching the bad guys, putting them away, and they feel more comfortable that the terrorists aren't going to come back, that you're going to be there to protect them. It isolates the terrorists." By spending CERP money, plus securing areas and patrolling with Iraqi forces, he said, his units got tips on where weapons were hidden. Residents alerted them to plans of suicide attacks or roadside bombs.

In all, Charlton said, CERP spent \$87 million in Ramadi during his 15 months there. "We did more to win the counterinsurgency with our CERP dollars than we did with our weapons," he said.

An industrial complex that had once been a major employer in Ramadi had been shuttered because of violence and local instability. Two factories in the complex had employed more than 1,500 workers, and some of the glass and ceramics they made went to supply Saddam Hussein's palaces.

The United States spent more than \$500,000 of CERP funds in 11 contracts in 2005 to revive the glass factory. It never opened. The abandoned factory was instead being used as a police recruiting station when it was attacked by a suicide bomber on Jan. 5, 2006, killing at least 70 and contributing to a year of fighting that earned Ramadi a reputation as one of the most dangerous cities in Iraq.

In May 2007, though, troops assessed that the situation had improved enough to try to reopen the ceramics factory.

CERP money would allow the factory to reopen and employ hundreds of Iraqis.

"It was an iconic symbol to try to reopen the ceramics plant," said Marine Col. John A. Koenig, who helped manage big-dollar projects in Anbar. "It meant a return of normalcy. It was a psychological impact."

Earlier attempts to reopen the ceramics factory had failed for a variety of reasons. One of the biggest challenges was the lack of reliable electricity in Ramadi to run the plant, according to Bill



The ceramics factory in Ramadi, long shuttered by violence and instability, has reopened. However, its production is hampered by lack of reliable electricity.

Marks, a chief engineer for the Air Force who helped oversee the reopening of the factory under Charlton. Plus, there was difficulty getting Iraq's central government in Baghdad to pony up some money to help, military leaders said.

But Charlton and his troops had access to CERP money. It took him two weeks to get the approval he needed to spend roughly \$2 million on new generators and other parts and materials. Another Pentagon program to revive state-owned entities in Iraq chipped in about \$900,000 to send a handful of Iraqi workers to Italy for training on the kilns and other equipment. Iraqi authorities put in \$6 million. By the winter, the government-owned plant reopened.

Charlton left in April. Since then, the plant's Iraqi managers have been struggling.

Electricity is still spotty from the national grid, and getting precious fuel to run the generators can be tough.

Local managers have dispatched privately owned tankers to truck fuel from a refinery in Baiji, about 100 miles north — a route that has been plagued by insurgent attacks and workers skimming fuel. The trucks have brought back enough

fuel to run the plant for a few weeks, but the Iraqi Ministry of Oil has put in place quotas on how much to distribute throughout the country.

Of the three production lines in the plant, only the one building toilets is operating, sometimes only four hours a day before the electricity goes off, said Iraqi workers there. The factory employs one-tenth of the hoped-for 1,500 workers. Some days only 100 men are working, said Iraqis at the plant. "They just don't show up," said Turki al-Mohammad, who works at the plant. "But they come at the end of the month to receive their salaries." In the past few weeks, however, Iraqi officials have started to require electronic fingerprinting to make sure employees show up every day, or they don't get paid.

Workers have produced 300 toilets, but managers haven't sold as many as they'd like, even though Charlton's unit paid to put up ads in a newly built business center that offered residents and business owners a subsidy if they bought the plant's products.

After months of slow sales, the local government stepped in: It now requires contractors reconstructing Iraqi government buildings to buy sup-

plies from the plant and pays the wages separately so the factory can sell at cost.

Fuad Hammad Anazy, one of the plant's top managers, said there are almost no sales because "the demands are often less than the level of output." The plant hasn't yet made a profit on any of its toilets because they are sold at cost.

For Musleh al-Meshaal, one of the chief engineers and managers, the reopening of the plant was bittersweet. After being shot four times in the head and body in January 2005, he said, he shut the factory down out of concern for everyone's safety. In a recent telephone interview from Ramadi, he said he was grateful his plant was working again.

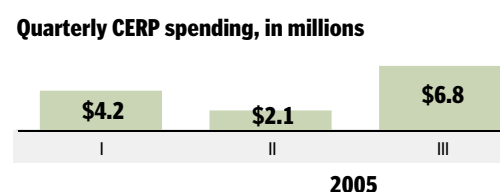
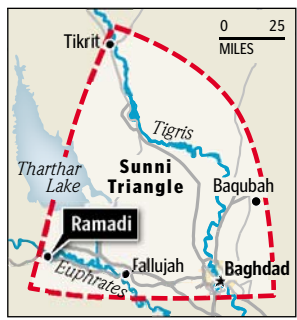
"With the help of the American army, we're open," he said. But he's now worried what will happen once the military leaves, saying the Iraqi government has problems of corruption and that officials in Baghdad don't spend the country's oil revenue on the local provinces.

"I suppose that I must get the fuel and raw materials on my own," he said. "We will need it. We will need more money to continue the factory."

"I'm worried, very worried, that when the American army goes, what will happen to our factory?"

Three Years in a City

Ramadi, a corner of the Sunni Triangle in Anbar province, was one of the most violent cities in Iraq for much of the war. Spending by commanders was limited because of the fighting. CERP spending accelerated as the region began to stabilize in 2007. At first, money went for day labor and trash pickup. It later funded larger reconstruction projects, such as a ceramics plant and a train station.



SOURCES: News reports and the Iraq Reconstruction Management System, June 2008. Figures are for obligated amounts. Includes records identified as Ramadi or towns in its immediate vicinity.

August
Top Marine intelligence officer in Anbar says that U.S. and Iraqi troops are "no longer capable of militarily defeating the insurgency" in the region.

June
Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq, is killed by U.S. forces.

January
At least 70 killed in suicide bombing of a police recruiting station.

November
U.S. commanders meet with top Sunni sheiks.

December
Iraq elections.

October
Al-Qaeda in Iraq stages military parade in downtown Ramadi, declaring the city its capital.

December
Saddam Hussein is hanged.

January
U.S. holds Ramadi Reconstruction Conference at the home of a Sunni sheik.

March
Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki makes first official visit to Ramadi.

April
More than 200 Sunni sheiks agree to form a new party called Iraq Awakening, to oppose the insurgency.

September
President Bush visits Anbar province and highlights progress in the region.

October
Unity Day parade in downtown Ramadi marks the defeat of the insurgency.

January
Marine Maj. Gen. Walter E. Gaskin expresses hope that the U.S. could soon turn control of security in Anbar province over to Iraqis.

GRAPHICS RESEARCH BY SARAH COHEN; IRAQ MAP BY RENÉE RIGDON AND NATHANIEL VAUGHN KELLO; GRAPHICS BY BRENNAN MALONEY AND CRISTINA RIVERO — THE WASHINGTON POST

RECONSTRUCT, From A8

of the most dangerous roads in the country because of the constant threat of improvised explosive devices, workers were hired to paint a \$900,000 mural depicting the progression of Iraq from fishing villages with seagulls and boats to oil refineries. Millions more were spent to plant and cultivate date palms, a crop decimated over the past two decades. Installing awnings worth \$687,000 in a market in Baghdad was justified partly because, documents say, "adding the awnings will create 35 jobs for 3 months."

In the violence-prone city of Ramadi, Army Capt. Nathan Strickland and his battalion used CERP money to hire day laborers to clear away trash and rubble. The military strategy: Get young men to pick up shovels instead of guns.

Strickland and his fellow soldiers offered Iraqis \$8 a day — comparable to what a garbage man for the city would make but not more because Iraqi officials said that if the United States paid more, none of their workers would show up for government jobs. But when few showed up for one of Strickland's work programs, others figured out why. Another U.S. military unit was offering \$10 because it didn't want to bother counting out one-dollar bills. "It wasn't synced together," Strickland said. "Everyone was trying to figure out how to do it on their own."

The largest jobs program began in 2007. Sons of Iraq, as it is now called, has paid more than 100,000 Iraqis \$5 to \$26 per day to guard checkpoints and patrol neighborhoods. The United States has

spent more than \$250 million on the program so far, records show.

Petraeus has told Congress that "the salaries paid to the Sons of Iraq alone cost far less than the cost savings and vehicles not lost due to the enhanced security in local communities."

But members of Congress, military strategists and government auditors said the problem is that there is no obvious way to end the program.

In their latest report, auditors at the special inspector general's office said the program is considered a "temporary security measure" but that only 14,000 Sons of Iraq members have transitioned to become part of the Iraqi Security Force.

"The Iraqi government should be stepping up to the plate to pay them," said Raymond F. DuBois, who is a senior adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and was a top Pentagon official under former defense secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld. "You've got to figure out a way to keep them on your side with the payroll, or you inject uncertainty into the situation and some of them will find employment elsewhere on the black market."

Lawmakers have begun to question CERP's seemingly endless funding. They say Iraq has failed to spend enough of its budget, which consists mainly of oil revenue, on its own reconstruction. In May, the House of Representatives proposed capping future CERP funding at twice the level the Iraqi government pitched in.

In a Senate hearing this spring, Levin recalled a recent trip to a base near Diyala. He said a senior U.S. military officer told him of a successful garbage-collection pro-

gram, paid for with CERP money, and the thanks he received from an Iraqi official, who added, "As long as you are willing to pay for the cleanup, why should we?"

Will the 'Rush' Last?

David Kilcullen, who has advised Petraeus on counterinsurgency strategy and who examined CERP last year, said the payouts are like dealing heroin — "easy development money that undercuts our efforts to improve their financial governance." He warned that the projects are a "rush" that often doesn't last.

After spending more than \$270 million in CERP money on schools, hospitals and health clinics, the U.S. government cannot say how many are in use and how many have been abandoned or attacked again, according to the Government Accountability Office.

One Ramadi health-care clinic became an al-Qaeda weapons cache, according to a senior officer in the region, whose unit found enough small arms, machine guns, IED components, rocket-propelled gre-

nades and mortar rounds at the clinic to fill a small SUV. In Baghdad, soldiers recently hired Iraqis to rebuild a school in the violent Dora neighborhood for the third time after it was repeatedly attacked.

Redevelopment experts say the military is ill-equipped to check in on how CERP projects are sustained. The Pentagon has addressed the issue in recent changes to CERP regulations. Among the changes: Requiring commanders to have a "formal, highly visible transfer" of projects to Iraqi control. A May update to the "Money as a Weapon System" manual tells commanders to work directly with the local government to guarantee that Iraq will accept the work once it's done.

The problem is persistent. Earlier this year, in the northern province of Irbil, two schools reviewed by the Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction included no provision for hand-over to the provincial government.

Last year, auditors found that a water treatment plant near Mosul that had been repaired with \$237,000 in CERP funds and then transferred to the local government was not working months later because it had no electricity.

At a sewage treatment plant in Baghdad, the inspector general's auditors found that when a new U.S. commander arrived in the area and discovered that the plant had no power, he would use CERP money to pay for a generator. That happened three times.

"So at the end of the day, they've paid for the same generator three different times," said Cruz, the deputy inspector general for reconstruction. "Nobody's

been there long enough to follow through."

When auditors for the Government Accountability Office surveyed commanders, they were told that many projects executed by their predecessors had been abandoned by the Iraqi government, been vandalized or simply disappeared. There is no requirement for regular monitoring of earlier projects, the GAO said, so there was no way to assess the success of the projects.

"We're Army guys," said Strickland, who helped distribute CERP money in Ramadi. "We're not civil engineers. We're not economists. We can't gut-check a lot of these programs."

"It's not their mission," said Gordon Adams, a former top international relations official for the Office of Management and Budget who has testified recently before Congress on Iraq reconstruction efforts. He said he doubts that the military should ever build schools or health clinics or other facilities that don't contribute to security improvements. "They've got a fairly Wild West approach to development. . . . If you build a clinic, that clinic needs medical support; it needs supplies. In six months, how is that going to be provided? It's not long-term development, to the degree it's development at all."

Staff writer Amit R. Paley and special correspondent K.I. Ibrahim in Baghdad contributed to this report. A special Washington Post correspondent reported from Anbar province. Staff researcher Julie Tate contributed from Washington.