



## Front Lines BECOME Food Lines

The State Department is talking with the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) about retaining some name-brand, fast-food operations, such as Green Beans coffee, at about half the bases converting over to diplomatic functions.

(U.S. ARMY PHOTO / SGT. LAURA M. BIGENHO)

### State Department Utilizes Facilities as Military Draws Down in Iraq

With the American military set to wind up its mission in Iraq by the end of this year, the bases and facilities they leave behind will remain active but transition to support thousands of civilian personnel gathering there to work under the Department of State and the Office of Security Cooperation Iraq (OSC-I).



A U.S. soldier shares a hug with country music artist Toby Keith earlier this year, during a lunch at the dining facility at Forward Operating Base Union III in Iraq. Keith performed a short acoustical concert at the base and spent time with soldiers assigned to the staff of the United States Forces-Iraq deputy commanding general for advising and training. The visit was part of Keith's ninth USO-Armed Forces Entertainment tour.

(U.S. ARMY PHOTO / SPC. BREEANNA DUBUKE)

Transitioning the military bases and facilities in Iraq to support civilians under the State Department suggests a 180-degree turn, but some of the original flavor will remain as selected dining facilities continue to operate, follow the Army's 28-day menu and be supplied through Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) Troop Support.

"They basically are all going to use the infrastructure that's in place now," said Cathie Sexton, program manager of the Executive Agent Office in the Directorate of Subsistence. "For us, for DLA TS, nothing is really going to change."

Plans are for the State Department to maintain a scaled-down infrastructure at each of the 12 former military bases complete with one dining facility per location for these civilian employees.

Including aviation facilities, there will be a total of 14 sites in Iraq after Dec. 31, 2011. The Office of Overseas Building Operations (OOBO) is overseeing and paying for the construction.

An exception is Erbil, for-

merly a forward operating base in the north of Iraq, where the State Department is building a full-service dining facility. Military personnel there ate out of Mobile Kitchen Trailers, which the State Department is replacing with a dining facility for its workers.

Another consistency is the State Department decision that its dining facilities would follow the Army's standard 28-day menu for planning meals. "It would preclude them from having to come up with their own menu; it was just easier to continue the same cycle," Sexton continued.

On six of the 12 bases, the cafeteria-style dining facility may not be the only meal option available. In talks with the State Department, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) is considering retaining some name-brand, fast-food operations at about half the bases. "However, ongoing analysis will be required to determine whether populations at these locations are sufficient for continued operation," said Judd Anstey, public relations manager, AAFES, in an e-mail response to questions.

The bases and name-brand, fast-food operations AAFES is considering continuing are: Taji, Green Beans; Besmaya, Green Beans; JSS Shield, Green Beans and North End Pizza; Union III, Popeyes, North End Pizza and Green Beans; Prosperity, Green Beans, Pizza Hut and Subway; and New Embassy, Green Beans, Pizza Hut and Subway.

When asked about the financial relationship and income from their outlets, he added that AAFES does not have any revenue-sharing agreement with the Department of State.

## DLA TROOP SUPPORT

Planning for transition of the bases and facilities to State Department jurisdiction began in January 2011. After Dec. 31, 2011, these former military bases in Iraq will accommodate Department of State and support personnel, such as dining facility staff and private security, and be headed by the U.S. Mission Iraq (USMI), under the Department of State. Some of the 12 bases are run by either OSC-I or the Department of State, while others are operated jointly.

Sites will transition as the military draws down,

with the first scheduled for Aug. 1, 2011, and the last in December 2011. "The use of the term 'bases' after DoD's withdrawal should be replaced with the term 'Diplomatic facilities,'" explained a State Department official.

Until the transition date, U.S. Forces Iraq (USFI), under the Department of the Army, continues operating the bases and facilities.

The number of Department of State employees in Iraq is growing from 8,500 now toward an anticipated target of approximately 15,000 to 17,000 civilian personnel working there under USM-I. All military are to be out of Iraq by the end of the year, unless asked to stay.

By continuing to be supplied through DLA



Dining facilities on 12 military bases in Iraq will support civilians working there under the Department of State and the Office of Security Cooperation Iraq (OSC-I).

Troop Support and its established channels, at least through December 2012, the State Department has time to decide to whether it can come up with alternate sources of its own.

Troop Support has worked with the State Department from the beginning of U.S. involvement in Iraq by supporting embassy workers there. Up to now, food and supplies purchased by the State Department for dining facilities supporting its workers in Iraq through Troop Support and its prime vendor were billed to the Army, but paid through the USFI, which was reimbursed for the cost by the Department of State.

"As DFACs transition from DoD to State, we will begin to pay DLA directly for costs associated with procurement and transportation of food from their vendor in Kuwait to the DFACs," the State Department official said. "The first DFAC to transition will be on Aug. 1, 2011."

Department of State has always reimbursed the Army for its share of the food used in dining facili-

ties. "It's basically how they are working right now ... except Department of State is going to be paying the bill," Sexton said.

To complete the transition by the Dec. 31, 2011 deadline leaves the State Department with too little time to arrange alternatives. "They don't have time to put a contract in place," Sexton said. "They won't have to put in a new supply pipeline ... things are flowing."

## ESTABLISHED CHANNELS

Dining facilities are operated by KBR under a contract issued by Rock Island Contracting Command (RICC). The current contract is soon to expire, but Department of State asked RICC to let another contract, which has been put out to bid and was expected to be awarded in July, dollar value unknown.

DLA Troop Support estimates the contract dollar value of subsistence supplies at \$145 million annually, which includes over-ocean and in-country transportation and is based on an estimated population of 17,000.

The actual dollar amount will vary from the estimate depending on what quantities are ordered. Each individual dining facility maintains its own supply levels, and re-supply orders are accomplished by the managing contractor. "It's up to the Rock Island contractor to place the order and keep supplies on hand," she explained.

Anham continues as the prime vendor for supplies to Iraq and Kuwait. Anham is a full-line food distributor with a current catalog of over 800 items. "We go soup to nuts, no pun intended," Sexton said.

Currently, the U.S. Army's Logistics Civil Augmentation Program IV (LOGCAP IV) contract requires dining facilities to keep a 10-day supply on hand. Dining facility inventory level and dollar volume is currently tracked with the Army Food Management Information System (AFMIS), which is expected to continue once Army forces leave.

The Department of State also asked RICC to let a separate contract for private security. DLA will have its own Task Order under the overarching security contract. This contract ensures safe delivery with private security escorts leading supplies up to Iraq from Kuwait in a convoy formation. A mixture of military escorts and private security escorts are currently being utilized, however, DLA is planning that all military protection is expected to end with troop withdrawal at the end of the year.

The LOGCAP program requires that the contractor is provided with security commensurate with that

provided Department of Defense civilians. With the departure of the military, the Department of State intends to rely on private contractors to meet this requirement. This effort is being contracted through the Army Sustainment Command under its Security Support Services – Iraq contract.

"Department of State missions and their staff can normally obtain food and fuel on the local economy. However, this is not the case in Iraq. Near to mid-term, security conditions are not expected to permit staff to leave either Baghdad or provincial facilities on a routine basis to obtain support services. Everything must be brought to the mission, either from sources within Iraq or, more likely, from outside Iraq. The DLA support function is reliable and already in place. If Department of State could not continue to receive food and fuel from DLA, we would be forced to require our life-support contractor to duplicate the DLA function and the mechanisms that already exist to ensure product integrity. Assuming a contractor could perform this function successfully, it would require a major investment of Department of State resources to ensure that this function, which is not a function traditionally performed by Department of State, is properly carried out," the official continued.

Not only is it easier for the State Department to continue supplying the 12 dining facilities through Troop Support, but the items are from known origin, inspected, meet sanitary standards and product security, and integrity is ensured through the use of seals on delivery vehicles. Troop Support also has the advantage of knowing how to operate in theater, such as facilitating border crossing.

Currently all military cargo is exempt from customs fees and taxes due to the Security Agreement currently in place. However, this agreement expires Dec. 31, 2011, and border crossing could become an issue.

"Being that Iraq is considered a 'contingency zone,' the Berry Amendment does not apply," Sexton said. However, Anham sources almost all of its product from the United States and utilizes the Defense Transportation System for over-ocean shipment. Due to the long lead times associated with these shipments to Kuwait along with customs clearance timeframes, short shelf-life/local market-ready items, such as dairy (milk, eggs and yogurt) and produce, are obtained locally by the prime vendor.

"Where the situation warrants, the Department of State intends to buy more products locally," the State Department official said. The Consulate General in Erbil now acquires its food locally, for example."

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