



# Operation RIO Update

31 October 2003

CPT Corrales in front of Baghdad parade field.

*An update for all SWD employees and Operation RIO volunteers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.*

**Mission Update:** With the warning order to possibly stand up a new USACE Division in Iraq, TF RIO plans accordingly. The formal stand up of the new Division is planned for on or about 1 February 2004 prior to the transfer of authority between V & III Corps. TF RIO is currently working on an event based exit strategy which is to be implemented once approved. The goal is to transfer operations to the new Division by the end of March 2004.

As TF RIO plans for the transfer of operations and re-deployment, the team continues to successfully maintain oil production over 2.1 million barrels per day.

**Follow on Contracts:** On 29 October, the Corps issued an amendment raising the capacity for the two follow-on contracts from a maximum \$500 million per contract to a maximum \$800 million for the Northern contract and a maximum \$1.2 billion for the Southern area contract, which would include Baghdad. This amendment was sent to the offerors who originally submitted proposals. They have 7 days to submit a revised proposal. It is estimated the new contracts will be issued in about 60 days.

## **A View From Down Range: Colonel Richard Jenkins**

Story and photos by Alan Dooley

It rained a little in Baghdad, Iraq the day after Colonel Rick Jenkins left to begin his 7,000 mile journey home. "It rained a little the first time I was there (Baghdad) too," Colonel Jenkins said.

And so the odyssey to Iraq has come to an end for Jenkins, who served six months to the day, as Chief of Staff with Task Force RIO (Restore Iraqi Oil) in that crucial Middle Eastern nation. Jenkins's regular assignment is as Deputy Commander for the Mississippi Valley Division of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Task Force RIO's assigned mission is to work with the Iraqis to restore their oil production system to prewar status – to enable it to produce 2 million barrels of crude oil a day by the end of 2003 and to ramp up to the prewar figure of 2.5 million barrels per day by March 31, 2004. The mission is critical to Iraq's future as a stable democracy. Iraq possesses the world's second largest known oil reserves and this oil underpins the nation's entire economy by providing 95% of its foreign earnings.

Colonel Jenkins arrived at Camp Doha, Kuwait on April 14, 2003. The last Scud alert had occurred the night before, but all personnel were still encumbered with MOPP gear – gas mask, chemical defense suits – and the war continued to rage to the north. The Third Infantry Division had forced its way into Baghdad.

No oil was flowing in Iraq except from a few damaged well heads, pipeline breaks and leaks. It was hardly an auspicious beginning.

His assignment was to run the staff supporting Task Force Commander Brigadier General Robert Crear. He would manage the myriad daily activities and develop and sustain the many relationships with military organizations, the contractor and others to ensure that everyone was working together in the best possible manner.



The last oil well fires were extinguished in Iraq's southern oil fields the day before he arrived, and a first challenge was setting up the Task Force's operating office in the southern oil field region. The northern oil fields remained to be secured at that point, so the team slated to go there was being held pending successful completion of combat in the Kirkuk region.

Task Force RIO was working in a small warehouse-like building – Building 9 – that had no air conditioning, but featured copious quantities of wind-driven dust every day. One RIO team member has commented that you could write your name on your desk every morning – without need for pen or paper.

“We reorganized in April. We reorganized again in May. That time we applied the principles of PMBP. Gary Loew and Don Dunn did a fabulous job of applying PMBP to our situation,” Colonel Jenkins remembered. “We retooled the organization several times – not because it wasn't working, but to keep pace with the rapid changes around us. I'm proud of how we were able to make the necessary changes to stay on top of the situation, the challenges and opportunities.”

Jenkins, who traveled by air over much of Iraq, reflected upon his last six months and cited a number of highlights. “Driving from Kuwait to Baghdad was an incredible experience – and I got to do it twice. The land changes from starkly desolate desert to the fertile farmland between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The people, their homes and ways of life were fascinating. Traveling on the ground is really the only way to get an image of the country in your mind,” he noted.

“It was also exhilarating to drive through the streets of Baghdad the first time,” he told. He had to remind himself that this was the capital of Iraq, that this was a city that some pundits had forecast that we would have to fight building to building to wrest from tenacious Iraqi defenders – and now he was there. And it was all still there too.

“Around June first, we presented the ROM (Rough Order of Magnitude) estimate to the Ministry of oil,” Colonel Jenkins told. “Only a few weeks later we were sitting down in a four-day workshop, with Ministry of Oil officials and operating officers from the entire Iraqi oil system to and lay out a work plan and then shake hands over it. I was there for both occasions and it was like being a part of history,” he added. “And that work plan – that's what we are executing now,” he noted, as his departure date drew near.



When asked what he would take from the experience, Colonel Jenkins said that he had not had any life-changing realizations. But a long held belief was reinforced.

“This mission and the way it has been accomplished, I believe, demonstrates the way the USACE (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) is uniquely capable of contributing to military operations in this world today.”

“I don't think that the Army has adequately valued tours with USACE for military engineer officers. Tours with USACE are valuable for exposure to large building and operating projects and to the civilian engineering professionals who do this for their life's work,” he said. “The professional development gained serving in the Corps would be invaluable on missions such as TF RIO.

In a similar vein Colonel Jenkins noted, “I don't think our military engineering officers have appreciated, until now, the power of having our civilian employees present during and immediately after the conflict.”

Noting that a small cadre from TF RIO was on hand before the fighting started, to help prepare Marines, SEALs, and soldiers for what they would find in the oil fields and how to deal with it, he said this was instrumental to helping preserve the irreplaceable infrastructure and oil assets.

Some may have been concerned that our civilians would not or could not deal with the dangers and privations of the military situation. “I went to the CRC with twelve people. They didn't know where they were headed. They didn't know for sure what they'd be called on to do when they got there. But without exception, they were eager to get on with the task. They were ready to enter an unknown situation alongside their military counterparts,” Jenkins noted with pride.

“And throughout, Task Force RIO has been a resilient, learning organization. It has responded to change, risen to challenges, and anticipated needs.

“The combination of military people to ensure the proper fit with other military units and operations, working with the civilian subject matter experts has been simply amazing,” he said. “No other nation on earth could do this. In fact, without the USACE team, I don’t even think America could. And the future may hold more of these kinds of missions.”

Does Jenkins have any misgivings about his tour in Iraq? “There’s never a good time to leave. You always want to complete the mission. The job isn’t finished. But I’ve had to redeploy and leave a team behind before. It’s just the military way. But I’m leaving with a lot of pride in where we’ve come from and where we are,” he said. During his last week in Iraq he also took great pride in leading completion of a major move of personnel from Kuwait, forward to Baghdad, thrusting the Task Force’s center of gravity into the heart of the Iraq.

Colonel Jenkins credits a large amount of Task Force RIO’s success to its commander, Brigadier General Crear, who also commands the Corps’ Southwestern Division, in Dallas, Texas. “RIO’s undergone a 100% turnover in six months – really closer to 200%. But he’s been here throughout.

“General Crear has been remarkable for his clarity of vision, for his ability to clearly articulate his intent and then keep us focused on his vision and intent. He has set standards that everyone understood and strived to meet. It’s awfully easy to work for a guy like that,” he noted.

As Jenkins flies back to his duties in Vicksburg, Miss., he returns home to his family: his wife Clare, daughters Catherine (17), and Mary (7) and son Matthew (15). Jenkins is a native of Columbus, Georgia, where his mother still resides.

Oh yes, about the oil that he came to restore. On the day that Colonel Rick Jenkins flew from Kuwait City International Airport en route home – 75 days ahead of schedule and for the first time since the war – 2 million barrels of oil flowed from Iraq’s wells to be exported and to be processed to meet domestic needs. Well Done!

### **A View From Down Range: Captain Robert Corrales**

by Alan Dooley



They call him Captain Bob, Captain RIO, Baghdad Bob, Dr. Bob – and a few other colorful names. Captain Robert C. Corrales, USAR, has completed a six-month tour of duty in Iraq. There he served with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Task Force RIO (Restore Iraqi Oil).

Corrales, who became part of the group at its inception in Dallas, Texas, in February, served first to help plan the classified mission, then journeyed to Kuwait in May, not long after major combat ended.

In June he journeyed north to Baghdad, where he was part of a small group that had been sent to establish a toehold for Task Force RIO to open relations with the Iraqi Ministry of Oil, who along with contractor KBR (Kellogg, Brown and Root) would work closely together in the following weeks and months to start the rebuilding process.

Corrales spoke of those early days. “It was incredibly hot. There was no air conditioning. We were hot. We were sweating constantly. We simply couldn’t drink enough water,” he remembered.

Task Force RIO’s mission was, and remains, to help the Iraqi nation restore its oil production capabilities to their prewar benchmarks. Before the recent conflict, Iraq produced some 2.5 million barrels of petroleum each day. With the lifting of the UN Embargo put in place

after the last Gulf War, the Iraqi oil industry has the potential and promise to generate fully 95 percent of the nation's foreign exchange earnings, stabilizing its economy and future.

Captain Corrales was involved early on in events that culminated in the historic July workshop that established his reputation as a consummate organizer and "diplomat."

"We struggled to organize a workshop to bring together all the players in the Iraqi Oil Industry, along with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and KBR. We decided to hold it in the Iraqi Oil Cultural Center, which had been sacked by vandals in the days after the Coalition got to Baghdad. The final refurbishing didn't get completed until the night before the session was to kick off.

"When the conclave started the next day, all of the directors general and MOO (Ministry of Oil) leadership were present. This marked the first time they had sat down together in over 20 years. It also marked the first time they had met without heavy-handed restraints in more than three decades, maybe ever," Corrales said with deep satisfaction.

Out of that meeting came a list of priorities and a work plan. That work plan has guided the combined efforts of the MOO, Task Force RIO and KBR as they have steadily brought the oil industry back to life, even in the face of unforeseen levels of looting and sabotage.

Corrales credits many people with Task Force RIO's success to date, not the least of whom are the Iraqi people themselves. "They are brilliant people. They accomplish things that are simply unbelievable. They are passionate in pursuit of success," he emphasized.

"They believe in their mission. Look at those guards at the Baghdad Hotel, for example, who put their lives on the line to stop a car bomber. Some of them died. And they did it for \$60 a month."

"Let me tell you about the people who came to that workshop in July," he continued. "The directors from the 16 operating companies all over Iraq journeyed to Baghdad to sit together. They did it on their own. Most hadn't been paid in months. They weren't there on expense accounts. They just came. They worked hard. They came and they did the job because they believed in their nation and their roles in getting it going again," he affirmed.

Corrales went on: "I see nothing but good here, especially in the young people. When you drive through the city and out on the roads, the kids smile and offer the most genuine emotion. They give you thumbs up. The recipe for success is here. But we need to keep telling them that. Nobody has told them how good they are in ages."

He also searches for words to adequately tell how he feels about the soldiers serving in Iraq. "This is the finest Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force in the world. For them, this war – the global war on terrorism – is just starting. It's in its infancy. And you are seeing virtually none of the problems that have plagued armies in the field in the past, like discipline or drug problems. These men and women – many of them are kids – are all heroes.

"Some are dying. That hurts every time I hear of it," Captain Corrales reflected. "But somehow they know this is important, and I think that they think it is worth it. If our children and their children have to come here to redo this, we will have failed. It's tough to hear people argue about money for this. This is simply too important to get wrong."

Corrales added, "It's more than the 125,000 soldiers here. Each one of them represents a family. They are not just individual soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines – they are family members and those families are in this with them."

"This is clearly a war of good versus evil – not against Iraq – against terrorism. America is a great nation. Its greatness will only grow if we are able to show other nations how to achieve similar greatness," he reflected emphatically.

He continued, "This military has incredible power. We could wipe our adversaries out. But it takes greater strength to restrain that power. We are providing an object lesson on how Americans deal with a challenge.



SSG Melody Garcia, an interpreter with the 221<sup>st</sup> Military Intelligence Battalion, Ft. Gillum, Ga., working with TF RIO stands near the base of the entrance to the parade field. Those are old American helmets.

Corrales, whose work in Iraq has taken him almost daily out across the city of Baghdad and into even more dangerous territory, emphasizes that his work is all about relationships with people. “I encourage people to speak up, to speak out, to speak their minds. They are uncomfortable at first, but it is wonderful to watch them finally do this.”

“I learned how important relationships are by having my own business,” he said of a telecommunications consulting company he once owned and operated in Las Vegas. “You have to be the CEO, the salesman and the janitor, and it’s all about dealing with people.”

Captain Corrales has not achieved what he has in Iraq without personal sacrifice.

“I was called to active duty nearly two years ago, after 9-11. It was for one year, but I got caught in the stop-loss program,” he said. And that was not an inconsequential pause in his life. They call him “Dr. Bob” for a reason. He had just earned his Doctor of Medicine degree from the Ibero American University in Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic, not long before being called up. “It’s put my residency on hold.”

What called him to medicine?

Corrales, who wants to be a country doctor, reflected, “I am simply amazed by the human body – by life. Everything else we basically know. We know how to build buildings. Bridges are well understood. But human beings are the most interesting creation I know of and the human body is still an unsolved mystery. We can’t cure a cold and we don’t know what causes cancer. I want to know about these things.”

Reflecting on heroes, Corrales focuses keenly on one person. “My wife, Barbara, is my personal hero. Listen, we’ve been together a total of three months since this started. I kept waiting to bring her to Tulsa, and then when I did, I was deployed to Djibouti and then sent to Dallas two months later. She’s waiting there for me to return. She’s my hero.”

The rest of the Corrales family waits in the Las Vegas area, including his mother Connie Corrales, who is also Dr. Corrales – a pediatrician. His four brothers, Ronald, August, Paul and John also live in the Las Vegas area.

“In so many ways I want to stay, but this mission is going to go on without me. The people in Iraq are going to get this done without me,” Corrales said. “I am returning to my family, but part of me will stay here with the people on the RIO team and our Iraq colleagues. I would like to come back some day as a tourist and see how this all comes out.”



Captain Corrales’ contribution to Task Force RIO was recognized by the award of the Army Bronze Star Medal in a ceremony before his departure.

When Captain Bob Corrales flies out of Iraq it will be aboard a military airplane from the former Saddam Hussein – now renamed Baghdad – International Airport. But when he returns

sometime in the future, there will likely be a very large welcoming committee of the multitude of Iraqi friends he has made while he has served both his nation and theirs.

**Deploying:** Arriving at CRC 26 Oct.: Samuel Parker, Omaha District; Katie Brasfield, North Atlantic Division. Arriving at CRC on 2 Nov.: Kinney Bryant, Little Rock; Thomas Chamberland, South Pacific Division; R C Fell, Albuquerque District; Sven Hahr, Southwestern Division; Renee Inabnitt, Portland District; Frankie Johnson, Little Rock District; Thomas Miller, St. Louis District; Chris Morgan, St. Louis District; Ida Morris, St. Louis District; Robert Morris, Fort Worth District; Nancy Pierce Rock Island District; Mark Simmons, Fort Worth District; Carolyn Vadino, New York District; Greg Wishard, Little Rock District; Lee Wolf, Walla Walla District.

**Redeploying:** On or about 25 Oct.: CPT Robert Corrales, Tulsa District; On or about 26 Oct.: Shelby Joe Jackson, Little Rock District. On or about 28 Oct.: Ethan Luke, North Atlantic Division. On or about 1 Nov.: Jerry Balcom, Portland District. On or about 3 Nov.: Jim McKinney, Fort Worth District; Kris Graves, Tulsa District; Pam McNeeley, Fort Worth District.

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**"HOOAH!!"**

*MICHAEL L. SCHULTZ, COLONEL, EN  
Acting Commander,  
Southwestern Division*