

DECLASSIFIED



DFID

Department for
International
Development

1, Palace Street, London, SW1E 5HE

Martin Howard
Director Joint Commitments
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

Email:
Tel:

18 March 2006

Dear Martin

RE: OPERATION AMPERE: LESSONS LEARNED

In mid November I visited Basra and Baghdad with Suma Chakrabarti. We were both very encouraged to see how well the relationship between DFID and MOD has developed since 2003. The cooperation on the ground between DFID staff and military personnel is impressive and a unique example of effective joined-up working.

Our collaboration takes many forms from access to MND(SE) air assets, to information sharing on the political process, to joint funding of quick impact projects. Both sides have worked hard to bring together two organisations with their own unique histories and very different cultures. We are now in a position where our cooperation is supporting mutual objectives on the ground. But it is important to remember that our collaboration has not always been seamless; there are many lessons to learn from our efforts in Iraq. Operation Ampere, a £5.6m quick impact project funded by DFID and implemented in partnership with MND(SE), is a useful case study.

In early 2005, our Secretary of State and the Defence Secretary agreed to buy and install ten generators through Operation Ampere. The aim was to deliver additional power to areas where the hot summer months would potentially worsen security and create additional unrest. The project has had numerous problems which has delayed completion by a year to June 2006. These include:

- Lack of commitment in MND(SE) to work with DFID's international procurement systems to ensure value for money and proper audit trails. This meant that DFID eventually executed the project
- Failure to accept the expert's opinion that the project could not be delivered within such short time frames
- Little Iraqi buy in which caused significant delays in installation and means that once completed the local authorities might abandon it

I attach a recent internal review of the project which provides more details.

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

Operation Ampere illustrates that initiatives such as these often meet neither force protection objectives, nor development objectives. This does not, however, mean that we should collaborate less. We must be clearer about the sorts of things we can usefully do together. Examples of good cooperation in southern Iraq include:

- DFID-funded governance advisers working alongside MND(SE) with the provincial councils to build their administrative capacity
- Collaboration between J9/G9's economic advisers and our business advisers on opportunities for spending fund allocated to economic development
- Small scale quick impact projects, such as the refurbishment of the Basra provincial council building, funded by DFID but procured locally and project managed by MND(SE) in theatre.
- Symbiotic relationship between DFID funded staff and MND(SE) who provide us with security and help us deliver common objectives (i.e. protection for the transportation of complex equipment).

The reason these projects were successful and Operation Ampere has not been is because both our objectives – force protection and development – were met. In addition, none of these initiatives involved complex international procurement and project management. And all these initiatives had substantial buy-in from local authorities.

Our teams in theatre have grappled admirably with many challenges in an increasingly difficult security environment over the last 12 months. And we have resolved most of the problems facing us. I hope you will agree with me that Operation Ampere offers significant lessons on how we might further improve our collaboration in the future. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further with you. My team will be in touch to arrange a discussion.

Yours ever,

Martin Dinham

Director, Europe, Middle East & Americas Division

DECLASSIFIED