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1. Iraqi irregular forces include the Ba'ath Party militia, Fedayyin Saddam, and Al Quds Army. The various security and intelligence agencies (the Special Security Organisation (SSO), the Directorate of General Intelligence (DGI), Directorate of General Security (DGS) and Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI) and police) might also add personnel to the fighting or coerce others into the irregulars.
2. Intelligence is often unclear or unreliable about which particular organisation is involved in particular events. Moreover, the distinction between these organisations may break down in war, particularly in confused situations eg currently in Basra, Nasiriya and Najaf. It is also quite possible that remnants of Regular Army units are joining ad-hoc groups of fighters, or that local people are being press-ganged into fighting, despite no prior membership. Some RG special forces may also be present.
3. **Numerical strength.** Pre-war, each of Iraq's 18 governorates had at least one Fedayyin battalion and one or two 'emergency forces' battalions made up of Ba'ath Party militia and intelligence/security forces (with each battalion possibly up to 1,500 men).

The numbers and deployments of personnel in each of the irregular/security forces therefore remains uncertain:

- **Fedayyin Saddam.** Estimates vary from 15-40,000 members;
- **Ba'ath Party militia.** Theoretically, all Ba'ath Party members (estimated 700,000) can be called to serve in the militia. Actual numbers currently serving are not known;
- **Al Quds Volunteer Forces.** Possibly 20,000 men. It is unclear to what extent the Al Quds Army and the Ba'ath Party militia are separate organisations;
- **SSO.** We estimate SSO strength to be 2,000 personnel, but it is possibly much greater. SSO personnel provide protection for senior leadership figures and WMD; others are attached to the military to ensure the latter's loyalty;

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- **DGI.**

have been much lower (total 4,000);

Previous UK estimates

- **DGS.** The UK has estimated DGS strength at 8,000, but

as a whole.

Before the war, it had a uniformed emergency battalion, each with several hundred personnel, in each of Iraq's 18 governorates to suppress civil unrest;

- **DMI.** Estimated to be 6,000 strong.

4. **Motivation.** Iraq's irregular forces are probably motivated by a range of factors:

- some will fight because of true loyalty to the regime. Membership offers social status and material benefits (and there are further rewards on offer for fighting the coalition). Regime propaganda has been virtually unchallenged;
- many fear retribution from the Iraqi population or the coalition if the regime falls, particularly now they have 'blood on their hands' from recent activities;
- intimidation by other regime loyalists (which depends on a credible continuing capability to punish dissenters). There are unconfirmed reports of execution squads and the murder of tribal shaikhs who refused to resist coalition forces;
- some probably convince themselves that they are fighting for reasons of nationalism/patriotism, or even professional pride. But these motivations may conflict with brutal treatment of the Iraqi population (or possibly POWs);
- a herd mentality. It is impossible to specify when confidence in the regime might waver and break. But intangible factors relating to morale, the relative fear of facing the coalition versus regime retribution, may play a part. The sense of who is winning is important.

5. The **strengths** of the irregular forces are that they make it difficult for the coalition to identify, locate and attack them, taking advantage of the coalition's rules of engagement and aversion to causing civilian casualties. They are

- able to blend in to the general population. Fighters in civilian clothes can infiltrate and possibly leave areas of fighting relatively easily. They can

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ment away from a coalition attack, to return later. Members can collect intelligence on coalition forces unobtrusively.

- flexible. Armed only with light weapons, small groups of fighters can move around their small area of responsibility quickly and easily;
- difficult to target by air strikes (fighting in small, mobile, groups in built-up areas);
- able to use their local knowledge and contacts to help the tactical battle and intelligence-gathering;
- willing to use intimidation to force co-operation from local people, or to use them as human shields.

6. The irregular forces do not need to be particularly militarily effective to cause the coalition problems politically or to increase coalition requirements for force protection. Being cut off from information may even work to their advantage; they may not know when their position is theoretically untenable.

7. **Weaknesses**, which are potentially significant, include:

- uncertain quality of personnel (Quds Army members are reportedly recruited on a quota basis from state employees);
- poor military training
- lack of heavy equipment, uncertain supplies of food and ammunition;
- little awareness of the big picture, particularly if communications are cut with Baghdad;
- weak central control might make them less effective than they could be;
- poor relationship with Regular Army;
- uncertain ability for the different organisations to co-operate without strong central control (Saddam has always encouraged a degree of competition and overlap of roles between these organisations, to avoid any one becoming too strong);

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- intimidation may only force members to fight until they have an opportunity to surrender or, more likely, disappear back into the civilian population;
- dubious reputation with local population. And brutalising tactics may undermine the loyalty of some members;
- (possibly) lack of ability to sustain the fight. A lack of training, poor supplies and low morale might inhibit these fighters' willingness to carry on the fight for weeks on end. But this is uncertain, and the regime could allow fighters rest periods away from the front.

8. **Ability to operate autonomously.** that the survival of communication links with Baghdad and the central Iraqi leadership is of pivotal importance to the continued resistance by the irregular forces.

that the regime remains in control, thereby maintaining the implicit threat of retribution against those who do not fight and undermining any perception of coalition success.

9. However, it remains possible that even without effective command and control exercised direct from Baghdad, some irregulars would fight on. Baghdad expected the loss of communications earlier and has installed regime loyalists to all significant positions of authority. They would retain the power to intimidate, at least for a time. And some other motivations will remain unaffected (eg the irregulars' stake in avoiding the fall of the regime).

10. Although there is little specific intelligence, we must be ready for new guerrilla-style activity and tactics from the irregulars. It is possible that Iraq now will have established plans for a 'stay-behind' network of fighters and supplies to harass coalition forces and the Iraqi population in areas supposedly cleared of fighters. Some pockets of irregulars might remain dormant while the coalition enters an area, before reappearing to conduct sniping, bomb attacks, kidnaps of coalition soldiers and violent retribution against members of the population co-operating with the coalition. The irregulars will also continue take advantage of any opportunity to infiltrate across the front line into the coalition rear areas.

11. But the key issue will be to what extent the irregulars can intimidate, or are supported by, the local population. Only a substantial, active and visible coalition troop presence can guarantee true control over an area and deny it to the irregulars.


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