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From: Philip Parham. IOU  
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cc: John Buck

To: PS/PUS

**SUBJECT: IRAQ - SIR H SYNNOTT'S CALL ON THE PUS TODAY**

1. Updates on staffing and security for the PUS's meeting with Hilary Synnott this afternoon. On these issues, the PUS may want to discuss in particular the search for Hilary's successor (now that Andy Bearpark appears to be out of the frame), and contingency planning for partial drawdown of staff.

**STAFFING**

**Basra**

2. DFID, through Crown Agents, is recruiting 37 new staff for Basra. 15 of these should be deployed this month, including 7 departing TA officers reengaged on civilian contracts. Candidates have been identified for most of the remaining posts, and should be deployed in December and early January. Basra have requested some further staff: the number of this requirement is now 19 (after further refinement and definition in discussion between Iraq Directorate and PS/Sir H Synnott last week). We are working on this, and should be able to fill most of these posts from FCO and OGDs.

**Contingency Planning for Possible Drawdown of Staff**

3. Iraq Rep have produced ideas on this for staff in Baghdad only -- preliminary drawdown to around 60 staff, and subsequent drawdown to around 30.
4. Sir H Synnott does not believe any partial drawdown in Basra would make sense, on the grounds that CPA(S) could not perform a valuable function with fewer staff than it has now. But, in Sir H Synnott's absence, his PS is working up suggestions, eg for reduction to a core consisting of Sir H Synnott, his immediate staff and the heads of CPA(S)'s

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seven "pillars". This core could at least maintain a presence and some profile, against the possibility that staff could be brought back out in due course.

#### **Replacement of Sir Hilary Synnott**

5. We have now learned that Bremer wants Andy Bearpark to remain in Baghdad, and that Bearpark would prefer to do that. We are thinking about other possible candidates.

#### **Other Background**

6. There are around 170 British staff in the CPA, the British Office in Baghdad and Jeremy Greenstock's office. 138 of these are civilians (some civil servants, some consultants), for whom FCO and DFID are responsible. Around 100 of these are in Baghdad, 50 are in Basra and 18 are in the Governorates. 43 are FCO staff.
7. The number of civilian staff will grow towards 200 with, for example the arrival of additional staff in Basra and police trainers.
8. Recruitment and succession planning are difficult, for obvious reasons. We have to rely on volunteers. A number lined up for deployment have dropped out in recent weeks (including, last week, a Personnel Manager recruited for Basra by Crown Agents). A few staff in Baghdad also decided to leave early. The staffing requirements are just about manageable at the moment, but will of course become more difficult if security concerns increase.

#### **SECURITY OF CIVILIAN STAFF**

9. Basra: the CPA(S) compound was "locked down" following the receipt of specific, credible threat information on 14 November. This precaution is now being eased. With the help of MND(SE), Hilary Synnott thoroughly reviewed security arrangements after the Nasariya attack. He found them essentially sound, but some further refinements are being implemented.
10. Governorate Security: the CPA review is moving more slowly than we had hoped. But Iraq Rep and our own security managers have in any case been making their own review in those Governorates where there are UK staff. Iraq Rep have also issued specific instructions to UK staff in the Governorates to take extra security precautions. Additional physical security measures, such as blast walls, bomb shelters, alarm systems and window protection, are in the process of being implemented.

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11. Baghdad Accommodation: Crown Agents are arranging new accommodation for UK civilian staff under hard cover in the ground floor of a car park building near the Convention Centre. They say the project should be complete by mid-January. In the meantime, some improvements are being made to the interim accommodation arrangements – to increase security and reduce comfort.
12. Baghdad Green Zone Security: the Americans are now taking measures to improve this, eg extending it to its former boundaries and increasing patrols.

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