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Desmond Bowen
Defence and Overseas Secretariat

70 Whitehall • London SW1A 2AS

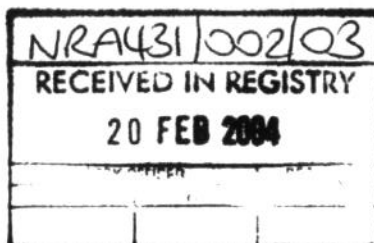
TELEPHONE:

• FAX:

• E-MAIL:

TO 0103

Kara Owen
PS/Secretary of State
FCO
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH



14 November 2003

Dear Kara,

IRAQ: CPA (SOUTH) STAFF

At the meeting of the Ad Hoc Group on Iraq on 6 November, Ministers requested a note updating them on the recruitment of replacement and additional staff for CPA (South).

As of 11 November, CPA (South) had 104 staff working directly for Hilary Synnott in Basra. These included eight different nationalities, of whom the largest contingents after the British were the Italians and Danes. There were 30 British civilians and 18 UK military (half regular and half TA).

In October, DFID contracted the Crown Agents to recruit 37 staff - 7 to replace existing posts currently filled by the TA, and 30 for new posts. The posts were for technical advisers in areas such as essential services, social affairs, agriculture, industry and finance. All the current military officers will depart between now and the end of December. Of the departing military officers not replaced by the Crown Agents recruitment, some are being replaced by other military officers, some by non-UK staff, and some do not need to be replaced.

It has not proved easy to recruit staff to serve in Iraq, despite financial inducements. Successful candidates need to have the right technical skills, aptitude for building Iraqi capacity and willingness to work in a difficult environment. When recruited, candidates also need to undergo security training. The Crown Agents should fill 15 of the 37 posts this month, including 7 TA personnel who are being re-engaged on civilian contracts. These 7 posts will be vacant for 2-3 weeks while the TA officers are

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demobilised and contracted by Crown Agents. Candidates have been identified for most remaining posts and should deploy in December and early January. Up to 5 lesser priority posts are likely to remain more difficult to fill but Crown Agents are being pressed to locate suitable candidates as soon as possible. The appointment of a CPA (South) personnel manager will assist local staff management and liaison with recruitment in London.

Having completed an overall review of activity, Hilary Synnott subsequently asked FCO to fill a further 29 posts. These are in the areas of interior and justice, liaison with the southern Governorates, and in the political and development directorates. Job descriptions for these posts have now arrived from Basra. FCO Iraq Directorate and DFID are assessing these, will set priorities and will then recruit accordingly as soon as possible, ensuring no overlap with existing recruitment. It should be possible to fill many of the jobs from Whitehall (eg Home Office), although outside specialists may be necessary for some. There is already a database of volunteers. But the security situation in Iraq will be a deterrent. Extracting people from current jobs, security training and the logistics of deployment often take longer than we would want. But FCO aim to fill the posts during December and January.

CPA (South) has now grown substantially, and UK civilian staffing in Iraq as a whole is moving towards the 200 mark. The number of civilians in CPA(S) is larger than in other regions. But account must be taken of the fact that the large numbers of US Army Civil Affairs officers who are available elsewhere are not available in the South. When the evolution of the political timetable is clearer, and anyway during the first quarter of next year, we will need to review with Hilary Synnott the future role and scope of CPA South. (Funding will as always be one key factor: the arrangements for funding secondees in FY2004/5 have yet to be agreed.) The resulting recommendations will be brought to the Ad Hoc Ministerial Group for discussion and approval.

Separately, we are looking at the staffing of the Governorate teams in order to ensure that staffing requirements and placements match and are clearly understood between departments.

I am copying this to Martyn Williams (MOD), Moazzam Malik, (DFID), Matthew Hilton (DTI), David Brummell (LOD), Nigel Sheinwald, George Fergusson and Nick Cannon; and Hilary Synnott, CPA (South).



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