

ORHA/COMMS

To: Hd Home Team on Iraqi Telecommunications DOS

From: Hd Communications - Ministry Transport and Communications

Date: 23 Apr 03

Subject: Telecommunication Reconstruction Funding

1. I now believe that there is no funding currently set aside for the reconstruction of telecommunications within Iraq. CFLCC and in particular Maj Gen Whitley has already expressed alarm that ORHA has yet to commence work on the repair and rejuvenation of communications. The lack of communications is severely hampering power generation and distribution, rail movement and the production and distribution of oil. A serviceable communication network is also critical for effective civil governance, HA coordination and emergency response services.

2. Our initial estimate is that reconstruction will require approximately \$M300 to return the systems to pre-war levels, thereby, providing a basic telephone network between Baghdad and the major population centres. Additional funding, probably from the private or commercial sector, will be needed for the follow on modernisation of the telecomm system. We have developed a statement of work for the reconstruction which is split into the following packages:

- Immediate Repair. The immediate repair of regional switches and intercity fibre optic links by Iraqi telecom experts. Spares and replacement parts only are required for this task.
- Technical Damage Assessment. A detailed technical damage assessment of the complete infrastructure to ascertain the technical status and set work priorities.
- Emergency Relief. The delivery of transportable emergency relief equipment as a short term expedient whilst the fixed infrastructure is repaired or replaced. This will include a switching centre in Baghdad and the provision of satellite communication links to the centres of regional governance while work is completed on fibre optic land lines.
- Regulatory Preparation. Regulatory preparation to enable the future deregulation of telecommunication provision, thereby enabling private and commercial investment in the telecommunication system for its expansion and modernisation.
- Replacement. Replacement of destroyed switching, international connectivity and unsupportable switches in the regional centres.

3. The technical damage assessments will not only determine our priorities and drive our courses of action but will also allow the refinement of costing information. The ICABI endorsed the scope of work at today's meeting. I am in the process of passing this up the ORHA staffing chain but need you to start work on this issue now particularly given the fact that they are out of contact in Baghdad. Need I state that without funding we will really struggle to get telecom and the rest for the country up and running. I firmly believe that ORHA will not succeed in its mission if we do not get the telecom sector up and running. Finally we need to be clear that private and commercial investment will not meet the immediacy of this crisis situation. The HT acknowledged that we could not license GSM/Mobile operators until the interim authority was up and running and that is likely to take many weeks. We would have an even bigger problem divesting the IPTC of its fibre and switch infrastructure in a matter of weeks.

4. Rest assured that I firmly believe commercial activity will be required and is the way forward in the future, but at this point the only rapid solution is to fund the reconstruction of the telecom sector to bring