

## IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION SURFACE TRANSPORTATION

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Iraq's transportation networks are vital supports of commerce, culture, and infrastructure. USAID partner Bechtel is implementing \$31.5 million in job orders for the repair of Iraq's bridges, road, and railways.

### Accomplishments

- Cooperating with the Ministry of Public Works and two Iraqi firms to rehabilitate three priority bridges:
  - *Al Mat*: A key link on Highway 10, which carries over 3,000 trucks daily on the main route between Baghdad and Jordan. This bridge was in imminent danger of collapse.
  - *Khazir*: Critical to the flow of fuel and agricultural products in northern Iraq.
  - *Tikrit*: An important link for passengers and commerce over the Tigris River between Tikrit and Tuz Khurmatu.
- Constructed a 1.5-km, four-lane bypass around the damaged Al-Mat Bridge.
- Demolition of irreparable sections of three key bridges Khazir, Tikrit and Al Mat in preparation for reconstruction.
- Completed repairs on a floating bridge on the Tigris River in Al Kut, improving traffic for approximately 50,000 travelers a day.
- Completed 36 detailed bridge assessments.
- Completed an evaluation of the Iraqi railroad system. Work on railways is an integrated U.S.-Iraqi effort; Bechtel contributes project management, material, and parts, and the Iraqi Railway Administration contributes equipment and labor.
- Arabic-English translation of railway specifications for earthwork, reinforced concrete, and buildings is underway.
- Completed explosive ordinance disposal (EOD) at all 53 sites of the rail line project near Shuiaba Junction, Basra governorate.

### Next Steps

- Begin earthwork and culvert work on the 72-km stretch of track from Umm Qasr to Shuiaba Junction, near Al Basrah.
  - Repairs will ensure grain shipments from the seaport to mills are not jeopardized due to faulty track.

### Issues

- Reconstructing the Tikrit Bridge is a particular challenge due to its unique design. A source may have the original bridge drawings, which would help in repairs.
- The government-owned rail company will require significant capital investment to deal with deferred maintenance and lack of spare parts. Higher than expected repair costs are forcing a reduction in the number of items to be repaired.
  - Bechtel's mitigation plan is to use locally rented mobile equipment instead of track-mounted equipment.
- A revenue stream or defined subsidy will be necessary to support recurrent costs.
- Modernized switching systems are needed for safe operation.