The Al Quwwa al Jawwiya al Iraqiya
The Iraqi Air Force (IQAF)

**GOAL:** “Build an Iraqi Air Force capable of conducting sustained operations, focused on the COIN fight in the near-term, in order to defeat terrorism and create a stable environment, while setting the conditions for achieving air sovereignty.” - CAFTT Mission Statement

**ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Exponential growth in personnel and equipment
- Reconstruction/reopening of essential infrastructure and training facilities
- Huge benefit from CAFTT and USAF advisors/role models
- Able to effectively conduct ISR missions and help secure borders and oil industry
- Benefits to COIN effort—visual presence of GOI building an air force
- Plans for expansion of fleet in the future
- Foundation has been successfully laid upon which an independent IQAF can build to hopefully fulfill the goal of any air force—to secure Iraq’s borders and sovereignty.

**CHALLENGES**

- Building an air force from the ground up represents a huge challenge and of itself
- Assassination of IQAF pilots by Iran
- Difficulty of recruiting and training troops in a nation rife with war
- Lack of maintenance resources for fleet
- Language and cultural barriers that had to be overcome between CAFTT and IQAF
- Sectarian concerns of GOI
- Lack of cultural awareness/training of by CAFTT advisors
- USAF had to focus on training IQAF while also fighting current COIN conflict
- CAFTT not prepared to train IQAF to fight COIN war
Future Outlook:
- IQAF is “barely off the ground”
- If Iran attacked Iraq today it would be up to the US to repel attack
- Will rely upon US assistance long after 12/31/11, until at least 2020
- Unclear whether IQAF will be able to protect Iraq given the challenges during development and in the future
- IQAF lacks jet fighters necessary to compete with other countries’ planes
- Difficulty purchasing new planes as a result of falling revenue and oil prices
- IQAF can perform the ISR roles, but must continue to develop for many years to ensure Iraq’s security

Conclusion: Despite accomplishments, the future of the IQAF remains uncertain given the challenges it has and will continue to face.