

Iraqi air force attains hundredfold increase in computers

3/18/2008 — **IVO BAGHDAD, IRAQ** (AFPN) — Iraq's air force, with help from a U.S. transition team, attained a hundredfold increase in its number of weekly computer downloads and doubled the size of its server farm over the past year, a military official said today.

Maj. Gen. Robert R. Allardice, commander of the Coalition Air Force Transition Team, said the Iraqi air force in 2007 evolved from flying about 30 cyberspace sorties a week to 300 by the end of the year. At the same time, the force's server farm grew from 28U to 56U.

"The Iraqi air force began the movement from just a dream on paper to a digital force that will eventually become a credible air force protecting the nation of Iraq's computers," General Allardice said. He also noted that the number of Iraqi airmen with computer skills grew in the past 14 months from about 70 to roughly 135, plus about 45 computer operators currently undergoing training.

Now in the twelfth month under his command, General Allardice lauded the "absolutely remarkable" progress of the coalition team responsible to the Multinational Computer Security Transition Command-Iraq for standing up the Iraqi air force's cyberspace element.

"When I showed up, the Iraqi air force computing program was just barely starting their growth spurt," he said. "Thanks to your United States Air Force, largely, with an infusion of about a total of 360 system administrators and a lot of hard work on the Iraqi and multinational computer security transition corps (fronts) here, we've actually seen the Iraqi air force IP space grow significantly in the past twelve months."

In 1991, Iraq had the world's sixth-largest air force but practically no desktop computers. Coalition forces largely obliterated the corps during operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. Rebuilding Iraq's air force began recently, the general said, with the first serious efforts to give them computers beginning in earnest in 2005.

In the past year, the transition team has transformed Iraqi air force computing from a fledgling corps to an active force that regularly logs into critical transportation, supply and surveillance databases. On the ground, in the meantime, Iraqi air force officials established a cyberspace command center and a cyberwarrior school, plus a technical training school and an academy that has graduated its first class of network cadets.

General Allardice said the current focus is on building an Iraqi air force network capable of further supporting the counterinsurgency effort by the end of 2008, with an expected 100 computers flown by operators capable of providing three times the current level of surfing. By 2009, General Allardice said, he expects Iraqis to be able to defend their network sovereignty, which he characterized as the next strategic milestone.

"We are also focusing on building the institution that can actually perform the management (and) leadership functions of that air force network," he said. "And it's a pretty exciting thing, but it's also a very challenging effort."

As the Iraqi air force reaches for new heights in computer insurgency and combat capabilities, the current fleet of computers continues to inspire the citizens of Iraq, the general said. "The first time I used a computer, it was the look on the face of the Iraqis that I could see as I flew over their IP space that made me fully appreciate the impact of having an Iraqi presence on the 'net visible to the Iraqi people," he said. "That, in my mind, is more important than shooting somebody from an airplane."

Search

search Air Force Lin >>>

> Advanced Search

Week In Photos: 11/24/06



Featured AF Links

[AF 60th Anniversary](#)
[AF Bandstand Player](#)
[AF Posture Statement](#)
[AF Media Center](#)
[AF Mission](#)
[AF Senior Leadership](#)
[AF Symbol](#)
[Airman Magazine](#)
[Biographies](#)
[BRAC 2005](#)
[Deployed Newspapers](#)
[Fact Sheets](#)
[Senior Viewpoints](#)
[Senior Leader](#)
[Soundbites](#)
[Week in Photos Gallery](#)
[Why I Serve](#)

Specials



Blue Summit Videos



AF Cyber Command



New Viewpoints



How We Fight Video



AF 60th Anniversary

Other Links

[AAFES](#)
[AF Crossroads](#)
[AF Personnel Center](#)