



# News Release

## US Army Corps of Engineers®

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## MVD's John Ashley – Work in Iraq Challenging, Rewarding

**Vicksburg, MISS., October 14, 2004** – John Ashley is on his second tour of temporary duty in Iraq, this time as the Deputy, Chief of Construction, Gulf Region Central District (GRC), of the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). In this position he is helping to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure through the execution of the GRC Construction Program.

“Part of my job is to help identify and recruit personnel with specific skills that are required to accomplish our mission,” said Ashley. “I coordinate the training of incoming personnel in the Resident Management System which is utilized to track the progress of all construction projects within the USACE purview. I also coordinate the training of Construction Quality Management for Contractors.”

In addition to the establishment of the Central District Office, the GRC stood up one Area Office and several Resident Offices. Ashley is responsible for ensuring that these offices have everything that they need to accomplish their mission. He facilitated the establishment of a Memorandum of Agreement with other governmental offices and Military Maneuvering Units.

“The outstanding Corps of Engineers personnel on the ground in Iraq assures me that the job of rebuilding the Iraqi infrastructure will be successful,” Said Brig. Gen. Robert Crear, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division. “John Ashley is a credit to the Army Corps of Engineers – and our nation can be proud of his service and the 1700 other Corps personnel who have volunteered to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan.”

“Only once in a lifetime is a person given the opportunity to help people in such a meaningful way,” said Ashley. “Every little jester here is 'great' in nature, and in my position I have the ability to facilitate needs with resources. This has enabled me to connect an Iraqi Doctor (in need of medical supplies) with a Non-Governmental Organization (i.e., UNICEF, Red Cross). I feel I am doing my

## **ASHLEY/2-2-2**

part to fight terrorism and help the Iraqi people.”

Ashley’s previous deployment to Iraq was June 2003 to October 2003 where he worked for the United States Agency for International Development as Team Leader, Hillah Iraqi Reconstruction Office. His team was tasked with the construction oversight of the renovation of the schools and sewer and water treatment plants.

“Before I left country we had completed the renovation of over 210 schools and just started work on the electrical power plants,” said Ashley. “I find the work fast pace, challenging and very rewarding. The Iraqi contractors, engineers, and people we work with, for the most part, are very thankful for our being here and helping to rebuild their country.”

Ashley is employed as a civil engineer with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Valley Division (MVD). MVD is responsible for the Corps’ water resources engineering programs and water management in a 370,000-square-mile area that includes portions of 12 states; its boundary extends from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico with drainage from over 41 percent of the United States. District offices are headquartered in St. Paul, Minn.; Rock Island, Ill.; St. Louis, Mo.; Memphis, Tenn.; Vicksburg, Miss.; and New Orleans, La.