

Military Deployment
Periodic Occupational and Environmental Monitoring Summary (POEMS):
Qayyarah Airfield, West and Vicinity, Iraq
Calendar Years: (2003 to 2010)

AUTHORITY: This periodic occupational and environmental monitoring summary (POEMS) has been developed in accordance with Department of Defense (DoD) Instructions 6490.03, 6055.05, and JCSM (MCM) 0028-07, See *REFERENCES*.

PURPOSE: This POEMS documents the Department of Defense (DoD) assessment of occupational and environmental health (OEH) risk for Qayyarah Airfield West (Q-West), Iraq and vicinity that includes Forward Operating Base (FOB) Endurance, Objective (OBJ) Jaguar, and Combat Outpost (COP) Ash-Shura. It presents a qualitative summary of health risks identified at this location and their potential medical implications. The report is based on information collected from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010 to include deployment OEHS sampling and monitoring data (e.g. air, water, and soil), field investigation and health assessment reports, as well as country and area-specific information on endemic diseases.

This assessment assumes that environmental sampling at Q-West and vicinity during this period was performed at representative exposure points selected to characterize health risks at the *population-level*. Due to the nature of environmental sampling, the data upon which this report is based may not be fully representative of all the fluctuations in environmental quality or capture unique occurrences. While one might expect health risks pertaining to historic or future conditions at this site to be similar to those described in this report, the health risk assessment is limited to 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

The POEMS can be useful to inform healthcare providers and others of environmental conditions experienced by individuals deployed to Q-West and vicinity during the period of this assessment. However, it does not represent an individual exposure profile. Individual exposures depend on many variables such as; how long, how often, where and what someone is doing while working and/or spending time outside. Individual outdoor activities and associated routes of exposure are extremely variable and cannot be identified from or during environmental sampling. Individuals who sought medical treatment related to OEH exposures while deployed should have exposure/treatment noted in their medical record on a Standard Form (SF) 600 (Chronological Record of Medical Care).

SITE DESCRIPTION:

Qayyarah Airfield West was located in the Ninawa governorate (province) of northern Iraq approximately 300 km north of Baghdad, 30 km south of Mosul and 16 kilometers west of the Tigris River. The airfield was served by two main runways measuring 11,500 and 11,800 feet. The airfield had at least 33 dispersed hardened aircraft shelters. Forward Operating Base Endurance (located at Q-West), OBJ Jaguar (70 km SW of Q-West) and COP Ash-Shura (23 km NE of Q-West) were also included in this POEMS.

SUMMARY: Conditions that may pose a Moderate or greater health risk are summarized in Table 1. Table 2 provides population based risk estimates for identified OEH conditions at Q-West and vicinity. As indicated in the detailed sections that follow Table 2, controls established to reduce health risk were factored into this assessment. In some cases, e.g. ambient air, specific controls are noted, but not routinely available/feasible.

**Table 1: Summary of Occupational and Environmental Conditions
with MODERATE or Greater Health Risk**

Short-term health risks & medical implications:

The following hazards may be associated with potential acute health effects in some personnel during deployment at Q-West and vicinity that includes FOB Endurance, OBJ Jaguar, and COP Ash-Shura:

Inhalable coarse particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM10); food/waterborne diseases (e.g., bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid/paratyphoid fever, diarrhea-protozoal, diarrhea-cholera, brucellosis, Hepatitis E); other endemic diseases (cutaneous leishmaniasis, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, sandfly fever, Tuberculosis (TB), leptospirosis, schistosomiasis, rabies, Q fever); venomous animals and insects; heat stress; and emissions from a 2003 sulfur fire incident. For food/waterborne diseases (e.g., bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid/paratyphoid fever, diarrhea-protozoal, diarrhea-cholera, brucellosis, hepatitis E), if ingesting local food and water, the health effects can temporarily incapacitate personnel (diarrhea) or result in prolonged illness (hepatitis A, typhoid fever, brucellosis, hepatitis E). Risks from food/waterborne diseases may have been reduced with preventive medicine controls and mitigation, which includes hepatitis A and typhoid fever vaccinations and only drinking from approved water sources in accordance with standing CENTCOM policy. For other vector-borne endemic diseases (cutaneous leishmaniasis, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, sandfly fever); these diseases may constitute a significant risk due to exposure to biting vectors; risk reduced to low by proper wear of the treated uniform, application of repellent to exposed skin and bed net, and appropriate chemoprophylaxis. For respiratory diseases (TB), personnel in close-quarter conditions could have been at risk for person-to-person spread. For water contact diseases (leptospirosis, schistosomiasis) activities involving extensive contact with surface water increase risk. Animal contact diseases (rabies, Q fever), pose year-round risk. For venomous animals and insects, if encountered, effects of venom vary with species from mild localized swelling (e.g. *S. maurus*) to potentially lethal effects (e.g. *V. albicornuta*); risk reduced with proper and timely treatment. For heat stress, risk can be greater for susceptible persons including those older than 45, of low fitness level, or with underlying medical conditions. Risks from heat stress may have been reduced with preventive medicine controls, work-rest cycles, and mitigation.

A fire accidentally ignited at the Mishraq State Sulfur Mine Plant on 24 June 2003 and burned for 3 weeks. This fire potentially affected over 6,000 troops that were presumed (based on unit locations) to have been within 50 km of the Mishraq State Sulfur Plant during the event (see section 10.4 for a summary of this incident).

Air quality: For PM10, exposures, particularly to high levels of dust and particulate matter (such as during high winds or dust storms), may result in mild to more serious short-term health effects (e.g., eye, nose or throat and lung irritation) in some personnel while at this site. For PM10, certain subgroups of the deployed forces (e.g., those with pre-existing asthma/cardio-pulmonary conditions) are at greatest risk of developing notable health effects. In addition, though the burn pit evaluation risk was low, there may be higher peak levels that may produce mild eye, nose, and throat irritation and exacerbate pre-existing conditions. Although most effects from exposure to particulate matter and burn pits should have resolved post-deployment, providers should be prepared to consider the relationship between deployment exposures and current complaints. Some individuals may have sought treatment for acute respiratory irritation during their time at Q-West, FOB Endurance, OBJ Jaguar, and COP Ash-Shura, Iraq. Personnel who reported with symptoms or required treatment while at this site should have exposure/treatment noted in medical record (e.g., electronic medical record and/or on a Standard Form (SF) 600 (Chronological Record of Medical Care)).

Long-term health risks & medical implications:

The following hazards may be associated with potential chronic health effects in some personnel during deployment at Q-West and vicinity that includes FOB Endurance, OBJ Jaguar, and COP Ash-Shura:

Leishmaniasis is transmitted by sand flies. Visceral leishmaniasis (a more latent form of the disease) causes a severe febrile illness, which typically requires hospitalization with convalescence over 7 days. The leishmaniasis parasites may survive for years in infected individuals. Consequently, this infection may go unrecognized until infections become symptomatic years later.

A fire accidentally ignited at the Mishraq State Sulfur Mine Plant on 24 June 2003 and potentially affected over 6,000 troops that were presumed to have been within 50 km of the Mishraq State Sulfur Plant during the 3-week event (see section 10.4 for a summary of this incident).

Air quality: Although PM10 was not evaluated for long-term risk due to no available health guidelines, the area is a dusty desert environment and there was a burn pit on the site. For inhalational exposure to high levels of dust and particulate matter, such as during high winds or dust storms, and for exposure to burn pit smoke, it is considered possible that some otherwise healthy personnel who were exposed for a long-term period to dust and particulate matter and burn pit smoke could develop certain health conditions (e.g., reduced lung function, cardiopulmonary disease). Personnel with a history of asthma or cardiopulmonary disease could potentially be more likely to develop such chronic health conditions. While the dust and particulate matter exposures and exposures to burn pit smoke are acknowledged, at this time there are no specific recommended, post-deployment medical surveillance evaluations or treatments. Providers should still consider overall individual health status (e.g., any underlying conditions/susceptibilities) and any potential unique individual exposures (such

as burn pits, occupational or specific personal dosimeter data), and individual behaviors when assessing individual concerns. Certain individuals may need to be followed/evaluated for specific occupational exposures/injuries (e.g., annual audiograms as part of the medical surveillance for those enrolled in the Hearing Conservation Program; and personnel covered by Respiratory Protection Program and/or Hazardous Waste/Emergency Responders Medical Surveillance).

Table 2. Population-Based Health Risk Estimates - Q-West and vicinity that includes FOB Endurance, OBJ Jaguar, and COP Ash-Shura ^{1,2}

Source of Identified Health Risk ³	Unmitigated Health Risk Estimate ⁴	Control Measures Implemented	Residual Health Risk Estimate ⁴
AIR			
Particulate matter less than 10 micrometers in diameter (PM ₁₀)	Short-term: Moderate, Daily levels vary, acute health effects (e.g., upper respiratory tract irritation) more pronounced during peak days. More serious effects are possible in susceptible persons (e.g., those with asthma/existing respiratory diseases).	Limiting strenuous physical activities when air quality is especially poor; and actions such as closing tent flaps, windows, and doors.	Short-term: Moderate, Daily levels vary, acute health effects (e.g., upper respiratory tract irritation) more pronounced during peak days. More serious effects are possible in susceptible persons (e.g., those with asthma/existing respiratory diseases).
	Long-term: No health guidelines		Long-term: No health guidelines
Particulate matter less than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM _{2.5})	Short-term: Low, A majority of the time mild acute (short term) health effects are anticipated; certain peak levels may produce mild eye, nose, or throat irritation in some personnel and pre-existing health conditions (e.g., asthma, or cardiopulmonary diseases) may be exacerbated.	Limiting strenuous physical activities when air quality is especially poor; and actions such as closing tent flaps, windows, and doors.	Short-term: Low, A majority of the time mild acute (short term) health effects are anticipated; certain peak levels may produce mild eye, nose, or throat irritation in some personnel and pre-existing health conditions (e.g., asthma, or cardiopulmonary diseases) may be exacerbated.
	Long-term: Low. A small percentage of personnel may be at increased risk for developing chronic conditions. Particularly those more susceptible to acute effects (e.g., those with asthma/existing respiratory diseases).		Long-term: Low. A small percentage of personnel may be at increased risk for developing chronic conditions. Particularly those more susceptible to acute effects (e.g., those with asthma/existing respiratory diseases).
ENDEMIC DISEASE			
Food borne/Waterborne (e.g., diarrhea-bacteriological)	Short-term: Variable, (bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid fever) to Moderate (diarrhea-cholera, diarrhea- protozoal, brucellosis and hepatitis E). If local food/water were consumed, the health effects can temporarily incapacitate personnel (diarrhea) or result in prolonged illness (Hepatitis A, Typhoid fever, Brucellosis, Hepatitis E).	Preventive measures include Hepatitis A and Typhoid fever vaccination and consumption of food and water only from approved sources.	Short-term: Low to none
	Long-term: none identified		Long-term: No data available
Arthropod Vector Borne	Short-term: Variable, Moderate for leishmaniasis-cutaneous, Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, sandfly fever and typhus-miteborne; Low for West Nile fever, and Plague.	Preventive measures include proper wear of treated uniform, application of repellent to exposed skin, and bed net use, minimizing areas of standing water and appropriate chemoprophylaxis.	Short-term: Low
	Long-term: Low (Leishmaniasis-visceral infection)		Long-term: No data available
Water-Contact (e.g. wading, swimming)	Short-term: Moderate for leptospirosis and schistosomiasis.		Short-term: Moderate for leptospirosis and schistosomiasis.
	Long-term: No data available		Long-term: No data available
Respiratory	Short-term: Variable; Moderate for tuberculosis (TB) to Low for meningococcal meningitis.	Providing adequate living and work space; medical screening; vaccination	Short-term: Low
	Long-term: No data available		Long-term: No data available

Animal Contact	Short-term: Variable; Moderate for rabies and Q-fever, and Low for Anthrax and H5N1 avian influenza.	Prohibiting contact with, adoption, or feeding of feral animals IAW U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) General Order (GO) 1B. Risks are further reduced in the event of assessed contact by prompt post-exposure rabies prophylaxis IAW The Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices guidance.	Short-term: No data available
	Long-term: Low (Rabies)		Long-term: No data available
VENOMOUS ANIMAL/ INSECTS			
Snakes, scorpions, and spiders	Short-term: Low; If encountered, effects of venom vary with species from mild localized swelling (e.g. <i>S. maurus</i>) to potentially lethal effects (e.g. <i>V. albicornuta</i>).	Risk reduced by avoiding contact, proper wear of uniform (especially footwear), and proper and timely treatment.	Short-term: Low; If encountered, effects of venom vary with species from mild localized swelling (e.g. <i>S. maurus</i>) to potentially lethal effects (e.g. <i>V. albicornuta</i>).
	Long-term: No data available		Long-term: No data available
HEAT/COLD STRESS			
Heat	Short-term: Variable; Risk of heat injury is Moderate for April, and High from May – October.	Work-rest cycles, proper hydration and nutrition, and Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) monitoring.	Short-term: Variable; Risk of heat injury in unacclimatized or susceptible personnel is Moderate for April, and High from May – October.
	Long-term: Low, The long-term risk was Low. However, the risk may be greater to certain susceptible persons—those older (i.e., greater than 45 years), in lesser physical shape, or with underlying medical/health conditions.		Long-term: Low, The long-term risk is Low. However, the risk may be greater to certain susceptible persons—those older (i.e., greater than 45 years), in lesser physical shape, or with underlying medical/health conditions.
Cold	Short-term: Low risk of cold stress/injury.	Risks from cold stress reduced with protective measures such as use of the buddy system, limiting exposure during cold weather, proper hydration and nutrition, and proper wear of issued protective clothing.	Short-term: Low risk of cold stress/injury.
	Long-term: Low; Long-term health implications from cold injuries are rare but can occur, especially from more serious injuries such as frost bite.		Long-term: Low; Long-term health implications from cold injuries are rare but can occur, especially from more serious injuries such as frost bite.
Unique Incidents/ Concerns			
Pesticides/Pest Control	Short-term: Low	See Section 10.4	Short-term: Low
	Long-term: Low		Long-term: Low
Asbestos	Short-term: No data available		Short-term: No data available
	Long-term: Low		Long-term: Low
Sulfur	A fire accidentally ignited at the Mishraq State Sulfur Mine Plant on 24 June 2003 potentially affected over 6,000 troops that were presumed to have been within 50 km of the Mishraq State Sulfur Plant during the 3-week event. See section 10.7 for a summary of this incident.		

Burn Pits	Short-term: Low	Risks reduced by limiting strenuous physical activities when air quality was especially poor; and action such as closing tent flaps, windows, and doors. Other control measures included locating burn pits downwind of prevailing winds, increased distance from troop populations, and improved waste segregation and management techniques.	Short-term: Low
	Long-term: Low		Long-term: Low

¹This Summary Table provides a qualitative estimate of population-based short- and long-term health risks associated with the occupational environment conditions at Q-West and vicinity that includes FOB Endurance, OBJ Jaguar, and COP Ash-Shura. It does not represent an individual exposure profile. Actual individual exposures and health effects depend on many variables. For example, while a chemical may have been present in the environment, if a person did not inhale, ingest, or contact a specific dose of the chemical for adequate duration and frequency, then there may have been no health risk. Alternatively, a person at a specific location may have experienced a unique exposure which could result in a significant individual exposure. Any such person seeking medical care should have their specific exposure documented in an SF600.

² This assessment is based on specific environmental sampling data and reports obtained from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010. Sampling locations are assumed to be representative of exposure points for the camp population but may not reflect all the fluctuations in environmental quality or capture unique exposure incidents.

³This Summary Table is organized by major categories of identified sources of health risk. It only lists those sub-categories specifically identified and addressed at Q-West and vicinity. The health risks are presented as Low, Moderate, High or Extremely High for both acute and chronic health effects. The health risk level is based on an assessment of both the potential severity of the health effects that could be caused and probability of the exposure that would produce such health effects. Details can be obtained from the APHC/ U.S. Army Institute of Public Health AIPH. Where applicable, "None Identified" is used when though a potential exposure is identified, and no health risks of either a specific acute or chronic health effects are determined. More detailed descriptions of OEH exposures that are evaluated but determined to pose no health risk are discussed in the following sections of this report.

⁴Health risks in this Summary Table are based on quantitative surveillance thresholds (e.g. endemic disease rates; host/vector/pathogen surveillance) or screening levels, e.g. Military Exposure Guidelines (MEGs) for chemicals. Some previous assessment reports may provide slightly inconsistent health risk estimates because quantitative criteria such as MEGs may have changed since the samples were originally evaluated and/or because this assessment makes use of all historic site data while previous reports may have only been based on a select few samples.

1 Discussion of Health Risks at Q-West and vicinity, Iraq by Source

The following sections provide additional information about the OEH conditions summarized above. All risk assessments were performed using the methodology described in the US Army Public Health Command Technical Guide 230, *Environmental Health Risk Assessment and Chemical Exposure Guidelines for Deployed Military Personnel* (USAPHC TG 230). All OEH risk estimates represent residual risk after accounting for preventive controls in place. Occupational exposures and exposures to endemic diseases are greatly reduced by preventive measures. For environmental exposures related to airborne dust, there are limited preventive measures available, and available measures have little efficacy in reducing exposure to ambient conditions.

2 Air

2.1 Site-Specific Sources Identified

Q-West is situated in a dusty semi-arid desert environment. Inhalational exposure to high levels of dust and particulate matter, such as during high winds or dust storms, may result in mild to more serious short-term health effects (e.g., eye, nose or throat and lung irritation) in some personnel. Additionally, certain subgroups of the deployed forces (e.g., those with pre-existing asthma/cardio pulmonary conditions) are at greatest risk of developing notable health effects.

2.2 Particulate matter

Particulate matter (PM) is a complex mixture of extremely small particles suspended in the air. The PM includes solid particles and liquid droplets emitted directly into the air by sources such as: power plants, motor vehicles, aircraft, generators, construction activities, fires, and natural windblown dust. The PM can include sand, soil, metals, volatile organic compounds (VOC), allergens, and other compounds such as nitrates or sulfates that are formed by condensation or transformation of combustion exhaust. The PM composition and particle size vary considerably depending on the source. Generally, PM of health concern is divided into two fractions: PM₁₀, which includes coarse particles with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less, and fine particles less than 2.5 micrometers (PM_{2.5}), which can reach the deepest regions of the lungs when inhaled. Exposure to excessive PM is linked to a variety of potential health effects.

2.3 Particulate matter, less than 10 micrometers (PM₁₀)

2.3.1 Exposure Guidelines:

Short Term (24-hour) PM₁₀ (µg/m³):

- Negligible MEG = 250
- Marginal MEG = 420
- Critical MEG = 600

Long-term PM₁₀ MEG (µg/m³):

- Not defined and not available.

2.3.2 Sample data/Notes:

A total of 72 valid PM₁₀ air samples were collected from 2003-2009. The range of 24-hour PM₁₀ concentrations was 10 µg/m³ – 859 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 184 µg/m³.

Q-West: A total of 67 valid PM₁₀ air samples were collected from 4 August 2003 to 24 April 2009. The range of 24-hour PM₁₀ concentrations was 10 µg/m³ – 859 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 218 µg/m³.

COP Ash-Shura: A total of 5 valid PM₁₀ air samples were collected from 19 May to 11 September 2009. The range of 24-hour PM₁₀ concentrations was 113 µg/m³ – 229 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 150 µg/m³. The average and peak PM₁₀ concentration were below the short-term PM₁₀ negligible MEG and was not considered a health risk hazard. However, the data quantity and quality were insufficient to characterize the potential health risk of PM₁₀ exposure to U.S. personnel.

2.3.3 Short-term health risks:

Moderate: The average PM₁₀ concentration at Q-West was below the short-term PM₁₀ negligible MEG and was not considered a health risk hazard. The short-term risk assessment for peak PM₁₀ concentration was Moderate. Therefore, PM₁₀ was not expected to pose a short-term health risk to personnel on typical days. Peak exposures may have occurred, increasing the health risk level to Moderate (TG 230 Table 3-2). A Moderate health risk suggests that mission capabilities may have been degraded, and may have required limited in-theater medical countermeasures and resources. Daily average health risk levels for PM₁₀ show no hazard for 64%, Low health risk for 24%, Moderate health risk for 9%, and High health risk for 3% of the time. Confidence in the short-term PM₁₀ health risk assessment was low (TG 230, Table 3-6).

For the highest observed PM₁₀ exposure at Q-West, the hazard severity was critical. During peak exposures at the critical hazard severity level, most if not all personnel may have experienced very notable eye, nose, and throat irritation and respiratory effects. Visual acuity may have been impaired, as was overall aerobic capacity. Some personnel may not have been able to perform assigned duties. Lost duty days were expected. Those with a history of asthma or cardiopulmonary disease may have experienced more severe symptoms. Confidence in short-term PM₁₀ risk assessment was low (TG 230, Table 3-6).

2.3.4 Long-term health risk:

Not Evaluated-no available health guidelines. The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has retracted its long-term standard (national ambient air quality standards, NAAQS) for PM₁₀ due to an inability to clearly link chronic health effects with chronic PM₁₀ exposure levels.

2.4 Particulate Matter, less than 2.5 micrometers (PM_{2.5})

2.4.1 Exposure Guidelines:

Short Term (24-hour) PM_{2.5} (µg/m³):

- Negligible MEG = 65
- Marginal MEG = 250
- Critical MEG = 500

Long-term (1year) PM_{2.5} MEGs (µg/m³):

- Negligible MEG = 15
- Marginal MEG = 65.

2.4.2 Sample data/Notes:

Q-West: A total of 24 valid PM_{2.5} air samples were collected from 31 March to 30 July 2008. The range of 24-hour PM_{2.5} concentrations was 13 µg/m³ – 254 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 89 µg/m³.

2.4.3 Short-term health risks:

Low: The short-term PM_{2.5} health risk assessment is Low based on average and peak PM_{2.5} sample concentrations, and the likelihood of exposure at these hazard severity levels. A Low health risk

assessment is expected to have little or no impact on mission readiness with no specific medical action required (Reference 9, Table 3-2). Daily average health risk levels for PM_{2.5} show no hazard for 38%, low health risk for 58% and moderate health risk for 4% of the time. Confidence in the short-term PM_{2.5} health risk assessment was low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

The hazard severity was negligible for average PM_{2.5} sample concentrations. The results indicate that severity a few personnel may have experienced notable eye, nose, and throat irritation; most personnel would have experienced only mild effects. Pre-existing health conditions (e.g., asthma or cardiopulmonary diseases) may have been exacerbated (Reference 9, Table 3-10).

For the highest observed PM_{2.5} exposure, the hazard severity was marginal. During peak exposures at the marginal hazard severity level, a majority of personnel may have experienced notable eye, nose, and throat irritation and some respiratory effects. Some lost duty days were expected. Significant aerobic activity would have increased risk. Those with a history of asthma or cardiopulmonary disease were expected to experience increased symptoms (Reference 9, Table 3-10).

2.4.4 Long-term health risks:

Low: The long-term health risk assessment is Low based on average PM_{2.5} concentration, and the likelihood of exposure at this hazard severity level. A Low health risk level suggests that long-term exposure to PM_{2.5} is expected to have little or no impact on mission readiness, with no specific medical action required for typical exposures (Reference 9, Table 3-3). Confidence in the long-term PM_{2.5} health risk assessment is low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

The hazard severity was marginal ($>65 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) for average PM_{2.5} sample concentrations. The results suggest that with repeated exposures above the marginal hazard severity threshold, it was plausible that development of chronic health conditions such as reduced lung function or exacerbated chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, atherosclerosis or other cardiopulmonary diseases could have occurred in generally healthy troops. Those with a history of asthma or cardiopulmonary disease were considered to be at particular risk (Reference 9, Table 3-11).

2.5 Airborne Metals

2.5.1 Sample data/Notes:

A total of 67 valid PM₁₀ airborne metal samples were collected at Q-West from 4 August 2003 to 24 April 2009. None of the analyzed metals in the collected samples were found at concentrations above the 1-year negligible MEGs.

2.5.2 Short and long-term health risks:

None identified based on the available sampling data.

2.6 Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)

2.6.1 Sample data/Notes:

The health risk assessment is based on average and peak concentration of 14 valid volatile organic chemical (VOC) air samples collected at Q-West from 3 to 26 July 2008, and the likelihood of exposure. None of the analyzed VOC pollutants were found at concentrations above short or long-term MEGs.

2.6.2 Short and long-term health risks:

None identified based on the available sampling data. No parameters exceeded 1-year Negligible MEGs.

3 Soil

3.1 Site-Specific Sources Identified

3.2 Sample data/Notes:

A total of 7 valid surface soil samples were collected at Q-West (n = 2), COP Ash-Shura (n = 2), and OBJ Jaguar (n = 3) from 2003 - 2009 to assess OEH health risk to deployed personnel. The primary soil contamination exposure pathways are dermal contact and dust inhalation. Typical parameters analyzed for included semi volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), heavy metals, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), pesticides, herbicides. If the contaminant was known or suspected, other parameters may have been analyzed for (i.e. Total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) near fuel spills). The percent of the population exposed to soil and associated dust in the sampled areas was > 75% for 2 samples, 50 – 75% for 1 sample and 25 <50% for 3 samples. For the risk assessment, personnel are assumed to remain at this location for 6 months to 1 year. No health hazards were identified from surface soil samples collected. However, soil sample data were of insufficient type, quality or quantity to provide base-wide health risk characterizations.

3.3 Short-term health risk:

Not an identified source of health risk. Currently, sampling data for soil are not evaluated for short term (acute) health risks.

3.4 Long-term health risk:

None identified based on available sample data. No parameters exceeded 1-year Negligible MEGs.

4 Water

In order to assess the health risk to U.S. personnel from exposure to water in theater, the APHC identified the most probable exposure pathways. These are based on the administrative information provided on the field data sheets submitted with the samples taken over the time period being evaluated. Based on the information provided from the field, all samples for untreated water samples were associated with source water for treatment and no exposure pathways were associated with those samples. Therefore, untreated samples are not assessed as potential health hazards. It is assumed that 100% of all U.S. personnel at Q-West, FOB Endurance, and COP Ash-Shura will be directly exposed to reverse osmosis water purification unit (ROWPU) treated and disinfected fresh bulk water, since this classification of water is primarily used for personal hygiene, showering, cooking, and for use at vehicle wash racks. Field data sheets indicate that bottled water is the only approved source of drinking water.

4.1 Drinking Water: Bottled or Packaged Water

4.1.1 Site-Specific Sources Identified

The primary source for bottled water comes from Tigris River which was treated by filtration and bottled on site by Oasis Water (Oasis Bottled Water Plant on Q-West, which was not affiliated with the commercial bottled water company of the same name). Other bottled water sources may also have been available.

4.1.2 Sample data/Notes:

To assess the potential for adverse health effects to troops, the following assumptions were made about dose and duration: A conservative (protective) assumption was that personnel routinely ingested 15 L/day of bottled water for up to 365 days (1-year). It was further assumed that control measures were not used. A total of 9 valid bottled water samples were collected from 11 April 2006 to 18 April 2009. No health risks from bottled water exposures were identified based on limited sample data.

4.1.3 Short-term and long-term health risk:

None identified based on available sample data. All collected samples were below the short and long-term Negligible MEGs.

4.2 Non-Drinking Water: ROWPU

4.2.1 Site-Specific Sources Identified

Although the primary route of exposure for most microorganisms is ingestion of contaminated water, dermal exposure to some microorganisms, chemicals, and biologicals may also cause adverse health effects. Complete exposure pathways would include drinking, brushing teeth, personal hygiene, cooking, providing medical and dental care using a contaminated water supply or during dermal contact at vehicle or aircraft wash racks.

4.2.2 Sample data/Notes:

To assess the potential for adverse health effects to troops the following assumptions were made about dose and duration: All U.S. personnel at this location were expected to remain at this site for approximately 1 year. A conservative (protective) assumption is that personnel routinely consumed less than 5L/day of non-drinking water for up to 365 days (1-year). It is further assumed that control measures and/or personal protective equipment were not used. A total of 24 reverse osmosis treated (Non-Drinking) samples from 2006 to 2009 were evaluated for this health risk assessment. No chemicals were detected at levels above the short or long-term MEGs.

4.2.3 Short and long-term health risks:

None identified based on available sample data. All collected samples were below the short and long-term Negligible MEGs.

5 Military Unique

5.1 Chemical Biological, Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) Weapons

No specific hazard sources were documented in the Defense Occupational and Environmental Health Readiness System (DOEHRS) or the Military Environmental Surveillance Library (MESL) from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

5.2 Depleted Uranium (DU)

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRs or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

5.3 Ionizing Radiation

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRs or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

5.4 Non-Ionizing Radiation

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRs or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

6 Endemic Diseases

This document lists the endemic diseases reported in the region, its specific health risks and severity and general health information about the diseases. USCENTCOM MOD 11 (Reference 11) lists deployment requirements, to include immunizations and chemoprophylaxis, in effect during the timeframe of this POEMS.

6.1 Foodborne and Waterborne Diseases

Food borne and waterborne diseases in the area are transmitted through the consumption of local food and water. Local unapproved food and water sources (including ice) are heavily contaminated with pathogenic bacteria, parasites, and viruses to which most U.S. Service Members have little or no natural immunity. Effective host nation disease surveillance does not exist within the country. Only a small fraction of diseases are identified or reported in host nation personnel. Diarrheal diseases are expected to temporarily incapacitate a very high percentage of U.S. personnel within days if local food, water, or ice is consumed. Hepatitis A and typhoid fever infections typically cause prolonged illness in a smaller percentage of unvaccinated personnel. Vaccinations are required for DOD personnel and contractors. In addition, although not specifically assessed in this document, significant outbreaks of viral gastroenteritis (e.g., norovirus) and food poisoning (e.g., *Bacillus cereus*, *Clostridium perfringens*, *Staphylococcus*) may occur. Key disease risks are summarized below:

Mitigation strategies were in place and included consuming food and water from approved sources, vaccinations (when available), frequent hand washing and general sanitation practices.

6.1.1 Diarrheal diseases (bacteriological)

High, mitigated to Low: Diarrheal diseases are expected to temporarily incapacitate a very high percentage of personnel (potentially over 50% per month) within days if local food, water, or ice is consumed. Field conditions (including lack of hand washing and primitive sanitation) may facilitate

person-to-person spread and epidemics. Typically mild disease treated in outpatient setting; recovery and return to duty in less than 72 hours with appropriate therapy. A small proportion of infections may require greater than 72 hours limited duty, or hospitalization.

6.1.2 Hepatitis A, typhoid/paratyphoid fever, and diarrhea-protozoal

High, mitigated to Low: Unmitigated health risk to U.S. personnel is high year round for hepatitis A and typhoid/paratyphoid fever, and Moderate for diarrhea-protozoal. Mitigation was in place to reduce the risks to low. Hepatitis A, typhoid/paratyphoid fever, and diarrhea-protozoal disease may cause prolonged illness in a small percentage of personnel (less than 1% per month). Although much rarer, other potential diseases in this area that are also considered a Moderate risk include: hepatitis E, diarrhea-cholera, and brucellosis.

6.1.3 Short-term Health Risks:

Low: The overall unmitigated short-term risk associated with food borne and waterborne diseases are considered High (bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, typhoid/paratyphoid fever) to Moderate (diarrhea-cholera, diarrhea-protozoal, brucellosis) to Low (hepatitis E) if local food or water is consumed. Preventive Medicine measures reduced the risk to Low. Confidence in the health risk estimate was high.

6.1.4 Long-term Health Risks:

None identified based on available data.

6.2 Arthropod Vector-Borne Diseases

During the warmer months, the climate and ecological habitat support populations of arthropod vectors, including mosquitoes, ticks, mites, and sandflies. Significant disease transmission is sustained countrywide, including urban areas. Mitigation strategies were in place and included proper wear of treated uniforms, application of repellent to exposed skin, and use of bed nets and chemoprophylaxis (when applicable). Additional methods included the use of pesticides, reduction of pest/breeding habitats, and engineering controls.

6.2.1 Malaria

None: Indigenous transmission of malaria in Iraq was eliminated as of 2008 reducing risk among personnel exposed to mosquito bites to None.

6.2.2 Leishmaniasis

Moderate, mitigated to Low: The disease risk is Moderate during the warmer months when sandflies are most prevalent, but reduced to low with mitigation measures. Leishmaniasis is transmitted by sand flies. There are two forms of the disease; cutaneous (acute form) and visceral (a more latent form of the disease). The leishmaniasis parasites may survive for years in infected individuals and this infection may go unrecognized by physicians in the U.S. when infections become symptomatic years later. Cutaneous infection is unlikely to be debilitating, though lesions may be disfiguring. Visceral leishmaniasis disease can cause severe febrile illness which typically requires hospitalization with convalescence over 7 days.

6.2.3 Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Unmitigated risk is moderate, but reduced to low with mitigation measures. Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever occurs in rare cases (less than 0.1% per month attack rate in indigenous personnel) and is transmitted by tick bites or occupational contact with blood or secretions from infected animals. The disease typically requires intensive care with fatality rates from 5% to 50%.

6.2.4 Sandfly fever

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Sandfly fever has a Moderate risk with potential disease rates from 1% to 10% per month under worst case conditions. Mitigation measures reduced the risk to low. The disease is transmitted by sandflies and occurs more commonly in children though adults are still at risk. Sandfly fever disease typically resulted in debilitating febrile illness requiring 1 to 7 days of supportive care followed by return to duty.

6.2.5 Sindbis (and Sindbis-like viruses)

Low: Sindbis and sindbis-like viruses are maintained in a bird-mosquito cycle in rural areas and occasionally caused limited outbreaks among humans. The viruses are transmitted by a variety of *Culex* mosquito species found primarily in rural areas. A variety of bird species may serve as reservoir or amplifying hosts. Extremely rare cases (less than 0.01% per month attack rate) could have occurred seasonally (April - November). Debilitating febrile illness often accompanied by rash, typically requires 1 to 7 days of supportive care; significant arthralgias may persist for several weeks or more in some cases. This disease is associated with a low health risk estimate.

6.2.6 Rickettsioses, tickborne (spotted fever group)

Low: Rare cases (less than 0.1% per month) of rickettsioses disease are possible among personnel exposed to tick bites. Rickettsioses are transmitted by multiple species of hard ticks, including *Rhipicephalus* spp., which are associated with dogs. Other species of ticks, including *Ixodes* are also capable of transmitting rickettsial pathogens in this group. In addition to dogs, various rodents and other animals also may serve as reservoirs. Ticks are most prevalent from April through November. Incidents can result in debilitating febrile illness, which may require 1 to 7 days of supportive care followed by return to duty. The health risk of rickettsial disease is Low.

6.2.7 Typhus-murine (fleaborne)

Low: Typhus-murine has a Low risk estimate and is assessed as present, but at unknown levels. Rare cases are possible among personnel exposed to rodents (particularly rats) and flea bites. Incidents may result in debilitating febrile illness typically requiring 1 to 7 days of supportive care followed by return to duty.

6.2.8 West Nile fever

Low: West Nile fever is present. The disease is maintained by the bird population and transmitted to humans via mosquito vector. Typically, infections in young, healthy adults were asymptomatic although fever, headache, tiredness, body aches (occasionally with a skin rash on trunk of body), and swollen lymph glands can occur. This disease is associated with a low risk estimate.

6.2.9 Short -term health risks:

Low: The unmitigated risk is moderate for leishmaniasis - cutaneous (acute), Crimean-Congo hemorrhagic fever, and sandfly fever; Low for, sindbis, rickettsioses-tickborne, typhus-fleaborne, and West Nile fever. No hazard from malaria (2008 - 2011). Risk is reduced to Low by proper wear of the uniform and application of repellent to exposed skin. Confidence in the risk estimate is high.

6.2.10 Long -term health risks:

Low: The unmitigated risk is moderate for leishmaniasis-visceral (chronic). Risk is reduced to Low by proper wear of the uniform and application of repellent to exposed skin. Confidence in the risk estimate is high.

6.3 Water Contact Diseases

Tactical operations or recreational activities that involve extensive contact with surface water such as lakes, streams, rivers, or flooded fields may result in significant exposure to leptospirosis and schistosomiasis. Arid portions of Iraq without permanent or persistent bodies of surface water do not support transmission of leptospirosis or schistosomiasis. Risk was restricted primarily to areas along rivers and lakes. These diseases can debilitate personnel for up to a week or more. Leptospirosis risk typically increases during flooding. In addition, although not specifically assessed in this document, bodies of surface water are likely to be contaminated with human and animal waste. Activities such as wading or swimming may result in exposure to enteric diseases including diarrhea and hepatitis via incidental ingestion of water. Prolonged water contact also may lead to the development of a variety of potentially debilitating skin conditions including bacterial or fungal dermatitis. Mitigation strategies were in place and included avoiding water contact and recreational water activities, proper wear of uniform (especially footwear), and protective coverings for cuts/abraded skin.

6.3.1 Leptospirosis

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Human infections occur seasonally (typically April through November) through exposure to water or soil contaminated by infected animals and is associated with wading, and swimming in contaminated, untreated open water. The occurrence of flooding after heavy rainfall facilitates the spread of the organism because as water saturates the environment leptospirosis present in the soil passes directly into surface waters. Leptospirosis can enter the body through cut or abraded skin, mucous membranes, and conjunctivae. Infection may also occur from ingestion of contaminated water. The acute, generalized illness associated with infection may mimic other tropical diseases (for example, dengue fever, malaria, and typhus), and common symptoms include fever, chills, myalgia, nausea, diarrhea, cough, and conjunctival suffusion. Manifestations of severe disease can include jaundice, renal failure, hemorrhage, pneumonitis, and hemodynamic collapse. Recreational activities involving extensive water contact may result in personnel being temporarily debilitated with leptospirosis. This disease is associated with a Moderate health risk estimate.

6.3.2 Schistosomiasis

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Humans are the principal reservoir for schistosomes; humans shed schistosome eggs in urine or feces. Animals such as cattle and water buffalo may also be significant reservoirs. Rare cases (less than 0.1% per month attack rate) may occur seasonally (typically April through November) among personnel wading or swimming in lakes, streams, or irrigated fields which were frequently contaminated with human and animal waste containing schistosome eggs. In groups with prolonged exposure to heavily contaminated foci, attack rates may exceed 10%. Exceptionally heavy concentrations of schistosomes may occur in discrete foci, which were difficult to distinguish from

less contaminated areas. In non-immune personnel exposed to such foci, rates of acute schistosomiasis may be over 50%. Mild infections are generally asymptomatic. In very heavy acute infections, a febrile illness (acute schistosomiasis) may occur, especially with *Schistosoma japonicum* and *S. mansoni*, requiring hospitalization and convalescence over 7 days. This disease is associated with a Moderate health risk estimate.

6.3.3 Short-term health risks:

Low: Unmitigated Health risk of schistosomiasis and leptospirosis is Moderate during warmer months. Mitigation measures reduce the risk to Low. Confidence in the health risk estimate is high.

6.3.4 Long-term health risks:

None identified based on available data.

6.4 Respiratory Diseases

Although not specifically assessed in this document, deployed U.S. forces may be exposed to a wide variety of common respiratory infections in the local population. These include influenza, pertussis, viral upper respiratory infections, viral and bacterial pneumonia, and others. The U.S. military populations living in close-quarter conditions are at risk for substantial person-to-person spread of respiratory pathogens. Influenza is of particular concern because of its ability to debilitate large numbers of unvaccinated personnel for several days. Mitigation strategies were in place and included routine medical screenings, vaccination, enforcing minimum space allocation in housing units, implementing head-to-toe sleeping in crowded housing units, implementation of proper personal protective equipment (PPE) when necessary for healthcare providers and detention facility personnel.

6.4.1 Tuberculosis (TB)

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Potential health risk to U.S. personnel is Moderate, mitigated to Low, year round. Transmission typically requires close and prolonged contact with an active case of pulmonary or laryngeal TB, although it also can occur with more incidental contact. The Army Surgeon General has defined increased risk in deployed Soldiers as indoor exposure to locals or third country nationals of greater than one hour per week in a highly endemic active TB region. Additional mitigation included active case isolation in negative pressure rooms, where available.

6.4.2 Meningococcal meningitis

Low: Meningococcal meningitis poses a Low risk and is transmitted from person to person through droplets of respiratory or throat secretions. Close and prolonged contact facilitates the spread of this disease. Meningococcal meningitis is potentially a very severe disease typically requiring intensive care; fatalities may occur in 5-15% of cases.

6.4.3 Short-term health risks:

Low: Moderate (TB) to Low (for meningococcal meningitis). Overall risk was reduced to Low with mitigation measures. Confidence in the health risk estimate is high.

6.4.4 Long-term health risks:

None identified based on available data. Tuberculosis is evaluated as part of the post deployment health assessment (PDHA). A TB skin test is required post-deployment if potentially exposed and is based upon individual service policies.

6.5 Animal-Contact Diseases

6.5.1 Rabies

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Rabies posed a year-round moderate risk. Occurrence in local animals was well above U.S. levels due to the lack of organized control programs. Dogs were the primary reservoir of rabies in Iraq, and a frequent source of human exposure. In June 2008, the New Jersey Health department in The United States reported a confirmed case of rabies in a mixed-breed dog recently imported from Iraq. Rabies is transmitted by exposure to the virus-laden saliva of an infected animal, typically through bites, but could occur from scratches contaminated with the saliva. No cases of rabies acquired in Iraq have been identified in US Service Members to date. The vast majority (>99%) of persons who develop rabies disease will do so within a year after a risk exposure, there have been rare reports of individuals presenting with rabies disease up to six years or more after their last known risk exposure. Mitigation strategies included command emphasis of CENTCOM GO 1B, reduction of animal habitats, active pest management programs, and timely treatment of feral animal scratches/bites.

6.5.2 Anthrax

Low: Anthrax cases are rare in indigenous personnel, and pose a Low risk to U.S. personnel. Anthrax is a naturally occurring infection; cutaneous anthrax is transmitted by direct contact with infected animals or carcasses, including hides. Eating undercooked infected meat may result in contracting gastrointestinal anthrax. Pulmonary anthrax is contracted through inhalation of spores and is extremely rare. Mitigation measures included consuming approved food sources, proper food preparation and cooking temperatures, avoidance of animals and farms, dust abatement when working in these areas, vaccinations, and proper PPE for personnel working with animals.

6.5.3 Q-Fever

Moderate, mitigated to Low: Potential health risk to U.S. personnel is Moderate, but mitigated to Low, year round. Rare cases are possible among personnel exposed to aerosols from infected animals, with clusters of cases possible in some situations. Significant outbreaks (affecting 1-50%) can occur in personnel with heavy exposure to barnyards or other areas where animals are kept. Unpasteurized milk may also transmit infection. The primary route of exposure is respiratory, with an infectious dose as low as a single organism. Incidence could result in debilitating febrile illness, sometimes presenting as pneumonia, typically requiring 1 to 7 days of inpatient care followed by return to duty. Mitigation strategies in place as listed in paragraph 6.5.2 except for vaccinations.

6.5.4 H5N1 avian influenza

Low: Potential health risk to U.S. personnel is Low. Although H5N1 avian influenza (AI) is easily transmitted among birds, bird-to-human transmission is extremely inefficient. Human-to-human transmission appears to be exceedingly rare, even with relatively close contact. Extremely rare cases (less than 0.01% per month attack rate) could occur. Incidence could result in very severe illness with fatality rate higher than 50 percent in symptomatic cases. Mitigation strategies included avoidance of birds/poultry and proper cooking temperatures for poultry products.

6.5.5 Short-term health risks:

Low: The short-term unmitigated risk is Moderate for rabies, and Q-fever, to Low for anthrax, and H5N1 avian influenza. Mitigation measures reduced the overall risk to Low. Confidence in risk estimate is high.

6.5.6 Long-term health risks:

Low: A Low long term risk exists for rabies because, in rare cases, the incubation period for rabies can be several years.

7 Venomous Animals

All information was taken directly from the Clinical Toxinology Resources web site from the University of Adelaide, Australia (Reference 2). The species listed below have home ranges that overlap the location of Q-West and vicinity, and may present a health risk if they are encountered by personnel. See Section 9 for more information about pesticides and pest control measures.

7.1 Spiders

- *Latrodectus pallidus*: Clinical effects uncertain, but related to medically important species, therefore major envenoming cannot be excluded.

7.2 Scorpions

- *Androctonus crassicauda* (black scorpion): Severe envenoming possible and potentially lethal, however most stings cause only severe local pain.
- *Buthacus leptochelys*, *B. macrocentrus*, *Compsobuthus werneri*, *Mesobuthus caucasicus*, *M. eupeus*, *Orthochirus scrobiculosus*: Clinical effects unknown; there were a number of dangerous buthid scorpions, but also others known to cause minimal effects only. Without clinical data it was unclear where this species fits within that spectrum.
- *Scorpio maurus*: Mild envenoming only, not likely to prove lethal.
- *Hemiscorpius lepturus*: Severe envenoming possible, potentially lethal.
- *Hottentotta saulcyi*, *Hottentotta scaber*, and *Hottentotta schach*: Moderate envenoming possible but unlikely to prove lethal.

7.3 Snakes

- *Cerastes gasperettii*: Potentially lethal envenoming, though unlikely.
- *Hemorrhoids ravergeri*, *Psammophis schokari* and *Pseudocyclophis persicus*: Clinical effects unknown, but unlikely to cause significant envenoming.
- *Macrovipera lebetina* subspecies *euphratica* and subspecies *obtuse* and *Vipera albicornuta*: Severe envenoming possible, potentially lethal.

- *Platyceps rhodorachis*: Mild envenoming only, not likely to prove lethal.
- *Walterinnesia aegyptia*: Clinical effects unknown, but potentially lethal envenoming, though unlikely, cannot be excluded.

7.4 Short-term health risk:

Low: If encountered, effects of venom vary with species from mild localized swelling (e.g. *S. maurus*) to potentially lethal effects (e.g. *V. albicornuta*). See effects of venom above. Mitigation strategies included avoiding contact, proper wear of uniform (especially footwear), and timely medical treatment. Confidence in the health risk estimate is low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

7.5 Long-term health risk:

None identified.

8 Heat/Cold Stress

8.1 Site-Specific Sources Identified

The Ninawa province experiences hot semi-arid climate with extremely hot, almost rainless summers and cool, rainy winters based on historical climatological data from the U.S. Air Force Combat Climatology Center, 14th Weather Squadron.

8.2 Heat

Summer (June - September) monthly mean daily maximum temperatures range from 68 °F to 122 °F with an average temperature of 95 °F based on historical climatological data from the U.S. Air Force Combat Climatology Center, 14th Weather Squadron. The health risk of heat stress/injury based on temperatures alone is high (82-87.9°F) in April and extremely high ($\geq 88^\circ\text{F}$) from May – October. However, work intensity and clothing/equipment worn pose greater health risk of heat stress/injury than environmental factors alone (Reference 6). Managing risk of hot weather operations included monitoring work/rest periods, proper hydration, and taking individual risk factors (e.g. acclimation, weight, and physical conditioning) into consideration. Risk of heat stress/injury was reduced with preventive measures

8.2.1 Short-term health risk:

High to Extremely High, mitigated to Moderate to High: The risk of heat injury was reduced to low through preventive measures such as work/rest cycles, proper hydration and nutrition, and monitoring Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT). Risk of heat injury in unacclimatized or susceptible populations (older, previous history of heat injury, poor physical condition, underlying medical/health conditions), and those under operational constraints (equipment, PPE, vehicles) is high (82-87.9°F) in April and extremely high ($\geq 88^\circ\text{F}$) from May – October. Confidence in the health risk estimate is low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

8.2.2 Long-term health risk:

Low: The long-term risk is Low. However, the risk may be greater for certain susceptible persons—those older (i.e., greater than 45 years), in lesser physical shape, or with underlying medical/health conditions. Long-term health implications from heat injuries are rare but may occur, especially from more serious injuries such as heat stroke. It is possible that high heat in conjunction with various

chemical exposures may increase long-term health risks, though specific scientific evidence is not conclusive. Confidence in these risk estimates is medium (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

8.3 Cold

8.3.1 Short-term health risks:

Winter (December - March) mean daily minimum temperatures range from 24 °F to 93 °F with an average temperature of 55 °F based on historical climatological data from the U.S. Air Force Combat Climatology Center, 14th Weather Squadron. Because even on warm days a significant drop in temperature after sunset by as much as 40 °F can occur, there is a risk of cold stress/injury from September – May. The risk assessment for Non-Freezing Cold Injuries (NFCI), such as chilblain, trench foot, and hypothermia, is Low based on historical temperature and precipitation data. Frostbite is unlikely to occur because temperatures rarely drop below freezing. However, personnel may encounter significantly lower temperatures during field operations at higher altitudes. As with heat stress/injuries, cold stress/injuries are largely dependent on operational and individual factors instead of environmental factors alone.

Low: The health risk of cold injury is Low. Confidence in the health risk estimate is medium.

8.3.2 Long-term health risk:

Low: The health risk of cold injury is Low. Confidence in the health risk estimate is high

9 Noise

9.1 Continuous

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRS or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

9.1.1 Short and long-term health risks:

Not evaluated

9.2 Impulse

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRS or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

9.2.1 Short-term and Long-term health risks:

Not evaluated.

10 Unique Incidents/Concerns

10.1 Potential environmental contamination sources

DoD personnel are exposed to various chemical, physical, ergonomic, and biological hazards in the course of performing their mission. These types of hazards depend on the mission of the unit and the operations and tasks which the personnel are required to perform to complete their mission. The health risk associated with these hazards depends on a number of elements including what materials are

used, how long the exposure last, what is done to the material, the environment where the task or operation is performed, and what controls are used. The hazards can include exposures to heavy metal particulates (e.g. lead, cadmium, manganese, chromium, and iron oxide), solvents, fuels, oils, and gases (e.g. carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, oxides of nitrogen, and oxides of sulfur). Most of these exposures occur when performing maintenance task such as painting, grinding, welding, engine repair, or movement through contaminated areas. Exposures to these occupational hazards can occur through inhalation (air), skin contact, or ingestion; however exposures through air are generally associated with the highest health risk.

10.2 Waste Sites/Waste Disposal

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRS or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

10.3 Fuel/petroleum products/industrial chemical spills

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHRS or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

10.4 Pesticides/Pest Control:

The health risk of exposure to pesticide residues is considered within the framework of typical residential exposure scenarios, based on the types of equipment, techniques, and pesticide products that have been employed, such as enclosed bait stations for rodenticides, various handheld equipment for spot treatments of insecticides and herbicides, and a number of ready-to-use (RTU) methods such as aerosol cans and baits. The control of rodents required the majority of pest management inputs, with the acutely toxic rodenticides staged as solid formulation lethal baits placed in tamper-resistant bait stations indoors and outdoors throughout cantonment areas. Nuisance insects, including biting and stinging insects such as bees, wasps, and ants, also required significant pest management inputs. Use of pesticides targeting against these pests generally involved selection of compounds with low mammalian toxicity and short-term residual using pinpoint rather than broadcast application techniques. No specific hazard sources were documented in DOEHRS or MESL data portal. A total of 18 monthly pesticide application reports in the MESL data portal for Q-West and FOB Endurance (January 2005 to July 2006) list the usage of pesticides on the site. For each pesticide product applied during this period, the USEPA approved label has been archived, providing a framework how each pesticide handled and applied (see below).

10.4.1 Rodenticides

Brodifacoum, bromadiolone, difenacoum and diphacinone were used to control rodents.

10.4.2 Insecticides

Insecticides used to control ants, bees, crickets, fleas, flies, lice, mosquitoes, spiders, termites, and wasps include: abamectin b1, bifenthrin, cypermethrin, hydramethylnon, imidacloprid, lambda-cyhalothrin, methomy, n-ethyl perfluorooctanesulfonamide, piperonyl butoxide, polybutylenes, polyisobutylenes, pyrethrins, resmerithrin, s-methoprene, β -cyfluthrin, and z-9-tricosene.

10.4.3 Vertebrate pesticides

Naphthalene and sulfur were used to control snakes and 4-Aminopyridine was used to control birds.

10.4.4 Short-term and Long-term health risks

Low: Long term health risk is Low. Confidence in the health risk assessment is medium (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

10.5 Asbestos

Asbestos containing materials (ACM) were common in east Europe, Middle East, Indian subcontinent, and Asia because it was a very good thermal insulator, fire retardant and binder in friction products, and it was inexpensive to make. Exposure to airborne friable asbestos may have resulted in a potential health risk because persons breathing the air may have breathed in asbestos fibers. Continued exposure may have increased the amount of fibers that remain in the lungs. Fibers embedded in lung tissue over time may have caused serious lung diseases including asbestosis, lung cancer, or mesothelioma. Smoking increases the risk of developing illness from asbestos exposure. If the ACM was not friable then the asbestos did not present a significant health hazard. However without proper controls, ACM may have presented an elevated risk to soldiers if it was in poor condition, friable, or if the material was disturbed, such as in maintenance operations, renovations, or demolitions.

Results from a bulk sample collected on 17 January 2006 from the dump at Q-West contained water pipe insulation with 30% chrysotile asbestos and 30% crocidolite asbestos, and floor liner with 60% chrysotile asbestos.

10.5.1 Short-term health risk:

None identified.

10.5.2 Long-term health risk:

Low: Long term population health risk from asbestos exposure is low. Confidence in risk assessment was low (TG 230 Table 3-6).

10.6 Lead Based Paint

No specific hazard sources were documented in the DOEHSR, or MESL from 01 April 2003 through 01 August 2010.

10.7 Mishraq State Sulfur Mine Plant

On 24 June 2003, a fire accidentally ignited at the Mishraq State Sulfur Mine Plant located 50 km south of Mosul and 25 km north of Q-West. The fire burned for approximately three weeks. Satellite photos demonstrated that the smoke plume direction, length, and opacity varied throughout the three week time frame potentially affecting a group of over six thousand troops that were presumed to have been within 50 km of the Mishraq State Sulfur Plant during the event, based on unit location information. The plume contained various contaminants including particulate matter and varying concentrations of sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and hydrogen sulfide (H₂S). Both H₂S and SO₂ gases may have produced irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, and coughing. Because these gases were water soluble, they typically penetrated as far as the nose and throat with minimal amounts reaching the lungs unless the person was breathing heavily, breathing only through the mouth (both conditions potentially present with physical exertion), or the concentrations were especially high, as was noted in some of the sampling results. Although individual exposure levels cannot be accurately determined, the USAPHC currently considers constrictive bronchiolitis (initially diagnosed as "bronchiolitis obliterans") to be plausibly associated with exposure to the 2003 Mishraq State sulfur fire event. This health effect has been

scientifically associated with very high exposures to SO₂. For more information regarding this incident please contact: U.S. Army Public Health Command, Environmental Medicine Program, at USAPHC-EnvironmentalMedicineProgram@AMEDD.army.mil.

10.8 Burn Pit

While not specific to Q-West and vicinity, the consolidated epidemiological and environmental sampling and studies on burn pits that have been conducted as of the date of this publication have been unable to determine whether an association does or does not exist between exposures to emissions from the burn pits and long-term health effects (Reference 7). The committee's review of the literature and the data suggests that service in Iraq or Afghanistan (i.e., a broader consideration of air pollution than exposure only to burn pit emissions) may be associated with long-term health effects, particularly in susceptible (e.g., those who have asthma) or highly exposed subpopulations, such as those who worked at the burn pit. Such health effects would be due mainly to high ambient concentrations of PM from both natural and anthropogenic sources, including military sources. If that broader exposure to air pollution turns out to be relevant, potentially related health effects of concern are respiratory and cardiovascular effects and cancer. Susceptibility to the PM health effects could be exacerbated by other exposures, such as stress, smoking, local climatic conditions, and co-exposures to other chemicals that affect the same biologic or chemical processes. Individually, the chemicals measured at burn pit sites in the study were generally below concentrations of health concern for general populations in the United States. However, the possibility of exposure to mixtures of the chemicals raises the potential for health outcomes associated with cumulative exposure to combinations of the constituents of burn pit emissions and emissions from other sources.

10.8.1 Particulate matter, less than 10 micrometers (PM₁₀)

10.8.2 Exposure Guidelines:

Short Term (24-hour) PM₁₀ MEG (µg/m³):

- Negligible MEG = 250
- Marginal MEG = 420
- Critical MEG = 600

Long-term PM₁₀ MEG (µg/m³):

- Not defined and not available.

10.8.2.1 Sample data/Notes:

A total of 23 valid PM₁₀ air samples were collected at Q-West from 31 March to 22 May 2008. The range of 24-hour PM₁₀ concentrations was 30 µg/m³ – 948 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 271 µg/m³.

10.8.2.2 Short-term health risks:

Low: The average and peak PM₁₀ concentration was above the short-term PM₁₀ negligible MEG and was considered a Low short-term health risk. A Low health risk suggests that PM₁₀ exposure was expected to have little or no impact on mission readiness with no specific medical action required. Daily average risk levels for PM₁₀ show no hazard for 61%, low risk for 17%, moderate risk 17%, and high risk for 4% of the time.

The hazard severity was negligible for average PM₁₀ exposures. At the negligible hazard severity a few personnel may have experienced notable eye, nose, and throat irritation; most personnel may have experienced only mild effects. Pre-existing health conditions (e.g., asthma, or cardiopulmonary diseases) may have been exacerbated. (Reference 9, Table 3-10).

For the highest observed PM₁₀ exposure, the hazard severity was critical. Peak exposures, such as during high winds or dust storms, may have resulted in reduced mission capability. Limited in-theater medical action may have been required for peak exposures. At PM₁₀ concentrations above 600 ug/m³, most if not all personnel may have experienced very notable eye, nose, and throat irritation and respiratory effects. Visual acuity may have been impaired, as was overall aerobic capacity. Some personnel may not have been able to perform assigned duties. Lost duty days were expected. Those with a history of asthma or cardiopulmonary disease may have experienced more severe symptoms. Confidence in short-term PM₁₀ risk assessment is Low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

10.8.2.3 Long-term health risk:

Not Evaluated-no available health guidelines. The EPA has retracted its long-term NAAQS for PM₁₀ due to an inability to clearly link chronic health effects with chronic PM₁₀ exposure levels.

10.8.3 Particulate Matter, less than 2.5 micrometers (PM_{2.5})

10.8.4 Exposure Guidelines:

Short Term (24-hour) PM_{2.5} MEG (µg/m³):

- Negligible MEG = 65
- Marginal MEG = 250
- Critical MEG = 500

Long-term PM_{2.5} MEG (µg/m³):

- Negligible MEG = 15
- Marginal MEG = 65

10.8.4.1 Sample data/Notes:

A total of 22 valid PM_{2.5} air samples were collected at Q-West from 31 March to 22 May 2008. The range of 24-hour PM_{2.5} concentrations was 27 µg/m³ – 205 µg/m³ with an average concentration of 95 µg/m³.

10.8.4.2 Short-term health risks:

Low: The short-term risk assessment for typical and peak PM_{2.5} concentrations was Low. Typical and peak short-term exposure to PM_{2.5} was expected to have little or no impact on mission readiness with no specific medical action required. Daily average risk levels for PM_{2.5} show no hazard for 32% and low risk for 68% of the time. Confidence in short-term PM_{2.5} risk assessment was Low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

The hazard severity was negligible for average and peak PM_{2.5} exposures. At the negligible hazard severity a few personnel may have experienced notable eye, nose, and throat irritation; most personnel may have experienced only mild effects. Pre-existing health conditions (e.g., asthma, or cardiopulmonary diseases) may have been exacerbated. (Reference 9, Table 3-10).

10.8.4.3 Long-term health risks:

Low: The long-term health risk assessment was Low. A Low health risk level suggests that long-term exposure to PM_{2.5} was expected to have little or no impact on mission readiness, with no specific medical action required for typical exposures (Reference 9, Table 3-3). Confidence in the long-term PM_{2.5} health risk assessment was low (Reference 9, Table 3-6).

The hazard severity was marginal for average PM_{2.5} exposures. The results suggest that with repeated exposures above the marginal hazard severity threshold, it was plausible that development of chronic health conditions such as reduced lung function or exacerbated chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, atherosclerosis, or other cardiopulmonary diseases may have occurred in generally healthy troops. Those with a history of asthma or cardiopulmonary disease were considered to be at particular risk. (Reference 9, Table 3-11).

11 References¹

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2. Clinical Toxinology Resources: <http://www.toxinology.com/>. University of Adelaide, Australia.
3. Defense Occupational and Environmental Health Readiness System (referred to as the DOEHRSEH database) at <https://doehrs-ih.csd.disa.mil/Doehrs/>. Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction 6490.03, *Deployment Health*, 2006.
4. DoDI 6055.05, Occupational and Environmental Health, 2008.
5. DoD MESL Data Portal: <https://mesl.apgea.army.mil/mesl/>. Some of the data and reports used may be classified or otherwise have some restricted distribution.
6. Goldman RF. 2001. Introduction to heat-related problems in military operations. *In: Textbook of military medicine: medical aspects of harsh environments* Vol. 1, Pandolf KB, and Burr RE (Eds.), Office of the Surgeon General, Department of the Army, Washington DC.
7. IOM (Institute of Medicine). 2011. Long-term health consequences of exposure to burn pits in Iraq and Afghanistan. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
8. Joint Staff Memorandum (MCM) 0028-07, Procedures for Deployment Health Surveillance, 2007.
9. USA PHC TG230, June 2010 Revision.
10. USACHPPM. 2008. Particulate Matter Factsheet; 64-009-0708, 2008.
11. Modification 11 to United States Central Command Individual Protection and Individual Unit Deployment Policy, 2 December 2011.

¹ NOTE. The data are currently assessed using the 2010 TG230. The general method involves an initial review of the data which eliminates all chemical substances not detected above 1-yr negligible MEGs. Those substances screened out are not considered acute or chronic health hazards so are not assessed further. For remaining substances, acute and chronic health effects are evaluated separately for air water (soil is only evaluated for long term risk). This is performed by deriving separate short-term and long term population exposure level and estimates (referred to as population exposure point concentrations (PEPC)) that are compared to MEGs derived for similar exposure durations. If less than or equal to negligible MEG the risk is Low. If levels are higher than negligible then there is a chemical-specific toxicity and exposure evaluation by appropriate SMEs, which includes comparison to any available marginal, critical or catastrophic MEGs. For drinking water 15 L/day MEGs are used for the screening while site specific 5-15 L/day are used for more detailed assessment. For nondrinking water (such as that used for personal hygiene or cooking) the 'consumption rate' is limited to 2 L/day (similar to the EPA) which is derived by multiplying the 5 L/day MEG by a factor of 2.5. This value is used to conservatively assess non drinking uses of water.

12 Where Do I Get More Information?

If a provider feels that the Service member's or Veteran's current medical condition may be attributed to specific OEH exposures at this deployment location, he/she can contact the Service-specific organization below. Organizations external to DoD should contact DoD Force Health Protection and Readiness (FHP & R).

Army Institute of Public Health Phone: (800) 222-9698. <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/>

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC) (formerly NEHC) Phone: (757) 953-0700. <http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil>

U.S. Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine (USAFSAM) (formerly AFIOH) Phone: (888) 232-3764. <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/afri/711hpw/usafsam.asp>

DoD Force Health Protection and Readiness (FHP & R) Phone: (800) 497-6261. <http://fhp.osd.mil>