

Engagement with Public Security Forces - Iraq¹

I. INTRODUCTION

The Rumaila oil field is Iraq's largest oilfield situated in Southern Iraq, southwest of Basra city. Since 2009, Iraq's state-owned South Oil Company (SOC) has engaged BP and PetroChina together with the State Oil Marketing Company of Iraq through a technical service contract to operate and modernize the oil field.

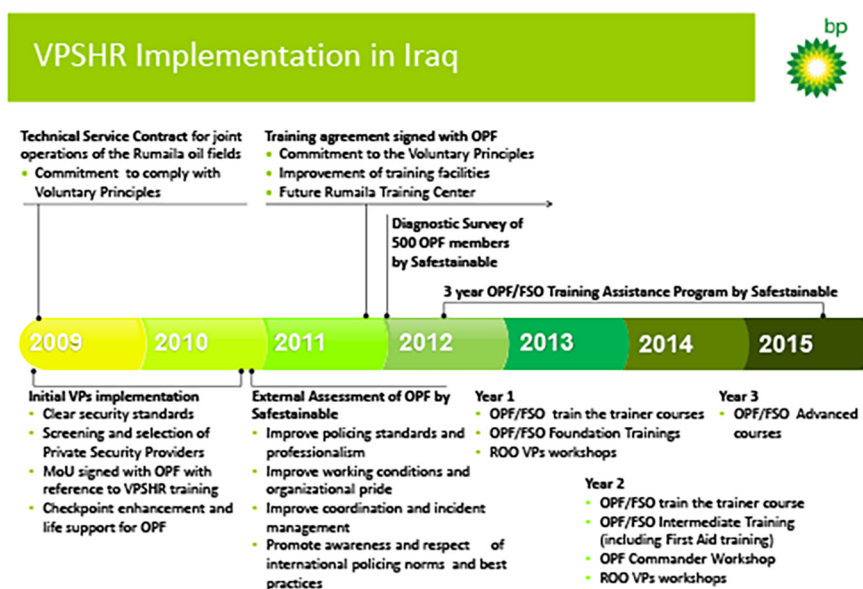
From the beginning, BP, the lead contractor under the Rumaila technical service contract and a founding signatory of the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights (VPSHR), has worked closely with the Government of Iraq to ensure that a commitment to the VPSHR was embedded within the technical service contract.

The provision of security for the Rumaila field consists of a combination of contracted private security providers, Rumaila Field Security Officers and the Iraqi Oil Police Force (OPF) who are responsible for field access control and the protection of national infrastructure. The OPF are critical to controlling access to the oilfields, as well as deterring, detecting and responding to criminal and insurgency-related incidents.

This case study focuses on the Training Assistance Program (TAP) with the public security provider, the OPF. It should also be recognised that a comprehensive Rumaila VPSHR program is in place, which also includes training elements for Rumaila Field Security Officers (FSO), trained by a cadre of FSO instructors who underwent a similar Train the Trainer program. VPSHR workshops are also provided for contracted private security staff and Rumaila personnel.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE RUMAILA OPERATING ORGANISATION (ROO) VPSHR PROGRAM

From the outset Rumaila's goal was to develop a program that enabled the practical implementation of the VPSHR. This program comprises four stages: a) preliminary measures; b) information gathering; c) formal engagement process; and d) design and implementation of the OPF Training Assistance Program (TAP). These are identified in the timeline below.



a) Preliminary measures

Between 2009 and 2010, the ROO program took the following actions:

1. Began engagement with the Ministry of Interior and OPF
2. Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the OPF which included a reference to future VPSHR training
3. Assessed security risks on Rumaila field and established clear security standards
4. Screened and selected private security providers
5. Enhanced checkpoints

b) Information gathering

In 2010 and 2011, as part of the assessment process of the OPF, two studies were conducted to collect baseline information, as well as to establish Rumaila priorities:

- Preliminary Objective Needs Assessment

To better understand the OPF, tactical and operational needs, training gaps and requirements to promote adherence to human rights standards, Safestainable was asked in 2010 to conduct an objective needs assessment of the OPF on Rumaila, covering the following elements:

1. Comprehensive profile of the OPF on the Rumaila field focused on policing standards and working conditions
2. Operational review of OPF and identification of operational baseline
3. Human rights risk assessment focused on the identification of scenarios with potential for human rights violations
4. A provisional training needs analysis
5. Recommendations to set up a comprehensive Rumaila VPSHR program

- Diagnostic Survey

In 2011, Safestainable, partnering with a local Iraqi consultancy, undertook a diagnostic survey, based upon quantitative and qualitative interviews administered face-to-face to 562 OPF policemen in Rumaila. Specifically the survey helped to:

1. Gain objective and evidence-based insights regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the OPF organisational performance to guide discussions regarding training requirements
2. Provide a baseline with which to measure impact of any training program or assistance provided to the OPF
3. Provide evidence-based information to OPF Southern Command

All results and recommendations of this survey were formally presented in detail to Rumaila, OPF Central and OPF Southern Command in 2012.

c) Formal engagement process

At Rumaila's request, the OPF designated a Rumaila Liaison Officer from the OPF Southern Command, who was provided with office space at the Rumaila HQ and worked closely with the Rumaila Security Department.

In efforts to further guide discussions, Rumaila, with the assistance of Safestainable, drafted a Training Agreement between Rumaila and the OPF, which clarified the possible scope of the future Training Assistance Program and the anticipated roles and responsibilities of each party. The formal agreement was signed at the end of 2011, underpinned by a commitment from the OPF to integrate human rights standards into all future training.

d) Design and implementation of the OPF Training Assistance Program

Once the agreement was signed, Safestainable was requested to operationalize the training concept, develop the course schedule and prepare the curricula for a 3-year Training Assistance Program, under the guidance and with close support from the Rumaila Security Department. Collaboration was essential to ensure all trainings were relevant to tactical requirements and reflected the operational environment and its constraints.

The Training Assistance Program has been based on a Train the Trainers approach to promote OPF ownership and increase its sustainability. The program follows a systematic training cycle and relies on a training model called the Systems Approach to Training to guide the formal curriculum development, validation and evaluation process.

The program aimed to develop a cadre of OPF trainers with the skills and knowledge to train their counterparts to effectively carry out all duties. It followed that over the 3 years the OPF trainers would deliver foundation, intermediate and advanced courses to all OPF policemen on the Rumaila field. Arabic speaking training consultants were engaged, all of which had professional backgrounds in senior positions in Middle East and North African public security forces and thereafter with human rights experience gained in the UN or ICRC.

Training consultants initially delivered a pilot course to the OPF to introduce the curriculum, and then participated in the trainer selection process, before delivering a series of "Train the Trainer" courses. Thereafter they acted as mentors to the OPF trainers, providing continuous refresher training and monitoring the quality of training to ensure effective delivery. The Rumaila security training team oversaw all aspects of program management and ensured continuity in the absence of the visiting training consultants.

Each year the Training Assistance Program is evaluated to measure its impact on OPF policemen performance and identify further training needs. At the end of the program a final evaluation is scheduled to measure its impact as a component of the overall Rumaila VPSHR program with its objective to maintain security in Rumaila operations carried out under a framework that guarantees the respect of the human rights.

III. THE TRAINING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

a) Train the Trainers approach

The success of any Train the Trainers approach depends on having a pool of motivated, experienced and educated individuals who have the capacity to become valuable trainers over time. The selection and training process in the first year took place in three one-month blocks (Selection/Foundation training; Train the Trainers training; Coaching week) after which the selected number of

trainers started to deliver trainings themselves. A fourth Train the Trainers course mainly attended by existing OPF Instructors, from the OPF Southern Command Training Centre who were not from the Rumaila Battalions was added upon the request of OPF Southern Command, recognising the value of the Training Assistance Program.

Once OPF trainers begin the delivery of training courses, Safestainable and Rumaila oversee a comprehensive monitoring and coaching process to ensure that the training content and quality is guaranteed throughout delivery. Additionally training participants' feedback is systematically collected and integrated in the annual evaluation process.

b) Course content

Module selection for the Training Assistance Program has been based on a formal training needs analysis, complemented by the identification of bespoke operational and tactical requirements by the Rumaila Security Department. The initial curriculum was developed by Safestainable and reviewed by the Rumaila Security Department, the OPF and Rumaila representatives. The content of the courses is presented below.

5 Days Foundation Training Course delivered to all OPF policemen - Year 1

- Covering Related Human Rights/VPSHR and training skills
- Rumaila Infrastructure Management, Access Control and checkpoints

5 Days Intermediate Training Course delivered to all OPF policemen - Year 2

- Advanced Human Rights/VPSHR and training skills
- Advance Rumaila Infrastructure Management, Access Control and checkpoints
- Provision of Highfield Internationally accredited Emergency First Aid at Work certificate

10 Days Train the Trainers course and 5 Days Refresher Course - Year 1

- Human rights law and standards, international best practices and standards for Law Enforcement Officials
- Method of Instruction Training and methodologies
- Delivery of Foundation training session/exercises by new trainers
- ICRC presentation on IHL and ICRC mandate and activities

10 Days Train the Trainers course and 5 Days Refresher Course - Year 2

- Highfield International Award to deliver training certification
- Highfield First Aid at work certification
- Advanced Human Rights/VPSHR and training skills
- Delivery of Intermediate training session/exercises by new trainers

OPF Command Level Workshops - Year 2

- Human Rights standards/IHL and VPSHR
- Human Rights and Iraqi national legislation
- Iraqi Security Forces Code of Conduct
- Table top exercise on Command Responsibility

c) Scenario-based trainings and role-play exercises

To reinforce the classroom learning elements, practical exercises, scenarios and role-play training exercises comprise almost 50% of the training content. The use of these practical exercises and reality-based training elements customised to the local context are essential to allow each participant to translate the theoretical learnings into practical skills. 82% of participants rated the scenario-based training as either excellent or good.

d) Incentives for participants

- OPF Policemen: They recognised the value of acquiring practical skills. 83% rated the usefulness of the training for their daily work as excellent or good.
- OPF Trainers: Maintaining high motivation levels for OPF trainers is a key element in guaranteeing the long-term success of the Training Assistance Program. With the provision of recognised Training and First Aid Training certificates in Year 2 and the formalization of the OPF Trainers Pool dedicated to training on Rumaila field, the “trainer status” of OPF trainers is formally recognised.

IV. OVERCOMING KEY CHALLENGES

Rumaila faced various challenges engaging the OPF on the VPSHR, which were overcome by deploying a number of strategies:

a) Early engagement and support to OPF deployed in Rumaila

Supporting early engagement with the OPF through the delivery of tangible inputs, such as physical enhancements to checkpoints, enabled the OPF to quickly assign value to their relationship with Rumaila. Specialist boat training for one OPF Battalion to enable patrols to be conducted on the waterways was supported by the provision of boats and a boat yard.

b) Results of diagnostic survey shared with OPF Command

The findings of the survey were formally presented to and shared with OPF Central and Southern Command. This exercise helped them develop a better understanding of their own personnel and provided them with evidence-based information.

c) Formalised engagement process with OPF Central Command

A draft Training Agreement, based on findings of the two comprehensive OPF studies (preliminary objective needs assessment and diagnostic survey), guided the negotiation process with OPF. The agreement helped to manage expectations, clarified roles and responsibilities early on, and enabled further discussions within the agreed scope of the Training Assistance Program.

d) Training Assistance Program informed by formal studies

The in depth knowledge of the OPF gained through the two studies enabled the Training Assistance Program to better account for the OPF organisational culture, operational constraints, limitations, levels of motivation and the individual values of policemen deployed on the field.

e) Focus on best police practices rather than human rights discourse

The engagement process with OPF Command on the scope of the Training Assistance Program focused on communicating best police practices and improving practical skills of individual policemen, aligned with human rights standards. The translation of human rights standards into practices, rather than treating them as a standalone subject, proved essential in the early stages of the program.

f) Rumaila leadership and long term commitment towards OPF

The long term commitment of Rumaila towards supporting the OPF and readiness to engage after the signing of the technical service contract sent a positive message to the OPF which highlighted early on that Rumaila was looking to work in partnership with the OPF, within a VPSHR framework, to improve standards with the corresponding benefits to field security.

g) Train the Trainers approach and infrastructure support

The Rumaila commitment to build a cadre of OPF trainers, support long term training infrastructure development and improve OPF training facilities is designed such that after the end of the 3 year Training Assistance Program the OPF have the human resources and assets in place to continue with their own training program.

V. POLICY LESSONS AND TAKE AWAYS**a) Message a long term commitment**

The success of the Training Assistance Program has been largely due to its sustainable approach and long term commitment. This has been achieved by working with and providing technical assistance to the OPF, where appropriate, within the terms of the Training Agreement, in particular by establishing a cadre of trainers within the OPF. Furthermore, the Training Assistance Program contributed to the development of OPF training facilities and supported the OPF to overcome logistical constraints on the Rumaila field.

b) Coordinate early and formally

Proactive engagement and coordination with the OPF at various Command levels from the beginning and the availability of a dedicated OPF Liaison Officer to plan, coordinate and implement the Training Assistance Program proved essential. Furthermore signing a MoU and later a Training Agreement with the OPF gave the Training Assistance Program a solid foundation upon which to align expectations and clarify individual roles and responsibilities.

c) Promote local ownership

OPF ownership of the Training Assistance Program is the key factor to the sustainability of the program, but equally the key challenge. The adopted Train the Trainers approach, underpinned by the successful development of a professional and dedicated Rumaila OPF trainers pool led by an OPF Officer, quickly provided tangible results and demonstrated the practical value of the program to OPF Command, thereby increasing OPF ownership. However ownership at all levels of command is critical and further efforts are required to increase the ownership at Battalion level, where it is hampered by operational commitments.

d) Focus on context specificity

Close collaboration between Safestainable and the Rumaila Security Department in the development of the Training Assistance Program and specifically the curriculum ensured that the realities of a complex and dynamic local context as well as the operational constraints facing the OPF were accounted for. The use of Arabic speaking training consultants, who combine human rights and police/military background, meant that candidates for OPF trainers could relate and easily engage with their trainers throughout the Train the Trainers selection process. Training delivery based on practical exercises, scenarios and role-play exercises and adaptive teaching methods to account for low literacy levels amongst OPF policemen proved essential to effective instruction.

e) Undertake baseline studies to facilitate performance management

The preliminary objective needs assessment and diagnostic survey developed insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the OPF, while its organisational performance guided all discussions regarding training requirements. It also established baseline indicators to support the application of a systematic and on-going monitoring process and to measure the practical impact of the Training Assistance Program and identify training gaps during formal annual evaluations.

f) Integrate preventive aspects into training

While the Training Assistance Program focuses on reducing the likelihood of incidents occurring and improving reactive capabilities to respond to incidents in line with human rights standards and best practices, it is equally hoped that it will support the development of a preventive character by increasing OPF acceptance amongst the general population.

1. Authors: ROO Security Chief Training Officer, Managing Director Safestainable, Iraq Project Director Safestainable. This case study has been commissioned by the DCAF-ICRC project 'Addressing Security and Human Rights Challenges in Complex Environments'. See: <http://www.securityhumanrightshub.com/>