

The perSPEctive

The Newsletter of the New Jersey Chapter of the Construction Specification Institute, Inc.

Volume One Number 9



Knowledge for Creating
and Sustaining
the Built Environment

Costs are rising on Iraq rebuild plan

Scarce materials and threatened supply routes have put the price of rebuilding out of reach for many

All his life, as Baghdad stretched and swelled with new neighborhoods of boxy, concrete houses, Raad Latif's family sold the bricks, cement and other stuff of which this city is built. Latif says he has never seen the business as crazy as it is now. At his depot in the lower- middle-class neighborhood of Baghdad Jadida (New Baghdad), bricks cost two to four times what they did before the U.S. invasion last year. The price of cement is up 400 percent, gravel up 70 percent. The United States is pushing urgently for reconstruction as a way to stabilize Iraq and the U.S.-led occupation authority is to spend \$18 billion on rebuilding over four years. But you can't repair a country still at war, say many Iraqis and foreign specialists, and a simple barometer for the U.S. plans is the cost of bricks and mortar. "We cannot build if we cannot afford bricks," Latif said recently in the cramped office of his depot. "The authorities are buying up the bricks and cement" to build defenses against anti-U.S. guerrillas. Prices also are rising because building materials must be imported over insecure roads. Following April's eruption of guerrilla warfare in Fallujah, Najaf and other cities, "much of the aid and economic development program [to rebuild Iraq] has been paralyzed," according to Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East specialist at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies who traveled in Iraq this spring. With "far too many jobs ... dependent on aid and paid security positions, Iraq now has a 'bubble' economy, not real reconstruction, and Iraqis know this," Cordesman wrote in a report last month.

Especially here in central Iraq, the occupation authorities have been forced to spend vast sums to fortify government offices, police stations, hotels (where the foreign reconstruction workers stay) and other sites. Baghdad's "Green Zone," the headquarters of the ruling Coalition Provisional Authority, is protected from bombs and rocket attack by about 17 miles of thick, reinforced concrete walls, said a U.S. contractor who asked not to be named because he works with the authority on reconstruction issues. The heavy official purchases of brick, cement and the like have driven prices beyond the reach of ordinary Iraqis, say Latif and others in the business. With Iraq's brick and cement factories barely working, supplies must be trucked from neighboring countries over highways infested with bandits, guerrillas and roadside bombs. Outside Baghdad, on the highway to Jordan, scorch marks and debris on the asphalt mark spots where supply trucks have been attacked and burned. "In the Saddam era, Iraqi cement cost the equivalent of \$24 a [metric] ton," said Latif. "In the Bush era, it costs about \$95 or \$100." Still, occupation officials are optimistic that recovery is in sight. "The first contracts [from the \$18-billion aid pool] were awarded [in April]," said Gareth Bayley, a spokesman for the Coalition Provisional Authority. "We are accelerating the planned reconstruction plan" in response to Iraqis' urgent need to see progress, he said. Cordesman said the authority's officials "talk about 'success' in aid programs

Continued on Page 3

June 2004

Mark Your Calendars

July 2004

Board Meeting

Location to be
Announced

September 2004

Chapter Meeting

Topic To Be
Announced
The Forge

Sept. 10, 2004

4th Annual
Golf Outing

Gamblers Ridge
Cream Ridge

Sept. 23-25, 2004

Buffalo Conference
Hyatt Regency
Buffalo, NY

October 2004

Chapter Meeting

Topic To Be
Announced
The Forge

November 2004

Chapter Meeting

Topic To Be
Announced
The Forge



Chapter Meetings are the first Monday of the Month @ 6:30 at The Forge Inn.

**New Jersey Chapter
FY 2005
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President: Susan Sheffmaker, CSI, AIA
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NE Region Director

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Membership: Susan Sheffmaker, CSI, AIA
Program: Les Cadigan, CSI, CCPR
Technical: Ruma Som, CSI, CDT
Newsletter Editor: Mike Debiak, CSI, CDT

Awards, Certification, Student Liaison, and Finance committees still have open Chairs. If you are interested please contact Susan Sheffmaker @ 732-514-9543



Editor's Submittal

The New Jersey Chapter of CSI is proud to announce the FY 2005 chapter leadership roster.

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President –elect	Les Cadigan, CSI, CCPR
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Newsletter Editor	Mike Debiak, CSI, CDT
Membership Chair	Susan Sheffmaker, CSI, AIA
Program Chair	Les Cadigan, CSI, CCPR

Although a new slate of officers and chairs has been put in motion there is always room for more, so please don't be shy if you have an idea, want to fill a Chair position or wish to offer some help.

A new feature in the perSPECTive is the offering of FREE business card size employment opportunity ads. I have received several requests and as you see from this issue of the perSPECTive we have begun. This is evidence that the industry is "finding" the NJ Chapter of CSI, and reaching out to us to communicate to, and with, our members.

It is time to renewing or purchasing your perSPECTive newsletter advertising.

There will be twelve (12) exciting new issues next year via e-mail, ten (10) of which will also be sent via US mail, which is more than 4000 "hits". Advertiser's names and web-links are included in the newsletter e-mail, and the newsletter is posted on the NJ CSI website, which is www.csi-nj.org and linked to the North-east Region and CSInet sites, so web searches find it too.

Ad Rates per year

Business card	\$ 250
Half page	\$ 500
Full page	\$ 900

Ad Rates per issue

Business card	\$ 45
Half page	\$ 90
Full page	\$ 150

The e-mail version of the newsletter is published in **full color** and mailed in **black and white**. Each newsletter issue is scheduled to go out the end of the month and the deadline for articles and advertisements is the first week of the month (for example the deadline of the September issue is the first week of September, and it goes out the last week of September).

We are offering an incentive program for tabletops at our monthly meetings. Individual tabletops are \$175 and include one (1) dinner. If you purchase a package of seven (7) tabletops you have the choice of –

- i) Getting seven (7) tabletops for the price of six (6) and a full year business card ad in the perSPECTive (twelve (12) issues) – Total Value \$1,475 for only \$1,050.
- ii) Getting seven (7) tabletops, a full year business card ad in the perSPECTive (twelve (12) issues), and a FREE one (1) year membership in CSI – Total Value \$1,740 for only \$1,225.

If you would like to get published, or you have an interesting story to share you can get a FREE business card advertisement for a perSPECTive issue by submitting an article.

Please contact michael.debiak@dmjmharris.com for advertising.

Don't forget **September 10th is the Annual NJ CSI Golf Outing**, please contact Les Cadigan, and **September 23rd is the NER Conference** in Buffalo, NY.

Respectively,
Mike Debiak, CSI, CDT
Newsletter Editor

Continued Cost Are Rising. . .

measured in terms of contracts signed, fiscal obligations and gross measures of performance like megawatts - not about actual progress on the ground, the kind that can really win hearts and minds."

U.S. officials concede that recent guerrilla uprisings put economic recovery and reconstruction at risk. "If this is sustained for a long period ... prices will probably go up," said Maj. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, the chief military spokesman, on April 16. "The reconstruction projects, which are so critical to the onward development in this country, will be slowed down because contractors will be intimidated to come in." And "even more significant" is that "every dollar that is paid for security is one less dollar that's put into the infrastructure," he said.

Besides the cost of bricks, signs that reconstruction is stalling include recent kidnappings and higher insurance claims. Kidnappings of dozens of foreigners, and the recent killing of Pennsylvania radio communications worker Nick Berg, led hundreds of foreign technical or construction workers to leave Iraq and firms such as General Electric, Siemens and banks HSBC and Standard Chartered to postpone major projects.

Deaths and injuries among workers with U.S. companies in Iraq caused more insurance claims in three weeks this spring than in all of last year for AIG WorldSource, one of only three major insurers for workers in Iraq, the Associated Press reported. Another of the three, Chicago-based Aon, told London's Financial

Times that insurance and security costs now eat up half of every dollar the authorities spend here on construction projects.

In Latif's brickyard, his brother Haidar watched recently as a customer backed in a pickup truck and began tossing bricks into the bed. "He's building his house, but he buys only a few hundred bricks at a time, hoping that later the price will come down," said Haidar Latif. "Nobody can afford to buy much at these prices."

As printed by NY Newsday, June 8, 2004

James Rupert
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

GOLF ANYONE!

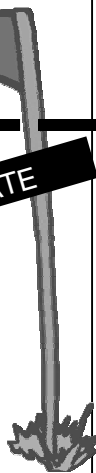
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Annual Golf Outing
Friday, September 10, 2004**

Gambler's Ridge Golf Course
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Dateline July 15, 2004

Membership Recognition

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* FY04-05 Chapter Leadership is high lighted in bold.

Information provided from April Chapter Roster.

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Lafarge North America is the United States' and Canada's largest diversified supplier of construction materials. The Gypsum division is in need of a Architectural Services Manager in the Northeastern United States. The position is responsible for establishing product representation within the architectural community. This would be achieved by establishing relationships and obtaining specification of Lafarge products on various construction projects. The Architectural Services Manager will also be responsible for conducting CEU seminars and other technical presentations to the A&D community. Internal to Lafarge, the Architectural Services Manager is the liaison to the sales force on job tracking and also serves as a technical resource to the sales force. This may include some interaction with the contractor community. Overnight travel is required.

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{New Jersey, New York, New England, Eastern Pennsylvania}

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