



Home Office

# **Country Policy and Information Note**

## **Iraq: Perceived collaborators**

**Version 1.0**

**January 2018**

# Preface

This note provides country of origin information (COI) and policy guidance to Home Office decision makers on handling particular types of protection and human rights claims. This includes whether claims are likely to justify the granting of asylum, humanitarian protection or discretionary leave and whether – in the event of a claim being refused – it is likely to be certifiable as ‘clearly unfounded’ under s94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.

Decision makers must consider claims on an individual basis, taking into account the case specific facts and all relevant evidence, including: the policy guidance contained with this note; the available COI; any applicable caselaw; and the Home Office casework guidance in relation to relevant policies.

## Country information

COI in this note has been researched in accordance with principles set out in the [Common EU \[European Union\] Guidelines for Processing Country of Origin Information \(COI\)](#) and the [European Asylum Support Office’s research guidelines, Country of Origin Information report methodology](#), namely taking into account its relevance, reliability, accuracy, objectivity, currency, transparency and traceability.

All information is carefully selected from generally reliable, publicly accessible sources or is information that can be made publicly available. Full publication details of supporting documentation are provided in footnotes. Multiple sourcing is normally used to ensure that the information is accurate, balanced and corroborated, and that a comprehensive and up-to-date picture at the time of publication is provided. Information is compared and contrasted, whenever possible, to provide a range of views and opinions. The inclusion of a source is not an endorsement of it or any views expressed.

## Feedback

Our goal is to continuously improve our material. Therefore, if you would like to comment on this note, please email [the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

## Independent Advisory Group on Country Information

The Independent Advisory Group on Country Information (IAGCI) was set up in March 2009 by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration to make recommendations to him about the content of the Home Office’s COI material. The IAGCI welcomes feedback on the Home Office’s COI material. It is not the function of the IAGCI to endorse any Home Office material, procedures or policy. IAGCI may be contacted at:

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Information about the IAGCI’s work and a list of the COI documents which have been reviewed by the IAGCI can be found on the Independent Chief Inspector’s website at <http://icinspector.independent.gov.uk/country-information-reviews/>

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# Policy guidance

Updated: 3 January 2018

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Basis of claim

- 1.1.1 Fear of persecution or serious harm from non-state actors because the person has, or is perceived to have, collaborated with Western or international companies, and/or the Government of Iraq (GoI).

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### 1.2 Points to note

- 1.2.1 The Upper Tribunal, in the case of [BA \(Returns to Baghdad\) Iraq CG \[2017\] UKUT 18 \(IAC\) \(23 January 2017\)](#), heard on 24-25 August 2016, which considered the treatment of perceived collaborators in Iraq, recognised the difficulty in defining the term 'perceived collaborator' and thus concluded that '[the] assessment of whether a person is likely to be perceived as a collaborator will depend on the facts of each case' (paragraph 49).

- 1.2.2 For the purposes of this note, the term 'perceived collaborator' means:

- those who have worked for:
  - coalition forces; and/or
  - international (particularly Western) organisations; and/or
- anyone, including those who work(ed) for or assist(ed) the GoI, perceived to be acting contrary to the agenda of various armed groups, principally Daesh (ISIS) and the Shia militia; and
- returnees from the West

- 1.2.3 This notes does **not** include information and guidance about those who have been perceived as collaborators of Daesh (ISIS). For information and guidance on such claims, see the [country policy and information note, Iraq: Sunni \(Arabs\)](#).

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## 2. Consideration of issues

### 2.1 Credibility

- 2.1.1 For information on assessing credibility, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

- 2.1.2 Decision makers must also check if there has been a previous application for a UK visa or another form of leave. Asylum applications matched to visas should be investigated prior to the asylum interview (see the [Asylum Instruction on Visa Matches, Asylum Claims from UK Visa Applicants](#)).

- 2.1.3 Decision makers should also consider the need to conduct language analysis testing (see the [Asylum Instruction on Language Analysis](#)).

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## 2.2 Assessment of risk

### a. Non-military/security related 'perceived collaborator'

#### 2.2.1 The Upper Tribunal in [BA](#) found:

'The evidence shows that those who worked for non-security related Western or international companies, or any other categories of people who would be perceived as having collaborated with foreign coalition forces, are still likely to be at risk in areas which are under ISIL [Daesh] control or have high levels of insurgent activity. At the current time [2017] the risk is likely to emanate from Sunni insurgent groups who continue to target Western or international companies as well as those who are perceived to collaborate with the Government of Iraq' (paragraph 107 (ii)).

#### 2.2.2 For information on the security situation in Iraq, including about Daesh's current control of territory (which has diminished since the height of their power and control in mid-2014), see the [country information and guidance document on the security and humanitarian situation](#).

#### 2.2.3 The Upper Tribunal also found:

'The current evidence indicates that the risk in Baghdad to those who worked for non-security related Western or international companies is low although there is evidence to show that insurgent groups such as ISIL [Daesh] are active and capable of carrying out attacks in the city. In so far as there may be a low level of risk from such groups in Baghdad it is not sufficient to show a real risk solely as a perceived collaborator' (paragraph 107 (iii)).

#### 2.2.4 Outside of the evidence considered by the Upper Tribunal in [BA](#), there is very limited information about the treatment of those who worked in non-military and security roles who may be perceived as a collaborator. The available evidence does not justify a departure from the findings of the Upper Tribunal in [BA](#).

### b. Military/security related 'perceived collaborator'

#### 2.2.5 The Upper Tribunal in [BA](#) commented:

'We make clear that we have not considered any detailed evidence on the potential risk to perceived collaborators in other categories such as those who worked in a military or security setting, including interpreters... However, the evidence outlined above shows that such people are likely to be at risk in areas under ISIL [Daesh] control outside Baghdad. We bear in mind that the case was not prepared with those potential risk categories in mind. Although there is likely to be the same low level of risk from ISIL [Daesh] in Baghdad, Dr [Alan] George's initial opinion was that there may be a slightly enhanced risk to those who worked in a military or security setting. Nothing in the evidence that we have considered suggests that there are regular reported incidents of collaborators from a security setting being targeted in Baghdad city. However, given the focus of this case we are unable to give any clear guidance relating to the possibility of an enhanced risk to perceived collaborators from a military or security setting without further evidence' (paragraph 67).

2.2.6 Evidence about the treatment of those who worked in a military or security setting (such as interpreters) overall relates to events between 2003 and 2011 (see [Perceived collaborators](#)). Therefore, the available evidence does not establish that there is a current general real risk outside Daesh-controlled areas (see 2.2.2) to those in this category.

c. [Returnees from the West](#)

2.2.7 The Upper Tribunal in [BA](#) also found:

‘Whether a returnee from the West is likely to be perceived as a potential target for kidnapping in Baghdad may depend on how long he or she has been away from Iraq. Each case will be fact sensitive, but in principle, the longer a person has spent abroad the greater the risk. However, the evidence does not show a real risk to a returnee in Baghdad on this ground alone’ (paragraph 107 (iii)).

2.2.8 There is no available evidence outside of that considered by the Upper Tribunal in [BA](#) about the treatment of someone being perceived as a collaborator because of their spending time in the West. There is therefore no reason to justify departing from the guidance in [BA](#) on this point.

d. [General points](#)

2.2.9 However, while in general there is no real risk based on being perceived as a collaborator, decision makers must decide each case on its facts, with the onus on the person to demonstrate that they would be at risk on return.

2.2.10 For further guidance on assessing risk, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.3 [Protection](#)

2.3.1 Where the person’s fear is of persecution and/or serious harm from non-state actors, decision makers must assess whether the state can provide effective protection.

2.3.2 The Upper Tribunal in [BA](#) found: ‘In general, the authorities in Baghdad are unable, and in the case of Sunni complainants, are likely to be unwilling to provide sufficient protection’ (paragraph 107 (vii)).

2.3.3 The Upper Tribunal did not consider protection in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI). The evidence is limited, but it does not suggest that the authorities in the KRG are unable or unwilling to provide effective protection to those at risk from non-state actors. The onus will be on the person to show why they cannot obtain protection from the Kurdistan authorities.

2.3.4 For further guidance about entry requirements to the KRI, see the [country information and guidance note on Return/internal relocation](#).

2.3.5 For further guidance on assessing the availability of state protection, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.4 Internal relocation

- 2.4.1 In general, internal relocation is possible to the areas of Iraq where the risk does not extend and which do not breach Article 15(c) of the Qualification Directive. Decision makers must decide each case on its facts. For information on the security and humanitarian situation in Iraq, see the [country information and guidance note on the security and humanitarian situation](#).
- 2.4.2 For further information and guidance on internal relocation, see the [country information and guidance note on Return/Internal relocation](#).
- 2.4.3 For further guidance on internal relocation and the factors to be considered, see the [Asylum Instruction on Assessing Credibility and Refugee Status](#).

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## 2.5 Certification

- 2.7.1 Where a claim is refused, it is unlikely to be certifiable as 'clearly unfounded' under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002.
- 2.7.2 For further guidance on certification, see [Certification of Protection and Human Rights claims under section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 \(clearly unfounded claims\)](#).

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# Country information

Updated: 3 January 2018

## 3. Evidence used in BA (Returns to Baghdad)

3.1.1 The Country Guidance (CG) case of [BA \(Returns to Baghdad\) Iraq CG \[2017\] UKUT 18 \(IAC\)](#), heard on 24-25 August 2016 and promulgated on 23 January 2017, considered the issue of 'perceived collaborators' in Iraq. The Upper Tribunal consulted a range of sources and covered issues including:

- limitations in the evidence (paragraphs 45-47);
- the Western presence in Iraq (paragraph 57);
- categories of 'perceived collaborators' (paragraphs 57-59);
- treatment of 'perceived collaborators' by Sunni militants (including Daesh) (paragraph 63);
- treatment of 'perceived collaborators' by Shia militia (paragraphs 62, 66);
- reported incidents of the targeting of 'perceived collaborators' (paragraphs 60-63);
- reported incidents of kidnapping (paragraphs 68-83); and
- state protection (paragraphs 102-106)

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## 4. Actors of violence

### 4.1 Sunni militants (including Daesh)

4.1.1 An article by McClatchy DC Bureau, a news service in Washington DC, dated March 2013, noted that Iraqis who worked with Americans, who applied for special US visas, and their advocates, said that Sunni militants threatened them<sup>1</sup>.

4.1.2 Malcolm W Nance, in his book 'The Terrorists of Iraq: Inside the Strategy and Tactics of the Iraq Insurgency 2003-2014', published in December 2014, wrote: 'The tactics selected by the terrorist insurgents on any given day have a single terminal objective: to kill a government soldier, a perceived collaborator (government workers), or any foreigner to maintain the destabilization of the Shiite majority-based regime.'<sup>2</sup>

4.1.3 A post by The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, which describes itself as a 'non-profit operating in the U.S., founded with the belief that the United States Government has a clear and urgent moral obligation to resettle to

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<sup>1</sup> McClatchy DC Bureau, 'U.S. pledge to help Iraqis who aided occupation largely unfulfilled', 14 March 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24746656.html>. Accessed: 11 November 2017

<sup>2</sup> Malcolm W Nance, 'The Terrorists of Iraq: Inside the Strategy and Tactics of the Iraq Insurgency 2003-2014', December 2014, p. xxiv. Hard copy only.



safety Iraqis who are imperilled [sic] due to their affiliation with the United States of America', undated but copyrighted 2017, read:

'Compounding the urgency, the terrorist group which is responsible for the slaying of many U.S.-affiliated Iraqis over the years, the Islamic State of Iraq, has just issued its strategic plan, which the List Project has examined.

'There are clear references to steadily and patiently targeting U.S.-affiliated Iraqis in the wake of our [the US-led Coalition] departure. The perception, however desirable, that the 'surge' eliminated the possibility of terrorist groups to carry out complex and high-impact attacks ignores the numerous attacks during the past year of withdrawal. The Islamic State of Iraq, an umbrella organization which includes Al-Qaeda in Iraq, has claimed responsibility the majority of these attacks, several of which targeted foreign embassies.'<sup>3</sup>

It is not exactly clear what period this is referring to; however, the source refers to the 'past year of [US] withdrawal', which suggests that it is 2009-2011. The source also refers to the 'Islamic State of Iraq', a forerunner to Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) ('Daesh'). The group changed its name to ISIS in 2013.

#### 4.1.4 The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in their November 2016 Position on Returns to Iraq, citing various sources, commented:

'ISIS [Daesh] is reported to systematically target those considered to be affiliated or collaborating with the Iraqi Government, the ISF [Iraqi Security Forces] or associated forces. Persons opposing, or perceived to be opposing ISIS, or infringing on ISIS rules, are reported to be at risk of severe punishment meted out by self-appointed Shari'a courts without due process. As ISIS has come under increased military pressure, it has reportedly also abducted and executed former members of the ISF and men and boys unwilling to fight on behalf of the group. There are also reports that ISIS has been threatening relatives of those they suspect to be supporting the ISF. The enforcement of summary justice reportedly includes, inter alia, executions by shooting, beheading, stoning, burning, drowning, electrocution and throwing off tall buildings, as well as flogging, crucifixion and amputation of limbs. According to reports, ISIS is holding large numbers of people captive while torture and ill-treatment are said to be widely used in ISIS facilities.'<sup>4</sup>

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## 4.2 Shia militia

### 4.2.1 An article by McClatchy DC Bureau, dated March 2013, noted that Iraqis who worked with Americans, who applied for special US visas, and their advocates, said that the Shia militia threatened them<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, 'A History of Just and Unjust Withdrawals', undated by copyrighted 2017, <http://thelistproject.org/history/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>4</sup> UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNHCR Position on Returns to Iraq, 14 November 2016, paragraph 10, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/58299e694.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>5</sup> McClatchy DC Bureau, 'U.S. pledge to help Iraqis who aided occupation largely unfulfilled', 14

4.2.2 A Landinfo response (translated into English), dated 2016, which cited various sources, noted:

‘One can not in general terms today say that the Shiite militias promotes threats or violent [sic] to people who work for, or are / have been involved, foreign companies in Iraq. This was a relevant issue in the period before the Americans pulled their troops out of Iraq in December 2011, and especially in the most violent period between 2005 and 2008. According to the UNHCR occurred albeit [sic] still some attacks against people who had worked for foreign forces or organizations in 2012.

‘Before the Americans pulled out of Iraq, were people who worked for the US-led coalition subjected to abuse by militias, including the Shiite, who wanted to liberate Iraq from occupation forces. This affected not only Iraqis who assisted the forces directly, but also others who worked in the civil, such as in the oil sector.

‘Today however, the situation is different. The Shiite militias are now, in spite of internal feuds and power struggles, mainly focused on combating the threat from the Islamic State (IS).

‘What may trigger these militias to again threaten foreign players in Iraq, and possibly their local partners, the return of foreign ground forces. This is a bone of contention in Iraqi politics. As a result of IS's seizure of power in parts of central Iraq, the foreign forces, including American, again returned to the country. These have mainly been doing consulting and training of Iraqi forces. As of August 2014, they also assisted the Iraqi army with air strikes against IS targets. These forces participation in ground operations has so far been minimal and largely confined to the Kurdish forces' operational areas.

‘Influential militia leaders have stated that they will not allow foreign ground forces, and has threatened violent reactions if US troops will participate in ground operations

‘The influential Shiite politician Moqtada al-Sadr, who in recent months has collected thousands of people in Baghdad in demonstrations against the government's lack of reforms, has also come with direct warnings to the American and British Embassy in Baghdad. When al-Sadr in March planned to enter the well-guarded Green Zone, where the main government offices and foreign embassies are located, he warned the US and Britain that they would meet reactions if they intervened.’<sup>6</sup>

4.2.3 The response added:

‘Working for foreigners has not in itself something of apostasy from Islam to do [sic]. The term "apostate" was still used rhetorically whether people who worked for the foreign forces, especially in the most violent period in Iraq between 2005-2008.

‘Today this is no longer a relevant issue in the face of Shiite militias. Shiite militias aimed to get the foreign forces out of Iraq, and that goal was reached

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March 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24746656.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>6</sup> Landinfo, ‘Response Iraq: The situation for the people who worked for foreign companies’, 2016, translated by the Home Office. Available on request.

in December 2011. What may happen if the US military presence in Iraq increases in the future, as signalled [sic] by the US authorities, is not easy to predict (Browne 2016). However, there is nothing as yet indicate they will get in the same situation as in 2005-2008. Both sjamilitsene [Shia militia], Iraqi authorities and the US military have a common goal in fighting IS, and the US military contribution is specifically linked to this. Iraqi soldiers who work closely with the foreign forces, is today, though among the most vulnerable in Iraq. However, it is not the Shiite militias as attacks against them, but IS.<sup>7</sup>

- 4.2.4 An article in Al-Monitor, dated October 2016, noted that ‘factions’ of the PMU [Popular Mobilisation Units – the Shia militia] are ‘threatening to attack US troops that participate in the battle to liberate Mosul from the Islamic State (IS), but the Iraqi government hopes to smooth things over...’ The article quoted PMU leader Rayan al-Kaldani, who in September 2016 said: “The PMU will be dealing with any illegitimate and foreign forces in Mosul the way it deals with the gangs of the Islamic State.” A former US military intelligence officer, Michael Pregent, said that most of the PMU factions fighting alongside US forces have fought against US forces in the past and that: ‘Most, if not all, PMU factions perceive the US military presence in Iraq as an occupation.’<sup>8</sup>
- 4.2.5 The article continued: ‘Many of the Shia militias fighting in the PMUs also fought U.S. soldiers during the occupation, and they disdain anyone who collaborated with the U.S.’<sup>9</sup>
- 4.2.6 A post by The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, undated but copyrighted 2017, read: ‘The British conducted little contingency planning throughout their withdrawal from Basrah in Southern Iraq [in 2007]. As they withdrew, militias systematically hunted British-affiliated Iraqis, warning them to “get out or die.”’<sup>10</sup>

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## 5. Perceived collaborators

### 5.1 Types

- 5.1.1 An article in the Washington Post, dated September 2015, noted that there were ‘50,000’ men and women who served as interpreters for the US military in Afghanistan *and* Iraq. However, it is not clear how many of this number worked in Iraq<sup>11</sup>. An article in The New York Times, dated February 2017,

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<sup>7</sup> Landinfo, ‘Response Iraq: The situation for the people who worked for foreign companies’, 2016, translated by the Home Office. Available on request.

<sup>8</sup> Al-Monitor, ‘Will PMU attack US troops in Iraq?’, 3 October 2016, <https://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2016/10/pmu-iraqi-us-mosul-battle.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>9</sup> The Daily Caller, ‘Left Behind: Iraqi Interpreter Faces Death Threats For Helping US Troops’, 20 April 2016, <http://dailycaller.com/2016/04/20/left-behind-iraqi-interpreter-faces-death-threats-for-helping-us-troops/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>10</sup> The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, ‘A History of Just and Unjust Withdrawals’, undated by copyrighted 2017, <http://thelistproject.org/history/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>11</sup> The Washington Post, ‘Forget the Syrian refugees. America needs to bring its Afghan and Iraqi interpreters here first’, 17 September 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/09/17/forget-the-syrian-refugees-america-needs-to-bring-its-afghani-and-iraqi-interpreters-here-first/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

noted: 'Thousands of interpreters, known to troops as 'terps', worked for the USA in missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.'<sup>12</sup>

- 5.1.2 An article in Task & Purpose, which describes itself as a 'news site for veterans, by veterans', dated July 2016, noted that interpreters who worked with the American armed forces were embedded with units and were used during meetings with Iraqi city leaders, security patrols, combat missions and sometimes emergency medical situations after bombings. Often they translated documents or videos that troops would find in underground terrorist caches<sup>13</sup>. An article in The New York Times, dated February 2017, noted: 'In addition to interpreting, they also advised US soldiers through Iraqi politics, tribal disputes and social customs.'<sup>14</sup> An article in Al Jazeera, dated February 2017, noted that 'tens of thousands' of Iraqis worked with the Americans as engineers, drivers or cultural consultants (as well as interpreters), for which they face 'grave dangers'.<sup>15</sup>
- 5.1.3 An article in the Daily Caller, dated April 2016, noted that 'thousands of interpreters risked their lives working on behalf of the United States during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan'.<sup>16</sup>
- 5.1.4 An article in The New York Times, dated February 2017, noted that interpreters who worked for the United States between 2003 and 2011 worked 'often at great...risk' to themselves and their families...They were given American nicknames like "Tony" and "Bobby" and "Max". The article said that they 'often wore scarves across their faces to mask their identities'.<sup>17</sup>
- 5.1.5 An article in Fortune, dated January 2017, quoted Allen Vaught, a former US Army captain who worked in Fallujah: "A lot of translators were trying to get the hell out of there because they had a mark on their head for working with U.S forces...They're viewed as collaborators".<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The New York Times, 'Visa Ban Amended to Allow Iraqi Interpreters Into U.S.', 2 February 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/02/world/middleeast/trump-visa-ban-iraqi-interpreters.html?mcubz=0>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>13</sup> Task & Purpose, 'This Iraqi Interpreter, Called A Traitor At Home, Finds Peace in Texas', 14 July 2016, <http://taskandpurpose.com/iraqi-interpreter-called-traitor-home-finds-peace-texas/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>14</sup> The New York Times, 'Visa Ban Amended to Allow Iraqi Interpreters Into U.S.', 2 February 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/02/world/middleeast/trump-visa-ban-iraqi-interpreters.html?mcubz=0>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>15</sup> Al Jazeera, 'What happens to Iraqis who worked with the US military', 1 February 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/02/muslim-ban-closing-door-170201050223763.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>16</sup> The Daily Caller, 'Left Behind: Iraqi Interpreter Faces Death Threats For Helping US Troops', 20 April 2016, <http://dailycaller.com/2016/04/20/left-behind-iraqi-interpreter-faces-death-threats-for-helping-us-troops/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>17</sup> The New York Times, 'Visa Ban Amended to Allow Iraqi Interpreters Into U.S.', 2 February 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/02/world/middleeast/trump-visa-ban-iraqi-interpreters.html?mcubz=0>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>18</sup> Fortune, 'Trump Refugee Order Dashes Hopes of Iraqis Who Helped the U.S.', 28 January 2017, <http://fortune.com/2017/01/28/trump-refugees-iraqi-translators/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

- 5.1.6 An article by McClatchy DC Bureau, dated March 2013, noted that people who worked with Americans are viewed as 'enemy collaborators'.<sup>19</sup>
- 5.1.7 The same source noted that, in 2008, 'militants' targeted those who served in 'supporting roles'.<sup>20</sup>
- 5.1.8 An article in Al Jazeera, dated February 2017, noted that, in December 2006, an armed group targeted a family because one member worked at a US military base in Baghdad<sup>21</sup>.

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## 5.2 Incidents of targeting

- 5.2.1 An article in the Daily Caller, which describes itself as a 'for-profit, independent news outlet' and 'one of America's largest and fastest-growing publications', dated April 2016, noted: 'While most of the U.S. military personnel who fought in those conflicts [in Afghanistan and Iraq] have now returned home, a majority of their interpreters remain in-country and their lives are in as much danger now as they were before'. It described the experience of 'Mahbeer', from a Shia-controlled part of eastern Baghdad, who worked as an interpreter for the US Army for five years. The article said that Mahbeer's wife and children are also in danger. Mahbeer said: "'We [those who worked with the US] are afraid of everything: armed militias backed by Iran on our streets, without fear of the government, on the pretext that they are protecting Iraq and at the same time they are a serial killer[s]". Mahbeer said his life was first threatened through an anonymous death threat letter<sup>22</sup>.
- 5.2.2 The article continued: 'Mahbeer said he knows many interpreters who have been harassed and killed for their work with the U.S. One example he provided was that of a young man who was killed four months ago [December 2015]. He left his house one day day [sic] never to return – his body was later discovered.' The article noted: 'Cases like those of Mahbeer [who received death threats] are all too common.'<sup>23</sup> However, the article did not provide further specific examples.
- 5.2.3 An article in Task & Purpose, dated July 2016, described the experiences of an interpreter who worked for the US military between 2008 and 2011, who received 'numerous' death threats, felt unable to leave his house in Baghdad

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<sup>19</sup> McClatchy DC Bureau, 'U.S. pledge to help Iraqis who aided occupation largely unfulfilled', 14 March 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24746656.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>20</sup> McClatchy DC Bureau, 'U.S. pledge to help Iraqis who aided occupation largely unfulfilled', 14 March 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24746656.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>21</sup> Al Jazeera, 'What happens to Iraqis who worked with the US military', 1 February 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/02/muslim-ban-closing-door-170201050223763.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>22</sup> The Daily Caller, 'Left Behind: Iraqi Interpreter Faces Death Threats For Helping US Troops', 20 April 2016, <http://dailycaller.com/2016/04/20/left-behind-iraqi-interpreter-faces-death-threats-for-helping-us-troops/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>23</sup> The Daily Caller, 'Left Behind: Iraqi Interpreter Faces Death Threats For Helping US Troops', 20 April 2016, <http://dailycaller.com/2016/04/20/left-behind-iraqi-interpreter-faces-death-threats-for-helping-us-troops/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017



and feared terrorists and militias. The interpreter said: “Honestly, they hate us more than the United States Army...Multiple times they called me a traitor”. He was sent a death threat in the post in 2010 which made him change address; although he was followed home from work in 2011, which prompted him to quit his job<sup>24</sup>.

- 5.2.4 An article in Fortune, dated January 2017, cited Allen Vaught, a former US Army captain who worked in Fallujah, who said that two interpreters he worked with were executed by militia groups. It is not clear when this allegedly happened, although the article noted that Vaught went to Iraq in 2003<sup>25</sup>.
- 5.2.5 An article by McClatchy DC Bureau, dated March 2013, noted that people who worked with Americans are viewed as ‘enemy collaborators’ and receive ‘death threats’, even 15 months after the US withdrawal from the country. It cited Khaldoun Kubba, who worked with the US government after the invasion on projects in south Iraq: “People don’t forget what you did. Ever.”<sup>26</sup>
- 5.2.6 An article in Foreign Policy, dated February 2017, documented the experience of the interpreter Munther Alaskry, who claimed he moved house four times in Baghdad for safety reasons since he stopped working for the US military<sup>27</sup>.
- 5.2.7 A post by The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, undated but copyrighted 2017, read: ‘Many more [than ‘hundreds and likely thousands’] have been abducted, tortured, raped, and forced to flee as a result of their collaboration...’<sup>28</sup>
- 5.2.8 The source also stated: ‘While the full scale of violence will likely never be known with certainty, hundreds and likely thousands have already been slain...In a single mass killing, 17 interpreters were assassinated; their bodies were strewn throughout the streets of Basrah [in 2006].’<sup>29</sup>
- 5.2.9 An article in McClatchy DC Bureau, dated March 2013, noted that, in 2008, ‘militants were regularly tracking and executing Iraqis who served in supporting roles’.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Task & Purpose, ‘This Iraqi Interpreter, Called A Traitor At Home, Finds Peace in Texas’, 14 July 2016, <http://taskandpurpose.com/iraqi-interpreter-called-traitor-home-finds-peace-texas/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>25</sup> Fortune, ‘Trump Refugee Order Dashes Hopes of Iraqis Who Helped the U.S.’, 28 January 2017, <http://fortune.com/2017/01/28/trump-refugees-iraqi-translators/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>26</sup> McClatchy DC Bureau, ‘U.S. pledge to help Iraqis who aided occupation largely unfulfilled’, 14 March 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24746656.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>27</sup> Foreign Policy, ‘For Iraqi Military Interpreters, Trump Travel Ban Chaos is ‘Life and Death’’, 6 February 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/02/06/for-iraqi-military-interpreters-trump-travel-ban-chaos-is-life-and-death/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>28</sup> The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, ‘A History of Just and Unjust Withdrawals’, undated by copyrighted 2017, <http://thelistproject.org/history/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>29</sup> The List Project to Resettle Iraqi Allies, ‘A History of Just and Unjust Withdrawals’, undated by copyrighted 2017, <http://thelistproject.org/history/>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>30</sup> McClatchy DC Bureau, ‘U.S. pledge to help Iraqis who aided occupation largely unfulfilled’, 14 March 2013, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/news/nation-world/world/article24746656.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

- 5.2.10 An article in Daily Mail, dated May 2015, reported that Daesh publicly hanged a 'suspected spy', accused of collaborating with the Iraqi army, in a location 30 miles from Ramadi<sup>31</sup>.
- 5.2.11 An article in Al Jazeera, dated February 2017, reported that, in December 2006 in Baghdad, 'armed men dressed in Iraqi military uniforms' raided the home of Farah Marcolla, killed her husband and kidnapped her father (who was later ransomed)<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Daily Mail, 'ISIS hangs 'Iraqi army collaborator' from bridge just an hour's drive from Baghdad as terror hordes attack another town on their march towards capital', 20 May 2015, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3089235/ISIS-hangs-Iraqi-army-collaborator-bridge-just-hour-s-drive-Baghdad-terror-hordes-attack-town-march-capital.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

<sup>32</sup> Al Jazeera, 'What happens to Iraqis who worked with the US military', 1 February 2017, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2017/02/muslim-ban-closing-door-170201050223763.html>. Accessed: 10 November 2017

# Version control and contacts

## Contacts

If you have any questions about this note and your line manager, senior caseworker or technical specialist cannot help you, or you think that this note has factual errors then [email the Country Policy and Information Team](#).

If you notice any formatting errors in this note (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability, you can [email the Guidance, Rules and Forms Team](#).

## Clearance

Below is information on when this note was cleared:

- version **1.0**
- valid from **January 2018**

## Changes from last version of this note

New CPIN

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