Iraq recorded 640 incidents in June, a decrease from the 658 seen in May. These figures do not account for events classed as military action.

Hostile activity rose slightly in Baghdad and markedly in the South Central, though fell in all other regions. The decrease in violence is largely attributable to the onset of Ramadan and enhanced security measures in place for Eid al-Fitr celebrations.
Regional Summary: June 2018
Iraq Monthly Statistics Summary

INCIDENTS BY PROVINCE: June 2018

North
DAIHUK* 2 (5)▼
ERBIL* 10 (16)▼
ninawa 34 (46)▼

SULAYMANIYA* ▼10 (11)
TAMIM ▼89 (125)
SALAH AL-DIN ▲90 (71)
DIYALA ▲84 (76)

West
ANBAR 36 (45)▼

BABIL ▲168 (150)
KARBALA ▲5 (7)
NAJAF ▲5 (2)
QADISIYAH ▲2 (3)
WASIT ▲2 (3)

Comparative of Previous Month
Increase ▲ No Change ▲ Decrease ▼

*Indicates that the province comes under the control of the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Figures in parentheses () are the totals from the previous month.
Baghdad

Incidents 168  Monthly Trend Up

Figure 3: Incident Levels – Baghdad (July 2017 – June 2018)
Security Overview
Iraq Monthly Report

Outlook

- **Overall hostile activity increased from May.** With the conclusion of Ramadan and the Eid al-Fitr celebrations, the number of hostile incidents rose in Baghdad. This coincided with the drawdown of enhanced security measures implemented during the religious festivals and Imam Ali commemorations. Following on from last month’s two suicide attacks, no high-profile attacks (HPAs) were recorded in Baghdad over the reporting period, though an ISF operation in Jihad Bayaa discovered an SVEST and C-4 near Baghdad International Airport. Overall patterns of activity remained in line with established trends, with violent activity in the city largely comprised of low-level localised disputes. Tribal hostilities, for examples, were noted in Sadr City on 20 June, when a tribe set fire to three houses following a skirmish over a football match three days prior. Other acts of violence were largely intimidatory, involving grenade detonations outside civilian residences along with targeted SAF attacks prompted by personal disputes. Insurgent activity was once again largely centered on the province’s northern peripheries, with incident levels consistently higher here due to elevated levels of militancy emanating from southern Salah al-Din, notably the Samarra area. Of note, on 3 June, an Islamic State bombing in the Husseiniya area wounded 21 civilians on 3 June, representing a large casualty count for the region. There was however also a suspected militant attack in Baghdad City, demonstrative of an ongoing IDF threat in the capital. On 10 June, an RPG-7 round landed near a park in the Resala area, causing material damage only. As this is a more sophisticated weapons system than usually employed within the city limits and the target was likely to have been a crowded area, it is assessed most probable that this represents an insurgent strike. Other acts of insurgency in the ‘Baghdad Belts’, including SAF and IED attacks, were noted in Tarmiya, Shaab, Yusufiyah, Madain and Mushahda, and to a lesser extent in Radwaniyah.

- **High-profile PMU incidents noted for June.** Incidents involving PMUs were highly publicised over the reporting month. Most noteworthy was the detonation of a weapons depot at a Sadrist Husseiniya in Sadr City on 6 June. Open source reporting suggested that the weapons exploded whilst being transferred from the building to a vehicle, and that the group involved was Sadrist PMU Saraya al-Salam. 18 people were killed, and 90 wounded, while significant material damage was caused to the surrounding area. The accident was widely condemned, and resulted in calls for a large-scale disarmament campaign. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi responded by describing the incident as a ‘crime’, while Muqtada al-Sadr called for a committee to be established to investigate what happened, as well as requesting that the MOI carryout a nationwide disarmament campaign following the end of Ramadan. Sadr’s statements were however likely intended to displace responsibility from his own faction, and frame the incident as part of a much broader issue related to militia disarmament. Another significant incident involved members of Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) on 20 June. After militiamen refused to hand over their documents to the MOI, who were carrying out license plate checks near Palestine Street in Sadr City, an exchange of fire between the two groups ensued. After a long stand-off, a truce was eventually called. According to open sources, three ISF and one KH member were wounded.

- **Political stalemate persists following May election.** Following the Electoral Commission’s announcement in late May that it had cancelled the ballots of over 1000 polling stations due to voting irregularities, post-election tensions remained elevated over June. Notably, on 6 June, the Iraqi House of Representatives (HoR) passed legislation demanding a complete manual recount of the 2018 election result, while four days later, a fire broke out inside a warehouse containing election ballots and electronic voting machines in Rusafa, Baghdad, in what was a suspected arson attack. Later in the month, the Federal Supreme Court (FSC) upheld in-part an amendment to the Election Law, agreeing on provisions calling for a complete manual recount of the 2018 Election, though the IHEC announced a recount would only commence where formal complaints have been raised. The HoR is meanwhile is attempting to extend parliament beyond 30 June.
**Incident Types**

![Incidents by type – Baghdad](image)

**Forecast**

- **Election-related violence expected to persist.** Until the manual recount of votes concludes – scheduled to begin on Tuesday 3 July – and the next government is appointed, ongoing political instability in Iraq will endure. Given the convoluted process, government formation is expected to be lengthy. This will translate in an extended period of political maneuvering, with tensions highly likely to result in an increase in politically-motivated attacks. Incidents are anticipated to remain primarily intimidatory, with low level IED and SAF attacks against party interests and officials likely. Political parties such as the Sadrist bloc are also likely to continue to urge their supporters to protest in an attempt to use demonstrations to gain leverage in coalition negotiations. Protest activity motivated by electoral fraud allegations also has the potential to deteriorate into violence as witnessed elsewhere in the country this month. Localized disruptions and road closures are expected during protests in the capital. Protest activity will resume established levels prior to Ramadan.

- **Activity expected to remain within established parameters for July.** Despite the absence of HPAs over June, there is a heightened risk of attempted attacks in Baghdad province following the drawdown of enhanced security measures implemented for Eid. Nevertheless, due to an ongoing robust security posture in the capital, IS will be limited in its ability to conduct complex attacks, particularly within the limits of the city. As such, high profile attacks are anticipated to remain sporadic. Meanwhile, asymmetric insurgent attacks, utilizing unconventional weapons and tactics such as guerilla-style hit-and-run ambushes, will continue in the ‘Baghdad Belts.’ While the majority of incidents will likely comprise of SAF and IEDs, the threat of more sophisticated attacks such as SVESTs and VBIEDs remains. Tarmiya is expected to remain the focal point of insurgent violence. Activity in Baghdad City will be largely typified by low-level attacks associated with criminality and personal disputes. These will take the form of SAF and intimidatory explosive attack, usually conducted in residential neighbourhoods.
North

Incidents 46  Monthly Trend Down

Figure 5: Incident Levels – North (July 2017 – June 2018)
Hostile activity continued to subdue over June in Ninawa. Toward the beginning of the month, hostile activity remained low in Ninawa following an uptick of security operations in insurgent hotspots south of Mosul. These resulted in the arrest of several militants. Moreover, several operations across the province resulted in the discovery of hundreds of IEDs and dozens of mortars/rockets. On 3 June, for instance, ISF reported the find of approximately 400 containers filled with explosive materials in the Al-Tanak area of Mosul. Over Eid al-Fitr, enhanced security measures were implemented in the city, as well as a series of proactive arrests targeting IS sleeper cells. Several cache finds were also noted, for example in Badush, Tal Afar and Shura. Of note, on 26 June, an ISF operation in Sinjar area found and cleared two IEDs, one SVEST, five RPG-7s, one Katyusha rocket and five 20mm mortar rounds. Such finds are indicative that an active insurgent presence endures.

Indeed, despite the commencement of widespread ISF operations, militant attacks persevered in Ninawa, demonstrative of a growing operational capability in the region. For instance, a group of IS fighters attacked Salbi village, southwest of Mosul, taking control of the area for several hours before withdrawing into the desert. Furthermore, levels of militancy continued to grow in Badush, to the north of Mosul City. Here, several IED attacks targeted ISF and a local Mukhtar, prompting ISF to conduct a large-scale operation, arresting 22 IS members, alongside the seizure of suicide belt and weapons. The group had reportedly been planning a complex attack in Mosul. To the northwest, several PMUs were killed in an IED attack near the Askari interchange. The deterioration of the security environment in areas surrounding Mosul also began to affect the city itself, though at low levels. For example, IEDs detonated in Karaj alShamal and the al-Arabi area, wounding four policeman and six civilians respectively. Furthermore, on 25 June, ISF arrested two insurgents in possession of a SVEST. Nevertheless, due to the large ISF footprint in the provincial capital, insurgent arrests occurred on a near-daily basis, continuing to stifle hostile activity and push militant cells out of the city.

Turkish military attacks against the PKK escalated. In the run up to the Turkish snap elections, which took place on 24 June, military incursions into northern Iraq continued to increase in line with activity observed against Kurdish regions in northern Syria. Such activity was accompanied by strong anti-PKK rhetoric by Turkish President Recep Erdogan, who likely maintained high levels of military activity to bolster his standing with nationalist voters ahead of the vote. Over the month, reports surfaced that Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) had deeply embedded themselves into Iraqi territory in Soran district. Meanwhile, dozens of airstrikes and artillery strikes targeted PKK positions in Dahuk, northern Erbil and the Qandil mountains. This corresponded with Turkish President Erdogan announcing that the TAF had installed over 30 checkpoints and positions in the area, equipped with tanks and heavy artillery. The Turkish military also announced that dozens of PKK militants had been killed in operations over the month. Toward late June, local sources reported that Turkish fighter jets killed three Kurdish civilians and wounded a further three during sorties near the town of Amedi in Dahuk province. While not officially corroborated, civilian casualties have been previously recorded as a result of Turkish airstrikes, and so subsequent accidental fatalities cannot be discounted. Meanwhile, several PKK attacks were also noted against TAF in northern Iraq. On 10 and 12 June, for instance, the PKK reportedly killed Turkish soldiers north of Soran and in Mergasur district. Skirmishes between the two are likely to endure as Turkish military operations continue apace. Anti-Turkish sentiments in Iraq will meanwhile continue to manifest and possibly drive civil unrest nationwide.
Security Overview
Iraq Monthly Report

Incident Types

Forecast

- **Insurgent activity to remain focused south of Mosul.** Overall levels of hostile activity are expected to remain reduced in Mosul city itself, whilst in outlying areas ISF operations will continue to target militant cells and locate weapon caches. However, the threat of high-profile terrorist attacks remains elevated across Ninawa province. Militant attacks are expected to continue targeting ISF and civilians predominantly to the south of Mosul, including in Hammam al-Alil and Qayyarah. It is not considered likely that Sunni insurgents will fight to retain control of an area for a prolonged period of time, though will attempt ‘hit and run’ style assaults alongside remote and suicide attacks. Retaliatory violence against those with perceived links to the insurgency will also continue.

- **Political tensions will persist.** Tensions are expected to remain heightened while the government formation process is underway. An increase in politically-motivated violence is also anticipated as rival political blocs continue to contest the vote. However, attacks are expected to remain primarily low-level, targeting party interests and/or officials. Additionally, sectarian tensions will likely continue to increase, as tribes and paramilitary factions stationed in liberated areas compete for power. Enduring PMU presence in disputed areas will also continue to fuel tensions with local Sunni and minority actors as well as with Turkey and the US.

- **TAF-PKK skirmishes will persist.** TAF ground and air operations into northern Iraq are expected to persist. Erdogan’s recent re-election on 24 June will likely strengthen his mandate for further activity Iraq. In the short to medium term, an increase in activity by both parties is anticipated. While a significant unilateral expansion of TAF operations into Dahuk is unlikely, airstrikes and ground incursions into KRG, including Erbil province, are likely to increase. TAF is also expected to continue to build bases across KRG, which will be used to launch anti-PKK operations.
Security Overview
Iraq Monthly Report

North Central

Incidents This Month 273  Monthly Trend Down

Figure 7: Incident Levels – North Central (July 2017 – June 2018)
High-profile kidnap events recorded over June. Hostile activity remained amplified across Iraq’s north central provinces over the reporting month. Of note, a series of mass-kidnapping events were observed in Salah ad-Din, Diyala and Tamim. On 11 June, for instance, insurgents attacked Zingar village, Daqouq district, and kidnapped five farm labourers harvesting crops. One of those kidnapped was the brother of a local elder. This follows several attacks by insurgents targeting the agricultural sector and local powerbrokers in the North Central. On 17 June, in Tuz and Adhaim districts, IS militants set up fake checkpoints and abducted 11 ISF members and seven civilians, who drove through them, respectively. Another illegal checkpoint was reported on Highway 2 to the north of Khalis, and again resulted in further abductions. On the same day, six tribal members were kidnapped in Sharqat and found dead on 18 June. In the Jazeera area, west of Dawr, insurgents were also reported to have kidnapped 30 members of the Shammar tribe. Images circulated online showed the victims were blindfolded, had their hands tied behind their backs, and made to crouch before being shot, typical of killings carried out by insurgents such as IS. On 23 June, IS media outlets released a video claiming to show Iraqi police and PMU ‘hostages’ of the 18 recently captured on the Baghdad-Kirkuk road. Within the video, the militants demanded the release of IS prisoners or they would kill the abductees. Later, on 27 June, ISF announced that the dead bodies of eight of the hostages were discovered in Diyala.

Negligible decrease in overall hostile incidents in North Central Iraq. The total number of hostile incidents recorded in north central Iraq was largely consistent with figures observed in May. Toward the beginning of the month, several skirmishes and attacks were noted between ISF/PMUs and IS near Samarra in Salah ad-Din. These prompted the initiation of a large-scale security operation in the western Salah al-Din desert and neighbouring Anbar. Also in Salah ad-Din, on 22 June, three members of PMU al-Nujaiba were killed when a roadside IED struck their vehicle in Baiji. When PMUs responded, insurgents fired an RPG at the attending vehicle killing a further militiaman and wounding another. Attacks also persisted in northeastern Diyala. On 7 June, for example, insurgents attacked the villages of Kalabat Jibari and Ashtokan, with mortar rounds and SAF on both occasions. Indeed, elsewhere in the region, there was also an increase in reported cases of mortar fire used by insurgents. These targeted several areas of Kirkuk province, including Yayci district and near Tal al-Dahhab Police Station in Hawijah district. On 23 June, three mortar shells landed in Tal al-Dahhab village, again in Hawija. An undisclosed number of civilians were wounded. Meanwhile in Diyala, at least five mortar rounds landed near an IA position on the outskirts of Qara Tapa, wounding one soldier. The use of mortars, which requires the establishment of temporary fixed positions, alongside sophisticated attacks such as that in Baiji, are indicative of the strengthening insurgent presence in the region.

Enduring violence in Kirkuk City. Due to militant bases in the regions bordering Tamim, Salah ad-Din and Diyala, such as the Makhoul and Himrin Mountains, Kirkuk remained an attractive proposition for militant forces over June. Anti-PUK attacks are also assessed to have contributed to violence levels. IEDs on 8 June, for example, detonated in front of a café and mosque on al-Quds Street and on Baghdad Road near the Education College. The former killed one civilian and wounded a further 14, while the latter wounded one civilian. Midway through the month, unidentified gunmen shot and threw explosives at a Counter-Terrorism Service (CTS) building in the predominately Kurdish Shurao district, northern Kirkuk City. An elderly female passer-by was killed and three members of her family wounded during the attack. This incident provoked political fallout, with PUK members claiming the civilians were unjustifiably shot when CTS responded to the initial attack. ISF disputed this account by claiming the attack was initiated by ‘terrorists’ targeting the CTS building in Shurao, causing casualties amongst the bystanders. Finally, outside of the reporting period on 1 July, a SVBIED detonated outside a ballot warehouse in Kirkuk, wounding 14 ISF personnel and one civilian.
**Incident Types**

![Incident Types Chart](image)

*Figure 8: Incident Types – North Central*

**Forecast**

- **Heightened threat of kidnapping in North Central Iraq.** The magnitude of kidnapping events observed over June in North Central Iraq represents high residual insurgent capabilities, demonstrating that IS remain a significant threat in the region despite ongoing large-scale security operations. Furthermore, the ability of insurgents to launch a coordinated wave of kidnappings suggests some level of communication between different factions. As such, insurgent cells are expected to continue with their MO of abducting ISF members and civilians, both as part of a strategy to disrupt security operations and for using victims as bargaining tools. Local power brokers may also be targeted as part of IS’s objective in overturning local power structures. As seen over June, kidnapping events may be staged during assaults on villages or at ‘fake’ checkpoints, where people are seized when stopped in their vehicles along main roads.

- **Kirkuk province will remain the focal point of insurgent violence in the short term.** Established tunnel networks and safe houses during the occupation of Hawija continue to facilitate attacks in the province. Surrounding mountainous areas have also proven very difficult to police, with militants continuing to enjoy significant freedom of movement. Security conditions in Salah ad-Din and Diyala are also expected to gradually deteriorate, as the insurgency continues to regenerate. For example, growing insurgent networks in northern Baghdad will continue to threaten security in central and southern Salah ad-Din. Sporadic attacks in major urban centers in the region, especially Kirkuk city, are also expected to continue to occur.

- **Political tensions will remain heightened.** Allegations of election tampering in Kirkuk and Sulaymaniyyah will likely provoke increased civil unrest against the PUK. This will contribute to a worsening of ethnic tensions in Kirkuk province, notably within Kirkuk city, leading to an attendant rise in political violence. Nonetheless, attacks are expected to remain primarily low-level, with party interests the main targets of such incidents. Meanwhile, tensions between Baghdad and Erbil are anticipated to persist especially over the status of Kurdish-majority areas.
West

Incidents This Month 36    Monthly Trend Down

Figure 9: Incident Levels – West (July 2017 – June 2018)
Outlook

- **Overall hostile incidents reduced over June.** Despite an overall reduction in hostile activity across Anbar, a steep uptick was observed toward the end of the month. Cache finds and security operations continued to dominate reporting, with missions noted in the desert area north of Fallujah, Rutbah, between Hit and Ramadi, Karma, areas surrounding Thar Thar Lake, and along the Iraq / Syria border. On 9 June, security sources in Anbar reported a heavy ISF deployment in the western Anbari desert on the border with Syria in response to operations across the border. Furthermore, on 17 June the Iraqi military announced a large-scale series of operations were underway in the area of Qaim to secure the border and combat insurgent elements infiltrating from Syria.

However, due to the pervasive presence of IS fighters in the western Anbari desert, militant cells were able to attempt several attacks over the reporting period. Toward the southwest of the province in Rutbah, ISF successfully intercepted an SVIED before the vest was detonated, while similarly, in the Tash One area, south of Ramadi, ISF killed a suicide bomber before he could detonate. Another SVIED attack was disrupted in Baghdadi on 10 June. Here, the suicide bomber detonated after being surrounded by security forces in the Hay al-Shuhada area. This followed a second SVIED being shot and killed before he could detonate his vest. These attempted attacks are demonstrative of an enduring insurgent threat, but given that each of them was unsuccessful, ISF operations are proving largely effective in protecting civilian centers. An uptick in insurgent activity was noted toward the end of the month in western Anbar, including two IED detonations that targeted ISF / PMU forces along the Iraq / Syria border, as well as an RPG attack on the Akashat compound, killing four Kata’ib Hezbollah members. Both attacks were likely orchestrated by insurgents crossing the border from Syria.

- **Airstrike in eastern Syria results in PMU deaths.** Reports were received of airstrikes targeting PMU positions in eastern Syria near the Iraqi-Syrian border on 17 June, which PMUs claimed were conducted by US-led Coalition aircraft. According to the Kata’ib Hezbollah (KH) militia, the airstrikes killed 22 of their members and wounded a further 12. Though the US-led coalition denied any responsibility, KH and other Iranian-backed elements of the PMU used the incident to further ferment anti-US sentiments. Several Iraqi political blocs called for the expulsion of US troops from the country, while on 19 June, KH threatened ‘action’ against both the US and Israel over the recent airstrikes against Shia militia forces in Syria. The following day, a senior official in the prime minister’s office warned PMUs against attacking US interests and stated that, should such an action take place, Al Asad Airbase in Anbar would be the likely target. Nevertheless, a direct attack against US assets in Iraq is considered unlikely given the current political situation, though with mounting rhetoric, isolated incidents remain a possibility. Despite KH predominantly operating in central, western and northern Iraq, PMU affiliates nationwide share a similar outlook with regard to the presence of foreign militaries in the country. Civil unrest related to the issue was also observed in Baghdad, and may also occur elsewhere in Iraq.

- **IDPs and accused IS family members prevented from returning home.** The Iraqi government has faced criticism for ‘preventing’ the families of accused IS members from returning home. Many family members of accused insurgents are subject to intense suspicion, with the GOI wary of retuning them to areas they only nominally control, out of a fear of infiltration by hostile extremists. Following a negative report by Human Rights Watch (HRW), local authorities announced that IDP’s would be allowed to return to Baghdadi in the near future. However, following a grenade detonation against a civilian residence of a suspected IS member in Bakr, Hit district, threats were issued to family members of suspected IS militants should they return. Tensions surrounding the return of IDPs are therefore expected to remain elevated.
Areas along the Iraq/Syria border will remain the focal point of insurgent violence. Though IS’s operational capability remains degraded, the uptick in activity over the last few weeks strongly suggests the insurgency is re-establishing in the western Anbari desert, aided by the sparsely populated terrain enabling freedom of movement. As such, it is expected that militant strikes will continue to steadily rise across western Anbar, particularly around Rutbah and against ISF / PMU forces stationed along the Iraqi / Syrian border. The threat in this region has been partially linked to the ongoing Syrian conflict, which is currently seeing renewed attempts by the Syrian Arab Army to secure Albu Kamal. As a consequence of this, there is a strong possibility that Sunni insurgents will make renewed attempts to infiltrate Iraq, to avoid being caught up in the fighting across the border in Syria. Tensions will also remain elevated in urban centers where the proposed return of IDPs has been scheduled. This will likely result in localised intra-communal confrontations and reprisal attacks against suspected IS family members.

Military operations will likely continue to dominate reporting. Ongoing ISF operations across Anbar are expected to continue to account for the majority of activity in the province into the coming month. As observed over June, sporadic high-profile attacks are anticipated to be attempted in major urban centres such as Fallujah and Ramadi. Lower-level violence is also expected to endure along the northern bank of the Euphrates and in the province’s remote areas, with the International Highway to remain another potent target for militant attacks.
South Central

Incidents This Month 28  Monthly Trend Up

Figure 11: Incident Levels – South Central (July 2017 – June 2018)
**Outlook**

- **Incident levels increased in June.** The security situation remained stable in the South Central. Though lower in frequency during the first half of the month due to Ramadan and the implementation of provincial security plans, hostile incidents saw a notable increase toward the end of June following the drawdown of enhanced security measures. The vast majority of incidents fell within established parameters, comprising localised disputes and low-level criminality. Tribal fighting, for example, was observed in Babil, while an IED detonated outside a civilian residence in Kut and shooting attacks resultant from personal/familial disputes occurred in Diwaniyah, Najaf and Gharbi. Security operations were also noted across the region, with a high ISF / PMU presence along the Babil / Anbar border. To secure Shia religious sites over the Eid al-Fitr period, PMU forces stationed in Najaf province, on 14 June, relocated to the desert areas stretching between Karbala, Najaf and Ramadi to establish fixed positions in order to improve security in Najaf.

- **Babil was again the focal point of insurgent activity.** The bulk of insurgent activity in the South Central was again focused in the northern Babil area, likely facilitated by militants embedded in the eastern Anbari desert, as well as localised militant cells. Over the reporting month, unknown gunmen kidnapped a former IA officer in Mahawil, while four IED detonations were observed in the Jurf al-Sakkar area. The first wounded one Kata’ib Hezbollah member. Subsequently, between 9 and 11 June, three roadside IEDs targeted ISF / PMU patrols in the area, wounding six soldiers. Later in the month, on 21 June, further militant attacks were observed in the Jurf al-Sakkar area. Three SAF/IED attacks occurred here, killing five people, including two ISF Ministry of Electricity officials and an IA officer. Elsewhere in Babil, on 21 June, Director of Transport and Nationality, Colonel Safaa Jassim Obaidi, was attacked and killed by four unidentified gunmen whilst travelling home from work with his family on 60th Street in Hilla. Following this spike in militant attacks, an increased security posture was implemented in northern Babil, resulting in subdued levels of insurgency over the last week of June.
Security Overview
Iraq Monthly Report

Incident Types

![Figure 12: Incident Types – South Central](image)

Forecast

- **The security environment is expected to remain stable.** The overall security situation in the South Central will remain stable. Low-level SAF, kidnaps, murder, and intimidatory IEDs will feature prominently in reporting. Following Ramadan and the Eid al-Fitr celebrations, violent incidents such as attacks related to low-level criminality will likely resume established levels following the drawdown of enhanced security measures implemented over the religious period. Insurgent activity will remain most prevalent in the northern Babil area, largely typified by low-level IED strikes and SAF attacks against ISF / PMU forces stationed in the zone. The threat of sporadic High Profile Attack’s (HPA) will endure, with the areas at greatest risk assessed as population centres in northern Babil and Shia religious sites in Karbala and Najaf.

- **Politically-motivated incidents and civil unrest expected to persist.** Continued controversy over the election result and political tensions caused by ongoing negotiations to form the new Iraqi Government will result in an elevated threat of sporadic intimidatory attacks occurring against party interests and politicians. Meanwhile, protest activity will persist, with electricity privatisation, the water crisis, employment and service provision remaining as key drivers.
South East

Incidents This Month 89  Monthly Trend Down

Figure 13: Incident Levels – South East (July 2017 – June 2018)
Hostile incidents decreased negligibly over June. The security environment of the southeast region was largely stable over the reporting month, though tribal hostilities featured heavily in reporting, with several notable bouts of SAF reported. In Basra province, for example, BaOC QRF arrested 29 men following tribal violence between Bani Mansour members in Imam al-Sadiq on 1 June. The following day, members of the Bait Wafi tribesmen clashed in Abu Skhier, resulting in the death of a bystander. In the same region, on 5 June, an al-Saadi tribesman was the subject of a targeted killing following an intra-tribal dispute, while in Nahr al-Azz, five Shagamba tribesmen carried out a targeted attack that killed a Bait Awfi tribesmen. Elsewhere, a 23-year-old Bani Malik tribesman was murdered by Albu Khanjar tribesmen following a tribal dispute in Mawzaa. Tribal tensions also remained elevated in Dhi Qar, evidenced by the continuation of violence between members of the al-Buzayah and alHasara tribes over a private electricity generator facility in Sayed Dakhil. Small arms and RPG-variants were reported to have been used by both tribes, resulting in one person killed and two injured. Bani Assad tribesmen also skirmished following a dispute over the result of a local football match in Chibayish, while toward the end of the month in Sayed Dakhil, an internal dispute amongst members of the Hassan tribe critically injured one tribesman. In Maysan, tribal fighting on 7 June in Amarah resulted in eight people dead, including tribal Sheikh, Ali al-Oreibi, from the alBu Muhammad tribe. A security force deployed to the area and arrested 11 people. Additional incidents in the southeast resulted from criminality and personal disputes. Several armed robberies were reported over the month, including against a civilian residence in Batha and the occupants of a vehicle travelling toward Baghdad in Qalat Sukkar. Other than this, a number of murders and body finds were reported across the region, as well as a low-yield IED detonation outside the HQ of a company involved in the implementation of electricity privatisation in Rifai on 9 June.

Explosive attacks in Basra remained consistent over June. While a rise in politically-motivated attacks was observed over May, attacks in June emanated from a variety of sources. On 2 June, a 175g IED detonated outside the entrance of the local Electricity Directorate in Khor al-Zubayr, causing no damages or casualties. Another IED, of slightly lower yield, detonated on 13 June outside a partially constructed residential property in Mutayha and probably linked to a personal dispute. No casualties or arrests were reported. The most high-profile incident occurred in Qurna on 23 June, when an IED detonated in a remote area causing injuries to an individual tending buffalo after he triggered the device accidentally. An EOD team subsequently deployed to the area and discovered nine low-yield IEDs, all presumably intended for intimidatory attacks due to their small size. A number of attempted grenade attacks were recorded over June, though several devices failed to detonate. Of the six grenade incidents, all but two were intimidatory, resulting in two fatalities. The first killed a young male and was reported as a suicide in Jameat, while the second occurred on 22 June in Hayaniya. Official sources indicated the latter grenade was found by the intended victim’s daughter inside a bag near her father’s car, whilst it was parked outside a local market. The device was then taken to the family residence where it detonated. Another fatality was recorded on 18 June in the Western Basra desert, though this was the result of UXO as opposed to a targeted attack.

Ongoing ISF operations across the South East. On 9 June, ISF launched a large-scale security operation in Muthanna, broadly aimed at confiscating unlicensed weapons. This came after the detonation of a weapons depot in Baghdad and calls from the Federal Government to commence a nationwide disarmament campaign. In Zubayr, Basra province, an OPF security operation successfully disrupted an oil smuggling operation,
arresting four men and seizing four vehicles, including two takers loaded with 36,000 litres of crude oil, at a parking lot in the city.

**Incident Types**

![Incident Types - South East](image)

**Forecast**

- **Political tensions will persist, as negotiations between major political factions over government formation continue.** Sporadic attacks, predominantly intimidatory IEDs and SAF, are to be expected, as political players seek to intimidate their rivals. Demands for reform as well as major issues such as the water crisis are also expected to continue to fuel political tensions, with local authorities seeking to displace blame for their inability to resolve the matters. Political tensions are also expected to continue to increase gradually ahead of the December 2018 provincial elections. Conversely, the incidence of low level politically-motivated violence will highly likely increase.

- **Hostile activity is expected to remain within established parameters.** The security environment in the South East is anticipated to remain stable, despite a likely increase in incidents levels over July following the conclusion of Ramadan and Eid in mid-June. Localized disputes and low level criminality are anticipated to remain the key drivers of violent incidents, including SAF, IEDs, kidnaps and murders. In line with established trends, northern Basra is likely to continue to account for the majority of tribal-affiliated fighting, with fewer outbreaks of tribal violence expected in Dhi Qar, Maysan and Muthanna. Additionally, periods of heightened rates of tribal fighting or intimidatory IEDs, particularly in Basra, are expected to continue to prompt security operations, which will in turn result in periods of subdued hostility. For example, violent incidents in Basra
Security Overview
Iraq Monthly Report

will likely return to average levels once ongoing security operations focused on areas including Qurna, Madaina, Dayr, Qarmat Ali, Qibla, and Sharish conclude. Meanwhile, civil action motivated by various grievances, including employment and election-related issues, will continue. Regional water scarcity also has the potential to prompt large scale civil unrest. Overall, the frequency of detected tribal skirmishes has risen in the region over recent weeks, likely exacerbated by water shortages and the poor provision of municipal services.
### Forecast of Events 2018

**Iraq Monthly Report**

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
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<tr>
<td>21 – 24 August 18</td>
<td>Eid al-Adha</td>
<td>National Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 September 18</td>
<td>New Hijri Year</td>
<td>National Holiday, Shia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 September 18</td>
<td>Ashura</td>
<td>National Holiday, Shia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 October 18</td>
<td>al-Arba-iniyah</td>
<td>Religious Event, Karbala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 November 18</td>
<td>Birth of the Prophet Mohammad</td>
<td>National Holiday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Abbreviations and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAH</td>
<td>Asa‘ib Ahl al Haq (League of the Righteous)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQI</td>
<td>Al Qaeda in Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQA</td>
<td>Close Quarters Assassination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFP</td>
<td>Explosively Formed Projectile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOI</td>
<td>Government of Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HG</td>
<td>Hand Grenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>Iraqi Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDF</td>
<td>Indirect Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP</td>
<td>Internally Displaced People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IED</td>
<td>Improvised Explosive Device</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISF</td>
<td>Iraqi Security Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>Islamic State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>Iraqi Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IZ</td>
<td>International Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAM</td>
<td>Jaish Al Mahdi (Mahdi Army)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JM</td>
<td>Jaish al Mukhtar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRTN</td>
<td>Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al- Naqshbandia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LN</td>
<td>Local National</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>Modus Operandi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSTR</td>
<td>Nothing significant to report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKK</td>
<td>Kurdistan Workers’ Party Private Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMU</td>
<td>Popular Mobilization Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSC</td>
<td>Private Security Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>Private Security Detail</td>
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<tr>
<td>RPG</td>
<td>Rocket Propelled Grenade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAF</td>
<td>Small Arms Fire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVBIED</td>
<td>Suicide Vehicle Borne IED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SVEST</td>
<td>Suicide Vest IED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAF</td>
<td>Turkish Armed Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTPs</td>
<td>Tactics, Techniques and Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UXO</td>
<td>Unexploded Ordnance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VBIED</td>
<td>Vehicle Borne IED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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For more information on this report please contact:

**William Dennis**

*Security Analyst*

[william.dennis@constellis.com](mailto:william.dennis@constellis.com)

For all enquiries on Constellis’ advisory & consulting services please contact:

**Mark Allison**

*Vice President*

*Crisis & Risk Services*

[mark.allison@constellis.com](mailto:mark.allison@constellis.com)

[www.constellis.com](http://www.constellis.com)