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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY Iraq

SUBJECT Brochure on Port of Basrah, Iraq - A Brief
Outline of Port & Services 1951-52

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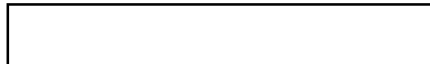
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- Pilotage & Berthing
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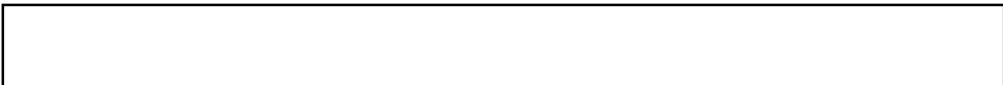
2. Other Information:

- Staff
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3. Maps:

- Basrah - Eco and Surrounding District, Scale: 4 mi = 1 in
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PORT of BARRAY IRAQ

BRIEF OUTLINE
of PORT & SERVICES
1951-52



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00B-60296

PORT OF BASRAH.

DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION.

Lat. 30° 31' N: Long. 47° E. (Margil).

Population of Basrah Liwa: (Province of Basrah, extending from Fao to Qurna): 385,000. Estimated population of Basrah City, Ashar and Margil: 125,000.

Authority: Directorate General of Ports & Navigation of the Government of 'Iraq.

Imports: Piece goods; provisions, liquor, tobacco, sugar, tea, machinery, hardware, glassware, crockery, haberdashery, apparel, leather, manufactures, cement, timber, etc.;

Exports: Dates, wheat, barley, liquorice, carpets, whool, hides, horses, dried fruit, gum, drugs, bitumen, crude petroleum and products.

District: Basrah is the main Port of Iraq situated on the right bank of Shatt-al-Arab about 80 miles from the sea and 350 miles (by rail) from Baghdad, the Capital city of Iraq, to which it is connected by metre-gauge railway line of the Iraqi State Railways.

The town of Basrah is divided into 3 main sections: Basrah city, the old town, on Ashar Creek, 2 miles from the Shatt-al-Arab; Ashar, the principal mercantile section of the town, on the Shatt-al-Arab 2 miles from Basrah City; and Margil, where are situated the wharves, warehouses, main railway terminals and airport, some 3 miles upstream from Ashar, all on the right bank of the Shatt-al-Arab. The centre of new oil development of the Basrah Petroleum Company is at Zubair, about 15 miles inland from Ashar.

Um-Qasr:- Development of a secondary Port was commenced during the Second World War at Um-Qasr about 40 miles south of Margil, on the Khor Abdulla, a sea inlet south of the Shatt-al-Arab entrance. One timber wharf was constructed, also railway line communication with Basrah and main line to Baghdad, but railway line was later dismantled, and only a few stumps of piles now remain to mark the wharf, and a few heaps of rubble to mark the buildings which had been constructed.

Accommodation
General:

The Authority of the Port of Basrah extends from the outer bar of the Shatt-al-Arab to 17 miles above the town of Basrah, the total distance being about 100 miles. The Shatt-al-Arab during practically the whole of its course is a wide deep fairway of which the dredged entrance channel admits at H.W.S.T. vessels drawing up to 32'.

Distances given in these paragraphs are in sea-miles measured from the entrance of the outer bar dredged channel.

At Fao (17 miles, on the right bank) is the dredging depot of the Bar Dredging Scheme, containing the offices of the Dredging Superintendent, Control Office, Wireless Station, Jetty for the berthing of Dredgers etc., Workshops for the maintenance of Dredging Fleet, Workshops and the Plant of the Light-House Engineer, Power Station, and general services for the depot, housing for the officials and senior employees and their families. Fao is connected by road with Basrah and Margil. (A fifty mile all-weather strip on raised embankment constructed by the Port Directorate completed this link in 1949).

About a mile upstream from the Fao depot (at 18 miles on the right bank) is situated the new Oil Port of the Basrah Petroleum Company now under construction, connected by Pipeline with the Zubair Oil Field. Principal accommodation⁽¹⁹⁵²⁾ ~~will~~ consists of 2 oil jetties for tankers drawing up to 32', together with Tank Farm, Offices, Living accommodation and necessary services.

At 30 miles on the left (Iranian) bank at Khazal' Bad are situated the Kabda Jetties of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, connected by Pipeline with Abadan Refinery.

At 41 to 45 miles on the left (Iranian) bank is Abadan, the well known Persian Refinery and Oil Port.

Opposite Bawarda (the Southern Section of Abadan) is situated, on the right bank, at Hamaq, a Port Depot for the accommodation of Pilots, Harbour Masters etc. with Wireless Station, Power House and other services, still in process of further development. As at Fao Depot there is all weather Road Communication with Basrah and Margil.

At 5¹/₄ miles is the Karun Bar, about a mile down-stream from the junction of the Hafar Channel, the main out-fall of the Karun river. In flood seasons heavy deposits of sand are brought down by the Karun river and come first to rest at the Karun Bar, sometimes with very serious effect on shipping movements. General minimum depth, maintained with necessary dredging, over the bar is 21' at L.W.S. which limits draught of shipping proceeding further up the river to about 27'.

Another mile upstream from the Hafar channel junction on the left bank is the Iranian Port of Khorumshahr.

At 7¹/₄ miles on the right bank is Ashar, the main business section of Basrah, containing the offices of the Mutasarrif (the governor of the Province of Liwa of Basrah) the Consulates, Banks, and Offices of the major Shipping and Trading firms, private slipways and repair depots, etc.

At Ashar there are five sets of Mooring Buoys for cargo handling in the stream.

At 77 miles, also on the right bank, is the commencement of Margil wharves and the main Port of Basrah with the Head Offices and Installations of the Directorate General of Ports & Navigation.

Just above Margil is an ex-Military bridge which limits shipping to a draught of 12 to 14 feet, but shallows above Qurna, about 40 miles further up, limit draught to 4 ft. to 6 ft. according to season of the year, the spring and early summer flood season being the best for up river navigation.

Pilotage & Berthing:

Pilotage is generally compulsory. A steam pilot vessel stationed outside the bar supplies local pilots to incoming vessels. The Pilot Service is efficient, Pilots being well trained and reliable. The bar is well buoyed and is lighted for night navigation. Signals from the Control Station at Fao give height of tide day and night.

At Kabda, Abadan, Basrah, etc., Pilots are relieved by highly qualified and specially recruited Harbour Masters who berth vessels alongside the Wharves, at Buoys, etc.

Accommodation
at Ashar and
Margil:

Margil Wharves are constructed of timber, mainly teak, and have a frontage of (approximately) 4500 ft. with a depth of 27' alongside at normal tide and are served by Railway Lines of the Iraqi State Railways. They accommodate 8 large vessels at a time and 2 or 3 small type. In addition there are lighterage berths about 1000' long, and barge berths for the handling of grain. At Ashar is a timber jetty of 300 ft. frontage for barges and local craft.

There are 5 sets of mooring buoys for the largest vessels in the stream at Ashar for cargo transfer to and from barges and local sailing craft etc.

Vessels of any length can lie with safety in the stream or alongside the wharves.

Main Wharves at Margil are served by 22 electric travelling portal cranes of 2 tons to 8 tons capacity and another 3 new 6 ton cranes ^(these electric) ~~are about to be~~ recently installed. The lighterage berth is served by five electric cranes of 30 cwt. capacity. All Wharves are served by Railway Lines and rolling stock of metre gauge of the Iraqi State Railways, operated by them and directly connected with extensive marshalling yards and with the main line services allowing quick access for goods to all parts of Iraq and the north.

Good Transit Shed and Warehouse accommodation of over 400,000 sq.ft. area at Margil and about 40,000 sq.ft. at Ashar is capable of storing about 50,000 tons of cargo, while open storage will accommodate about 75,000 tons.

2 Floating cranes are available, one capable of lifting 25 tons at 60 ft. radius the other a sheer-legs with lifting capacity of about 60 tons.

Ships cargo handling gear is available for loading and off-loading any kind of cargo.

There are Workshops available where small repairs can be undertaken. Port's own Workshops at Margil and Fao are mainly for the maintenance of Dredgers and other Port Craft.

There are 3 slipways at Messrs. Grey Mackenzie's in Ashar, the largest of which will handle 600 to 700 tons deadweight. There are no proper Graving Docks in the area, (but for repairs of craft at Abadan, A.I.O.C. have 2 Floating Docks, the smaller with a capacity of 750 tons, and the larger a lifting capacity of 5,000 tons, an overall length of 396', and a docking width at entrance of 60')

Also at Margil are three R.A.F. jetties as follows: one of 250' frontage with depth of 20' alongside at L.W.S.T.; one Crane Jetty with dolphins, depth alongside 25' at L.W.S.T., capacity of crane (electric) 60 tons; one jetty of 300' frontage for accommodation of sloops etc. depth alongside at L.W.S.T. 15' to 20'.

Craft: The Port owns 2 sea-going tugs, 2 other smaller tugs capable of manoeuvring ocean-going-vessels, some salvage plant and a diving unit; also 3 more river tugs, four survey vessels, buoyage vessel with 15 ton crane, Pilot vessel, light tender, creek dredger, 30 motor launches, and barges and pontoons; and for the Bar Dredging Scheme 5 steam Hopper Dredgers (Drag Suction type) one of 1250 tons and 4 of 2000 tons hopper capacity of which one can be rigged for cutter section work.

Bunkers: (Normally vessels bunker at Abadan or Kabda.) At Basrah the ~~Rhanda~~ Rhanda Oil Company have a depot at Muftieh, between Ashar and Margil, with jetties for small craft only. Fuel Oil Storage capacity at Muftieh is about 400,000 gallons and normal stocks of Diesel Oil amount to 500,000 gallons, while smaller local stocks are maintained of Petrol, Paraffin and Lubricating Oils. Water is available at Margil Wharves and stores can be obtained.

Charges: Port Dues (1952): Fao, 10 fils, Abadan, 14 fils, Khoramshahr, 18 fils, Basrah, 21 fils, per gross ton, (plus 75% surcharge): Persian Gulf Light Service dues, 9 fils per N.R.T. on every entry covering inward and outward trips. Pilotage is compulsory. Schedule of dues and charges on goods and for special services can be had on application. 1000 fils equals ID.1/- (One Iraqi Dinar) equals £1 Sterling.

Refinery under construction at Muftieh.

Holidays: 12 days a year, dates variable; Thursday and Friday are regarded as the week-end, but work can always be arranged.

Climate: The climate is one of considerable extremes, In the hot weather season from April to October, day time temperatures are 110°-117° F. in the shade. In the less extreme cold season, from November to March, night temperatures below freezing point are occasionally registered, lowest recorded being 24° F. Prevailing winds are North-West and South-East. Rainfall amounts to about 6" in the year. Rain is experienced only between November and early May.

Consuls: British Consul-General, River Front, Ashar, (Tel.02.405); French Consul-General; Iranian Consul-General; U.S. Consul; Saudi Arabian Consul; Pakistan Consul; India Consul; Norwegian Vice-Consul; Netherlands Vice-Consul; etc.

Lloyd's Agent: Lloyd's Agent c/o Messrs.Gray, Mackenzie & Co.Ltd.,

Port Officials: Director-General of Ports & Navigation: (Chief Engineer & Acting Director General) Mr.R.C.Kält, M.B.E., B.Sc., M.I.C.E.
Assistant Director: (Administration) Sd.Abdul Amir Rahmatallah, B.Com.
Chief Electrical & Mechanical Engineer: Mr.J.M.Morris, M.B.E., A.M.I.Mech.E., A.M.I.E.E.
Chief Marine Engineer: Mr.S.W.H.Gray, A.M.I.Mar.E.
Port Officer: Capt. W.M.Shoosmith.
Deputy Port Officer: Capt. C.E.Thompson.
Dredging Superintendent & Chief Hydrographical Surveyor: Mr.J.H.Hall, M.B.E.
Traffic Manager (Acting) Sd.J.R.Stephen.
Chief Medical Officer: Dr.R.D.MacLean, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.T.M.& H.
Director of Medical Services: Dr.Mohd Ali Fattah, Ph.D.(Baghdad).
Financial Secretary, Mr.C.F.Lynn, M.A., A.S.A.A., A.C.A.
Chief Airport Controller (Acting) Sd.J.Malcolm.
Labour Officer: Sd.Rajab Al-Na'ama.
Welfare & Education Officer: Sd.Tewfick El-Nakib.

Airport: Basrah (Margil) Airport: Main 3-7 Runway, 2000 yards long; accommodates all principal long distance services e.g. Constellations (up to about 100,000 lbs.), Argonauts, Skymasters etc. with efficient day and night service; large Hangar; up-to-date Fuelling facilities; etc. etc.

Number of Aircraft handled:

1947-48	-	3412
1948-49	-	4192
1949-50	-	4046
1950-51	-	3142

Hotel and terminal building now being extended to provide a total of about 100 bedrooms, well-equipped and air-conditioned, large restaurants etc.; one wing is for accommodation of Air Companies, Customs et. etc., and Transit Passengers lounge.

Public Utilities: Main Power Station and Water Purification Plants now in process of considerable extension. Power generation capacity will soon be over 6000 KW. Water purification maximum output (1951) 4,500,000 gallons per day. All the Basrah Liwa power and water plants and distribution are now in process of amalgamation under the administration of the Port Directorate.

Port Police Force: Seconded from Civil Police Force for Port service.

Fire Service: There is an efficient Fire Department for Port, Airport, and general service.

Housing etc.: Port & B.D.S. Staff Family Accommodation in Port Estate: Housing, Margil: Senior Officers' Quarters 50; other Staff and Artizan Quarters 176; Labour and Artizan Quarters are planned. Harmaq: Senior Officers' Quarters 8, other Quarters 20, Pilots' Quarters planned. Fao: Senior Officers' Quarters 20; other Quarters 90. Also Rest Houses, Messes, Clubs, etc.

Education: At Margil and Fao the Port has built and maintained school buildings, also a technical school, all operated and staffed by the Ministry of Education.

Road Transport: Fleet of 80 to 100 vehicles, various; also fleet of road construction plant.

FURTHER INFORMATION.

Budget	Port (1951-52):	Revenue	ID. 1,528,700
Estimates:		Expenditure	ID. 1,524,700
		Capital Works	ID. 650,900
	Bar Dredging	Revenue	ID. 950,000
	Scheme	Expenditure	ID. 791,800
	(1951-52):	Capital Works	ID. 1,099,500
Staff:	Port (1951) - 1118 (77 Officers; 1041 subordinates)		
	B.D.S. - 634 (67 " 567 ")		
Labour:	Daily average on Wharves (1950) - 986		
	(1951) - 844		
	Port & B.D.S. Services (excluding Wharves) and Utilities (1951) - 4150.		
Cargo Handled:	(1949-50): Transit Area 1,290,444 tons:		
	Total 2,002,789 tons. Imports: 469,154;		
	Exports: 1,187,986 (Grain 484,283 tons;		
	Dates: 135,895 tons).		
Shipping:	Shipping entering and leaving Port through dredged channels: 1950/51 - Inward 2501; Outward 2500. (About 180 Oil Tankers loaded per month at Abadan and Kabda; Oil carried, about 20,000,000 tons per annum; about 30 cargo vessels for Basrah per month). Local craft and sailing vessels numbering up to 3000 also enter the Port annually. (1950-51: Sea-going-vessels; 1290; Baghdad River Craft: 1692).		
Dredged Channels:	Quantity of spoil hopped annually about 4,000,000 cubic yards. Length of dredged channels about 25 miles.		
Medical:	The Port Health Department has a small Hospital at Fao with accommodation of 34 beds for normal local cases and large out-patients department. The Port and Railways combined Hospital at Margil has very few beds and deals mainly with out-patients and first-aid cases. All serious cases are sent to the Maude Memorial Hospital a large Iraqi Government Hospital and Isolation Hospital at Basrah. There is also quarantine accommodation in the Port area.		

OTHER PORT SERVICES.

Wireless Communication Services:	Marine Communication with shipping on 600, 606 and 750 metres (Persian Gulf, Shatt-al-Arab); Inter-departmental service, H.Q., Harmaq, Fao, 14 Port Vessels on 111 metres; Air-communication, long distance point to point to Karachi (East) and Cairo (West); short range point to point to Bahrein, Kuwait, Abadan, Tehran, Baghdad, Habbaniyah, Acradio Beacon "BA", 310 kilo-cycles. Wireless training school run in connection.
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Roads: In Port Area, Margil, 12 miles.
Road extension to Fao of over 50 miles (all weather road on raised embankment).

Railway Sidings: In Margil Marshalling Area 21 miles; and in Port Transit area about 10 miles. (All Railway lines and facilities are provided and operated by Iraqi State Railways).

Port Estate: Area: Margil, 2610 acres; Jubailah, 134 acres; Harmaq; 14 acres; Fao Depot, 18 acres; Fao New Village, 14 acres; New lands at Fao, 120 acres; Fao Oil Port Lands, 284 acres.

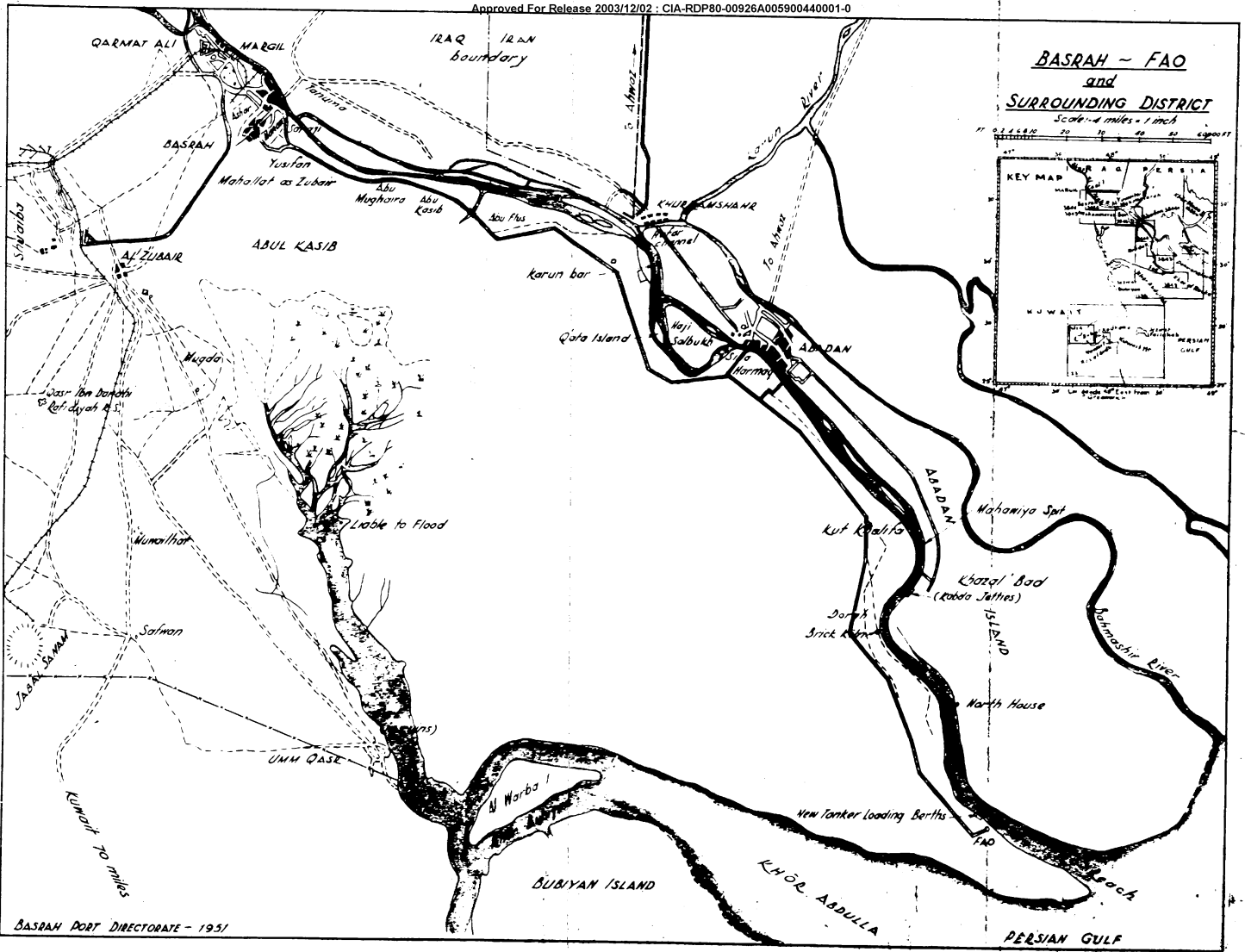
Navigation (Inland Waters): The Port Authorities, on behalf of the Government, operate a separate Department dealing with all inland water navigational matters, controlled by the Director General of (Ports and) Navigation. The Services cover the registration and survey of all inland water craft of 10 tons and upwards, the licensing of crews, and navigational matters in general.

Persian Gulf Lighting Service: The Port Authorities have in the past on behalf of the Board of the Persian Gulf Lighting Service (whose Headquarters were previously in Bombay but are now in London) carried out practically all work of construction, operation and maintenance of the principal Persian Gulf Lighthouses, Beacons, Buoys, etc. They are completing shortly a considerable programme of new construction of lights and beacons but are now scheduled to hand over their responsibilities by about the end of 1952 to a new permanent organization employed directly by the P.G.L.S. Board and stationed in Bahrain.

BASRAH - June, 1951-1952.

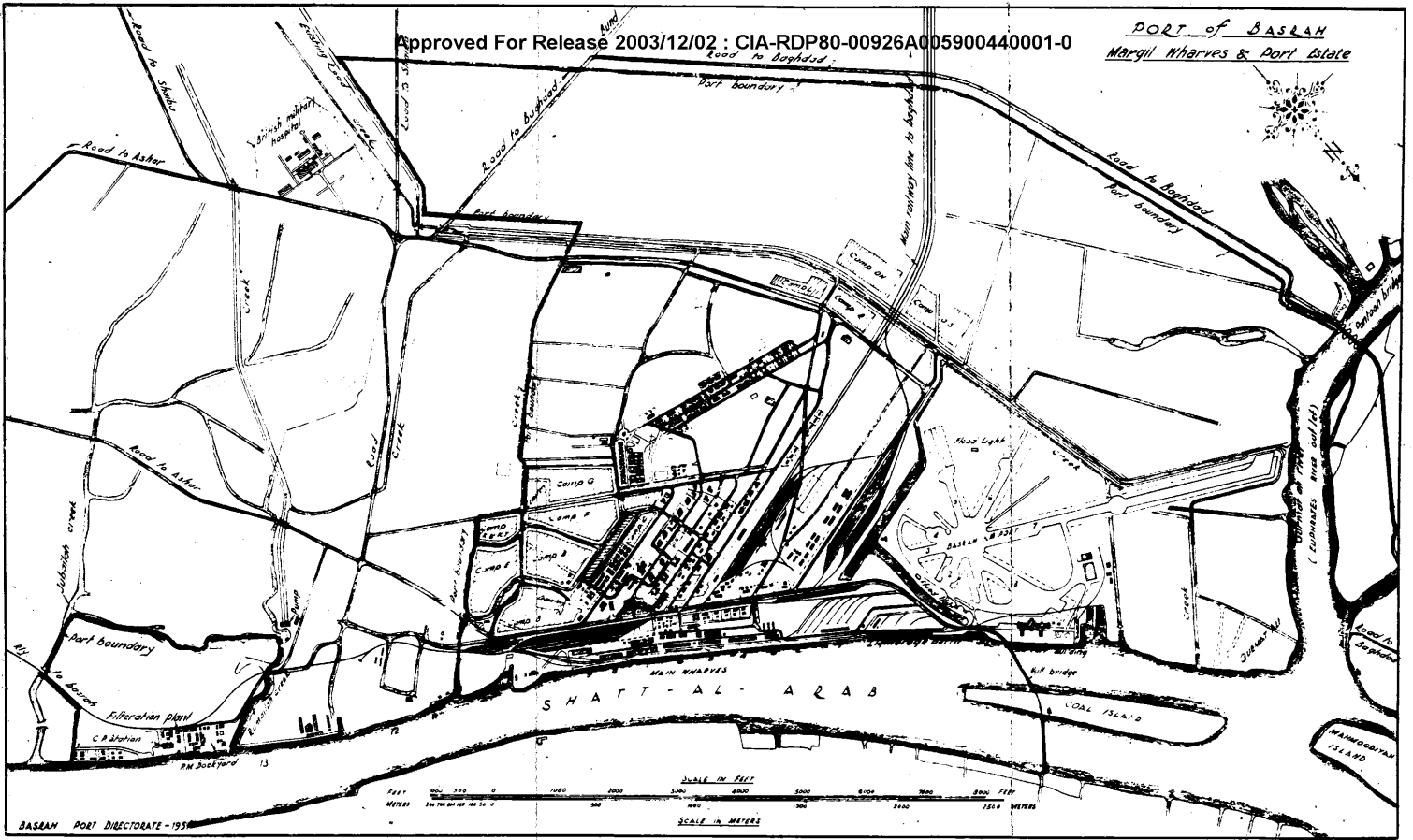
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PORT of BASRAH
Margil Wharves & Port Estate



BASRAH PORT DIRECTORATE - 1955

SCALE IN FEET

SCALE IN METERS