

Security dogs keep their cool at Baghdad Airport

The installation of air-conditioned kennels into the workplace has kept 11 MineTech Explosive Detection Dog teams working hard at their posts in Baghdad Airport this summer, despite difficult conditions and temperatures that frequently topped 55°C.

The teams are providing an essential screening role, supporting security specialist Global Risk Strategies in delivering a comprehensive security contract at the airport which remains a critical transport link as well as a frequent target for attacks.

As civilian passenger numbers have increased, adding to the 50 or so cargo flights that go in and out of the country every day, activity for the teams has spiralled dramatically. In a busy month, MineTech EDD teams positioned at the main airport entrance gate have been checking as many as 3-4000 vehicles a day. Further in, other teams have been responsible for inspecting passenger baggage before it is taken into the airport, sometimes seeing as many as 3000 bags a day. Behind the scenes, MineTech EDD teams are also playing a key role ensuring the integrity of cargo arriving into the airport.

Keeping the dogs healthy and happy in this environment is essential to their performance.

Explains Country Manager Jamie Buckler, “The air-conditioned kennels provide instant respite for the dogs, more efficient than simply keeping them cool with cold water. We’ve also taken many other precautions to ensure their conditions are as comfortable as possible, including covering the ground with rugs and cloth to protect their feet.”

Despite their busy workloads, man and dog still maintain a continuous programme of re-training whilst in country, completing several hours of explosives or obedience training every day, to help cope with the difficult conditions which can include regular explosions and other disturbances close to their camp.

In total MineTech currently has more than 30 EDD and PEDD (Patrol and Explosive Detection Dog teams) providing security support in Iraq. Six are contracted to the British Embassy in Baghdad and Basrah. Another twelve are providing security and protection to senior Iraqi Government officials.

www.minetech.co.uk