~~SECRET~~

POTUS

→ Not before election

→ June - Off ramp

Off Ramp Decisions

B/U

13

→ Before / after

2 November 2005

This briefing is classified
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Derived from: Multiple sources
DECL ON: 1 Nov 2015

Approved for Release

Declassified by: MG Michael X. Garrett,
USCENTCOM Chief of Staff
Declassified on: 201505

Bottom Line Up Front

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- Of the two brigades remaining to deploy to Iraq for the current rotation, we recommend that we do not deploy one brigade and deploy the second to Kuwait as an in-theater reserve to hedge against the projected uncertainty of the post-election environment.
- At some point, the reserve force could transition to a home station-based force ready to deploy into theater if required.
- Will result in ~7,000 soldiers not deploying into Iraq and US Brigades will drop from 17 to 15 in January.

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Situation

- The successful Iraqi Constitutional Referendum and continued Iraqi Security Force improvement provides the strategic opportunity to demonstrate our progress in Iraq by reducing US forces by two combat brigades in January 2006.
- Next 60 days will continue to be turbulent as terrorists and insurgents attempt to derail the political process.
- Outcome of the December elections and the nature of the next government remain uncertain. We should prepare for another protracted transition.
- Constitution amendment and implementation processes likely to be politically divisive.
- Expect impact of political process on insurgency to be gradual.
- While increasingly isolated, Al Qa'ida in Iraq will still be a factor post-election.

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Progress

- Significant progress in Iraqi Security Force development.
  - Over 200,000 Iraqi Security Forces now trained and equipped. 211K
  - One division, 4 brigades and 23 battalions currently have the lead in their areas.
  - One division, 9 brigades, and ~50 Iraq Army battalions should be ready to assume the lead by January 2006.
  - Professional performance by security forces during recent offensive combat operations (Tal'Afar, Western Euphrates River Valley).
  - Exceptional performance of security forces in support of Referendum.

□ 90% of Iraqi Army battalions acceptable to attack ISF

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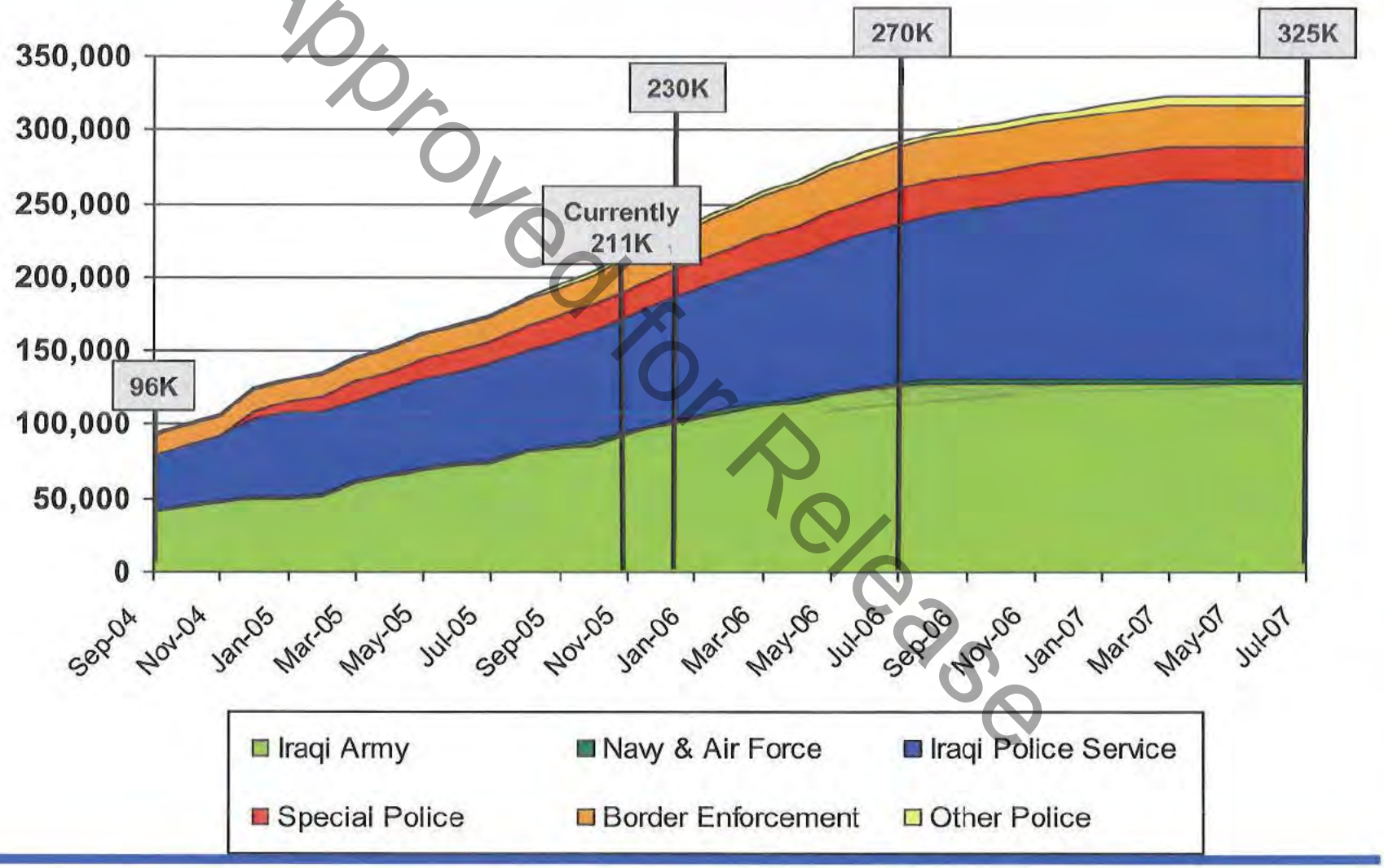
Trained and Equipped Iraqi Security Forces



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Iltizam Mushtarak – United Commitment

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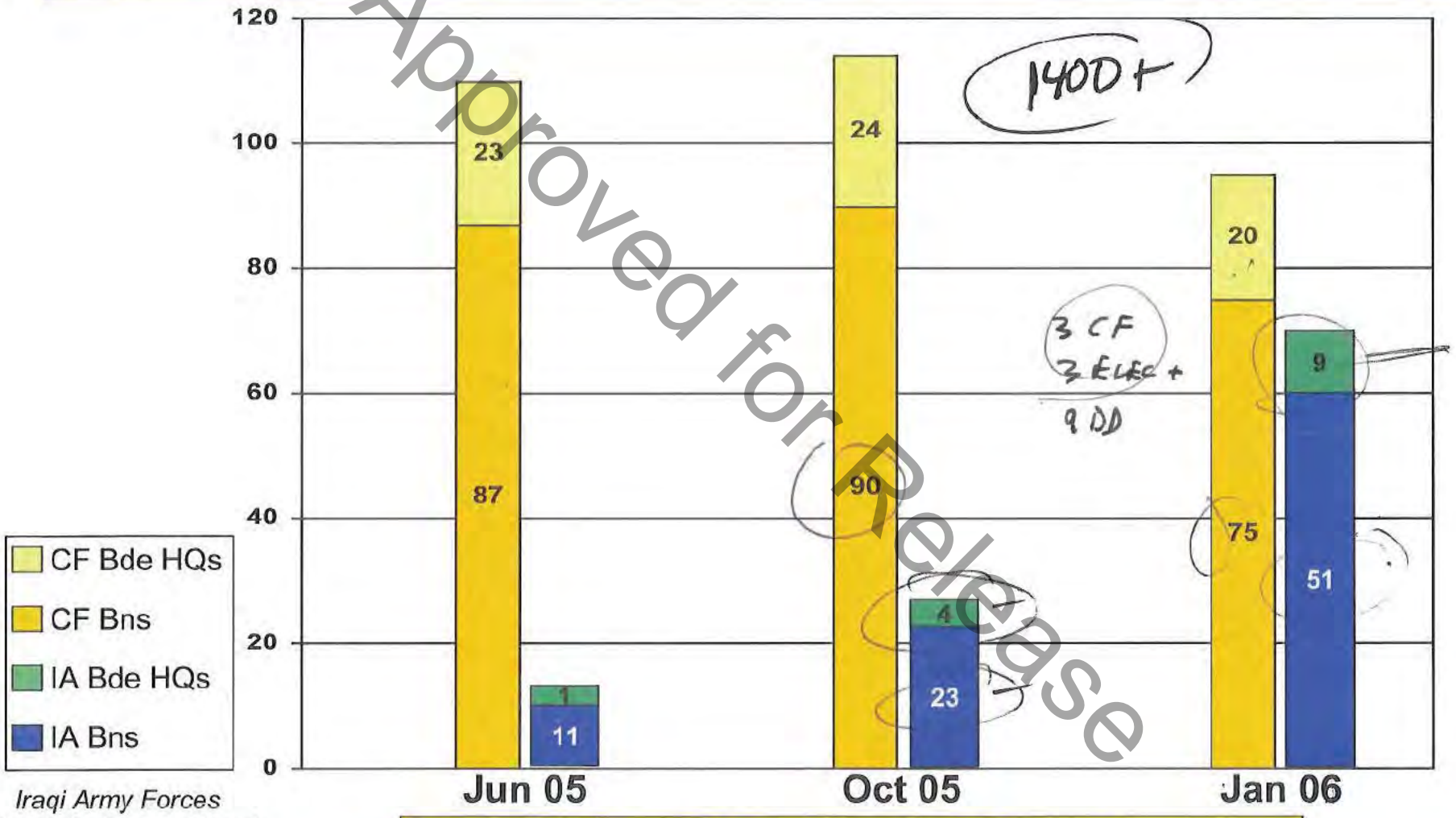
Security Forces in Iraq



Iraqi Army Forces Ready to Assume Lead

Supported by ~ 111,000 Ministry of Interior members

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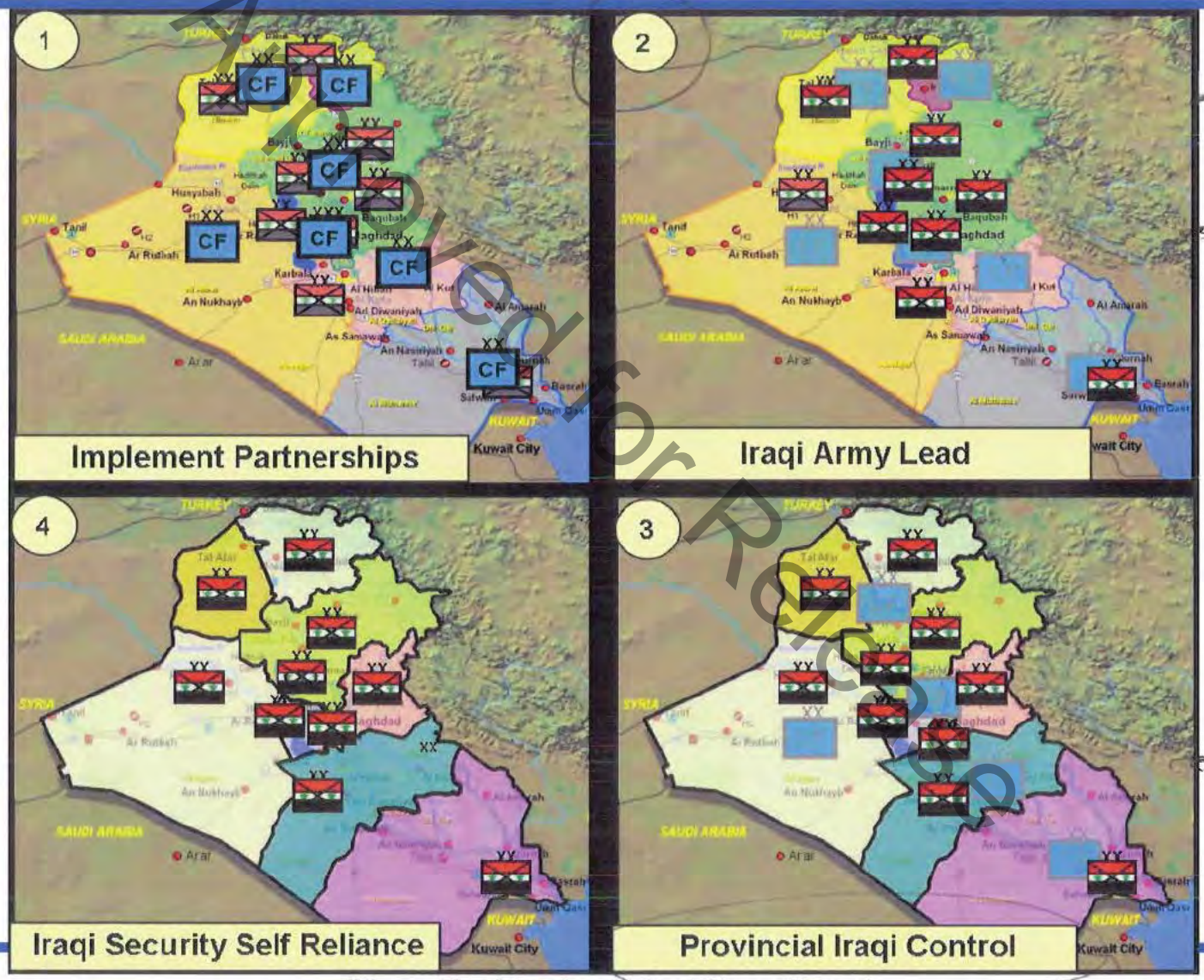
Iltizam Mushtarak – United Commitment

Transition Concept



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Opportunity

- A gradual, conditions-based reduction of Coalition forces, tied to improved Iraqi Security Force capability, and done from a position of strength, can:
  - + Build on the success of the Iraqi Security Forces in Referendum security and other operations.
  - + Begin to remove a central motivation attracting foreign fighters and drawing Iraqis into the insurgency.
  - + Create sense of urgency in the Iraqi Government and its security forces
  - + Send a strong signal that we are making progress.
  - + Send a strong signal to Iraqis that we mean what we say, "As you stand up, we stand down."

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Unknowns

- Outcome of the December election and the composition and effectiveness of government that results.
- Impact of the Referendum and election outcomes on the insurgency.
- Impact of AQIZ efforts to foment sectarian violence.
- The cumulative impact of increased transition of battle space to the Iraqi Army and Coalition force transitions in the first 6 months of 2006.
- Impact of increased [redacted] 1.4b, 1.4d

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Risks if we do

- Going too fast could unhinge ISF progress – Low.
- Reduction in tactical and operational effectiveness and flexibility – Moderate.
- Misperceived as US "running away" and creation of expectation for continuous reduction – Moderate.
- Insurgency increases in size and effectiveness and threatens political and economic progress – Moderate.
- Ministries can't sustain security forces – Moderate.
- Employment of Reserve could be seen as regressing – Moderate

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Risks if we don't

- Demonstrates a lack of confidence in Iraqi Security Force capability.
- Increases the potential for Iraqi dependency on Coalition forces.
- Misses opportunity to demonstrate progress and take advantage of the positive developments in Iraq.
- Misses opportunity to demonstrate that we do intend to depart as Iraqi Security Force improve.
- Strengthens perception of occupation in Iraq.

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Bottomline

- Of the two brigades remaining to deploy to Iraq for the current rotation, we recommend that we do not deploy one brigade and deploy the second to Kuwait as an in-theater reserve to hedge against the projected uncertainty of the post-election environment.
- At some point, the reserve force could transition to a home station-based force ready to deploy into theater if required.
- Announcement and roll-out must be carefully coordinated to achieve desired effect.

ITO COALITION

"Before/after"

1 before/1 after
2 after
2 before

ITO COALITION

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BACK UP

SLIDES

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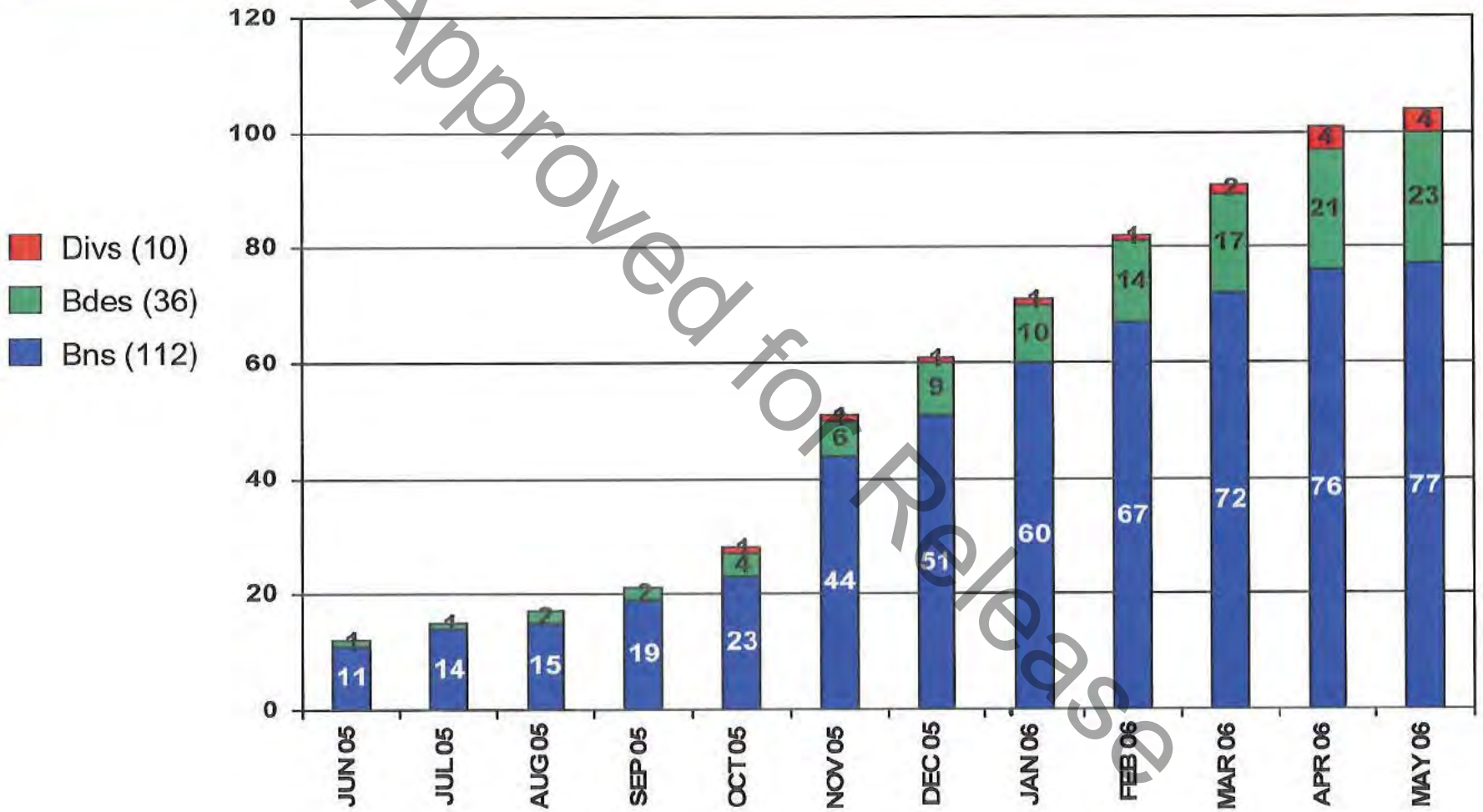
Months to Assume Battle Space



With 1 Oct 05 TRA Information

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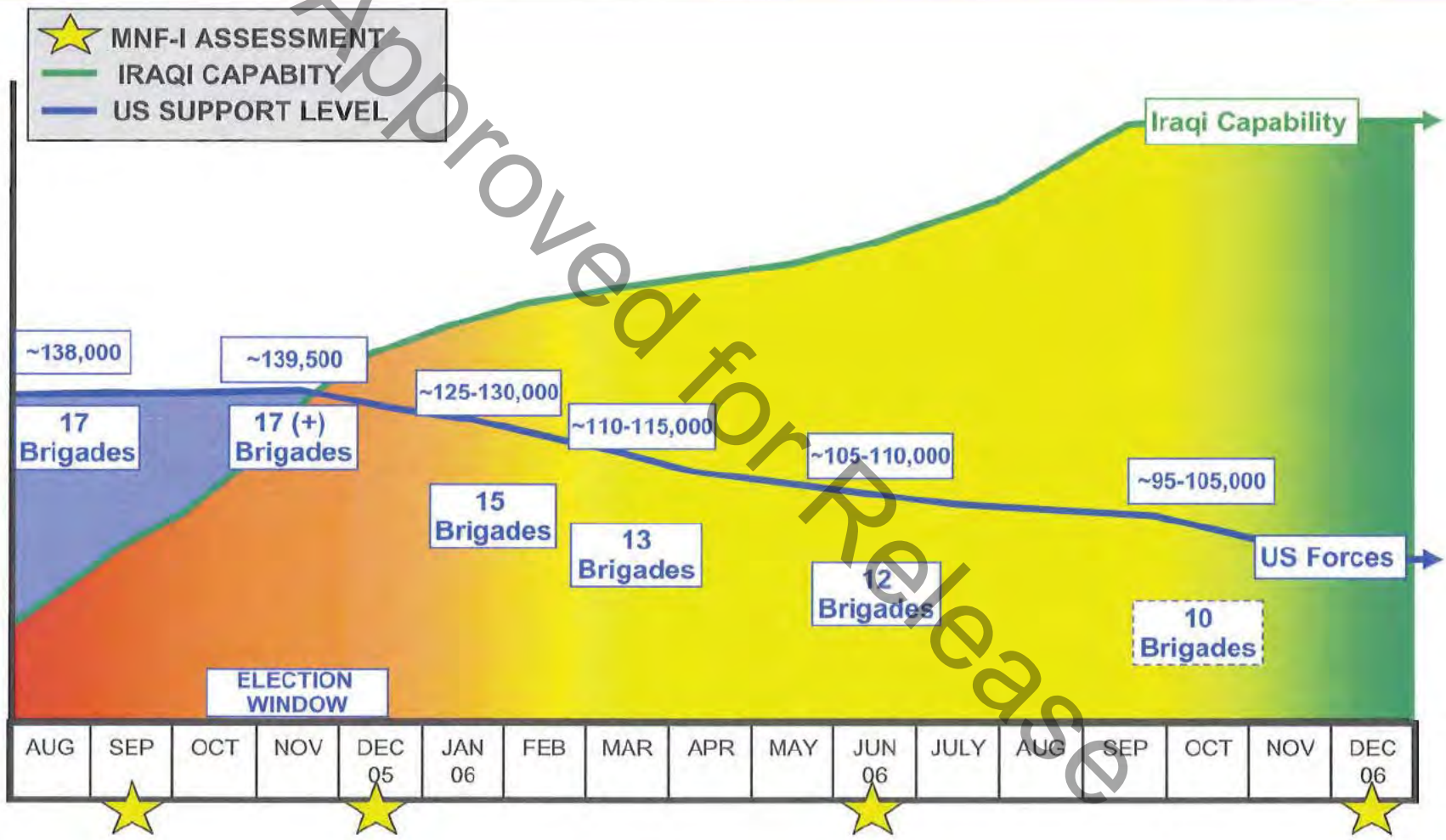
Transition of Security Lead



US off-ramp strategy linked to development of capable ISF

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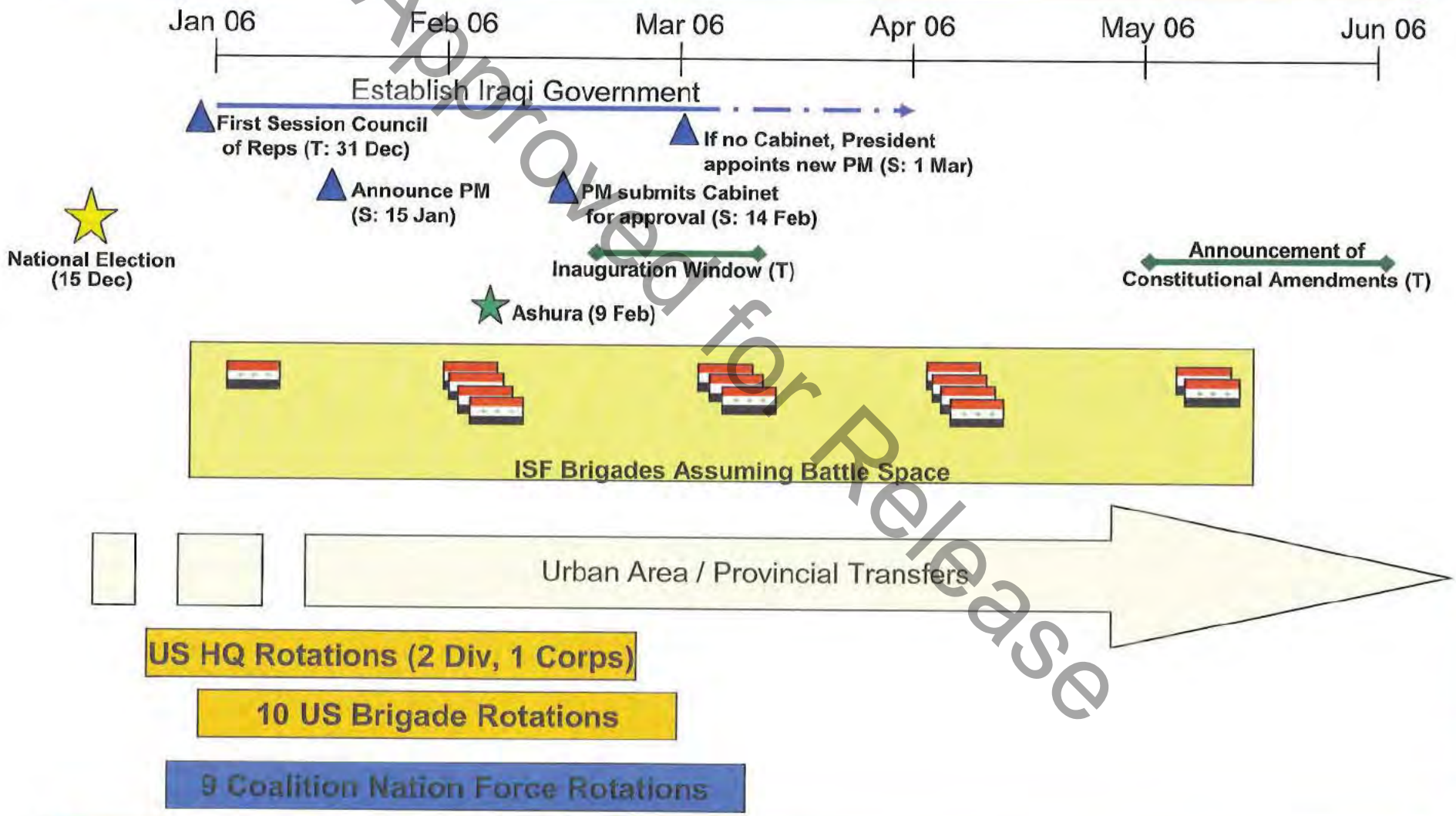
Post Election Risk Window



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