



News Release

BYRON L. DORGAN
CHAIRMAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday
May 18, 2009

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SENATE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE TO PROBE MILLIONS IN BONUSES PAID TO CONTRACTOR IN IRAQ FOR SHODDY WORK

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) --- Chairman Byron Dorgan (D-ND) announced Monday the U.S. Senate Democratic Policy Committee (DPC) will hold an oversight hearing Wednesday, May 20, to examine millions of dollars in bonuses paid to KBR, the Army's largest contractor in Iraq and Afghanistan, for grossly incompetent electrical wiring work on U.S. Army bases in Iraq. The shoddy work has been linked to the electrocution deaths of at least two, and perhaps as many as five, U.S. soldiers and contractors in Iraq. It continues to be a life threatening risk to U.S. soldiers and contractors throughout Iraq.

The hearing will take place at 9:30 AM, Wednesday, May 20, in Room 628 Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Witnesses will include a Master Electrician hired by the Army to review KBR's work in Iraq; a Master Electrician who worked for KBR in Iraq; and the former Army official who managed the contract under which KBR performed electrical work in Iraq.

Last summer Dorgan's committee held a hearing that revealed KBR hired third country nationals who were not electricians to perform electrical wiring work at U.S. military bases in Iraq. The Pentagon reports that more than a dozen U.S. soldiers have been electrocuted in Iraq, several as they showered or engaged in other routine activities on U.S. Army bases in Iraq. At the hearing, two of those deaths were linked to sloppy electrical work performed by contractors. Details follow:

WHO: U.S. Senators:
Byron Dorgan (D-ND), Chairman; Bob Casey (D-PA), Evan Bayh (D-IN), Tom Udall (D-NM), and other Senators.

Witnesses:
James Childs, Master Electrician hired by the Army to review KBR's electrical work in Iraq during 2008; Eric Peters, Master Electrician, who worked for KBR in Iraq as recently as 2007; and Charles Smith, the former Army official who previously managed the contract under which KBR performed electrical work in Iraq.

WHAT: Congressional oversight hearing on the payment of millions of dollars in bonuses by the Department of Defense to KBR for shoddy electrical wiring work that put the safety and lives of U.S. soldiers at risk on U.S. Army bases in Iraq.

WHEN: 9:30 AM, Wednesday, May 20, 2009

WHERE: Room 628 Dirksen Senate Office Building,

WHY: To examine how millions of dollars in bonuses were paid to contractor KBR for shoddy electrical work in Iraq and how to reform the Pentagon's contractor compensation system.

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