

BTC Archaeological Report Preparation

With the increase in the scale of work on the archaeological sites on the pipeline, there needs to be a formal understanding of the reporting needs for the archaeological work as a whole. This will allow BTC Co to discharge its requirements under the ESIA and to meet World Bank guidelines.

I've put forward a three-stage approach for the project as a whole, to allow all the technical information to be collated in one location in a centralized coherent fashion. If this process is followed then the IoAE will understand where their responsibility and involvement lies for any of the specific sites. It will also allow us to show external auditors to see the processes involved and work conducted.

At present, the archaeological record is kept in a number of different locations, with the IoAE, in the Bechtel system, in the Ganja Guest house and at my home in the UK. Keeping all this together is starting to prove an impossible task that needs systematizing before it all gets lost.

First Stage

Each site will have a summary report completed soon after fieldwork is completed. This will be about a page in length, with a basic statement of where and what. Some of the sites such as 200 and 204 will require no more than that, except to collate all the photographs and the site plans, drawings and GPS coordinates. The first excavations such as Borsunlu and Zayamchai have completed this work; the later ones from February to May of this year are not in such a good state.

Purpose: To put all the basic details of the site into one location, to act as a basis for further report work on the site, to show World Bank auditors that there is a systematic collection of record from each site.

Form: CD and on paper as required, but all of it must be digital to allow ease of access and storage

Time: Within one week of the completion of fieldwork on a site.

Second Stage

The technical report (such as is being discussed for Zayamchai at the moment). This will have all the technical information, drawings and discussion of the site and artefacts from the site. Not every site would have such a report; the small ones could be covered under the First Stage. This would be a fairly large document possibly with illustrations of every artefact. There would not be very many copies. It may be published in an Azerbaijan context, although there is a tendency for Azeri publications to be broken up into many small elements under different authors (suits their academic needs).

Purpose: Report on the archaeological results of analysis, to conform to archaeological practice

Form: Almost certainly in paper, but large parts can be easily placed in a digital format.

Time: Typically 12 months after start of report

Third Stage

Publication report. This would be in two forms an academic report and a glossy public brochure. The academic form will be a summary of the results of the technical report; it will draw out the important elements of the work and may include comparison with work in the other two countries

on the pipeline route. Illustrations will be a sample of the artefacts and important examples, many of the sites described in the technical report will be only summarised, if at all.

Purpose: To produce an internationally accepted report on the archaeological work of the project and disseminate that information to an interested audience.

Form: An international journal such as the Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society or in a specialised website, Azeri version published in a suitable national form.

Time: Large parts can be prepared at a post fieldwork stage, but the final version will need to wait for the technical report, 18 months after start of report

Public brochures these can be utilised to show the main results of the work, highly illustrated in colour and Black and White. Either in English or Azeri form. The IoAE may have different views of the purposes and form of such publications.

Who is to prepare these reports?

In order to show WB auditors the first stage reports, these will need to be prepared by the western archaeologist. The IoAE do prepare a report, but it is not focused.

The IoAE will be largely concerned with the technical report; there are many good examples that I have seen of work in progress, such as drawings, which equal international standards for illustration. The stage three reports will be a joint production by western archaeologists and IoAE. The international language will be in English and assistance will be given for technical preparation and contacts with the outside world. Azeri staff can prepare the brochure material; a similar brochure was produced following the WREP construction.

Material required (Stage 1 and site work)

Laptop computer on site, Dell is advertising a 2.2 mhz., 256 RAM with CDRW for £550.

Digital camera, I like the Sony as it seems easy to operate, good battery life and easy to transfer to computer. A 5mp camera is available for £275 in the UK.

This is the way I would like to proceed.

Each site has a folder in the laptop. Sub-folders for text, day record, Autocad drawings, finds, views on site, general shots, etc. Also the stage 1 summary report. An Azeri version of parts can also be included, but many parts of this scheme do not need any translation. Safar understood perfectly what was going on with the images in different folders, and was telling me where to put them on the GH computer.

When each site is complete, a CD is written for that site with all the data and an index. Copies are then given to IoAE and BTC. The Western Archaeologist is responsible for doing all this and ensuring the record is as complete as can be. This basically gives us the QA that is starting to go adrift as we have so many sites to deal with and data in various formats and parts of the World. This is aimed at giving us all the data for the Stage 1 reports and a framework for the Stage 2 and 3 reports.

Using the Bechtel system computers is a hassle as we cannot write CD's and cannot easily attach files to emails, also the speed is slow and finding a spare computer that will tolerate a jump drive

being added is a problem. It is easier to work in the Guest House and probably achieve some technology transfer.