



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors
Office of Inspector General**

Office of Inspector General

Office of Inspections

**Inspection of
Embassy Paris, France,
and Constituent Posts**

Report Number ISP-I-12-25A, May 2012

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PURPOSE, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation, as issued in 2011 by the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of State (Department) and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG).

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved; whether U.S. interests are being accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; whether instance of fraud, waste, or abuse exist; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this inspection, the inspectors: reviewed pertinent records; as appropriate, circulated, reviewed, and compiled the results of survey instruments; conducted on-site interviews; and reviewed the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with offices, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by this review.



United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors

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PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, and Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its responsibility to promote effective management, accountability, and positive change in the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors.

This report is the result of an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the office, post, or function under review. It is based on interviews with employees and officials of relevant agencies and institutions, direct observation, and a review of applicable documents.

The recommendations therein have been developed on the basis of the best knowledge available to the OIG and, as appropriate, have been discussed in draft with those responsible for implementation. It is my hope that these recommendations will result in more effective, efficient, and/or economical operations.

I express my appreciation to all of those who contributed to the preparation of this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. W. Geisel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Harold W. Geisel
Deputy Inspector General

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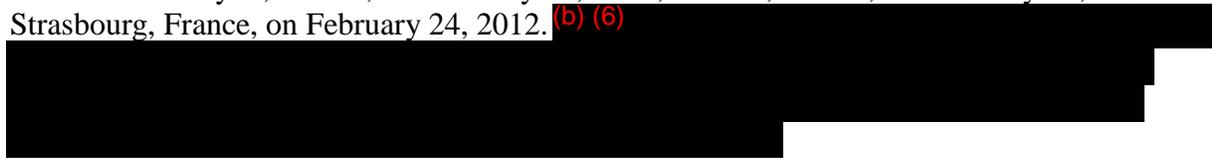
Key Judgments

- A dynamic and visionary noncareer Ambassador has challenged embassy employees to tackle innovative projects while at the same time performing their important advocacy and support responsibilities. Working closely with the highly respected and experienced deputy chief of mission (DCM), the Ambassador has fostered excellent morale among both American and locally employed staff, put a new emphasis on support for U.S. exports of goods and services into France, expanded embassy outreach, added a focus on French youth, and worked to showcase U.S. green technology.
- Despite the mission's size and the number of U.S. Government agencies represented, Embassy Paris displays impressive esprit de corps, and staff members perform well as a cohesive unit.
- The embassy has developed close working relationships with French officials on political, military, financial, environmental, and many other issues of mutual and global concern.
- The importance of the multifaceted and long-standing U.S.-French relationship is reflected in the seniority and number of official visitors the mission supports each year, but visitor support takes its toll on all embassy components.
- The tri-mission management (TMM) section does a good job of supporting the trio of U.S. diplomatic missions and handling a large visitor load; however, long-standing lapses in management controls have resulted in vulnerabilities in the procurement, voucher, and certification processes in all three missions.
- The embassy makes excellent use of its political section entry-level officers to coordinate the flow of information into and out of the embassy. The report features an innovative practice on the *Paris Points* and "Morning Message" programs.
- Embassy reporting is notable for its policy relevance, timeliness, and scope.
- The Department of State (Department) needs to examine the role of Consulate General Strasbourg in covering Council of Europe (COE) and European Parliament issues and to coordinate the consulate's posture with all bureaus and missions that have equities in those organizations.
- France is the birthplace of the American presence post (APP) program. The APPs were established to conduct commercial and public diplomacy outreach and provide both routine and emergency services to American citizens, but their mandate has expanded over time. There has been no recent cost/benefit analysis to determine whether the APPs are still instrumental, given the increase in access to the public through social media and the centralization of many consular services.

- An experienced public affairs team effectively manages a wide range of programs, including strong social media outreach platforms that support mission goals and objectives.

All findings and recommendations in this report are based on conditions observed during the on-site review and the standards and policies then in effect. The report does not comment at length on areas where OIG did not identify problems that need to be corrected.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between January 3 and 31, 2012; in Paris, France, between February 2 and March 20, 2012; in Marseille, France, on February 16 and 17, 2012; in Bordeaux and Lyon, France, on February 21, 2012; in Nice, France, on February 22; and in Strasbourg, France, on February 24, 2012. (b) (6)



Context

The newly independent United States of America established its first overseas diplomatic mission in France in 1776. Since that time, the U.S. Embassy in Paris has served as guardian of the relationship with America's oldest ally. The U.S. Mission in France provides a global diplomatic platform, where representatives of some 40 agencies and departments work to advance U.S. interests. In recent years, the two countries have forged a close partnership on a wide range of issues. The United States has benefitted from France's considerable influence within the European Union (EU) and globally, given its assets and expertise in the Middle East and Africa. France has returned to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's military command, where French forces are once again a major Alliance asset. France played a key role in bringing an end to the Qaddafi regime and is often a strong advocate for U.S. positions within European councils, most recently on Iran policy. Likewise, the French share many of our values and play an influential role around the world on democracy and human rights issues.

France is the world's fifth largest economy with a gross domestic product of \$2 trillion. It is the sixth largest investor in the United States, with some 760,000 Americans employed in French-owned enterprises in the United States. Conversely, the United States is the largest foreign investor in France, where American firms employ some 650,000 persons. France is the eighth largest trading partner of the United States, with transactions between the two countries totaling some \$100 billion in goods and services in 2010. Scientific cooperation between the two countries is long-standing and extensive. This is reflected in a bilateral agreement on science and technology cooperation that has been in place since 2008. French advances in the development and use of nuclear energy have long been a source of interest to and cooperation with the American scientific community.

In light of the increased U.S. engagement with France across a wide spectrum of political, economic, and cultural issues, the mission's workload has increased noticeably while human and financial resources have remained relatively static. The Department alone currently employs approximately 180 U.S. and 350 locally employed staff members. In addition to the embassy and the two consulates general in Marseille and Strasbourg, four APPs in Bordeaux, Lyon, Rennes, and Toulouse conduct public diplomacy outreach as well as some commercial support and consular activities.

In addition to the traditional work of diplomacy, Embassy Paris has set itself several priorities, including outreach to French youth and minorities, the promotion of green technology, and the maintenance of a vibrant U.S. presence outside the capital. Mission staff is called on to balance the sometimes conflicting priorities of arranging and staffing U.S. official visits and providing Washington with in-depth analytical reporting. During 2011, France presided over both G8 and G20 meetings that brought additional official visitors to the country. The embassy supported more than 9,000 official visitors, including 2 visits by the President, 4 visits by the Secretary of State, and visits by a dozen other Cabinet-level officials during the year.

Executive Direction

Embassy Paris serves as a global diplomatic platform, providing advocacy and support services to dozens of U.S. Government departments and agencies from the American Battlefield Monuments Commission to the U.S. Secret Service. If an agency's responsibilities involve equities outside the United States, someone at Embassy Paris provides assistance to that agency.

The steady stream of high-level official visitors is driven by the close bilateral relationship with France as well as the key role the French play in international affairs. French President Sarkozy brought France back into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's military command; U.S. Government experts work closely with their counterparts in France on efforts to contain instability in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia; and French troops have stood shoulder to shoulder with U.S. troops on the ground in Afghanistan from the beginning of the military action. More recently, the French have taken a leadership role in resolving the Eurozone financial crisis and have shared U.S. insistence that Iran comply with UN resolutions designed to deter development of nuclear weapons and to improve transparency.

The U.S. Mission to France is ably led by a dynamic and visionary noncareer Ambassador who has challenged his staff to tackle innovative projects while at the same time performing their important advocacy and support responsibilities. Working closely with the highly respected and experienced DCM, the Ambassador has fostered excellent morale among both American and locally employed staff members, put a new emphasis on support for U.S. exports of goods and services into France, expanded embassy outreach, added a focus on French youth, and worked to showcase U.S. green technology.

None of these achievements would have been possible had the Ambassador not fostered a culture of inclusiveness and cooperation among the many U.S. Government departments and agencies represented on his country team. Heads of agencies expressed unanimous appreciation for the Ambassador's and the DCM's consistent message that all issues should be thoroughly reviewed by all parties that have equities in the debate before decisions are made. One senior head of agency told the inspectors that Embassy Paris has the most collegial interagency atmosphere he has experienced in his 30-plus years of international service.

One of the Ambassador's interagency challenges is the need to enhance Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) policy and operational coordination within the embassy. There are four DHS entities working in France, including U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the U.S. Secret Service, Transportation Security Agency, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. DHS designated the senior U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer as the senior DHS representative accredited to France. His extensive travel and large regional area of responsibility, however, limit his ability to support the Ambassador on DHS policy and coordination issues. The Ambassador and DCM are examining best practices used by other large embassies with a similar DHS footprint to decide on an optimal course of action. The inspectors encouraged them to raise this issue with DHS leadership in the near future.

The Ambassador and DCM are both strong participants in the embassy's security program. They set a positive example in their own stewardship of sensitive information and work

closely with the regional security officer to make sure he has the high-level support he needs for a strong security program. The embassy will host a crisis management training exercise in the months after the inspection. The Ambassador has taken to heart the recent message to all chiefs of missions on the importance of crisis planning, and he has volunteered to participate in future radio checks as a means of encouraging greater participation by embassy staff.

Not long after his arrival in France, the Ambassador outlined three specific goals for his tenure. One of those goals was to improve the image of the United States in the eyes of average French citizens; in particular, he was determined to find new ways to reach out to French youth. Under his direction, Embassy Paris established active Facebook and Twitter accounts that are now serving as an important means of communicating with young French citizens. The Ambassador also recognized that the election of President Obama had given the embassy a window of opportunity to influence the thinking of disadvantaged youth living in the outskirts of Paris. He set up a series of interactions between these youth and icons of American culture such as Samuel Jackson, Will.i.am, Woody Allen, and Jodie Foster. The fact that he invited groups of disadvantaged youth into his home for these seminars, coupled with his own visits to their home turf in the economically depressed Paris “banlieues,” demonstrated both his personal commitment and the U.S. Government’s insistence on equal opportunity. Both the Ambassador and the DCM provide their full support to the embassy’s Equal Employment Opportunity program.

Under his leadership, the embassy’s public diplomacy activities have blossomed. The fact that both the Ambassador and the DCM speak fluent French opened up new public diplomacy opportunities that the embassy has exploited successfully. For example, the Ambassador appeared on a major French television show where he was viewed by more than 6 million residents of France. He also opened the doors of his residence to a French television cooking competition so that viewers would see that there was more to American cuisine than hamburgers. He recorded a voting video for the consular section and video greetings on the Armed Forces Network to U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan—both firsts for a U.S. ambassador.

His communication efforts within the embassy community have been similarly successful. Surprised to discover that previous ambassadors had never hosted open-mike town hall meetings with embassy staff, he has held a series of such meetings to bring together American and French staff members and to give them an opportunity to ask questions. He has tried to break down barriers among embassy sections and to foster greater understanding of technical issues by holding “drill down” sessions where mid-level subject matter experts make presentations to him with attendance open to interested American officers. Last year, for the first time, the embassy held its awards ceremony at his residence, and a reception for embassy staff members followed the formal ceremony.

It is difficult to impress senior locally employed staff members who have seen ambassadors and DCMs come and go over the course of 20 or 30 years. However, long-time French employees expressed great appreciation for the efforts the Ambassador and the DCM have made to create an atmosphere of trust and inclusion for locally employed staff. American staff members report satisfaction with embassy leadership and for the high ethical standards and commitment exhibited by both senior officers. Overall, morale within Embassy Paris is good.

The first- and second-tour (FAST) program has not been particularly vibrant in Paris. The DCM sought information on best practices from his counterparts at large U.S. embassies and directed the human resources office to develop a revised and reinvigorated FAST program. The entry-level generalists and specialists interviewed expressed a desire for more targeted mentoring and more opportunities to develop career-enhancing skills. Because the revised FAST program is still a work in progress, the inspectors urged the entry-level officers to work closely with the DCM and the human resources office so that the final product meets the needs of all parties.

Policy and Program Implementation

Political Section

France's global influence makes it a prominent U.S. ally. As discussed earlier, France's political interests and activities in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia parallel those of the United States. The political section engages French interlocutors in all these areas, effectively advancing U.S. interests. Washington consumers value the section's reporting, which reflects an impressive array of contacts in government, the opposition, think tanks, and academia. The intensity of the U.S.-French relationship keeps the political section fully occupied, although the need to support a steady stream of U.S. Government visitors has, at times, stretched the section's resources.

Communication is a challenge in any large section. One of the section's four unit chiefs meets briefly each morning with locally employed staff to share information and set operational priorities, thus enhancing team work. The section produces many reporting messages, and the clearance process can be cumbersome. During the inspection, the embassy took steps to streamline the clearance process, which should facilitate timely reporting. The section has not retired its electronic files for more than 2 years. Section leadership recognizes the need to comply with Department record management requirements and is taking steps to do so.

All political officers actively engage in public outreach. A mid-level officer chairs the embassy's minority outreach working group, which focuses on women, youth, and Muslims.

In May 2011, the Department selected the embassy to pilot a program for countering violent extremism, which entailed establishing an interagency working group for coordinating and reporting on this effort. A political officer has responsibility for reporting on this issue, but, 10 months later, the working group had not yet convened, due in part to embassy concerns over the applicability of the model to practical conditions in France. The mission is taking steps to establish the working group, engage actively, and report on the issue.

Staffing

Paris has the largest political section among U.S. embassies in Europe, and the Department views it as one of the most productive. The size of the political section has increased by three locally employed staff positions in the past 8 years. Two locally employed staff members are cleared U.S. citizen employees and carry out responsibilities similar to those of an officer. On at least one occasion, a cleared locally employed U.S. staff member filled in for nearly a year during an officer staffing gap without sacrificing the quality and timeliness of reporting and contact work. The embassy has undertaken no recent review of political section staffing to determine whether there is excess capacity that could be put to better use elsewhere within the embassy. (See the Economic/Commercial/Environment, Science, Technology, and Health section of this report on the related issue of staffing in the embassy's economic section.)

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Paris should review existing political and economic section staffing to determine whether the allocation of resources is consistent with overall embassy requirements and make adjustments as necessary.

Reporting

Washington consumers credit the political section with providing valuable analyses of French interests and objectives. They consider the quality, breadth, relevance, and timeliness of the section's analytical and spot reporting to be outstanding. The section received particularly high marks for its reporting on the Tunisia and Libya crises of 2011. Reporting is concise and relevant, often including recommendations that are helpful in shaping U.S. policy. Political officers engage key sources on the conflict in Syria. Much of the section's reporting is coordinated with the economic section and reflects comprehensive policy perspectives. Biographic reporting is placed on the government's Intellipedia and Diplopedia Web sites, maximizing access by Washington readers. The section also excels in explaining the impact of the approaching French presidential elections on French foreign and security policies. The section recently gained an Iran watcher position, expanding reporting on this important topic and reflecting France's leading role in shaping Europe's Iran policies. The embassy appropriately uses special caption messages to provide a steady stream of reporting on sensitive issues for high-level U.S. policymakers.

Washington readers praised the embassy's daily *Paris Points*, which the political section edits and transmits. This report combines political and economic reporting, is transmitted by both classified and unclassified channels, and complements open-source media reporting. The section's reporting on domestic affairs is keyed appropriately to elections or high-level personnel appointments that have potential impact on U.S. interests. The APPs and consulates contribute to embassy reporting, especially *Paris Points*. Contributions from the constituent posts have enriched embassy reporting on the French presidential election campaign. Consulate General Marseille has responded to the embassy's requests for reporting on political and social issues and contributes regularly to *Paris Points* but has not been proactive about reporting. The consulate in Marseille covers a politically and socially important region of southern France. The number of Marseille's reporting messages is low in comparison to Consulate General Strasbourg, which has only one officer. The embassy has encouraged Marseille's consul general, a political officer by training, to provide more reporting.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Paris should implement a reporting plan for Consulate General Marseille. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Innovative Practice: Staffing Information Flow in a Large Embassy

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Issue: The Embassy Paris political section needed a way to enhance mission productivity, share information across sections, eliminate duplicative work, coordinate taskings, and develop entry-level officer skills.

Response: The section developed two procedures for coordinating incoming and outgoing information that are singular in their scope and organization. The section rotates daily responsibility among its four entry-level officers and a cleared locally employed U.S. citizen staff member to edit the embassy's daily *Paris Points* report, to which other embassy sections and constituent posts contribute. In addition, every day one member of the political section, including entry-level officers, takes responsibility for compiling a "Morning Message" that

screens incoming cables and provides all economic and political officers, the DCM, and the Ambassador with relevant information. This information includes Washington taskings, incoming cables of interest, the embassy's outgoing messages from the previous day, a hyperlink for contributions to that day's *Paris Points* report, and general housekeeping information.

Result: Entry-level officers have an opportunity to develop professional skills, information flow within the embassy is integrated, and collaboration is fostered across sections. The political and economic section chiefs are able to monitor and oversee assignments, and the system reduces redundant work on the part of officers in the two sections. The executive office can confirm easily that taskings are being coordinated and that information is shared appropriately. This process is suited to a large embassy, where internal communications and coordination can sometimes be a challenge. It also contributes to entry-level officer professional development.

Consulate General Strasbourg

There is broad recognition among U.S. officials in Washington, Paris, and Strasbourg that the current division of responsibilities between Consulate General Strasbourg and the U.S. Mission to the EU is a legacy that does not reflect today's reality. The U.S. Mission to the EU, whose focus is on pan-European issues, has virtually no stake in the U.S. presence in Strasbourg. The U.S. Mission to the EU sends its own staff from Brussels to report on the European Parliament, which meets for 1 week each month in Strasbourg, while the consulate general in Strasbourg covers the other pan-European institution based in Strasbourg, the COE. This anomalous situation where two U.S. missions in two separate countries cover two pan-European organizations in the same city is both illogical and a poor use of resources. As a senior U.S. diplomat in Washington remarked, "if it were starting from scratch, the State Department would never come up with this arrangement."

Consulate General Strasbourg consists of one Foreign Service officer, supported by five locally employed staff members. The consul general has duties that include public diplomacy, consular services, promotion of U.S. exports, and political and economic reporting. The consulate general performs similar functions and handles approximately the same volume of work as the four one-officer APPs in France, but the consul general is also accredited as the U.S. deputy permanent observer to the COE. In 2011, Embassy Paris management and information technology staff members were Strasbourg's most frequent visitors. In general, the political and economic sections do not provide regular support in covering the COE.

The United States is unique among observer states, which include Japan, Mexico, and Canada, in accrediting its bilateral Ambassador to France to serve as the Permanent Observer to the COE. In practice, the current Ambassador, like his predecessors, delegates to the consul general the responsibility for representing the United States in the COE, which was founded in 1949 to promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. One of the COE's subordinate entities is the European Court of Human Rights, to which court rulings of member states can be appealed. To make chain of authority even more complex, the legal attaché of the U.S. Mission to the EU has responsibility for the European Court of Human Rights.

The OIG's 2009 inspection report on the U.S. Mission to the EU noted the high cost in having the U.S. Mission to the EU send Foreign Service staff to Strasbourg to cover EU

Parliamentary sessions. In FY 2011 U.S. Mission to the EU staff made at least 33 visits to Strasbourg, many for multiple days, to engage with the European Parliament and the European Court of Human Rights at a cost of more than \$40,000. This cost could be reduced if employees from the U.S. Mission to the EU used the consulate general's available residential and office space, but they rarely do so.

The political role of the European Parliament in shaping EU decisions has grown in recent years, a trend that Washington observers expect to continue. Washington consumers also see a need for expanded reporting on the European Parliament. Consequently, the U.S. Mission to the EU will continue to have significant interests in Strasbourg and send staff there regularly.

In 2011, Embassy Paris shared a discussion paper with the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and with the U.S. Mission to the EU about the need for a new and more efficient approach to the U.S. presence in Strasbourg. The Department of Justice and DHS may also have an interest in this issue. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security are in the process of addressing issues related to the consulate general's facilities. Pending decisions related to renovation and the sale of property will have significant cost implications, but there is no long-term plan on how to efficiently represent the United States to the COE and the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Recommendation 2: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Embassy Paris, and the U.S. Mission to the European Union, should devise a strategic plan for cost-effective U.S. representation in Strasbourg. (Action: EUR, in coordination with DS, OBO, Embassy Paris, and the U.S. Mission to the EU)

Law Enforcement Cooperation

Ten U.S. law enforcement agencies are represented in the embassy. The Ambassador exercises his oversight and coordination responsibilities both directly, in meetings with agency representatives, as well as through the DCM, who chairs the law enforcement working group.

The regional security officer coordinates working group meetings and is also the conduit to the French authorities on a variety of matters, ranging from weapons permits to coordination on protective details for high-level visits. Although the law enforcement working group meets formally approximately every 6 months, there is an unusually high level of ongoing, informal cooperation among law enforcement agencies.

The Ambassador and DCM actively promote cooperation among law enforcement agency representatives. One law enforcement official indicated that the Ambassador and DCM "have made clear their expectation that there should be close communication." Another factor contributing to unusually close cooperation is the Justice attaché, an experienced former U.S. prosecutor. Her advice and expertise in both U.S. and French law is valued by all the embassy's law enforcement agency representatives. As a first among equals, she reinforces cooperation through her cross-cutting role.

Paris is the destination of many high-level visitors. For most of these visits, there is no confusion about agency roles and responsibilities. However, visits by senior DHS officials often raise questions about which of the four DHS agencies has the lead on DHS policy issues. The Ambassador has no designated DHS representative to advise him on cross-cutting issues, such as on a DHS Cabinet-level visit. The senior DHS representative does not have authority to oversee or direct the work of the other three DHS representatives. The memorandum of understanding between the Department and DHS anticipates the appointment of a DHS attaché in embassies with multiple DHS components to coordinate on policy issues and to serve as a single point of contact for the chief of mission.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Paris should request that the Department of Homeland Security designate an attaché with the authority to act as a single point of contact on the full range of issues handled by that agency. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Economic/Commercial/Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Section

The overall atmosphere in the U.S.-French relationship, within which substantial economic, commercial, and scientific activity occurs, has changed significantly since the last OIG inspection. At that time, public trade disputes involving Airbus and Boeing, significant differences over the causes of and remedies for climate change, and large political issues flowing from the U.S. invasion of Iraq poisoned the dialogue. Since then, not only have Airbus and Boeing figured out how to profit from each other's successes, but policy differences on a range of environmental and health issues have diminished markedly. In addition, the further development of the EU's role has reduced the number of trade policy issues individual member states manage bilaterally.

In 2011, Embassy Paris combined the economic/commercial affairs and environment, science, technology, and health affairs sections into a single unit headed by a minister counselor. The intention of this merger was to create a more efficient structure within which to share personnel and other resources. Although the current staffing level reflects a reduction of three U.S. direct-hire positions since the last inspection, the section is able to cover topics ranging from the French economy, industry, and trade policies to Internet, cyber security, and passenger name record (privacy) issues because its locally employed staff increased by two positions. With regard to environment, science, technology, and health issues, the main emphases have been on energy, climate, green technology, health, and preparing for this year's World Water Forum and the Rio+20 conference.

The minister counselor is highly regarded within the embassy. Not only is she substantively strong, she is a capable manager who makes every effort to safeguard a reasonable work-life balance for the staff. At times, an unintended impact of her busy schedule is that the flow of paper within the section is interrupted. She is aware of this issue and is taking remedial action.

The section functions well as a team, and the strengths of both U.S. direct-hire and locally employed staff are complementary. The section led the embassy's preparations for U.S. participation in the May 2011 G8 and November G20 meetings that France hosted and President Obama attended. In addition, during this same period, the Eurozone debt crisis attracted

numerous senior Department of Treasury officials for consultations with their French counterparts—often on very short notice. The Fukushima disaster put nuclear safety issues front and center and generated a wide range of visitors to various segments of France’s well-developed nuclear industry. Although visits offer embassy officers the opportunity to reach out to new or established contacts and provide welcome reporting and advocacy opportunities, planning and supporting so many visitors absorbs significant amounts of staff time.

As mentioned earlier, *Paris Points* is the highly regarded daily email summary of the major political and economic developments in France that the embassy compiles and forwards to Washington, where it is available to policymakers at the opening of business. Given the fast-breaking nature of Eurozone crisis developments, the section has put the summary to especially good use to keep all interested parties in the U.S. Government—many of whom may not have ready access to cable traffic—informed of French perspectives. Although the section is relatively small, an analysis of *Paris Points* during the month of February 2012 revealed that the section drafted more than 50 percent of the items. During the same month, the daily listing of announced official visits to Paris indicated the section was the designated lead for some 40 percent of them.

The section also compiles three other products: *France Points Weekly*, which is based on submissions on economic and political developments from the consulates and APPs; a weekly financial crisis update; and a nightly financial report for the executive office. The section benefits from a comprehensive SharePoint site where staff can easily retrieve relevant incoming and outgoing documents. Given the frenetic pace of activity in 2011, the section had less time to produce many analytical pieces, a condition it fully intends to rectify in 2012.

Several other Embassy Paris Federal agencies are members of the “economic cluster,” a weekly meeting chaired by the minister counselor where Department of Energy, Federal Aviation Administration, Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, National Aeronautic and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, and Transportation Security Administration representatives share news of recent developments and highlight upcoming events and visits of mutual interest. This mechanism has facilitated the coordinated advancement of U.S. interests on topics as diverse as moving food for astronauts through French bureaucracies to publicizing recent developments in the American use of nuclear energy to French audiences via the embassy Web site.

The Secretary’s Economic Statecraft initiative encompasses a wide range of Department efforts to spur economic growth. The Department of Commerce has the lead in implementing the National Export Initiative and Select USA for inward investment. In fact, France is 1 of 10 priority markets selected for proactive international outreach on foreign direct investment in 2012. However, the reduced U.S. Foreign Commercial Service presence, which in France is now limited to Paris, has led to increased business facilitation and commercial support activities by Department officers, especially at the APPs.

The Obama Administration has placed significant emphasis on science and technology, but the embassy’s ability to address such issues has not increased commensurately. The OIG’s 1998 and 2005 inspection reports both discussed the inadequate number of employees devoted to environment, science, technology, and health issues, but the problem persists. The 2005 report noted that the unit “clearly does not have enough staff to advance vital U.S. ... policy interests.”

The same report also noted that the environment, science, and technology portfolio is not a good fit for a FAST officer. Staffing adjustments made in response to the 2005 OIG report were short lived. In 2005, there were five full-time staff members plus one part-time professional intern in the unit. The current staff includes four persons: the experienced counselor; an entry-level officer who has not taken the Foreign Service Institute's environment, science, technology, and health course; an office management specialist with good language skills; and an eligible family member who brought to the position significant relevant experience on environmental issues. The unit gave up a locally employed staff position in 2010, which resulted in the loss of institutional memory and French-language fluency. The embassy is planning, however, to reestablish this position in the near term in an effort to increase the unit's capacity.

The entry-level officer will be replaced this summer by another second-tour officer for the last time. The Department had ceded a mid-level position to the entry-level division a number of years ago, but there are plans to return the position to the mid-level division in 2 years. The OIG team supports restoring this position to mid-level assignments. The section hopes, but is not assured, that it will retain the eligible family member position when the incumbent departs in mid-2012 but cannot predict whether prospective applicants will have relevant experience. There is also no guarantee that future office management specialists will possess the same level of French-language skills as does the incumbent.

Public Affairs

The embassy's public affairs team successfully manages the full range of public diplomacy programs in support of clearly articulated strategic and implementation plans that address the mission's key priorities. Section staff has the trust and confidence of the Ambassador and DCM. The public affairs officer is an active participant in mission planning. He participates in regular meetings with senior mission leadership and ensures that his staff is informed of decisions so that it can implement programs appropriately in support of mission goals.

An experienced senior Foreign Service officer, who previously served in France, the public affairs officer took charge in fall 2011 after a gap left by his predecessor's curtailment. During his first 5 months at post, he has instituted several changes that have been welcomed by both staff and senior management. Unusually, at a time when experienced mid-grade public diplomacy officers are in short supply, the public affairs section in Paris has a team of officers who are all serving in their functional cone, either at or above grade, and fully language qualified. A large, skilled, well-trained, and experienced locally employed staff provides continuity and support. This combination of leadership and experience has resulted in balanced and well-implemented public diplomacy programs across the spectrum of core informational, cultural, and educational activities.

Building on the priorities in the Mission Strategic and Resource Plan, the section has created and regularly updates a viable program implementation plan, ensuring that programs are targeted, budgeted for, reported on, and effective. The section manages its program budget effectively and enters program results into the Mission Activity Tracker database regularly. The section uses a missionwide contact management system to track and engage program alumni. Although this system is far from perfect, program managers use it with varying success. The

section is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the system and is doing the best it can with what it has.

The public affairs section works closely with the Franco-American Commission for Educational Exchange, which runs the Fulbright program. The public affairs officer serves as cochair for the Fulbright board; the assistant cultural affairs officer is also a commission board member and serves as Treasurer. Cooperation between the commission and the public affairs section is close and effective. The French Government recently completed a review of the binational commission's programs and gave a ringing endorsement to the work, something that the French have backed up with their funding commitment, which is at parity with the U.S. contribution.

The cultural unit manages the full gamut of speaker, cultural, and exchange visitor programs. The mission's International Visitor Leadership Program is well managed and has input from all elements of the missions as well as constituent posts. Annual grantee selection slates show attention to regional as well as ethnic and gender diversity. The cultural section has an aggressive alumni outreach program. A locally employed staff member works full time on alumni outreach, maintaining an innovative Web site that aggregates material from a variety of exchange, educational, and cultural organizations throughout France. This "virtual convener" provides links to 185 Franco-American friendship associations as well as numerous other organizations of mutual interest.

The Information Resource Center is part of the information unit. Because the information unit also handles social media, placing the Information Resource Center in the same division has resulted in useful synergy. The public affairs section recently rolled out a new outreach tool called "Ben Franklin's Paris Blog," which supplements the section's previous outreach emails. The Information Resource Center provides effective support for in-house as well as French client research requests. The information section carries out core media reporting and translation functions effectively.

Social Media

The assistant information officer ably coordinates social media programs. The mission has conducted a careful analysis of social media markets in France and developed a clear and reasonable strategy that acknowledges resource demands. Recognizing that social media place a major demand on staff time, the section has allocated sufficient locally employed staff resources to update and coordinate Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube sites as well as to maintain the core Internet Web sites. The mission created a small studio for generating clips of high-visibility mission guests and speakers that it places on YouTube.

American Corners

The mission is in the process of opening its first American Corner, in Grenoble, and has also made a grant to an organization in Lyon to establish an American House. Both proposals originated with the Lyon APP and were approved by the public affairs section in Paris and by relevant Washington offices. This bottom-up approach, however, has not addressed several key strategic questions. Why have an American Corner in France? Where is the best place to put

one? What are the implications for sustaining costs? What are the supervisory demands on the APP or consulate that proposed an American Corner? American Corners are more than book collections; programming is an essential component and places considerable demands on the element responsible for supervision. In the absence of a strategic approach, the mission cannot determine whether the current program platform best meets countrywide needs.

Recommendation 4: Embassy Paris should establish a countrywide approach to American Corners that takes into account their overall place in the mission's strategic planning and the staff and resources involved in establishing and sustaining them. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Virtual Presence Post

Embassy Paris converted a former APP in Lille into a virtual presence post. Without active engagement, virtual presence posts sometimes become little more than Web sites. The public affairs section in Paris, however, has kept Lille's Web site accurate, lively, and up to date; used Lille as a program venue; and ensured meaningful contact with local audiences. From October 2010 to the date of the inspection, the Lille virtual presence post hosted approximately one event a month, including speeches and lectures by both mission staff and U.S. speakers. The larger question of APPs is addressed in a separate section of this report.

Administrative Unit

The public affairs section maintains a small three-person administrative unit that manages grants, monitors the public diplomacy budget, prepares travel and representational vouchers, generates procurement requests, and liaises with the embassy's management section. During the 1999 consolidation of the former U.S. Information Agency with the Department, many of these functions became the responsibility of the embassy's management section. Although public affairs sections generally have retained control over grants and other public diplomacy functions not ordinarily supported by an embassy management section, the Paris vestigial administrative tail is larger than that at other missions of similar size, and some of this unit's work duplicates that of the management section. Because the head of this small unit is normally an eligible family member, this job turns over every 2 to 3 years. Moreover, because grant management and other government-specific administrative skills are not widely available in the public sector, there is usually an extended learning curve before the unit manager is fully up to speed.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Paris should evaluate the work currently being done by the public affairs section's administrative unit, either reprogram or abolish duplicative positions, and reallocate grants oversight work to the appropriate working-level officer. (Action: Embassy Paris)

A review of random grants files over the past 3 fiscal years revealed both technical and program problems. The public affairs section is neither using the required forms to maintain grant records, nor including designation letters for grants officer's representatives in the files, nor consistently closing out grants appropriately (see Department Grants Policy Directives 23, 16, and 41, respectively). The result is weak management controls for the use of Federal grants money.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Paris should update its open grants files so that they contain all required documentation, including forms for recording and tracking grants and grantee reports, and close out open grants appropriately. (Action: Embassy Paris)

In addition to the technical errors noted earlier, the OIG team questioned the section's general approach to grants. In FYs 2009, 2010, and 2011, the section issued 172, 217, and 141 grants, respectively, for both the section and on behalf of the APPs and consulates. Most of these are small grants for less than \$10,000. Many grants appear to be made to individuals or organizations on an ad hoc basis. Although the amounts are small enough that noncompetition is not an issue, the process for selecting and approving grantees is not clear.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Paris should develop a standard operating procedure to prioritize issuance of small grants in order to promote greater competition, openness, and wider managerial input.

Although the public affairs section is maintaining and recording grants, it is not closing grants out properly or managing them effectively. There is insufficient attention to the program aspects of grants when they are awarded, and no one monitors grantee reports and reminds grants officer's representatives of their responsibilities. Administrative support unit staff could assist with these duties.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Paris should implement a plan for the public affairs section's restructured administrative support unit to provide support for small grants and monitor budget progress and rewrite position descriptions of unit employees to reflect these new responsibilities. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Public Diplomacy Support to the Multilateral U.S. Missions

The OIG team noted locally employed staff training and technical grant issues in the companion reports on the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).¹ Although each of the three missions has a different public diplomacy focus, there is still an opportunity for the bilateral mission to play a role in providing mentoring, training, and technical support to the other two. The OIG team recognizes that there are three different Department bureaus and three different funding streams involved. The OIG team also recognizes that the bilateral mission does not have much flexibility to take on additional tasks. Adding an unfunded mandate to one mission to support other entities is not a recommendation that the OIG team takes lightly; however, in this case there is a clear benefit to the Department as a whole. Ideally, the restructuring of the public affairs section's management support unit recommended earlier would take into account how the section can help the public affairs sections of the two multilateral missions.

Recommendation 8: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the U.S. Mission to the Organization

¹ *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Paris, France* (May 2012) and *Inspection of the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Paris, France* (May 2012).

for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, and the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, should determine how the bilateral mission can provide limited training and mentoring opportunities to the public diplomacy programs at the two multilateral missions and draw up and approve a memorandum of understanding setting out mutual responsibilities. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the U.S. Mission to UNESCO, the U.S. Mission to the OECD, IO, and EB)

Consular Affairs

Consular operations in France are well run. In addition to the Paris consular section, the minister counselor for consular affairs ensures consistent application of policies and regulations for two consulates general, four APPs, and one consular agency, all of which provide limited American citizens services. The diversity of supervisory structures, level of services provided, and staffing of the various entities poses management challenges. Consular management will reorganize consular lines of authority when two mid-level management positions are eliminated in the summer of 2012.

The consular section has good relations with the constituent posts, which praised the section's expertise and responsiveness. A recently conducted visa services survey recorded favorable comments.

Consular Management

Staffing

The consular section has sufficient staff but will be reconfiguring portfolios in the summer of 2012 with the elimination of two American supervisory positions. The American citizens services chief position will be combined with the passport and citizenship unit chief position. The visa chief position will be eliminated, leaving a nonimmigrant unit chief and an immigrant visa and fraud prevention chief, each reporting directly to the consul general. The restructuring will correct an out-of-balance ratio of more than one manager for every two entry-level positions.

The experienced local staff is customer service oriented. Within individual units, the local staff is cross-trained on routine functions, but there is insufficient cross-training on the more complex or specialized tasks. For example, one visa assistant is responsible for the treaty trader investor visas. During the inspection, this person's designated alternate was on extended maternity leave. The dearth of cross-trained backups means that whenever the visa assistant is on leave, unopened cases build up, causing unnecessary delays in processing.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Paris should designate, cross-train, and maintain adequate alternates for each consular function, especially the most complex portfolios, to ensure continuity of service during staffing gaps.

Locally employed nonimmigrant visa staff members appear to be over graded for the work that they perform. A review of similar positions at other European posts confirms that most nonsupervisory or nonspecialized visa assistants are a grade lower than those in Paris. All locally

employed staff members in the nonimmigrant visa unit rotate through the core functions of accepting documents, printing visas, uploading applications into the database, and handling diplomatic and official visa cases. Specialty functions, such as preparing security advisory opinions, are assigned to specific individuals. A Bureau of Consular Affairs sample position description states that the FSN-08 grade is appropriate when the incumbent has responsibility for a high volume of cases, of which the majority are nonroutine. Although many of the current staff members have the experience to perform at higher levels, most of the actual work they are performing falls into the routine category.

The consular section receives visa applicants from nearly every country in the world, but the majority of those applicants apply for tourist and student visas. More than two-thirds of the applicants are French citizens; most of them apply for student, tourist, flight crew, Summer Work Travel, and diplomatic or official visas—none of them complex categories. Only 4 percent of all cases require special processing. The highly specialized treaty trader and investor cases are not processed through the regular appointment system but are instead prepared by a visa assistant at a higher grade level.

At the end of 2011, the consular section reviewed and updated all locally employed staff position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities, taking into account new requirements for collecting biometric fingerprints and processing electronic applications. The new descriptions, however, overstate the complexity of the majority of the applications and do not reflect the percentage of time the visa assistants spend on nonroutine duties. There would be no immediate financial impact of a downgrade of any visa assistant position because all incumbents can apply for saved pay; however, over the longer term, savings could be significant.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Paris should revise the nonimmigrant visa assistant position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities, determining which are at the journeyman versus highly specialized level, and submit them to the embassy's human resources section for reclassification as appropriate. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Consular Exchange Rate

The consular section is responsible for setting the official consular exchange rate for the Euro, an apparent holdover from a time when there was a financial services center in Paris. The consular exchange rate is normally set jointly by the accountable consular officer and the financial management officer and should never be lower than the rate used by the U.S. Disbursing Officer to avoid losing money. The Euro rate is important because it is used by most EU countries and is also the basis for the CFA franc used in 14 African countries. The Consular Management Handbook tasks Paris with advising other EU posts of the appropriate Euro rates. Because any change will affect more than 40 consular sections, the officer responsible for this task spends several hours each month ensuring correctness. A cumbersome clearance process lengthens the amount of time it takes to adjust to fluctuations in the Euro. There is no real reason why this function, which can be done anywhere, should be retained by a busy consular section that is about to lose two U.S. direct-hire staff.

Recommendation 10: The Bureau of Consular Affairs should assume responsibility for setting the Euro consular exchange rate. (Action: CA)

Efficiency Measures

The Nice consular agency accepts passport applications and provides notarial services. A senior local employee with more than 40 years of consular experience essentially runs the office, making appointments for the part-time consular agent, who sees applicants on Wednesdays. Applicants make appointments by phone or in person. Reducing the amount of time the local employee spends making appointments would allow her to focus on activities commensurate with her grade level.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Paris should establish an email address for the Nice consular agency and implement a policy that requires consular clients to use email as the preferred method of scheduling appointments.

On its public Web site and in response to telephone or in-person inquiries, Consulate General Marseille refers all Federal benefits applicants to Nice. The Social Security Administration funds a five-person Federal benefits unit at Embassy Paris that has responsibility for providing information and processing claims in France and regionally. The assistant in Nice, although knowledgeable about Federal benefits, is providing unreimbursed and duplicative services for customers living in the south of France. The APPs and Consulate General Strasbourg already forward all Federal benefits inquiries to Paris.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Paris should designate the Paris Federal benefits unit in France as the sole provider of Federal benefits information and update all public Web sites accordingly. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The Marseille consulate general telephone tree is inadequate. Callers who choose the French information option are referred only to a Web site but are not given the Web site address. The consular section, even though it is open to the public only 2 days a week, does not have any public telephone inquiry hours. As a result, callers press any button on the automated options menu, flooding nonconsular staff with consular inquiries or using the emergency consular services line to get nonemergency information.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Paris should revise the Consulate General Marseille automated response options menu to provide more detailed consular information.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Paris should establish telephone inquiry hours at Consulate General Marseille, publicize them on the Web site, and include them in the consulate's telephone automated options menu.

Space

The Paris consular facilities are spacious but separated into four nonconnected units. The small passport unit is divided in half by a corridor (b) (5) The consul general and the office management specialist, as well as a conference room, are two floors above the rest of the section.

The physical layout is not ideal for supervising staff or maintaining a cohesive work unit. When the two manager positions are eliminated in the summer, there will be sufficient space to consolidate the units into three areas. The consular section would be reduced by nearly 63 square meters, decreasing the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) cost.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Paris should consolidate the consular section spaces to improve supervision, create stronger section cohesiveness, reduce the number of entrances, and decrease International Cooperative Administrative Support Services charges.

(b) (5)

Informal Recommendation 8: (b) (5)

Nonimmigrant Visas

Embassy Paris provides all visa services in France. Although France is a nonimmigrant visa waiver country, nearly 60 percent of the 58,000 visa applicants are French seeking nontourist and business visas. Non-French applicants from more than 100 different countries add complexity to the work.

Nonimmigrant visa appointments are scheduled through a contract call center, which also provides applicants with general processing information but does not collect the application fee, which is paid through a bank. The call center provides daily reports of the following day's appointments that, in turn, facilitate uploading of the online applications each evening. Because applicants do not have to complete the online form before securing an interview time, some names on the appointment list do not have a corresponding application to upload, nor can the section be certain that the applicant paid the requisite fee.

The consular section experiences a no-show rate of approximately 10 percent. According to *Foreign Affairs Manual* regulation 9 FAM 41.103 N 10.3, the cases of applicants that fail to appear should be refused temporarily until they actually apply for their visas. However, because the consular section cannot be sure that the applicant paid, it does not routinely refuse the applications. Allowing applicants to schedule appointments before paying fees results in more open cases and complicates the fee reconciliation process.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should implement a policy requiring the call center to obtain proof of payment of the machine-readable nonimmigrant visa application fee and a confirmation number from the online application before scheduling an appointment. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with CA)

Immigrant Visas

The immigrant visa unit processed just over 1,100 applicants in FY 2011. Included in that total were more than 350 diversity visa (lottery) cases from dozens of countries. On March 1, 2012, the unit also began processing all immigrant visas for Portugal. The number of additional cases should not have a large impact on the one-officer unit but will require creating information sheets and instructions in Portuguese. Consular management rewrote a vacant visa assistant position to require both French and Portuguese language proficiency. During the inspection, the embassy identified a candidate, and a security clearance was pending. In the meantime, a Portuguese speaker from another section will be available to provide interpretation as needed.

The unit also provides travel letters for U.S. permanent residents whose green cards have been lost, stolen, or expired. The unit processes four or five such cases a day. The U.S. Customs and Immigration Service in Rome provides guidance for and verification of the legal status of these individuals. Although the Department bills other agencies for such services in accordance with the Economy Act, the unit does not do so.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Paris should establish an appointment system for routine U.S. Customs and Immigration Service requests to facilitate tracking of actual time spent on those cases for reimbursement purposes.

Visas Viper

The Ambassador's staff assistant is the designated Visas Viper coordinator. That position has traditionally been filled by an entry-level consular officer on a 1-year rotational assignment. Having the staff assistant coordinate the committee facilitates the handling and storing of classified material. A consular section entry-level officer runs required name checks on any nominations, but the staff assistant drafts and transmits the monthly cables. The visa chief is the designated consular representative to the group, and the DCM chairs the Visas Viper meetings.

The embassy submitted all reports on time for the 12 months preceding the inspection. However, the submission cables did not note whether the embassy had checked the consular lookout and support system or whether the embassy had made a potential terrorist entry into the lookout system. The OIG team discussed with the Visas Viper coordinator ways to include this information in the future.

In summer 2012, the staff assistant position will become a regular assignment and no longer a consular rotation. Additionally, a new mechanism for creating the nomination will make it more cumbersome for the consular section to pass name check results to a coordinator outside the consular section. Administrative coordination for scheduling meetings and requesting initial nominations could remain with the staff assistant.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Paris should move the Visas Viper coordinator function to the consular section for the purpose of drafting submission cables and coordinating required name checks.

American Citizens Services

The American citizens services unit is divided into two separate divisions: passport and nationality, and special citizens services. As mentioned earlier, one supervisory officer will manage both units as part of an upcoming reorganization.

The passport unit prides itself on its customer service orientation. It opens extra appointments for children's passport applications on Wednesdays, for example, when French schools close early. Staff at the two consulates and the APPs uniformly commented on the Paris passport staff's availability at a moment's notice to provide advice on complex citizenship cases.

The passport unit has a good mix of experienced staff and newer employees, who have introduced useful information technology skills. In addition to its regular passport and consular report of birth appointments, the unit processes a high number of emergency passports and handles data entry and transmission of mail-in passport applications, APP-accepted cases, and diplomatic and official passport renewals.

Marseille also processes passport applications and consular reports of birth abroad, both for itself and for the Nice consular agency and the Toulouse APP. Occasionally, Paris and Marseille may have different requirements or procedures for the same service. Although they consult productively when questions arise, the OIG team counseled both on the advisability of mutual visits, if resources permit, to identify and resolve any anomalies.

Marseille has three locally employed consular assistants. All perform essentially the same functions, although one employee also maintains the Web site, formats the consulate's biweekly reports, and serves as the backup systems administrator. Her position is two grades lower than that of the other two consular assistants. The consulate has submitted a request to the Paris human resources section for a position description review and reclassification, which the OIG team supports.

American Aid Society

The consular section provides office space, telephone, and computer access to the American Aid Society, a private, nonprofit organization that supplements the embassy's services to destitute American citizens. The aid society's volunteer has an embassy badge, unescorted access to the consular section, a Department email address, and an embassy telephone line. The organization has occupied free office space for 20 years without a formal agreement. Prior to the OIG inspection, the consular section chief prepared a memorandum of agreement to delineate the duties and responsibilities of the organization. Embassy management has not previously verified that the use of government funds to provide space and telephone and other services to this nongovernmental entity is authorized. Clarity on this issue is important, given the liability implications for the section.

Recommendation 13: Embassy Paris should request that the Office of the Legal Adviser review the memorandum of agreement between the consular section and the American Aid Society and determine whether the consular section has authority to provide space and other resources to this private, nonprofit organization. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Consular Integrity and Antifraud

France is designated as a low-fraud country. The fraud prevention unit is composed of one full-time local employee, who is supervised by the immigrant visa unit chief. Most of the unit's time is devoted to document verification for nonimmigrant visa cases. Recent validation studies verified that the overstay rate for Paris-issued visa applicants is very low. Paris is scheduled to get an assistant regional security officer – investigator for fraud work in the summer of 2013. Consular management has not yet determined how best to integrate this position into the consular section, given the low level of fraud and lack of a full-time American fraud prevention manager counterpart.

Recommendation 14: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should develop specific work requirements and a scope of work for the new assistant regional security officer – investigator before the employee arrives at post. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with DS and CA)

American Presence Posts

Embassy Paris developed the APP concept in 1998. The Department has built on this base and established APPs in several other bilateral missions.² Both the original paper and the FAM note that trade and public diplomacy are key missions of the APPs in France, followed by American citizens services. Embassy France currently maintains four APPs in Bordeaux, Lyon, Rennes, and Toulouse.

Recognizing the importance of trade promotion when creating the APPs, the mission placed their supervision and coordination under the minister counselor for economic affairs. In coordination with Paris-based Department of Commerce colleagues, the economic section recently hosted a digital video conference with APP and consulate staff to review the basics of trade promotion. Although the minister counselor attends the monthly video conference meetings chaired by the DCM with APP officers and organizes semiannual meetings that APP staff attend in Paris, she has not visited all of the posts in the past 2 years.

During the 2005 OIG inspection report, the Department of Commerce was funding the salaries of locally employed staff at two of the APPs and providing all costs for an American officer at the APP in Toulouse. Since then, the Department of Commerce has withdrawn all support from the APP program. The Department of Commerce currently maintains a staff of 3 full-time American officer positions and 14 locally employed staff members in Paris, but its withdrawal from the APPs has resulted in the Department's picking up the trade banner without additional funding in order to maintain that leg of the APP tripod.

Another leg is public diplomacy. APP officers report spending between one-third and one-half of their time on public diplomacy, and public diplomacy funds pay for half of each of the locally employed staff positions in three of the APPs and all of the costs of a locally employed staff member in the fourth. In addition, the public affairs section provides each APP an average of \$20,000 per year to support local projects, mostly through small grants, as well as a

² 2 FAM 133.

modest share of the public diplomacy representational budget. There is, however, no formal supervisory relationship between the public affairs section and the APP officers. Based on the operative principle “follow the money,” the OIG team questions the appropriateness of the public diplomacy section’s funding of staff and programs when the minister counselor for public affairs has no direct supervisory role. The public affairs section has already moved in the direction of providing greater support and accountability to public diplomacy activities in the APPs by designating a member of the section as the APP coordinator. The OIG team endorses this change, which both strengthens program management controls and provides needed technical assistance.

Recommendation 15: Embassy Paris should require the public affairs officer to submit formal input to the employee evaluation reports of the American presence post officers and incorporate this responsibility into the public affairs officer’s work requirements. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The APPs provide limited consular services, including accepting passport applications and reports of birth abroad and performing notary services. Each APP provides consular services by appointment only and collects fees by credit card. None of the APPs has the necessary consular software to process passports or consular reports of birth, but they do accept and conduct a preliminary review of passport and report of birth cases based on paper submissions. The APPs then forward completed passport and report of birth applications to either Paris or Marseille for data entry, adjudication, mandatory name checks, and final processing. On rare occasions, APP staff requests that an applicant return to the APP’s office or go to Paris, based on results of the name check. Notarial services do not require any computer applications and are completed on site.

The APPs were originally intended to provide only emergency American citizens services;³ however, officers at some of the APPs say that they spend as much as 25 percent of their time on consular work. Fielding, referring, or forwarding visa questions to the embassy also consume some portion of local staff time. (b) (5)

Officers at APPs report that applicants appreciate the convenience of being able to obtain services close to home. (b) (5)

Each of these four APPs has its own mix of program goals and objectives; moreover, the success of each of these one-officer operations depends on the energy, vision, skill set, and resourcefulness of the incumbent. The OIG team recognizes the vital importance of “being there” that gave rise to the APP concept; however, there have been several changes in APP protocols since the last inspection, notably the withdrawal of Foreign Commercial Service support. The last evaluation of the APPs in France was conducted in 2006.⁴

Recommendation 16: Embassy Paris should conduct a thorough cost/benefit analysis of each American presence post that involves all stakeholders in the posts’ work and make

³ 2 FAM 133.2 (5).

⁴ 06 STATE 114035.

recommendations to the Department of State about whether continued operations are justified.
(Action: Embassy Paris)

Resource Management

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2011
Department of State					
Diplomatic and Consular Programs	113	10	67	190	\$19,655,611
ICASS	13	14	217	244	\$41,646,100
Public Diplomacy	5	3	24	32	\$4,468,375
Diplomatic Security	3	3	1	7	\$6,265,706
Marine Security Guards	12	0	4	16	\$392,130
Representation				0	\$152,500
OBO	1	1		2	\$10,611,918
Africa Budget Office			5	5	\$870,900
African Regional Services	2		19	21	\$4,166,323
Financial Support and Training Office	1		15	16	\$2,083,000
Department of Agriculture					
Foreign Agriculture Service	2		3	5	\$621,397
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service					
Other (Agricultural Research Service, European Biological Control Laboratory)	2		19	21	
Department of Defense					
Defense Attaché Office	21	1	7	29	\$2,545,255
Office of Defense Cooperation	3	3	1	7	
Other – Exchange Students, Olmstead Scholars, FAOs	39	0	0	39	
Other – Department of Defense	16	1	0	17	
Department of Energy	1	0	0	1	
Department of Justice					
Drug Enforcement Administration	5	0	1	6	
Federal Bureau of Investigation	1	1	0	2	
Legal Attaché Office	7	0	0	7	
Other				0	
Department of Homeland					

Security					
Transportation Security Administration	1	1	0	2	
Coast Guard				0	
Customs and Border Protection	5	0	0	5	
Container Security Initiative	2	0	0	2	
Immigration and Customs Enforcement	3	1	3	7	
Secret Service	6	2	2	10	
Other				0	
Foreign Commercial Service	3	0	14	17	\$2,409,060
Department of Transportation					
Federal Aviation Administration	1	0	1	2	
Social Security Administration			7	7	
Centers for Disease Control	1	0	0	1	
American Battle Monuments Commission	31	0	188	219	
National Science Foundation	1	1	1	3	
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	1		1	2	
Internal Revenue Service	2	3		5	
Totals	304	45	600	949	\$95,888,275

Note: Funding is included only for agencies whose budgets are administered by the Department. Funding costs do not include U.S. direct-hire salaries.

Management Overview

The TMM office provides administrative support to all three missions in France. The OIG 2005 inspection report for the three missions recommended that their individual administrative support operations be merged, which led to the September 2005 establishment of the TMM office. All three missions now subscribe fully to the ICASS platform managed by the TMM office. Partly as a result of this merger, and partly due to outsourcing and automation of administrative services, administrative support staff has decreased by approximately 17 percent from 2006 to the present number, despite a client base increase of approximately 7 percent.

The TMM does a good job of supporting a large and complex trio of diplomatic missions and copes well with the heavy official visitor load. The minister counselor's considerable experience and familiarity with the host country environment have facilitated the section's

success in advancing a number of the mission's top goals. The single biggest challenge in the coming years will be succession planning for the mission's aging senior locally employed staff, combined with continued rightsizing by attrition as locally employed staff members retire.

The TMM platform in Paris provides the full range of administrative support services to the consulates general in Marseille and Strasbourg. The consular officer in Marseilles, who has previous management experience, directs basic administrative operations in addition to his consular functions. He is assisted by a locally employed administrative assistant. Management and staff from TMM travel to Marseille occasionally, but the consulate staff would welcome more frequent visits in both directions and across all functions to promote a sense of common purpose.

The Strasbourg administrative assistant and TMM collaborate well. The motivated management staff in Strasbourg also includes a secretary/receptionist/driver and the consul general's driver.

Real Property

Office Facilities

The embassy has addressed a number of major property issues since the 2005 inspection, the most significant being completion of the post-September 11 plan to improve the security of U.S. Government personnel and facilities in Paris through colocation and security upgrades. The three U.S. missions, which were scattered over several sites in 2004, are now consolidated in the embassy chancery, one floor of a nearby office building (called the NEO), and in the leased Raphael building near the OECD. The embassy receives high marks for accomplishing this complex undertaking. Space in all three locations is attractive, functional, and well maintained. The embassy also leases and operates a remote warehouse.

Embassy Paris is a member of the League of Green Embassies and has embarked on an ambitious plan to reduce its carbon footprint through facility upgrades via an energy savings performance contract in coordination with OBO.

NEO Building Cost Sharing

During the survey phase of the inspection, the OIG team learned that as part of the space consolidation plan, Department offices displaced some other agencies in the chancery, requiring that they relocate to the leased NEO building. The displaced agencies have been paying considerable fit-out costs for their spaces as part of the annual rent. Per 15 FAM 164, when one agency's activities are moved to accommodate another's activities, the displacing agency is to pay for the fit out of the displaced agency's new space. TMM has brought this issue to OBO's attention.

Recommendation 17: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with the Bureau of Resource Management, should review the history of the forced moves of other agencies from the chancery to leased accommodations, determine whether fit-out costs at the NEO building were allocated either in accordance with regulations or per any formal agreement

at the time of the move, and take appropriate remedial action, if required. (Action: OBO, in coordination with RM)

Hotel de Talleyrand – George C. Marshall Center

The U.S. Government-owned Talleyrand building, which previously housed the consular section and other offices, is a historical property listed on the Secretary's Register of Culturally Significant Properties. It was the venue for the signing of the Marshall Plan following World War II. In August 2006, the Department entered into a lease agreement with a prominent American law firm, which now occupies most of the building. The most historically significant and decorative rooms, which were restored through private contributions, remain under embassy control. They house the George C. Marshall Center, which contains photographs and other memorabilia related to the Marshall Plan. As an integral part of the embassy's cultural heritage program, the Ambassador has opened the Marshall Center and his official residence for tours by family and contacts of embassy personnel.

The Marshall Center is also available for conferences and representational and private events that promote U.S.-French ties and understanding. The embassy receives reimbursement for actual maintenance, local guard, and other costs related to these events. In a recent development, the embassy requested Department approval to charge a capital fee for such use, which will defray the cost of the unique maintenance requirements of the Marshall Center's period furniture, furnishings, and decorative finishes. The inspectors support this proposal. The embassy's overall cultural heritage program is addressed in a separate section of this report.

Several clauses in the lease with the tenant of the Talleyrand building restrict how the embassy may use the Marshall Center. For example, guests can use the grand staircase only during formal events, relegating all others to a narrow and undistinguished stairwell, and only the tenant or lessor can sponsor events at the Marshall Center. The Department is reviewing a proposal that would enable the embassy to expand the use of the center and charge a capital fee to be applied toward its unique maintenance requirements.

Residential Property

The TMM staff maintains a total of five government-owned residences for the three ambassadors in Paris and their three DCMs.⁵ These properties are beautiful and well maintained.

The bilateral Ambassador's residence, like the Talleyrand building, is on the Secretary's Register of Culturally Significant Properties. This large residence has numerous elegant reception rooms for entertaining and a large private apartment. The Ambassador, in collaboration with OBO, has secured donations for the maintenance and renovation of this historical property. The Jefferson bedroom, used by high-level visitors including the President, and the ballroom theater system were renovated recently through donations, and a project to restore a main reception room is in the planning stages. The TMM staff is also working with OBO on the renovation and upgrade of the outdated electrical system.

⁵ Two of the DCMs are a couple and share a residence.

The U.S. Government owns several other residential properties and 2 residential complexes and leases 178 residential units. Although central Paris apartments typically have great charm, they are in most cases quite old and require constant maintenance. Employees, however, seem willing to endure these shortcomings for the experience of living in central Paris. Most leased properties are rented from institutional owners such as banks, insurance companies, and pension funds, which reduces dependency on individual landlords who are less attuned to embassy maintenance expectations.

Boulogne and Neuilly Housing

The Department constructed the gated Boulogne and Neuilly complexes in 1954 to U.S. specifications. The five-story buildings have elevators, good storage, and well-kept common recreational areas. Both complexes are on the bus routes of the schools attended by American dependent children but are a relatively long commute from central Paris where most employees work.

The two complexes tend to be the most difficult housing to assign due to their distance from central Paris. The apartments, however, are spacious, bright, have plenty of closets and storage, and are in quiet suburban neighborhoods. They are also fully furnished, whereas leased apartments are provided with appliances and draperies only, and employees must ship their own furniture.

Armed Forces Network

At the end of FY 2011, TMM spent \$44,000 to repair/upgrade the Armed Forces Network television service at the Boulogne and Neuilly housing complexes. The system was originally installed at the personal expense of former compound residents. TMM justified the expense as an attraction for new employees contemplating assignment to the two complexes. Per 5 FAM 570 d. (1), regional bureaus must approve installation of television and related services in U.S. Government facilities, and the occupants must pay recurring charges for personal use. Similarly, the embassy installed an Armed Forces Network system at the consul general's residence in Strasbourg. There is no record that the embassy requested approval for either installation.

Recommendation 18: Embassy Paris should request retroactive approval from the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs for the installation of Armed Forces Network service at the Boulogne and Neuilly complexes and the consul general's residence in Strasbourg and implement procedures for collecting payment from occupants for recurring charges for personal use of this service. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Marseille

The U.S. Government owns two properties in Marseille—the consulate general office building and the consul general's residence. The consular officer resides in a furnished short-term leased apartment, and the two U.S. Navy employees are on military overseas housing allowance. The old office building, which was purchased in 1955, is in the congested center of

Marseille. On-site parking for both official vehicles and the public is nonexistent, and the consulate sedan and van are parked in an adjacent parking garage.

Although the office building retains a certain Mediterranean charm, it is in need of significant refurbishment. An electrical upgrade is due to be completed by summer 2012. Consulate staff complain of difficulties in identifying reliable maintenance contractors, which often stalls projects. The consulate general would welcome more support from TMM functional specialists on more complicated procurement and maintenance requirements. This lack of attention is most notably reflected in the relatively tired state of the consulate's interior spaces and furnishings. The inspectors also heard the familiar refrain of there being little money to make improvements to the consulate.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should develop a comprehensive refurbishment plan for Consulate General Marseille's interior and make improvements a priority as funds become available. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with OBO)

Because consulate staffing has diminished over the years, the office space allocations are now excessive. Individual offices are quite large, and there are a number of vacant rooms. Per 15 FAM 512.1 a., posts must review U.S. Government-owned properties annually to identify any that exceed requirements or are uneconomical to retain. This review then forms the basis for a formal determination by the Department of whether to retain a property.

Recommendation 20: Embassy Paris should report the underutilization of the consulate general building in Marseille in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The consul general's residence, purchased in 1947, is a lovely property with a large terrace and garden overlooking the sea. It is suitable for the consul general's representational needs. The property also has a cottage with two small apartments that are used by Department interns assigned to Marseille. The house is well maintained, and a full electrical upgrade project is under way.

Strasbourg

The centrally located U.S. Government-owned office building is meticulously maintained. The office space, all on the ground floor, is more than adequate for the consulate's current staffing and is attractive and well furnished. The second floor has two apartments, one of which is available for use by official visitors; the other serves as a digital video conference room. Until recently, one of the apartments was occupied by an officer studying at the Ecole Nationale d'Administration prior to a regular assignment to the embassy. There are two staff rooms with a bath on the top floor used by Department interns. An OBO-funded roof replacement project was completed in 2005. Major security upgrades have been concluded as well.

The consul general's residence and garden are perfectly suited for representational entertaining. The property is well maintained and was recently refurbished. A project to replace and upgrade the electrical system is in progress. Embassy Paris has proposed to the Department

that the consul general's residence be sold and the top two floors of the consulate be converted to a large apartment for the consul general. The Policy and Program Implementation section of this report includes a recommendation about deferring the decision on the sale of the residence until the Department makes a decision on the future of the U.S. presence in Strasbourg.

Interagency Housing Board

The interagency housing board does a good job of assigning housing to employees based on family size, rank in position, stated preferences, and availability of government-owned units. The board is obligated to assign Department and other foreign affairs agency personnel to government-owned housing before other agency staff, so at times the board has no choice but to make assignments to the less popular Boulogne and Neuilly complexes to avoid incurring unnecessary lease costs.

Although employees expressed concern that the previous interagency housing board made decisions based on insufficient information received from the housing office, the new housing management team and housing staff are making a concerted effort to be more transparent and customer oriented in proposing assignments. The process is improving, as evidenced by the most recent meeting of the new housing board, where members lauded the housing staff for providing a complete packet of information well in advance. The inspectors did find, however, that some housing board members are not fully briefed on their responsibilities and pertinent policies. The board also has no designated vice chair, resulting in confusion as to who is in charge in the chair's absence.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Paris should establish a training program for new members of the interagency housing board.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Paris should designate a vice chair of the interagency housing board.

Marine Security Guard Quarters/Embassy Parking Lot

The Marine security guard detachment is housed in one of the apartment buildings at the Boulogne complex. When the detachment relocated to Boulogne from central Paris years ago, the building underwent modifications to accommodate the 26 Marines assigned to Paris at that time. The contingent is now down to 12, and the large and well-maintained quarters are underutilized. The Department is reviewing the embassy's proposal to construct a new Marine security guard residence on the embassy parking lot adjacent to the Ambassador's residence and in close proximity to the chancery. In 2005, an effort to sell the parking lot failed due to the buyer's inability to get zoning approval. Beginning in 2010, the embassy mounted a successful legal argument paving the way for the construction of a staff residential building that would showcase the latest American green technology. The relocation of the Marines to this new building also would allow for reconversion of the Boulogne building to staff apartments, which in today's market would save the U.S. Government more than \$500,000 in annual rent. The project would also improve significantly Marine reaction time to an embassy emergency; allow for construction of badly needed underground parking for official vehicles; and boost the morale

of the Marine security guard detachment, whose current residence is isolated from central Paris. The inspection team supports this project.

Living Quarters Allowance Oversight

Several agencies under chief of mission authority assign staff to duty locations outside Paris. For example, there are dozens of Department of Defense (DOD) personnel on various exchange programs throughout France. Personnel receive either a civilian living quarters allowance or a military overseas housing allowance from their respective agencies to defray the cost of leased housing and utilities on the local economy. Military personnel receive their allowances directly from their respective commands, so TMM is not involved with payments. Neither the TMM housing office nor the regional security office inspects these privately leased properties to ensure that the lease protects the interest of the employee, complies with space standards as required by 15 FAM 236, and meets security and safety guidelines as required by 15 FAM 263 e. Embassy Paris has experienced logistical and financial impediments to supporting U.S. Government employees under chief of mission authority at remote locations. However, the Ambassador and the single real property manager at post have responsibility for ensuring proper oversight of all nonmilitary properties in France leased or owned by U.S. Government departments and agencies.

Recommendation 21: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to bring all residences leased by employees under chief of mission authority or funded with U.S. Government allowances into compliance with U.S. Government space, safety, and security standards for France. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Paris should review all residential housing leases for employees under chief of mission authority and modify the wording as necessary so that the lease agreements contain the standard language that the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations has approved for France.

General Services Office

The general services office staff includes a supervisory general services officer and a first-tour assistant general services officer. The third general services officer position recently became vacant and will remain so until fall 2012. This staffing gap will place a considerable burden on the other two officers as they prepare for the summer housing cycle, and the embassy is requesting temporary duty assistance. (See the Management Controls section for additional information about the impact of this staffing gap.) The office also includes two locally employed ombudsmen, who liaise with the housing office on behalf of the tri-mission community. The inspectors identified several management control weaknesses that are discussed in that section of the report.

Procurement

The procurement staff is well trained in Federal acquisition regulations and has transitioned fully to the Web-based Integrated Logistics Management System and procurement and contracting software. The embassy makes use of bulk purchase agreements wherever

possible and participates in the government credit card program. The three general services officers and the procurement supervisor have contracting warrants of \$250,000 each. The procurement employees are isolated and spread among numerous office spaces, which hinders internal communications and teamwork. Responsibilities among the locally employed staff members are well defined, but backup duties are less clear and not assigned based on functional expertise.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Paris should designate formal backup relationships in the procurement section and provide cross-training where appropriate.

TMM recently designated the financial management office as the designated billing office to ensure proper internal controls. Nonetheless, the responsibility for matching an invoice with the purchase order and receiving report still lies with the procurement section. This arrangement is a clear internal control weakness and is addressed fully in the Management Controls section of this report.

The procurement agent responsible for ordering cellular telephones for official use receives and distributes cell phones and maintains cell phone inventory records. He also holds a stock of cell phones for use by temporary official visitors. Per 14 FAM 411.2 d., inventories of goods should be received and maintained separately from the procurement function. In Paris, the information management office already manages the inventory of official BlackBerry devices but does not manage the cellular phone inventory, which is a management control weakness. (See the Information Technology section of this report for a related recommendation.)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Paris should transfer responsibility for the management of the cellular phone program from the procurement section to the information management office. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Property, Warehouse, and Supply Chain Management

The TMM property management section in Paris performs effectively. During the inspection, the property office completed annual inventories for all office facilities and official residences in France. Inventory discrepancies, where they existed, were well within guidelines.

The off-site nonexpendable property warehouse is well organized and meticulously maintained. The Ambassador and DCM residences and the two government-owned apartment complexes are the only fully furnished properties, so there is no need to maintain large stocks of furniture. In an effort to shorten the supply chain and further reduce inventories, the property team has taken advantage of the Department's just-in-time residential furniture program. Recently, TMM began procuring all major appliances on the local market.

In 2011, TMM joined the Department's expendable supplies contract with Staples. Tri-mission offices and agencies now order their office supplies directly on the Internet with their government credit cards for door-to-door delivery. As a result, TMM has been able to free up valuable store room space and reduce positions.

A number of valuable works by American artists donated by the Foundation for Arts and Preservation in Embassies are hanging in the private family quarters, rather than in the representational areas, of some of the ambassadorial residences in Paris.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Paris should confirm with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations that it is appropriate to place official artworks donated by the Foundation for Arts and Preservation in Embassies in the private family quarters of the ambassadorial residences.

Customs and Shipping

In recent years, the customs and shipping unit has struggled to maintain high customer service standards due to staffing shortages. Despite these difficulties, the unit continues to receive good marks for service. The staff has transitioned well to the introduction of the more efficient International Government Bill of Lading shipping method, whereby shipments are booked door to door rather than through several intermediaries. TMM uses five shipping contractors, and the contract is rebid every 5 years. DOD shipments pose unique challenges. All DOD personnel under chief of mission authority at other missions arrange their shipping through a specialized DOD shipping organization. In France, the TMM shipping section serves that purpose, requiring that the shipping staff be fully versed in DOD shipping regulations.

The shipping section is also responsible for the registration of official vehicles. The workload is significant; the American Battlefields Monument Commission alone has 60 vehicles countrywide, for example. Shipping also assists newly arrived employees with registering personal vehicles and obtaining license plates. Employees provide the shipping clerk with cash, which he holds in his file cabinet and uses to pay the vendor upon delivery of the private license plates. However, the clerk is not an official subcashier and therefore is not authorized to hold funds for which he is then personally accountable.

Recommendation 23: Embassy Paris should establish an appropriate procedure for handling funding for the purchase of employees' personal license plates. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Motor Pool

Motor pool operations are generally effective, most notably in the area of high-level visitor support. As a part of the embassy's greening initiative to reduce its carbon footprint, TMM has purchased four U.S.-manufactured electric vehicles for use in Paris and at the consulates general. Because taxis and public transportation are readily available in Paris, TMM is making an effort to discourage staff from using scarce motor pool resources for routine official transportation. Nonetheless, in response to calls that the motor pool be more responsive to tri-mission needs, a working group undertook a thorough analysis of motor pool operations in 2011. The group's findings revealed that, although motor pool refuses very few legitimate requests for vehicles, there were areas for improvement that TMM has taken steps to address. For example, the embassy cashier now sells metro tickets for official use; official documents are delivered daily to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNESCO; and transportation of ICASS-subscribing agency staff now has a higher priority.

The motor pool supervisor is working to modernize and automate motor pool operations. Employees must use eServices to submit requests for vehicles, and all drivers now have smart phones. She is also updating and validating the Integrated Logistical Management System database to ensure that vehicle inventory, mileage, and maintenance records are correct. Drivers use credit cards for gasoline purchase that are vehicle specific, which allows TMM access to important management control information.

Motor pool records indicate that drivers are generally adhering to the regulation that they not work more than 10 hours per day to ensure the safety of passengers. However, in a few cases overtime has been excessive; one driver incurred more than 1,000 hours of overtime in 1 year. This practice not only poses a safety hazard but also is an inefficient use of U.S. Government funds.

Recommendation 24: Embassy Paris should review all excessive driver overtime and reallocate resources to keep overtime costs at a minimum. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The TMM motor vehicle policy addresses the potential personal liability of nonofficial drivers, or incidental operators, who use U.S. Government vehicles for other authorized uses. The policy does not address an employee's potential personal liability in a U.S. or foreign court for damages by a host country or third-country national injured in an accident, per 14 FAM 433.5 a. and b.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Paris should amend its motor vehicle policy to inform incidental operators of their potential personal liability for damages that may be awarded by a U.S. or foreign court.

Passengers do not sign their trip tickets consistently in accordance with tri-mission motor vehicle policy M2011-019, dated October 2011, nor do drivers enforce the requirement. As a result, motor pool records are incomplete, and it is difficult to confirm authorized vehicle use.

Recommendation 25: Embassy Paris should enforce tri-mission policy requiring that passengers in U.S. Government vehicles sign a trip ticket following each trip. (Action: Embassy Paris)

In 2002, the regional security officer determined that the chauffeurs for the three ambassadors require knowledge, skills, and abilities of a security-related nature that were not addressed in position classification standards at that time. As a result, five current and former ambassadorial drivers were promoted and given the title of security guard/chauffeur. This title is a misnomer and no longer a distinguishing feature because all embassy drivers are given defensive driver training and required to be alert to any potential hostile action against U.S. Government employees or property.

Recommendation 26: Embassy Paris should cease giving ambassadors' drivers the title of security guard/chauffeur. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Four armored vehicles used by the three ambassadors and the two consuls general have been replaced, and the older vehicles are awaiting disposal. Both TMM and the regional security

office want to retain the older vehicles for their useful life as backups for high-level visits. Premature disposal of these vehicles deprives the mission of a valuable asset.

Recommendation 27: Embassy Paris should submit a request to the Bureau of Administration and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security for formal authority to retain the four armored vehicles scheduled for disposal. (Action: Embassy Paris)

(b) (5)

(b) (6)

The mission has also imposed strict rules on the number of hours drivers can work for both safety and funding reasons. The relocation of maintenance shops from a remote site to the chancery reduced the number of available parking spaces, resulted in closure of the car wash, and displaced the drivers from their down room. The dispatcher and 13 drivers are squeezed into small cubicles in a cramped space resembling a call center. TMM is aware of these issues and is addressing them through more consistent and open communication and targeted counseling.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy Paris should identify appropriate space in the chancery as a chauffeur down room.

Visitors Support Unit

TMM recently merged the executive support unit, established in 2009 to relieve control officers of the burden of coordinating visit logistics, with the traditional travel and visitors unit. Both units are operating effectively; however, overlapping responsibilities has at times led to misunderstandings and duplication of effort. The volume of travel and visits to Paris (52,834 room nights booked for 9,341 official visitors in 2011) leaves little room for error.

The new one-stop-shop visitors support unit provides the full range of travel services to travelers and control officers. The unit also oversees the work of the tri-mission travel management contractor, Carlson Wagonlit Travel, and monitors all premium class travel. Recognizing that the ultimate success of the combined unit requires a clear definition of the organizational structure and staff responsibilities, TMM has updated and reclassified all unit position descriptions.

The visitors unit negotiates arrangements with hotels for official visitors, including rates for the coming year. The visitors unit also has a role in defining accommodation requirements, but per *Foreign Affairs Handbook* regulation 14 FAH-2 H-131 a., only a designated contracting officer can request proposals and negotiate on behalf of the U.S. Government. Because the staff of the visitors unit has no contracting authority, it is inappropriate for the unit to perform this function

Recommendation 28: Embassy Paris should transfer responsibility for negotiating arrangements with hotels from the visitors unit to an authorized contracting officer. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Print Shop

The TMM print shop received the highest customer satisfaction scores of any ICASS service provider. The shop's three staff members have stayed ahead of the curve on new technologies, are trained on Adobe InDesign software, and create a panoply of complex products. The print shop outsources jobs requiring unique equipment, such as extra-large posters and banners.

The print shop supports the consulates and APPs as well as other agencies under ICASS. The print shop supervisor tracks workload counts through an in-house software application. As new technologies further streamline the printing process and with targeted outsourcing, TMM may find that the print shop can function with two employees in the future.

Facilities and Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

The facilities management office provides effective support to the three missions in Paris, the consulates general, and the APPs. A facilities management officer, who has been on temporary duty in Paris since July 2011, leads the section. A permanent facilities manager will arrive in July 2012. In 2010, the facilities section, formerly part of general services, became an independent unit reporting directly to TMM management. Despite some early reorganization strains, the relationship between facilities and other general services sections has improved, as reflected in the more inclusive weekly meetings to coordinate housing make readies for new arrivals.

The mission's occupational safety and health committee last met in December 2011. Chaired by the DCM, the committee discussed recommendations from the 2008 Office of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management report. The inspection team reviewed the mission's compliance with the report's recommendations and found that virtually all have been closed.

In addition to directing maintenance and construction projects and providing routine maintenance for government-owned buildings, the facilities office oversees the cultural heritage program.

Cultural Heritage Program

The cultural heritage program was established to protect and maintain the large inventory of high-value fine arts and other items of cultural significance distributed among 16 locations in France. The embassy and OBO's residential design and cultural heritage division jointly administer the program.

OBO funds the salary of a part-time cultural heritage asset manager—one of four in the world—who oversees inventory and restoration. The asset manager works with local antique dealers and auction houses to identify period pieces that would augment the collection. More than 2,000 individual items have been inventoried, of which 900 are located in the bilateral Ambassador's residence. A separate secure warehouse storage area contains the small inventory of heritage items not in use or awaiting restoration. OBO sometimes draws on this warehouse stock to augment collections at other U.S. embassies.

The cultural heritage program was placed under facilities management section oversight due to the section's close involvement with the major multiyear restoration at the Talleyrand building. Although this relationship improves coordination for the maintenance of heritage buildings, placing the program under the purview of the general services section will align the program with those responsible for inventories, storage, and procurement of restoration and repair services.

Recommendation 29: Embassy Paris should place the cultural heritage program under the direction of the general services officer. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Management of the George C. Marshall Center

The George C. Marshall Center at the Talleyrand building is an integral part of the embassy's efforts to promote the U.S.-French relationship. The chief of staff at the bilateral Ambassador's residence and the director of the center manage docent tours and event coordination. Both these employees are part of the Ambassador's official residence household staff. Department Standardized Regulations 411d. define "household staff" as a person employed to perform household duties at the official residence. Although the Marshall Center director does not perform household duties at the residence, the position is funded as an official residence expense, which is an inappropriate use of these funds.

Recommendation 30: Embassy Paris should determine an appropriate direct-hiring mechanism for the George C. Marshall Center director and terminate the incumbent's employment as a member of the Ambassador's official residence staff. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The chief of staff has the appropriate designation as a member of the Ambassador's official residence staff, but he is not a government employee and cannot be involved directly in the management of the Marshall Center's operations, which is an inherently governmental function. A direct operational relationship between the bilateral Ambassador's official residence staff and the Marshall Center is not appropriate.

Recommendation 31: Embassy Paris should exclude the official residence chief of staff from any operational oversight of the George C. Marshall Center. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 32: Embassy Paris should place operational oversight of the George C. Marshall Center and supervision of its director under the tri-mission management section. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The Marshall Center is a well-established venue for official representational events and is also used for events by private groups that reimburse actual costs. The center director has defined and implemented a process for authorizing outside events, including TMM vetting for possible conflicts of interest. TMM also provides outside sponsors of events at the Marshall Center, as well as at the bilateral Ambassador's residence, with an advance list of all anticipated costs, including staff overtime, security, and janitorial services. The center director and the Ambassador's French residence manager sign agreements with sponsors for use of their respective facilities; however, neither the center director nor the residence manager has the U.S. Government contracting authority required by 14 FAH-2 H-131 a. to perform this function.

Recommendation 33: Embassy Paris should remove contract signing authority from the George C. Marshall Center director and the Ambassador's residence manager and identify an authorized contracting officer to sign future agreements. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The embassy finance office manages payments by outside groups for expenses related to events at the Ambassador's residence and the Marshall Center; payments are deposited into a commercial checking account at a local bank. Two locally employed staff members have check-signing authority on that bank account, voucher all payments, and control the check stock. Although the financial management officer approves payments, the locally employed staff members are also responsible for reconciling bank statements. This lack of separation of duties is a management control weakness.

Recommendation 34: Embassy Paris should designate an employee other than the signatories to the group event account to reconcile the bank statements upon receipt and to control the check stock. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The embassy was not able to document that the Bureau of Resource Management and Office of the Legal Adviser had approved this nonstandard arrangement for processing funds for outside group events through a commercial bank account instead of within the Department's financial management system. Without the proper safeguards in place, these funds could be subject to mismanagement and fraud.

Recommendation 35: Embassy Paris should submit a request to the Bureau of Resource Management and the Office of the Legal Adviser to provide a ruling on whether the embassy has the authority to process outside group event funds through a commercial bank account and, if not, to recommend an alternative procedure. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Human Resources

The human resources officer manages a section and its complex issues well. Allowance documentation is current. The FAST program is improving steadily. The position classification program is in order, with sufficient in-house expertise to manage it. The section's priority is long-term succession planning to prepare for the retirements of many senior locally employed staff members during the next 10 years.

The human resources office is split in two, with American services on one side of a corridor and locally employed staff services on the other. The configurations of both offices are unwelcoming and confusing. On entering either office suite, it is not clear to whom one should address initial questions, who is a receptionist, or who is a supervisor. TMM is exploring possible solutions.

The inspectors observed that the grade levels for locally employed staff members providing similar functions in different APPs are inconsistent.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Paris should revise locally employed staff position descriptions and grades so that they are consistent among all American presence posts.

Official Residence Staff

TMM is rightsizing official residence staff across the board. As stated in the U.S. Mission to UNESCO and the U.S. Mission to the OECD reports, these missions are reducing their official residence staffs. In 2009, the bilateral Ambassador's residence staff was reduced from 16 to 13 employees.

In 2009, the bilateral ambassador hired a U.S. citizen chief of staff to augment the official residence staff. A residence manager, responsible for the overall management of the residence and its representational events, had been in place for many years. The chief of staff has been involved in the embassy's cultural heritage program and with events at the Marshall Center in addition to his responsibilities at the residence. Elsewhere in this report, the inspectors recommend that the chief of staff cease involvement in these inherently governmental functions. Because of the high cost of this position, the duplicative nature of its responsibilities, and the incumbent's lack of authority to perform inherently governmental functions, the inspectors found the position redundant.

Recommendation 36: Embassy Paris should cease funding a chief of staff position as part of the Ambassador's official residence staff on the departure of the current Ambassador. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The official residence staff includes the Ambassador's speechwriter. According to Department Standardized Regulations 411 d., household staff performs household duties at the official residence. Although the speechwriter does not perform household duties at the residence, the position is funded as an official residence expense, which is an inappropriate use of these funds.

Recommendation 37: Embassy Paris should determine an appropriate direct-hiring mechanism for the Ambassador's speechwriter and terminate the incumbent's employment as a member of the official residence staff. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Performance Evaluations

During the FY 2011 rating cycles, several performance evaluations for both U.S. direct-hire and locally employed staff were overdue. Although the human resources office reminded the supervisors in question of their obligations, several of the submissions were still late. (b) (5)

Recommendation 38: Embassy Paris should hold rating officers accountable for timely submission of annual employee performance evaluations and cite poor performance in the delinquent officer's own performance evaluation. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Entry-level officers' performance evaluations are due at different times, and it is important to track these dates closely and provide reminders for supervisors. The human resources office has begun to develop a tracking and reminder system for entry-level officer evaluations, but it is still rudimentary.

Recommendation 39: Embassy Paris should develop a system to provide supervisors with advance notice of each entry-level officer's performance evaluation due date. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Locally Employed Staff Position Descriptions

The OIG team found that a number of locally employed staff members do not have updated position descriptions. Supervisors have not been updating or confirming position descriptions during the annual performance evaluation process, as required by 3 FAH-2 H-443. If position descriptions do not reflect the actual duties performed by the employee, there can be gaps in performing essential duties and adequately documenting performance.

Recommendation 40: Embassy Paris should revise all outdated locally employed staff member position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities and duties performed. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Eligible Family Members

The eligible family member employment program gets mixed reviews from Washington and embassy interlocutors. Although the embassy is trying to establish three additional family members positions through the Professional Associates Program, the number and diversity of existing positions are low for such a large post. The inspectors encouraged the embassy to continue its efforts to establish eligible family member positions.

Post Language Program

The embassy has neglected the post language program. In a human resources office survey in November 2011, only 70 percent of current students thought that the lessons were clear and organized and that the instructor was well prepared. The embassy spent \$92,600 in FY 2011 on the language program, and officers take valuable time from their work to attend class in order to enhance their language capabilities. Survey scores indicate that the program is not effective.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Paris should reenergize the post language program by observing classes, mentoring the instructor, interviewing students to find client-needs-based improvements, and hold the instructor accountable for a successful program.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Embassy Paris has three enthusiastic and well-informed Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) counselors and two equally committed locally employed staff EEO liaisons. The team has posted accessible and complete EEO information on the embassy's Web site; the counselors meet periodically to discuss the programs; and one of the locally employed staff liaisons has taken EEO training and shared her materials with the second liaison, who hopes his agency will fund training for him in the near future.

Approximately 18 months ago, the embassy asked the Department's Office of Civil Rights to conduct EEO training at all three Paris missions. Recently, the embassy's human resources section asked the EEO counselors to retrain employees from one section. The counselors contribute an EEO-related article to the embassy's widely read newsletter every month. This level of attention to EEO issues indicates management's strong commitment to EEO principles.

All of the EEO counselors and liaisons work at the chancery or at the NEO building. It is understandable that the two multilateral missions do not have their own EEO counselors because of their small size and the difficulty of finding a counselor who would not be the employee's supervisor or immediate colleague. Some employees at the multilateral missions, however, do not know whom to contact on EEO questions because the EEO counselors do not visit those missions regularly and there is no cafeteria or other gathering place to post EEO notices.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to conduct periodic Equal Employment Opportunity training programs at the two multilateral missions.

Financial Management

The financial management office is in flux as it outsources vouchers and adjusts to E2 travel services. This transition has highlighted weaknesses in processes and oversight that are addressed in the Management Controls section of this report. The financial management officer has not established voucher examination procedures that contribute to adequate internal controls.

International Cooperative Administrative Support Services

The ICASS program functions well at Embassy Paris. The financial management officer calls budget committee meetings only twice a year due to the size of the committee, but individual agencies are satisfied with the quality of information they receive from the financial management section. Council meetings are well organized, informative, and efficient. The embassy publicizes the ICASS learning library with online information. Budget carryover amounts are relatively small.

Cashiering

(b) (5)



Informal Recommendation 21: (b) (5)



In Marseille, the inspectors also observed an unannounced cash count, which verified the cashier's accountability. The cashier's office also serves as the cashier cage. The cashier dispenses cash through a small cutout in a door that does not appear to meet standards for a

cashier operation. (b) (5)



Recommendation 41: Embassy Paris should survey the cashier's office at Consulate General Marseille, enforce standards regarding cashiering operations, and take corrective action if required. (Action: Embassy Paris)

In Strasbourg, the administrative assistant also serves as subcashier to the Paris Class B cashier. A cash count verified her cash advance as correct.

Vouchering

See the Management Controls section of this report.

Accommodation Exchange

The TMM section provides accommodation exchange in both Paris and Marseille even though automatic teller machines are available and safe. The cashier also facilitates U.S. dollar deposits to clients' local bank accounts, and that service could continue. Per 4 FAH-3 H-361.2 a., each ambassador decides whether to authorize the Class B cashier to provide accommodation exchange services after considering the availability of U.S.-owned foreign currency in the country and satisfactory local banking and/or automatic teller machine facilities for obtaining the currency. Per 4 FAH-3 H-361.2 c., having the Class B cashier provide accommodation exchange increases the amount of the cashier's advance and places the cashier at greater risk of receiving an uncollectible check.

Recommendation 42: Embassy Paris should conduct a management review to determine whether the embassy should continue to provide cash accommodation exchange services. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Information Management

Embassy Paris operates one of the largest information management programs in the world. The section provides excellent direct support to all three Paris missions as well as off-site support to six constituent posts. The section is perceived as a strong component of the TMM platform, receiving high scores on both ICASS and OIG surveys.

The information management program covers the standard array of information technology operations, including the OpenNet Plus and ClassNet networks; dedicated Internet network; mail and pouch management; radio and telephone operations; digital video conferencing; and the mission's mobile computing platforms, including a BlackBerry communications network.

The information management officer has tried to address long-standing operational issues by creating a team-oriented work environment. However, recent staff turnover has made this approach difficult.

The OIG team identified several areas requiring management's immediate attention, including helpdesk operations, radio operations, network infrastructure, mobile communications, telephone network, and mail processing. The OIG team reviewed systems management, telephone operations, radio programs, and mail operations. Information security issues are covered in the classified annex to this report. Section management expeditiously resolved several issues identified during the inspection.

Information Systems Center

Helpdesk operations are handled by staff members who each specialize in an operational area. The same individuals also manage other projects. At times, there is conflict between the need for helpdesk support and ongoing project management, resulting in disruption of project tasks. Intermittent disruptions in work patterns increases the amount of time and resources required to complete projects.

Recommendation 43: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to cross-train helpdesk staff members so that each employee can address the full range of helpdesk issues. (Action: Embassy Paris)

In addition to problems with scheduling support staff for helpdesk duties, the information systems center lacks a single focal point for basic helpdesk services. Customers currently submit service requests either through the online eServices system or by contacting the information systems center staff directly. Service requests are then coordinated on an ad hoc basis, leaving the helpdesk vulnerable to either failing to respond to requests or duplicating service.

Recommendation 44: Embassy Paris should implement a helpdesk coordination plan, complete with standard operating procedures, for managing all helpdesk service requests. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Information Programs Center

The information programs center is led by a cohesive management team. The newly arrived information programs officer has put together a project-oriented structure and is starting to see results. The unit's specialists have taken a proactive approach to addressing a number of long-standing issues. Classified systems support is effective, and customers gave high ratings to mail, pouch, and telephone services.

Radio Inventory

Embassy Paris does not have an updated working inventory for its 350 radio units, which is an internal controls weakness. Typically at a mission of this size there is at least one locally employed staff member responsible for daily administrative duties. To redress this weakness, the

information programs officer intends to assign such duties, including inventory maintenance, to a telephone technician. The OIG team supports this approach.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Paris should assign daily administrative duties for the radio program, including inventory maintenance, to an appropriate staff member in the information programs center.

Electrical and Cabling Infrastructure

The network cabling infrastructure at the chancery requires maintenance. A review of the cabling infrastructure identified surplus wires and obsolete cabling that hinder operational maintenance. Although the section is aware of the issue and has taken steps to address it, staff lacks sufficient technical expertise to complete the job.

Recommendation 45: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management and the Regional Information Management Center Frankfurt, should organize the chancery's network cabling. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with IRM and RIMC Frankfurt)

The chancery's unclassified server room also requires attention to organize and label its network cables appropriately. Department standard 5 FAH-9 H-380 establishes a uniform identification process for infrastructure and equipment components. Inadequately identified network cabling could potentially hamper network staff from fixing connectivity problems expeditiously.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Paris should organize and label the unclassified server room network cabling according to the Department of State standard.

Obsolete Power Supply

During the inspection, the embassy identified a parasitic power supply and disabled it, leaving the physical infrastructure in place. This obsolete system provided backup support for a previous generation of system operations and had never been removed. As a result, the embassy has been running multiple industrial transformers unnecessarily for more than 15 years. The cost to power these units roughly equates to that needed to run electricity in two single-family homes for the same period of time, or \$50,000.

Recommendation 46: Embassy Paris should remove the obsolete power supply infrastructure. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Telephone Operators

Embassy Paris employs a telephone operator 24 hours a day; however, embassy operations do not justify this coverage. The 10 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. shift receives an average of only five calls per shift. Elimination of this shift would save the embassy more than \$62,000 per year.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Paris should evaluate the mission's switchboard operations and determine whether there is a need for coverage 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Mobile Communications

The Embassy Paris mobile communications program lacks internal controls. Although management recently created a BlackBerry manager position to address internal controls weaknesses in that program, cell phone management does not fall under that manager's purview.

Recommendation 47: Embassy Paris should implement internal controls for the effective management of all mission mobile communications units. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The mission's BlackBerry and cellular phone contracts are at least 5 years old and overdue for renewal. The contracts are no longer competitive with those of other service providers currently operating in France. The embassy accrues significant monthly overage charges, which inflate contract costs. There are a number of service options that might reduce these fees significantly. Preliminary estimates suggest that yearly savings could be as much as \$500,000, but the embassy has not yet solicited new proposals.

Informal Recommendation 25: Embassy Paris should recompete the BlackBerry and cellular phone contracts.

Telephone Network Operations

The Raphael building has had duplicative telephone networks since 2005. This redundancy is a legacy of the U.S. Mission to the OECD's move from OECD headquarters to the Raphael building. At that time, unified phone services through TMM were not available and the U.S. Mission to the OECD argued successfully that it needed to maintain direct telephone connections to its headquarters. U.S. Mission to UNESCO telephone extensions subsequently were added to the original OECD telephone network. Now that TMM can support the needs of both multilateral missions, duplicative telephone systems are no longer required. According to TMM, this unnecessary telephone system costs approximately \$7,500 per year.

Recommendation 48: Embassy Paris should discontinue the legacy telephone network connecting the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development headquarters. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Network Operations

The Embassy Paris network has serious latency issues that severely hinder operations at the constituent posts. The OIG team observed delayed or slow processing throughout the mission, including in several critical Web-based applications. The information systems officer is working with the Department's Telecommunications Program Office to solve the problem. The installation of a NexGen platform is a possible long-term improvement. The OIG team supports an expedited solution to this problem.

Recommendation 49: The Bureau of Information Resource Management, in coordination with the Diplomatic Telecommunication Service Program Office, should resolve the Embassy Paris network latency problem. (Action: IRM, in coordination with DTS-PO)

State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset

None of the Paris missions is making effective use of the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset (SMART) program. In all three missions, the OIG team found that reporting officers are not retaining record emails. Although the IM staff has provided training to users, created a number of SMART user guides on the mission's SharePoint site, and created a link to SMART online training for the user community, these efforts have not resulted in the use of record email by all officers and sections. Unless the embassy addresses this issue, important data needed for policy analysis and archival research will not be available in the future.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Paris should implement a policy that requires personnel at all three missions to take the record email training and to use the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset.

IPad Technology

TMM has purchased a number of iPads to meet operational requirements. Although the Department continues to create mobile computing solutions, TMM has lagged in establishing appropriate management controls for the units. During the inspection, TMM drafted a management memorandum to address the use and support of these devices. Lack of formal guidelines governing the use of these devices is a management controls weakness.

Recommendation 50: Embassy Paris should establish management controls for all iPads purchased and operated by tri-mission staff. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Consulate General Marseille Information Management

Consulate General Marseille's information management program is managed by a sole locally employed systems administrator, who by all accounts has done transformative work. System operations are well maintained, and he has undertaken significant projects to improve network infrastructure. A clerk in the consular section provides backup support duties. She has successfully completed the consular systems training and attends other on-the-job training when time permits.

Embassy Paris provides regularly scheduled support visits to the consulate general in addition to some remote oversight. The Marseille systems administrator has incorporated a number of innovative operations practices. Regularly scheduled communication among information management staff members at Embassy Paris, Marseille, and Strasbourg would enhance the exchange of innovative ideas. The embassy's digital video conferencing system would be ideal for this purpose.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Paris should establish regular communication with the systems administrators at the consulates general in Marseille and Strasbourg.

Quality of Life

Community Liaison Office

The community liaison office (CLO) gets high marks from clients. In this large mission, CLO services for families are particularly important. There are two CLO coordinators, a CLO assistant, and a newsletter editor. Even with this relatively large CLO contingent, all of the staff works uncompensated hours to get the job done.

The two coordinators each work 32 hours per week, and the CLO assistant works 20 hours per week. The four CLO employees are professional and creative in backing one another up and keeping everyone informed. The OIG team counseled staff on ways that TMM could provide more guidance to the coordinators.

Overseas Schools

There is a range of options for families with school-age children assigned to the missions in Paris. The general level of satisfaction with these schools, as shown by surveys and interviews, is high. The majority of children of tri-mission American staff attend either (b)(5)(b)(6) or (b)(5)(b)(6) but other options exist.

(b)(5)(b)(6)
(b)(5)(b)(6) For many years, the status of the school property was unclear, which inhibited full updates to and maintenance of the facilities. The recent purchase of the land from the French Government has resolved the ownership issue. The school currently has long-term plans to upgrade and renew its campus. The Ambassador serves as a nonvoting member of the board, whereas the DCM is a voting member. (b)(5)(b)(6) has received grants from the Department of Overseas Schools; the current grant is a relatively modest award of approximately \$30,000.

(b)(5)(b)(6) This school is well-regarded by parents. (b)(5)(b)(6) offers a relatively small but effective program for children with moderate special needs, which some perceive as a strength of this institution.

(b)(5)(b)(6) have received security grants from the Department's soft-target initiative. (b)(5)(b)(6) received approximately \$500,000 for the installation of an access control system, new closed-circuit television system, emergency radio/public address system, shatter-resistant window film, and new security gates. (b)(5)(b)(6) received more than \$200,000 in grants to install an access control system, public address system, closed-circuit television upgrade, and alarm system.

(b)(5)(b)(6) have structures in place to support students with mild to moderate learning disabilities, but neither is able to provide the level of support that might be available in the United States. Mission management is attentive to the problems of children with special needs and does its best to ensure that parents are fully informed about the situation. The mission's post report clearly states that not all children with

special needs can be accommodated and stresses the need for parents with these concerns to contact the Department's Office of Medical Services as soon as an assignment is made.

Health Unit

Health unit staff includes three part-time nurses and a full-time receptionist. They primarily provide referrals to local health care providers, and the medical orientation information is excellent. The health unit is well informed about local health care providers.

The health unit is not, however, proactive on seeking out and responding to client feedback. The inspectors observed that in at least one case, despite receiving negative client feedback on a specific service provider, the health unit continued to advertise the individual's services.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Paris should devise a customer satisfaction survey for the health unit and take appropriate action on the feedback.

Health unit employees are professionally qualified, competent, and dedicated nurses. However, they are not managers, and the OIG team counseled TMM on providing more hands-on guidance to health unit employees on how to standardize and improve services to clients.

Commissary and Recreation Association

The Embassy Association Services for Employees in Paris provides a commissary, cafeteria with catering services, lounge/bar, gift shop, gymnasium, gasoline coupon sales, tailor, and other services to the tri-mission community. The association's operations have been in flux for nearly a decade as a succession of boards has tried to realign the association's business model to keep it financially viable and relevant. The association last posted an operating profit in 2006, but sales have fallen dramatically, and losses from 2007 to 2010 amounted to \$395,000, bringing reserves to new lows. During this period, the association changed general managers three times, and in 2008, several employees were terminated for malfeasance at considerable financial cost. More recently, it was discovered that withholding tax for American employees had not been remitted to the Internal Revenue Service. The day the inspection team arrived in Paris, the association computer suffered a major crash, and critical inventory and membership data had to be reconstructed. Financial reports for 2011 are not yet in, but the association expects another loss.

Despite these setbacks, the embassy community wants the association to succeed, and the Ambassador has taken a personal interest in seeing it become a model for associations worldwide. TMM management and the all-volunteer association board elected in July 2011 are making a concerted effort to improve operations and have developed a solid written strategy. In September 2010, at the request of TMM, a representative from the Department's Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs conducted training for the new board. The association hired an energetic management team, the bar has reopened, and locally employed staff is now allowed to purchase non-duty-free gift items and food items for consumption on the premises, thereby increasing patronage. The inspectors suggested that the association look for ways to maximize

patronage by expanding the range of goods available to local staff such as fast-moving logo items procured locally. The facilities are attractive, functional, and well maintained by TMM.

The Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs is dispatching an internal audit team to Paris in May 2012 to conduct a full analysis of the association's operations. That team will make recommendations for improving internal controls, financial statements, inventory levels, and safety and health and for validating agreements with locally hired employees. The ultimate success of the association will depend upon a partnership among the association board, the Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs, and TMM at the highest levels, which can help inform board decisions and provide oversight on the Ambassador's behalf. Per 6 FAM 514.1 c., the Ambassador or his designee is responsible for monitoring the activities of the employee association to ensure compliance with Departmental directives and to protect the interests of the U.S. Government. Furthermore, the Ambassador or his designee is granted a nonvoting seat on the association's board of directors in accordance with 6 FAM 522. The appointment of a designee would reflect the importance the Ambassador places on the future viability of the association.

Recommendation 51: Embassy Paris should assign a senior officer as the Ambassador's designee to the employee association board. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Management Controls

The three missions in Paris have suffered from long-term inattention to management controls. The inspectors identified problem areas in official residence expenses; representational expenses; travel authorizations and vouchers; invitational travel; inadequate records on acceptance of gifts; inappropriate use of official residences and official residence staff; representation, including spousal representational travel; and use of official vehicles. The inspectors reviewed the statements of assurances on management controls signed by the three Ambassadors in Paris. None of them identified these areas as vulnerabilities.

TMM has not taken adequate responsibility for oversight of internal controls, nor has it taken the lead in advising the three Ambassadors on relevant regulations and appropriate procedures. Tools such as the annual risk assessment are helpful, but it is also essential to verify that each employee with a role in management controls up and down the chain of command thoroughly understands his or her responsibilities and is held accountable for the performance of those duties. The three Ambassadors, their DCMs, and TMM have not taken sufficient steps to verify that employees at all levels feel empowered to question anomalous claims, expose internal control vulnerabilities, and perform their assigned management controls responsibilities.

(b) (5)



Recommendation 52: The Bureau of Resource Management, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, should draft a standard cable for regional bureaus to send to new ambassadors in the first month of their tenure that clearly explains their responsibilities for oversight of missionwide management controls and the need to conduct a rigorous analysis of potential

vulnerabilities during the annual chief of mission certification exercise. (Action: RM, in coordination with L)

Staffing Gaps

There is pressing work to do in the area of management controls. Key players are the financial management and general services officers. Both the financial management and general services units are suffering from unanticipated staffing gaps. Filling the financial management officer gap is complicated by the position's language designation. The financial management officer is responsible for organizing voucher examination and for supervising the office that has virtually all the responsibility for travel management controls. Without an experienced financial management officer in place, the embassy will be unable to institute improved travel management controls.

Recommendation 53: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should remove the language designation from the financial management officer position (number 53-107000) or grant a waiver to the officer assigned to the position to hasten the employee's arrival at post. (Action: EUR, in coordination with DGHR)

Informal Recommendation 29: Embassy Paris should request temporary duty assistance until the general services officer is able to resume his duties.

The mission travel policy dates from 2001 and is incomplete and misleading. The policy implies that actual subsistence rates are not uncommon and that flat rate lodging without receipts is acceptable. The mission travel policy includes no explanation of the different types of travel or of travel on cost construction. There is no mention of the requirements that must be met to justify premium travel, nor is there discussion of Fly America requirements. Per 14 FAM 515 c. (1), the traveler is responsible for the correct performance of official travel. The embassy has not made it easy for travelers to access the information they need to make responsible decisions in the interest of good customer service, transparency, and responsible stewardship of U.S. Government resources. Without a definitive policy, it is at best difficult and cumbersome for travelers and those responsible for management controls to carry out official travel at reasonable cost and within regulations.

Recommendation 54: Embassy Paris should implement a written, comprehensive, and accurate travel policy that includes clear information on the different types of official travel, how to request and perform travel, how and when to use cost construct travel, the required authorizations for premium class travel, and the requirement to use the most direct and expeditious routes consistent with economy and reasonable comfort and safety. (Action: Embassy Paris)

There are no clear lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability among the mission's travel service providers. This situation is the result of neglect of internal controls over time, the heavy visitor workload, staffing gaps, and faulty implementation of the automated E2 travel service system. This lack of clear accountability has led to the approval of travel authorizations and vouchers that do not comply with regulations.

Recommendation 55: Embassy Paris should document the logical hierarchy of responsibility and accountability for travel management controls, including clear approval chains for E2 travel services, specific descriptions of accountability in each employee's position description and work requirements, and sufficient numbers of backup employees for each function, so that there is continuity of service during staffing gaps. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Travel Authorizations

The part that the general services office plays in the travel function is minimal due to historical factors such as staffing gaps and the considerable role of the visitor support unit. Per the embassy's delegation of authority management memorandum number M2011-024, dated December 13, 2011, the supervisory general services officer is the authorizing and approving officer for all travel. However, in all three Paris missions, individual sections' office management specialists, section heads, and employees of the financial management section, in fact, perform this function through the E2 travel services system. As a result, the supervisory general services officer does not play an appropriate role at the outset in reviewing travel authorizations for compliance with regulations.

Recommendation 56: Embassy Paris should assign the supervisory general services officer responsibility for reviewing supporting documentation and approving initial authorizations for all official travel and incorporate this responsibility into the officer's work requirements statement. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The embassy authorized premium class travel for one of the three ambassadors without obtaining Department approval because of inappropriate delegation of responsibility for travel management controls to employees unfamiliar with travel regulations. Per 14 FAM 567.2-4 a. (1), premium class travel for any ambassador must be approved by his or her bureau's executive director. Failure to obtain the appropriate authorization puts the traveler at risk of having to reimburse the cost of premium travel and possibly at risk of ethics violations.

Recommendation 57: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy requiring approval from the appropriate bureau executive director for premium class travel requested by any ambassador. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The embassy has authorized actual lodging costs without adequate justification. Part of the cause seems to be an incomplete understanding of the regulations. Per 14 FAM 576.2-2 c., authorizing officials may authorize actual expenses only for lodging, not to exceed 300 percent of the applicable rate for lodging. However, the conditions under which actual lodging expenses may be authorized are found in 14 FAM 576.1 c. and are very specific and limited. Travelers have had to reimburse excess costs after the fact because of faulty travel authorizations.

Recommendation 58: Embassy Paris should authorize actual lodging costs in accordance with Department of State regulations and provide training for employees who perform this function. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The embassy has authorized invitational travel outside the country because of inappropriate delegation of responsibility for travel management controls to employees with

insufficient knowledge of travel regulations. Per 2 FAM 962.1-8 b., the executive director of the relevant bureau has authority to approve gifts of invitational travel outside a country of assignment. Failure to obtain the appropriate authorization puts the traveler at risk of having to reimburse the invitational travel costs and at risk of ethics violations.

Recommendation 59: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy requiring approval from the appropriate bureau executive director for invitational travel outside the employee's country of assignment. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The embassy has authorized invitational travel for employees' spouses because of inappropriate delegation of responsibility for travel management controls to employees unfamiliar with travel regulations. Per 2 FAM 962.1-8 d., all such invitational travel must be authorized by the Office of the Legal Adviser's ethics office, in addition to the executive director of the relevant bureau or administrative officer, as applicable. Failure to obtain the appropriate authorization puts the employee at risk of having to reimburse the invitational travel costs and at risk of ethics violations.

Recommendation 60: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy requiring approval from the Office of the Legal Adviser and the appropriate bureau executive director, as applicable, for invitational travel by the spouse of an employee outside the employee's country of assignment. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Fiscal Irregularity

The inspectors discovered instances in which Embassy Paris disbursed funds inappropriately because of improper voucher examination and certification. Per 4 FAM 374, an embassy must notify the Department as soon as it determines that the probability of a fiscal irregularity exists. The content of the required report on fiscal irregularities is outlined in 4 FAM 374 f. Failure to report fiscal irregularities impedes the Department's ability to hold employees accountable and to seek restitution when appropriate.

Recommendation 61: Embassy Paris should develop procedures to report to the Bureau of Resource Management all fiscal irregularities as soon as discovered and submit a final report of investigation to the Bureau of Resource Management that includes information on any restitution obtained. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Travel Vouchers

The financial management office is responsible for examining travel vouchers before passing them to the post support unit for additional checking and certification. However, the office is unsure of its appropriate role now that it is outsourcing voucher examination and certification to post support units. Per 4 FAM 043 a., employees at all levels are expected to be familiar with management control objectives and techniques associated with their assigned duties. Per 4 FAM 043 b., managers are responsible for the establishment, maintenance, continuing evaluation, and monitoring of management controls. Lack of clarity about employees' authority, responsibility, and accountability in the financial management section results in inappropriate payments to travelers and increases the risk of fraudulent travel vouchers.

Recommendation 62: Embassy Paris should document voucher examiner roles and emphasize that it is the financial management section's responsibility to examine vouchers thoroughly even though the post support unit will do the same before certifying them. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Inspectors reviewed a number of travel vouchers for which the financial management office had approved actual lodging costs. Staff members commented that they do not review travel regulations and certify vouchers on that basis but instead simply confirm the availability of funds to pay for the requested actual costs. There is lack of clarity in the financial management office about the proper roles and responsibilities of a certifying officer. Per 4 FAM 414, the certifying officer is personally liable to repay the amount of any illegal or improper payment resulting from his or her certification. Per 4 FAM 432 b., the certifying officer may be relieved of this liability only if no law specifically prohibits the payment and if the certifying officer could not have discovered correct information by reasonable diligence and inquiry. By not inquiring and attempting to find the correct information, the certifying officer puts himself at risk of financial liability and the embassy at risk of fiscal irregularities.

Recommendation 63: Embassy Paris should provide written guidance to all certifying officers explaining their roles and responsibilities as outlined in Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

The financial management section has developed expertise on the mechanics of the new E2 travel services automated system; however, staff does not understand and apply the FAM guidelines governing approval and decisionmaking for unusual travel situations. When the embassy made travel arrangers in individual offices responsible for producing travel authorizations, the travel arrangers (usually office management specialists in each section of the embassy) looked to the voucher examiners to help put together travel authorizations. As noted earlier, the general services office is responsible for procuring travel—producing the travel authorizations— but is not performing that role. Per 4 FAM 042 (3) and 4 FAH-3 H-413.5 b., the procurement and voucher examiner functions are to be independent of each other. Allowing voucher examiners to assist with travel authorizations is a violation of separation of duties.

Recommendation 64: Embassy Paris should separate the travel authorization and voucher examiner functions by transferring responsibility for travel authorizations from the financial management section to the general services office. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Embassy Paris has amended travel authorizations inappropriately to benefit the traveler after the fact. Because the travel authorization function is linked directly with financial systems through E2 travel services, amending the travel authorization to conform to the amount of money actually spent on travel has become routine. Use of the E2 system does not obviate the need to follow regulatory guidance on amending travel authorizations. Per 14 FAM 524.3 c., travel orders may not be amended retroactively to increase or decrease the right of the traveler except under specific conditions. Lack of clear explanation in the E2 travel authorization and voucher chain of authorization amendments leaves the three missions in Paris vulnerable to inappropriate travel authorizations and vouchers.

Recommendation 65: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy that permits authorization amendments to travel orders only under the conditions outlined in Department of State

regulations and that requires annotation of travel authorization amendments to leave a clear audit trail. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Payment Vouchers

In February 2011, Embassy Paris named the financial management office as its designated billing office. However, the separation of duties between the procurement office and the paying office took place in name only. The financial management office does indeed receive the vendor bills but, after logging them in, forwards the original to the procurement section to package the voucher, including the receiving report, for payment. The financial management office is not taking full responsibility for the control of payment vouchers. The lack of attention to internal controls by American supervisors over time and during the transition to automated systems has resulted in an abdication of responsibility to the procurement office to answer questions on invoice documentation with vendors to the extent that the procedure violates separation of duties. Per 4 FAH-3 H-413.5 b. (1) and (3), purchasing goods and services should be separated from examining invoices and preparing vouchers. Violation of separation of duties increases the risk of error, waste, and wrongful acts. The correct voucher processing procedure is explained in detail in 4 FAH-3 H-420.

Recommendation 66: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to bring procurement, receiving, and payment processes into compliance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Gifts

The inspectors found that those staff members assigned to track and dispose of gifts received by employees do not understand the regulations that govern gift acceptance. Some missions lack gift acceptance records altogether. TMM assigned gifts disposition responsibilities to the Ambassadors' office management assistants because they can more easily track and dispose of the gifts given to the Ambassador and DCM. Per 3 FAM 4122.1 c., the designated office for receiving gifts is the embassy management officer. Because gifts are used and disposed of in accordance with regulations governing property management and disposal, management officers often delegate this role to the general services office. With no designated gifts officer and no clear standard operating procedure for gifts disposition, the embassy is out of compliance with regulations and gift recipients are at risk of ethics violations.

Recommendation 67: Embassy Paris should revise its delegation of authorities memorandum to identify a gifts officer from the general services office to maintain gift logs and dispose of gifts in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Official Residence Staff Overtime

The Ambassador to UNESCO augmented his official residence staff temporarily for representational events by hiring additional official residence staff members and then terminating them at the end of the event. This method of obtaining additional help for individual events augments the representation allotment inappropriately. According to 3 FAM 3256 (1) and

Department Standardized Regulations 320 f., official residence staff overtime and augmentation expenses for representational events are to be charged to the representation allowance.

Recommendation 68: Embassy Paris should bring its method of accounting for official residence staff overtime expenses and additional staff support connected to representational events into conformity with U.S. Government regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Embassy Paris should implement a reporting plan for Consulate General Marseille. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 2: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Embassy Paris, and the U.S. Mission to the European Union, should devise a strategic plan for cost-effective U.S. representation in Strasbourg. (Action: EUR, in coordination with DS, OBO, Embassy Paris, and the U.S. Mission to the EU)

Recommendation 3: Embassy Paris should request that the Department of Homeland Security designate an attaché with the authority to act as a single point of contact on the full range of issues handled by that agency. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 4: Embassy Paris should establish a countrywide approach to American Corners that takes into account their overall place in the mission's strategic planning and the staff and resources involved in establishing and sustaining them. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 5: Embassy Paris should evaluate the work currently being done by the public affairs section's administrative unit, either reprogram or abolish duplicative positions, and reallocate grants oversight work to the appropriate working-level officer. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 6: Embassy Paris should update its open grants files so that they contain all required documentation, including forms for recording and tracking grants and grantee reports, and close out open grants appropriately. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Paris should implement a plan for the public affairs section's restructured administrative support unit to provide support for small grants and monitor budget progress and rewrite position descriptions of unit employees to reflect these new responsibilities. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 8: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Bureau of International Organization Affairs, and the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, should determine how the bilateral mission can provide limited training and mentoring opportunities to the public diplomacy programs at the two multilateral missions and draw up and approve a memorandum of understanding setting out mutual responsibilities. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the U.S. Mission to UNESCO, the U.S. Mission to the OECD, IO, and EB)

Recommendation 9: Embassy Paris should revise the nonimmigrant visa assistant position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities, determining which are at the journeyman versus highly specialized level, and submit them to the embassy's human resources section for reclassification as appropriate. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 10: The Bureau of Consular Affairs should assume responsibility for setting the Euro consular exchange rate. (Action: CA)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Paris should designate the Paris Federal benefits unit in France as the sole provider of Federal benefits information and update all public Web sites accordingly. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 12: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should implement a policy requiring the call center to obtain proof of payment of the machine-readable nonimmigrant visa application fee and a confirmation number from the online application before scheduling an appointment. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with CA)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Paris should request that the Office of the Legal Adviser review the memorandum of agreement between the consular section and the American Aid Society and determine whether the consular section has authority to provide space and other resources to this private, nonprofit organization. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 14: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should develop specific work requirements and a scope of work for the new assistant regional security officer – investigator before the employee arrives at post. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with DS and CA)

Recommendation 15: Embassy Paris should require the public affairs officer to submit formal input to the employee evaluation reports of the American presence post officers and incorporate this responsibility into the public affairs officer's work requirements. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 16: Embassy Paris should conduct a thorough cost/benefit analysis of each American presence post that involves all stakeholders in the posts' work and make recommendations to the Department of State about whether continued operations are justified. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 17: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with the Bureau of Resource Management, should review the history of the forced moves of other agencies from the chancery to leased accommodations, determine whether fit-out costs at the NEO building were allocated either in accordance with regulations or per any formal agreement at the time of the move, and take appropriate remedial action, if required. (Action: OBO, in coordination with RM)

Recommendation 18: Embassy Paris should request retroactive approval from the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs for the installation of Armed Forces Network service at the Boulogne and Neuilly complexes and the consul general's residence in Strasbourg and implement procedures for collecting payment from occupants for recurring charges for personal use of this service. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 19: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should develop a comprehensive refurbishment plan for Consulate General

Marseille's interior and make improvements a priority as funds become available. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 20: Embassy Paris should report the underutilization of the consulate general building in Marseille in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 21: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to bring all residences leased by employees under chief of mission authority or funded with U.S. Government allowances into compliance with U.S. Government space, safety, and security standards for France. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 22: Embassy Paris should transfer responsibility for the management of the cellular phone program from the procurement section to the information management office. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 23: Embassy Paris should establish an appropriate procedure for handling funding for the purchase of employees' personal license plates. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 24: Embassy Paris should review all excessive driver overtime and reallocate resources to keep overtime costs at a minimum. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 25: Embassy Paris should enforce tri-mission policy requiring that passengers in U.S. Government vehicles sign a trip ticket following each trip. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 26: Embassy Paris should cease giving ambassadors' drivers the title of security guard/chauffeur. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 27: Embassy Paris should submit a request to the Bureau of Administration and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security for formal authority to retain the four armored vehicles scheduled for disposal. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 28: Embassy Paris should transfer responsibility for negotiating arrangements with hotels from the visitors unit to an authorized contracting officer. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 29: Embassy Paris should place the cultural heritage program under the direction of the general services officer. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 30: Embassy Paris should determine an appropriate direct-hiring mechanism for the George C. Marshall Center director and terminate the incumbent's employment as a member of the Ambassador's official residence staff. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 31: Embassy Paris should exclude the official residence chief of staff from any operational oversight of the George C. Marshall Center. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 32: Embassy Paris should place operational oversight of the George C. Marshall Center and supervision of its director under the tri-mission management section. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 33: Embassy Paris should remove contract signing authority from the George C. Marshall Center director and the Ambassador's residence manager and identify an authorized contracting officer to sign future agreements. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 34: Embassy Paris should designate an employee other than the signatories to the group event account to reconcile the bank statements upon receipt and to control the check stock. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 35: Embassy Paris should submit a request to the Bureau of Resource Management and the Office of the Legal Adviser to provide a ruling on whether the embassy has the authority to process outside group event funds through a commercial bank account and, if not, to recommend an alternative procedure. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 36: Embassy Paris should cease funding a chief of staff position as part of the Ambassador's official residence staff on the departure of the current Ambassador. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 37: Embassy Paris should determine an appropriate direct-hiring mechanism for the Ambassador's speechwriter and terminate the incumbent's employment as a member of the official residence staff. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 38: Embassy Paris should hold rating officers accountable for timely submission of annual employee performance evaluations and cite poor performance in the delinquent officer's own performance evaluation. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 39: Embassy Paris should develop a system to provide supervisors with advance notice of each entry-level officer's performance evaluation due date. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 40: Embassy Paris should revise all outdated locally employed staff member position descriptions to reflect actual responsibilities and duties performed. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 41: Embassy Paris should survey the cashier's office at Consulate General Marseille, enforce standards regarding cashiering operations, and take corrective action if required. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 42: Embassy Paris should conduct a management review to determine whether the embassy should continue to provide cash accommodation exchange services. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 43: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to cross-train helpdesk staff members so that each employee can address the full range of helpdesk issues. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 44: Embassy Paris should implement a helpdesk coordination plan, complete with standard operating procedures, for managing all helpdesk service requests. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 45: Embassy Paris, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management and the Regional Information Management Center Frankfurt, should organize the chancery's network cabling. (Action: Embassy Paris, in coordination with IRM and RIMC Frankfurt)

Recommendation 46: Embassy Paris should remove the obsolete power supply infrastructure. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 47: Embassy Paris should implement internal controls for the effective management of all mission mobile communications units. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 48: Embassy Paris should discontinue the legacy telephone network connecting the U.S. Mission to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development headquarters. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 49: The Bureau of Information Resource Management, in coordination with the Diplomatic Telecommunication Service Program Office, should resolve the Embassy Paris network latency problem. (Action: IRM, in coordination with DTS-PO)

Recommendation 50: Embassy Paris should establish management controls for all iPads purchased and operated by tri-mission staff. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 51: Embassy Paris should assign a senior officer as the Ambassador's designee to the employee association board. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 52: The Bureau of Resource Management, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, should draft a standard cable for regional bureaus to send to new ambassadors in the first month of their tenure that clearly explains their responsibilities for oversight of missionwide management controls and the need to conduct a rigorous analysis of potential vulnerabilities during the annual chief of mission certification exercise. (Action: RM, in coordination with L)

Recommendation 53: The Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should remove the language designation from the financial management officer position (number 53-107000) or grant a waiver to the officer assigned to the position to hasten the employee's arrival at post. (Action: EUR, in coordination with DGHR)

Recommendation 54: Embassy Paris should implement a written, comprehensive, and accurate travel policy that includes clear information on the different types of official travel, how to request and perform travel, how and when to use cost construct travel, the required authorizations for premium class travel, and the requirement to use the most direct and expeditious routes consistent with economy and reasonable comfort and safety. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 55: Embassy Paris should document the logical hierarchy of responsibility and accountability for travel management controls, including clear approval chains for E2 travel services, specific descriptions of accountability in each employee's position description and work requirements, and sufficient numbers of backup employees for each function, so that there is continuity of service during staffing gaps. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 56: Embassy Paris should assign the supervisory general services officer responsibility for reviewing supporting documentation and approving initial authorizations for all official travel and incorporate this responsibility into the officer's work requirements statement. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 57: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy requiring approval from the appropriate bureau executive director for premium class travel requested by any ambassador. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 58: Embassy Paris should authorize actual lodging costs in accordance with Department of State regulations and provide training for employees who perform this function. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 59: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy requiring approval from the appropriate bureau executive director for invitational travel outside the employee's country of assignment. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 60: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy requiring approval from the Office of the Legal Adviser and the appropriate bureau executive director, as applicable, for invitational travel by the spouse of an employee outside the employee's country of assignment. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 61: Embassy Paris should develop procedures to report to the Bureau of Resource Management all fiscal irregularities as soon as discovered and submit a final report of investigation to the Bureau of Resource Management that includes information on any restitution obtained. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 62: Embassy Paris should document voucher examiner roles and emphasize that it is the financial management section's responsibility to examine vouchers thoroughly even though the post support unit will do the same before certifying them. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 63: Embassy Paris should provide written guidance to all certifying officers explaining their roles and responsibilities as outlined in Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 64: Embassy Paris should separate the travel authorization and voucher examiner functions by transferring responsibility for travel authorizations from the financial management section to the general services office. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 65: Embassy Paris should enforce the policy that permits authorization amendments to travel orders only under the conditions outlined in Department of State

regulations and that requires annotation of travel authorization amendments to leave a clear audit trail. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 66: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to bring procurement, receiving, and payment processes into compliance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 67: Embassy Paris should revise its delegation of authorities memorandum to identify a gifts officer from the general services office to maintain gift logs and dispose of gifts in accordance with Department of State regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

Recommendation 68: Embassy Paris should bring its method of accounting for official residence staff overtime expenses and additional staff support connected to representational events into conformity with U.S. Government regulations. (Action: Embassy Paris)

List of Informal Recommendations

Informal recommendations cover operational matters not requiring action by organizations outside the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau. Informal recommendations will not be subject to the OIG compliance process. However, any subsequent OIG inspection or on-site compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Paris should review existing political and economic section staffing to determine whether the allocation of resources is consistent with overall embassy requirements and make adjustments as necessary.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Paris should develop a standard operating procedure to prioritize issuance of small grants in order to promote greater competition, openness, and wider managerial input.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Paris should designate, cross-train, and maintain adequate alternates for each consular function, especially the most complex portfolios, to ensure continuity of service during staffing gaps.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Paris should establish an email address for the Nice consular agency and implement a policy that requires consular clients to use email as the preferred method of scheduling appointments.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Paris should revise the Consulate General Marseille automated response options menu to provide more detailed consular information.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Paris should establish telephone inquiry hours at Consulate General Marseille, publicize them on the Web site, and include them in the consulate's telephone automated options menu.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Paris should consolidate the consular section spaces to improve supervision, create stronger section cohesiveness, reduce the number of entrances, and decrease International Cooperative Administrative Support Services charges.

Informal Recommendation 8: (b) (5)



Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Paris should establish an appointment system for routine U.S. Customs and Immigration Service requests to facilitate tracking of actual time spent on those cases for reimbursement purposes.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Paris should move the Visas Viper coordinator function to the consular section for the purpose of drafting submission cables and coordinating required name checks.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Paris should establish a training program for new members of the interagency housing board.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Paris should designate a vice chair of the interagency housing board.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Paris should review all residential housing leases for employees under chief of mission authority and modify the wording as necessary so that the lease agreements contain the standard language that the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations has approved for France.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Paris should designate formal backup relationships in the procurement section and provide cross-training where appropriate.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Paris should confirm with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations that it is appropriate to place official artworks donated by the Foundation for Arts and Preservation in Embassies in the private family quarters of the ambassadorial residences.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Paris should amend its motor vehicle policy to inform incidental operators of their potential personal liability for damages that may be awarded by a U.S. or foreign court.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy Paris should identify appropriate space in the chancery as a chauffeur down room.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Paris should revise locally employed staff position descriptions and grades so that they are consistent among all American presence posts.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Paris should reenergize the post language program by observing classes, mentoring the instructor, interviewing students to find client-needs-based improvements, and hold the instructor accountable for a successful program.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Paris should implement a plan to conduct periodic Equal Employment Opportunity training programs at the two multilateral missions.

Informal Recommendation 21: (b) (5)

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Paris should assign daily administrative duties for the radio program, including inventory maintenance, to an appropriate staff member in the information programs center.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Paris should organize and label the unclassified server room network cabling according to the Department of State standard.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Paris should evaluate the mission's switchboard operations and determine whether there is a need for coverage 7 days a week, 24 hours a day.

Informal Recommendation 25: Embassy Paris should recompete the BlackBerry and cellular phone contracts.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Paris should implement a policy that requires personnel at all three missions to take the record email training and to use the State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Paris should establish regular communication with the systems administrators at the consulates general in Marseille and Strasbourg.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Paris should devise a customer satisfaction survey for the health unit and take appropriate action on the feedback.

Informal Recommendation 29: Embassy Paris should request temporary duty assistance until the general services officer is able to resume his duties.

Principal Officials

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Charles H. Rivkin	08/09
Deputy Chief of Mission	Mark Taplin	07/10
Constituent Post(s)		
Marseilles: Consul General	Diane Kelly	03/11
Strasbourg: Consul General	Evan Reade	08/11
APP Bordeaux: Consul	Joel Maybury	08/10
APP Lyon: Consul	Mark Schapiro	09/10
APP Rennes: Consul	Robert Tate	08/11
AAP Toulouse: Consul	Matthew Purl	08/11
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management	J. Patrick Truhn	08/10
Consular	Lisa Piascik	05/11
Political	Jonathan Cohen	08/11
Economic	Wendela Moore	07/10
Public Affairs	Philip Breeden	09/11
Regional Security	James Murphy	08/10
Other Agencies:		
American Battle Monuments Commission	Steven Hawkins	12/05
Department of Agriculture	Daryl Brehm	09/09
Department of Commerce	Reginald Miller	03/12
Department of Defense	Thomas Sweeney	08/09
Department of Energy	Maureen Clapper	12/11
Department of Homeland Security	Andy Yu	08/09
Department of Justice	Monique Roth	12/09
National Aeronautics and Space Administration	Gilbert Kirkham	08/10
National Science Foundation	Carmen Huber	09/11
Department of Transportation	David Knorr	12/11
Department of the Treasury	Aziz Benbrahim	12/08

Abbreviations

APP	American presence post
CLO	Community Liaison Office
COE	Council of Europe
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	U.S. Department of State
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of Defense
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EU	European Union
FAH	<i>Foreign Affairs Handbook</i>
FAM	<i>Foreign Affairs Manual</i>
FAST	First- and second-tour (program)
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Building Operations
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SMART	State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset
TMM	Tri-mission management
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

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OR MISMANAGEMENT**
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