

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

Report of Inspection

Compliance Follow-Up Review of Embassy Brasilia and Constituent Posts, Brazil

Report Number ISP-C-10-21A, January 2010

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PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, as issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, and the Inspector's Handbook, as issued by the Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of State.

PURPOSE

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department of State, its posts abroad, and related activities. 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 being accurately and effectively represented; 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 in the Department and elsewhere; as appropriate, circulated, reviewed, and compiled the results of survey instruments; conducted on site interviews with personnel at the overseas missions, in the Department, and elsewhere; and reviewed the substance of the report and its findings and recommendations with office, individuals, organizations, and activities affected by this review.



**United States Department of State
and the Broadcasting Board of Governors**

Office of Inspector General

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".

Harold W. Geisel
Deputy Inspector General

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PREFACE

The Office of Inspector General's (OIG) compliance follow-up reviews (CFR) provide a progress report regarding the status of recommendations that result from periodic inspections of U.S. diplomatic missions and Department of State bureaus and offices. They also offer OIG a quality assurance assessment of its work by checking and monitoring compliance, looking at the general operational situation with a fresh set of eyes, and gauging — with the passage of time — whether the implementation of key recommendations had the intended effect.

This CFR follows the 2008 OIG inspection report of Embassy Brasilia and its constituent posts in Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Recife (Report Number ISP-I-08-15A, March 2008).

The 2009 CFR reviewed all formal recommendations that were closed, assessed the status of the remaining open formal recommendations' and examined the actions taken by Embassy Brasilia and its constituent posts regarding each of the informal recommendations. This CFR also reviewed the formal and informal security recommendations in the classified annex of the 2008 inspection report.

This review took place in Brazil from August 18 to September 5, 2009. The CFR team visited all four U.S. diplomatic posts in Brazil. (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)
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EVALUATION OF COMPLIANCE

The inspection report issued in March 2008, Embassy Brasilia, Brazil (ISP-I-08-15A), had 64 formal recommendations. Of those recommendations, 61 were issued to Brasilia, one was issued to the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO), one was issued to the Bureau of Human Resources (HR), and one was issued to the Bureau of Resource Management (RM). While Embassy Brasilia and the relevant bureaus took some steps to address each of the problems and concerns raised by the 2008 inspection report, eight recommendations (seven tasked to Embassy Brasilia and the one issued to OBO) remained open, pending further post or Department action. The CFR team closed all of these recommendations.

The CFR team confirmed Embassy Brasilia had acceptable compliance with the 61 recommendations that were issued in the 2008 inspection report. Formal recommendations issued to HR, RM, and OBO had acceptable compliance. Formal management recommendations 36 and 37 were reissued as informal recommendations. Embassy Brasilia and its three constituent posts also complied with all 79 informal recommendations that were issued in the 2008 inspection report.

The CFR also reviewed 24 formal and 17 informal security recommendations made in the classified annex of the 2008 inspection report. As reported prior to this CFR, 14 formal security recommendations were closed. The CFR team confirmed compliance with these recommendations and reissued seven formal recommendations. The CFR confirmed compliance with 14 informal recommendations; three informal recommendations are still pending post action.

The CFR team found that the formal and information recommendations made in the 2008 inspection report for the four diplomatic posts in Brazil correctly identified key areas of concern. Mission staff reported the OIG recommendations resulted in improved operations and greater security.

Although the 2008 inspection report is now closed, offices to which recommendations were addressed must still complete implementation of them or report to OIG the changed circumstances that substantially affect implementation.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT

Brazil has been jokingly referred to as permanently “pais do futuro” (the country of the future); current operations and activities at its four U.S. missions suggest that Brazil’s future may be arriving sooner than expected. From the election of the Lula government to the discovery of vast, deep-sea oil deposits off Rio de Janeiro’s coast, political and economic developments have presented key opportunities to advance U.S. interests in Brazil.

U.S. engagement with Brazil is growing, and the U.S. Embassy and consulates are working hard to shoulder an ever-increasing workload. To the mission’s credit, there have been concrete successes in a number of areas: new initiatives have been launched, public diplomacy and outreach expanded, and potential new approaches brought to Washington’s attention. The mission is making contacts and developing plans to foster substantially greater cooperation; this will be challenging as the U.S.-Brazilian diplomatic relationship remains particularly delicate. Brazilians are anxious about foreign exploitation of their resources (both oil and the Amazon), frequently question the motives of outsiders, and have not fully agreed upon their proper role in the international system.

Effective U.S. diplomatic engagement will require careful application of resources, effort, and attention. In recent years, staffing — including interagency staffing — has increased at all four posts, to help facilitate this stronger relationship. Furthermore, shortcomings in consular operations have been largely addressed via upgraded facilities, more visa officers, and streamlined operations. While these steps are positive, they have also placed an increased burden on facilities and mission financial resources. Washington will need to determine whether the greater activity and potential gains in Brazil warrant further adjustments in personnel and financial support. It will also need to resolve outstanding issues regarding the establishment of American Presence Posts (APP) in Brazil. In the meantime, the general mission work environment demands effective leadership and greater mission-wide coordination.

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COMMUNICATIONS AND COORDINATION

Since the Ambassador's departure, mission leadership and staff have been taking steps to improve communication and coordination. Much of this can be done through existing mechanisms (e.g., mission strategic plan, embassy working groups, digital videoconferences between embassy and consulate sections) and by a more comprehensive, inclusive approach. The shift from the departed Ambassador's leadership style to the chargé's more engaging and positive management approach is already yielding benefits in staff morale. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to assume — as some employees do — that the change in chief of mission alone will resolve all mission shortcomings. Mission coordination has been a historic issue in Brazil, with Consulates General Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro often taking a more independent path and Consulate Recife feeling somewhat abandoned. The constituent posts' institutional cultures should not preclude developing and implementing a more effective mission-wide strategy. Indeed, the changes taking place in Brazil itself — with more fruitful interaction in Brasilia, new economic prospects centered on Rio de Janeiro, and the growing development of Brazil's northeast states — may help to erode these cultures and facilitate a fresh outlook across the mission. Nonetheless, improvements in communication and coordination will remain a key focus for embassy and consulate leadership.

MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY

During site visits to all four diplomatic posts, the CFR team observed that the management and security staff are effectively carrying out daily operations.

Management in this mission was strained by the front office situation (detailed above), insufficient financial resources (addressed below), and the problems inherent in coordinating operations across a nation similar in size to the continental United States. Relations between the Ambassador and supervisory general services officer, both of whom have since departed post, were at times poor and undermined the development of smooth administrative coordination across the chain of command. In addition, upon arrival, the general services officer was shifted to provide front office staff support despite her being assigned to a management position. That officer has returned to the management section and a new supervisory general services officer will arrive shortly. An essential task for the management counselor will be to forge a strong management team that can effectively meet embassy needs and provide mission-wide support.

The Mission Strategic Plan process, shepherded by the chargé, was praised by staff as a vehicle that is helping to focus and implement mission priorities and bring about needed coordination. Mission Brazil faces a challenge in securing the proper mix of central direction and independence in dealing with the three consulates. The assessment of CFR team's assessment is that there should be a more centralized management focus in the areas of policy and outreach, but substantial independence in day-to-day management. The mission demonstrated the merits of substantive cooperation and coordination during the CFR in reporting on Brazil's cash transfer program to reduce poverty. The cash transfer program is a centerpiece of domestic welfare policy reform in Brazil. Washington praised the mission's reporting on this program.

In the management area, the three consulates believe they should be given greater control of their budgets than in the past, because they are in the best position to determine on-the-ground requirements. Because budgets are tight, the Embassy believes greater centralization is needed to manage fixed operational expenses. As recommended in the 2008 inspection report, it is crucial that embassy senior managers travel to the constituent posts to maintain a better understanding of the problems that the constituent posts face. It is also important that section heads meet periodically with consulate leadership and reporting officers (preferably both in the capital

and at the consulates) to facilitate advancing a mission-wide agenda.

The CFR team was impressed with the mission-wide security program. Communication and coordination among the regional security officers are exemplary, and there is a key focus on the safety of mission staff, facilities, and visitors. All posts in Brazil face a critical crime threat, and the security team attentively apprises personnel of changes. Mission coordination on law enforcement issues appears strong.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Mission Brazil continues to face significant and longstanding management problems in the area of budget, real property, and staffing that it cannot resolve on its own.

BUDGET

Subsequent to the 2008 inspection report, substantial shortfalls in the mission budget occurred that required Washington intervention. Mid-year, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) increased the FY 2009 International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) budget by \$661,000. Recently, the Bureau provided an additional \$725,000 in program funding, which will be used to purchase equipment, furniture, training, and travel. As reported in the 2008 inspection report, travel remains an issue of concern among mission leadership, section heads, and officers. Sufficient funding is essential to maintaining mission coordination, effective management, and staff expertise and development. Examples of insufficient travel funds include the economic counselor (mid-way through her tour of duty) had never been able to visit Rio de Janeiro and the supervisory consular officers had not been able to visit the five consular agencies in Brazil, a problem that was noted in the 2008 inspection report. Indeed, almost half of all the program money allocated to travel for this enormous mission (embassy and consulates combined) was consumed by chief of mission travel. The mission will reexamine the distribution of travel funds, reducing the front office allocation, to address these concerns.

It remains to be seen whether the increases in ICASS funding will be sufficient to resolve the budget shortfalls. At the time of the CFR, 42 management positions remained unfilled because of budget constraints. The WHA budget director visited Brasilia during the CFR to further assess the mission's inadequate budgets. He reported that WHA recognized Brazil's need for additional ICASS funding, and had already recommended a \$900,000 base increase to the FY 2010 ICASS budget. The mission can fill many vacant positions with those new resources, but the budget increase is subject to funding availability.

REAL PROPERTY

Real property remains another historic and key problem area. Since 2004, Sao Paulo has been housed in a spacious compound that provides a secure and pleasant work environment and offers an effective venue for regional operations. However, facilities in Rio de Janeiro, Recife, and even Brasilia do not match this standard. Mission personnel have spent significant time and effort looking for new properties to house embassy and consulate operations.

Consulate General Rio de Janeiro continues to operate in the original embassy chancery, although there have been plans to relocate for more than 15 years. The consulate has not found suitable commercial space in downtown Rio de Janeiro, and this will likely delay any move to a location that meets Department requirements. The continuing search for a new building has blocked rehabilitation of the current facility aside from the most essential repairs. Maintenance issues continue to grow and security requirements cannot be met. Nevertheless, the consulate is working to make better use of its space. It recently resolved a serious work and safety concern, through OBO's assistance, by repairing its elevators, as recommended in the 2008 inspection report. The CFR team discussed with consulate leadership the importance of also taking measures to spruce up the facility to improve morale. Rio de Janeiro is also looking for a new residence for the consul general; the current residence is dated, requires substantial renovation, and has become expensive to maintain.

Increases in personnel assigned to Consulate Recife have highlighted the dire need for larger and more secure facilities. The consulate is shifting sections to improve space allocation and better accommodate staff, but there are concrete limits to what this can accomplish. The current facility is a single-family house that has been poorly configured into office space. The post is considering the option of leasing commercial office space in a high-rise building, which will need to be coordinated with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) and OBO.

Embassy Brasilia's property concerns include rehabilitating and expanding chancery office space, and acquiring a chief of mission residence; the post has tentative plans to rehabilitate the chancery in FY 2015. The Embassy is more than 50 years old and in need of renovation. For a brief period during the CFR, the Embassy did not have a proper residence for the incoming Ambassador. Through quick coordination by the chargé and management team, the Embassy negotiated a lease and secured DS approval of a waiver for a new chief of mission residence. The mission is currently in negotiations and working closely with OBO to purchase a chief of mission residence.

STAFFING

Staffing at Mission Brazil continues to grow. Since the 2008 inspection report was issued, 15 U.S. direct-hire positions were established. One concern raised in the inspection was that the mission was not properly following National Security Decision Directive (NSDD)-38 guidelines, in particular the requirement that suitable and secure office space should be available before any staffing increases are approved. The CFR team closed this recommendation. However, as more NSDD-38 requests are made, the mission must be disciplined and disapprove assignment of additional personnel at any of its posts, unless these positions can be properly supported and accommodated. Another recommendation focused on the need for Embassy Brasilia to house its entire staff in the chancery. As recommended, the Embassy developed a plan to move all U.S. direct-hire staff to the chancery. When implemented, eight U.S. direct-hire and eight locally employed staff will be moved to the chancery.

The 2008 inspection report recognized Embassy Brasilia's economic section was not adequately staffed to support the current level of bilateral engagement and recommended reprogramming a specific position from the political section to the economic section. This recommendation was carried out and effectively resolved the staffing shortfall, but had the unanticipated effect of leaving the political section with a preponderance of more senior officers while the economic section was primarily staffed with entry-level officers. Embassy section heads recognize this problem, and the post will work with HR to reprogram the grades of positions in each section to provide a more effective grade structure. Finally, given the continued increase in bilateral engagement, the Embassy needs to assess in the coming year whether the political section is now short-staffed, relative to the demands being placed upon it.

CONSULAR OPERATIONS

Consular operations in Brazil are significant, with Consulate General Sao Paolo currently occupying the position of the Department's highest visa issuance post. The 2008 inspection report found that consular operations in Embassy Brazil were seriously under-resourced, as compared to equivalent operations at the other major consular work centers, e.g., Mexico, China, and India. Consular leadership was not strong, and operations across the country lacked integration and standardization. The grade and depth of consular management in the country also had not kept pace with the growth and complexity of the consular operations.

As a direct result of the 2008 inspection report, the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) dedicated additional personnel resources to Brazil and seriously reexamined the managerial needs of the mission's four consular sections. The resulting upgrade of existing consular manager positions and the addition of several others, while not yet complete, is bringing Brazil's consular operations more in line with their counterparts in China. Oversight and coordination by the Embassy's new consular coordinator also improved significantly. Weekly telephone conferences, increased use of digital videoconference facilities, increased travel by the consular coordinator, closer integration of consular agents, and support for entry-level officer exchanges have all enhanced standard consular procedures and fostered a greater sense of a unified mission.

As of the CFR, all of the formal consular recommendations within the control of Mission Brazil have been addressed and closed. Those recommendations that remain open require action by either HR or OBO. While the affected consular sections have implemented workarounds to address immediate issues, the problems posed by the physical limitations of the consular sections in Sao Paolo and Rio de Janeiro remain and appear unlikely to be resolved in the near future.

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover matters not requiring action by organizations outside of the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau, and are 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.

Embassy Brasilia has appointed at least 15 contracting officer's representatives for its various contracts. Only six employees have completed the proper training, as required in 14 FAH-2 H-143.

CFR Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Brasilia should implement procedures to appoint contracting officer's representatives during the post award orientation conference in future contracts and require all contracting officer's representatives to take the Department's contracting officer's representative training course.

Embassy Brasilia identified eight contracts that require government technical monitors. Contrary to 14 FAH-2-145, no government technical monitors were appointed to any of the eight contracts.

CFR Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement procedures to appoint government technical monitors for each of its mission-wide contracts.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Clifford M. Sobel	08/06*
Deputy Chief of Mission	Lisa Kubiske	04/07
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management	Cherie Jackson	09/08
Consular	Marie Damour	10/08
Consul General Rio de Janeiro	Dennis Hearn	08/09
Consul General Sao Paulo	Thomas J. White	08/07
Consul Recife	Christopher Del Corso	09/08
Political	Stephen M. Liston	08/07
Economic	Tara Elizabeth Feret	09/07
Public Affairs	Adele Ruppe	07/08
Regional Security	Christopher Culver	03/07

Other Agencies:

Department of Defense		
Defense Attaché Office	COL Ventura Cuello	06/08
Military Liaison Office	COL Willie Burges	08/08
DHS/ICE, Acting	Charles Allen	04/07
Drug Enforcement Administration	Alexander Toth	01/09
Foreign Agricultural Service	Alan Hrapsky	08/05
Foreign Commercial Service	Rebecca Armand	04/07
Federal Bureau of Investigation	David Brassanini	08/06
Force Protection Detachment	Stanford L. Raborn	05/07
HHS –CDC-COMM	POSITION NO LONGER EXISTS	
HHS –CDC - PAHO	Brendan N. Flannery	09/07
U.S. Agency for International Development	Jeffrey Bell	10/08
U.S. Secret Service	Roger Fuentes (ACTING)	06/06

*Ambassador Sobel departed post on August 7, 2009.

ABBREVIATIONS

APP	American Presence Posts
CA	Bureau of Consular Affairs
CFR	compliance follow-up review
DCM	deputy chief of mission
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
HR	Bureau of Human Resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
NSDD	National Security Decision Directive
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
RM	Bureau of Resource Management
WHA	Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

RECOMMENDATIONS WITH CONFIRMED COMPLIANCE

Recommendation 1: Embassy Brasilia should cease the approval of additional direct-hire positions until adequate working space has been identified. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Action: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 2: Embassy Brasilia should review and revise its chancery building plan to ensure that all direct-hire employees have adequate and secure working space. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Action: Closed August 09

Embassy Brasilia developed and has started moving all direct-hire staff located in the warehouse to the chancery. Eight direct-hire staff and eight locally employed staff will be relocated to secure working space.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Brasilia should require the Library of Congress field office in Rio de Janeiro to perform a baseline study of its operational and staffing requirements to determine whether its operations could be conducted from a regional platform in Sao Paulo and/or by contracting out portions of its work such as packing and shipping. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 4: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, should carry out a plan to increase reporting on labor, human rights, and trafficking in persons and to streamline preparation of its annual human rights report. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with DRL)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 5: Embassy Brasilia should prepare and carry out a travel reporting plan, appointing a travel coordinator to ensure that countrywide travel makes the best use of resources by combining work for different agencies and sections and including a public diplomacy component. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 6: Embassy Brasilia should complete rebuilding of the political files it inadvertently lost in 2007 and put in place procedures to ensure that necessary records are maintained and used. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 7: Embassy Brasilia should request assistance from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to put in place a more effective and less onerous system for conducting Leahy Amendment checks on all Brazilian officials recommended for training in the United States. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with DRL)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 8: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs should prepare a reporting strategy to guide economic reporting, link it to the mission's policy priorities, and clarify how each consulate can best contribute to mission-wide reporting. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with WHA)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 9: Embassy Brasilia should reprogram position number 01807000 from the political section to the economic section. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 10: Embassy Brasilia should name a terrorist finance coordinator and devise and carry out a plan to increase its efforts in this area, establishing a central record of activities and following up on all Brazilian promises of action in response to its demarches. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 11: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, should make the heads of its political and narcotics assistance sections members of its law enforcement working group, ensuring that they are included, as appropriate, in policy deliberations and should keep and distribute minutes of the working group's meetings. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with INL)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Finding: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 12: Embassy Brasilia should create a foreign assistance coordinating group, chaired by U.S. Agency for International Development and including all agencies with policy or program interests in assistance. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 13: Embassy Brasilia should build on existing mechanisms, such as the monthly country-wide digital videoconference programs and the daily press briefing, to devise, implement, and follow a program planning strategy to keep public diplomacy officers informed so they can support Ambassadorial outreach more efficiently and effectively. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 14: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should conduct a country-wide public diplomacy program and operations review to assess results and effectiveness, identifying mandatory responsibilities and high priority programs, and identifying lower priority activities that can be eliminated, so that public diplomacy Brasilia's human and financial resources are aligned in support of mission goals and objectives, reflecting budget, staffing, and policy realities. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with WHA)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 15: Embassy Brasilia should review and revise the work requirements statements of public affairs officers Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, information officer Rio de Janeiro, and cultural affairs officers Brasilia and Sao Paulo to reflect new responsibilities assumed after the elimination of Foreign Service officer positions in their respective posts. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 16: Embassy Brasilia should clearly establish the role, responsibilities and work requirements statements for American presence officers Belem, Belo Horizonte, and Porto Alegre, along with clear and consistent rating and reviewing officers within 45 days of the arrival at post of each officer. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Embassy Brasilia reported that it has identified sufficient funds for the APP officers to travel to their APP locations. Each APP officer developed a travel plan for FY 09 that was funded through Public Affairs and Program funds. 08 State 010741, dated February 1, 2008 noted a freeze on APPs due to department budgetary constraints. The cable stated that APPs in Porto Alegre and Belem could not be approved because of legislative prohibition. The Department proposed a legislative fix to allow APPs and consular agencies to co-exist.

Recommendation 17: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, should work to obtain and set aside the necessary program funds to support each American presence officer's necessary travel to Belem, Belo Horizonte, and Porto Alegre prior to the resolution of the bilateral tax dispute and the acquisition of appropriate office space and housing in those cities. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with WHA)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed Compliance

Embassy Brasilia referred OIG to its response to recommendation 16.

Recommendation 18: Embassy Brasilia should request, and the Bureaus of Consular Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs should approve, the creation of a FS-03 deputy nonimmigrant visa chief position for the consular section in Sao Paulo. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with CA and WHA)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Finding: Closed July 09

Bureau of Consular Affairs has requested several position upgrades to provide greater managerial experience to the growing Brazil consular operations. These include upgrading the Sao Paolo consular section chief to an Officer Counselor and the visa chief to FS-01, while establishing an FS-03 nonimmigrant visa deputy and an FS-03 American citizens' services chief. In both Recife and Brasilia the consular section chief is being upgraded to FS-02. In Rio de Janeiro the visa chief is being upgraded to FS-02 and they are establishing a new FS-03 American citizens' services chief. As an aggregate, this will bring Brazil more into line with comparable consular operations in India and China. The final action is pending HR concurrence and action.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Brasilia should request and the Bureaus of Consular Affairs and Western Hemisphere Affairs should approve an additional six entry-level officer positions for nonimmigrant work in Brazil (in addition to those approved in 2007) and fund a commensurate additional increase in locally employed staff for nonimmigrant visa operations. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with CA and WHA)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 20: Embassy Brasilia should devise a plan, and the Bureau of Consular Affairs should support it with additional resources, for how it could utilize effectively non-Portuguese-speaking when actually employed officers. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with CA)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 21: Embassy Brasilia should design and implement an expansion of the intake capacity from the sidewalk into the street-side nonimmigrant visa processing area in Sao Paulo. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

By moving contractor functions out of the hardline area, post has obtained more visa processing space within hardline areas. New visa application technologies coming online in the near future will also substantially reduce the amount of time an applicant is required to spend in the compound. It should also reduce the number of windows needed for document intake, data entry, and fingerprinting thus expanding adjudication space.

Recommendation 22: Embassy Brasilia should install a sophisticated queuing system for the nonimmigrant visa unit in Sao Paulo. This would be tied in with the appointment system to allow for electronic verification of appointments and allow multiple streams of queues in nonimmigrant visa processing. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 23: Embassy Brasilia should replace the locally employed staff member who works as a receptionist in the non immigrant visa waiting area in Sao Paulo with a contract employee and reassign that locally employed staff member to work inside the nonimmigrant visa work area. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 24: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should design and implement a plan to expand the nonimmigrant visa waiting area in Sao Paulo. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with WHA, OBO, and DS)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Finding: Closed August 09

Embassy Brasilia reported that it has still not received a response to 08 Sao Paulo 108 to date. Embassy Brasilia sent a follow-up email to OBO on May 22 and again on August 20 inquiring about the status of the Sao Paulo cable. However, the consular section in Sao Paulo has begun interviewing earlier and instituted other changes in workflow that have increased the efficiency of the visa process. This has alleviated some of the more pressing waiting area overcrowding. Expansion would still be highly desirable.

Recommendation 25: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should design and implement a plan to construct several additional windows in the nonimmigrant visa unit in Sao Paulo. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with WHA and OBO)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

While additional windows would still be useful, post has instituted procedural changes that freed up additional windows for non immigrant visa processing.

Recommendation 26: Embassy Brasilia should fund a redesign of the work area in the nonimmigrant visa unit in Rio de Janeiro and furnish it to accommodate the increased officer and locally employed staff positions that have been approved and those that should be requested. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Consulate General Rio has a well thought out redesign plan to accommodate the expansion of staffing in the coming year. The consular chief and management officer confirm that they have the resources to implement the plan by February 2010.

Recommendation 27: Embassy Brasilia should approve and fund the creation of a fourth locally employed staff position in the American citizens' services unit in Rio de Janeiro. In addition, the most senior position in that unit should be designated as the supervisor of the other three locally employed staff, and the position should be reclassified. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 28: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should fund the construction of a second window for American citizens' services in the consular section in Rio de Janeiro. (Action: OBO)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Finding: Closed August 09

The second window has still not been funded. The Architectural & Engineering firm has completed its work, and initial cost estimates indicated that costs would not exceed \$65,000. OBO reported in May that the window project should include and be expanded to include fire, life and safety issues that were not in the original design. Brasilia's facilities manager forwarded a revised design to OBO/Fire for evaluation of a fire egress system in the Rio consular section. While the 7902 project was submitted to OBO, it did not make the cut for approval in FY2009. It remains on the project list to be reconsidered for FY 2010.

In the meantime, Consulate General Rio has worked an internal reconfiguration that will free up additional window space for American citizens' services on the ground floor. While the additional window is still needed, this reconfiguration will largely address the immediate issues of concern in the provision of American citizens' services.

Recommendation 29: Embassy Brasilia should formulate and implement a plan in which each supervisory consular officer makes a personal visit at least once each year to their respective consular agencies and prepares an assessment, copies of which are to be sent to the Department. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Finding: Confirmed compliance

Recommendation 30: Embassy Brasilia should conduct a mission-wide review of all position descriptions, revise those that are not accurate, and reclassify the affected positions. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Action: Closed August 09

Embassy Brasilia and its constituent posts have reviewed over 97 percent of their position descriptions.

Recommendation 31: The Bureau of Human Resources should seek guidance from the Office of the Legal Adviser as to whether its interpretation that regional bureaus and overseas missions may select the "best" qualified candidate over a "minimally" or "fully" qualified eligible family member or veteran candidate in the Professional Associates Program is appropriate. The final opinion should be used to revise and reissue Professional Associates Program guidance. The revised guidance should clarify whether the Bureau of Human Resources, the regional bureau, or the mission is responsible for applying eligible family member and veterans preferences, for reviewing the cost implications of the selection (if applicable), and for making the selection. (Action: DGHR)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 32: Embassy Brasilia's financial management officer should host regular meetings, at a minimum quarterly, with staff responsible for specific fund sources (the regional security officer, the public affairs officer, the narcotics affairs section director, and the facilities maintenance manager) to discuss the status of funds and to keep abreast of ongoing activities to ensure the proper funding sources are used. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed September 08

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 33: Embassy Brasilia should cease the practice of rewiring newly acquired housing units to reduce the electrical current from 220 to 110 volts, and in consultation with the safety, health, environmental management division, should instead issue residents with step-down transformers. (Action: Embassy Brasilia).

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 34: Embassy Brasilia should assign non-foreign affairs agency personnel to government-owned properties only when the housing requirements of the foreign affairs agencies have been met. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

One government-owned property continues to be assigned to a non-foreign affairs agency staff member. In 2005, Embassy Brasilia and the Department of Defense incorrectly entered into an agreement that provides dedicated use of a government-owned housing unit to a senior Force Protection Detachment representative for ten years. The Bureau of Overseas Building Operations had no prior knowledge of this agreement and has taken steps to terminate this agreement. A new draft memorandum of agreement was created that terminates the agreement no later than January 2013.

Recommendation 35: Embassy Brasilia should establish in writing, and implement throughout the mission, required procedures and controls for contracts as described in the Federal Acquisition Regulations and Department of State Acquisition Regulations. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 36: Embassy Brasilia should implement procedures to appoint contracting officer's representatives during the post award orientation conference in future contracts and require all contracting officer's representatives to take the Department's contracting officer's representative training course. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Embassy Brasilia has appointed at least 15 contracting officer's representatives for its various contracts. Only six employees have completed the proper training. This formal recommendation was reissued as an informal recommendation.

Recommendation 37: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement procedures to appoint government technical monitors for each of its mission-wide contracts. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Embassy Brasilia identified eight contracts that require government technical monitors. No government technical monitors were appointed to any of the eight contracts. This formal recommendation was reissued as an informal recommendation.

Recommendation 38: Embassy Brasilia should transfer position number C52697- purchasing agent from the facilities maintenance unit to the procurement unit. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 39: Embassy Brasilia should permit and fund travel for the information management officer to visit all consulates on a regular basis as part of continued management and oversight of the information technology operations. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 40: Embassy Brasilia should review all radio programs throughout the mission to identify weaknesses and required corrective measures, including the purchase of encrypted radios and the implementation of a radio program at Consulate Recife. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Action: Closed August 2009

Embassy Brasilia and Consulates General Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo reviewed their radio programs. All of these locations have fully functional radio programs. For Consulate Recife, Post continues to negotiate with local owners while it awaits host government approval for the requested frequency ranges. Once post has received host government approval, post will move to lease the less expensive site (although it will require additional site preparation slowing down the final installation) and begin the installation process. Assuming that all players (host government, owner of building, contractor for installation, Regional Information Management Center, and funding, etc.) involved are cooperative, post expects to have the project completed before the end of the calendar year.

Recommendation 41: Embassy Brasilia should implement and enforce corrective measures for mailroom operations mission wide, to include mail screening facilities at each constituent post, interim prescreening areas for those posts scheduled to receive facilities, detailed procedures for handling suspicious substances, and the requirement for mailroom clerks to perform mail screening duties. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 42: Embassy Brasilia should provide its telephone technicians and information technology staff throughout the mission required training as detailed within their individual development plans. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 43: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management should submit waivers and purchase necessary software for all dedicated Internet networks throughout the mission. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with IRM)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 44: Embassy Brasilia should determine and purchase a sufficient quantity of backup tapes for 6 months of unclassified and classified electronic information throughout the mission. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 45: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement a records and information life cycle management program throughout the mission. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 46: Embassy Brasilia should develop a decommissioning plan, with milestone dates, for the current consulate building in Rio de Janeiro, which identifies space for personnel of all agencies, administrative services that can be outsourced, and outlines disposition plans and responsibilities for sensitive equipment. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 47: Embassy Brasilia should submit a request to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations with cost estimates of the minimum requirement to keep the consulate's elevators in safe operating condition. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Action: Closed August 09

In August 2009, the Bureau of Overseas Building Operations completed repairs to the Consulate General Rio de Janeiro's elevators. The Bureau of Overseas Building Operations representative prepared a statement of work for the replacement of the mechanical components of the three elevators. A contract should be issued by September 15, 2009, with a target elevator project completion date of October 2010.

Recommendation 48: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro a comprehensive safety, health, and environmental management program to include meeting at least semiannually and keeping records of those meetings. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 49: Embassy Brasilia should review and update its housing questionnaire and housing handbook to reflect the Department's housing policies. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed September 08
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 50: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement procedures to verify that all agencies under overseas housing allowance have received interagency housing board approval for their residences before signing leases. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed September 08
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 51: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement written procedures for purchase orders at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro so they are prepared in accordance with Federal and Department acquisition regulations. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 52: Embassy Brasilia should require incoming information management specialists arriving at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro to be trained on the post's current telephone system. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed September 08
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 53: Embassy Brasilia should establish and fulfill a formal oversight schedule to ensure that all officers with responsibilities for Consulate Recife have the funding and time to travel to Recife on a regular basis. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed September 08
CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 54: Embassy Brasilia should review Consulate Recife's privacy policies and establish and implement procedures according to Department guidelines for the protection of privacy information for its personnel. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 55: Embassy Brasilia should install appropriate locks for the computer server rooms at Consulate Recife in accordance with Department policy. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 56: Embassy Brasilia should prepare and forward a corrected certification of management controls in the format required by the Department's Foreign Affairs Manual. (Action: Embassy Brasilia).

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 57: The Bureau of Resource Management, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration, should conduct an audit of all premium class and home leave travel performed by the staff of Mission Brazil in fiscal years 2006 and 2007 and should seek reimbursement for any inappropriate reimbursements. (Action: RM, in coordination with A)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 58: Embassy Brasilia should enact a procedure to require any traveler claiming a lodging rate above per diem to provide a justification for the request for actual charges. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 59: Embassy Brasilia should seek repayment from the traveler for the cost of the flight performed on the foreign flag carrier unless the traveler is able to produce a properly executed and signed justification memo that was approved in advance of the flight. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Embassy Brasilia made several attempts to collect repayment from the traveler. However, the traveler did not agree with OIG's recommendation and informed the post of his plans to challenge the claim and file a grievance.

Although a justification certificate for the use of a foreign airline was not properly filled out before ticketing, the travel authorization included a comment that "in accordance with 14 Foreign Affairs Manual 583.2 2(c), travel is eligible for a waiver to the Fly America Act due to official function, and cannot fly out on the 20th on a U.S. carrier in order to be able to attend said conference that begins at 0800 on June 22nd." The management counselor and financial management officer approved the employee's travel authorization. At the request of the OIG inspection team, post filled out a justification certificate to use a foreign flag carrier and included the certificate with the employee's voucher. The employee returned to Brasilia using an American airline carrier. This was the only case found during the inspection.

Recommendation 60: Embassy Brasilia should seek guidance from the Office of the Legal Adviser to clarify whether it is appropriate to charge the Ambassador for the use of U.S. Government resources already expended to support his family members and, if it is determined that it is appropriate, seek reimbursement. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 61: Embassy Brasilia should enforce Department requirements that all assignments of armored vehicles be based on a decision made by the emergency action committee and should not provide an armed security escort for any individual absent a formal decision by the emergency action committee. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed July 08

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 62: Embassy Brasilia should stop requesting the services of the language instructor without any legal binding document, seek the assistance from the Bureau of Administration to determine what hiring mechanism is appropriate for the language instructor, and establish and implement proper payment procedures at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed March 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 63: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with the Bureau of Administration and Bureau of Resource Management, should report the potential fiscal irregularities involved in the payments that were made to the recipient of contract number S-BR-820-C-95-0001 when a valid obligating document did not exist and ratify the transactions involved in such contract. (Action: Embassy Brasilia, in coordination with A and RM)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed June 09

CFR Action: Confirmed Compliance

Recommendation 64: Embassy Brasilia should establish and implement proper accountability and management controls over expendable and nonexpendable property at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro. (Action: Embassy Brasilia)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved/Open

CFR Action: Closed August 2009

Consulate General Rio de Janeiro cannot provide proper separation of property management duties with its existing staffing. The consulate has proposed staffing adjustments to meet property management requirements. The Embassy should review the proposal and provide position funding as necessary to correct the property control deficiency.

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS WITH CONFIRMED COMPLIANCE

RIGHTSIZING

Embassy Brasilia's NSDD-38 instructions do not provide a comprehensive estimate of the costs involved in the support of a proposed position.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Brasilia should provide the chief of mission with a comprehensive list of estimated costs involved in the support of a proposed staffing change at the Embassy.

Embassy Brasilia's NSDD-38 instructions do not provide an estimate of the effect of a proposed position change on the ICASS costs of all agencies.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Brasilia should provide the chief of mission with an estimate of the impact of the proposed position change on each agency's International Cooperative Administrative Support Services charges.

Embassy Brasilia's revised NSDD-38 does not call for comment by the ICASS council as required under Departmental guidelines.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Brasilia should seek International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council input into NSDD-38 decisions.

POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Results of some important meetings are not reported to Washington on a timely basis because draft cables have to wait for approval when the Ambassador is away from post.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Brasilia should ensure that, during the absence of the chief of mission, reporting cables are approved by the chargé d'affaires.

ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS

Embassy-Washington coordination to negotiate the 2007 agreement on bio fuels was seamless, but coordination within the mission needs to be improved in order to produce the needed follow-through.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Brasilia should continue strengthening coordination and information-sharing by all agencies and consulates responsible for aspects of the complex bio fuels issue, using such tools as a common list for internal e-mail dialogue and a central, mutually accessible record of activities.

Economic and other reporting officers provide high-quality support to a sharply increased pace of official visitors but do not have the tools to do this work efficiently.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Brasilia should provide reporting sections that support high-level visits with standardized checklists of procedures and explore the use of a dedicated visitor support unit like those used by some missions.

Coordination of spot and analytical reporting by the Embassy and consulates is close, but the mission might be able to stretch its thin reporting resources in Rio de Janeiro and Recife by a unified sectoral reporting system under which each consulate would take lead responsibility for a sector such as aviation or infrastructure.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Brasilia should experiment with a unified system of reporting on economic sectors, assigning each constituent post the lead responsibility for an appropriate issue country-wide.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND NARCOTICS AFFAIRS

Lines of authority and communication in the Narcotic Affairs section need to be clarified in order to ensure American officer control of all significant disbursements.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Brasilia should revise the work requirements of locally employed narcotics affairs section staff and use counseling as appropriate to clarify their responsibilities and authority.

ENVIRONMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND HEALTH AFFAIRS

Mission Brazil has granted NSDD-38 approval to establish a new position of health attaché, but has not yet done sufficient planning to determine how it will coordinate the work of the new position with existing work by U.S. Agency for International Development and Embassy Brasilia's environment, science and technology section.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Brasilia should prepare and circulate a strategy for how it will use its newly created health attaché position and coordinate the work of this position with that of existing mission elements.

Friction between the environment, science and technology section, and the regional environmental hub has been replaced by close coordination, but some (not all) of the reasons why a regional hub was originally placed in Brasilia rather than a city with better transport links appear to have changed.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Brasilia should review its policy on basing regional offices in Sao Paulo with the Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science Affairs to determine whether the bureau's regional hub in Brasilia should continue to be located there.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

While the Brasilia public affairs officer and the DCM see each other on a regular basis, there is no formally scheduled meeting during which they can review program schedules, travel dates, and the running of the section.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Brasilia's public affairs officer (or the acting public affairs officer) and the deputy chief of mission (or the acting deputy chief of mission) should have a regularly scheduled weekly meeting to discuss public diplomacy programs and activities.

Because of the urgent need to report to post, the incumbent Embassy Brasilia public affairs officers had no Portuguese language training prior to his arrival; his predecessor received only half the required 24-week language class. Their respective work responsibilities did not allow time to participate in the post language program, thereby forcing them to rely on interpreters or to communicate with English-speaking contacts only.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Brasilia should adopt a policy that all public diplomacy Foreign Service officers have Foreign Service Institute certified language ability at the designated level prior to arriving at post.

The local employees staff art graphics specialists in Embassy Brasilia and Consulate General Rio de Janeiro each support print operations producing print runs of under 500 for invitations, posters, programs, and business cards.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Brasilia should carry out a cost benefit analysis of the print operations in Embassy Brasilia and Consulate General Rio de Janeiro to determine if both operations are still needed.

Public diplomacy Brazil conducts monthly digital videoconferences among the embassy and Consulates General Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo and Consulate Recife to discuss programming and operations. Consulate American and locally employed program staff participate, but the locally employed administrative staff does not.

Informal Recommendation 14: To facilitate communication among public diplomacy staff countrywide, consulate administrative locally employed staff should also participate in the monthly program digital videoconference call so they are ready to prepare requests for program funds quickly and smoothly to the general services office and financial management sections.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

The electronic visa application form has not yet been made mandatory for all visa applicants in Brazil. As a result, extra time is being spent by the locally employed staff in data entry and correcting errors in data entries.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Brasilia should make the electronic visa application form mandatory for all visa applicants in Brazil.

The nonimmigrant visa windows in the consular section in Sao Paulo were inoperable. Finger scanners have not been installed in all windows. Without such scanners, officers cannot conduct interviews as they often have to verify the applicants' fingerprints.

Informal Recommendation 16: Consulate General Sao Paulo should request a sufficient number of two-print finger scanners to be in all nonimmigrant visa windows that will not have the ten-print scanners.

The American citizens' services unit in Sao Paulo is managed on a day-to-day basis by entry-level officers who rotate through the unit every few months. Each officer has different ideas on procedures, creating confusion for the locally employed staff.

Informal Recommendation 17: Consulate General Sao Paulo should write standard operating procedures for American citizens' services.

In Rio de Janeiro, Recife and Brasilia, consular staff meetings (especially for the nonimmigrant visa units) have not been held on a regular basis due to the workload demands. As a result, communications among the staff have been poor.

Informal Recommendation 18: The consular managers in Rio de Janeiro, Recife, and Brasilia should ensure that staff meetings are held regularly for consular staff, especially those who work in the nonimmigrant visa units.

The efficiency of the nonimmigrant visa unit in Rio de Janeiro has been hampered by the fact that officers and locally employed staff have not been assigned specific duties on a rotating basis. As a result, it is not always clear who is responsible for accomplishing tasks involved in processing visas.

Informal Recommendation 19: Consulate General Rio de Janeiro should create systematic work plans for the nonimmigrant visa unit to ensure that officers and locally employed staff are assigned specific duties on a rotating basis.

The nonimmigrant visa unit in Rio de Janeiro has windows that are not interoperable and are therefore not being fully utilized. For example, windows for document intake are not set up to do fingerprinting and vice versa. This means that managers are hampered in increasing non immigrant visa appointment numbers.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Locally employed staff working in admin management (political) specialist position numbers C10-105-015 and C01-105-010 are not performing duties described in the position descriptions.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Brasilia should ensure that position descriptions for staff working in positions C10-105-015 and C01-105-010 are revised to reflect duties actually being performed and then reclassified.

Locally employed drivers working in security guard/chauffeurs position numbers N01-710-035 and N01-710-030 have not been engaged with the regional security officer on security-related duties described in their position descriptions.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy Brasilia should ensure that position descriptions for staff working in positions N01-710-035 and N01-710-030 are revised to reflect duties actually being performed and then reclassified.

Although locally employed mail room supervisors in Consulate General Rio and Embassy Brasilia (position numbers N55-130-020 and N55-130-130) appear to be performing the same functions, they have different grades.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Brasilia should review position descriptions for staff working in positions N55-130-020 and N55-130-130 to ensure that they are accurate and determine why the staff have different grades.

Embassy Brasilia is behind in reclassifying a number of constituent post position descriptions. Only one locally employed staff is trained to classify positions and she has numerous additional responsibilities and priorities.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Brasilia should identify and train another locally employed staff to classify positions.

American staff at Consulate General Sao Paulo lack the level of human resources expertise of a senior human resources officer; a problem that impacted the consulate general's ability to hire much needed consular section staff.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Brasilia should ensure that the senior human resources officer travels quarterly to Consulate General Sao Paulo to ensure that human resources operations are on track.

A number of assistant, associate, and clerk positions carry high language requirements. Given the impact the lack of eligible family members employment has had on mission morale, the mission should take a more proactive approach to employ family members.

Informal Recommendation 25: Embassy Brasilia should review the language requirements of vacant assistant, associate, and clerk positions to determine if language requirements can be lowered and vacancies restricted to eligible family member candidates.

The most recent management notices on the mission's hiring policy and the posts employment committee were issued in 2003. Additionally, prior to the inspection, the mission's recruitment policy (that describes the local employment process including who is on the employment committee and how to apply eligible family members and veterans hiring preferences) was not readily available to staff. Finally, although members of the post employment committee are listed in a delegation of responsibilities document dated March 2007, that document is not available on Embassy Brasilia's Web site.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Brasilia should issue a management notice that highlights sections of the mission's recruitment policy related to eligible family member employment including who is on the post employment committee and how to apply eligible family member and veterans hiring preference.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Brasilia should add its 2007 delegation of responsibilities document to its Web site.

The OIG team also found that while Embassy Brasilia has mission-specific guidelines to ensure while-actually employed-opportunities are equitably distributed among eligible family members, there was no worksheet or other document tracking compliance with those guidelines.

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Brasilia should develop and maintain a worksheet to ensure compliance with its when-actually-employed guidelines and make those guidelines available to eligible family members requested.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

A number of Consulate General Sao Paulo staff complained about the timeliness of travel voucher processing. Additionally, non-Department agencies did not believe the level of support they received was equitable to services provided to Department customers. ICASS support providers are required by 6 FAH-5 H-160 to evaluate compliance with its service standards.

Informal Recommendation 29: Consulate General Sao Paulo International Cooperative Administrative Support Services providers should evaluate compliance with its service standards.

Neither the accountant nor the voucher examiner responsible for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs obligations and payments have had training specific to that funding source.

Informal Recommendation 30: Embassy Brasilia should ensure that accountants and voucher examiners responsible for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs accounts receive appropriate training.

GENERAL SERVICES

Leased housing units in Brasilia and Rio exceed the \$25,000 annual cost ceiling, many by substantially more. In most cases, the post has not provided, nor has OBO asked for adequate justification for the higher cost.

Informal Recommendation 31: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should conduct a real estate assistance visit to validate Brasilia and Rio's rental costs for short-term leased residential properties and reconcile post's actual leasing history. The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should also procure an independent rental market survey and establish rental benchmarks for each category of housing.

The memorandum of understanding between Embassy Brasilia and Carlson Wagonlit Travel agency has not been reviewed since April 2005.

Informal Recommendation 32: Embassy Brasilia should review and if necessary issue a new memorandum of understanding with Carlson Wagonlit travel agency.

The contracting specialist, who has had limited training, administers all the contracts. The supervisor of the procurement office, who took the Department's procurement training, does not administer any contracts.

Informal Recommendation 33: Embassy Brasilia should direct the supervisor of the procurement office to administer some embassy contracts.

The use of blanket purchase orders has not been efficient.

Informal Recommendation 34: Embassy Brasilia should review purchases to determine which actions would be more efficient and advantageous to use blanket purchase agreements.

The purchases for installation of security equipment for leased apartments have been improperly obtained through a blanket purchase agreement.

Informal Recommendation 35: Embassy Brasilia should cancel its blanket purchase agreement and use a purchase order for installation of security equipment for leased apartments in Rio de Janeiro.

The purchase cards transactions and blanket purchases agreements are not bulk funded.

Informal Recommendation 36: Embassy Brasilia should bulk fund purchase cards and blanket purchase agreements transactions.

Some of the daily vehicle use record Official Form (OF-108) forms' reverse sides were not completed and signatures of passengers were missing.

Informal Recommendation 37: Embassy Brasilia should complete the Official Form-108 form and require passengers' signatures after the use of official vehicles.

Passengers have not listed whether the purpose of transportation was official U.S. government business or other authorized use.

Informal Recommendation 38: Embassy Brasilia should require motor pool users to indicate whether the purpose of transportation was official U.S. Government business or other authorized use.

Some drivers do not require passengers to use seat belts.

Informal Recommendation 39: Embassy Brasilia should enforce the requirement for drivers to require passengers to wear seat belts.

Embassy Brasilia and Consulate General Rio de Janeiro nonoperational armored vehicles have been authorized to be disposed of, but no action has been taken, awaiting a decision from the embassy regional security office.

Informal Recommendation 40: Embassy Brasilia should make a decision on how to dispose its nonoperational armored vehicles countrywide.

Although accident reports are completed, they are not organized and are not being submitted to the Department.

Informal Recommendation 41: Embassy Brasilia should organize and submit to the Department accidents reports for official vehicles.

There is no written finding for other authorized use of DS vehicles, particularly other authorized use for on-call duty personnel.

Informal Recommendation 42: Embassy Brasilia should issue a written finding for other authorized use of Bureau of Diplomatic Security vehicles, particularly other authorized use for on-call duty personnel.

Embassy Brasilia does not charge for its shuttle service.

Informal Recommendation 43: Embassy Brasilia should charge for its shuttle service.

The OIG team was not able to review the formula used to charge for the “other authorized use.”

Informal Recommendation 44: Embassy Brasilia should use the appropriate formula to capture the costs for the shuttle services.

The embassy off-site warehouse does not have clear designated receiving and disposal areas.

Informal Recommendation 45: Embassy Brasilia should clearly designate receiving and disposal areas.

There are no established written minimum and maximum stock levels.

Informal Recommendation 46: Embassy Brasilia should establish written minimum and maximum stock levels.

The facilities maintenance unit and other embassy agencies maintain items at the warehouse that have not been used for some time.

Informal Recommendation 47: Embassy Brasilia should sell or dispose of items that have not been used for some time to make usage of the warehouse more efficient.

Neither the embassy’s Travel Message TWO cable nor its Web site includes any information about potential delays in receipt of household effects, air freight, or privately owned vehicle shipments.

Informal Recommendation 48: Embassy Brasilia should include in its cables and on its Web site information about potential delays in receipt of household effects, air freight, and privately owned vehicle shipments.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Mission Brazil information resource management staff lack necessary training. None of the telephone technicians have received formal training; most of the information technology staff in Brasilia and Sao Paulo have not attended the Information Assurance for System Administrators or Windows 2003 courses. Further, most of the information resource management local employed staff and information management system supervisors throughout the mission have received no supervisory training.

Informal Recommendation 49: Embassy Brasilia should develop and implement individual development plans for the Information Resource Management staff throughout Mission Brazil.

Mission Brazil's Information Resource Management work request software is inadequate. The current software is not an effective management tool for the information management section. The software does not allow for management to document trouble tickets, identify patterns and related trends, document the length of time it takes to resolve issues, identify number of tickets assigned to personnel at any period of time, or provide reports. Such information could be useful for information management section by providing information on workload balance, identifying recurring problems, and identifying the normal wait time for resolution of issues.

Informal Recommendation 50: Embassy Brasilia's information resource management office should evaluate the work request software to determine and implement methods to make the software a more effective management tool for the mission.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Some Equal Employment Opportunity information on the intranet is not accurate.

Informal Recommendation 51: Embassy Brasilia Equal Employment Opportunity counselors should update the Equal Employment Opportunity pages on the intranet.

CONSULATE GENERAL SAO PAULO

Access to the Sao Paulo on-compound warehouse, which contains substantial property including high value items, is available to any American by checking out the key at Post One.

Informal Recommendation 52: Consulate Sao Paulo should institute appropriate access controls to the on-compound warehouse to restrict access to authorized employees only.

The receiving area in the warehouse is separate and segregated, but access is not controlled.

Informal Recommendation 53: Consulate Sao Paulo should institute appropriate controls at the on-compound warehouse to restrict access to authorized employees only.

The American Consul General Services Association submitted a late annual 2006 compliance certification to the Department. However, neither document satisfies Department requirements.

Informal Recommendation 54: The American Consul General Services Association should submit the required compliance certification to include correct financial data and an independent audit report for 2006 that conforms to Department requirements.

CONSULATE RECIFE

Some warehouse equipment is not properly stored and is not included in the mission's inventory system.

Informal Recommendation 55: Consulate Recife should ensure that all equipment in the warehouse is included in the mission's inventory system and properly stored.

Consulate Recife has excess furniture, furnishings, and telephone equipment cluttering up the compound unnecessarily.

Informal Recommendation 56: Consulate Recife should identify all excess furniture, furnishings, and telephone equipment and follow appropriate disposal procedures.

Issued visa files that are more than 1 year-old are taking up consulate storage space unnecessarily (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) Issued visa files can be shipped to the United States after one year.

Informal Recommendation 57: Consulate Recife should develop and maintain a schedule for shipping visa files back to the United States 1 year after issuance.

Informal Recommendation 58: Consulate Recife should request that the Embassy Brasilia facilities manager identify and/or construct an area for proper storage of issued visa files.

Consulate Recife plans to add additional public diplomacy, foreign commercial service and political/economic Foreign Service LE staff positions to the compound though safe office space has not yet been identified.

Informal Recommendation 59: Consulate Recife should coordinate with the Embassy Brasilia facilities manager to ensure that adequate office space is available for planned staffing additions.

A number of employees in Recife do not know who their Equal Employment Opportunity representative is.

Informal Recommendation 60: Consulate Recife should reissue its Equal Employment Opportunity notice.

Because Consulate Recife does not maintain a U.S. dollar cash advance, staff traveling to the United States on official travel must obtain advances in Brazilian currency and then exchange them for U.S. dollars at an alternate location. Staff claim that they have lost money on the exchange rates and were told that they could not claim those losses on travel vouchers.

Informal Recommendation 61: Embassy Brasilia should explain to Consulate Recife how staff members may claim exchange rate losses.

Consulate Recife lacks a documented cellular phone policy. The systems manager distributes the cellular phones, maintains the inventory, and provides a verbal briefing. Upon receipt of the cellular phone the employee signs a document acknowledging receipt but no acknowledgement that they are aware of the cellular phone policy.

Informal Recommendation 62: Consulate Recife should document a cellular phone policy in accordance with Department policy.

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CONSULATE GENERAL RIO DE JANEIRO

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The interagency housing board minutes are not detailed and it appears that nonvoting members' opinions are given just as much weight as voting members.

Informal Recommendation 64: Embassy Brasilia should prepare housing board minutes with sufficient detail to reflect voting members' discussions and approvals at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro.

The housing coordinator at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro spends a significant amount of time explaining private leases to those officers who are on overseas housing allowances.

Informal Recommendation 65: Embassy Brasilia should provide leasing services in Consulate General Rio de Janeiro only to those agencies that signed up for such services under International Cooperative Administrative Support Services.

The consulate general charges \$1 per trip for its shuttle services.

Informal Recommendation 66: Embassy Brasilia should review its formula for charging for shuttle services at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro.

The hours of the motor pool drivers are not staggered to ensure proper services and some overtime is accrued.

Informal Recommendation 67: Embassy Brasilia should stagger the working hours of the motor pool drivers at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro to ensure proper services and overtime is kept to a minimum.

A spot check of items in the warehouse at Consulate General Rio de Janeiro was not possible because the warehouse was too cluttered.

Informal Recommendation 68: Embassy Brasilia should assist Consulate General Rio de Janeiro with reviewing its holdings in the warehouse with a view to eliminating some items.

COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

Single adults and couples without children told the OIG team they would appreciate community liaison officer programs directed to their interests.

Informal Recommendation 69: Embassy Brasilia's community liaison office should establish an advisory board with officers who are single or childless to provide events ideas that appeal to them.

HEALTH UNIT

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EMBASSY SPECIAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION

The Embassy Special Services Association provides a small space within the commissary to a laundry service company without charging a concession fee. The laundry company is only at the Embassy three times a week.

Informal Recommendation 72: Embassy Brasilia should charge a concession fee to the laundry company for the use of its space.

The Embassy Special Services Association has not disposed of voucher receipts since 1991.

Informal Recommendation 73: Embassy Brasilia should direct the employee association to dispose of records that are not longer needed.

Although purchases of duty-free items in the commissary are minimal, the Embassy Special Services Association has not established any quotas.

Informal Recommendation 74: Embassy Brasilia should establish and monitor sales of duty-free items sold by the Embassy Special Service Association.

MANAGEMENT CONTROL

The Embassy did not obtain the necessary approval from the Office of the Legal Adviser for the acceptance of several instances of invitational travel by the Ambassador.

Informal Recommendation 75: Embassy Brasilia should seek advice from the Office of the Legal Adviser on the proper method to seek retroactive approval for those instances of invitational travel by the Ambassador that had not been cleared in advance.

Documentation that Embassy Brasilia relies upon to certify Consulate Recife vouchers does not contain sufficient detail to ensure that payments comply with laws and regulations.

Informal Recommendation 76: Embassy Brasilia should request that Consulate Recife provide more detailed descriptions of goods and services ordered and purchased.

A number of travel advances have been outstanding since 2006.

Informal Recommendation 77: Embassy Brasilia should initiate collection procedures for its outstanding travel advances.

The supervisory cashier's safe contains documents from 1998 that need to be appropriately disposed of and cashier vouchers that are in transit are stored outside of the safe.

Informal Recommendation 78: Embassy Brasilia should dispose of outdated documents in the supervisory cashier's safe and instead store in-transit vouchers in the safe.

Other-agency advice of allotment cables, including those from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are not always distributed to the mission's financial management section. This hampers the financial management section's ability to adequately service those other agencies. When other agencies submit invoices for payment, the financial management section may assume unauthorized commitments have occurred due to lack of funding.

Informal Recommendation 79: Embassy Brasilia should review other-agency allotment cables to determine which other agencies do not regularly tag allotment cables for the financial management section and then request that those agencies add a financial management section tag to allotment cables.

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