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

# Report of Inspection

## Embassy Cairo and American Presence Post in Alexandria, Egypt

**Report Number ISP-I-10-02A, November 2009**

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

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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

## **PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION**

This inspection was conducted in accordance with the Quality Standards for Inspections, as issued by the Council of the Inspectors General (OIG) 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**

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.

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## KEY JUDGMENTS

- The Ambassador has an impressive command of all aspects of her demanding job and is an effective proponent of U.S. policy with Egyptian officials and civil society leaders. She also is a convincing advocate for U.S. goals in her frequent media appearances. She and an able deputy chief of mission (DCM) deliver consistently strong, coherent, and effective leadership and management at one of the largest U.S. missions in the world. They have shown particular skill in guiding this embassy during a downturn in relations in late 2008 and in using the election of a popular new U.S. President to reinvigorate the bilateral relationship.
- Embassy Cairo is extremely efficient in handling visitors and using them to advance policy goals. Good procedures, including a clear division of labor among policy, public affairs, and management sections, ensure that visits by major officials, such as the President of the United States, among others, proceed smoothly. Planning sessions, chaired by the Ambassador or DCM, explicitly consider how best to use individual high-level visitors to advance one or more policy goals.
- Management of the economic and political affairs section is strong. Analysis and reporting are excellent. It would be improved, however, by increased travel, the inclusion of more biographic data in cables, closer integration of locally employed (LE) staff, and development of a reporting strategy in coordination with the public affairs office, the American presence post (APP) in Alexandria, and the desk in Washington.
- The APP in Alexandria has done well in fulfilling U.S. public diplomacy objectives in Egypt's second largest city. AAP Alexandria and Embassy Cairo need to coordinate more closely as the APP seeks to expand its economic and political outreach and reporting. The Embassy should assign higher priority to funding training and travel requests for the Alexandria staff.
- Embassy Cairo manages more than \$1.5 billion in bilateral foreign assistance each year. The Ambassador led a successful team effort to break an impasse with the Government of Egypt over the amount and use of the economic support funds and consistently provides guidance for the overall assistance strategy. However, horizontal coordination among agencies involved in foreign assistance needs improvement.

- Embassy Cairo's consular section is located in inadequate and poorly configured work and public space. Embassy facility managers are working with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to move the American citizen services (ACS) unit to a perimeter building and to reconfigure the basement-level space to better serve the non-immigrant visa (NIV) and immigrant visa (IV) units. These projects deserve priority attention.
- The public affairs section (PAS) is a sound organization functioning somewhat beyond design tolerances. It is almost always short on American officers, and never has the Arabic competence called for in language designations. With the Ambassador's help, the PAS skillfully exploits its ready access to Egyptian media. Its cultural, information resource, and English teaching units are all serving their traditional constituencies, while pushing to reach beyond the Cairo-Alexandria axis and elite audiences.
- Embassy Cairo is grappling with a range of complex factors as it seeks to respond to requests from a number of U.S. Government agencies for approximately 100 new American positions. The Department provided additional International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) funding to help support such growth, but the actual number of required new ICASS positions has yet to be firmly established or approved. Adequate housing is increasingly difficult to find; (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) To accommodate a large influx of new staff, the Embassy may need to move toward construction and ownership of more of its housing, including multi-unit housing compounds.
- The mission has made considerable progress in consolidating administrative support services, but further consolidation in motor pool and nonexpendable property management would enhance the efficiency of operations, and result in overall savings to the U.S. Government.
- Most mission staff are located in the chancery, but many who work in remote locations, such as the embassy support services annex (ESSA) compound and APP Alexandria, expressed concern over the lack of interaction with mission management and counterparts, limited opportunities for training and recognition, and workplaces lacking amenities such as cafeterias and adequate provision for medical care.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between April 13 and 29, 2009, and in Cairo, Egypt, between May 3 and June 11, 2009. Subgroups of the team visited the American Presence Post in Alexandria, Egypt, on May 18 and 19, 2009.

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## CONTEXT



For over a century, as the Arab world sought to reestablish its sovereignty and prestige after its 19th Century submission to the European powers, Egypt was an acknowledged leader in most political, cultural, and intellectual realms. While oil wealth fueled the growth of rival centers, particularly in the Gulf, Egypt's large population, central geographic location and sophisticated media continued to guarantee it a place at the heart of most currents moving through the region. The Camp David agreements between Israel and Egypt began a 30-

year period of close relations between the United States and Egypt, based on mutual interest in bringing peace to the whole region, and buttressed by an economic and military assistance program of massive proportions. Egyptian influence, diplomacy, and willingness to run risks vis-à-vis its own population and hard-line Arab states were important elements underpinning all of the progress toward peace between 1978 and 2001.

With the peace process in low gear after the breakdown of negotiations in early 2001, the relationship stalled. An increasingly risk-averse and cautious Egyptian Government resented the United States' public criticism of its record on human rights and democracy. It also grew uneasy about other aspects of U.S. policy in the Muslim world after September 11, 2001. Egypt saw the removal of Saddam Hussein in Iraq as a strategic blunder opening the entire region to Iranian and Shi'ite influence, and bringing terrorist attacks to its doorstep. It viewed U.S. support of democracy through the electoral process as playing with fire, citing the Hamas victory in Gaza and the growing fragility of politics in Pakistan as examples. As the U.S. Administration and Congress unilaterally cut bilateral economic assistance and attached human rights and democracy-related conditions to its delivery, Egyptian public opinion and the Egyptian Government soured on the relationship. President Mubarak, who had made annual trips to Washington until 2004, has not visited since. Israel's military

incursion into Gaza in early 2009 and its ongoing blockade of essential supplies into that area exposed the Egyptian Government to a barrage of criticism, both in the streets and among its Arab neighbors.

The inspection occurred as the bilateral relationship seemed to be improving. Egyptians at all levels were ecstatic over the outcome of the U.S. presidential election, and found encouragement and signs of a more conciliatory approach in early comments, public and private, from the new Administration. Astute diplomacy on the part of the Ambassador and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) mission director overcame initial Egyptian refusal to move forward on the FY 2009 economic assistance program and prepared the way for Mubarak to travel to the United States. (b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6)(b) (6) Finally, the visit of President Obama to Cairo in early June underscored to Egyptians, and the world at large, renewed U.S. recognition of Egypt as a key regional player. The President's message of tolerance toward Islam, his dedication to concrete progress in the peace process and his support for democracy, were warmly received and hold promise for a period of intensified cooperation.

Implementing the bilateral agenda requires close coordination among many U.S. Government entities. U.S. Government agencies represented in Egypt include the Department of State, USAID, Department of Defense, Department of Commerce, Department of Agriculture, Department of Justice, Department of the Treasury, Department of Homeland Security, Library of Congress, and BBG. The mission also includes an APP in Alexandria, Egypt. Sharp mission growth is expected to occur in the next few years, placing additional strain on already-stretched embassy housing and support services. With about 500 U.S. direct-hire and eligible family member (EFM) employees, 1,350 LE staff, an annual budget of roughly \$72 million, and U.S. bilateral assistance of more than \$1.5 billion in FY 2009, Embassy Cairo ranks as one of America's largest, most complex, and most important diplomatic missions abroad.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The Ambassador has an impressive understanding of the many deep-rooted and complicated issues in the U.S.-Egyptian relationship and of the myriad personalities and currents that affect Egyptian policy and public opinion. In just over a year at post, she prevented the deterioration of the bilateral relationship from spinning out of control in late 2008, and has since capitalized on Egyptian support for the new U.S. Administration to advance the bilateral agenda across a broad range of issues. An equally knowledgeable and personable DCM assists the Ambassador.

Questionnaire results and extensive interviews indicate that the staff, and notably senior managers from all agencies, view the Ambassador and DCM as a seamless whole, and respect and appreciate their professionalism. The staff highlighted the Ambassador's and DCM's willingness to provide support whenever asked and their ability to achieve results. The two put in place a simple but effective meeting structure, including a weekly country team meeting open to all offices in Cairo, as well as a series of regularly scheduled smaller meetings to discuss specific aspects of the policy relationship. They each maintain a true open door policy, avoiding what past inspectors considered to be an overly layered and bureaucratic management style. The inspectors suggested that one additional meeting on law enforcement issues would provide a more focused opportunity to review actions among concerned agencies.

### Mission Strategic Plan

Embassy Cairo's DCM supervised the preparation of the Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) for FY 2011, creating a small task force to pull the document together, assigning the drafting of its component parts to relevant embassy units, and providing forums for discussion of cross-cutting elements. The Ambassador also participated in the final drafting. The Bureau of Resource Management praised the MSP for its clearly defined goals and concrete performance indicators and targets. The Ambassador will institute a review of the MSP at an off-site location in early autumn, an idea the inspection team endorses.



## Special Circumstances and Challenges

Good management at Embassy Cairo is not easy. Embassy units are housed at three major and a number of smaller locations scattered around this vast city. The Ambassador and DCM agree that they should strive for greater visibility; in practice, however, travelling to USAID or the general services compound or elsewhere for a meeting can easily consume half a day. They should continue to search for ways to add “management by walking around” to their many accomplishments, but doing so will be difficult.

Egypt’s central location in the Arab and Muslim world makes it a prime stop for many official visitors. The 2-month period surrounding the inspection saw visits by the President; a half-dozen congressional delegations; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Secretaries of State and Defense; the Under Secretary for Political Affairs; and the Special Representatives for Iran, the Middle East, and Afghanistan/Pakistan, among others. Such high-level visits are common here and require considerable policy, public affairs, and administrative support by all elements of the Embassy. In compensation, the Ambassador and DCM make certain, through careful planning and thorough scene-setting messages, that the Embassy takes advantage of this unparalleled exposure to Egypt’s leaders to advance the bilateral agenda.



## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

### ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Embassy Cairo's combined economic and political office (ECPO) is strong with excellent leadership. The minister counselor for economic and political affairs and the section's deputy are respected throughout the mission, and liked and admired by subordinates. The ECPO staff's acceptance and appreciation of its leaders is a key factor in the section's high morale.

Two and a half years ago, the section's leaders divided the section into three units: economics, internal politics, and external politics. This new structure improved organization, rationalized tasking, and instituted a sub-level of supervision by three FS-02 division chiefs. Junior officers within each unit supervise LE staff. The arrangement provides valuable management experience to all of these officers and enhances their career development. The decision also enables the minister counselor and deputy to delegate a number of management responsibilities, allowing them more time for policy oversight.

The synergistic combination of ECPO since the mid-1990s is a conspicuous success in Cairo. The precedence of the word "economic" serves to remind observers that the United States has an important, long-standing economic relationship with Egypt. The U.S. foreign assistance program in Egypt, covered in more detail below, is the second largest in the world. Egypt received \$22 billion in U.S. economic assistance since the Camp David Accords of 1979, and Egypt's steady growth in recent years is also attributable, at least in part, to economic reforms encouraged by the U.S. mission.

ECPO supports the MSP goals of achieving peace and security, encouraging just and democratic governance, and promoting economic growth and prosperity with numerous activities and partnerships. For example, the political-military officer works daily with the office of military cooperation (OMC) and the Defense attaché office to provide support for the highly active military-to-military relationship. Officers monitor key judicial cases and notify the Ambassador when input from the U.S. Government may promote just governance. The mission also participates in negotiations over the qualified industrial zones as a mediator between Israel and Egypt.

## Reporting

The section reports at a highly professional, polished level in adequate volume. The impressive variety of subjects includes Egypt's foreign policy with regional neighbors, avian and swine influenza, the Muslim Brotherhood, religious freedom, human rights, economic reform, counterterrorism, labor, trade, the budget, and the current tensions on the border with Gaza. The portfolios for each individual officer are full, with a high demand for spot reporting.

A number of factors constrain the section's ability to produce longer, projective reports. Officers devote an unusual amount of staff time to control officer responsibilities for a seemingly unending stream of high-ranking visitors. The section was responsible for two visits by the President of the United States to Sharm El Sheikh in 2008 and two separate visits by the Secretary of State in the same year to the same location. President Obama visited Cairo during the inspection on only a few weeks' notice. During a recent 10-month period, the section supported the visits of 14 U.S. congressional delegations and congressional staff delegations. Between 80 and 85 percent of the mission's substantive control responsibilities devolve to ECPO.

Another draw on officers' time is the necessary coverage of a large number of important international conferences in Egypt. These range from discussions of major political, economic, scientific, and medical matters to important Arab initiatives launched in Cairo, the location of the Secretariat of the Arab League. In 2002, for example, Saudi Arabia announced its initiative to resolve the Israeli – Palestinian conflict at an Arab League meeting in Cairo, an effort that the United States still views as useful to achieve peace. Continuing international negotiations, based in part on the Saudi initiative, make it necessary to continue tracking the initiative.

## Human Rights

The dilemma of how to report human rights abuses in a fair and complete manner that minimizes neither Egypt's shortcomings nor its efforts and successes, has preoccupied the Embassy for years. Egypt fails to meet criteria stipulated in the guidance for the Department's annual human rights report, which demands a "warts and all" approach. Yet, Egypt is a key partner in attempting to solve some of the most vexing foreign policy problems facing the United States. It was the first Arab country to sign a peace agreement with Israel, and is still one of only two countries in the Arab world to have done so. It is important to recognize such improvements.

The inspectors reviewed the mission's reporting on human rights from its draft stage to final product, and found it to be a genuine effort to be thorough, fair,

accurate, and balanced, while upholding U.S. principles and not indulging in excuses for the Egyptian Government. This does not mean that the mission's perspective is always perfect. The Embassy has been tractable in adopting changes to its drafts when the Department makes a strong case.

## Organization and Strategy

The large demands on the section's time described above produce a natural drift toward spot reporting on current events. There is a need to schedule more long-range think pieces focused on Egypt's future. Though there is no strict requirement to produce a formal reporting plan, the OIG inspectors made an informal recommendation that ECPO should, under the guidance of the DCM, work with APP Alexandria, PAS, and the country desk in Washington to develop a long-range reporting strategy. This strategy would focus on making maximum use of the mission's sizeable overall resources, including talented LE staff and colocated agencies, to produce long-range analyses. Two possible subjects would be achieving the reforms that the U.S. Government hopes to see in Egypt at a time of declining U.S. economic assistance, and identifying the kind of future U.S. relationship that would fill the breach in the absence of such assistance.

The OIG inspectors discussed with section personnel the need for more travel to widen the geographic area of reporting, and also the desirability of more biographic reporting. The section as a whole undertakes an average of two trips per month outside of Cairo. The pace of business and the demand for quickly drafted reports also limit the routine addition of brief biographic data at the end of substantive cables. The OIG team believes that it is necessary to review travel and biographic reporting along with other subjects as part of the long range reporting strategy discussed above. In particular, the OIG inspectors made an informal recommendation that ECPO methodically increase the frequency and geographic diversity of its travel within Egypt.

ECPO makes significant efforts to integrate its LE staff, in part, by working to reduce cultural misunderstandings, and by scheduling regular all-hands meetings to keep everyone informed, suggest reporting topics, and recognize good work. The regularity of such meetings is observed more in the breach, again because of time and work pressures. The inspectors left an informal recommendation that ECPO review, revise, and uphold its internal meeting schedule with a view to greater integration, recognition, and use of its LE staff.

It is challenging to discreetly and sensitively monitor the way in which the LE staff members treat each other in the workplace. These are highly valuable em-

ployees who forswear discrimination of any kind, but sectarian prejudices, some unconscious, do exist. The inspectors support the section's intention to continue its commendable efforts to keep cultural antagonisms and exaggerated class distinctions out of the workplace. The section leaders' effective urging for greater information sharing among LE staff also will be beneficial.

The ECPO section is developing methods to synthesize cables with email and other electronic resources. Embassy Cairo served as a pilot post for the SIPR Net Distribution (SIPDIS) program, which now makes cables available through the Net Diplomacy Intranet site. Nearly all of ECPO's cables include the "SIPDIS" distribution caption. This works well with the development of weekly email briefs for targeted audiences. These briefs include short summaries of recent cables, and the emails can link directly to the archived cables for easy accessibility. While still in the developmental stage, these email briefs address many of the concerns expressed in Washington and in Embassy Cairo about the shrinking number of readers for the cables.

The section also designed an effective electronic filing system for archiving both cables and significant emails. A shared drive contains a system that mirrors traditional filing, using tags and subject headings to maintain organization. The office management specialists are responsible for most of the filing, but everyone participates in the process, particularly for saving substantive emails. Archiving the files on compact discs will allow the section to maintain a historical record of the section's communications in an easily accessible medium.

## Trade and Commerce

Trade will loom larger in the bilateral relationship if, as expected, U.S. economic assistance continues to decline from the high levels of the last three decades. The reduction of economic assistance is not only a matter of policy but also a natural result of the smaller impact that economic assistance in any amount could have on Egypt's increasingly modern and strengthening economy. One alternative is to emphasize trade.

Officers of the economic and commercial unit usefully backstop efforts of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) and the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) to promote U.S. exports. Section members actively participate in FCS and FAS programs and those of the American Chamber of Commerce. The counselor for economic and political affairs is especially visible in this regard. The Ambassador and the DCM regularly attend promotional and informational functions, and meet periodically for substantive discussions with U. S. business representatives.

The trade policy officer position has been vacant since October 2008, when the incumbent curtailed to go to Iraq, and the position is frozen for budgetary reasons. The absence of a trade policy officer in the section causes policy consequences. For example, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative must be kept accurately informed on a nearly daily basis about creeping Egyptian protective measures that began to appear in response to the global economic downturn. In addition, the U.S. Government agreed to a “Strategic Economic Partnership on Trade-Related and Investment Issues” with the Government of Egypt in May, requiring an intense period of review and negotiations. The plan calls for a commitment to establish working groups along lines of mutual interest and will involve a number of agencies and ministries. Without a full-time, experienced trade policy officer, it will be difficult for Embassy Cairo to coordinate with the appropriate Egyptian Government entities.

The previous incumbent also monitored an innovative trade program that benefits the United States politically, by keeping the spirit of Camp David alive in a small way. By an arrangement under the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences, Egyptian products manufactured in “qualifying industrial zones” may enter the United States duty-free, if a given percentage of Israeli content is included.

The policy focus of the trade policy officer complements the more promotion-oriented efforts of FCS and FAS. Given the expected growing role of trade as a positive factor in future U.S. relations with Egypt, the current absence of a trade policy officer hampers the daily efforts to influence Egyptian trade policy in directions favorable to U.S. interests.

**Recommendation 1:** The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and Embassy Cairo, should fill position no. 14-031001, trade policy officer, at Embassy Cairo. (Action: NEA, in coordination with HR and Embassy Cairo)

A regional Treasury attaché is colocated in the section and consults closely with economic officers while analyzing macroeconomic trends and financial developments. A second regional Treasury officer located elsewhere in the mission devotes his time to terrorist money laundering issues. The Department of the Treasury will not fill the attaché position when the incumbent departs in July 2009, pending a general review of needs at competing locations. The loss of this officer, especially while the traditional trade policy officer position still remains vacant, will place a heavy strain on the section.

## Grants Monitoring

Several ECPO officers, and some local employees, act as project officers for small grants awarded by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) and the Institutes of Democracy working group. These are informal designations, and their responsibilities include visiting grant recipient sites and providing comments on quarterly reports for grants warrant officers. Officers may also participate in the Institutes of Democracy working group during the pre-award process, when members review grant applications for local approval. While most officers take the initiative to complete the online training for grants monitoring, there is no formal requirement by the section for them to do so. The OIG team informally recommended that ECPO require that all project officers complete adequate training for their responsibilities.

## Counterterrorism

The mission coordinates counterterrorism efforts on two levels. A broad-based Homeland Security Working Group, chaired by the DCM and comprised of a cross-section of agencies, meets biweekly to heighten awareness of counterterrorism issues related to both Egypt and nearby countries in the Middle East and Africa. An officer in ECPO with responsibility for coordinating counterterrorism serves as the group's executive secretary. This group, however, does not enter into a detailed discussion of specific cases. A smaller working group comprising ECPO, the regional security office (RSO), the office of the legal attaché, and the office of regional affairs, meets as needed to discuss cases and devise strategies. The DCM normally calls and chairs the ad hoc group. If an incident of terrorism occurs, the group might meet daily, as it did after the recent bombing of a popular market place in Cairo. Embassy Cairo also has a newly created Counter Smuggling Working Group to focus on border security and weapons smuggling issues.

The relationship between mission elements and Egyptian state security and police agencies is collaborative, close, and effective. The regional security officer leads the effort to help Egyptian state security improve its newly established antiterrorism unit. The U.S. Government allocated \$900,000 for antiterrorism training in Egypt for 2008, and a similar amount for 2009. The RSO will conduct an assessment of the program in July 2009, and expects to emphasize the need to encourage both Washington and the Egyptians to expand border surveillance to areas beyond the Gaza border, as well as develop a wider strategy to combat weapons smuggling.

## FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

The bilateral relationship with Egypt is firmly grounded in the military and economic support foreign assistance programs. The United States sent more than \$63 billion in aid to Egypt since the conclusion of the Camp David Accords, including more than \$37 billion in military financing. It also continues to fund more than \$1.5 billion in bilateral foreign assistance each year: \$1.3 billion in foreign military financing, the second largest in the world; and \$200 million in economic support funds focused on promoting economic growth, expanding access to political opportunities, and improving education and health. The Ambassador is keenly aware of the political and public affairs aspects of the foreign assistance program, maintaining a close relationship with the USAID director and OMC.

The tension created by a sharp reduction in the economic support funds provided for FY 2009 demonstrated the need to carefully align foreign assistance goals with our overall strategic interests and wider relationship with Egypt. There were also concerns about particular aspects of programming for the democracy and governance assistance funds in the politically charged environment. The Ambassador led a successful team effort to reach a satisfactory solution for both the United States and Egypt, and the Government of Egypt accepted the economic support funds for the year during the inspection. The Ambassador continues to provide clear and specific guidance for the overall foreign assistance strategy in light of the political climate.

Embassy Cairo also receives foreign assistance funding from a number of other sources, including an emergency response fund (formerly the Ambassador's self-help fund), the Middle East Partnership Initiative, international military and education training, repatriation programs, antiterrorism assistance program, supplemental funds for security along the Gaza border, and a number of regional and global law enforcement programs. Overall, 14 different U.S. departments and agencies have an interest in foreign assistance programming in Egypt. Within the mission, as many as a dozen offices have active roles in the management of foreign assistance. The Ambassador, along with ECPO, does an admirable job of following the progress of the overall assistance program.

The Institutes of Democracy working group, chaired by the DCM, provides a forum for ECPO, PAS, and USAID (in an advisory capacity). The working group manages small grants up to \$50,000 each, awarded locally from \$400,000 in democracy and governance funding. The working group also channels the local approval process for small Middle East Partnership Initiative grants.



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(b) (2)(b) (2) while the mission conducts local vetting for over 600 trainees sponsored by OMC each year, the process does not include sending cables to Washington for secondary vetting. Participants in these assistance programs require approval from the Department, both at the mission and in Washington; without such approval, the agencies must cancel or reschedule the training. The mission's procedures should include the involvement of the front office to enforce these requirements.

The vast majority of submissions for Leahy vetting are cleared by only ECPO and the RSO, without contribution from other mission sources. Frequently, this is due to last-minute submissions of vetting information; the mission's procedures do not include a submission deadline to allow sufficient time for thorough vetting by all relevant offices and agencies. There are also many regional training programs held in Cairo with trainees invited from multiple countries throughout the region.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Cairo should revise the standard operating procedures for Leahy Amendment human rights vetting to comply with the policies of the Departments of State and Defense, and distribute them to all relevant offices and agencies. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

The current procedures name the human rights officer as the point-of-contact, responsible for oversight of and compliance with Leahy vetting procedures for Embassy Cairo. However, the RSO is actively responsible for requesting database and record reviews from multiple offices and sending the cable to Washington. The human rights officer is responsible only for updating the Abuse Case Evaluation System as needed and providing section clearance to the RSO during the vetting process. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)  
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## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The PAS in Cairo is a busy, focused operation in an environment that is thirsty for its products. The main programming challenge is prioritization, rather than access. The large number of official visitors poses problems, especially for the information section, where there is constant risk that officers will become overextended. PAS Cairo deals with gaps (the office did not have an assistant information officer and an assistant cultural affairs officer during the inspection), as well as a lack of officers with adequate Arabic skills. (Among the seven language-designated American positions that were occupied during the OIG visit, only three officers were at the required level.) The officer at APP Alexandria devotes approximately 70 percent of her time to public diplomacy.

The front office is fully supportive of public affairs activities; the Ambassador participates proactively in media interviews, representational events, and cultural activities. She also suggests and volunteers for such activities, when appropriate.

The results of the 2008 presidential election transformed the tone of Egyptian public opinion toward the United States. The previous inspection report stated: “Local media and public opinion generally oppose U.S. policies and question American values.” Even before President Obama chose Egypt as the venue for his Mideast policy speech, his election resonated with the Egyptian public. Egyptians have been willing consumers of PAS offerings, including program events, information resource center (IRC) products, English training, and opportunities for media interviews.

The allotments for public diplomacy in FY 2009 totaled \$1.6 million, which permitted the section to slightly increase its programming activities. USAID and military interdepartmental purchase requests (MIPR) are sources of further program funds.

The Embassy is fully aware of the importance of Upper Egypt and is increasing activities there. The Ambassador makes periodic visits to the area and is always accompanied by a press officer and a media contingent. The cultural affairs section focuses part of its programming there. A significant proportion of English Access Micro-Scholarships (Access), which is an English teaching program for underprivileged teenagers, is devoted to Upper Egypt and has received eager acceptance. The regional library officer is developing a less intrusive system than American Corners to place collections of American books in Upper Egypt.

## Public Affairs Officer and Program Support Office

The public affairs officer (PAO) is a Middle East veteran who speaks fluent Arabic. He is one of three embassy officers (along with the Ambassador and the information officer) who have blanket permission to speak to the media on record. He gives speeches and TV interviews in Arabic. The PAO expressed his desire to spend more time doing outreach—meeting people and traveling outside Cairo—but is frustrated with current limitations hindering outreach. The two greatest barriers to outreach are time and money. Indeed, the desirable level of attention will not be paid to outlying regions of Egypt until money is available to fund personnel and travel. An additional assistant cultural affairs officer (roughly \$300,000 per year), with \$40,000 in travel funds, could conduct 20 program visits to Upper Egypt.

The program support office designated an LE staffer as the PAS E2 Solutions (travel software) expert; however, this person has not mastered the software. Section travel—especially for the two regional officers—has slowed. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that PAS improve its E2 Solutions capability or shift this responsibility to the travel assistant in the general services office.

When officials other than the PAO are speaking, programs and interactions require English-speaking counterparts, a contract interpreter, or (most frequently) interpretation by a LE staffer. The section cannot verify that its communications are accurately translated. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that PAS reprogram a vacant position in its program support section to hire an interpreter or translator to perform this function.

## Media Relations

The information section has three American and 10 LE staff positions. The information officer (IO) is in a stretch assignment and the assistant IO is a Civil Servant on an excursion tour. Both are strong officers, and they are served by experienced, hard-working LE staff employees. At the time of the OIG inspection, the junior assistant IO was in the midst of a 9-month staffing gap. When all positions are encumbered, the section is adequately staffed.

Cairo has an extremely high visitor load, with 23 official visits requiring IO support over the last 8 months. The assistant IO, who has been there for a year and a half, worked on his third Presidential visit. The Ambassador made three trips in 2009 to governorates outside of Cairo. On each of these, an American IO and an LE staffer accompanied her. She also participated in two business panel discussions, which also featured the CG and the FCS counselor, and both business representa-

tives and media attended. Moreover, the Ambassador and other officers gave frequent interviews to Egyptian media. The section also conducts an average of two off-the-record information meetings with the media per week. During the build-up to the Presidential election last fall, the IO conducted three sessions with bloggers.

The opportunity to push a longer term media agenda, thus stressing freedom of the press, objectivity, and editorial responsibility, is missing from these events. There are many ways to make opportunities for this kind of advocacy. They all involve Embassy sponsorship of events that are discussions rather than interviews, and can range from an evening with one or more officers with a focus of interest, to off-site press weekends.

The information section made one strong and innovative stride into cyberspace last year when the assistant IOs explored Facebook to help in educational advising efforts. Initially they faced resistance, but eventually succeeded. Whenever a participant logs onto the site, the visit is communicated to the participant's "friends," who also see the responses and thus learn about ways of exploring U.S. educational opportunities. The Education USA site now has over 5,000 participants – an extraordinary number for a specialized topic among a limited audience.

## Cultural Relations

The cultural section consists of three Americans and 11 LE staff employees, with common staffing gaps in both areas. Most of the LE staff are apportioned between the programs and exchanges teams. Only two LE staff work on exchanges; they are overburdened. When the leader of the exchanges team joined the office, she oversaw only the International Visitors program, which sends 45 people per year to the United States. An additional 10 programs have been added, with more than 100 participants. For most of the additional programs, the exchange team leader and her assistant carry the entire load, from publicizing the program to arranging travel. There is sufficient LE staff in the cultural section to move one more to exchanges team. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to move one employee from the cultural section to the exchanges team to assist with the workload.

An exchange program meriting individual attention is the Youth Exchange and Study program. This program identifies about 60 Egyptian high school students each year and places them in American schools. This year, four participants are graduates of the regional English language officer's (RELO) access program for underprivileged secondary school students. In general, returning Egyptian students are enthusiastic about their experiences and their families, who are often initially cautious, frequently volunteer to host American counterparts.

The exchange program staff's burden has increased, partly because the workload depends on the number of exchanges as well as the number of individuals who apply. An LE staffer on the exchange program team noted that she is required to enter relevant data into a database for every applicant for every program. With several hundred applicants for some of these programs, this is very burdensome. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the section find and implement a way to preserve necessary information without laborious data entry.

On the program side, the cultural section schedules speakers and digital video-conferences twice monthly, with monthly themes such as Black History month in February and an environmental focus in April. The section also runs the embassy speakers bureau, scheduling about two speakers a month. The Model U.S. Congress is a program with an exchange component. Students at Cairo University set up a club to mimic the U.S. Congress, with committee meetings, discussions, negotiations, speeches, and votes—all on real issues faced by the actual U.S. Congress. Each year, 12 participants travel to the United States and spend 1 week touring and another week interning in the House of Representatives.

The cultural affairs section also runs the Book Translation program, which arranges the translation into Arabic of eight to ten American books a year. These are selected from across the spectrum of possible interests, from American history and literature. The section also sponsors “The Big Read,” which gives Americans and Egyptians an opportunity to read and discuss books.

## Information Resource Center and Information Resource Officer

The IRC is on the first floor of the Cairo II building on the main embassy compound. Visitors enter through the main hall of the building. The IRC typically hosts 50 to 60 daily walk-ins. There are four librarians there, each with a specific focus, and the reference librarian fields incoming questions. The IRC distributes a bimonthly document to contacts, which serves as an article alert service focused on MSP themes, lists relevant Web sites, and advertises products of the book translation program.

Another area of responsibility is the support of Embassy activities. The IRC provides information packets (relevant articles, bibliographies, and descriptions of IRC services) for all public affairs programs, similar packets for international visitors and Fulbright scholars (120 last year), and program support to other posts. The IRC maintains three blogs (on women, African-American history, and American literature) and two Facebook pages (on events and publications).

The PAO proposed that the Department purchase a building across from the Embassy to house the IRC and other related entities, such as AMIDEAST, a public affairs contractor. Although it would reduce the security barrier hindering interested people from visiting the IRC, and ease pressure for space on the embassy compound, a more likely alternative is to move the IRC to the Embassy's perimeter building. Such a move would be positive if it eased access and was accomplished without loss of program space.

The information resource officer (IRO) supervises the IRCs in Cairo, Alexandria, and seven other countries in the region. A major area of progress for the IRO is American Windows. Several years ago, an IRO agreed to place an American Corner at a large library in Cairo. During the incumbency of the next IRO, the library reneged, reportedly because it was reluctant to have an acknowledged American presence on its premises. Later, the Integrated Care Society, which operates community and youth centers with libraries throughout Egypt, agreed to accept a modified program (an American Window) at its center in Maadi, in a suburb of Cairo. The American Window will consist of a set of about 800 U.S. books shelved together; the center will also host public affairs programs. The American Window is less elaborate than an American Corner, its maintenance is less onerous for both parties, and the expense for the U.S. Government is substantially lower than the \$50,000 for an American Corner. The IRO plans for five more American Windows throughout Egypt. The IRO funded the associated book acquisitions with year-end money and a \$68,000 grant from the Inter Department Working Group on Democracy.

## English Teaching

The RELO in Cairo is an experienced officer on his second tour. He covers Saudi Arabia and Yemen as well as Egypt, and tries to visit each country twice per year. His \$110,000 annual budget covers programs and travel.

RELO's headline program is Access, a 2-year introductory English language course for underprivileged youth, started in 2006, and is funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. At present, with two cohorts of students in the system, the annual budget is \$720,000. The initial Access appropriation was for 3 years. At the time of the of the OIG inspection, 38 students were learning at each of seven sites: three in Cairo and Alexandria and four in Upper Egypt. The students are eager to take advantage of what this program offers them; they work hard and demonstrate encouraging progress.

In an effort to provide and plan for the future (when the 2-year program ends, most students are age 16) the RELO organized and funded a series of camps, during

which the first group of alumni could both renew the experience and plan for sustaining it in the future. The main focus of the camp's agenda was formulating a goal statement—the students' consensus goal involved keeping in touch and continually learning.

Whereas Access is focused on Upper Egypt, another RELO project crossed a frontier: the English Language Research Center at Cairo's Al-Azhar University, the oldest Islamic university in the world. Al-Azhar had not permitted any embassy contacts outside the English department until it accepted the English Language Research Center, a program that uses four Fulbright fellows to teach English to its professors. Currently the program provides three beginning and three intermediate courses, attended by 78 professors. Another RELO program that features Islamic outreach is English for Imams, in which the embassy funds study for imams (30 participants at present) at private schools.

RELO offers two programs per year of "Shaping the Way We Teach English" as its primary teacher training effort. Each course consists of 14 sessions and accommodates 30 to 35 teachers. It also distributes two publications: *Forum* (for teachers—1,500 copies distributed quarterly); and *News for You* (a special English newspaper for all learners—50 copies distributed weekly).

## Fulbright Program

The executive director of the Fulbright program in Egypt has 14 years in the Foreign Service and two previous stints as country Fulbright director. Fulbright is located in its own building; its annual allotment is \$8.3 million. The Fulbright board consists of four Egyptians and four Americans; the Ambassador appoints the American members. Currently, two members, including the cultural affairs officer, are embassy officers. The Embassy is supportive; the Ambassador is willing to help and appear at major events.

The American Scholar Program brings approximately 10 American scholars annually to Egypt. Typically, approximately 70 percent teach at universities in Cairo and Alexandria, while 30 percent conduct research. The American Student Program has 27 students coming for the next academic year; most will conduct research in such areas as Islamic studies and Middle Eastern politics. Visa clearances are a perennial problem; although an irritant and a consumer of time and energy, all issues find resolution.

The Egyptian Scholar Program had 13 grantees, most engaged in research, in 2008-09. The Egyptian Student Program awarded eight grants in 2008-09. These

students are generally pursuing a Master's degree. The Community College Initiative is unique to Egypt. It is funded by USAID money through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. This program sends Egyptians to community colleges in the United States to prepare them to find jobs upon return. Participants study such fields as agriculture, applied engineering, health, business management, and tourism. Selected students who do not speak English must take and pass a course administered by a contractor. Over the 3-year life of the program, 1,000 Egyptians will have studied in the United States.

## AMIDEAST

AMIDEAST is a Department contractor on several public affairs programs; its employees are in close contact with embassy counterparts, who regard them as conscientious and well-performing colleagues. AMIDEAST handles educational advising (informing foreign students about U.S. educational opportunities) in 13 Middle Eastern countries, including Egypt. It also provides English teaching for the Access and Community College Initiative programs and screens applicants for the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Teachers of Critical Languages programs.

AMIDEAST maintains advising centers in Cairo and Alexandria and provides these services at no cost to the student. Each center also conducts programs in surrounding governorates. Because of the large difference in costs of tertiary education between Egypt and the United States, AMIDEAST primarily advises prospective graduate school students. Several American universities have branches in the Gulf that grant equivalent degrees. To alert Egyptians to its services, AMIDEAST advertises and conducts programs that introduce students to educational opportunities in six particularly popular fields: law, medicine, dentistry, business, engineering, and pharmacy.

## Voice of America

There has been no Voice of America (VOA) correspondent in Cairo for almost a year. Neither VOA's American executive director in Cairo nor the London correspondent, who visits periodically, feels that this gap, which has been filled with stringers, has affected coverage of Egypt. A new correspondent will arrive in summer 2009. VOA is gradually adding web and satellite transmissions to its radio coverage. Local hire employees of the Cairo bureau are hired by the Embassy, and—except for one American—are paid through the Embassy.

## Al-Hurra TV

Al-Hurra TV rents office space at the Cairo bureau of the Associated Press and relies on that office for technical and crew support. The Al-Hurra correspondent files roughly 20 stories a month. He contracts with another reporter to cover economics and sports. He has not experienced interference with his reporting; he has reported on human rights in Egypt, the Coptic Christian garbage collectors debate over the religious implications of killing pigs to prevent swine flu, Arab-Israeli issues, the Palestinian question, unemployment, and the reaction of poor Egyptians when the government threatened to cut its bread subsidy. He believes that Al-Youm, a Middle East Broadcasting Networks talk show, has not attracted its potential viewership, because it has not been effectively promoted. He believes that Al-Hurra is watched, because guests that he has interviewed tell him of comments that they receive from friends.

The correspondent believes that the way to attract viewers for particular TV shows is to preview them in print; he has lost battles for viewership because he lacked press attention. He believes that if he could get transcripts of some of his pieces—or redactions/stories based on them—then he could publish them and attract more viewers. The OIG team considers this idea to have merit, and will discuss with relevant MBN representatives in the United States its providing transcript or promotional story service to Al-Hurra, so that the station can place stories and attract viewers.

## Radio Sawa

The Radio Sawa Cairo correspondent is a 22-year VOA veteran who was asked to stay on when broadcasting in Arabic shifted to MBN. Most stories are one or two minutes long, though some features can run up to six minutes. The correspondent has received positive feedback from Washington and says that her stories have been broadcast. She tries to cover a variety of subjects but said that Washington wants political pieces, whereas she would like to do more cultural features.

## CONSULAR OPERATIONS

Egypt is a key international tourist destination, with over 300,000 American visitors a year and a resident American citizen population of approximately 35,000. It has the largest population in the Middle East, with widespread poverty and a perceived lack of economic prospects that drives many to seek opportunity elsewhere.

The Embassy's medium-sized consular section operates in this complex environment of touristic attraction and outward migration, providing the full range of consular services. The regional consular officer operates an independent office supervised by the Bureau of Consular Affairs.

Consular priorities are well described in the FY 2011 MSP; the consular goal covers serving American citizens, facilitating legitimate travel to the United States from Egypt and Sudan, and preventing terrorists and illegitimate travelers from entering the United States. The consular section is well integrated into embassy operations and receives clear front office support. The CG is a regular member of the country team, the emergency action committee's core group, and the homeland security working group. The latter also serves as the Visas Viper committee. The CG has a regularly scheduled biweekly meeting with the DCM and is able to meet with the Ambassador or the DCM as necessary. The Ambassador and DCM regularly visit the consular section to attend events or to show their interest and support.

## Consular Management

Embassy Cairo's consular section is headed by a senior consular officer and staffed by a deputy section chief and unit chiefs for NIV, ACS, and fraud prevention (FP). The deputy CG is also the visa chief. There are eight Department entry-level officer (ELO) positions, of which two are rotational for the second year—one to the front office into a staff aide position and one to the economic/political section. There is a formal rotation schedule within the consular section to at least two of the three units (IV, NIV and ACS), although visa caseloads usually preclude a lengthy rotation into ACS. The one consular associate position is vacant, and the candidate hired for the EFM position is pending security clearance. Temporary American citizen summer hires are providing biometric services. All 33 LE staff positions are filled.

Consular management is guarding against waste, fraud and misappropriation of public property through adherence to internal controls mandated by the Bureau of Consular Affairs. Consular fees are collected in accordance with the schedule of fees and accounted for by the accountable consular officer. With each change of an accountable consular officer, an inventory and reconciliation of accountable property is completed. Cashiering operations meet 4 FAH-3 H-300 guidelines.

Consular management maintains that training and communications within the consular section are important. One afternoon a week is dedicated to officer and LE staff meetings and training sessions, and one day a month the section is closed so that the entire staff can participate in training and other embassy activities. There is a



**Recommendation 6:** Embassy Cairo should require that the deputy consular section chief and unit chiefs prepare individual professional development plans for consular locally employed staff, to include training based on the Bureau of Consular Affairs correspondence courses. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

A majority of consular section personnel, both American and LE staff, raised the issue of participation in the mission awards program. In the past 3 years, the ACS unit members won all but two of the individual and group awards. This year, the FP unit is receiving a Franklin Award. This record contrasts with other mission elements that are more proactive in recognizing various levels of achievement of all section personnel. The OIG notes that the consular section honors an LE staff member by recognition as employee of the month. In addition, several extra mile awards have been granted by consular management during the same 3-year period to staff members in the other units. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that consular management promote greater participation in the mission awards program.

## Information and Correspondence Unit

The information and correspondence unit is the central communications point for all consular units. It answers all congressional correspondence. It endeavors to screen inquiries by referring callers first to the Embassy Web site, and then to the unit's email account for later response. However, the procedures for answering case-specific telephone inquiries and insisting on email messages are proving to be less efficient than intended. They often result in exasperated, unsatisfied clients and a flood of email messages. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the unit prepare a detailed SOP and cross-train the staff in visa and ACS subject matter to provide more accurate information to callers.

## Consular Space

Consular section space allocation and configuration are inadequate for its needs, especially providing line-of-sight positioning of consular officers and other internal controls. There are insufficient windows available for interviewing visa applicants, and no privacy booths, as well as poorly designed work areas for LE and American staff. Ventilation and air quality are unsatisfactory. Post is developing plans for submission to OBO and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to relocate the ACS unit to a perimeter building and the IV unit to the former ACS space, and to increase space in the current NIV unit. The OIG team understands that in 2005, the Department

approved a fully integrated renovation plan that included applicant needs, staffing requirements, electrical usage, and air quality improvements, but that the project was delayed because of perimeter security concerns. These plans could be revisited to provide for the IV and NIV unit renovations.

## American Citizen Services

The ACS unit provides standard passport and special consular services to a growing clientele. There is a large resident American citizen population, the vast majority of whom are dual nationals (American-Egyptian). In addition to the large volume of tourists, Cairo provides consular services not easily available in neighboring countries such as Libya and Sudan, as well as Gaza. ACS developed an extensive network of wardens, most recently expanded along the Red Sea coast's major tourist areas, and provides warden training activities. Warden messages are sent by email and text messages. ACS promotes outreach to American citizens in Egypt through visits to the American Cultural Center in Alexandria, the American University in Cairo, and the Cairo American College to offer regular services.

The importance of family and children's issues in the ACS unit is beyond dispute. The unit faces a growing caseload of parental child abductions; destitute and abandoned American citizen mothers with minor children; Internet marriages and associated claims of domestic violence; mentally ill American citizens; property disputes; and other family-related issues. Maintaining contact with Egyptian Government officials to highlight the needs of American citizens remains a high priority. Egypt is not a party to the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Moreover, the Subcommittee on Good Intentions, an Egyptian interagency body established in 2000 to mediate between parents in abduction cases and custody disputes, no longer functions as intended, and embassy participation is no longer welcomed. While the October 2003 memorandum of understanding between the United States and Egypt emphasizes the importance of parental and consular access, it has not led to successful resolution of abduction cases. These facts complicate ACS interventions and limit its successes.

Given this workload, there is a clear need for a dedicated children's issues officer. The Embassy requested approval for this position for FY 2011 in its MSP and responded affirmatively by email to an April 2009 solicitation from the Bureau of Consular Affairs for a position justification (State 33402). The OIG team supports this request and urges consular management to formally respond to the solicitation, and to discuss its associated needs for a nonrotational ELO position and other ACS LE staff.





## Visa Referral System

Embassy Cairo has an official visa referral policy approved by the COM and renewed annually. Referrals are properly identified in the NIV system. Class A referrals are adjudicated by the CG and reviewed by the DCM. Class B referrals are adjudicated by the NIV chief and reviewed by the deputy CG/visa chief. Consular management provides training and has posted guidance on the Embassy's intranet site. The visa referrals on the embassy intranet site are incomplete. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that consular management place completed visa referral forms on its Intranet site for use by officers authorized to make referrals.

## Fraud Prevention and Visa Security

Embassy Cairo's consular section is well endowed with FP, investigative, and security resources to support its operations. In addition, consular managers coordinate with mission security and law enforcement officers, as well as other diplomatic missions in Cairo (Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Austria) regarding fraud trends and investigations to counter specifically identified fraud conspiracies. Random and targeted validation studies are conducted quarterly, generally 6 months after issuance of the visas, to assess the level of NIV abuse. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that consular management perform more frequent targeted validation studies, particularly a study of 100 percent of referral cases, in accordance with 04 State 172283 and 9 FAM Appendix K, 105 d.

The FP unit investigates suspicious cases from all consular units. It is supervised by the fraud prevention manager (FPM) and includes two LE staff investigators and one LE staff investigative assistant. In addition to the offices cited below, they work in tandem with the post RSO and the office of the legal attaché. Two of the investigators are temporarily seconded from the Egyptian Immigration Police and vetted by the RSO. These officers have excellent access to civil and criminal records. With their assistance, the FPM develops close, cooperative relationships with senior Egyptian officials concerned with terrorism, illegal immigration, and human trafficking.

An assistant RSO-investigator is assigned to the consular section and reports to the CG. He works closely with the FP unit on fraud investigations and law enforcement. He also works daily with consular officers, responding to their requests for assistance in document examination and offering training on investigative techniques appropriate to their jobs. The assistant RSO-investigator helps determine the source of illegal document production, as well as criminal enterprises engaged in immigration fraud, and solicits cooperation with local authorities to effect arrests and criminal prosecutions. He also pursues cases in the United States through the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.





## AMERICAN PRESENCE POST ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria is home to a very nontraditional APP. Located in the third-largest city on the African continent, the American footprint in Alexandria has in the past included a consulate, a U.S. Information Service branch post, and an American Center before it was designated an APP in 2004. Currently, a single American officer supervises 49 local employees responsible for public diplomacy, economic and political reporting, and various management functions including customs and shipping support for Embassy Cairo. The facilities include an IRC, public computer access, cashier services, and an AMIDEAST counseling center with language classes. Due to the complex mission of the APP and the importance of the Nile delta region, Embassy Cairo proposed in the FY 2011 MSP to convert the post back into a small consulate.

### Reporting

Reporting from APP Alexandria is high on the current officer's priority list for improvements in the coming year. Embassy Cairo identified an increase in reporting on the Nile delta region as a prime goal of the APP at its designation, but the operational focus remained heavily on public diplomacy. While APP officers sent a number of spot reports over the years, Embassy Cairo does not encourage the APP to coordinate with ECPO. Coordinating with ECPO on a reporting strategy will enhance the current officer's efforts to reorganize and energize APP reporting.

APP Alexandria also needs to address the anticipated staffing needs in order to provide adequate economic and political support. The APP currently has one local economic and political assistant, and two FCS local employees. The two FCS employees will retire in the summer, and a freeze on FCS hiring makes it unlikely that these positions will be filled in the foreseeable future. The loss of these resources will make it much more difficult for the APP to monitor economic developments in the region. Embassy Cairo requested a second economic and political employee position in the MSP. In light of the loss of the FCS employees and the intent to increase the reporting output by APP Alexandria, the OIG supports the mission's request for a new position.

## Public Diplomacy

The APP officer is positive, energetic, and thoughtful, spending nearly 70 percent of her time on public affairs work. All five LE staff support her. Three of the LE staff work in the IRC. The others are a public affairs assistant and a cultural affairs assistant. The APP also hosts the Alexandria office of AMIDEAST. The combined efforts of all these generate an average of 10 programs a month at the center. Alexandria annually selects between 10 and 15 nominees to the International Visitor program, approximately half of whom are accepted.

## Administrative Support for APP Alexandria

The APP is staffed by one American officer and 49 LE staff employees, including a 26-person security detachment. Many of these employees have worked for the Department for 25 years or more and have witnessed the changing status of Alexandria from a full consulate to an embassy branch office to its current status as an APP. Embassy Cairo provides management support to APP Alexandria in the form of resources, program direction, and remote as well as periodic on-site supervision. APP Alexandria also performs a vital service for Embassy Cairo, with a four-person general services/customs and shipping staff, clearing all official and personal shipments through the port of Alexandria.

The OIG team met with LE staff at Alexandria to discuss work-related issues and concerns. Many of their comments were similar to those of their colleagues in Embassy Cairo, focusing on issues of compensation, position classification, and career advancement opportunities. There were also complaints about the lack of an employee cafeteria and health clinic. The OIG team made informal recommendations addressing these matters.

The LE staff also expressed a common desire for more training opportunities in subjects related to their specific positions, as well as broader skills such as English language and computer operations. They often do not hear about external training courses until it is too late to apply or find that no funding is available.

**Recommendation 11:** Embassy Cairo should conduct a training needs assessment for American Presence Post Alexandria, identifying candidates for external training in job-specific subjects as well as local training in English language and computer skills, and then develop a multi-year plan to fund such training. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

The Alexandria staff (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) would welcome more visits to Alexandria from the Ambassador, DCM, and other key mission officers, as well as increased opportunities to visit Embassy Cairo to interact with their counterparts, particularly those Embassy supervisors who serve as their rating officers. Whether through direct interaction or through increased use of digital videoconferencing, there is a clear need to increase the interaction between Embassy Cairo and APP Alexandria.

## Information Management

APP Alexandria has two local area networks – OpenNet Plus and the IRC-dedicated Internet network. The network consists of approximately 33 workstations and four servers and is supported by one LE systems administrator. The APP also receives quarterly support from the information services center, radio, and telephone offices in Embassy Cairo. A full review of operations is conducted every 6 months by the information management officer (IMO).

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## Overseas Schools

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U.S. Government grant assistance to (b)(2)(b)(6) in FY 2008 totaled \$347,948: \$332,948 in funding—provided by the Middle East Partnership Initiative in coordination with the Office of Overseas Schools—for scholarships for Egyptian students; and \$15,000 funded by the Office of Overseas Schools designated for purchase of educational materials, support for training, and professional development. The regional education officer did not visit the school during her March 2009 visit to Egypt.

**Recommendation 13:** The Bureau of Administration should visit (b)(2)(b)(6) to assess U.S. Government grant assistance programs during its next consultation visit to Egypt. (Action: A)

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

| Agency                                       | U.S. Direct-Hire Staff | U.S. Local-Hire Staff | Foreign National Staff | Total Staff | Total Funding FY 2009     |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| State – D&CP                                 | 105                    | 3                     | 57                     | 165         | \$4,425,500               |
| State – ICASS                                | 57                     | 20                    | 862                    | 939         | \$15,633,700              |
| State – Public Diplomacy                     | 9                      | 1                     | 45                     | 55          | \$1,582,600               |
| State – Diplomatic Security                  |                        |                       |                        |             | \$3,142,000               |
| State – Marine Security Guard                | 22                     |                       | 4                      | 26          | \$97,000                  |
| State – Representation                       |                        |                       |                        |             | \$89,600                  |
| State – Overseas Buildings Operations        |                        |                       |                        |             | \$5,204,700               |
| State – Global Publishing Solutions          | 1                      |                       | 26                     | 27          | \$3,300,000               |
| State – Regional English Language Office     | 1                      |                       | 2                      | 3           | \$139,300                 |
| Agriculture (FAS, APHIS)                     | 4                      |                       | 9                      | 13          | \$365,200                 |
| AID (total includes 22 U.S. Contracted PSCs) | 68                     | 2                     | 139                    | 231         | \$14,521,000 <sup>1</sup> |
| BBG/IBB/VOA                                  | 1                      | 1                     | 3                      | 5           | \$300,000                 |
| Commerce - FCS                               | 4                      |                       | 15                     | 19          | \$976,300                 |
| DHS – ICE and other                          | 3                      |                       | 3                      | 6           | \$35,400                  |
| DOD  | 191                    |                       | 146                    | 337         | \$24,338,800 <sup>2</sup> |
| DOJ – Drug Enforcement Administration        | 8                      |                       | 3                      | 11          | \$78,000                  |
| Library of Congress                          | 1                      |                       | 34                     | 35          | \$1,308,500               |
| Treasury – Other                             | 1                      |                       | 1                      | 2           | \$98,200                  |
| <b>Total (includes 22 USAID PSCs)</b>        | <b>476</b>             | <b>27</b>             | <b>1349</b>            | <b>1874</b> | <b>\$75,635,800</b>       |

<sup>1</sup> Includes \$2,503,000 for O&E and \$12,018,000 in trust account

<sup>2</sup> Includes \$20,000,000 for NAMRU

## Embassy Facilities

The chancery compound is a 3.7-acre property, acquired in 1959, near the Nile River in Cairo's central business district. The compound contains four separate buildings: Cairo I, a 15-story office building containing 13,799 gross square meters, constructed in 1989; Cairo II, an eight-story office building with 11,446 gross square meters, including a two-story Marine House, and completed in 1994; a two-story office/utility/multipurpose (perimeter building) structure; and the Ambassador's three-story residence built in 1989.

All personnel were relocated from the perimeter building after the bombings in Kenya and Tanzania in 1997, and it remains vacant except for some storage. (b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) The Embassy is working with OBO and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to renovate the structure so that it may once again be used for office space. They have contracted with an architectural firm to develop the project design. However, there is no specific timeline for completion of this project, and in fact, there is no final decision regarding the occupants of the building once the renovation is complete.

The perimeter building renovation is only one of an extensive list of OBO projects for Embassy Cairo included in its long range facility plan. This plan was completed in 2007 and has 19 recommendations for 59 separate projects costing an estimated \$130 million over the next 8 to 10 years as funding becomes available. The projects are primarily focused on essential upgrades or repairs to building systems, but also include some necessary security enhancements as well as aesthetic improvements to office buildings and living quarters.

Another major U. S. Government-owned facility is the ESSA, completed in May 1993, and located in an industrial development in suburban Maadi on the outskirts of Cairo. The ESSA compound is located 14 kilometers from the chancery; driving time between the two is 35 to 70 minutes, depending on traffic. The only access road is in poor condition and getting worse from the pounding of heavy trucks and other construction equipment. A three-meter-high concrete wall surrounds both facilities and plentiful parking facilities. The ESSA compound contains administrative offices, a U.S. military commissary, an Army and Air Force Exchange store, a property disposal building, facilities maintenance unit shops, and a motor pool workshop. There are two supply and property management (SPM) warehouses, including one formerly operated by USAID, which converted to ICASS control in FY 2005. There is also a smaller warehouse operated by OMC where it stores furniture. The latest addition to the ESSA compound is global publishing solutions, a Department regional facility soon to operate in a newly renovated building.

The Embassy staff and families have access to a U.S. Government-owned recreational facility known as the Maadi House, constructed in 1975, which contains a pool, clubhouse, and other recreational amenities. This facility is located in suburban Maadi, convenient to the large number of mission personnel who live in this area, (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

USAID employees work in a purpose-built facility in Maadi on an attractive and modern compound that contains administrative offices, a small U.S. military exchange, an LE staff medical clinic, and various maintenance and repair shops. This facility will also accommodate a 20-person regional Department OIG presence, due to begin operations in the summer of 2009.

The mission also maintains APP Alexandria, located at the historic American Center in downtown Alexandria. This building was constructed in 1922 as a villa for a wealthy Alexandria merchant and is one of the Department's 17 heritage properties; it is also on the Government of Egypt's historic building list. Substantial improvements have already occurred, and a major roof renovation project was underway at the time of this inspection. Other Alexandria projects in OBO's long range facility plan include the installation of a second exit stair and elevator, and a façade renovation and repair project. The ongoing improvements are designed to enhance operations to further expand the diplomatic, commercial, management, and public diplomacy functions that can be undertaken in Alexandria.

## MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

The management section in Embassy Cairo is facing a number of challenges, such as providing quality administrative support for a huge and increasing embassy population, maintaining a vast array of office and residential facilities in various parts of the city, and accommodating a steady stream of VIP visitors, including a visit by the President and Secretary of State during this inspection. Such challenges are greatly complicated by endemic problems in Cairo, such as the incessant heavy traffic, pollution, inconsistent multi-providers of municipal utilities, and increasing costs for commodities ranging from labor to residential leases. Furthermore, the management section is also subject to prolonged staffing gaps attributable to the priority of service in Embassy Baghdad.

The management section is under the direction of a counselor (FE-OC) who is serving in a minister counselor (FE-MC) position, so designated, because it is among the most demanding overseas management positions. The counselor is the primary management interlocutor with other agencies through the ICASS council and with

the executive office, and effectively manages the relationships with both constituencies. An experienced FS-01 management officer serves as deputy to the management counselor and has responsibility for many of the ongoing operations and special projects. Other key positions include supervisory general services officer (GSO), IMO, facilities manager, human resources officer (HRO), financial management officer (FMO), and regional medical officer (RMO). With the exception of the HRO and most recently the FMO, these front-line supervisors are backed up by talented and experienced mid-grade officers and a few ELOs.

The organizational structure of the management section contains some anomalies that should be addressed, particularly regarding the reporting and supervisory responsibilities. Specifically, the work requirements statement for the management counselor identifies no direct supervisory requirements, although she supervises four officers: the FS-01 management officer; the RMO, the RMO psychiatrist, and the IMO. The work requirements statement for the management officer states that she “directs day-to-day operations and directly supervises section heads of Embassy Cairo’s diverse and complex management section: FMO, human resources (HR) officer, GSO, facilities manager, and an IMO.” However, the IMO’s work requirements statement claims that he reports directly to the management counselor, and indeed the recent employee evaluation report for the IMO was signed by the management counselor as rating officer.

The Department designated both the IMO and FMO positions at Embassy Cairo as FE-OC positions, but it would appear that both of these senior officers are under the direct supervision of the FS-01 management officer. Such an arrangement is awkward for the employees and inconsistent with Department policy regarding organizational structure. Possible solutions to correct this situation include designating the FE-MC as the supervisor and rating officer for these two positions, or retaining the current reporting and supervisory chain, but upgrading the management officer position to FE-OC.

**Recommendation 14:** Embassy Cairo should resolve the reporting structure for the information management officer and financial management officer.  
(Action: Embassy Cairo)

The management section includes roughly 450 LE staff in a range of professional, clerical, and trades positions, many of whom have worked at Embassy Cairo for 25 years or more, and provide knowledge, continuity and experience within

several management subunits. However, too many of the subordinate staff are inexperienced, untrained, or lack requisite job skills, and their performance does not always meet the expectations of supervisors or customers. Embassy management recognizes the potential impact on administrative operations when the senior LE staff begins to retire within the next few years and plans to introduce a performance management program to improve the productivity of remaining staff. The LE staff also has an elected committee of representatives that meet with post management, but the committee has been unable to meet on a regular basis with the management counselor. A good practice would be to have a monthly meeting between the FE-OC and the LE staff committee. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

Despite the efforts of post management, recent customer surveys reveal a slight decline in the level of overall satisfaction with ICASS services. In its recent MSP, the Embassy established an ambitious objective of achieving a score on the 2009 customer survey equal to or higher than that of the 2008 survey and at least 2 percent higher than the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA) average. In fact, the overall satisfaction score in the 2009 survey declined from 2008 and 2007, and was slightly lower than both the NEA and worldwide average. The workplace and quality of life questionnaires (WQLQ) survey scores for this inspection were also slightly below the average of previously inspected posts, both for overall running of the management section, as well as for customer service.

In absolute terms, the scores on both of these surveys were not alarmingly low. However, the trend concerns Embassy management, particularly as the workload will soon increase with the planned addition of several more American staff in the Embassy. Without additional American supervision in the section, it will become increasingly difficult to support mission requirements and maintain effective internal controls, and customer satisfaction could decline as a result.

Embassy management is taking active measures to deal with this situation. Embassy Cairo's 2011 MSP includes this goal: "Managing this growth smartly and without degradation to our services is our primary goal. Continuing to eliminate duplicative support services and good performance management also remain key management priorities." The Embassy also requested additional ICASS funding and staff as a prerequisite to approving several pending requests for staffing increases in Department programs and other agency offices.

## Rightsizing

Embassy Cairo prepared a rightsizing review for the Under Secretary for Management's Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation in June 2008, projecting that the number of U.S. personnel would actually decline from 503 to 494 over the next 4 years. Embassy management concluded at time that the mission was rightsized to meet its strategic objectives, but that there may be some duplication in management activities. The Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation had not yet responded to Embassy Cairo's 2008 rightsizing review at the time of this inspection but intended to do so by the end of June 2009.

However, circumstances have changed considerably in the year since the Embassy submitted the rightsizing review. Early in FY 2009, Embassy Cairo received formal National Security Decision Directive-38 requests for an additional 25 positions and has approved 23 of them—19 positions for the Department OIG regional office, three positions under the USAID development leadership initiative, and one for the global publishing solutions operation. The FY 2011 MSP includes requests for significantly more positions, including 20 from the Department, and 79 for other agencies, the latter total including 32 positions under USAID's development leadership initiative. Embassy Cairo will also be hosting several other U.S. diplomatic officials and families not directly associated with the mission, including several who will be studying Arabic language at local institutions, as well as families of those serving unaccompanied tours in Iraq or Afghanistan.

With such substantial increases in program staffing proposed over the next few years, Embassy management anticipates the requirement for additional staffing and resources if they are to meet the MSP goal of providing quality support services. In an initial attempt to quantify these additional resource requirements, Embassy management undertook an internal review in early FY 2009 to determine what additional resources would be required to support the new OIG office and the global publishing solutions operation. In November 2008, the review was expanded to identify the additional resource requirements to support another 70 staff.

Embassy Cairo addressed this issue in a cable (Cairo 103 dated January 21, 2009) that listed the actual or anticipated requests for new program positions and requested more ICASS funding. Specifically, the mission requested that \$500,000 – cut from its ICASS base in FY 2005 – be restored to support the current population plus the new OIG personnel. The Embassy also requested another \$230,000 in ICASS funding to add 25 more LE staff to support the additional 50 positions anticipated over the

next year. The cable concludes with the assertion that the Ambassador will not be able to concur with any further expansion of U.S. staffing, without the Department's assurances of increased funding for critical support positions and infrastructure.

The Embassy further pressed its case for additional resources in the FY 2011 MSP, submitted in March 2009. In this plan Embassy Cairo noted the need for two GSO positions and two IMO positions that had not been included in the January 2009 cable. At the time of the inspection, the Embassy was awaiting the Department's decision on these positions requests.

Embassy Cairo received an additional ICASS allotment of \$7.2 million in early May 2009, bringing the total ICASS allotment to \$15.7 million. The management counselor considered this increase responsive to the Embassy's request and informed the ICASS council that she would recommend approval of the pending National Security Decision Directive-38 requests. She further noted that specific plans for expenditures on supplies, equipment, and new positions would be developed and presented to the council at a later date. Management previously pledged to the ICASS council that no new positions would be added without council approval.

At a time of continued resource constraints for the Department, Embassy Cairo's case for additional U.S. direct-hire and LE staff ICASS positions can be strengthened, if the Embassy can demonstrate that all feasible actions have been taken to improve the efficiency of operations. The management section's LE staff member has both professional training and experience as a management analyst, and could be tasked to undertake an in-depth analysis of administrative operations to identify inefficiencies, obstacles, and potential improvements. The OIG team issued an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

Although the mission previously consolidated many of its administrative support operations, further economies can be achieved through expanded participation in appliance and residential furniture pools, as well as in the total or partial consolidation of ICASS and USAID motor pools. These issues are discussed elsewhere in the management section of this report.

Embassy Cairo has not updated the June 2008 rightsizing report to reflect the actual number of proposed new positions that Embassy Cairo will approve and the corresponding increases in support positions to support the mission growth.

**Recommendation 15:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, should prepare and submit an updated rightsizing review to the Office of Management Policy, Rightsizing, and Innovation, in order to determine the appropriate International Cooperative Administrative Support Services staffing profile to support this growing mission. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with NEA and M/PRI)

**Recommendation 16:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, should engage the Bureau of Human Resources to expedite the staffing of additional positions identified in the updated rightsizing review, to hire new support personnel before the arrival of new program staff. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with NEA and HR)

## Facilities Management

The facilities management section is under the direction of an experienced facilities manager who arrived at post in October 2008. He reports directly to the management officer and supervises two other U.S. facilities managers and a large staff of technicians and laborers. Maintaining office and residential buildings is greatly complicated by the climatic conditions, limited availability and quality of contract services, transportation problems, and staff who sometimes lack the desired skill sets and training.

Despite the general conditions under which the facilities management staff operates, the customers are relatively satisfied with the quality of maintenance and repair for both the office buildings and residences. Respondents to the WQLQ rated chancery maintenance below the average of embassies previously inspected by OIG, but the score was still within the positive range. The quality of residential maintenance and repair rated slightly higher than the average rating for other embassies recently inspected by OIG. The 2009 ICASS customer satisfaction survey scores for both residential and nonresidential building maintenance were just slightly below the worldwide and NEA averages.

The facilities manager recognizes the need for improvement and has taken several measures to upgrade the effectiveness of his operations. He designated an EFM administrative assistant to serve as a customer liaison, with responsibility to brief newcomers about residential maintenance, and to follow up with customers who requested maintenance. The facilities managers instituted a more rigorous preemploy-



staff to improve oversight and compliance with SHEM programs, particularly if the mission population continues to expand. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this matter.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

Befitting its status as one of the largest U.S. embassies, Embassy Cairo has a large ICASS council that consists of senior representatives from the various cabinet agencies represented here. To assess the relationship between the council and the service providers, the OIG team reviewed council minutes and other relevant documents, attended a council meeting, and met with the outgoing and incoming ICASS council chairs. The OIG team concluded that there is a solid and productive working relationship between the parties.

The council is active, engaged, and knowledgeable regarding the ICASS principles and procedures. The executive office also takes an active interest in council proceedings, as the DCM occasionally attends the meetings. The council meets frequently and works closely with the service provider to address such major issues as LE staff compensation, mission growth, and the results of the ICASS customer survey. There is also a standing budget committee that reviews financial issues for consideration by the council. The council provided input for the DCM to use in the evaluation of the management counselor.

There are strong indications that the council will continue to be a positive and productive partner with the service provider. The chair responsibility was just passed to the senior representative of the Department of Agriculture, who has considerable training and experience with ICASS at the local and headquarters level. The ICASS service center sent instructors to Cairo in February 2009 to provide the council and service providers with post-specific training in ICASS principles and procedures.

There are additional measures available to further enhance the effectiveness of ICASS in Embassy Cairo. Until recently, ICASS documents and activities were publicized on the Embassy Cairo Web site, thus providing transparency and promoting mission-wide understanding of ICASS. Since 2006, Embassy Cairo's Web site no longer features up-to-date information about the ICASS service provider, council membership, meeting minutes, and any recent modifications to charter, service standards, etc., and an important source of information and reference atrophied.

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Cairo should designate an individual to update the information about International Cooperative Administrative Support Services on the mission Web site, so that meeting minutes and changes to vital information are posted in a timely manner. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE

Under normal circumstances, the general services office is adequately staffed to provide the full range of support for the embassy community, with a supervisory GSO and three assistant GSOs. At the time of the OIG inspection, however, the section was understaffed due to the recent transfer of the supervisory GSO to Embassy Baghdad. Despite the staffing gap, the three American GSO personnel present during the inspection worked diligently to maintain quality support services and the demands of a planning visit from the President and Secretary of State. They were ably assisted by a cadre of competent LE staff in first-line supervisory positions, who offered both continuity and experience.

The section faces an even more acute staffing shortage with the early summer departure of one assistant GSO for Baghdad and the scheduled departure of another assistant GSO for reassignment. As a result, there will be only one assistant GSO overseeing all GSO operations at a time when demands for many of these services will peak. NEA agreed to send two officers to provide temporary assistance until the arrival of the new supervisory GSO and two new assistant GSO personnel.

Despite the conscientious efforts of GSO staff, respondents to the WQLQ survey rated overall management of GSO operations below the average ratings of other embassies. Most of the individual GSO subunits were also rated slightly below average. The exceptions were with travel services, which ranked slightly above average, and motor pool operations, which rated considerably higher than the aggregate scores for the other embassies recently inspected by OIG. The 2009 ICASS customer survey scores reflected a similar pattern, with most of the GSO operations ranking slightly below the NEA and worldwide averages. Although the latter scores are not alarmingly low, they have slipped in recent years, a trend that mission management would like to reverse.

## Housing

Housing is always a primary factor in mission morale and probably nowhere else as much as in Cairo, where people need an oasis from this chaotic city. Embassy management recognizes the importance of housing and included in the housing handbook a goal for Cairo to have the reputation of a posting with “superb housing.” Unfortunately, many staff members at Embassy Cairo do not regard their housing as adequate, let alone superb, nor do they consider the housing program to be equitable or fairly administered. The WQLQ results for suitability of housing were slightly below the average of recent OIG inspections, while the scores for equity and administration of the housing program were significantly lower than the average. The WQLQ narrative comments questioned the price versus the quality of leased housing, which were described as dirty, noisy, and substandard. Some respondents believed that discrimination occurs in housing assignments based on personal rank and agency affiliation. The FY 2009 ICASS customer survey results for leasing were also significantly below the worldwide average and that of NEA posts, and the comments from that survey were even more critical. In response to such criticism, management is taking several measures designed to improve communication with customers, as well as to upgrade the housing pool.

With over 300 staff and families to accommodate, the housing pool is vast and varied, with a ratio of more than 2:1 between leased and government-owned units. According to the housing profile report for Embassy Cairo, the U.S. Government owns 97 housing units, including the COM residence, the DCM residence, Marine security guard quarters, 11 single-family houses, and four separate apartment buildings. Leased residences constitute the majority of the housing pool with a total of 229 separate leases. Housing is located in one of two areas: the Zamalek district, which is within reasonable proximity of the downtown chancery or the distant suburb of Maadi, (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6) (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

Lease costs have been rising rapidly in recent years, with total outlays for FY 2009 amounting to \$2.15 million, up from the \$1.76 million total for FY 2008. A few executive-level leases are in the \$70,000 to \$90,000 range, and almost all leases now exceed the annual cost threshold of \$25,000 that requires OBO approval. Recognizing this fact, and the administrative burden associated with the waiver approval process, OBO recently agreed to replace this longtime threshold with a new set of price ceilings, or “benchmarks” for the various categories of housing.

There are several disparities between the U.S. Government-owned units and the leased properties. The government apartments are clustered in compounds that provide better security, infrastructure, and amenities, including recreation and off-street parking. The embassy facilities management staff performs all maintenance, and OBO provides funding to remodel the units. Although some staff members prefer to live in leased units, many experience problems with parking, noise, unsanitary surroundings, and municipal services. Such units often lack such vital safety features as secondary egress and fire detection systems. Some landlords are willing to make necessary upgrades and fulfill their contractual obligations for major maintenance and repairs, but others are reluctant to undertake any improvements or repairs.

With the increasing difficulty in finding affordable, quality housing, it may be difficult for the Embassy to support further expansion of the U.S. Government presence in Cairo. In consideration of the increasingly high lease costs, the fundamental advantages of U.S. Government-owned housing, and the importance of quality housing for mission morale, a strong case can be made to acquire more housing in Cairo. OBO acknowledges this, as evidenced by their authorization for the Embassy to identify a few apartments for potential purchase, but the initial results were unsuccessful.

Although the OIG team supports the concept of purchasing a limited number of existing residences, a better alternative would be to acquire property of sufficient size to construct at least one more multi-unit housing compound. While the upfront costs would be significant, the investment would likely be recouped within a reasonable period through lease cost savings. Furthermore, it would positively impact mission morale, as well as recruitment and retention. Mission management reacted favorably to this concept.

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should identify and acquire property for the purpose of constructing additional U.S. Government-owned housing for mission staff and families. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with OBO)

## Interagency Housing Board

The interagency housing board (IAHB) assigns housing for all incoming personnel, in consideration of special needs or expressed preferences, contingent upon the timing of arrivals and vacancies. OIG team members met with members of the

IAHB and attended a monthly meeting of this organization to observe its proceedings. The IAHB considered proposals for housing assignments of 10 incoming staff members, as well as petitions from six employees who sought reassignment to other quarters for various reasons. Most of these requests were from employees who were assigned to leased apartment units.

As outlined in 15 FAM 212.2-2(B) a., the board was appropriately composed of members who represented the various agencies and interest groups, including lower-graded staff, specialists, and ELOs. The meeting was properly conducted by the recently designated chair and attended both by voting members and management personnel serving in an ex officio capacity. In view of the importance of housing to customer satisfaction and morale, it is appropriate that the management counselor attend IAHB meetings to ensure the fairness, objectivity, and adherence to U.S. Government policies. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this matter.

The information that the GSO prepared and distributed to the IAHB members before the meeting did not include any information regarding lease costs for the various units to which assignments were to be made. Without such information, the IAHB is not able to properly carry out its responsibilities under 15 FAM 212.2-2(C) (b) to monitor lease costs and ensure the cost-effectiveness of post housing.

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Cairo should provide the interagency housing board with sufficient and timely information regarding lease costs for housing units. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## Motor Pool Operations

The ICASS motor pool is vital to the operations of Embassy Cairo. The motor pool supports a large staff and a substantial number of temporary duty and VIP visitors, and provides an important link between the downtown chancery and the offices and residences in suburban Maadi. In view of the terrorist threat, the heavy and hazardous traffic, and the lack of downtown parking, the motor pool shuttle service is a necessary and convenient means of commuting for many employees.

Despite the extent and range of demands, the motor pool provides quality support to Embassy Cairo. Mission employees who responded to the WQLQ survey for this inspection rated the responsiveness of the ICASS motor pool well above

the average of embassies previously inspected. The 2009 ICASS customer satisfaction survey reflected similar results, with scores for Embassy Cairo well above both the NEA and worldwide average, a pattern which has prevailed over the past several years.

The WQLQ results were less positive for maintenance and upkeep of motor pool vehicles, with the scores well below the average of posts from previous inspections. This is particularly difficult to explain because Embassy Cairo has the latest diagnostic and repair equipment, well-trained mechanics, and a highly regarded LE supervisor who frequently provides training in motor pool operations for other embassies. One possible explanation is that mission staff are most familiar with the vans used for shuttle service, many of which are between 5 and 10-years old. Furthermore, these shuttle vans are all armored vehicles, which are more difficult to maintain than conventional vehicles.

The most recent ICASS motor pool inventory includes a grand total of 140 vehicles of various model years and configurations, most of U.S. manufacture. The total cost of acquiring and armoring this fleet was \$5.72 million. In addition to these 140 vehicles, there are another 29 that are unavailable for common use, because they are dedicated to specific mission offices or activities. The ICASS motor pool fleet is aging, with 107 of the 140 vehicles now at least 5 years old, including 39 that are 10 or more years old. Management recognizes the need to replace these old models and ordered nine new vehicles but will need to replace many more over the next few years.

The planned expansion of Embassy staffing will greatly increase the demands for both official and other authorized use of motor pool assets, but this expanding operational requirement could be difficult to support unless the vehicle fleet is expanded. Accordingly, the Embassy insisted that necessary funding for vehicles and personnel be provided as a condition of approval for further staffing increases. In November 2008, management conducted an analysis of the additional resources required to support staff growth, and the assistant GSO for motor pool operations projected a need for six more vehicles. The LE motor pool supervisor now anticipates a need for another eight vehicles and at least two more drivers.

Before proceeding with these requests, it would be prudent to determine whether the necessary resources might already be available at post. In 2007, the ICASS council considered a proposal for consolidation of USAID's fleet of 29 vehicles into the ICASS motor pool but rejected it because the potential for savings did not overcome USAID's justification for maintaining a separate motor pool. In the June 2008 rightsizing report, Embassy management acknowledged that duplication of motor pools exists, and that the mission would "...continue to monitor for any change of

circumstances which would support future consolidation.” The proposed increases in mission staffing—including USAID’s plan to add several new positions under the development leadership initiative—clearly constitute a major change of circumstances that would merit a review of motor pool consolidation.

**Recommendation 21:** Embassy Cairo should reassess the previously proposed merger of the U.S. Agency for International Development and International Cooperative Administrative Support Services motor pools to determine whether full or partial consolidation would enhance the capacity to provide transportation to support an increasing mission population. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

In view of the security threat, a large number of Embassy vehicles are either fully or partially armored. Of the 140 vehicles listed in the ICASS inventory, a total of 49 have either light or full armoring. These vehicles are expensive to purchase and operate, and the Embassy motor pool is conscientious in maintaining them. Damage to the laminated windshields from prolonged exposure to direct sunlight often occurs, particularly in a place with a desert climate like Egypt. The USAID building provides covered parking for its motor pool, but there are very few covered parking areas near the chancery where ICASS armored vehicles are stationed. As a result, several armored vehicles have suffered various degrees of damage to windshields, including some that were disabled until the damaged windshields could be replaced. This is a very expensive proposition, as each armored windshield costs several thousand dollars.

**Recommendation 22:** Embassy Cairo should limit damage to armored vehicle windshields from exposure to direct sunlight by constructing shelters where feasible and providing portable windshield covers when vehicles cannot otherwise be sheltered. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

Another issue relating to armored vehicles is their disposal once they have reached the end of their useful life cycle. In order to prevent potential adversaries from obtaining and analyzing the armoring for vulnerabilities, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security approved several disposal methods, as set forth in 12 FAM 388. For various reasons however, the alternatives available to Embassy Cairo prove either too expensive or otherwise not feasible. As a result, several obsolete armored vehicles are parked at the ESSA compound awaiting disposal. The GSO and RSO had extensive

discussions regarding disposition of these vehicles, and a tentative agreement has been reached to destroy the current inventory of excess armored vehicles during an upcoming U.S.-Egyptian counterterrorism exercise. However, it will be necessary for the GSO and RSO to reach agreement on procedures for future disposal actions.

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should dispose of all obsolete armored vehicles in storage at the Embassy, in accordance with procedures set forth in 12 FAM 388, and establish standard operating procedures requiring that future armored vehicle disposals are also carried out in a timely and approved manner. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with DS)

## Customs and Shipping

The customs and shipping section is under the direction of one of the three assistant GSOs, who provides guidance and supervision to an LE staff of 15 in Embassy Cairo. There are also four LE staff in Alexandria who handle all of the Embassy's official and personal shipments transiting the port there. The staff in both locations are experienced and trained. According to the key LE staff supervisors, there are no significant problems with either the port facilities or the local bureaucracy, and thus there is minimal delay in shipping and customs clearance for embassy cargo.

The Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is tightening procedures for customs clearance of diplomatic household effects, after finding that diplomats from some other countries were importing duty-free commercial items for black market resale. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also initiated a similar program to tighten controls over vehicles imported duty-free by diplomats as such vehicles were being sold locally to persons without duty-free privileges.

Customer evaluations of the customs and shipping subunit of GSO this past year reflect some dissatisfaction, primarily with a perceived lack of transparency and communication regarding the status of shipments for incoming staff. The WQLQ score for this important service was slightly less than the average score of posts previously inspected. This is consistent with the result of the FY 2009 ICASS customer survey, where the aggregate rating for Embassy Cairo was somewhat less than the NEA and worldwide averages. Although the score was still respectable—3.7 on a scale of one to five—the assistant GSO recognizes that the customer needs and

expectations cannot be met without improved communication. Therefore, she hired an EFM to provide customers regular updates about shipments and instructed the LE staff to be more proactive in notifying customers of the status of incoming shipments.

## Property Management and Warehousing

The SPM section is located on the ESSA compound, under the direct on-site supervision of an experienced assistant GSO. He is supported by a cadre of competent and well-trained senior LE supervisors of the separate SPM branches: receiving; warehouse operations; inventory; and data entry, which produces various inventory reports. SPM maintains two ICASS warehouse facilities on the ESSA compound: a larger one purpose-built in 1993 in accordance with the Embassy's requirements and applicable U.S. Government standards; and a smaller building previously managed by USAID until the consolidation of nonexpendable property. The OIG inspection confirmed that the warehouses meet the safety, security, and operational standards set forth in 14 FAM 413.7, and in fact, they are operated and maintained in an exceptional manner. However, the facility has some deficiencies that negatively affect LE staff morale, such as the lack of a cafeteria or a comfortable break room. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

The FY 2008 property management report for Embassy Cairo shows a total inventory value for nonexpendable property of \$22.8 million, and a total inventory value of \$22.4 million in expendable property. Shortages and overages for both categories of property fell well below the 1 percent threshold that requires further justification. The Embassy also reported proceeds of sales from nonexpendable Department property in the amount of \$323,364.

Neither the WQLQ nor the ICASS customer survey includes an assessment of overall SPM operations, but there are questions relating to specific categories of supplies. On the WQLQ survey, respondents ranked Embassy Cairo lower than the average of previous inspections for both the adequacy of expendable supplies and the suitability of household furnishings. The FY 2009 ICASS customer survey rated administrative supply slightly below the NEA and worldwide averages, but scores for nonexpendable property management and furniture and furnishings were relatively good; fours on a scale of five and virtually the same as the worldwide and NEA averages.

Embassy Cairo has made much progress in consolidating property management operations, but more must be done to eliminate duplication in this labor-intensive activity. As noted above, ICASS and USAID consolidated nonexpendable inventories

and warehouse operations in 2005, but separate inventories are still maintained for smaller agencies such as the Library of Congress, Drug Enforcement Administration, and FAS. In addition, OMC operates its own separate warehouse on the ESSA compound. The Embassy also established ICASS appliance and furniture pools that most agencies, except for the Library of Congress, Drug Enforcement Administration and FAS, have joined. OMC participates in the appliance pool but not the furniture pool. ICASS workers are tasked with moving appliances and furniture when occupancy of a residential unit changes from a participating to a nonparticipating agency.

It is an unnecessary and costly waste of labor to swap out appliances and furniture owned by one agency for similar or identical items owned by a different agency. Most of these exchanges occur during the summer transfer season, when SPM must also be involved in residential make-readies. Further complicating the exchange of nonexpendable property is the fact that most buildings where the Embassy leases apartments do not have service elevators, and the passenger elevators are either too small or otherwise not available for moving furniture or appliances. SPM staff must often carry such bulky and heavy items up several flights of stairs, thus risking damage to the property and injury to the workers.

The obvious solution to this inefficient and wasteful practice is to consolidate all warehousing operations under ICASS and to have all agencies at post participate in both the appliance and furniture pools. The consolidation of warehouse operations and nonexpendable property inventories will reduce the total amount of inventory that must be stored, simplify record keeping, and reduce the number of warehouse personnel. With all agencies participating in the appliance and furniture pools, there will be no need to exchange assets when residential occupancy changes. This will reduce the SPM workload and costs to the U.S. Government, as well as minimize the possibility of loss or damage to items and injury to workers during frequent movements.

The 2008 rightsizing review acknowledges the duplication in SPM, and notes that: "GSO continues to seek OMC's full participation in the residential furniture pool and warehousing operations, but does not foresee positive action in this regard in the short term." While the GSO may not be able to persuade OMC and the other nonparticipating agencies to join the appliance and furniture pools, such leverage is within the authority of the COM. In a recent cable (State 49647), the Under Secretary for Management asked chiefs of mission to "...ensure that all elements under their authority establish and maintain consolidated support platforms under the

ICASS program.” This directive is particularly relevant to missions where growth is occurring, as the Under Secretary stated in the referenced cable: “As we expand the overseas diplomatic workforce, individual missions should look for opportunities to eliminate duplication in management support positions.”

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Cairo should reduce duplication and inefficiency in nonexpendable supply and property management by consolidating the office of military cooperation and International Cooperative Administrative Support Services warehousing operations and incorporating all nonparticipating agencies into the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services appliance and residential furniture pools. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## Contracting and Procurement

The senior assistant GSO is directly responsible for contracting and procurement, although he has also taken the role of supervisory GSO since the departure of the incumbent for Embassy Baghdad. The assistant GSO has a contracting warrant for \$250,000, and one of the other assistant GSOs also has a contracting warrant for up to \$100,000. The assistant GSO is assisted by a senior LE staff member with over 20 years of experience, who supervises a staff of nine other LE staff. The LE supervisor has had formal procurement training, but his staff members only received on-the-job training. Procurement and contracting are complex subjects requiring a thorough understanding of laws and regulations, so it is imperative that additional LE staff members complete formal Department procurement training. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## Travel Services

Embassy Cairo is a party to the worldwide General Services Administration contract with the Carlson Wagonlit commercial agency, which maintains an office in the chancery. USAID maintains a separate agreement with Carlson Wagonlit, which operates a travel office in the USAID building. An assistant GSO provides oversight for ICASS travel operations and supervises one LE travel assistant who monitors the travel contract and assists travelers with the Carlson Wagonlit E2 Solutions travel system. Although some staff members expressed concerns about the costs, quality, and timeliness of travel services, WQLQ scores on this GSO operation actually ex-

ceeded the average score of posts previously inspected by OIG. The FY 2009 ICASS customer satisfaction survey results were also respectable, with an average score of 3.9 on a five-point scale, and only slightly below the worldwide and NEA averages.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CENTER

Embassy Cairo's financial management center (FMC) is under the direction of an FE-OC FMO, who supervises an FS-02 deputy. The FMC has 22 LE staff and one EFM, and the section provides a full range of ICASS financial support services. Accommodation exchange is provided by the Commercial International Bank of Cairo, with an office conveniently located in the chancery.

At the time of the inspection, the financial management section was understaffed. The deputy FMO position was vacant following the early departure of the incumbent for reassignment to Embassy Baghdad. The FMO unexpectedly departed post in early June, and NEA provided an experienced retired annuitant who will serve until the arrival of the new deputy FMO in July. It is uncertain when the senior financial management position will be filled.

During his tenure, the senior FMO identified performance deficiencies in the section, addressed areas that needed improvement, and provided extra attention and training to employees who were not achieving his objectives. His effort to address LE staff performance issues was not consistently successful. He also hired three new employees with excellent credentials who should serve the FMC long and well. The infusion of talented young employees is critical to the future of the FMC, as 18 of the veteran LE staff have 25 years or more of service with the Embassy and will soon reach mandatory retirement at the age of 60. Many of these senior employees will not be effective trainers of new hires, as evidenced by the experiences of two of the three new FMC employees. In addition, many of these senior employees are often perceived as protecting their portfolios. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the American FMOs provide oversight and assistance in managing the incorporation of new hires into FMC.

## Financial Management Center Restructuring

As noted below, adjustments are needed to improve customer satisfaction with voucher processing. With an anticipated increase in vouchering workload from the pending growth in Embassy staffing, the FMC needs additional personnel in this subunit. Accordingly, the FMO proposed to hire two additional voucher examiners

and planned a limited reorganization of the FMC to better distribute the workload. The voucher function is currently performed by two units (vouchers and travel/transportation vouchers), each directed by a separate supervisor. Distribution of work might improve if the units were directed by one senior LE supervisor. Furthermore, the transfer of two LE positions into the combined voucher processing unit would increase its capacity. These are the class B FSN-8 cashier position and the FSN-9 disbursing assistant position.

**Recommendation 25:** Embassy Cairo should review the current organization of the vouchering section and realign its structure to better meet International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

**Recommendation 26:** Embassy Cairo should certify its continued need for two full-time class B cashiers in conjunction with a reorganization of the vouchering unit. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

Several position descriptions for financial management center staff are not up-to-date and no longer reflect their responsibilities. A restructuring of the FMC will likely require other position descriptions to be revised. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this matter.

## Budgeting

The Embassy has endured sharp funding limitations that have decimated many programs. Reductions to meet targets continue to restrict the training and development of the mission and its staff. Unfunded requests resulting from lowered funding targets include 10 new ICASS LE staff positions linked to the proposed establishment of upwards to 100 new U.S. direct-hire positions, as well as over \$1 million for household and office furnishings and equipment. Embassy Cairo presented a strong case to the ICASS service center and the NEA executive office for additional FY 2009 ICASS funding, and as a result, Cairo received an increase of \$1.7 million to a level of \$15.6 million. However, the increased funding levels will still fall short of funding many important priorities and therefore challenge post management to

determine the best use for the available funds. This will be particularly difficult in the absence of a permanent FMO, and will require the management counselor and management officer to become very engaged in budget discussions with the ICASS council.

The incoming FMOs should focus on developing the expertise of LE budget analysts. One of two new employees designated to help administer the \$15 million ICASS budget is both capable and ambitious in seeking additional responsibilities. The employee has received some ICASS training at the Embassy but would benefit from additional training in the Department.

Another task for the FMO supervisor is to require an equitable balance in the workload of the budget analysts. One budget analyst manages the Department program and OBO budgets, and two others share responsibility for other Department budgets (PD/DS) and agencies such as the Defense attaché office, FAS, and FCS. These portfolios may need some redistribution to better balance the workloads of the respective budget analysts.

## Cashiering

The OIG team observed a cash count conducted by the FMO on one of the two class B cashiers. The previous cash count was certified by a budget analyst who recently completed the Certifying Voucher Officer course, and was authorized by the Department to conduct cash counts. The OIG team also observed the cashiers assisting in collection of proceeds from a property disposal sale totaling several thousand dollars.

The 2004 OIG report noted the designation of 31 subcashiers and recommended that the Embassy reduce the number. However, the Embassy currently has certified 32 subcashiers, with approval for one more now in process. At least a dozen of these subcashiers are located in the chancery, within proximity of the two class B cashiers in FMC. Subcashiers require oversight by managers and cashiers, which represents an additional responsibility for oversight and accountability. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the Embassy review the frequency of cash replenishments and other indicators in an effort to reduce subcashier designations.

## Educational Allowances and Payroll

The FMC has one employee with important payroll liaison responsibilities, who also processes educational allowance requests (SF-1190) and voucher payments to the various schools used by mission dependents in Cairo and Alexandria. The

schools submit their invoices for tuition and transportation to FMC every August, but in recent years, these invoices have not been paid promptly, often not until after the end of the fiscal year. The senior FMO monitored the process for FY 2008-09 to promptly pay school invoices, but in his absence the problem could again resurface. Reassignment of these duties to another LE staff member would help to prevent a recurrence of difficulties regarding timeliness of payment of school invoices and allow the first employee to focus exclusively on important payroll issues. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this matter.

## Time and Attendance Reporting

The FMC has an established deadline for receipt of time and attendance information. While most timekeepers meet the schedule, there are offices lacking designated back-up timekeepers to be contacted if the FMC staff has not received the required information. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## Taxes

Several years ago, Embassy management agreed to collect taxes directly from LE staff on behalf of the Government of Egypt. The Embassy pays about \$60,000 annually for a private accounting company to assist in preparing tax payments and auditing employee accounts to ensure that payments are correct. The company's 2008 audit determined that excess collections of about \$35,000 need to be distributed to approximately 1,100 employees. The costs of the professional accounting services are substantial.

**Recommendation 27:** Embassy Cairo should evaluate whether locally employed staff income tax collections can be handled by financial management center staff rather than by a commercial accounting firm and, if so, assign the responsibility and provide training for the designated employees. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## Vouchering

Travel voucher processing received lower than average scores on both the WQLQ questionnaire and the 2009 ICASS customer satisfaction survey, with most comments critical of timeliness. The FMO does not monitor the queue of pending

vouchers or have a single tracking log accessible to all FMC units. In addition, FMC relies upon hard copies of receiving reports from GSO to prepare vouchers for payment. The OIG team made an informal recommendation regarding the use of electronic records to streamline the vouchering process.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The HR office at Embassy Cairo provides personnel services to approximately 1,875 American and LE staff, and the quality of this support is well regarded by the customers. The 2009 ICASS customer survey results exceeded both the worldwide and NEA average for LE staff services, and were equivalent to those scores for American personnel services. The WQLQ scores for Cairo were less than the average for other posts recently inspected by OIG but still a respectable 3.65 on a scale of five.

The complex HR operation is under the direction of a senior FS-02 HRO in an FS-01 position, who is currently supported by one first-tour FS-04 HRO and an EFM. The FS-02 deputy HRO position will have been vacant nearly 2 years by the time the assigned employee arrives in August 2009. This long-term gap places a substantial burden on the senior HRO to maintain daily operational requirements, leaving little time for strategic planning, special projects, and staff development. The entry-level HRO has been at post 5 months, and requires more direct mentoring to develop her full potential, a possibility with the arrival of the deputy HRO.

The HR office also includes 15 LE staff members who are trained and experienced, nine of whom have more than 25 years of service with the Embassy. Those in the more senior HR positions are generally superb in their knowledge of HR principles and regulations, but there are some subordinates who may not be sufficiently challenged or focused on improving their own performance. Closer supervision of those LE employees will likely enhance their personal sense of worth to HR operations and enhance their customer service ethic. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address this issue.

Some communications are prepared in Arabic for the HRO's signature. These documents do not have an informal summary English translation attached, so that the HRO understands the content and purpose of the letter. The OIG team made an informal recommendation concerning this matter.

## Local Employment Compensation Plan

The fundamental concern for virtually all LE staff is their compensation package, as expressed in the responses to the OIG questionnaires, as well as in discussions with the OIG inspectors. The Department approved a 3.9 percent salary increase for all FSN grades effective May 10, 2009, at a time when the annual inflation rate in Egypt was about 13 percent. The previous year, Embassy Cairo was able to provide a 7 percent increase, well below the level supported by the compensation review, and at a time when the inflation rate was about 18 percent.

Despite the lagging compensation package, the Embassy employee turnover rate is low, and the number of applicants for vacant positions is high—especially in the lower grades. However, there is anecdotal evidence that the Embassy is becoming less competitive in the market for skilled technical and professional positions requiring advanced education. For example, the HR office reported that 11 LE staff positions at grade FSN-7 and above were vacant for over 2 months early in 2009.

The HR office reported that about 25 percent of current LE staff will be eligible for retirement within the next 5 years. This will allow Embassy Cairo to hire many well-trained and motivated young workers who could serve long and productive careers. Reexamining the LE salary scale to reestablish the Embassy's competitive position with top corporations and other comparators is necessary to attract and retain the desired caliber of candidates. In June, 2008, the Embassy reported that its comparative compensation market position, previously established at the 75 percent level, had fallen to the 65 percent level (08 Cairo 001112) for employees in grades FSN-6 through FSN-13. Employees at pay grades FSN-1 through FSN-5 are already matched at the 90 percent comparative level

**Recommendation 28:** Embassy Cairo should request that the Bureau of Human Resources reestablish its target market position for compensation at the 80 percent level for positions at grades FSN-6 through FSN-13. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with HR)

Not only were the LE employees disappointed with the 3.9 percent increase in May 2009, they also objected to the 3-month delay in implementation. The regularly scheduled month for implementing annual salary adjustments at Embassy Cairo is February. The contractor—Watson and Wyatt Data Services—completed their compensation review in November 2008, yet it took almost 6 months to receive Depart-

ment approval to actually implement the increase. (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)  
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**Recommendation 29:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the Bureau of Resource Management, should request that the Bureau of Human Resources approve payment of authorized salary adjustments retroactive to February, the fixed effective date. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with NEA and RM)

The Embassy has a severance payment plan (Supplemental Defined Benefit Retirement Plan), essentially based on prevailing practice. This plan features two separate payment levels, based on the employee's grade level at the time of retirement: 7 percent of salary for each year of creditable service for employees in Grades 1-2; and 9.5 percent for employees in all other grades. The Embassy's LE committee believes this two-tiered pension is unfair to those employees at the lower grades. The OIG team agrees.

**Recommendation 30:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should provide severance payments at the same level for all locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with HR)

### Diplomatic Titles

For an unknown number of years, Embassy Cairo has granted diplomatic titles to most administrative and technical staff, apparently without authorization from the Department. The rationale for conferring diplomatic titles on nondiplomatic personnel is that it will enhance their morale, improve their access to Egyptian Government officials, and provide a greater array of privileges and immunities. However, 3 FAH-1 H-2431.2 (a) clearly states that there must normally be a work-related need for the title and that such titles will not be granted or authorized for the personal, social, or financial benefit of personnel in the Foreign Service, except as defined in 3 FAH-1 H-2438. The Department can grant exceptions in accordance with 3 FAH-1 H-2438.1-1 to alleviate substantial financial inequities, but such exceptions require formal concurrence by the host government.

**Recommendation 31:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should seek Department authorization and host nation concurrence with the practice of granting diplomatic titles to administrative and technical staff. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with HR)

## Employment of Local Staff

The OIG team confirmed the existence of an anomaly, which is currently under review by HR, Office of Overseas Employment, involving the hiring of local staff at Embassy Cairo. Specifically, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and the Department of Defense's Defense Commissary Agency have improperly hired local personnel through personal services agreements under the auspices of the OMC at Embassy Cairo. Neither agency can legally hire local employees, as such authority is derived from the Department of State and exercised only by the embassy HR office, as per 6 FAH-5 H-352.2-2. The Embassy has the hiring authority on behalf of the Department of Defense only for those specific Department of Defense organizations that have requested and received Department of Defense approval. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

Furthermore, these employees have been incorrectly identified as embassy staff, when in fact they are paid through the American Embassy Cooperative and Welfare Association, as they occupy nonappropriated fund positions. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

A third Department of Defense operation, the Navy Medical Research Unit (NAMRU), has also improperly hired local staff. The Embassy has the hiring authority on behalf of the Department of Defense only for those specific Department of Defense organizations that have requested and received Department of Defense approval, but NAMRU has neither received nor requested this authorization. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## Locally Employed Staff Evaluations and Position Descriptions

The Embassy HR staff maintains employee files for the LE staff of all agencies at post, except for USAID and NAMRU, which have their own HR offices. These files typically contain position descriptions, employee performance reports (EPR), awards, letters of reprimand, and other relevant documents. The OIG team reviewed several personnel files and identified some position descriptions that did not accu-

rately represent the employee's current responsibilities. The OIG made an informal recommendation that the supervisor maintain employee position descriptions in electronic format and make them available or provide them to the rated employee.

The HR office is responsible for preparing EPRs in a timely manner. With a total of 1,108 employees requiring evaluation, monitoring such a large quantity of EPRs is a time-consuming task. Beginning 2 months ahead of the EPR due date, the HR office sends advance reminders to supervisors who must prepare an EPR. The notice should also be simultaneously emailed to the rated employees, which could prompt both the supervisor and the employee to review the position descriptions so that the EPR accurately represents the employee's duties. The OIG team made an informal recommendation concerning this matter.

Despite the efforts of the HR office to notify supervisors of upcoming EPRs, there were 51 EPRs overdue by 3 months or more as of March 2009. If those employees were eligible for an annual step increase, that increase would be delayed until the supervisor submitted the EPR. Four EPRs were overdue by at least 1 year, including one that was the responsibility of an American officer. (b)(2)(b)(6)  
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### American and Eligible Family Member Work Requirements Statements

The 2004 OIG report identified problems with delinquent work requirements statements (WRS) for EFM employees, and it is evident that the problems still persist. A review of all personnel files for American officers and EFMs indicated that approximately 25 percent of the WRS were not negotiated and submitted within the 45-day interval from the beginning of the new rating period as prescribed by 3 FAH-1 H-2815.1 (a) (1). Ten of the statements were at least 5 months late. Furthermore, there were virtually no employee evaluation report files containing a properly dated and signed WRS. HR has not insisted on receipt of all WRS within the 45 days nor required proper recording and follow-up of delinquencies. The executive office is not informed of delinquent WRS, and does not support HR in its efforts to enforce compliance.

Even though some files contained a WRS submitted within the 45 day period, it appears that the files were not properly discussed with the employee. Two files contained WRS that were verified by the supervisor as completed before the employee

arrived, and another was completed the same day of the employee's arrival. Six WRS were completed the first day of the rating period, but with the same wording from previous statements.

**Recommendation 32:** Embassy Cairo should require compliance in preparing and completing work requirements statements within the prescribed 45-day period. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## Recruitment of Locally Employed Staff and Eligible Family Members

The process for recruiting new employees at Embassy Cairo can be improved. The Embassy typically advertises its positions via in-house vacancy announcements posted on the Intranet and on the Embassy's Web site. Occasionally LE staff positions are advertised in newspapers but only at the request of the supervisor. Care should be taken to encourage qualified applications from outside the embassy community. The length of such announcements can be unwieldy and of limited value, especially in the case of EFM applicants for low-graded LE positions. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

The number of applicants for certain positions, particularly those for lower-graded LE positions, can be overwhelming to HR LE staff. The OIG team learned that 500 applicants applied for six guard positions, 200 of whom were considered qualified. English language testing results reduced the list to 130 qualified applicants, all of whom were interviewed by the RSO LE staff guard force supervisors. The process could be streamlined if the qualification standards and preliminary review precepts were tightened to attain a more manageable number of potential interviewees. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

The existence of nepotism in hiring and employment of LE staff poses the potential for conflict of interest at Embassy Cairo, but there are no effective mechanisms in place to detect or prevent nepotism. Although LE vacancy announcements indicate on the cover page that "management will consider nepotism/conflict of interest," neither HR nor the regional security officer asks applicants about family ties within the Embassy. The family relationships between employees is important information to managers and must be recognized and available. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the HRO obtain this information during the application process, and both the HRO and the regional security officer file it once an employee is hired.

## Awards

The OIG team observed a mission awards committee meeting where members had the daunting task of reviewing 88 separate individual and group award nominations from the Department and three other agencies. A few of these nominations were poorly prepared and rejected by the committee on the basis of presentation. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the HR office review the submissions in advance, and work to correct obvious deficiencies before presentation to the committee.

The committee members also indicated some unfamiliarity with the varying types of awards available to mission employees. The OIG team informally recommended that the senior HRO review 3 FAM 4800 with committee members who may be uncertain about the qualification standards or mission policy. The HRO also noted that Department budget information was unavailable to determine the amount of cash available for awards, thus hindering the evaluation of the awards and establishment of standard award values.

The OIG team noted an inconsistency between the mission award policy and 3 FAM 4820. In June 2008, the awards committee considered three individual and one group award nominations for superior honor awards for LE staff; one was approved with a cash supplement, and the others became meritorious honor awards. At the time of the superior honor awards nominations, mission policy did not state that superior honor awards had to be approved by the area award committee, as required in the 3 FAH-1 H-4812.2 (1). That deficiency was being addressed by a new policy that was about to be issued at the time of the inspection.

HR maintains a list of all employees who received awards during the preceding 2 years, and such information is not available to every supervisor. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## Training

Besides compensation, training is one of the issues of greatest concern to LE staff. Embassy Cairo has an increasing role as a Department regional training center, because of its excellent training facilities, proximity to other NEA and African posts, and the Embassy's ability to support attendees. Although the availability of training courses is advantageous to LE staff, participation in these training programs would be enhanced by a closer association between job performance and a development plan for embassy LE staff.

The Department's work and development plan for LE staff (Form JF-0050-A) provides a basis for establishing mutual development objectives for the benefit of the employee and the supervisor, and should be linked to the JF-0050, EPR. Its purpose is to identify and justify suitable training courses, thus enhancing the prospects for enrollment when the courses become available. The Embassy began a program to use form JF-0050-A during the OIG inspection but will need to encourage supervisors to comply.

This plan can also assist financial management staff in projecting LE staff training costs for budgeting purposes. In October 2004, Embassy Cairo issued Management Policy 066/04, stating that the Embassy "will establish a training fund that applies to all eligible employees." It also notes that each section will "have a training fund to avoid the problems of dipping into travel budgets." Such a budget should be developed and protected as intended.

**Recommendation 33:** Embassy Cairo should monitor and track the submission of the work and development plan for locally employed staff (JF-0050-A) with the annual employee performance report (JF-0050) and verify that training objectives are identified. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## Orientation and Arrival/Departure Processing

The orientation program for new LE staff at Embassy Cairo needs greater attention. At the present time, new employees are issued a check-in sheet and instructed to visit various offices to complete it. Given the number of offices and the confusing layout of the chancery, this self-guided tour is often bewildering to the new employee. HR offers a 2-day embassy orientation program for newly hired LE staff, but this program is offered only twice a year, and some LE staff were reportedly denied permission to participate in all or part of it due to their workload. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## Computer-Aided Job Evaluation

Two LE staff members in the HRO at Embassy Cairo are trained and capable in performing computer-aided job evaluation (CAJE) reviews, which is a full-time task. As a CAJE position review might not be completed for 3 to 7 days, a number of pending reviews in such a large mission is expected. The senior HRO is pleased with the product of the CAJE reviewers. However, LE staff members continue to be

suspicious of the CAJE analysis process and are prone to make independent judgments of the results if their expectations are not met. Great care is therefore taken to verify the correctness of the review and the sensitivity to what is conveyed. CAJE reviewers noted that in rare instances, supervisors inflated the performance ability or position description of those being reviewed. An HRO should always be advised when such situations occur as they may justify further management action.

Certain technical positions, and in particular, those in information technology (IT) may be beyond the scope of the CAJE review. A knowledgeable American IT supervisor with more independent oversight of IT responsibilities would be an asset in preliminary CAJE reviews of IT positions in addition to the LE supervisor. This would help address the concern of inadequately prepared position descriptions or preferential consideration. New position descriptions are not submitted through the respective American supervisor to involve them in the process. It may be useful for all LE staff within an office unit, to be able to access and review the position descriptions for all positions in that same unit. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address these matters.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY

Embassy Cairo operates a generally effective IM program. The OIG team assessed the technical and management operating procedures and IT security postures of the Embassy, and found that the IM operations are adequate. However, there are areas that require management attention in the Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) operation related to information service center organizational structure, helpdesk operation, documentation, configuration management, contingency planning, and media handling. The OIG team counseled Embassy Cairo on issues such as media control, windows active directory access control, physical security of IM spaces, audit and accountability, and IM best practices. The Embassy has addressed some of the concerns and some mitigation activities are in progress. The Embassy also continues to address two open recommendations from the 2004 OIG inspection.

The IM program covers an array of IT operations including the OpenNet Plus SBU network, the ClassNet network, and an IRC dedicated Internet network. The program also includes pouch management, radio, telephone, and audio visual operations. Embassy Cairo's IMO manages the program, which is one of the largest overseas IM operations. The IMO is supported by the information systems officer who oversees unclassified system operations, and an information program officer who is

in charge of classified system and communications operations. Overall, there are 900 users, 700 workstations, and 25 servers being serviced by the SBU operations. The classified network consists of approximately 200 users, 70 workstations, and seven servers.

All resident U.S. Government agencies rely on Embassy Cairo IM program services. The program provides ICASS and program-funded technology services to all foreign affairs agencies located at ESSA, the USAID building in Maadi, motor pool, Boulas Hanna facilities maintenance office, and APP Alexandria. Also, the IM program provides services to the Foreign Service Institute's Cairo Regional Training Center and the NEA Regional Information Management Center located on embassy grounds.

In addition to regular IM duties, the program also supports frequent VIP visits to the region. These VIP visits demand prompt and efficient audio and visual, communication, and computer support on short notice. The IM staff consistently meets these requirements. Furthermore, the Cairo IM program is proactive in implementing and adopting new technologies to support the mission. Embassy Cairo is in the process of moving the mission's intranet site to a locally installed and administered *Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007* application. The new intranet site is designed to empower the user communities to manage content, collaborate, and control workflow processes. IM plans use SharePoint to accelerate the automation of shared business processes between the embassy offices and Washington.

## Information Security

Information systems security officer (ISSO) duties are performed adequately in Cairo. Information security briefings are conducted before users are given systems access, and automated reviews of inappropriate materials searches on users' folders and desktops are conducted on a regular basis. Currently, the ISSO staff members use their administrative accounts when performing ISSO duties. To satisfy separation of duties requirements, each ISSO should have a separate account from the day-to-day operational and network administration accounts to perform ISSO duties. In accordance with 12 FAM 621.3-2, "The ISSO, the data center manager, the system manager, and the user's supervisor must structure user access privileges to reflect the separation of key duties in the function the specific application supports. Access privileges must be consistent with the separation of duties established for manual processes." The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address this weakness.



inspection report, the issue remains problematic. The current helpdesk process requires users to submit helpdesk requests through the service request system, a web-based application that is accessed from the intranet site. The requests are then received by one individual in the ISC, who is responsible for coordination and distribution of the requests to the ISC staff, in addition to other collateral duties. The trouble tickets are then assigned to a large number of helpdesk technicians, creating lag in response time and discontinuity in the request management process. The OIG team processed several helpdesk tickets through the current request process, receiving little to no response.

Although post has implemented a helpdesk application, the lack of a formal helpdesk process impedes any possibility of effective helpdesk service. To operate an effective helpdesk operation, a formal process for receiving, assigning, and closing helpdesk requests needs to be implemented. Standardizing the helpdesk operation will allow the helpdesk staff to improve service quality by reducing the time required to resolve service requests. Furthermore, it is imperative that IM management has the ability to allocate staff appropriately and gauge the level of customer service received by users. IM management is aware of the customer service issue and is working to resolve it.

**Recommendation 35:** Embassy Cairo should create and implement a standardized helpdesk process to manage service requests. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

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## Local Information Technology Change Control Board

Embassy Cairo lacks an SOP for the local IT change control board. As a result, unauthorized software has been installed on the Embassy network. This was identified by iPost, a Department tool for monitoring the status and performance of IT infrastructure components. Currently, IM staff is actively working to remove the unapproved software from the network. Furthermore, the board has not instituted procedures for controlling software media used for the SBU system. Software media needs to be stored in secured cabinets at all times to avoid misuse of intellectual property rights and to protect the confidentiality of Department-owned software. The local change control board's lack of an SOP creates a void in the appropriate identification, control, and accounting of all IT assets operated on the local network. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this matter.

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## Pouch Regulations

Embassy Cairo lacks guidance specifying the usage of the post's unclassified pouch. The information programs supervisor, who currently supervises the unclassified pouch operations for post, acknowledged the requirement. It stipulates in 14 FAM 724.2 which persons are authorized to use the unclassified pouch. Although the OIG team found no evidence of inappropriate pouch usage by unauthorized staff, 14 FAM 728.3 requires that post management develop and implement post-specific procedures to control pouch usage. Without post management oversight, post is vulnerable to the possibility of inappropriate use of the pouch, in addition to Department incurred expenses. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to address this issue.



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### Cafeteria Concessionaire

A concessionaire provides cafeteria service to employees at the downtown chancery location. USAID has the same operator at its office compound. There is no similar operation provided to employees at ESSA or in Alexandria. The cafeteria operation was ranked the lowest of the evaluated questions on the WQLQ. The OIG team found the cafeteria menu selection acceptable and reasonably priced by American standards; however, LE staff consider the pricing structure of the cafeteria menu too high and believes that a typical hot lunch could be offered at a lower cost. The OIG team recommends that pricing and selection be reviewed with the concessionaire to develop a suitable hot lunch option at both current locations that is more attractive and affordable to mid-level LE staff. Consideration of a similar operation at ESSA and participation by the LE staff committee in these discussions may be appropriate.

**Recommendation 39:** Embassy Cairo should review menu options offered by the cafeteria concessionaire to develop a lower priced menu option more suitable to its locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

## COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The CLO is an anchor for the American and broader embassy communities in Cairo. Overall, embassy employees and EFMs are pleased with the level of services provided by the CLO. The WQLQ survey conducted for this inspection shows satisfaction with CLO programs and activities in Cairo, with scores generally above the average scores of posts previously inspected. More importantly, however, when one looks at how CLO-related WQLQ scores compare with scores for other areas, the strength and success of Cairo CLO operations become even more apparent. Four of Embassy Cairo's top 11 WQLQ scores (overall CLO helpfulness, appropriateness of CLO activities, usefulness of the newsletter, adequacy of the CLO sponsor program) are direct CLO responsibilities.

The CLO is staffed by five persons: an EFM CLO coordinator; two EFM assistant CLO coordinators (who job share); one newsletter editor; and one LE staff assistant. The CLO coordinator reports to the management counselor, with whom she meets weekly; she also meets monthly with the DCM. Additionally, the CLO coordinator participates in biweekly interagency community welfare meetings (where agency representatives come together to discuss quality of life issues), housing board meetings, the post employment committee, and sits as a nonvoting member of the community association board. An assistant CLO coordinator provides CLO services one morning per week in the USAID building, located in Maadi, where many embassy employees live.

In coordination with the RSO, the health unit, and other offices, the CLO carries out a thorough orientation program for all new arrivals, as well as many temporary duty employees. Periodically, the CLO also organizes a program for new arrivals entitled "The Ambassador's Welcome to Egypt." These programs include a welcome social event, formal welcomes by the CLO coordinator, the Ambassador, DCM, and HR office's family employment team, and conclude with skits—performed by an embassy drama team—highlighting "do's and don'ts" of cultural sensitivity in Egypt. Other important CLO programs and activities include providing information referral services, organizing a sponsorship program, maintaining liaison with schools used by mission families, advocating for family member employment with the Embassy, operating a lending library, as well as arranging trips and tours, youth activities, seminars, and workshops.

A number of families of the Department and other agency personnel reside in Egypt in safe haven status while the employee serves in Iraq or other critical assignments. Moreover, there are a number of U.S. Government employees assigned to Embassy Cairo who are studying Arabic at a local university. These families are

at risk of becoming isolated or disconnected from the American community. With strong backing from the front office and the management section, CLO personnel have actively reached out to such families. For example, the CLO operates a monthly support group, which provides an opportunity for EFM spouses in safe haven status to meet and discuss issues of interest and concern with the CLO and with each other. In addition, Embassy Cairo has put together a pamphlet that provides families in this situation with information regarding embassy services and support available to them. Safe-haven and language student families contacted by the OIG inspectors universally praised CLO efforts to keep them connected to the embassy community.

CLO personnel face a number of obstacles in their efforts to build and maintain a sense of community. The vast size of the Embassy Cairo's workforce means that employees bring myriad backgrounds and life experiences to the embassy environment. As one senior embassy official told the OIG inspectors, the Embassy is so big that there really is no such entity as "the community;" rather, there are a number of different subcommunities that may form according to agency, family size, marital status, residential location, or other criteria. In addition, the fact that mission offices and housing areas are spread across Cairo hampers the building of a sense of community. Additionally, Cairo can be a difficult place to live, with such issues as pollution, traffic, and increasing sexual harassment of women posing daily challenges to Cairo residents.

At the time of the inspection, the CLO was in the midst of major transitions. A new CLO coordinator and newsletter editor came on board; one assistant coordinator departed Cairo shortly after the inspection, and the other has been in her position less than a year. All will be challenged as the Embassy enters its massive summer transfer season. Embassy management is aware of the challenges posed by the turnover in the office and indicated to inspectors that it will enhance communication with the CLO during the transition period.

## OVERSEAS SCHOOLS

There is a high degree of satisfaction among mission staff regarding the quality of education provided at schools in Cairo that are attended by dependent children affiliated with the Embassy. The WQLQ survey conducted for this inspection shows relevant scores to be well above the average of posts previously inspected. Moreover, the score for educational quality ranked first among all 54 WQLQ categories evaluated by Embassy Cairo staff.

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Through its Office of Overseas Schools, the Department provides grant funding  
(b)(2)(b)(6) In FY 2008, Office of Overseas Schools assistance to  
(b)(2)(b)(6) totaled \$22,050 designated for the purchase of educational  
materials, facilitating a school-to-school program, and supporting professional de-  
velopment training for school personnel. The regional education officer visits (b)(2)(b)(6)  
(b)(2)(b)(6) regularly, most recently in March 2009, as well as other schools in  
Cairo attended by Embassy dependents. (b)(2)(b)(6) leadership consid-  
ers its relationship with the Office of Overseas Schools as close and expressed ap-  
preciation for Office of Overseas Schools support for professional development and  
training for school staff.

Embassy Cairo provides extensive support to (b)(2)(b)(6) primarily  
in the areas of security and administration. The RSO regularly communicates with  
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(b)(2)(b)(6) on security-related matters, provides security briefings for students and  
staff, assists with school field trips, engages with local police when appropriate, and  
consults on its short- and long-term security objectives. In FY 2009, the Depart-  
ment allocated \$112,000 in funding for upgrades to (b)(2)(b)(6) access  
control. In discussions with inspectors, school leadership strongly praised the close  
relationship between the Embassy and (b)(2)(b)(6) on security issues. In

addition to security-related support, the Embassy also provides customs support to the school and permits limited official school business use of U.S. Government mail facilities at post in accordance with 14 FAM 732.1.

## HEALTH UNIT

Upon retirement of the senior RMO in December 2008, the junior RMO stepped in to head up Cairo's sizeable health unit, the largest of any U.S. Embassy. This was the officer's first tour with the Department; she has done a commendable job of improving interpersonal relations in the unit. The RMO covers a number of African countries. A regional psychiatrist located in the unit coordinates well with the rest of the health unit and the mission at large. The psychiatrist is stretched by the demands of travel to a wide geographic constituency in North Africa, the Middle East, and Malta. As is the case with the RMO, the patients whom the psychiatrist sees in Egypt seem generally pleased. An LE pediatrician on contract is available at the health unit in the chancery one day a week.

The principal health unit is located in the chancery. A subunit operates 2 days a week in the USAID building in Maadi. Both units provide primary and emergency care to U.S. direct-hires and their families. There are laboratories in both locations. The laboratory in the chancery is staffed by a direct-hire laboratory technologist and two LE staff. The laboratory in the USAID building at Maadi is staffed by one EFM, a medical technologist, with one LE staff assistant. This technologist works the same 2 days each week that the RMO and one U.S. direct-hire nurse visit the Maadi clinic from the chancery.

The presence of NAMRU in Egypt and of two professionals assigned to NAMRU from the Centers for Disease Control is of considerable assistance to the health unit for advanced laboratory work and planning related to disease control.

The health unit supervises two clinics devoted to LE staff; one is located in the chancery and one in the USAID building in Maadi. Each is headed by a full-time LE physician. The LE physician in the USAID building at Maadi visits the ESSA compound four mornings per week to attend to LE staff there. This location has no permanent staff and stocks a minimum amount of pharmaceuticals and supplies, none of them controlled substances. The visits to the ESSA compound are burdensome to the physician since he is alone with no support. The need for the visits should be analyzed in conjunction with the overall review of medical services now being conducted by the management counselor and the RMO mentioned below.



In sum, it is clear that unless services at the LE staff clinics in Cairo are somehow reduced or rationalized, the Embassy Cairo health care system will overload. In view of the vigorous mission efforts underway, the OIG team did not make a recommendation but urged continued energetic review of the problem and pursuit of a solution. These efforts should include APP Alexandria, where a local doctor visits LE staff patients once a week. The doctor's signature is required for insurance-covered visits to specialists, which causes problems when the doctor is not there.

The OIG team verified that contingency plans for avian flu and other possible pandemics are in place, that the controlled substances are properly controlled and distributed, and that expiration dates are tracked. They also verified that logs are properly kept, that each lot of drugs has its own page, and that pharmaceuticals in safe havens are controlled and disposed of in the proper manner with witnesses. Under the lead of the LE physician in the chancery, the health unit conducts programs open to the mission community on smoking cessation, weight management, ergonomics, first aid, and CPR.

## STRATEGIC NETWORKING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Strategic Networking Assistance Program (SNAP) is a department initiative, started in 2002, dedicated to assisting EFMs of U.S. direct-hires assigned to U.S. diplomatic missions abroad with their search for employment in the host country. SNAP Cairo offers four primary services: pre-arrival preparatory counseling; seminars and workshops on career management and the Egyptian business and networking environment; individual career management services (for example, interviewing and résumé development); and access to a database of employers and organizations.

Embassy Cairo personnel are pleased with the local employment opportunities for EFMs. WQLQ scores for opportunities for EFMs are solidly above the average scores of posts previously inspected. The active and vibrant SNAP program at Embassy Cairo is undoubtedly a significant contributing factor to this result. Currently 85 EFM spouses—or 37 percent of the mission's 232 spouses—participate in SNAP activities in Cairo. According to reports submitted to the Department, since 2002 Cairo SNAP clients have accepted 393 jobs—256 positions outside the mission and 137 within.

Embassy Cairo's global employment advisor/SNAP coordinator has served in that position since March 2004. She is an American citizen resident in Egypt since 1989, under contract to the Embassy, with extensive knowledge of the Cairo employ-

ment market. Embassy Cairo houses its SNAP program within the HR office; the coordinator reports to the HRO. Embassy Cairo management consistently supports the SNAP program and coordinator.

The SNAP coordinator created a list serve for clients in Cairo; each week she emails clients a full description of employment opportunities, both outside and inside Embassy Cairo. The Embassy's weekly newsletter also provides a comprehensive listing of SNAP and embassy employment opportunities. In early 2009, the coordinator started a networking group for spouses, in which clients exchange information, explore ideas, and discuss potential employment opportunities. In an effort to further expand SNAP benefits to embassy families, she initiated a summer-hire program for dependents (generally college students) returning to Cairo to spend the summer holidays with their families; in support of this initiative, she compiled a list of summer-hire and volunteer opportunities.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY AND FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Embassy Cairo's Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) program is robust. There are six trained American EEO counselors, as well as four trained LE staff EEO liaisons, who provide advice and assistance to mission personnel on EEO matters. In addition, there are two trained USAID American EEO counselors located on the USAID compound. A representative from the Office of Civil Rights recently visited Cairo—on travel funded by the Embassy—to train both counselors and liaisons and to provide other EEO-related services.

The Embassy's front office and management section demonstrated strong support for EEO principles and activities at Embassy Cairo. The DCM met with the EEO counselors and liaisons and emphasized that EEO is a mission priority. With front office and management support, Embassy Cairo made some EEO training mandatory for American and LE staff employees; repeated comments indicating that many employees still fail to grasp the distinction between performance and EEO issues suggests that such training should continue in the future. EEO counselors and liaisons have also met among themselves to discuss trends and issues of common interest.

The Embassy posted EEO-related notices and materials that provide the names and contact numbers of the EEO counselors and liaisons on bulletin boards located in a well-traveled embassy corridor. Although this information was accessible, it was

entirely in English. Embassy Cairo has not posted materials in Arabic to ensure that LE staff employees have access to the relevant EEO information in their native language. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

During an OIG visit to the Embassy ESSA compound, inspectors noted that the bulletin board there contained no EEO-related information. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Cairo post relevant EEO materials in Arabic and English on the ESSA bulletin board.

Finally, inspectors observed that all of the EEO counselors and liaisons work in offices located on the main embassy compound. The OIG team suggested that Embassy Cairo encourage at least one ESSA-based LE staff employee to become an EEO liaison so that the roughly 250 mainly LE staff have an EEO resource in their workplace.

Embassy Cairo appointed a new Federal Women's Program (FWP) coordinator shortly before the arrival of the OIG team. The DCM strongly encouraged appointing the FWP coordinator, and the Ambassador participated in a panel on women's issues for the Embassy's FAST group. The name and contact information of the FWP coordinator had not yet been posted to a location readily accessible to the embassy community. The OIG team made an informal recommendation addressing this issue.

## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The OIG team's overall assessment of management controls at Embassy Cairo is favorable, although an embassy of this size and complexity requires constant vigilance to prevent waste, fraud, and mismanagement. A more active effort, enlisting the support of all agencies in the Embassy, could result in greater awareness and enforcement of internal controls.

**Recommendation 40:** Embassy Cairo should create an International Cooperative Administrative Support Services internal controls working group consisting of management officials from the various agencies at post, focusing on identifying potential fraud, waste, and abuse, as well as improvements to internal controls. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

The management counselor is also the management controls coordinator, and her name has been reported as such to NEA. The Embassy submitted the required annual inventory reports to the appropriate Department offices, addressing expendable and nonexpendable property, housing, motor pool, communications equipment, and controlled medical substances. In addition to reviewing these operations, the OIG team also examined consular and financial management operations, and found that appropriate management controls were in place.

Embassy Cairo undertook a review of management controls late in 2008, in preparation for its annual COM Management Control Statement of Assurance, which was submitted on September 7, 2008. In this statement, the Ambassador reported no material weaknesses, but noted three reportable conditions: the need for improved oversight of construction contracts, the lack of enforcement regarding preparation of work requirements statements, and follow-up of recommendations from the most recent OBO report regarding fire safety.

The issue regarding delinquent work requirements statements was identified during the 2005 OIG inspection, and the COM statement asserts that the Embassy would "work diligently to ensure that all American officers' files are complete and up-to-date." The OIG team believes that the level of compliance to the recommendation is still an issue, as explained in more detail in the HR section of this report.

The OIG team also noted a need for improved management oversight to prevent departing direct-hire employees from profiting on the sale of personal vehicles. Specifically, the OIG team found insufficient controls in place to prevent misrepresentation of both cost and sale price, as employees requesting sales approval frequently did not provide appropriate proof of purchase information. The Embassy does not require new employees to provide the Embassy with an official document indicating purchase price, in order to clear that vehicle through customs. This document could be sent beforehand and would become a part of the employee's file for future reference if that employee decided to sell the vehicle upon departure.

**Recommendation 41:** Embassy Cairo should require new employees to present official documents attesting to the value of their personal vehicle as a condition of customs clearance. (Action: Embassy Cairo)





**Recommendation 17:** Embassy Cairo should require that all swimming pools associated with facilities or residences owned, leased, or otherwise under Embassy control meet all safety standards as outlined in 15 FAM 957.4. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

**Recommendation 18:** Embassy Cairo should designate an individual to update the information about International Cooperative Administrative Support Services on the mission Web site, so that meeting minutes and changes to vital information are posted in a timely manner. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

**Recommendation 19:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should identify and acquire property for the purpose of constructing additional U.S. Government-owned housing for mission staff and families. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with OBO)

**Recommendation 20:** Embassy Cairo should provide the interagency housing board with sufficient and timely information regarding lease costs for housing units. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

**Recommendation 21:** Embassy Cairo should reassess the previously proposed merger of the U.S. Agency for International Development and International Cooperative Administrative Support Services motor pools to determine whether full or partial consolidation would enhance the capacity to provide transportation to support an increasing mission population. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

**Recommendation 22:** Embassy Cairo should limit damage to armored vehicle windshields from exposure to direct sunlight by constructing shelters where feasible and providing portable windshield covers when vehicles cannot otherwise be sheltered. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

**Recommendation 23:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should dispose of all obsolete armored vehicles in storage at the Embassy, in accordance with procedures set forth in 12 FAM 388, and establish standard operating procedures requiring that future armored vehicle disposals are also carried out in a timely and approved manner. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with DS)

**Recommendation 24:** Embassy Cairo should reduce duplication and inefficiency in nonexpendable supply and property management by consolidating the office of military cooperation and International Cooperative Administrative Support Services warehousing operations and incorporating all nonparticipating agencies into the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services appliance and residential furniture pools. (Action: Embassy Cairo)

- Recommendation 25:** Embassy Cairo should review the current organization of the vouchering section and realign its structure to better meet International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards. (Action: Embassy Cairo)
- Recommendation 26:** Embassy Cairo should certify its continued need for two full-time class B cashiers in conjunction with a reorganization of the vouchering unit. (Action: Embassy Cairo)
- Recommendation 27:** Embassy Cairo should evaluate whether locally employed staff income tax collections can be handled by financial management center staff rather than by a commercial accounting firm and, if so, assign the responsibility and provide training for the designated employees. (Action: Embassy Cairo)
- Recommendation 28:** Embassy Cairo should request that the Bureau of Human Resources reestablish its target market position for compensation at the 80 percent level for positions at grades FSN-6 through FSN-13. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with HR)
- Recommendation 29:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the Bureau of Resource Management, should request that the Bureau of Human Resources approve payment of authorized salary adjustments retroactive to February, the fixed effective date. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with NEA and RM)
- Recommendation 30:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should provide severance payments at the same level for all locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with HR)
- Recommendation 31:** Embassy Cairo, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, should seek Department authorization and host nation concurrence with the practice of granting diplomatic titles to administrative and technical staff. (Action: Embassy Cairo, in coordination with HR)
- Recommendation 32:** Embassy Cairo should require compliance in preparing and completing work requirements statements within the prescribed 45-day period. (Action: Embassy Cairo)
- Recommendation 33:** Embassy Cairo should monitor and track the submission of the work and development plan for locally employed staff (JF-0050-A) with the annual employee performance report (JF-0050) and verify that training objectives are identified. (Action: Embassy Cairo)





## 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.

### Executive Direction

FAST officers assigned to the consular section are rarely authorized, because of the press of consular work, to participate in aspects of the DCM's mentoring program, such as brief rotations out of the section or occasional assignment as control or reporting officers.

**Informal Recommendation 1:** Embassy Cairo should require that all first- and second-tour personnel, including those assigned to the consular section, have adequate opportunities to participate in the deputy chief of mission mentoring program.

### Political and Economic Affairs

Time management challenges at an extremely busy post have resulted in a heavy focus on spot reporting covering today's concerns, responding to Washington requests, and assisting visitors. These preoccupations hamper managers and individual reporting officers from producing long-range think-pieces that would help Washington policymakers.

**Informal Recommendation 2:** Embassy Cairo should develop a longer range reporting strategy under the guidance of the deputy chief of mission with the participation of the economic and political office, the public affairs section, the American Presence Post in Alexandria, and the country desk in Washington.

ECPO has not met an acceptable norm for travel within Egypt given the size of the section.

**Informal Recommendation 3:** Embassy Cairo should require that the economic and political office increase its travel in both frequency and geographical diversity in order to analyze and report on issues in the governates beyond Cairo.

ECPO makes a serious effort to integrate its LE staff, but more could be done; one helpful step would be to challenge LE staff to produce more of their own finished reports. This goal would be facilitated by a more collegial interchange with LE staff in regular meetings of the entire section.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** Embassy Cairo should require that the economic and political office review, revise, and uphold its internal meeting schedule with a view to greater integration, recognition, and use of its locally employed staff.

Several ECPO officers and local employees act as project officers for small grants; their responsibilities include visiting grant sites and providing comments on quarterly reports for the grants warrant officers. There is no formal requirement by the section for project officers to complete training for grants monitoring.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Cairo should require that all project officers complete adequate training for their responsibilities.

## Foreign Assistance

While the Institutes of Democracy working group successfully coordinates a small segment of programs, a number of agency representatives expressed concern about the lack of overall cooperation on foreign assistance. Because multiple elements within the mission may overlap programs involving the same Egyptian actors or institutions, effective horizontal communication is vital to effective overall management of foreign assistance.

**Informal Recommendation 6:** Embassy Cairo should broaden the Institutes of Democracy working group to invite participation by all embassy sections involved in the foreign assistance effort.

## Public Diplomacy

PAS travel has been slowed because there is no one in the office competent with E2 Solutions.

**Informal recommendation 7:** Embassy Cairo should train one of the employees in the public affairs section to competence with E2 Solutions or shift travel planning and vouchering to embassy management.

Though few PAS American officers are at designated levels in Arabic, the section depends on untrained LE staff and temporary hires for interpretation and translation. Inevitably, some communication opportunities are missed and others are less than perfect.

**Informal recommendation 8:** Embassy Cairo should reprogram the vacant locally employed staff position in the public affairs section and hire a professional interpreter or translator.

Because exchange programs have significantly increased in the last few years, the two LE staff members assigned to this area are overburdened.

**Informal recommendation 9:** Embassy Cairo should move a locally employed staff position in the cultural affairs section to work on exchanges, bringing the exchanges locally employed staff to three.

One junior LE staff in the cultural section's exchanges office spends a great deal of time entering data on every exchange applicant into the section's contact management program.

**Informal recommendation 10:** Embassy Cairo should seek ways to lessen the burden of contact data entry in the cultural section's exchanges office.

## Consular Operations

Many of the materials on the consular section's shared drive are disorganized and out-of-date, particularly its SOPs.

**Informal Recommendation 11:** Embassy Cairo's should require that consular management review and revise all consular standard operating procedures.

Management of the consular section's training program for entry-level officers and locally employed staff is inadequate.

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Cairo should assign an experienced consular officer as training officer.

The units in the consular section have not been recognized in the mission awards program.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Embassy Cairo's consular management should promote greater participation in the mission awards program to recognize achievements in improving efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of consular operations, in accordance with Management Policy 17/08 dated April 20, 2008.

Current consular information communication unit procedures result in some unsatisfied clients and a flood of email messages.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Embassy Cairo should require that consular management reassess current information communication unit telephone and email response procedures, and prepare a standard operating procedure for referrals and consultations with the other units, as well as arrange for additional cross-training of information communication unit staff.

The existing SOP for consular lookout and support system name check hits and security advisory opinion requests has not been updated since 2004.

**Informal Recommendation 15:** Embassy Cairo should revise the consular section's standard operating procedure for identifying consular lookout and support system hits and for sending security advisory opinion requests.

Instructions for visa referrals on the Embassy intranet site are incomplete.

**Informal Recommendation 16:** Embassy Cairo should place DS-4034 and DS-4035 (visa referral forms) on its intranet site for use by Embassy officers authorized to make visa referrals.

The Bureau of Consular Affairs provided an SOP for batch entry-exit checks against the Department of Homeland Security's Arrival Departure Information System database.

**Informal Recommendation 17:** Embassy Cairo's consular management should perform more frequent targeted validation studies, particularly a 100 percent study of referral cases, in accordance with general consular guidelines, and more generalized studies using the specific standard operating procedure on Arrival Departure Information System checks.

## American Presence Post Alexandria

The American Center building where APP Alexandria is located lacks an employee cafeteria.

**Informal Recommendation 18:** Embassy Cairo should identify and furnish a room at the American Center that can be used as a cafeteria for American Presence Post Alexandria staff.

The American Center building where APP Alexandria is located lacks a private room where the LE staff doctor can meet with employees.

**Informal Recommendation 19:** Embassy Cairo should identify and furnish a private room at the American Center that can be used for appointments between the locally employed staff physician and American Presence Post Alexandria staff.

## Management Operations

The LE staff committee requires more frequent meetings with the management counselor to discuss issues.

**Informal Recommendation 20:** Embassy Cairo should schedule monthly meetings between the management counselor and the locally employed staff committee.

Embassy Cairo's management section has not analyzed whether existing administrative functions are operating at maximum efficiency before requesting new ICASS staff.

**Informal Recommendation 21:** Embassy Cairo should conduct an in-depth analysis of administrative operations to identify inefficiencies, obstacles, and potential improvements.

The facilities manager has an assistant POSHO who needs additional training and would like to hire two more LE staff to improve oversight and compliance with SHEM programs.

**Informal Recommendation 22:** Embassy Cairo should provide funding to train the locally employed assistant post occupational safety and health officer, and to hire and train two additional people for this position.

## General Services

Embassy Cairo's housing program is large, complex, and costly. Some customers complain about housing quality and equity of assignments. The IAHB must make housing assignments and other decisions that are equitable, fair, and in accordance with embassy and U.S. Government policies.

**Informal Recommendation 23:** Embassy Cairo should require the management counselor to attend Interagency Housing Board meetings to provide necessary guidance and oversight, ensuring that it properly executes its responsibilities.

The lack of a cafeteria or a comfortable break room at the ESSA compound detrimentally impacts morale of the LE staff.

**Informal Recommendation 24:** Embassy Cairo should identify and furnish an appropriate room with tables and chairs and other amenities for embassy support services annex employees to use for lunch or breaks.

Most LE staff in the general services procurement and contracting office lack formal training in the complex procedures, laws, and regulations associated with this important function.

**Informal Recommendation 25:** Embassy Cairo should provide formal training in procurement and contracting for locally employed staff in the general services section, preferably by arranging for a Foreign Service Institute trainer to offer the course in Cairo.

## Financial Management

The infusion of talented young employees is critical to the future of the financial management center, as 18 of the veteran LE staff have 25 years or more of service with the Embassy, and will soon reach mandatory retirement at the age of 60. Many of these senior employees are not effective trainers of new hires and are often perceived as protecting their portfolios.

**Informal Recommendation 26:** Embassy Cairo should require that American financial management officers provide oversight and assistance in managing the incorporation of new hires into the financial management center.

Job responsibilities for employees in the FMC have been altered without change to the position descriptions.

**Informal Recommendation 27:** Embassy Cairo should certify that the position descriptions in the financial management center for locally employed staff properly reflect work requirements.

The Embassy appointed a significant number of subcashiers that may not be required considering their proximity to two class B cashiers.

**Informal Recommendation 28:** Embassy Cairo should review its subcashier designations and eliminate any designations that are not operationally required.

There has been a history of late processing of educational vouchers and school invoices.

**Informal Recommendation 29:** Embassy Cairo should reassign the work requirements for processing educational allowance documents and school invoices to another financial management center employee.

Backup timekeepers are missing for several offices, complicating the submission of time and attendance reports.

**Informal Recommendation 30:** Embassy Cairo should have two timekeepers designated and trained for each office, to ensure proper submission of time and attendance information to the financial management center.

FMC maintains several logs to track voucher processing and use similar information. FMC also requires paper copies of receiving reports in order to process vouchers. Electronic transmission of receiving reports is possible.

**Informal Recommendation 31:** Embassy Cairo should review the financial management center's flexibility for information sharing in an effort to maximize the use of electronic record keeping.

## Human Resources

There are some subordinates in the HR office who may not be sufficiently challenged or focused on improving their own performance.

**Informal Recommendation 32:** Embassy Cairo should require that senior human resources staff closely supervise subordinate local employees to enhance their own personal sense of worth to human resources operations and to enhance their customer service ethic.

The HROs do not receive an informal English language summary of documents prepared in Arabic and requiring their signature.

**Informal Recommendation 33:** Embassy Cairo should provide an accompanying English language summary translation to nonstandard documents prepared in Arabic to be signed by a human resources officer.

LE staff members often do not have easy access to an electronic version of their position description so cannot stay current on the position description for their work requirements.

**Informal Recommendation 34:** Embassy Cairo should make position descriptions available to the rated locally employed staff member.

LE staff are not always aware that an EPR is to be prepared.

**Informal Recommendation 35:** Embassy Cairo should notify locally employed staff members when the employee's supervisor is required to prepare an employee performance report.

EPRs for LE staff members are submitted late; tardiness has not impeded recognition for responsible supervisors.

**Informal Recommendation 36:** Embassy Cairo should require that supervisors meet submission requirements for employee performance reports, and that award nominations for supervisors with late reports be withheld until reports are submitted.

Position vacancy announcements include a large section of information directed to EFM applicants. Most vacancy announcements could be abbreviated in length through use of a hyperlink to another Web site containing complete hiring information for EFM applicants.

**Informal Recommendation 37:** Embassy Cairo should review and condense the information contained on its position vacancy announcements when the applicant is expected to be a local employee.

The number of applicants for certain positions, particularly those for lower-graded LE positions, can be overwhelming to HR LE staff. The OIG team learned that 500 applicants applied for six guard positions, 200 of whom were considered qualified. English language testing results reduced the list to 130 qualified applicants, all of whom were interviewed by the RSO LE staff guard force supervisors.

**Informal Recommendation 38:** Embassy Cairo should require that the human resource office tighten the qualification standards and preliminary review precepts in the hiring process to attain a more manageable number of potential interviewees.

The Embassy does not maintain records indicating family relationships of employees or applicants.

**Informal Recommendation 39:** Embassy Cairo should require applicants to provide names of family members and relatives on their job application or indicate they have none.

The Nomination for Award (Form JF-66) is prepared on a template with the spelling and grammar check mechanism disabled. HR could better support supervisors and particularly LE supervisors through in-house education for use of a cut and paste procedure on such a document.

**Informal Recommendation 40:** Embassy Cairo should review award submissions in advance and help correct obvious deficiencies before presentation to the awards committee.

The mission award committee members are unfamiliar with the varying types of awards available to mission employees.

**Informal Recommendation 41:** Embassy Cairo should require that the senior human resources officer review 3 FAM 4800 with committee members who may be uncertain about the qualification standards or mission policy.

Supervisors do not have access to historical information on their LE staff related to the awards program, and lack knowledge of which employee has and has not been recognized.

**Informal Recommendation 42:** Embassy Cairo should maintain a master list of locally employed staff award recipients and provide supervisors the information relevant to their staff with the semiannual request for award nominations.

The work and development plan for LE staff could assist financial management staff in projecting LE staff training costs for budgeting purposes. In October 2004, Embassy Cairo issued Management Policy 066/04, stating that the Embassy “will establish a training fund that applies to all eligible employees.” It also notes that each section will “have a training fund to avoid the problems of dipping into travel budgets.”

**Informal Recommendation 43:** Embassy Cairo should develop and protect a training budget.

The Embassy does not provide timely orientation information to its new LE staff.

**Informal Recommendation 44:** Embassy Cairo should increase the frequency of its locally employed staff orientation program with the introduction of a shorter agenda focused on more immediate entry information.



Embassy Cairo's local IT change control board has not been diligent in reviewing and approving the hardware and software installed and operated locally. As a result, unauthorized software has been installed on the embassy network.

**Informal Recommendation 51:** Embassy Cairo should create and establish a standard operating procedure for the functions and operations of the local change control board.

## Equal Employment Opportunity and Federal Women's Program

The main embassy EEO/FWP bulletin board contains no Arabic language EEO information.

**Informal Recommendation 52:** Embassy Cairo should post Equal Employment Opportunity information in Arabic.

The ESSA compound has no posted EEO information.

**Informal Recommendation 53:** Embassy Cairo should post Equal Employment Opportunity information at the embassy support services annex compound.

The name and contact of the Embassy's FWP coordinator has not been posted.

**Informal Recommendation 54:** Embassy Cairo should post the name and contact information of its Federal Women's Program coordinator.

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

|  | <u>Name</u>                 | <u>Arrival Date</u> |
|--|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Ambassador                                   | Margaret M. Scobey          | 04/08               |
| Deputy Chief of Mission                      | Matthew Tueller             | 08/08               |
| <b>Chiefs of Sections:</b>                   |                             |                     |
| Management                                   | Dolores Brown               | 08/07               |
| Consular Affairs                             | Richard Herrmann            | 08/06               |
| Economic and Political Affairs               | William Stewart             | 07/06               |
| Public Affairs                               | Haynes Mahoney              | 07/05               |
| Regional Security Officer                    | William Miller              | 07/08               |
| Regional Medical Officer                     | Kathleen McCray             | 09/07               |
| Regional Information Management Center       | Raemona Willis-Middlebrooks | 08/06               |
| Regional Consular Officer                    | Christopher Rowan           | 08/08               |
| American Presence Post Officer Alexandria    | Gwen Cardno                 | 08/08               |
| <b>Other Agencies:</b>                       |                             |                     |
| Foreign Agricultural Service                 | Peter Kurz                  | 08/06               |
| Senior Defense Official/Defense Attaché      | Floyd C. Williams           | 07/08               |
| Army Corps of Engineers                      | Nael Nmair                  | 06/06               |
| Naval Medical Research Unit                  | Kenneth Earhart             | 10/01               |
| Immigration and Customs Enforcement          | Timothy Hicks               | 01/09               |
| Legal Attaché                                | Kieran Ramsey               | 12/07               |
| Department of Justice                        | Jeffrey Cole                | 03/07               |
| Library of Congress                          | William Kopycki             | 04/09               |
| Foreign Commercial Service                   | Amer Kayani                 | 01/06               |
| Drug Enforcement Administration              | Thomas Riddles              | 12/08               |
| Animal, Plant Health Inspection Service      | Eloisa Jones                | 09/08               |
| Department of the Treasury                   | Alex Severens               | 03/07               |
| U.S. Agency for International<br>Development | Hilda Arellano              | 10/07               |
| Voice of America                             | (vacant)                    |                     |



## ABBREVIATIONS

|            |                                       |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| ACS        | American citizen services             |
| APP        | American presence post                |
| BBG        | Broadcasting Board of Governors       |
| CAJE       | computer-aided job evaluation         |
| CG         | consul general                        |
| CLO        | community liaison office              |
| COM        | chief of mission                      |
| DCM        | deputy chief of mission               |
| Department | Department of State                   |
| ECPO       | economic and political affairs office |
| EEO        | Equal Employment Opportunity          |
| EFM        | eligible family member                |
| ELO        | entry-level officer                   |
| EPR        | employee performance report           |
| ESSA       | embassy support services annex        |
| FAS        | Foreign Agricultural Service          |
| FAST       | first and second tour (officers)      |
| FCS        | U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service   |
| FMC        | financial management center           |
| FMO        | financial management officer          |
| FP         | fraud prevention                      |
| FPM        | fraud prevention manager              |
| FWP        | Federal Women's Program               |
| GSO        | general services officer              |
| HR         | human resources                       |
| HRO        | human resources officer               |

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| IAHB  | interagency housing board                                 |
| ICASS | International Cooperative Administrative Support Services |
| IM    | information management                                    |
| IMO   | information management officer                            |
| IO    | information officer                                       |
| IRC   | information resource center                               |
| IRO   | information resource officer                              |
| ISC   | information systems center                                |
| ISSO  | information systems security officer                      |
| IT    | information technology                                    |
| IV    | immigrant visa  |
| LE    | locally employed  |
| MSP   | Mission Strategic Plan                                    |
| NAMRU | Naval Medical Research Unit                               |
| NEA   | Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs                            |
| NIV   | nonimmigrant visa   |
| OBO   | Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations                   |
| OIG   | Office of Inspector General                               |
| OMC   | Office of Military Cooperation                            |
| PAS   | public affairs section                                    |
| PAO   | public affairs officer                                    |
| POSHO | post occupational safety and health officer               |
| RELO  | regional English language officer                         |
| RMO   | regional medical officer                                  |
| RSO   | regional security office                                  |
| SHEM  | Safety, Health and Environmental Management               |
| SNAP  | Strategic Networking Assistance Program                   |
| SOP   | standard operating procedure                              |
| SPM   | supply and property management                            |

USAID U.S. Agency for International Development  
VOA Voice of America  
WQLQ workplace and quality of life questionnaires  
WRS work requirements statement

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