

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

Report of Inspection

Compliance Follow-Up Review of Embassy Banjul, The Gambia

Report Number ISP-C-10-52, April 2010

~~IMPORTANT NOTICE~~

~~This report is intended solely for the official use of the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, or any agency or organization receiving a copy directly from the Office of Inspector General. No secondary distribution may be made, in whole or in part, outside the Department of State or the Broadcasting Board of Governors, by them or by other agencies or organizations, without prior authorization by the Inspector General. Public availability of the document will be determined by the Inspector General under the U.S. Code, 5 U.S.C. 552. Improper disclosure of this report may result in criminal, civil, or administrative penalties.~~

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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 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 instances of fraud, waste, or abuse exist; and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

METHODOLOGY

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



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

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY JUDGMENTS 1

BACKGROUND..... 3

U.S. INTERESTS AND RATIONALE FOR EMBASSY BANJUL 5

EVALUATION OF COMPLIANCE..... 9

LEADERSHIP AND MORALE ISSUES 11

RIGHTSIZING 13

OUTSIDE SUPPORT 15

REPORTING AND REPRESENTATION..... 19

MANAGEMENT ISSUES..... 21

..... 31

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES 35

CONSULAR ISSUES..... 37

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS 39

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS 43

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS 45

ABBREVIATIONS 47

APPENDIX I STATUS OF 2009 FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS..... 49

APPENDIX II STATUS OF 2009 ANNEX FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS 55

APPENDIX III STATUS OF 2009 INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS 59

APPENDIX IV STATUS OF 2009 ANNEX INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS..... 63

KEY JUDGMENTS

- Embassy Banjul complied with most of the formal and informal recommendations contained in the main report of the 2009 inspection. The record of compliance with recommendations in the security annex to that inspection was less successful. This compliance follow-up review (CFR) reissues and redirects action on many of the physical security issues.
-
- The United States does not have major interests in The Gambia. The principal rationale for the embassy is to demonstrate interest in furthering respect for human rights, enforcement of the rule of law, and positive Gambian engagement in global affairs. Policy decisions in Washington point to an increase in the number of direct-hire Americans assigned to Banjul. This counters consideration of conceivable downsizing at the embassy.
- Management at Embassy Banjul has been weak. Record keeping was in disarray with many documents missing or actions not carefully documented. American employees have departed Banjul without settling outstanding personal accounts. The response to the 2008 inspection's recommendation relative to the chief of mission's management control statement was pro forma, and the relevant recommendation is reissued by this CFR.
- The facilities on the chancery compound are unattractive and inefficient. Major flooding issues should be addressed. High priority should be given to identifying an alternative site for the embassy.
- Regional support (mostly from Embassy Dakar or Consulate General Frankfurt) is generally satisfactory. The CFR team was especially impressed by the work of the regional financial office. There is little or no Department feedback on reports submitted by regional officers after visits to Banjul.

- The Bureau of African Affairs (AF) and other offices in the Department should be proactive in reaching out to small, isolated posts such as Embassy Banjul. Small, relatively inexperienced staffing at such posts underscores the corresponding need for front offices to ‘reach back’ more vigorously to the Department for guidance and support when confronted with difficult issues such as those that have troubled Embassy Banjul over the past two years.

Compliance follow-up reviews (CFR) by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) provide Department senior managers with progress reports on the status of inspection recommendations and provide OIG with a quality assurance assessment of its work.

This compliance review took place in Washington, DC, between January 4 and 29, 2010; in Dakar, Senegal, on February 1, 2010; and in Banjul, The Gambia, between February 2 and 9, 2010.

BACKGROUND

The Gambia is one of the smallest and poorest countries in Africa. The 2007/2008 United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Human Development Index ranks The Gambia 155 among 177 nations in the UNDP global review. In 2008, the population of about 1.8 million had an average per capita income of about \$496.¹ There are few natural resources. The predominantly Moslem population is increasing at about 2.5 percent each year. Outdated (2003) Gambian statistics place unemployment at 6.03 percent. The embassy considers this to be a gross understatement, and believes the actual rate of unemployment and underemployment to be in the 50 to 70 percent range. Malaria remains a significant killer, and HIV/AIDS rates, while low by African standards, continue to grow.

For almost three decades following independence from the United Kingdom in 1965, The Gambia was politically stable with periodic, open elections. That pattern was disrupted in a July 1994 coup which brought President Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh to power. He consolidated his position and power in elections held in 1996 and 2001. The patina of democracy is marred by a poor record in respect to human rights and press freedom. Concerns about these fundamental rights resulted in the 2006 suspension of The Gambia's compact with the Millennium Challenge Corporation.

U.S. representation was established in The Gambia in 1830 but was withdrawn in 1867. Embassy Banjul opened in 1965. The first American ambassador took up residence in 1973. At present, the embassy staff is comprised of ten direct-hire Department positions, two Peace Corps officers, and 93 locally employed (LE) staff. There are approximately 90 Peace Corps volunteers in country with plans for an increase of about ten volunteers in FY 2010.

¹U.S. Department of State Background Note: The Gambia dated December 2009.

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

U.S. INTERESTS AND RATIONALE FOR EMBASSY BANJUL

Commerce and trade between The Gambia and the United States is negligible. In 2008, the United States exported \$29 million in goods to The Gambia and imported about \$1 million. Nonetheless, Embassy Banjul assiduously seeks to promote trade relations. The commercial section has tripled the number of trade lead requests resulting in multiple sales. The Gambia is eligible for special treatment under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), but there has been little effort to take advantage of this preferential access to U.S. markets. The embassy, in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade, the Gambian Chamber of Commerce, and the West African Trade Hub from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/West Africa, conducted a training session with over 100 participants interested in AGOA potential. The embassy recently submitted a proposal to the West African Trade Hub from USAID/West Africa to conduct expert textile training for fashion designers in The Gambia. The proposal was approved, and training is scheduled to commence in late February 2010.

American investment in The Gambia is minimal.

The Gambia has contributed well-qualified troops to international peacekeeping forces in Somalia, Darfur, and elsewhere. Plans call for an increase in numbers, perhaps to as many as 1,000. This indirectly serves U.S. interests. The host government's voting pattern at the United Nations is less helpful. The Department's "Country Voting Practices in the United Nations" documents the divergence between Washington and Banjul on issues of concern.

Year	Overall Votes				Arms Control	Human Rights	Middle East
	Agree	Disagree	Abstain	Absent			
2005	1	26	3	60	0.0%	5.9%	0.0%
2006	4	48	1	41	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2007	2	52	1	27	3.4%	5.9%	0.0%
2008	0	30	3	55	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Over the course of 2009, twelve new banks were established in Banjul, eleven of them with Nigerian corporate connections. This has aroused concern about financial transactions conceivably related to money laundering. These concerns are accentuated in light of increased transshipment of narcotics from Latin America through the West African region. In mid-2009, a combined team from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Drug Enforcement Administration visited Banjul to evaluate financial operations and procedures. Embassy Banjul tapped into good and productive relations and cooperation with local law enforcement institutions to address the issues. As a result of that team's visit, the INL budget request for FY 2011 includes \$500,000 for The Gambia. If and when these funds materialize, decisions will have to be made on the best way to design and administer relevant projects and programs.

Meanwhile, Embassy Banjul remains handicapped by the scarcity of program funding, the application of which presumptively would enhance possibilities of increased cooperation from the Gambian Government. Total U.S. economic assistance in 2009 was a \$2.3 million program for sustainable fisheries and a \$3 million project for cashew production. Both were funded through USAID. The argumentation for modest U.S. economic assistance remains valid. The USAID mission was withdrawn from Banjul in 1996. However, there is a substantial USAID presence at Embassy Dakar, and it should be possible to administer a small assistance program from that neighboring country.

The 2008 OIG inspection of Embassy Banjul highlighted a recommendation that the Department work with USAID to produce a short assistance strategy to provide modest assistance to The Gambia. This has not been accomplished. Accordingly, that recommendation is revised and reissued.

Recommendation CFR 1: The Office of the Under Secretary for Foreign Assistance, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should propose to and work with the U.S. Agency for International Development to include in that agency's next budget submission a modest program of economic assistance for The Gambia. (Action: F in coordination with AF)

As elsewhere, there are latent concerns about the influence of governments or groups hostile or unfavorable to U.S. interests. In the former category, Iran, Venezuela, and Cuba have embassies in Banjul. Islamic radicalism has been espoused in some instances, although The Gambia (with about a 90 percent Moslem population) has a commendable record of religious tolerance.

Arguably, the primary rationale for Embassy Banjul is to demonstrate the U.S. Government's determination to encourage The Gambia's respect for human rights, enhancement of the rule of law, and positive engagement in global affairs.

EVALUATION OF COMPLIANCE

The CFR team found that Embassy Banjul had complied with many of the formal and informal recommendations from the 2008 inspection. A CFR automatically closes all formal and informal recommendations from the inspection, but these may be reopened, revised and/or reissued by the CFR, as appropriate.

Of the 15 formal recommendations in the 2009 report, ten were closed before the CFR, four were resolved/open, and one was unresolved. As a result of the CFR, the one unresolved recommendation (Recommendation 1) was revised and reissued. Nine of the ten recommendations closed before the CFR remain closed, but one, dealing with management controls, was reissued. Two of the recommendations that were resolved/open were closed under the CFR (Recommendations 10 and 13, dealing with the local medical officer and the embassy boat). Recommendation 7 (the power-off switch for the server room), which was resolved/open, was closed and reissued. Recommendation 9 dealing with the Call Bill system was resolved/open before the CFR. It was closed and a new recommendation regarding training for the Call Bill system was issued under the CFR.

Of the 21 informal recommendations, 18 were closed by the CFR. Informal Recommendation 6 regarding the post report was reissued as a formal recommendation by the CFR team. Informal Recommendation 17 regarding a management control review of the expendable supply operation was closed; a formal CFR recommendation to complete a revised chief of mission management controls statement of assurance will include this previous informal recommendation. Informal Recommendation 15 regarding a memorandum of understanding with the regional facility manager was reissued under the CFR.

For the security annex, all of the recommendations issued in the 2009 Report of the Inspection of Embassy Banjul classified annex, ISP-S-09-15A, are closed with the issuance of this CFR.

Of the nine recommendations issued in the 2009 Classified Annex of the Inspection of Embassy Banjul, eight (89 percent) were open (recommendations 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 9); one (Recommendation 6) was closed. Action for six of the eight open recommendations was originally assigned to Embassy Banjul but, upon further review, the recommendations have been revised and reissued with action assigned

to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) for implementation (recommendation 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8). Two of the eight open recommendations require action by Embassy Banjul for implementation and have been revised and reissued. All of the informal recommendations issued in the classified annex have been closed. Two of the informal recommendations were closed because implementation had been confirmed, and two were closed due to changed circumstances.

LEADERSHIP AND MORALE ISSUES

Neither the Ambassador nor the previous deputy chief of mission (DCM) came to Embassy Banjul with embassy management experience. The current DCM served in her last tour as DCM in another African post. She takes an active role in attempting to build a team atmosphere among all personnel. Most embassy staff believe that she sets clear standards and expectations, and holds people accountable for their actions. The Ambassador must play an equally large role in improving morale. Both of those leaders should place greater emphasis on the sponsor program for new American direct-hire arrivals so that their initial experiences in The Gambia are positive.

The Ambassador or the DCM participate in most Foreign Service National (FSN) committee meetings. Some individual FSNs complained that this is not invariably the case. These complaints do not appear to be significant. In a meeting with the CFR team, the FSN committee reported that they were very comfortable with front office support. Some FSNs requested individual interviews with CFR team members. It was apparent that those who did so had a coordinated complaint about the recent suspension by the front office of salary advances, which are authorized in the local compensation plan. Those concerns were expressed even though the Ambassador explained in an earlier town meeting that the advances were temporarily being placed on hold due to the continuing resolution and lack of funds. The advances are being reinstated as FY 2010 funding becomes available. The front office should redouble its efforts to articulate to the LE staff, in writing, the basis of front office decisions that directly affect LE morale.

The facilities give the visual impression of neglect. The exterior and interior of the chancery are worn and unimposing. There are no decorative touches that would make the building a warm and welcoming environment to staff or visitors. The white paint on the exterior of the chancery shows signs of water damage from the annual rainy season. The gardeners meticulously maintain the grounds at the front of the chancery compound but the entire grounds show signs of annual flooding. Exposed pipes, electrical conduits and wires blemish the bland walls and ceilings throughout corridors and offices. With the exception of the Ambassador's office, the rest of the office spaces are mostly unadorned and singularly unattractive. The restrooms are functional but antiquated. Representational china is stored in an anteroom just outside the Ambassador's restroom and washed in the restroom sink. In short, the chancery is in need of much attention and care from the Department. A chancery makeover would help to improve the morale of Embassy Banjul's staff and the image of the U.S. Government.

Recommendation CFR 2: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs and Embassy Banjul, should develop and implement a plan to renovate the current chancery or find a more suitable location for Embassy Banjul. (Action: OBO, in coordination with AF and Embassy Banjul)

RIGHTSIZING

New Direct-Hire Positions and Implications Thereof

In the summer of 2010, the American staff at Embassy Banjul will be augmented by arrival of a public affairs officer (PAO.) At the time of this report, public diplomacy was being handled by the DCM. The Ambassador and DCM anticipate that assignment of the PAO implies a corresponding program budget. Their plans for the PAO are for vitalization of an American Corners in Banjul (to date a faltering experiment despite the enthusiasm and attention of the DCM). Arranging for speakers and cultural events is also an objective. This seems more problematic, not only because of the costs involved, but also in recognition that English-speaking The Gambia is not an automatic fit with programs planned for neighboring Francophone nations.

As part of the Department's Diplomacy 3.0 initiative, approval has been granted to add a full-time general services officer (GSO) to the staff. Additionally, the ICASS council has approved recruitment of an eligible family member (EFM) assistant GSO position. Officials in AF argue strongly that small embassies within that bureau's purview cannot operate well with only a management officer, much less an officer whose responsibilities combine management with those of the DCM. If the new GSO arrives, he/she will take over from the current assistant GSO who is scheduled to depart post in April.²

The addition of two full-time positions represents a growth of over 20 percent in the cadre of direct-hire Foreign Service personnel at Embassy Banjul. The CFR team is unaware of any plans to add additional LE staff to handle the commensurate expansion in the embassy's housing pool, motor pool, or other service sections. Meanwhile, the embassy will have to find space for the additional American officers in an already crowded and inadequate chancery.

The CFR team acknowledges that creation of the new positions—however welcome and eagerly anticipated at Banjul—reflects human resource management decisions made in Washington. Nonetheless, it seems likely that these are to be filled

² The management officer's position at Embassy Banjul remains vacant, reportedly with no bidders, but presently encumbered by a temporary duty (TDY) retired Foreign Service officer.

with entry-level or inexperienced junior officers, which poses different problems. In preparation for this CFR, a frequently voiced concern was that assignment of very junior or inexperienced officers to posts where they are the sole employees performing a function often results in difficulties for both the post and the individual. The corresponding dilemma is the scarcity of more experienced officers who are willing or available for assignment to such positions. In another section of this report, there is discussion of a related consideration: the negative impact that may evolve from the lack of a real professional challenge and a sense that the work accomplished is meaningful in the context of the Department's broader goals.

OUTSIDE SUPPORT

Regionalization: Present and Potential

Embassy Banjul receives regional support from a number of points for different aspects of work. A primary hub is at Embassy Dakar, the base for the regional financial management officer (FMO), regional human resources officer (HRO), regional medical officer (RMO), regional psychiatrist (RMOP), regional facilities management officer, and the Engineering Services Center (ESC). Dakar is about 25 minutes' air transit from Banjul, and the trip overland (preferred by ESC, for example) can be accomplished in seven to eight hours. Most of the regional offices in Dakar plan quarterly visits to Banjul. Some have memoranda of understanding establishing that goal. In reality, this is not always accomplished, in part because of other demands on the regional offices, some of which cover four or five additional countries that border on Senegal.

Regional consular support is provided by the regional consular officer (RCO) out of Frankfurt, and regional information technology support is provided by the regional information management center (RIMC), also out of Frankfurt. Visits by RIMC are tied to specific requests for assistance from Embassy Banjul.

The regional FMO and his specialist provide extensive service to Embassy Banjul. Their trip reports are thorough and comprehensive, and include a number of important suggestions and recommendations. In addition to a one-time trip report produced in fall 2009, the regional FMO and the Embassy Dakar financial management specialist have developed an ongoing trip report format that includes observations and recommendations from each quarterly visit, and notes when an objective has been met. Although these reports are made available to AF, the CFR team did not find that AF responded to them or acknowledged their contents.

The regional HRO arrived in Dakar in September 2009 and visited Banjul in November 2009. The CFR team did not find any record of a response from AF to that officer's trip reports.

The Department is not taking full advantage of regional officer efforts if their trip reports are not reviewed and acknowledged, with input from Washington offices on how regional activities and recommendations are being received, and what types of support can be provided. The CFR team has, in this report and in a number of other reports for small hardship posts, noted the importance of support and involvement of Washington offices to the management, morale and successful conduct of foreign policy in such locations. In the case of Embassy Banjul, the CFR team particularly noted the lack of outreach by the Department, and the failure of the embassy to “reach back” to the Department when doing so might have provided guidance regarding some of the decisions taken by Embassy Banjul in the last few years.

Recommendation CFR 3: The Bureau of African Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Embassy Dakar, and Embassy Banjul, should develop standard procedures for reviewing and acknowledging trip reports prepared by regional officers in their coverage of Embassy Banjul. These procedures should include written responses on the contents of the reports and on the needs or recommendations expressed by the regional officers. (Action: AF, in coordination with Embassy Dakar, Embassy Banjul, and OBO)

The 2009 OIG inspection report included an informal recommendation that Embassy Banjul negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the Dakar regional facility manager for one assistance visit per quarter. The regional facility manager at Embassy Dakar told the CFR team he will locate a copy of a memorandum of understanding and will discuss it with the DCM at Embassy Banjul. The condition of the Banjul chancery and properties requires the attention of the facilities manager.

Recommendation CFR 4: Embassy Dakar, in coordination with Embassy Banjul and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should negotiate and sign a memorandum of understanding between the regional facilities manager and Embassy Banjul that includes visits to Embassy Banjul at least once per quarter. (Action: Embassy Dakar, in coordination with Embassy Banjul and OBO)

The CFR team considered whether there might be potential for further regionalization. The objective in doing so would be to reduce the size and cost of U.S. Government operations in The Gambia. As noted, policy decisions in Washington point to an increase in U.S. direct-hire personnel at this embassy that runs counter to any conceivable diminution of functions at Embassy Banjul. For better or worse, the Department has configured a critical mass in terms of staff assigned here. The result is an expanding presence; the goal is an expanded capability to pursue U.S. objectives. The embassy needs a clearer definition of U.S. interests and objectives in The Gambia.

Embassy Banjul receives regional consular support from the regional consular office (RCO) in Frankfurt, Germany. The RCO visited Banjul in early December 2008, two months after the OIG inspection, and again in December 2009. A detailed report with specific recommendations was issued after each visit which provided invaluable guidance for this small, isolated post. With Banjul's consular section now being led by an experienced mid-level officer overseen by a DCM with recent consular experience, the RCO does not anticipate another visit until the final quarter of 2010, unless circumstances require it.

Embassy Dakar processes immigrant visas (IVs) for Embassy Banjul. Embassy Banjul has to verify and investigate IV cases and the two offices now have a smooth working relationship. This is important since the Gambian Government does not cooperate with verification of civil documents. Gambians who want IVs must travel to Dakar. Embassy Dakar could also conceivably process nonimmigrant visa (NIV) cases for Embassy Banjul. The physical distance between the two cities is not far (25 minutes by air) but the road is very bad in places so the drive currently takes from 7 to 9 hours.

Reach Back – Reach Out

Subsequent to the 2008 inspection of Embassy Banjul, four American direct-hire employees have curtailed. This represents almost fifty percent of those assigned. Each of the curtailments was unique, but the impact on post operations and staff morale is a matter of concern. Revisiting the circumstances surrounding the curtailments is not the purpose of this CFR. However, lessons can be drawn from these incidents:

- The Department should, to the extent possible, avoid assigning first-tour officers or those without prior experience to posts such as Embassy Banjul where there is only one person assigned to each section or function.

- The Bureau of African Affairs is responsive to requests for logistics support, but apparently either less informed or less inclined to initiate action on problems such as those preceding the troubling curtailments at Embassy Banjul. The bureau needs to proactively reach out to Embassy Banjul and similar small embassies. A vibrant dialogue, in this case on sensitive human resource management issues, may have resulted in solutions less disruptive to post operations and ultimately less costly to the U.S. Government.
- Confronted with difficult personnel decisions, those involved in human resources management should reach back to the Department and regional officers (e.g. regional human resources and medical personnel) for guidance and assistance in solving performance-related problems in a way that will keep personnel at post. Curtailment or loss of confidence should be last resort measures. Prior to the most recent curtailment at Embassy Banjul, the Ambassador sought and received generic guidance from the Director General's office relative to curtailments.
- Mentors and supervisors at posts such as Embassy Banjul confront major obstacles in inculcating a sense of professional accomplishment or satisfaction if—as it appears to be in the case—there is little or no feedback from Washington to indicate whether or not the embassy is on target in its work.

REPORTING AND REPRESENTATION

Since presentation of credentials in February 2008, the Ambassador has met and recorded two lengthy meetings with President Jammeh. (He had another meeting with the president the day before the CFR exit brief.) The Foreign Ministry is the embassy's normal channel of communications with Gambian officials. Requests for meetings with Gambian officials other than those in that ministry must be arranged via diplomatic note, a sometimes frustrating and cumbersome process. Despite often sharp policy differences between Washington and Banjul, the embassy's access appears adequate.

The CFR team reviewed the 2008 Human Rights Report for The Gambia. That and other reporting underscore the embassy's willingness to be objectively critical of the host government. For example, there is a blunt statement that the "government's respect for the human rights of its citizens did not improve during the year..." The CFR team reviewed Embassy Banjul's reports and found that they were devoid of any bias.

Formal reporting by Embassy Banjul is not voluminous. The CFR team reviewed reporting cables submitted between July 2009 and January 2010. Of thirty-six cables assembled for this purpose, fully one-fourth were drafted by one of the LE political/economic assistants. Engaging the LE staff in drafting cables and assembling materials for mandated reports (e.g. the annual Human Rights Report) is commendable. The preparation and submission of such mandated reports does not appear to impose a great workload burden, primarily because of the competence of the LE staff assistants.

In sum, the CFR team concludes that the quantity and quality of reporting from Embassy Banjul is commensurate with the interests and needs of Washington end users.

MANAGEMENT ISSUES

During the 2008 inspection, the DCM had responsibility for oversight of the management section, which included an American GSO and an eligible family member as the assistant GSO. The inspection report of Embassy Banjul noted that the embassy had requested permission to make the GSO position a management officer position, and to try to hire a GSO locally. The 2008 OIG team supported that request.

The direct-hire GSO curtailed in early 2009. The new management officer arrived in August 2009, and curtailed in December 2009. The former DCM left post in the summer of 2009, and the current DCM arrived shortly thereafter. The only American continuity in the management section was the American eligible family member in the assistant GSO position. This individual is currently serving in a generalized role, overseeing many management functions. While the CFR team was in Banjul in early February 2010, a TDY management officer arrived and was expected to remain in Banjul for several months. Embassy Banjul will receive another U.S. direct-hire GSO position under Diplomacy 3.0. The ICASS council has also voted to hire a GSO assistant from among the eligible family members arriving in the summer of 2010.

In the past few years, seven Department LE employees have left the embassy after applying for special immigrant visas (SIVs). Another six have applied for SIVs but are still working. At least two of the latter have been approved and are discussing their departure dates. These SIV issuances and applications represent a large proportion of the LE staff.³ Two employees who have been approved for SIVs but who have not yet left the embassy are the motor pool supervisor and the procurement assistant, both key positions. The U.S. Immigration and Nationality Act and Embassy Banjul's SIV policy state that "the Ambassador may recommend" to the Department of State that certain employees or former employees be designated as special immigrants to the United States. Thus, such recommendations are permissive but not prescriptive. The Ambassador has been generous in approving SIVs for LE staff, but the negative impact on embassy operations has been considerable, with such a relatively large number of SIVs being approved within a short period of time. Prudent management might have dictated a more gradual approach.

³ Two Peace Corps LE employees also departed The Gambia on SIVs.

The turmoil among management section American staff, combined with the departure of a number of LE staff on SIVs, has contributed to disorganization and uncertainty throughout the management section. Many of the current staff are relatively new to their jobs, and while their future performance looks promising, they need guidance and training by qualified American management staff. Several additional LE staff members plan to depart the embassy on SIVs in the next few years, and their departure will increase the training and experience gap among the local staff.

The regional HRO and FMO from Embassy Dakar, along with the Embassy Dakar financial management specialist, are working hard to improve the situation at Embassy Banjul. They have drafted memoranda of understanding with the embassy, and all have visited recently. While their involvement is making a dent in the array (or disarray) of needed activities at Embassy Banjul, the post badly needs the continued presence of American personnel in the management officer and newly approved GSO positions, particularly after the EFM GSO departs post in April 2010.

Throughout the management section, the CFR team found disordered records, often with missing paperwork. For example, records for local cash purchases were disordered, and some did not have work orders attached. The LE staff could not readily identify which personal fuel bills had been paid and which were unpaid, and they worked to update the list during the CFR. The LE staff showed the inspectors a large number of outstanding purchase orders, many of which may have been completed but lack receiving reports. These and other issues are presented in the following sections.

In spite of the turnover of American staff and the inexperience of LE staff, the CFR team found a number of management activities that were well conducted. These areas are also discussed below.

Financial Management Office

Cashiering services are being provided in an appropriate manner. (b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2) In the absence of a management officer, the financial management officer password for the automated cashiering system was held by the DCM. The TDY management officer arrived during the stay of the CFR team, and the post

will likely provide this individual with the password.

. The visiting regional FMO conducted a cashier reconciliation in the presence of a CFR inspector, with impeccable results.

There are two consular subcashiers, Although there was another subcashier at the time of the last inspection, there is not one now. Quarterly verifications for the consular subcashiers are performed by the consular officer, and were up-to-date as of January 2010.

Procurement personnel in the voucher processing unit are struggling, but persevering in their efforts. The embassy sells duty-free gasoline to U.S. direct-hire employees at the general services warehouse. These individuals pay the embassy cashier for the fuel for their personal vehicles. Collections for fuel bills were lagging, as was the preparation of fuel bills by the financial management section. The CFR team found fuel bills outstanding from 2007, particularly for the Peace Corps. There were also fuel bills for American officers who had departed post without settling their accounts. The nonpayment of personal fuel bills results in additional costs to the U.S. Government.

Recommendation CFR 5: Embassy Banjul should establish and implement procedures to ensure that the financial management office prepares fuel bills in a timely manner and subsequently keeps up-to-date and accurate records on payment for these purchases, and including a separate control mechanism to ensure that American officers settle their accounts for fuel bills before departing post. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Embassy Banjul is in the process of reclassifying an existing position to hire a voucher clerk. The addition of this position should greatly assist the financial management office in processing vouchers. The individual is also expected to serve as the alternate cashier.

The regional financial management specialist from Embassy Dakar has prepared a trip report in a continuing format for the visits made by her and the regional FMO. The trip report includes findings and recommendations, and notes actions and follow-up taken with respect to these recommendations. The February 4, 2010 version of the report includes the following recommendations, which the CFR team supports. (There are other recommendations, many of which have to do with preparation of budgets and financial plans, and are pertinent to post and its regional support.)

- The FMO should forward purchase order numbers to the GSO to identify related purchase orders. The obligation numbering system should be reviewed to include the last three digits of the purchase orders for ease in tracking purchase orders.
- Post should request that the certifying officer authority for the previous management officer be revoked.
- Post, which is now using Travel Manager software for travel computations, should consider implementing E-2 Solutions, in order to compute travel reimbursements more accurately.

Best Practice: Trip Report Format

Issue: The trip report format used by the financial management office was inadequate.

Response: The continuing trip report format developed by the regional financial management officer and the regional financial management specialist from Embassy Dakar warrants special commendation. The report format is thorough, including the assignment of tasks to general areas such as funds control, budgeting and financial planning, and cashier activities, etc. For each task and subtask, the regional personnel note the frequency with which it is to be reviewed, and note in which visits this review occurred. The format includes findings, recommendations, actions taken and the dates, as well as the results. The financial specialist uses color coding to track items to be covered in upcoming visits, as well as to indicate which notes were made during which visit. The trip reports are sent to the Bureau of African Affairs, providing information for that office to oversee both regional activities and post-specific needs.

Result: Overall, the trip report format represents a thorough, organized approach to tracking issues that arise during and between regional visits, and to ensuring that tasks and recommendations are clearly stated.

Unauthorized Commitments

The previous management officer, who had no contracting officer's warrant, allegedly made three unauthorized commitments for procurement of furniture/bookcases for his residence, for contracting of painting services for his residence, and for the payment of the Foreign Transfer Allowance for a departing employee. The first

of these incidents is being reviewed by AF. The embassy ratified the second, and is forwarding the required documentation to the Department. The third unauthorized commitment is under review by the embassy. Since the officer involved is no longer at post, and the embassy and regional bureau are actively reviewing the circumstances, the CFR team is not making a recommendation at this time regarding these matters.

Procurement

The embassy is using WebPASS to track purchase activities. Some of the purchasing staff is located at the chancery and some at the warehouse, about five to ten minutes driving distance away.

The status of various procurements, as portrayed by WebPASS, lists a number of outstanding purchase orders, dating back to 2007, when WebPASS was installed. These purchase orders, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars are for a variety of goods and services. Some of these are for shipments held by the European Logistical Office, others for items not yet delivered, and others for services such as packouts and shipping. Some of the items have been delivered and are in use; other purchase orders show partial shipments. Other listings are for items costing more than \$1000 and do not have Non-Expendable Property Application (NEPA) numbers. Embassy staff discussed the lack of coordination among the financial management, procurement, property, and pouch room staff that contributed to the lack of complete records. They also noted that when WebPASS was installed, not all information was entered completely. All of them stated that they had had little training on WebPASS.

Recommendation CFR 6: Embassy Banjul should review outstanding procurement activities as listed on WebPASS and should determine which items have been received and locate them, put Non-Expendable Property Application numbers on those items requiring them, and indicate which procurement actions are complete and which are incomplete. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 7: Embassy Banjul should develop and implement a workflow pattern involving the financial management, procurement, property, and information management staff that keeps all involved sections coordinated in issuing and tracking purchase orders, receipt of items and services, and appropriate record keeping. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Embassy Banjul is purchasing cellular telephone services from a local vendor. Although the embassy solicited cellular telephone services in early July 2008 and reportedly signed a contract with the vendor, the procurement file does not include a copy of the final signed contract, and the vendor reportedly does not have one. It is not clear whether a signed contract ever existed. The draft contract, which amounts to payments of about \$16,000 in local currency annually, was for one year, with a one-year option to renew. Since the contract, if it exists, would expire in the summer of 2010, this is a convenient time for the embassy to renew its cellular telephone contract and to determine if other vendors in Banjul could offer more advantageous services.

Recommendation CFR 8: Embassy Banjul should make a solicitation for cellular telephone services with the objective of signing a new contract with the existing or another cellular telephone service provider in Banjul. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Embassy Banjul uses a number of blanket purchase agreements (BPA) for the purchase of local supplies and services. There are a limited number of vendors in Banjul who can provide the items needed by the embassy, and the BPAs are awarded to the same vendors each year. A number of these BPAs had expired at the time of the CFR, and had not been renewed. The CFR team left an informal recommendation with the embassy to examine the expenditures for each BPA vendor and to cancel, renew, or reissue the BPAs, as appropriate.

In addition to the BPAs, the embassy also makes ad hoc purchases from local vendors on a cash basis. The 2009 inspection report included an informal recommendation that Embassy Banjul seek to obtain bank account information from vendors to facilitate more electronic payments. Local vendors do not frequently use electronic funds transfers, and although the embassy has tried to obtain routing numbers from local banks, they have had little success. The CFR team closed the former informal recommendation and did not reissue it.

Regardless of the method used to select vendors, the local procurement files are disordered and incomplete. As noted earlier, the purchase documents do not always include work orders, documents are not filed, and the files are not in any discernible order. Consequently, it is difficult to determine which vendors the embassy is using and for what items and amounts. At the time of the CFR, the purchasing agent had been filling in for the procurement clerk and had only recently returned to his office in the warehouse. The CFR team left an informal recommendation that the purchasing agent organize his documents and files, and that he produce periodic reports for his supervisors on his cash procurement activities.

Expendable and Nonexpendable Property

Embassy Banjul's warehouse is large and well-organized. The expendable and nonexpendable property is stored neatly and much of it is contained in cardboard boxes to protect items from the ever-present dust. Embassy Banjul completed an inventory of expendable and nonexpendable items in 2008, and is due to complete another one by March 15, 2010. Spot checks of expendable supplies by the CFR inspectors indicated that the property records are in reasonable order. The NEPA and supply clerks are relatively new to their jobs, and are learning their roles.

Separation of Duties

Embassy Banjul does not have sufficient staff to allow thorough separation of duties. The three LE staff involved in receiving, NEPA, and property management all back up each other. The lack of American officers contributes to the overlap, as the responsibilities must be distributed among fewer persons. The greatest need is for a designated property receiving clerk. This position could help clear the deficiencies in the WebPASS procurement system related to receiving reports, and could also serve as work order clerk for the maintenance section. The assistance in the maintenance section would allow the maintenance supervisor to dedicate more time to overseeing needed work on the chancery compound.

Recommendation CFR 9: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should establish a position of receiving clerk/work order clerk. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with AF)

Maintenance and Work Orders

Embassy Banjul has a maintenance staff of 18 trade workers, headed by an experienced mechanical engineer. The embassy uses a combination of eServices and WebPASS to manage its work orders. Of the 71 work orders submitted in January 2010, 70 had been completed as of the CFR in early February 2010. There were no work orders outstanding, 14 were approved and awaiting action, and about 50 were on hold, most due to insufficient funding or awaiting parts and supplies. The head of the maintenance section is personally involved in most of the maintenance work. He has little time to perform daily WebPASS activities, and does not track costs by

property or review other reports that WebPASS would make available. The addition of a receiving clerk/work order clerk would relieve the maintenance section foreman of some clerical responsibilities and allow him to spend more time resolving the many maintenance problems of the chancery and residences. Other information on chancery upkeep is included in another section of this report.

Motor Pool

Embassy Banjul operates 18 vehicles with seven LE staff drivers. One of these drivers is dedicated to the Ambassador. Eight vehicles are assigned to the motor pool itself, with the others used by the RSO, GSO, IMO and various other sections. The experienced motor pool supervisor will depart Banjul on an SIV sometime in 2010, and the motor pool will need to identify and hire a new supervisor.

The motor pool has had very few accidents. Vehicle inspections are conducted regularly and trip reports are carefully completed. The fleet is no older than 2004, and is in good condition. The dispatcher checks the odometers on each vehicle each morning against the trip reports. Americans who self-drive vehicles must check out the keys from the dispatcher or the duty driver.

Newly arrived American officers used to receive training in the Smith System, a type of defensive driving. After taking the training, American officers were authorized to self-drive official vehicles, as were TDY personnel who had completed the training. The self-drive approach fits well into embassy activities, however with the influx of new personnel in the summer of 2010, the embassy will need to review the self-drive policy and determine if it will continue to be administered in the same way.

Human Resources

The human resources (HR) section is managed by one LE staff member, with oversight from the regional HRO at Embassy Dakar. The CFR team found that personnel evaluations for LE staff were being carefully tracked and were up-to-date.

The HR office keeps copies of eye examinations for drivers, and these were up to date. However, the inspectors could not locate copies of medical examinations for the drivers. The CFR team left an informal recommendation with the embassy to begin tracking vision and medical examinations for drivers to ensure that they are kept current.

The CFR team found a lack of coordination between the travel assistant and the HR office in monitoring the departure of Americans from Banjul. The HR office needs to know the dates of departure for American staff in order to halt the differential allowance in a timely manner. The CFR team also found that when Americans left post on permanent reassignment, the ticketing documents were being provided before the individuals had turned in their check-out sheets. As a result, American staff left Embassy Banjul without clearing unpaid bills and without the HR office knowing in advance on what date the post differential would cease.

Recommendation CFR 10: Embassy Banjul should establish and implement a written policy regarding coordination of the issuance of travel documents for American officers departing post, and should ensure that all pertinent offices are notified in a timely manner of the departure of any American officer. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Management Controls

The 2009 inspection report included a recommendation that Embassy Banjul conduct an internal control review, revise the chief of mission annual management controls assurance statement to include identified weaknesses, and design and implement a plan to take corrective action. Embassy Banjul completed a management control statement of assurance dated August 7, 2009, that does not contain any identified weaknesses. Based on the findings in this CFR, the CFR team is repeating the recommendation that the embassy conduct an internal control review and issue a corrective chief of mission statement of assurance.

Recommendation CFR 11: Embassy Banjul should conduct an internal control review and revise the annual chief of mission management controls statement of assurance to reflect the findings of that review, and to include the management controls issues identified by the compliance follow-up review team. The statement of assurance should include appropriate plans for corrective actions. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

The 2009 inspection report included an informal recommendation that Embassy Banjul perform a management control review of the expendable supply operation. The CFR team has closed this informal recommendation, as it is subsumed under the recommendation to complete a revised chief of mission management controls statement of assurance.

Post Report

The 2009 inspection report included an informal recommendation that Embassy Banjul update its post report. At the time of the CFR, the embassy Web site contained a post report with most sections dating to 2004. The post report provides updated information for prospective bidders and family members, as well as others interested in Banjul.

Recommendation CFR 12: Embassy Banjul should update the post report on the embassy Web site. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The 2009 OIG inspection report recommended that Embassy Banjul install a Call-Bill system to automate the reconciliation of long distance telephone bills received from the local telephone company. The information management officer (IMO) at Embassy Banjul installed the software in 2009. However, the information management staff is not trained to operate or manage the Call-Bill software. Due to a staffing shortage, the IMO was unable to attend training on the use of the software (an information management specialist arrived for duty on the first day of the CFR). Embassy Banjul continues to manually reconcile long distance calls from a local telephone company. The IMO had asked for training assistance from the IMO at Embassy Dakar to train the entire IM staff on the use of the Call-Bill system. The Foreign Service Institute offers the Nortel Call Pilot training course in February and April 2010 in which a Call-Bill module is provided. Both courses are full. Another option is to request that RIMC Frankfurt provide on-site training to Embassy Banjul. RIMC Frankfurt responded to a CFR team inquiry that it has Call-Bill in its lab and could run through a basic exposure to the software at Frankfurt with Embassy Banjul's cleared IM staff, pending availability of IMTS/T staff.

Recommendation CFR 18: The Regional Information Management Center Frankfurt, in coordination with Embassy Banjul, should conduct on-site Call-Bill system training for Embassy Banjul information management staff as soon as practicable. (Action: RIMC Frankfurt, in coordination with Embassy Banjul)

(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

Recommendation CFR 19:

CONSULAR ISSUES

Embassy Banjul's consular section has become a smooth running operation since the arrival of the new consular section chief and DCM. The new section chief arrived at post in July 2009, and has steadily improved operations. The current DCM has recent consular experience and appropriately supervises the consular officer. Communication and morale in the consular section are good, as are the relationships between the section and other embassy offices. All recommendations in the 2009 inspection report regarding consular operations have been closed.

The consular officer has cleared or closed watch list and clearance items, and has implemented a process to do this daily. Only appropriate post employees are enabled users for consular systems. A team of contractors is coming soon to brief and train the consular section on Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA) systems. The consular officer printed the "Wilbur Wilberforce Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2007" (22 U.S.C. 7104) pamphlet and conducted in-house training on the concepts therein.

Embassy Banjul's visa referral policy has been updated three times since March 2009, each time reflecting the most current CA guidance. The most recent update, released as an embassy management notice on January 26, 2010, has been cleared by CA. The consular section chief briefed all officers on the new policy, and all of them signed Referral Policy Compliance Agreements. The consular officer also explained the policy at an all-hands meeting in September 2009. There has been only one referral since the consular officer's arrival but the recently released revision simplifies the referral submission process for officers and should encourage greater use of the system.

The consular officer reached agreement with Standard Chartered Bank branches to stagger nonimmigrant visa appointments. The consular section normally sees between 20-50 people a day depending on the month. There are appointments at 8AM and 10AM. Further staggering would not be useful. It would cause confusion at the embassy because most applicants show up early and the guards would have to sort it out. It might also confuse the three bank branches which do the appointments. The DCM ensures that the consular section receives OF-158 forms in a timely fashion from the management section to reflect receipt of off-site machine-readable visa fee collections. The consular section now attaches receipts to American citizen services

and visa case files. The consular officer has been designated as area custodial officer for fees. The political/economic officer is the alternate and she also has been formally designated as area custodial officer for fees.

Fraud is rampant in The Gambia. There is considerable fraud associated with visa requests, including Visa 92s ('following-to-join' asylees) and Visa 93s ('following-to-join' refugees.) The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) adjudicates these types of cases, including applications for the admission of family members of a derivative basis. Nevertheless, consular officers, particularly ones at posts with no USCIS officer present, are required to assist in processing cases of spouses and children of persons granted these visas. USCIS makes its determination in the United States for the person applying for asylum or refugee status and then the consular officer has to interview the 'follow-to-join' dependents in-country. According to CA, Embassy Banjul helped USCIS process over 200 of these cases in 2009.

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation CFR 1: The Office of the Under Secretary for Foreign Assistance, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should propose to and work with the U.S. Agency for International Development to include in that agency's next budget submission a modest program of economic assistance for The Gambia. (Action: F in coordination with AF)

Recommendation CFR 2: The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs and Embassy Banjul, should develop and implement a plan to renovate the current chancery or find a more suitable location for Embassy Banjul. (Action: OBO, in coordination with AF and Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 3: The Bureau of African Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Embassy Dakar, and Embassy Banjul, should develop standard procedures for reviewing and acknowledging trip reports prepared by regional officers in their coverage of Embassy Banjul. These procedures should include written responses on the contents of the reports and on the needs or recommendations expressed by the regional officers. (Action: AF, in coordination with Embassy Dakar, Embassy Banjul, and OBO)

Recommendation CFR 4: Embassy Dakar, in coordination with Embassy Banjul and the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should negotiate and sign a memorandum of understanding between the regional facilities manager and Embassy Banjul that includes visits to Embassy Banjul at least once per quarter. (Action: Embassy Dakar, in coordination with Embassy Banjul and OBO)

Recommendation CFR 5: Embassy Banjul should establish and implement procedures to ensure that the financial management office prepares fuel bills in a timely manner and subsequently keeps up-to-date and accurate records on payment for these purchases, and including a separate control mechanism to ensure that American officers settle their accounts for fuel bills before departing post. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 6: Embassy Banjul should review outstanding procurement activities as listed on WebPASS and should determine which items have been received and locate them, put Non-Expendable Property Application numbers on those items requiring them, and indicate which procurement actions are complete and which are incomplete. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 7: Embassy Banjul should develop and implement a workflow pattern involving the financial management, procurement, property, and information management staff that keeps all involved sections coordinated in issuing and tracking purchase orders, receipt of items and services, and appropriate record keeping. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 8: Embassy Banjul should make a solicitation for cellular telephone services with the objective of signing a new contract with the existing or another cellular telephone service provider in Banjul. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 9: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should establish a position of receiving clerk/work order clerk. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with AF)

Recommendation CFR 10: Embassy Banjul should establish and implement a written policy regarding coordination of the issuance of travel documents for American officers departing post, and should ensure that all pertinent offices are notified in a timely manner of the departure of any American officer. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 10: Embassy Banjul should establish and implement a written policy regarding coordination of the issuance of travel documents for American officers departing post, and should ensure that all pertinent offices are notified in a timely manner of the departure of any American officer. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 11: Embassy Banjul should conduct an internal control review and revise the annual chief of mission management controls statement of assurance to reflect the findings of that review, and to include the management controls issues identified by the compliance follow-up review team. The statement of assurance should include appropriate plans for corrective actions. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 12: Embassy Banjul should update the post report on the embassy Web site. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 13:

Recommendation CFR 14:

Recommendation CFR 15: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

Recommendation CFR 16: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

Recommendation CFR 17: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

Recommendation CFR 18: The Regional Information Management Center Frankfurt, in coordination with Embassy Banjul, should conduct on-site Call-Bill system training for Embassy Banjul information management staff as soon as practicable. (Action: RIMC Frankfurt, in coordination with Embassy Banjul)

Recommendation CFR 19: (b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)
(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2)

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 progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Embassy Banjul uses a number of BPAs to procure local supplies and services. There are a limited number of vendors in The Gambia who can provide the items needed by the embassy, and these BPAs are renewed each year, usually with the same vendors. A number of these BPAs had expired at the time of the CFR, and had not been renewed.

Informal Recommendation CFR 1: Embassy Banjul should examine the expenditures for each blanket purchase agreement vendor, determine the relative costs of each, and cancel, renew, or reissue the blanket purchase agreements, as appropriate.

The local procurement files are disordered and incomplete. It is difficult to determine which vendors the embassy is using and for what items and amounts.

Informal Recommendation CFR 2: Embassy Banjul should organize the purchasing agent's documents and files, and the purchasing agent should produce periodic reports for his supervisors on his cash procurement activities.

The HR office keeps copies of eye examinations for drivers, and these were up-to-date. However, the inspectors could not locate copies of medical examinations for the drivers.

Informal Recommendation CFR 3: Embassy Banjul should perform annual vision and medical examinations for drivers and should track these examinations to ensure that they are kept current.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Barry Wells	1/08
Deputy Chief of Mission	Cynthia Gregg	7/09
Political/Economic Officer	Tashawna Bethea	7/08
Management Officer	Vacant	
Consular Officer	Michael Fitzpatrick	7/09
Regional Security Officer	Aaron Wilson, Jr.	9/08
Information Management Office	Ali Nikooazm	10/08

Other Agency

Peace Corps Director	Jeff Cornish
----------------------	--------------

ABBREVIATIONS

AF	Bureau of African Affairs
AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
BPA	Blanket purchase agreement
CA	Bureau of Consular Affairs
CAC	Compound access control
CFR	Compliance follow-up review
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
E&E	Emergency and evacuation
EFM	Eligible family member
ESC	Engineering services center
FE/BR	Forced-entry-ballistic-resistant
FMO	Financial management officer
FSNI	Foreign Service national investigator
GSO	General services officer
HR	Human resources
HRO	Human resources officer
IMO	Information management officer
IDNS	Imminent danger notification system
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
IV	Immigrant visa
LE	Locally employed
NEPA	Nonexpendable property application
NIV	Nonimmigrant visa
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

PAO	Public affairs officer
RCO	Regional consular officer
RMO	Regional medical officer
RMOP	Regional medical officer, psychiatrist
RSO	Regional security officer
RIMC	Regional information management center
SIV	Special immigrant visa
TDY	Temporary duty
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USCIS	U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

APPENDIX I STATUS OF 2009 FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The Office of the Under Secretary for Foreign Assistance, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should work with the U.S. Agency for International Development to review the foreign assistance strategy as laid out in Embassy Banjul's Mission Strategic Plan and produce a short assistance strategy for the embassy's review and comment. (Action: F, in coordination with AF)

Pre-CFR Status: Unresolved

CFR Findings: This recommendation has been amended and reissued under the CFR.

Recommendation 2: Embassy Banjul should clear or close watch list and clearance items, and implement a process to do this daily from now on. It should update the systems references lists and close access to the system for officers who are no longer here or who should not have access. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: This recommendation remains closed under the CFR.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Banjul should issue a correct, written nonimmigrant visa referral policy under the chief of mission's signature and hold an all-hands meeting to explain the policy and the submission procedure, encourage its use by embassy officers for qualified applicants, and assure the officers that the consular section will adjudicate the visas promptly. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: This recommendation remains closed under the CFR.

Recommendation 4: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with Consulate General Frankfurt, should arrange a visit from the regional consular officer as soon as possible to work with the consular staff to bring processes into line with standard visa procedures and to improve staff and interoffice relationships. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with ConGen Frankfurt)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: This recommendation remains closed under the CFR.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Banjul should stop charging servants time and transportation while working on representation functions to official residence expenses and amend the official residence expense servants' contracts to exclude overtime. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: Embassy Banjul has revised the contracts with the official residence staff to exclude overtime, and is not charging overtime to official residence expenses. This recommendation remains closed.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Banjul should establish and implement a policy requiring that U.S. dollar payments for reimbursement of representation, travel claims, and travel advances be made by electronic funds transfers to employees' bank accounts. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: The embassy issued a management notice dated April 28, 2009 informing employees that all dollar payments for reimbursement of representation, travel claims and travel advances would be made by electronic fund transfer to employees' bank accounts. This recommendation remains closed.

Recommendation 7:

CFR Findings:

Recommendation 8: Embassy Banjul should request that the regional computer security office conduct a site audit on its computer infrastructure. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: An on-site computer security assessment was conducted by the regional computer security officer in Pretoria from April 15 to 17, 2009. This recommendation is closed.

Recommendation 9: Embassy Banjul should install the Call-Bill system and automate the process of reconciling telephone bills with the local service. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved Open

CFR Findings: The Call Bill system has been installed, and this recommendation is closed. The system is not yet operational due to the lack of training among the IM staff. The CFR team has included in this report a new recommendation regarding training on the Call Bill system.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Banjul should secure a local medical officer with a contract meeting Department standards. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved Open

CFR Findings: The embassy has a contract with a local medical officer. This recommendation is closed.

Recommendation 11: Embassy Banjul should conduct an internal control review, revise the chief of mission annual management controls assurance statement with identified weaknesses, and design and implement a plan to take corrective action. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: Although this recommendation was closed, during the CFR, the CFR team found instances of internal control weaknesses and identified them in this report. OIG is reissuing in the CFR report a recommendation that Embassy Banjul conduct an internal control review and revise the annual chief of mission management controls statement of assurance to reflect the findings of that review, and to include the management controls issues identified by the CFR team in the CFR.

Recommendation 12: Embassy Banjul should require the deputy chief of mission to retake the “How to be a Certifying Officer” course and pass the exam to be designated as the principal certifying officer for Embassy Banjul. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: The former deputy chief of mission has left post. This recommendation remains closed.

Recommendation 13: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs and the Office of the Legal Adviser, should review the life, safety, and liability issues associated with the use of the embassy boat and issue the results of the review in an embassy administrative notice. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with AF and L)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved Open

CFR Findings: Embassy Banjul has issued a management notice regarding use of the emergency evacuation boat for recreational purposes. The embassy requested guidance from the Office of the Legal Advisor, which cleared the policy. This recommendation is closed.

Recommendation 14: Embassy Banjul should review its policy on allowing employees to make personal local calls on cellular telephones and establish and implement a viable procedure for collecting reimbursements. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: Embassy Banjul issued a management notice on January 25, 2010 establishing a policy for mobile telephone usage. This policy notes that mobile telephones issued by the embassy are intended for official use only. "Personal use of government provided mobile phones is discouraged. International calls using the mobile telephone are only authorized when less expensive calling alternatives are not available. The reimbursement policy notes that the IMO is responsible for forwarding monthly bills over 400 Dalasi (about \$16) to the mobile phone holder, who is responsible for specifying which calls are personal and which official, and returning that bill to the IMO. The IMO then prepares bills of collection for personal calls, with payment due to the cashier within five working days. The CFR team found four unpaid bills with the cashier, dating from November 2009, three months before the CFR. One of the individuals owing money had departed post. The system for reviewing usage, gathering information on personal calls, and presenting bills to users is not working rapidly. This recommendation remains closed.

Recommendation 15: Embassy Banjul should establish and enforce a policy consistent with Department regulations that prohibits making long distance personal calls from government phones. (Action: Embassy Banjul)

Pre-CFR Status: Closed

CFR Findings: See the findings for Recommendation 14. This recommendation remains closed.

Recommendation 5: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should upgrade the Foreign Service national investigator's office building to meet 15-minute forced-entry/ballistic resistant standards (exterior door and window), replace the interior door to meet 15-minute forced-entry standards, and incorporate the newly designated refuge into posted guard orders and emergency plans. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with OBO)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved Open

CFR Findings: OBO stated that a compound security upgrade is tentatively scheduled for the end of FY 2010. This recommendation has been revised and reissued.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should replace the five thin wooden exterior doors in the embassy mission residence with ones that are manufactured with substantial material and can support appropriate security hardware. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with OBO)

Pre-CFR Status: Resolved Open

CFR Findings: Three of the six doors at the EMR are made of solid core mahogany wood and do not need to be replaced. The security inspector had the lock cores removed to observe the interior of the doors. Three of the remaining doors were of hollow core construction with multiple ply-wood inserts. One of the remaining doors had recently been replaced with a solid core door. Embassy Banjul was in the process of completing the purchase order for the remaining two doors. This recommendation is closed.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should request a visit by a representative from the security engineering office in Dakar to identify and repair the affected imminent danger notification system at the Peace Corps compound. (Action: Embassy Banjul, in coordination with DS)

(b) (2)(b) (2)(b) (2) (b) (2)(b) (2)

APPENDIX III STATUS OF 2009 INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Banjul should amend its reporting plan to focus resources, as far as practicable, on the activities of radical states in The Gambia; review of the country's eligibility under the Millennium Challenge Account; greater Gambian economic coordination with its neighbors; and the development of possible off-shore oil resources.

CFR Status: Subsequent embassy reports have covered these topics. This recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Banjul should arrange for the newly hired political-economic assistant to receive appropriate Foreign Service Institute political and public diplomacy training at an early opportunity.

CFR Status: The political-economic assistant received training. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Banjul should work with the Standard Chartered Bank branches that accept visa fees and applications and make appointments in a way that staggers appointment times so that applicants arrive throughout the morning and can be admitted without delay, rather than having to queue up outside the entrance.

CFR Status: This informal recommendation is closed under the CFR.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Banjul should update the per capita limits for reimbursement of representation claims.

CFR Status: Embassy issued a management notice on January 29, 2010 providing reasonable per capita limits for reimbursement of representation claims. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Banjul should issue an administrative procedure on the sale of personal property consistent with regulations.

CFR Status: The embassy issued a management notice dated February 1, 2010 regarding the sale of personal property that is consistent with U.S. Government guidance. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Banjul should update the post report.

CFR Status: Most portions of the post report on Embassy Banjul's web site have not been updated since 2004. The CFR is reissuing this former informal recommendation as a formal recommendation under the CFR.

Informal Recommendation 7: The International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council should hold regularly scheduled meetings.

CFR Status: The ICASS council in Banjul includes the Department and Peace Corps. The embassy held an ICASS council meeting on January 26, 2010, and has scheduled council meetings for April 27, July 27, and October 27, 2010. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Banjul should review International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards for each cost center and update them as necessary.

CFR Status: This recommendation has been superseded by the Department's establishment of world-wide uniform standards for cost centers. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Banjul should publicize the awards program and nomination procedures.

CFR Status: Embassy Banjul issued a management notice on November 4, 2009 providing information regarding awards and nomination procedures. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 10: Embassy Banjul should transfer responsibility to the principal timekeeper for consolidating the final time and attendance submission and employees.

CFR Status: The regional financial management officer from Embassy Dakar has verified that Embassy Banjul consolidated its timekeeper responsibilities under the management assistant. The regional FMO also noted that training for this individual would be appropriate, but not critical. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 11: Embassy Banjul should establish a policy on overtime and issue an administrative notice requiring that all overtime be approved in advance in accordance with Department regulations.

CFR Status: Embassy Banjul issued a management notice dated January 12, 2010 noting that all overtime work must be approved in advance, and that verification on the proper form must be provided after the overtime work has been completed. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 12: Embassy Banjul should develop and implement procedures to ensure that the deposits in the suspense deposit abroad account (19X6809) conform to Department regulations.

CFR Status: Embassy Banjul had no deposits in the SDA account at the time of the CFR. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 13: Embassy Banjul should seek to obtain bank account information from vendors to facilitate more electronic payments.

CFR Status: Local vendors do not frequently use electronic funds transfers, and although the embassy has tried to obtain routing numbers from local banks, they have had little success. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 14: Embassy Banjul should certify official long-distance telephone calls as required by Department regulations.

CFR Status: Embassy Banjul issued a management notice on January 29, 2010 noting that “careful attention should be given to limiting the number of personal phone calls made by embassy personnel.” The notice also stated that all payments of long distance telephone charges must be supported by a certification that the use of the telephone in such instances was necessary in the interest of the government. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 15: Embassy Banjul should negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the Dakar regional facility maintenance manager for one assistance visit per quarter.

CFR Status: The regional facility manager in Embassy Dakar has stated that he will locate a copy of an MOU and will discuss it with the DCM in Embassy Banjul. This informal recommendation is closed and a formal recommendation is being opened under the CFR.

Informal Recommendation 16: Embassy Banjul should implement its WebPASS motor pool application.

CFR Status: The embassy motor pool is using vehicle request forms generated by WebPASS/eServices. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 17: Embassy Banjul should perform a management control review of the expendable supply operation.

CFR Status: This informal recommendation is closed, and a management control review of the expendable supply operation is included under the CFR formal recommendation to complete a revised chief of mission management controls statement of assurance.

Informal Recommendation 18: Embassy Banjul should bring the dedicated Internet network into compliance with State Cable 166377, and patches and antivirus updates should be checked on a regular basis.

CFR Status: This informal recommendation is closed. The work station has been disconnected from the Internet.

Informal Recommendation 19: Embassy Banjul should develop individual training plans for the systems manager and computer operator to stay current on professional technical development.

CFR Status: The embassy has developed individual training plans for the two employees, and this recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 20: Embassy Banjul should develop and disseminate a policy on personal use of embassy telephones lines consistent with regulations.

CFR Status: Embassy Banjul issued a management notice on January 29, 2010 regarding personal use of embassy telephone lines. This informal recommendation is closed.

Informal Recommendation 21: Embassy Banjul should issue a cash advance to the alternate cashier in accordance with Department regulations.

CFR Status: At an ICASS council meeting on January 25, 2010, the council approved a voucher examiner position that will also serve as alternate cashier. There is not currently an alternate cashier with a cash advance. The regional FMO from Embassy Dakar is working with Embassy Banjul on this issue. This informal recommendation is closed.

FRAUD, WASTE, ABUSE, OR MISMANAGEMENT
of Federal programs
and resources hurts everyone.

Call the Office of Inspector General
HOTLINE
202-647-3320
or 1-800-409-9926
or email oighotline@state.gov
to report illegal or wasteful activities.

You may also write to:
Office of Inspector General
U.S. Department of State
Post Office Box 9778
Arlington, VA 22219
Please visit our Web site at:
<http://oig.state.gov>

Cables to the Inspector General
should be slugged "OIG Channel"
to ensure confidentiality.