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

# Report of Inspection

## Embassy Harare, Zimbabwe

Report Number ISP-I-10-61A, May 2010

### ~~IMPORTANT NOTICE~~

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

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



**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 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
CONTEXT .....	3
EXECUTIVE DIRECTION .....	5
Country Team Coordination.....	5
Connecting with the Mission .....	6
POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....	7
Interagency Cooperation on Foreign Assistance.....	7
The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.....	8
Democracy and Governance Programs .....	8
Political and Economic Reporting .....	9
Consular Operations .....	15
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.....	19
Management Overview.....	19
Financial Management.....	20
International Cooperative Administrative Support Services.....	21
Shared Services .....	22
Human Resources .....	23
General Services Office.....	25
Facilities Management.....	29
Communication and Customer Service .....	31
Information Management.....	31
QUALITY OF LIFE.....	35
Equal Employment Opportunity/Federal Women's Program .....	35
Community Liaison Office .....	35
<b>(b)(2)(b)(6)</b> .....	35
Medical Unit.....	36
Employee Association.....	36

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS . . . . . 39  
    Consular . . . . . 40  
LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . . 41  
INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . . 43  
PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS . . . . . 47  
ABBREVIATIONS . . . . . 49

## KEY JUDGMENTS

- The new Ambassador is admired by Washington end-users for his first round of reporting, sometimes gaining access to hitherto unavailable officials, as well as his strong public diplomacy skills. While morale is generally good, the Ambassador needs to give more attention to allowing his staff to know him better.
- The embassy to date has been able to support a dramatic increase in humanitarian assistance and other programs despite space and logistics challenges, but the Ambassador should provide more direction for these crucial programs, notably the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and governance.
- The deputy chief of mission (DCM) needs to tighten oversight of administrative operations. The management counselor should devote greater attention to his International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) responsibilities and exercise stronger and more transparent oversight of his section. The general services officer (GSO) deserves recognition for his progress in restoring management controls and providing needed services in a devastated local economy.
- Office space is inadequate. Embassy staff members work from five separate locations, including two commercial office buildings.
- Despite dysfunctional physical space, the well-led public affairs team conducts an effective program.
- Political reporting is solid, but more cooperation is needed between the political and economic section and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) governance unit.
- The consular unit is so well-trained and managed that it is able to assist colleagues in the region. It pays strict attention to complex travel sanctions, directed primarily at Zimbabwean officials.
- The regional security office conscientiously protects American and local staff in Harare's critical crime environment.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between January 4 and 24, 2010, and in Harare, Zimbabwe, between January 26 and February 5, 2010.

## CONTEXT



Zimbabwe, one of the most troubled countries in Africa, has been ruled by President Robert Mugabe since its independence in 1980. Zimbabwe showed great progress and promise in its first decade of independence, but extraordinary misrule in recent years has brought political turmoil and repression, economic hardship, and grave humanitarian crises. The country's per capita gross domestic product is now among the lowest in the world, according to the

*CLA World Factbook*. The dollarization of the economy in late 2008 and the advent of a coalition government in February 2009 helped bring hyperinflation under control and led to positive economic growth for the first time in a decade. But the once-productive commercial agricultural sector remains in ruin, public services such as power, water, and sanitation are crippled, and unemployment hovers near an astounding 90 percent. In addition, one in seven adults is infected with HIV/AIDS, the sixth highest infection rate in the world.

President Mugabe, 86, continues to be the driving force in Zimbabwe's politics, despite being pressured into signing a power sharing agreement, after numerous countries refused to recognize his legitimacy following violence-marred presidential elections in June 2008. The accord, known as the Global Political Agreement, led to the formation of the current coalition government. Mugabe remained president and his Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) retained key security and other positions; opposition leader Morgan Tsvangarai was named prime minister, and his Movement for Democratic Change was put in charge of several significant ministries, including finance. While economic conditions have improved, political progress has been scant, with President Mugabe failing to observe key conditions of the Global Political Agreement, maintaining a firm grip on the country's security apparatus, and continuing to harass and jail political opponents.

The United States welcomed Tsvangarai's appointment as Prime Minister. President Obama received him at the White House in June 2009 and reiterated U.S. support for him. U.S. relations with President Mugabe and his ZANU-PF remain strained. Sanctions bar him, his leadership cohort, and enterprises associated with them from using the U.S. banking system. U.S. citizens are effectively barred from doing business with them.

In addition, the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act of 2001 (S-494) bars the United States from supporting efforts by the World Bank and other international financial institutions to provide monetary assistance to the Zimbabwean Government. Except in rare cases, the United States does not provide direct assistance to the Zimbabwean Government.

Embassy Harare's primary missions are to support democratic change in Zimbabwe and to manage the growing humanitarian and HIV/AIDS relief efforts. The United States is the largest single provider of humanitarian and medical assistance to the Zimbabwean people. U.S. assistance exceeded \$300 million in 2009; the largest components were food aid under Public Law 480 and medical assistance under PEPFAR.

Embassy staff includes 52 U.S. direct-hires from the Department, USAID, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Department of Defense, as well as 212 locally employed (LE) staff. Mutual tension between President Mugabe and the United States, deteriorating public services, high crime, and crippling HIV/AIDS rates pose substantial challenges to embassy operations. Office space is inadequate. Embassy staff members work from five separate locations, including two commercial office buildings.

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The new Ambassador arrived in the midst of a changing political landscape, prompting him to press his embassy team to reexamine established views and practices. Presenting credentials in November 2009, he embarked on a wide variety of calls on Zimbabweans and foreign diplomats, opening doors that had been closed for many years. Washington end users welcomed the ensuing flood of fresh reporting. The Ambassador is supported by an outstanding DCM, who saw the post through the trials of 2007-08. The DCM enjoyed the support of the former ambassador and has quickly established a strong relationship with the present one.

## COUNTRY TEAM COORDINATION

The small country team is program-oriented, as discussed in the next section. The growing PEPFAR program would benefit from more particular attention from the Ambassador. In addition, the program would benefit from clarification of the newly hired PEPFAR coordinator's responsibilities and authorities.

The reporting agencies and sections work cooperatively with each other. Although the Ambassador oversees and contributes to reporting, he needs to insist that the political section and USAID share more fully with each other.

The Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) emphasizes governance and humanitarian assistance. It was rewritten drastically with the advent of the coalition government in February 2009, although the goals did not change. A Department official lauded the embassy for recognizing that change and writing about it. The Chief of Mission statement was termed excellent, Harare "being alone in presenting two scenarios in its Chief of Mission statement." Goal papers, the OIG team was told, were not good, and performance measures were inadequate. The Department will be following up.

## Focused on Next Generation

Public diplomacy deserves particular notice. Both the public affairs section (PAS) and the Ambassador have engaged each other productively. The Ambassador is a wonderful speaker and, more importantly, he is intent on engaging everyone in his

public diplomacy push to focus on the next generation of Zimbabweans. He has challenged old programs and obtained funding for innovative television and radio programs aimed at the emerging generation of leaders.

## CONNECTING WITH THE MISSION

While the Ambassador's early focus was on meeting Zimbabweans, it is time that he engages more deeply with his own personnel. Walk-arounds and brief conversations will help enormously, as one inspector saw when the Ambassador surprised the consular section with an unscheduled visit. The LE staff perked up instantly. Small town hall meetings with randomly selected employees might be a natural way for the Ambassador to connect with mission colleagues. During the inspection, he underlined the importance he attaches to creating an "environment free of abuse." He stated that "abusive behavior, whether verbal or physical, will not be tolerated."<sup>1</sup>

Morale is generally good. There are no reported Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues. Personnel grouse, sometimes justifiably, about the quality of services, with one striking exception: information management (IM). If an award were given to any embassy section, mission personnel would give it to the IM team; the OIG team concurs.

The regional security officer and the two assistant regional security officers know their business and enjoy the respect of the front office. The Ambassador met with police officials during the inspection, seeking to improve uniformed protection of the mission. The OIG team commends the regional security office for its concern for the well being of LE staff, many of whom have been terrorized by their own government or Harare's high crime. While regional security office first responders are carefully tuned to American needs, they also can provide help, where possible, to victimized LE staff members. Physical security is addressed in the classified annex to this report.

At this small post, the entry-level officers in the chancery have easy access to both the Ambassador and DCM. Mentoring is informal, but the Ambassador and DCM both might focus a little more attention on the needs articulated by the newer officers, including those at USAID and CDC. The OIG team was impressed by the quality and perceptiveness of junior personnel.

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<sup>1</sup> Memorandum from Ambassador Ray to Embassy Harare Staff. February 2, 2010

## POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The embassy's three principal goals at the time of the inspection were to promote democratic change in Zimbabwe, provide urgent humanitarian assistance, and operate robust and effective HIV/AIDS programs. Officers from the Department, USAID, and CDC all are involved in these endeavors. There is basic coordination among agencies, but also room for improvement. Embassy efforts to pursue these goals — all reflected in the MSP — take place in a context of sanctions against President Mugabe, his leadership circle, and related business, as well as limits on the type of assistance programs the embassy can pursue in Zimbabwe. Authoritative guidance from senior Department and interagency officials on these issues is infrequent, leaving embassy leadership and working-level officers at times uncertain of how best to direct their efforts.

### INTERAGENCY COOPERATION ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

U.S. foreign assistance to Zimbabwe has grown substantially over the last 5 years. In 2005, the United States provided roughly \$75 million in foreign assistance. In 2009, the United States budgeted \$310 million in assistance, two-thirds of it food and other humanitarian aid. While the United States is the largest single donor to Zimbabwe, significant restrictions apply. Direct financial assistance to the Government of Zimbabwe generally is prohibited, except for humanitarian aid and democracy and governance programs; most other programs that include direct assistance require waivers. The growth in assistance has created a need for greater Executive Office policy guidance to facilitate cooperation among the Department, USAID, and CDC. It also has created a need for additional administrative and security services, especially since USAID and CDC each have offices separate from the embassy compound.

The inspection team focused on coordination of the PEPFAR program, which involves primarily Department, USAID and CDC; and USAID's democracy and governance programs, which overlap with the Department's efforts to promote democratic change.

## THE PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY PLAN FOR AIDS RELIEF

Washington officials termed Zimbabwe's PEPFAR team "outstanding" and noted it worked under extremely challenging circumstances. PEPFAR programs in Zimbabwe had a budget of \$46 million in 2009, up from \$26 million in 2008. The majority of the 2009 funds went to USAID for projects involving prevention, treatment, and care, implemented by nongovernmental partners. CDC projects focus on providing equipment and training to Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health laboratories and to prevalence surveys. PAS is receiving \$200,000 in PEPFAR funds to expand public diplomacy support for the programs. The section works closely with both agencies and provides excellent support, according to Washington officials and embassy principals.

The embassy hired a PEPFAR coordinator in late 2009; she is scheduled to assume her duties in early 2010. Currently, the PEPFAR effort is co-managed by USAID and CDC. The DCM chairs a weekly meeting that includes representatives from USAID, CDC, and PAS. A representative from the Defense attaché's office also participates, although the Department of Defense does not currently engage in PEPFAR activities in Zimbabwe. The DCM has helped to settle disagreements over funding and programs, when USAID and CDC were unable to reach agreement. Officials from both USAID and CDC acknowledged some friction between the organizations, but said that major disputes ultimately were resolved. One participant in the weekly meetings described interagency cooperation as "a mixed bag."

The hiring of a new PEPFAR coordinator marks a significant management change. The duties will include serving as the embassy's liaison with the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator and facilitating coordination between USAID and CDC on the ground. Other issues — such as the coordinating role and interactions with the Ministry of Health — remain to be decided. Several officials involved with PEPFAR expressed uncertainty over the coordinator's specific duties and authorities. The inspection team left an informal recommendation that the Ambassador clarify these issues when the coordinator assumes her duties.

## DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE PROGRAMS

USAID's Office of Democracy and Governance and its Office of Transition Initiatives fund a variety of programs to promote democratic change in Zimbabwe. Beneficiaries include political parties, labor unions, women's groups, and civic orga-

nizations. Funding has grown significantly in recent years. In 2006, the budget for democracy and government programs was \$6 million. In 2009, funding for these and Office of Transition Initiatives programs totaled nearly \$35 million.

Although the goals of these programs dovetail with those of the political and economic section and PAS, the inspection team heard frequent references to inadequate coordination. Department officers said they had never received a comprehensive list of USAID governance projects, were unaware of the budget for such programs, and were rarely asked to comment on proposed projects. In some cases, they learned of programs from the press or outside contacts. At the same time, one USAID officer asserted that Department officers did not always keep USAID informed of their conversations with ministries involved in development.

The embassy coordinates democracy and governance issues through a weekly meeting that is chaired by the DCM and occasionally by the Ambassador. It is attended by the political and economic section, PAS, and USAID program officers. LE staff also attend. The inspection team was told that most weekly meetings include general but incomplete information-sharing; they do not address strategic issues or discuss individual programs in depth. One officer suggested that regular working level meetings between the Department and USAID would help, especially since their offices are not colocated. The inspection team left an informal recommendation addressing coordination.

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REPORTING

The combined political and economic section appropriately focuses on issues related to democratic development, including the progress of the coalition government; President Mugabe's compliance and noncompliance with promised democratic reforms; and human rights issues, including trafficking in persons. Washington consumers across agencies expressed satisfaction with embassy reporting. They cited comprehensive analyses of the coalition government's record, its budget priorities, and a report on the future of the ZANU-PF as examples of excellent reporting on policy-relevant issues. Reporting on human rights and trafficking in persons was cited as among the best anywhere. The section also oversees the drafting of ZimNotes, a weekly summary that is widely read in Washington. The section does little reporting on Zimbabwe's foreign relations. Analyses of the political situation outside Harare are infrequent but of high quality.

Washington consumers noted — and embassy officers acknowledge — that reporting often is based on contacts with reformist politicians, human rights organizations, and other nongovernmental organizations. Contact with President Mugabe's ZANU-PF is limited, as many party officials refuse to engage with embassy officers. The advent of the coalition government and the Ambassador's guidance to reach out to all parties have created a potential opening for embassy officers to broaden their contact base. The OIG's 2005 inspection of Embassy Harare noted the section's limited contact base. Changed conditions now may make it possible to address this issue successfully.

In addition to covering human rights, the section's entry-level officer monitors four sets of projects addressing human rights, trafficking in persons, refugees, and wildlife protection. Although her work receives high marks from the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, she has never received training in grants management and is not permitted to sign any grants herself. Lack of training has left her uncertain of how best to meet her responsibilities.

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of African Affairs, should provide the Foreign Service Institute's grants management course to the entry-level officer assigned to human rights, trafficking in persons, and refugee programs. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with HR and AF)

The political and economic section is well-managed. Officers get out of the office frequently, participate in public diplomacy events, and use representation funds appropriately. The three LE staff members work closely with officers as part of a team, receive adequate training, and have access to the section's representation funds.

## PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Despite its dysfunctional physical space, the PAS team conducts an effective program that includes educational advising, exchanges, library and Internet services, and public outreach. In his 18 months in Harare, the public affairs officer (PAO) has provided much needed leadership, teamwork, and structure to the PAS operation. The Ambassador has fully supported the PAO, including with a memo to all mission sections outlining a concrete and coherent message, listing specific public diplomacy

goals, and mandating that all activities include an MSP message component, focusing especially on young people and future leaders. The PAO has instituted a strategic planning and budgeting process that includes all PAS staff members. The PAO gives overall direction and empowers his American and LE staff to be creative in devising and managing programs to support MSP goals. He has worked with the assistant PAO and LE staff to develop individual training plans, and he has instituted a closer budget tracking system. Morale is high.

Despite a restrictive political environment, PAS is engaging younger audiences through its Educational Advising Center, cited by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs as a model; inventive use of new social media; targeted outreach to schools; and weekly discussion programs.

PAS will gain a third public diplomacy officer position in fall 2010. Sixty percent of the new officer's time will be spent on the new \$200,000 PEPFAR public diplomacy initiative. The rest will be divided among youth outreach, social media, and alumni coordination.

## Public Affairs Office Space

The current PAS space is dysfunctional. Located on the seventh floor of an office/shopping complex in the city center, maintenance and services have deteriorated. Internet access is inconsistent, there is no air conditioning or ventilation system, and electrical outages and water shortages are frequent. The popular Information Resource Center (IRC), one of the largest free public libraries in Zimbabwe, is cramped and accommodates only 38 persons at a time. On days when the IRC is open to the public, lines form outside PAS an hour before opening; only the first 38 people are admitted. Others must wait for a space.

The embassy has located a potential new site for PAS, in an office/shopping complex that is still under construction and situated in a convenient area, where building services promise to be better. The management officer has sent all relevant documents to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and is waiting for approval to proceed on this extremely important and necessary project.

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Bureau of African Affairs, and the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy's Office of Policy, Planning and Resources, should take steps to establish an appropriate new location for the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with DS, OBO, AF, and R)

## Information Resource Center

In a country with a failing educational system, the IRC is one of the largest free public libraries in the country, and the only one with free Internet access. Led by an experienced and well-respected LE staff director, the IRC targets its audiences according to MSP goals, to include: government officials, academics, librarians, members of civil society, student groups, and the media. Each IRC staff member keeps a contact list and tracks outreach efforts.

The IRC has implemented training programs for students and academics on Internet use. Recently, the IRC was approached by a group of blind students who had no access to a library or Internet. The IRC used the Job Access With Speech (JAWS) software program, which combines Braille and voice technology, to enable the students to access online courses offered by U.S. universities and other resources. The IRC director has been named to a special Zimbabwean Government advisory commission and is often called on for advice by librarians throughout Zimbabwe. The IRC receives excellent support from the regional information resource officer in Pretoria.

## Use of New Electronic and Social Media

PAS uses several forms of electronic communication to reach target audiences. It manages the mission's Web site, which receives more than 10,000 visits a month. The section also oversees two Facebook pages, which are populated with news stories, videos, links, and photos from mission events, as well as information about speaker programs and upcoming activities.

The Educational Advising Center's Facebook site includes lively question-and-answer sessions on key educational themes. With host country bandwidth limited, PAS communicates on its YouTube site with occasional videos and video links, which will increase if bandwidth access expands. The section also is testing Twitter to determine its potential for outreach opportunities.

PAS actively distributes recordings of the Ambassador's speeches and interviews to a wide range of interested media outlets, including the Voice of America, Studio 7, BBC and Radio Voice of the People, as well as Web sites. In 2010, the section also plans to produce pilot programs using short messaging service to reach alumni of U.S.-Zimbabwean exchange programs.

All mission public events, media presentations, etc., are branded with a clever and eye-catching U.S. Embassy Harare logo, designed by the PAS LE staff editor/graphic artist, who also creates attractive and innovative posters, flyers, announcements, brochures, and electronic communications to publicize mission events.

## Exchange Programs and Cultural Activities

PAS has maintained its educational exchange programs in a difficult environment. Schools and universities were closed for most of 2009 due to post-election related violence and a cholera epidemic. In addition, teachers, principals, and administrators in government-run institutions are subject to intimidation for cooperating with the U.S. embassy. In January 2010, PAS reached a formal agreement with the Minister of Education that allows the section access to government educational institutions. For a long time, the embassy has sent Zimbabwean Fulbright grantees to the United States. After a year's suspension in 2009, American Fulbright scholars will resume studying and teaching in Zimbabwe in summer 2010.

PAS is making a deliberate effort to extend the search for International Visitor Leadership Program to candidates outside of Harare, and to women and minorities. For the first time in recent years, the embassy has invited a moderate ZANU-PF member of parliament to participate in the visitors program. The International Visitor Leadership Program committee has wide participation throughout the embassy.

PAS has increased the number of U.S. speakers visiting Zimbabwe since the coalition government took office last year. The section uses American Foreign Services officers and local experts to conduct discussions for a student book club and the PAS' weekly "Food for Thought" program. Taking advantage of every possible cultural program offered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, PAS has maximized cultural programs as an effective way to reach out to audiences and engage with people in a nonpolitical way.

## Embassy Speakers' Bureau

Several years ago, PAS had an ad hoc program of local speakers. A formal speaking program was unfeasible, due to Zimbabwe's political turmoil and poor security, so the section developed a less formal approach featuring a "speaker of opportunity." Over the past year, 16 American officers from various sections and agencies have participated in 43 speaking events. The program has addressed such topics as U.S. elections, military service in a democratic society, human rights, women's health, African-American literature, and U.S. foreign policy in Zimbabwe. PAS markets outreach opportunities and recruits speakers by making announcements at both weekly senior

staff and monthly all-staff meetings; distributing electronic invitations to officers; and distributing a monthly calendar of events that includes speaking opportunities. The inspection team left an informal recommendation that the embassy establish a formal speakers' bureau.

## Educational Advising Center

In 2009, for the first time ever, the Educational Advising Center reached 30,000 inquiries about advising services. The center director has developed ways to engage prospective students, teachers, and advisors on the subject of education in the United States, with extraordinary results. The U.S. Student Achievers Program, which the center director created 10 years ago, has been replicated in 14 countries around the world to provide training and funding for high-achieving students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This year, 20 Zimbabwean participants in the program won full scholarships to U.S. colleges and universities. An expert on Zimbabwean education, the center director has drafted a series of analytic cables on the state of the educational sector and helped develop a strategy that succeeded in gaining \$100,000 in books for secondary school students from USAID.

## Grants

PAS Harare was cited in the 2005 OIG inspection for lax oversight of its grants, many of which were not tied to MSP goals. All grants now are monitored and entered into the grants database management system. The embassy financial management officer certifies the availability of funds before the grants officers (who are the PAO and assistant PAO) sign the grant documents. Procedures to prevent unauthorized commitments are in place. In the case of one accidental unauthorized commitment, the case was reported and ratified by the Office of the Procurement Executive. The PAS staff member in error was counseled and trained in how to avoid unauthorized commitments. The PAO requested additional information on procurement procedures from the general services officer (GSO), briefed all PAS staff members on procedures, and distributed written instructions.

## Press Section

Although much of the media in Zimbabwe is government-controlled and hostile to the United States, PAS cultivates relationships with journalists and editors, and it has a good record for media coverage of the Ambassador's public appearances, as well as USAID and CDC activities, all of which prominently display the U.S. Embassy Harare logo. The section conducts regular media roundtables with the Ambassa-

dor and other American officers on topical issues. While the government TV station has been very negative toward the United States, this year, for the first time, it has agreed to broadcast the PAS video series “Legends of Jazz.”

## American Corners

PAS operates American Corners in two large cities in the eastern and western areas of the country. In the past, these centers suffered from insufficient attention, partly due to PAS staffing conditions and the difficulty of travel. However, the current PAO has begun to revitalize them, gaining \$20,000 in FY 2009 funding to maintain the collections, upgrade equipment, train local coordinators, and fund programs.

## Performance Measurement and the Mission Activity Tracker

The PAO uses social research methods to develop predeparture and post-program questionnaires for International Visitor Leadership Program and Hubert Humphrey participants. Questions track increases in knowledge of American values of pluralism and democracy, civil society, U.S. press freedom, and the role of the media. Program results tracked in the Mission Activity Tracker (MAT) are up-to-date. According to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, PAS Harare is one of the best Mission Activity Tracker reporting posts in Africa.

## CONSULAR OPERATIONS

Embassy Harare’s consular section expertly addresses consular policy and functional issues and provides fast professional services. The consul exercises explicit functional and managerial supervision. He maintains rigorous training standards. Coordination with other embassy sections is first rate. Performance and morale are high.

### Overview

Safeguarding American citizens is the embassy’s most important consular objective, but visa programs consume most consular resources. Two restrictions, discussed below, regulate specific Zimbabwean nationals’ travel to the United States. The sensitive nature of their visa applications requires meticulous analysis and processing. The consul emphasizes lawful and fair eligibility adjudication in dealing with these and other visa requests.

Two full-time and one half-time Foreign Service officers, an eligible family member (EFM), and four LE staff members work in the consular section. Position descriptions are accurate, and evaluation reports are completed on time. During FY 2009, all LE staff members completed at least two consular study courses. Several attended consular classes outside Zimbabwe. Every week, the consul leads a tightly focused training session targeting specific consular issues, ranging from policy implementation to nuts-and-bolts tradecraft. Staffers are thus equipped, and readily volunteer, to assist neighboring missions when they need consular backup. The embassy Web site provides links to accurate information on consular services, including provincial travel. Staffing is adequate to deal with the current workload.

## American Citizen Services

About 2,500 U.S. citizens, of whom approximately 500 reside in Zimbabwe, are registered with the American citizen services unit. The unit believes that some U.S. citizens have not registered. About 600 Americans visit Zimbabwe at any given time. During FY 2009, the unit processed several death cases, 150 passport requests, 100 other passport services, and 12 consular reports of birth.

Despite these relatively small numbers, the country's recent history underlines the need for an efficient emergency notification system for Americans and plans for their safety and evacuation. Relations with relevant government agencies are strained, due to political tensions. Government authorities fail to give consular notification of arrests or detentions of Americans and deny rapid consular access. Zimbabwe's poor infrastructure makes contact with Americans, U.S. citizen visits to the embassy, and basic medical care extremely challenging. The consular and other embassy sections, in concert with other foreign missions, have sought to improve access, without much success. The consular section's well-organized warden system, outreach, and consular emergency plan address these issues well.

## Visa Sanctions

Presidential Proclamation 7524 of February 22, 2002, suspends entry into the United States of persons responsible for actions that threaten Zimbabwe's democratic institutions and transition to a multiparty democracy. Section 212(f) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 United States Code paragraph 1182 (f)) is the technical condition applicable to this Presidential Proclamation. Executive Order 13391, of November 23, 2005, imposes sanctions on the property and economic assets of certain Zimbabwean Government officials deemed responsible for undermining Zimbabwe's democratic institutions. A Department of the Treasury Foreign Assets Controls register composed from various sources identifies these people.

Visa eligibility must be considered in terms of Presidential Proclamation 7524 and Executive Order 13391. The Immigration and Nationality Act (8 United States Code § 1182 (f)) requires advisory opinions on all Zimbabwean visa candidates with possible Section 212(f) ineligibilities. Every Zimbabwean diplomatic and international organization visa applicant must undergo a visa advisory opinion evaluation. Visas may be granted if the Department finds that issuance would not harm U.S. interests. In FY 2009, the visa unit, which rigorously vets applicants, doubled the number of individuals recommended for visa ineligibility under terms of Presidential Proclamation 7524.

The visa unit seeks information and coordinates with all other embassy sections and agencies, as well as Washington bureaus, to do this work. Besides checking the Foreign Assets Controls list, it creates dossiers, prepares advisory opinion requests, and forwards the material to the Bureau of Consular Affairs' Advisory Opinions Division, which evaluates the request and issues an opinion on the applicant's visa eligibility. A reply may take a few weeks to 6 months. This effort requires the unit's attention to detail, careful coordination, and continuing dialogue with visa candidates, as well as with those involved in assessing the application.

The visa unit adjudicated about 230 immigrant and 5,100 nonimmigrant visa applications in FY 2009. Applications from asylum seekers doubled in FY 2009; about 110 people applied. Estimates for FY 2010 project slight overall increases for all visa-related categories.

## Antifraud Activity

Sixty percent of first-time applicants fail to qualify for visitor visas. The overall refusal rate for all nonimmigrant visa candidates is about 45 percent. Work is hindered by endemic fraud, especially in petition-based applications, student qualifications, employment claims, and asylum requests. Pervasive civil service corruption makes official documents unreliable; illicit vendors can provide just about any document. The consular section recently discovered sharp increases in the number of fraudulent civil documents produced on genuine official blank forms, complete with authentic seals. A full-time EFM verifies information and investigates suspicious cases, but security and political constraints limit the opportunities to look into cases outside Harare.

## Visas Viper Program

Embassy Harare's Visas Viper process meets Department standards 9 FAM 40.37. The committee meets monthly, as required.

## Consular Space

The consular section, adjacent to the chancery's main entrance, is cramped. Wheelchair users need assistance to enter the waiting room, which seats about 20 applicants. Employees must pass through the waiting room to enter their workspace, a condition that will be addressed in the embassy's upcoming security upgrade.

Although the office space is awkward, it is adequate for current staff levels.

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding FY 2009 (in USD)
Department – Diplomatic and Consular Programs	22	0	25	47	\$2,453,600
Department – ICASS	8	3	81	92	6,234,300
Department – Public Diplomacy	2	0	15	17	782,200
Department – Diplomatic Security	2	2	15	19	1,233,857
Department – Marine Security	6	0	4	10	150,197
Department – Representation					28,400
Department – Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations	1	0	0	1	930,904
Defense Attaché Office	3	0	1	4	131,716
USAID <sup>1</sup>	6	2	49	57	114,999,000
CDC	2	0	22	24	2,229,600
<b>Totals</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>\$129,173,774</b>

<sup>1</sup>Includes \$112 million in program funding.

### MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

The OIG team inspected embassy management against Department standards, but nothing has been standard in Zimbabwe since 2007. While the country has regained some normalcy, management officers and staff have coped with shortages of

fuel, water, electricity, and food. The economy runs on cash, not checks or electronic transfers. Thousands of skilled workers have fled the country. Thousands of others have died of HIV/AIDS.

The current management officer arrived in September 2008, when the embassy was trying to maintain operations amid economic and political upheaval. The LE staff was especially hard hit by the problems afflicting Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, while the mission worked to keep water and electricity flowing and the embassy up-and-running, normal operating policies, procedures, and management controls suffered. The current management officer inherited an operation beset by serious problems in almost all offices—the primary exception being IM, which he and his staff are still in the process of fixing.

A number of issues — inadequate LE staff, lack of ICASS funds to hire new employees, and excessive overtime — still affect several sections, but the management office has yet to take firm control of these and other issues. The individual section heads often discuss issues among themselves, but without guidance and decisions from the management officer, the problems will persist.

OIG interviews and personal questionnaires highlighted problems in getting items approved by the management office, as well as the slow pace in answering emails. It can take an extraordinary amount of time — up to 9 months, in one case — to get management policies through the clearance process and issued. Numerous management policies are several years outdated.

The DCM holds weekly meetings with the management officer. Given continued management problems, the inspection team informally recommended that the DCM expand the weekly meeting with the management officer to include more frequent meetings with the management section heads.

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Embassy Harare's financial management unit is doing an acceptable job providing services to its ICASS customers. An American officer, on his fourth tour as a financial management officer and second tour in Harare, supervises eight LE staff members. The unit was responsible for FY 2009 Department allotments of approximately \$11.8 million. The financial management unit provides financial services to the Defense attaché office and CDC.

The 2009 ICASS Customer Satisfaction Survey results were mixed, compared to the Bureau of African Affairs and worldwide averages. When scores from the last five surveys are compared, four of the five financial operations measured began a steady decrease in 2007. Payrolling is the only operation that has not shown lower scores.

With the assistance of a Bureau of African Affairs rover from the Paris Financial Support and Training Office, who visited the embassy 2 months before the OIG team arrived, the financial management unit prepared well for the inspection. The financial management officer corrected procedural shortcomings identified by the rover, including reorganization of the financial management unit to bring it in line with regulations.

The class B cashier is experienced, knowledgeable, and well-trained. Cashier operations are conducted in accord with the Cashier User's Guide financial management procedures and requirements, a point underscored during a Paris Financial Support and Training Office visit in January 2009 to review cashier operations. Monthly and quarterly subcashier reconciliations are performed as required by 4 FAH-397.2-3. The cashier's advance is \$1.1 million and is denominated in U.S. dollars. Following Zimbabwe's transition to a U.S. dollar, cash-based economy, the bulk of vendor payments and LE staff salaries are paid in cash.

The cashier's office, located at the entrance of the financial management unit, becomes exceptionally crowded on paydays. There is a small space in the general services office that the bank uses whenever it delivers cash; the cashier could use this space on paydays. The inspection team informally recommended that the management section and regional security office determine the feasibility of the cashier using this small office space.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES

The embassy's ICASS council includes representatives of the Department, USAID, CDC, and the Department of Defense. The council is chaired by the Department's representative, the consular section chief. The council meets on a regular basis, but minutes are available for only two of the four meetings held in 2009. During one of the unrecorded meetings, an agency's workload count was modified without an understanding of the ramifications for other agencies. This impromptu meeting was called during the absence of the ICASS council chair and the manage-

ment officer. It is unclear who called the meeting, because no records were kept. The OIG inspection team informally recommended that the embassy keep minutes of all meetings, and avoid impromptu meetings.

The council did not fulfill its responsibility to provide input to the management officer's employee evaluation report. The inspection team made an informal recommendation to correct that oversight.

Despite guidance from the Department, Embassy Harare has not established an ICASS budget committee. The inspection team informally recommended that Embassy Harare establish a post budget committee. Due to the size of the embassy, the council and the budget committee may be identical.

Embassy Harare prepares its ICASS budget using ICASS Lite but is slowly moving to "Lite++." Now may be the time for Embassy Harare to switch to ICASS Standard to take advantage of its increased capabilities. The inspection team informally recommended that Harare's financial management unit prepare an analysis highlighting the differences between Lite and Standard, and present it to the ICASS council for decision.

In its October 2009 meeting, the ICASS council approved six new general services office positions. At its next meeting, it is scheduled to decide whether to approve up to 16 new maintenance positions, a step designed to reduce embassy overtime, which cost a total of \$306,300 in FY 2009 and is approaching \$100,000 in the first 4 months of FY 2010. Inaction on the part of the management section in deciding its hiring priorities for the maintenance section will result in additional overtime costs and a reduction in reprogrammable funding. The inspection team informally recommended that the management section meet without delay to decide its hiring priorities.

The management officer told the OIG inspection that he will be taking a more active role in meeting his responsibility as the ICASS service provider. That role had fallen to the ICASS council chair and the financial management officer.

## SHARED SERVICES

Embassy Harare's last, full rightsizing review, dated February 6, 2005, was drafted in anticipation of a new embassy compound being completed in 2010. However, deteriorating conditions in Zimbabwe ultimately led to an economic crisis, which resulted in the new embassy compound being postponed until 2014.

Postponement of the new embassy compound delayed the Department–USAID management consolidation. Harare was to have completed its consolidation planning by December 31, 2009, but was granted an extension to February 26, 2010. Notwithstanding that extension, consolidation must take place by the end of the fiscal year, unless additional waivers are granted.

USAID’s executive officer and the Department’s management officer have developed a good working relationship and have held several meetings about the consolidation. As a further step, the inspection team informally recommended that working groups be established to develop plans for consolidating each of the 13 management support services.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

Embassy Harare’s human resources (HR) unit’s 2009 scores for both American personnel and LE staff services were below bureau and worldwide averages. In addition, when compared to its scores for the 2005 through 2008 surveys, 2009’s scores are below those of all years, except for ratings given to LE staff services in 2005. However, the recently arrived HR officer is making a concerted effort to improve the unit’s services, and the 2010 ICASS Customer Satisfaction Survey, currently underway, should reflect this.

The American HR officer supervises a small staff of one EFM position (currently vacant) and two LE staff positions.

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(b) (7)(C)(b) (7)(C)(b) (7)(C) The HR officer, who also has regional responsibilities for Embassy Lilongwe, is certified for performing computer-aided job evaluations. The new HR specialist will attend the 8-week Human Resources Management course to earn computer-aided job evaluations certification this summer.

The evaluation process is well-managed. All the American staff work requirements statements, and all the LE staff employee performance reports were completed on a timely basis. Although the use of ePerformance is optional for overseas Foreign Service members for the 2009-10 cycle, the embassy is encouraging its use.

The awards program functions appropriately, with 137 incentive awards given in the past 12 months, including group awards. Awards are agency-wide and, to ensure fairness, employees must wait 1 year before receiving another award.

Training is an embassy priority, although only \$19,100 in ICASS funding currently is budgeted for this. To compensate, the embassy has developed a robust training program using FSI distance learning.

Transparency, especially with respect to salaries and benefits, was a main issue in the OIG team's introductory meeting with the mission's LE staff, as well as in its meeting with the LE staff committee. When asked whether the LE staff members provided input into the annual LE staff compensation questionnaire disseminated by the Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Overseas Employment, the universal answer was, "No." The inspection team informally recommended that the embassy seek the LE staff committee's input in completing its next LE staff compensation questionnaire.

## Locally Employed Staff Committee

The OIG team met with the LE staff committee, which represents all embassy LE staff members. The committee, which includes representatives from the Department, USAID, and CDC, meets monthly with the management counselor and HR officer. Committee members said that although most LE staff members had met the new Ambassador during his visits to the various mission offices, the LE staff as a group had not met with him. The inspection team informally recommended that the Ambassador hold periodic town hall meetings with the LE staff.

The OIG team was impressed with the committee's grasp of short- and long-term issues. These include medical and funeral benefits, security, salaries, career development, awards, and respect. The committee requested that the LE staff be considered for a "unique conditions of work" allowance.

According to the committee, under the embassy's self-insured medical plan, base plan benefits are capped below prevailing practice and are limited to doctors and hospitals in Zimbabwe. Embassy management is aware of these two concerns and is conducting a survey of comparators. The committee also stated that, in Zimbabwe, the cultural practice is for an employer to cover all burial costs for a deceased employee, but that the embassy's funeral benefit is much less than the actual cost of the funeral, presenting a financial hardship to the employee's family.

LE staff members have remained loyal embassy employees, despite the real dangers they face by working for the United States in Zimbabwe. They are subject to hostility and harassment from security services. Some have been beaten and jailed. They told the inspection team that the embassy's proposed policy of sending photos of the employee and family members to doctors in the embassy medical plan can

expose them and their families to added risks, should the host government obtain those photos. Instead, they said, the doctors could rely on embassy identification to confirm identities. Inspectors raised this issue with the regional security officer.

Culturally, Zimbabweans are very polite and greetings are very important, but they stated that some American staff do not greet the LE staff members. The inspection team informally recommended that a Zimbabwean cultural segment be included in the mission's American newcomer orientation.

## GENERAL SERVICES OFFICE

Since the arrival of a new and experienced GSO in October 2008, the general services unit has made great progress bringing the office up to Department standards. The GSO has systematically reenergized the staff, set up procedures and systems to improve operations and provide more accountability, reinstated management controls, and begun rebuilding each section from the ground up. The general services office staff is often underappreciated for their efforts. More remains to be done, but they deserve to be commended for the strides they have made.

Overall ICASS satisfaction results for the general services office dropped in February 2009 from the previous years, perhaps because of stricter management controls and the ongoing rebuilding efforts. Some agencies continue to report delays in the services they request from the GSO. It is not yet clear whether continued changes in the office will reflect positively on upcoming survey results. Although ICASS service standards are posted clearly throughout the general services office, they are out of date. Updated standards were written in October 2009, but these have yet to be approved and posted. The OIG inspection team made an informal recommendation regarding this issue.

### Procurement

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The office was in disarray. There were minimal procurement files, and those that did exist were incomplete. Procurements were not competed, there were numerous unauthorized obligations, and required Department reports were inaccurate and incomplete. An experienced EFM, who was working in another section, was transferred quickly to the procurement section to handle end-of-year procurements and begin rebuilding the section. A second staff member was added in spring 2009. At

Embassy Harare's request, Embassy Pretoria sent procurement specialists to provide temporary duty support to the section. The procurement section now follows Department procedures. The number of unauthorized obligations has dropped dramatically, although the problem has yet to be eliminated. Files are properly documented. However, complaints about delays in procurement continue.

Buying products and services in Zimbabwe can be labor intensive and time consuming. Many vendors do not have telephones or faxes, cell phone connectivity is unreliable, and few companies have email. Visiting the vendors in person is often the only way to finalize a purchase. Also, while some companies have bank accounts and can be paid by electronic funds transfer, most still are paid in cash by the cashier, which requires the procurement staff to escort them within the embassy. The two procurement employees handled 1,700 procurements in FY 2009, and they are working to close out open files from FY 2007 and FY 2008. They also plan to issue four formal contract solicitations this year (they currently have none.) The ICASS council has approved hiring two additional procurement staff members, but funding is yet to be found for these and other general services office positions. The current EFM procurement specialist is scheduled to depart post in summer 2011. Without additional, trained staff, the section will be unable to maintain its current level of operations, and service will begin to deteriorate.

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should fund the additional locally employed staff positions approved by the post International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council in October 2009. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with AF)

## Motor Pool Operations

Embassy Harare has 15 embassy drivers: nine assigned to ICASS, three to the Marine security guards, two to the Chief of Mission, and one to the DCM. USAID and CDC operate separate motor pools. The embassy has 59 vehicles including water and fuel trucks, in addition to the normal vans, sedans, and warehouse trucks. The motor pool provides (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6) twice weekly water delivery to Department and ICASS houses, and regular diesel fuel deliveries for generators at embassy houses. As the DCM uses her driver infrequently, this position would be more effective if it were made part of the overall motor pool.

When the GSO arrived, the current motor pool supervisor had not received training in either motor pool operations or supervisory skills. The post had a trans-

portation policy, but it was not enforced. Embassy staff members were not charged for nonofficial use of government vehicles. Weekend use of official vehicles was a common occurrence. Motor pool staff did not know how to use the Integrated Logistics Management System reporting and tracking programs. Vehicles were not maintained, and accidents were not reported. The GSO arranged for the Embassy Pretoria motor pool supervisor to visit Harare to set up and help train staff on proper accountability procedures and programs. Motor pool records are now up-to-date and appear accurate; embassy staff is charged appropriately for using official vehicles; and the motor pool is organized and well-run.

The motor pool supervisor has received basic supervisory skills training, but still needs Smith safety training, which is an important component of motor pool operations. The OIG inspection team made an informal recommendation regarding this issue.

## Housing

Almost without exception, American employees stated in their personal questionnaires that they were satisfied with their housing; some said it was the best they had occupied in the Foreign Service. However, when the current GSO arrived, 21 of the embassy's 31 residential and functional leases had expired (although the embassy was continuing to pay the landlords). Renegotiating these leases was a daunting task, especially as all of the houses were already occupied by embassy staff, and it is difficult to find new housing that meets American standards in Harare. All residential leases have now been renegotiated, almost all on acceptable terms, and only one functional lease has yet to be completed. Reports are up-to-date and complete, and most, though not all, embassy staff members have signed their housing inventories.

A number of embassy employees expressed concern in their personal questionnaires over the transparency of decisions made by the Interagency Housing Board. The board met five times in 2009. The GSO was unavailable to attend three meetings, including the meeting during which the majority of the houses were assigned for the upcoming transfer season. The management officer attended only two meetings. Housing board members have yet to receive an orientation on the Department's housing program and how it works at the embassy. The inspection team informally recommended that the meetings should be held only when the management officer and GSO are available.

The approval by the front office of an embassy officer's housing appeal, after it had been denied by the Interagency Housing Board, cast a shadow over the housing assignment process, according to personal questionnaires and interviews at post.

Embassy management is in the process of reconstituting the board, which should help allay staff concerns about favoritism, while ensuring that all groups, sections, and agencies are represented.

## Property Management and Warehouse

The Department and ICASS warehouse is located approximately 20 minutes from the chancery, on a 6-acre plot that the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the embassy are in the process of purchasing. The warehouse is clean and fairly well-organized, but shelving is old and the space is not always well used. There are separate, locked areas for receiving and for small, pilferable items and motor vehicle parts, plus a separate, locked area for expendable supplies. The regional security office, IM office, and consular section share one large, locked cage that could be divided into separate areas for each office. There are also approximately 15 shipping containers outside the building that are used for storage, and another two vented shipping containers in a separate area where flammable materials are stored. Some flammable materials remain in the warehouse but are being moved to these outside containers.

The GSO has proposed buying new shelving when money becomes available, which should help improve space utilization and allow the staff to bring into the building some of the items now being stored in shipping containers.

A spot check of expendable supplies and nonexpendable furniture and furnishings shows that the staff is keeping accurate records, with only one discrepancy (an overage) found. However, the staff has received no formal training in using the Nonexpendable Property Accountability (NEPA) inventory system, which tracks furniture and furnishings. Four warehouse staff members transferred or quit in summer 2009. Three of these positions now have been filled. Two staff members have signed up for Nonexpendable Property Accountability training, which will help to ensure that the inventories are properly maintained and recorded.

## Shipping, Customs, and Travel

The shipping section works closely with Embassy Pretoria, as the majority of shipments received by Embassy Harare come through the port in Durban, South Africa, and then are trucked to Zimbabwe. This convoluted route means shipments can be delayed either in Durban or at the Zimbabwean border. Embassy Harare uses its own expeditors in Durban and at the border with South Africa, and receives good support from Embassy Pretoria, all of which helps reduce delays. Embassy travel is

handled by a subcontractor to the Department's travel provider. The contractor is familiar with U.S. Government travel regulations. All travel reservations are approved by the GSO before tickets are issued, to ensure compliance with regulations. A sampling of the travel and shipping files showed them to be complete.

## FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The facilities manager arrived in August 2008 and found a similar situation to that in the general services office: files were incomplete or nonexistent, recommendations from the Safety Health and Environmental Management and fire inspections had not been followed, numerous work orders were pending, and few safety inspection or preventive maintenance procedures were in place.

Upon arrival, the facilities manager, who has twice been named the Department's Post Occupational Safety and Health Officer of the Year, began revamping maintenance and safety procedures. He has ensured that everything is documented and that records are meticulously kept. The facilities manager has started a preventive maintenance program that has reduced the number of emergency work orders and has instituted an annual safety inspection of all embassy-owned and leased houses. While some complaints continue about the slow pace of responding to work orders, the section has made commendable progress over the past 18 months regarding fire, safety, and preventive maintenance.

The improvements, however, have come about through the extensive use of overtime and casual labor. In the past, the embassy hired contractors to do much of its maintenance work. In the wake of the economic collapse, most of the contractors upon whom the embassy had relied for much of its maintenance work have disappeared. While a few contractors are available now, their reliability and work quality often are lacking. This has forced the maintenance section to bring much of their work in-house, even though no new facilities employees have been hired to handle the extra work. According to the MSP, in many areas the size of the ICASS LE staff is half the average for the Bureau of African Affairs. The monies used to pay for maintenance overtime and casual labor (\$160,000 in FY 2009) would be better spent on hiring permanent staff. The proposal to make this change is scheduled for discussion at the next ICASS council meeting.

The facilities maintenance section keeps minimal expendable supplies on hand, forcing employees to spend up to 90 minutes per person, per day, locating and purchasing supplies they need to complete work orders. With 11 technicians on staff, this means as much as 80-plus hours per week spent tracking down supplies.

If adequate expendable supplies were kept on hand, the section could gain the work time equivalent of two full-time employees per week, which could be spent handling at least some of what is now done on overtime.

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Harare should implement a plan to purchase and maintain an adequate stock of expendable supplies needed by the facilities maintenance staff. (Action: Embassy Harare)

Despite the facilities manager's emphasis on the safety of the embassy offices and houses, the Safety, Health and Environmental Management committee has not met in the past 18 months. Department regulation 15 FAM 923 requires that this committee meet regularly.

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Harare should establish and implement a schedule for the Safety, Health and Environmental Management committee to meet regularly to address safety and related issues. (Action: Embassy Harare)

**Best Practice: Maintenance Emergency Magnet**

**Issue:** Embassy staff members often are confused about what constitutes a maintenance emergency, versus what is an issue that can wait until the next day.

**Response:** Embassy Harare's facilities maintenance section has printed refrigerator magnets explaining what constitutes a maintenance emergency. In addition to providing a list of emergencies, it includes the correct emergency contacts, with both daytime and after-hours phone numbers.

**Result:** The number of false emergency maintenance calls has dropped tremendously, and employee staff members are more aware of which issues need immediate attention.

## COMMUNICATION AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

A weakness in both the general services office and the facilities maintenance office involves communication, not only with the customer but with their counterparts in the other office. Each office has an LE staff member handling customer service, but communication between the two offices could be better. Both the GSO and the facilities manager have focused on putting proper procedures in place and improving the quality of the services their respective offices provide. It is now time to focus on improving communication between the two offices themselves, and between these offices and the rest of the embassy staff. While the facilities manager and GSO are in different offices, their work is intertwined; the only way to ensure that customers receive the service they require is for the offices to work more closely together. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to this effect.

## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Embassy Harare's information technology staff is one of the most highly rated in Africa, according to ICASS surveys. It operates a thorough and cohesive IM program, including systems security requirements. It provides support to approximately 60 Americans and more than 200 LE staff members. This section is responsible for more than 100 OpenNet and 20 ClassNet computer workstations and 15 associated servers, as well as the radio, telephone, switchboard, and classified and unclassified pouch operations.

American staffing consists of the IM officer, an information programs officer, an information systems officer, and an IM assistant. The IM assistant position was filled by an American EFM after the post lost an IM position to Iraq staffing in the summer of 2008. Two radio/telephone technicians, three mailroom staff members, and one telephone operator round out the rest of the IM LE staff.

### Information Systems

The information programs officer performs informational security duties regularly and efficiently. The information systems officer acts as the alternate. The section has proper standard operating procedures and systems documentation, and it performs required random checks of files. Both the information programs officer and information systems officer have received adequate training. The entire section

provides server maintenance and user support, and it ensures that Department regulations are followed. A regional computer security officer visited Harare in 2009 and provided many housekeeping recommendations, which the post has adopted.

## Harare Alternate Route of Communications

Before the inspection team departed Washington, the Bureau of African Affairs advised that the embassy's alternate communications path, to be used during an emergency, is unreliable. During the inspection, the team learned that extra bandwidth had recently been approved for the alternate route. The Diplomatic Telecommunication Service Program Office is in the process of funding this upgrade. Once completed, the Harare alternate path will be sufficiently more robust.

## Harare Bandwidth Issue

Harare suffers from inadequate bandwidth. As a result, embassy staff members find it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to use BNET, digital videoconferencing, the Integrated Logistics Management System, the Foreign Service Institute's online training programs, and certain Department-wide consular and financial applications.

**Recommendation 6:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should increase the bandwidth on the Embassy Harare primary data network connection, so that bandwidth is adequate to meet the needs of the embassy staff. (Action: IRM)

## General Services Office Warehouse and Public Affairs Section Telephone Systems

The embassy compound, general services office warehouse, and PAS office use separate telephone systems. The PAS office has a telephone system that uses individual trunk lines for incoming and outgoing calls. The general services office warehouse does not even have its own telephone system, using only individual telephone lines at each employee's desk. Neither location has embassy extension capabilities, nor can they use the International Voice Gateway. The overall result is increased calling costs and unreliable telecommunications.

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management and the Regional Information Management Center in Pretoria, should purchase and install embassy-compatible phone switches at the general services office warehouse and the public affairs section office. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with IRM and RIMC Pretoria)

## Obsolete Equipment

The inspection team learned that there is a large amount of obsolete IM equipment at the general services office warehouse, including computers, monitors, keyboards, and uninterrupted power supplies. The inspection team was shown more than 50 damaged cell phones. Damaged or obsolete material should be sold or disposed of regularly. The inspection team made an informal recommendation that the IM section dispose of excess equipment on a regular basis.



# QUALITY OF LIFE

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY/FEDERAL WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Employees rated mission Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) sensitivity as positive on their workplace and quality of life questionnaires. The EEO counselor, who completed the required training program in September 2008, stated that no employees have registered formal EEO complaints since she assumed her duties. Embassy Harare selected and trained a local employee to provide EEO-type services to LE staff, as authorized by 98 State 192346. The Federal Women's Program coordinator told inspectors that no one had requested her assistance. The coordinator developed and implemented robust outreach and speaking programs in conjunction with PAS. The embassy updated EEO and Federal Women's Program materials and guidance in the course of the inspection. The DCM directs careful attention to the family advocacy program.

## COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

At the time of the inspection, a new community liaison office coordinator, hired 2 months earlier, had already earned positive marks from the embassy community. Community liaison office activities include advising employees on local conditions, organizing social events for staff and family members, managing a lending library, and maintaining emergency plans. Besides serving on the emergency action committee, the housing board, and other embassy committees, the coordinator assists with preparations for new employee arrivals and coordinates recreational programs. The coordinator prepares two weekly email notices publicizing recreational activities, dining opportunities, and shopping trips.

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## MEDICAL UNIT

The embassy's medical unit occupies prime but cramped space on the chancery compound. The unit closely follows the Department's Office of Medical Services guidelines in providing care, which sometimes limits services expected by clients. It provides medical counseling and first aid for all embassy staff, and primary outpatient care for American employees and families. The unit presently reviews medical insurance claims submitted by LE staff members. This burden may require additional staff. The unit coordinates an average of one medical evacuation per month. It actively promotes HIV/AIDS education and prevention.

A Foreign Service health practitioner manages the unit and supervises two nurses. Medical specialists are available for referrals. The Department and the regional medical office in Pretoria provide further support. Regional medical officers visited Embassy Harare several times within the last year. The OIG team's review confirmed that the unit correctly administers confidential patient records and controlled medical supplies, properly keeping stocks on hand in secure containers and destroying outdated materials.

## EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

The American Embassy Welfare and Recreation Association provides its members a range of services, including commissary and stamp sales and the Department's Homeward Bound Mail Program. It meets its financial reporting obligations to the

Department and has maintained its solvency, while making a net operating profit of approximately 10 percent in 2007 and 2008. In the first months of 2009, however, the association suffered a loss of approximately 8 percent on gross income of \$68,570. Its latest financial audit by an independent firm indicated no material weaknesses.

In addition to regular membership available to American employees, LE staff members are allowed to buy single unit items from the commissary, but no liquor or other packaged or duty-free goods. The association employs three Zimbabwean citizens. Its general manager was the winner of the Department's 2008 Manager of the Year Award.

The Office of Commissary and Recreation Affairs reported that the American Embassy Welfare and Receptions Association failed to submit the principal officer's compliance certification covering 2008. The inspectors advised post management of this, and the embassy is addressing it.



## MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The GSO drafted a strong, 19-page memorandum in November 2008 detailing a breakdown in general services office operations and management controls. This memorandum was not brought to the attention of the DCM as promptly as it should have been. She learned of its existence when an officer made an offhand comment. The DCM might not have been surprised had her weekly meetings with the management counselor not been private. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that those weekly meetings be expanded to include administrative section chiefs more frequently.

Management control issues affected every area of general services, including procurements, motor pool, embassy property, and housing and leasing. Procurements now are properly documented. The improper use of embassy vehicles for personal weekend travel has stopped, and leases that had expired over several years have been renewed. The facilities management office also has completed numerous outstanding issues raised in previous safety and fire inspections that had never been addressed. Embassy leadership has been supportive of the management section's ongoing efforts to fix these issues and institute viable management controls.

During the OIG inspection, it was noted that many management policies and notices were outdated. In addition, procedural shortcomings in financial management operations were identified during the visit by the Bureau of African Affairs rover from the Paris Financial Support and Training Office in late 2009. Of particular concern was the nonseparation of obligating and vouchering duties. The financial management officer subsequently corrected the shortcomings.

## CONSULAR

The embassy properly designated an accountable consular officer, a consular sub-cashier, and alternates. Consular subcashiers have their own cash advances. The OIG team's random verification of records and accounts revealed no accounting errors. During the inspection, the accountable consular officer corrected three flaws in the embassy's consular fee collection procedures.

The embassy's accountable consular officers and alternates comply with 7 FAH-1 H-650 standards to control supplies of blank passports, reports of birth, immigrant visa and nonimmigrant visa documents, official seals, funds, and other accountable items. Stocks appear adequate. Sensitive computer access controls, computer file security, inventories generated by consular computer systems, and the nonimmigrant visa referral system fulfill requirements in 7 FAH-1, H-600. However, the embassy warehouse contains some obsolete consular materials that should be destroyed. The OIG team made an informal recommendation to this effect.

## LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources and the Bureau of African Affairs, should provide the Foreign Service Institute's grants management course to the entry-level officer assigned to human rights, trafficking in persons, and refugee programs. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with HR and AF)

**Recommendation 2:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, Bureau of African Affairs, and the Office of the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy's Office of Policy, Planning and Resources, should take steps to establish an appropriate new location for the public affairs section. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with DS, OBO, AF, and R)

**Recommendation 3:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of African Affairs, should fund the additional locally employed staff positions approved by the post International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council in October 2009. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with AF)

**Recommendation 4:** Embassy Harare should implement a plan to purchase and maintain an adequate stock of expendable supplies needed by the facilities maintenance staff. (Action: Embassy Harare)

**Recommendation 5:** Embassy Harare should establish and implement a schedule for the Safety, Health and Environmental Management committee to meet regularly to address safety and related issues. (Action: Embassy Harare)

**Recommendation 6:** The Bureau of Information Resource Management should increase the bandwidth on the Embassy Harare primary data network connection, so that bandwidth is adequate to meet the needs of the embassy staff. (Action: IRM)

**Recommendation 7:** Embassy Harare, in coordination with the Bureau of Information Resource Management and the Regional Information Management Center in Pretoria, should purchase and install embassy-compatible phone switches at the general services office warehouse and the public affairs section office. (Action: Embassy Harare, in coordination with IRM and RIMC Pretoria)



## 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.

Important aspects of the PEPFAR coordinator's responsibilities and authorities are not clear to all stakeholders. These need to be clarified if the coordinator is to be successful.

**Informal Recommendation 1:** Embassy Harare should clarify uncertainties among some stakeholders in the U.S. Agency for International Development and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in connection with the appointment of a President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief coordinator, including the coordinator's role, responsibilities, and authorities.

Coordination is not strong enough between the Department and USAID on efforts to promote democratic change in Zimbabwe.

**Informal Recommendation 2:** Embassy Harare should issue clear guidance on information sharing and coordination of democracy-related projects and, at least once a month, have a formal agenda for the weekly meeting to focus on strategic issues.

The embassy has an ad hoc speakers' bureau for embassy officers. A formal speakers' bureau would be more effective.

**Informal Recommendation 3:** Embassy Harare should establish a formal speakers' bureau.

The DCM has been surprised occasionally by certain management issues.

**Informal Recommendation 4:** Embassy Harare should expand the deputy chief of mission's weekly meetings with the management officer and include section chiefs more frequently.

The cashier's office, located at the entrance of the financial management unit, becomes exceptionally crowded on paydays.

**Informal Recommendation 5:** Embassy Harare should determine whether the bank's office, located in the general services office, can be used by the cashier on payday.

The ICASS council has had some impromptu meetings and does not always document the discussion and decisions made at its meetings.

**Informal Recommendation 6:** Embassy Harare should develop and implement procedures to ensure that all International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council meetings are documented with minutes and are scheduled in a way that allows all members to attend.

The ICASS council did not fulfill its responsibility to provide input to the management officer's employee evaluation report.

**Informal Recommendation 7:** Embassy Harare should establish a procedure to ensure that the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council provides input to the management officer's employee evaluation report.

Embassy Harare has not established a post budget committee.

**Informal Recommendation 8:** Embassy Harare should establish a post budget committee.

Embassy Harare prepares its ICASS budget using ICASS Lite. Given the enhanced capabilities of the standard system, it may be advantageous to switch to ICASS Standard.

**Informal Recommendation 9:** Embassy Harare's should compare International Cooperative Administrative Support Services Lite to Standard as a basis for deciding whether to maintain the status quo or convert to Standard.

New ICASS positions have been authorized by the ICASS council but have not been filled.

**Informal Recommendation 10:** Embassy Harare should decide its hiring priorities and fill the authorized International Cooperative Administrative Support Services positions.

Consolidation of Department and USAID management operations must be accomplished by October 1, 2010.

**Informal Recommendation 11:** Embassy Harare should establish working groups to develop plans for the consolidation of each of the 13 management support services.

The LE staff committee does not provide input in completing the LE staff annual compensation questionnaire.

**Informal Recommendation 12:** Embassy Harare should seek the locally employed staff committee's input in completing its next locally employed staff annual compensation questionnaire.

The Ambassador has not held a town hall meeting with the LE staff.

**Informal Recommendation 13:** Embassy Harare should hold periodic town hall meetings with the Ambassador and the locally employed staff.

LE staff members are concerned about American officer's cultural insensitivity.

**Informal Recommendation 14:** Embassy Harare should redesign the American newcomer orientation to include information about local customs, attitudes, and sensitivities.

ICASS standards for the general services office are posted throughout the section, but have not been reviewed and updated.

**Informal recommendation 15:** Embassy Harare should establish standard operating procedures for the review, approval, and posting of International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards for the general services office.

The motor pool supervisor has received basic supervisory skills training but has not had the Smith safety training that is an important component of motor pool operations.

**Informal Recommendation 16:** Embassy Harare should enroll the motor pool supervisor in safety training as soon as funding is available.

The Interagency Housing Board has held meetings without the GSO and management officer present.

**Informal Recommendation 17:** Embassy Harare should establish standard operating procedures to ensure that, except in emergencies, housing board meetings should be held only when the management officer and general services officer are able to attend.

The general services and facilities maintenance office duties are closely intertwined and the only way to ensure the customer receives the required service is to work more closely together.

**Informal Recommendation 18:** Embassy Harare should require the general services officer and the facilities maintenance specialist, and the members of their staffs, to work more closely together to improve customer service.

Embassy Harare is storing obsolete IM equipment in the GSO warehouse.

**Informal Recommendation 19:** Embassy Harare should properly dispose of all unnecessary information management equipment.

The general services warehouse contains some obsolete consular materials.

**Informal Recommendation 20:** Embassy Harare should inventory and destroy obsolete consular items stored at the general services warehouse.

## PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Arrival Date</b>
Ambassador	Charles Ray	11/09
Deputy Chief of Mission	Katherine Dhanani	06/07

### **Chiefs of Sections:**

Management	Don D. Curtis, Sr.	09/08
Consular	Jim Jimenez	08/08
Political	Glenn Warren	08/06
Public Affairs	Timothy Gerhardson	09/08
Regional Affairs	Edwin Brauchli	07/09
Regional Security	Jeffrey Roberts	08/09

### **Other Agencies:**

U.S. Agency for International Development	Karen Freeman	09/06
Centers for Disease Control	Ruth Walkup	11/07
Department of Defense	Patrick Anderson	07/09



## ABBREVIATIONS

BBG	Broadcasting Board of Governors
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
DCM	deputy chief of mission
Department	Department of State
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EFM	Eligible family member
GSO	general services officer
HR	human resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information management
IRC	Information Resource Center
LE	locally employed (staff)
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	public affairs officer
PAS	public affairs section
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front

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