

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

Report of Inspection

Embassy
Abu Dhabi
and Consulate General
Dubai,
United Arab Emirates

Report Number ISP-I-10-62A, June 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~~



**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

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.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY JUDGMENTS	1
CONTEXT	3
EXECUTIVE DIRECTION	5
The Country Team	6
POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.....	11
Consular Affairs.....	24
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT.....	41
Human Resources	47
Financial Management.....	58
Information Management and Information Security	61
Quality of Life.....	65
MANAGEMENT CONTROLS	71
RECOMMENDATIONS	77
INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS	83
PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS	93
ABBREVIATIONS	97

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between January 4 and 27, 2010; in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, between February 11 and March 11, 2010; and in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, between February 19 and 28, 2010.

CONTEXT

The Persian Gulf's southern coast emirates were best known for pearls and pirates until the advent of the oil era in 1960. In the last half-century, the

region underwent a transformation in which sleepy, backwater emirates were put on the world stage and their far-sighted leaders took advantage of their oil revenues to create modern nations.



Map of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Source: U.S. Government

In the last three decades, Dubai developed itself as a world financial and travel center, leveraging a steady inflow of investment capital. The building spree generated massive development, including two planned artificial archipelagos, the world's highest hotel, and the world's tallest skyscraper, the Burj Khalifa.

The shallow foundation of the recent development fervor was exposed during the 2008-2009 world economic downturn. Easy money began to dry up. Many projects were put on hold, tens of thousands of expatriate workers were laid off, and a key investment arm of the Dubai government (Dubai World) risked bankruptcy.

Abu Dhabi, the richest and most powerful emirate and the capital of the U.A.E., has strong fiscal standing and has had large budget surpluses for the past five years. The U.A.E. oil industry was founded here. Today, the nation is flush with cash from oil exports as a result of Abu Dhabi's financial prudence.

U.S. interests and presence in the U.A.E. mirror the recent boom in development. This country has become a major locus of terror and drug financing; the principal air gateway to Afghanistan and Pakistan; host to more than 70 major aviation, food, and other trade shows; and the biggest purchaser of U.S. military hardware in the world.

Most importantly, the U.A.E. has emerged as a key strategic partner for the United States in the Middle East. Emirati leaders have significant personal and political ties to Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Palestinian Authority, and Israel, and their views on Iran and other Arab regional powers are congruent with the United States.

Embassy Abu Dhabi moved into a spacious new facility in 2004. The Consulate General in Dubai is working in cramped quarters in a 1979 office building, awaiting the completion of a new consulate general complex in 2011. Space in the new building is already oversubscribed.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Too many times in recent history, the U.S. Government discovered the strength and benefits of the relationship between the United States and the U.A.E. only in the last years of a U.S. President's administration. This time, however, under the hand of the current Ambassador, ground was not lost during the change in American leadership. From arranging early Oval Office visits by the U.A.E. leadership, to guiding a spate of cabinet-level engagements in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the Ambassador has deepened and expanded the historically strong relationship between the United States and the U.A.E. early in the new administration, and at a crucial time.

Indeed, the U.A.E. may be one of the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' (NEA) smallest countries in population, but it leads the region in U.S. exports. The U.S. Government tends to focus on exports to Brazil, Russia, India, and China (the BRIC countries), even though American businessmen export more goods and services to U.A.E. than to Saudi Arabia, Israel, or Russia. The U.A.E. matters to the U.S. military as well. The facilities at Jebel Ali host more U.S. Navy ship visits than any port in the world—except Norfolk. A significant but low key U.S. Air Force presence at Al Dhafra air base supports Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. Notwithstanding all these factors, the U.A.E.'s policy position on Iran, Afghanistan-Pakistan, and Middle East peace would be enough to warrant the undivided attention of senior Department management.

Because the U.A.E. is a modern, politically stable, relatively tolerant, business friendly country, and a convenient crossroad in a region where these features are rare, congressional delegations and desk officers alike transit the airports, and U.S. Government agencies increasingly eye regional bases here.

A major challenge facing the U.S. Government is to establish a suitable platform—under chief of mission authority—to manage the unique and complex task of supporting one of the world's largest foreign military sales accounts, amounting to some \$15 billion. The need for training and technical support stems from these sales, but providing such services is not traditional diplomatic work. Hundreds of military people and contractors (accompanied by families and their support needs) will do the work, and they will do it far

from the embassy or consulate general. The U.S. Central Command has expressed its vote of confidence by sending a two-star general officer to Embassy Abu Dhabi to serve as the commander's representative. The Ambassador and his team, in coordination with NEA, have developed a suitable solution. The embassy now needs the agreement of senior leadership of the Department of State and the Department of Defense to get the agreement signed and implemented. The OIG team discussed with the country team how best to proceed.

THE COUNTRY TEAM

Already a known quantity on the Arabian Peninsula because of two previous tours in the U.A.E., the Ambassador to Abu Dhabi has unrivaled contacts at the highest level of the U.A.E. Government. He can help Washington understand royal attitudes and obtain U.A.E. cooperation on regional issues, counterterrorism, nonproliferation, economics, and the strategic dialogue. The Ambassador's classified blog is required reading among the Persian Gulf's policymakers, because it is engaged, energetic, and current. The Ambassador's skills are complemented by those of an experienced deputy chief of mission (DCM) with superior management skills and wide regional experience. Just 90 miles away, in Dubai, a vigorous consul general rounds out a well suited, capable management team.

The Ambassador in Abu Dhabi manages a countrywide operation whose staff has grown by 52 percent over the past five years. The embassy now occupies a sleek, new compound, but the consulate general is crowded into a few floors of an aging commercial office building in downtown Dubai. Coordination within Embassy Abu Dhabi works smoothly. There are weekly country team and core group meetings that include participation from Consulate General Dubai. Working groups on illicit finance issues and law enforcement meet twice a month. Counterterrorism information coordination is good. The Ambassador does a good deal of public diplomacy work and is seen as an effective and visible advocate by the U.S. business community.

Consulate General Dubai

Consulate General Dubai performs admirably. It manages a staggering number of U.S. Government visitors. In 2009, there were approximately 250 visits that required front office involvement. The airlines have made Dubai not just the sixth busiest airport in the world, but the principal gateway to Afghani-

through a healthy U.S.-U.A.E. partnership. The public diplomacy operation can harvest a rich yield of leading American speakers and expertise in almost any field. Emirati citizens, blessed with the largesse of U.A.E. government scholarships and travel support, need the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' complicated grants less than they need wise counsel on how to get the most out of their American experience. The Foreign Commercial Service, habitually understaffed, annually turns away hundreds of American businesses seeking help to enter an export market that buys more than a billion dollars a month in American goods.

Mission Strategic Plan

The Ambassador is fortunate to have a DCM providing highly effective coordination among the diverse sections and agencies at the mission. Section chiefs and experienced agency heads unanimously called this the finest embassy country team experience they have had, and voted full confidence in the leadership. Indeed, both officers scored a perfect five (on a scale of one to five) on the OIG "leadership qualities" confidential survey among non-Department agency heads before the inspection. Even the Department officers ranked the Ambassador and DCM favorably (averaging a score of four on the same scale), with the questionnaires showing only statistically irrelevant differences between the two. The DCM has a careful schedule of weekly meetings with core agencies and sections, interspersed with meetings every two weeks with other agencies.

The Mission Strategic Plan (MSP) sets out mission priorities and goals, tracks accomplishments, and includes resource requests. It was the basis for a successful request for additional staff. It is not, however, used to manage mission activities throughout the year, and most employees had difficulty articulating mission goals. On the other hand, some staff members were able to pull out key speeches by the consul general and the Ambassador that identified principal policy objectives. The OIG team informally recommended that the mission leadership consider how to develop and articulate a long range vision that will incorporate all the efforts of the diverse set of offices and agencies represented into a whole-of-government approach. Such a vision could be useful in helping the host nation leadership see U.S. actions and policies in a larger historical context.

While the Ambassador and the DCM try to engage directly and frequently through one-on-one encounters with supervisors and weekly small group meetings, they may not be aware that some parts of the embassy feel left out.

is inadequate. The embassy executive office and the consul general in Dubai are aware of the need to establish International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) standards and to measure general services, financial management, and human resources performance against those standards. The consul general brought to the team's attention instances of irregular handling of congressional delegation purchase orders. Several agency heads complained of the embassy's growing reputation for slow payment to local vendors. Because neither the embassy nor the consulate general is measuring general services and financial management performance against agreed metrics, it is hard to set expectations and measure performance. This subject is discussed later in this report.

(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)

Consulate General Dubai has a combined political-economic section headed by an FS-02 section chief.

The section chief also serves as the deputy principal officer.

Senior U.S. Government officials have praised the economic reporting from both Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai, especially in covering the Dubai financial crisis. Their praise is coupled with surprise at the level of reporting productivity and insight, given the mission's staff shortages and crushing visitor loads. The recent approvals for additional staff reflect that acknowledgement. Interagency customers of these sections' reporting want and request more information on the political interactions of the U.A.E. royal families dealing with the current economic crisis.

The OIG team has encouraged these sections to communicate regularly through their reporting working groups, the MSP, and mission reporting plan exercises to clarify which section has the reporting lead.

As the U.S.-U.A.E. relationship grows in complexity, so do the numbers and profile of visitors concerned with these many programs. Moreover, the increase of congressional delegations and other high-level visitors transiting through Dubai gives embassy and consulate general leadership greater opportunities to engage the attention of these important visitors. The OIG team believes that even the Department's well informed U.A.E. country affairs office may not recognize the scope of U.S. engagement in the U.A.E. – in part because much of it is driven by the U.S. private sector and the host nation's seemingly insatiable appetite for the best, biggest, and most modern of everything from the United States. Indeed, this mission's officers report that the most frequent question they get from U.A.E. leaders is: Why does the United States not step up to the opportunities here?

Iran Regional Presence Office

This unique office was established in 2006 to take advantage of the fact that sizeable numbers of Iranians frequently do business in, visit, and traverse through Dubai. This is a semiautonomous reporting mission, and the Department and the interagency community acknowledge and praise its analytical reporting. The OIG team conducted a review of four months' worth of the office's reporting, and observed that the quality, relevance, and timeliness of its reporting is stronger whenever it references clarification, nuance, and analysis,

which the office obtained through personal contacts. The IRPO once managed a well regarded public diplomacy program, but this effort has been scaled back within the past year due to operational concerns. The OIG team suggested that it consider engaging in alternative public diplomacy activities (such as social networking) via the Internet, until such time as person-to-person programs become possible. This five-officer unit seeks more officers, a request which currently is under consideration by the Department, most likely for staffing by 2012.

Middle East Partnership Initiative

Embassy Abu Dhabi houses a regional hub for Middle East Partnership Initiative programs in Jordan and the Gulf. These programs encourage the development of instruments of civil society, democracy, and education, especially for women. University programs comprise the majority of the modest local grants program in U.A.E. The initiative's regional hub is responsible for coordinating, vetting, awarding, monitoring, and reviewing local grants throughout the Persian Gulf states, Yemen, and Jordan. Programs conducted by U.S. and international nongovernmental organizations are awarded, monitored, and reviewed out of Washington. The OIG team believes that doing back office program management operations with staff based overseas may not be the best use of U.S. Government resources.

Department of Commerce

Both embassy and consulate general leadership actively support their lean commercial sections (one officer in each post) in promoting and advocating U.S. trade. The senior commercial LE staff have superb contacts and frequently can open the door to senior U.A.E. leaders. The U.S. business presence is extensive with two active chapters of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. With the year long financial downturn, Foreign Commercial Service staffers have helped companies secure payment for which services have already been contracted and rendered. Nevertheless, there is more business interest than these offices can accommodate at current staffing levels. These officers report that in 2009 U.S. companies participated in more than 100 trade fairs throughout the U.A.E. Such trade fairs are often regional in scope and serve as major vehicles for U.S. producers to introduce and expand distribution. The commercial attaché regrets that, for lack of staff alone, the office rejects requests from dozens of American companies seeking its assistance to facilitate access to the largest U.S. export market in the region.

Drug Enforcement Administration

The Drug Enforcement Administration arrived in Dubai in 2006, and its office enjoys full cooperation and support from the embassy and consulate general, although it is concerned about space allocation in the new consulate general building, which is scheduled to open in summer 2011. U.A.E. partners are excellent in fighting crime and money laundering; local police training programs are a good investment.

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration agent-in-charge, a steady flow of money in illicit drug-related funds, as much as a billion dollars a year, comes through U.A.E. financial institutions.

Department of Homeland Security

The Department of Homeland Security offices in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai are actively promoting container security with U.A.E. customs officials to thwart criminal shipment of weapons and materiel under export controls. They also are exposing illicit financing and supporting visa security. Both offices stated that they receive excellent support and cooperation from the embassy and consulate general. The Dubai office, in particular, is concerned about having enough space in the new consulate general building.

Department of the Treasury

The treasury attaché has regional responsibilities to promote financial stability and thwart illicit financing. As a practical matter, this means the attaché is in the U.A.E. and Saudi Arabia every week. The attaché enjoys frequent and easy access to the embassy leadership, and finds cooperation from both embassy and consulate general reporting offices, but has been frustrated by the space constraints. He has advocated for a deputy attaché resident in Dubai, to no avail.

Department of Defense

The U.A.E. is the single largest customer of U.S. foreign military sales (\$12 billion in 2009 and \$11 billion projected for 2010). There is no Status of Forces Agreement here, and even the Defense Cooperation Agreement negotiated in 1994 was never officially ratified. The Foreign Military Sales, a formula the

Emirates military increasingly prefers, will require as many as 150 long-term and short-term specialists, trainers, technical staff, and support elements. There will be an ebb and flow of people, including dependents. If the Department cannot provide the training and support services that are included in the price of military sales, the U.A.E. will turn to other sellers, and jobs will be lost in America's heartland.

Both the Department and Embassy Abu Dhabi realize that ICASS and the Department bureaucracy cannot handle these kinds of special needs, exponential growth, and singular demands. Therefore, the Ambassador proposed a unique Defense support detachment, which is to be a distinct Department of Defense administrative office under chief of mission control. The detachment will be housed in commercial space and staffed by certifying and contracting officers provided by the Department of Defense. The OIG team reviewed the Defense support detachment office space and necessary colocation waiver documentation. Program costs will be paid out of the 3.8 percent surcharge that the Department of Defense collects on Foreign Military Sales contracts to cover administrative costs. The sticking point is the up-front investment necessary to establish the detachment and make it operational. The OIG team was told that the conceptual model for a Defense support detachment has been accepted by the Undersecretary for Management. Negotiations are underway with the Defense Security Cooperation Agency. As the OIG team departed, the Secretary of Defense was due to arrive at the embassy.

Public Diplomacy

The public affairs section (PAS) in Abu Dhabi and its counterpart in Dubai operate in a difficult public diplomacy environment:

- Emiratis – the target audience for the embassy's public diplomacy programs – represent only 15 percent of the population of the U.A.E.
- The generally wealthy and cosmopolitan Emiratis tend to be unimpressed by the U.S. Government-sponsored exchange and other cultural programs the embassy can offer.
- A near steady stream of high-level visitors to the U.A.E. – including senior U.S. Government officials and congressional delegations – tax the time and energy of the public diplomacy staff at both the embassy and consulate general; however, these visitors also are an impressive source of senior officials who can articulate U.S. policy to journalists and other audiences.

Embassy Abu Dhabi's PAS is directed by an experienced public affairs officer, supported by a first-tour assistant public affairs officer who also serves as the cultural affairs officer. A third American is due to join the staff in April 2010 as information resource officer. A regional information resource officer also is based at the embassy. An LE staff of ten supports the section's press and cultural activities.

PAS does not have a written, mission-wide strategic communications plan. The public affairs officer emphasizes "softer" issues as a way of countering the widespread public perception that U.S. interests in the U.A.E. are strictly strategic.

However, it somewhat restricts the embassy's ability to use public diplomacy tools in addressing the full range of MSP goals.

The Ambassador and officers in both Abu Dhabi and Dubai concede that it is often difficult to get a handle on what U.A.E. citizens (as opposed to the majority of the population, who are third country nationals) are thinking on matters that are important to the United States. It is even more difficult to divine what would change their thinking. The U.A.E. is a relatively closed society. Because of their positions, the Ambassador and the consul general do have some productive personal contact with senior Emiratis and have even participated in some Emirati family events like weddings. Most officers do not have such opportunities. The public affairs officer at Consulate General Dubai reports having better access to personal contacts in the northern emirates. The Ambassador told the OIG team that U.A.E. ministries conduct private polling to assess public opinion, but the data is rarely released – although sometimes the Ambassador is able to obtain a copy, or at least is briefed on the findings.

The OIG team observed that it would be useful to have more objective data and analysis to guide the embassy communication strategy and identify public diplomacy opportunities. Congress and other outside experts frequently encourage the Department's public diplomacy practitioners to use objective data and research metrics to determine and measure communication programs. In the absence of data, it is impossible to be confident of targeting or to measure accomplishments.

Over time, and with the support of the Ambassador, the public diplomacy section would benefit from developing professional relationships with leading opinion analysis and market research firms in Dubai and Abu Dhabi; doing so would likely lead to sharing of information on an informal basis. Moreover, it would be helpful for the embassy to assess opportunities to develop its own quantitative and qualitative information through cooperation with the Bureau of Intelligence and Research and other government agencies.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Abu Dhabi should develop a plan to obtain sufficient elite opinion and social network analysis to guide communication strategies and to help measure effects. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Embassy Abu Dhabi's public affairs officer contributes to the embassy's public outreach efforts for the Middle East Partnership Initiative by identifying projects that may qualify for initiative support, including student leadership exchange programs, English language classes, and a democracy building project to introduce the concept of student government to universities. The public affairs officer acknowledged that PAS could do more with this initiative's resources, and noted that the embassy recently created a Middle East Partnership Initiative council to improve coordination of the initiative's operations in the U.A.E. The council had not met as of the time of this inspection.

Media Outreach

The embassy's public affairs officer is the official mission spokesman and de facto information officer, and directs the mission's overall media strategy. The senior information/media specialist, an LE staff member, manages the day-to-day press operation. The media specialist is well known and respected among U.A.E. journalists, and uses his experience and connections effectively in arranging interviews, press conferences, and other media events. He is also able to contact influential journalists to obtain retractions or corrections of false and misleading stories. The media specialist and an information assistant prepare a daily press summary for mission and Washington readers.

The heavy traffic of VIP visitors to and through the U.A.E. places a heavy burden on mission staff, much of it falling to PAS. For the embassy's press operation, this is a dual-edged sword: While the demands of the frequent visits of senior U.S. Government officials severely tax staff resources, these same officials are able and often willing to speak authoritatively in public about key U.S. policy issues affecting the U.A.E. and the region. PAS takes frequent advantage

of these high-level spokespersons. For example, during the OIG team's visit, a visiting Deputy Secretary of the Treasury spoke in Dubai to graduate students of government and business and gave two interviews to regional TV outlets. These events were arranged by Consulate General Dubai and facilitated by Embassy Abu Dhabi (a demonstration of the excellent cooperation between the public affairs offices of both mission elements).

The Under Secretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy maintains a hub in Dubai to serve the many regional media organizations with offices and bureaus there. The hub also takes advantage of the senior U.S. Government visitors to the U.A.E. by arranging interviews and press conferences when possible and appropriate, but is not otherwise involved in their programming.

While extremely useful, this reliance on incidental visitors to articulate the rationale behind U.S. policy would be enhanced by a clear, mission-wide communication strategy. Such a strategy, which could serve as a roadmap to the desired state of U.S.-U.A.E. relations, would include an institutional analysis of U.A.E. media (including bloggers and social media); identification of target audiences; key messages, drawn heavily from the MSP; desired outcomes of communications initiatives; and yardsticks for success. The OIG team has informally recommended that Embassy Abu Dhabi take advantage of the anticipated arrival of an information resource officer to develop such a strategy to augment the current, largely reactive approach to dealing with the press.

PAS Abu Dhabi is taking tentative steps toward using social media as public diplomacy outreach tools. The embassy maintains a Facebook page as one way of disseminating important U.S. Government policy information and publicizing embassy activities. As of March 7, 2010, the page had 304 "fans," although an informal review of their names suggests that relatively few are Emiratis. As yet, it is unclear how useful this medium will be for reaching target audiences in the U.A.E.

Information Resource Center and Embassy Web Site

The Information Resource Center (IRC) is an attractive and well equipped but underutilized facility located on the ground floor of the chancery. It is directed by an LE resource officer who is supervised by the regional information resource officer. The resource officer is rated by the embassy public affairs officer and reviewed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, which appears to be a satisfactory arrangement.

The regional security office allows individuals and groups to use the IRC by appointment with 24 hours' notice. This makes drop-in visits virtually impossible, and even scheduled visits are awkward. The IRC director and the education adviser use the IRC two or three times a month, at most, for presentations and training.

The IRC can be a powerful tool for countering prejudice and stereotypes about the United States. At Embassy Abu Dhabi, the IRC is not being used at its full potential. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi develop a plan to integrate the IRC more fully into the embassy's public diplomacy outreach effort. The plan could include exploring the option of establishing a U.S. reference facility at a school, mall, or other publicly accessible location.

Although the IRC director does not prepare monthly reports on the use of the center, there are reports on individual events. The OIG team suggested that the public affairs officer require regular reporting to keep track of how the IRC is being used, and whether it might be used more effectively.

The IRC director's job includes outreach, which involves broadening the embassy contact base and disseminating information to key embassy audiences and contacts. The center's director noted that other embassy elements, such as the military and the reporting sections, do not take advantage of the resources available in the IRC. The OIG team suggested that the public affairs officer consider inviting the country team to convene in the IRC for a presentation to raise awareness of the IRC's available services and how it can be useful for their contacts.

The IRC director, who is relatively new to the position, also serves as the embassy webmaster, despite having had little training in maintaining a Web site. The center director spends an estimated three hours a day updating the Web page. Nevertheless, the page could be more timely: As of March 7, 2010, the three-picture slide on the landing page (which could be an important feature attracting readers to look more deeply) still featured the U.S. President's January 27 State of the Union address, the Secretary of State's January 21 speech on Internet freedom, and the U.S. national cricket team's participation in a Dubai tournament which ended February 13. The page's regional news, provided via the Department's content management system, is up-to-date, as are embassy press releases, job announcements, and consular information.

The embassy's Web site is presentable and easy to navigate¹ but it does not depict a vibrant mission actively and positively engaged with an important regional partner. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi send the IRC director to formal webmaster training. The team also made an informal recommendation that the embassy keep the landing page of its Web site up-to-date.

PAS recently hired an eligible family member as information/IRC assistant, who will serve as assistant webmaster. This support will enable the IRC director to devote more time to outreach.

Cultural Affairs

The assistant public affairs officer serves as the embassy's cultural affairs officer. The cultural affairs LE staff is headed by an experienced senior cultural and educational specialist who supervises a cultural assistant and an educational adviser and indirectly supervises the Consulate General Dubai program assistant.

PAS' cultural programming is heavily focused on youth and women, and it stresses educational issues. Particularly through its speakers and Web chats program, the section also reaches audiences with messages on human rights, good governance and transparency, and cultural diversity and tolerance.

Educational and Professional Exchanges

The senior cultural and educational specialist administers the mission's educational and professional exchanges, and notes with justifiable pride that three of the four women in the present U.A.E. cabinet are alumnae of embassy-run exchange programs. Each year, the mission sends eight to ten U.A.E. grantees to participate in the International Visitor Leadership Program. In educational exchanges, the post annually sends seven to ten participants to study for a year in the United States, through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Near East and South Asia Undergraduate exchange program. The Fulbright exchange program brings two to four American professors to the U.A.E. in a given year. One post-doctoral student from the U.A.E. is currently in the United States. There is no Fulbright Commission in the U.A.E.

¹ <http://abudhabi.usembassy.gov/>

On the secondary school level, the embassy manages an active Middle East Partnership Initiative-funded English Access Microscholarship Program. This program provides a foundation of English language skills to bright, disadvantaged 14 to 18 year old students through afterschool classes and intensive summer learning activities. Despite a generally conservative Emirati attitude toward education that makes it difficult to introduce this program into public schools, about 200 students participate in the program each year.

The OIG team noted that virtually all but the highest public or private sector positions in the U.A.E., including those in journalism, academia, government, business, and nongovernmental organizations, are filled by non-Emiratis. Many in these positions are influential in developing and executing U.A.E. policies that are important to the United States. However, the selection committee for the International Visitor Leadership Program (which provides grants to prominent foreign professionals to visit the United States) traditionally does not consider non-Emiratis. While it is true the program normally targets only host country citizens for its exchanges, its selection guidelines (10 FAM 216.6-4) note that third country nationals may participate under “exceptional circumstances.” The OIG team believes that exceptional circumstances do exist in the U.A.E. and suggested that the mission’s International Visitor Leadership Program selection committee, chaired by the DCM, consider nominating non-Emiratis for an exchange grant whenever they find a promising candidate.

Educational Advising

Educational advising is an important component of the embassy’s cultural outreach effort, and PAS rightly devotes considerable resources to it. The section’s staff, usually accompanied by a consular officer, visit schools throughout the U.A.E. to speak directly with students and teachers about education and student life in the United States. They also staff booths at education fairs. The educational adviser works closely with the Abu Dhabi police, which sends qualified recruits to the United States for a four- or five-year degree program in criminal justice, in return for a service commitment upon their return to the U.A.E. Since U.A.E. companies and government ministries often send promising employees overseas for graduate education, the educational adviser also conducts programs for corporations and government organizations, to provide information and resources for researching educational opportunities in the United States. This training is usually done in the IRC.

Because it is so difficult to enter the IRC in the embassy and the public diplomacy offices in the consulate general, the number of potential students that are receiving educational counseling is very low. America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST) is a U.S. government-supported organization that provides educational counseling through the region, often very effectively. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Abu Dhabi establish a relationship with AMIDEAST to leverage their resources and their capability to interact directly with potential students.

Arts and Cultural Programs

In 2009, the Abu Dhabi PAS sponsored a successful, week-long program of concerts and workshops by a Cajun-Zydeco musical group. The section also occasionally is able to take advantage of visits by U.S. performers who come to the U.A.E. under Emirati sponsorship. For example, when a string quartet from the New York Philharmonic Orchestra was in the U.A.E. under the auspices of the Abu Dhabi government, the embassy arranged a performance at the Ambassador's residence for 100 embassy contacts. This practice of piggybacking is an excellent way of promoting cultural understanding while minimizing costs to the U.S. Government.

PAS is missing some opportunities, however. For instance, during the OIG team's visit a prominent female Iranian-American author was in Abu Dhabi participating in the annual international book fair, but had slipped in beneath the PAS radar. As a result, the embassy may have missed an opportunity to program for its own audiences an important and respected U.S. cultural figure with a potent message on democracy, freedom of expression, and the role of women. The Ambassador expressed strong interest in leveraging the Emiratis' own interest in, and willingness to pay for, first-rate American culture, creativity, and thinking. He recognizes the limitations of traditional public diplomacy programming tools in an environment like this one and he would like to do better. The OIG team suggested that PAS make a systematic effort to identify visiting American cultural figures and other personalities who can help deliver positive messages on key themes, then try to engage these individuals for events that will attract the mission's target audiences.

Administrative Issues

The OIG team identified no systemic administrative problems in PAS. All LE staff position descriptions are up-to-date or are being reviewed or revised. (b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

The public affairs officer holds a grants warrant. In FY 2009, PAS wrote grants totaling \$66,000. A grants and programs administrator (an eligible family member) manages the section's budget under the supervision of the public affairs officer. Record keeping is good, and the grants and program files are up-to-date.

Consulate General Dubai

PAS Dubai is directed by a third-tour, public diplomacy-coned officer, supported by one LE staff member who serves as cultural assistant/office manager. The public affairs officer in Dubai has been recruiting LE staff candidates for an education adviser position, so far without success.

The consul general rates Dubai's public affairs officer and Embassy Abu Dhabi's public affairs officer serves as the reviewer for Consulate General Dubai. This appears to be a satisfactory arrangement. Both officers are scheduled to transfer from the U.A.E. in summer 2010.

The relationship between the mission's two public affairs sections is good. Dubai's public affairs officer participates via speakerphone in PAS Abu Dhabi's weekly staff meetings, and Abu Dhabi's LE staff are almost always available to support public affairs programs in Dubai.

To gauge Emirati public opinion, the Dubai public affairs officer relies on media monitoring and frequent contact with students and other audiences in Dubai and the northern emirates; she reports her observations directly to the consul general and to the Ambassador via the public affairs officer in Abu Dhabi. The OIG team believes that these observations could make a positive contribution to the mission's reporting efforts, and made an informal recommendation to that effect.

Dubai is an active media center, and the consulate general's PAS has good contacts among local media. Both the Dubai public affairs officer and the consul general believe that the Dubai PAS misses opportunities to disseminate positive messages because the embassy insists on pre-approving all contacts with the media. However, the embassy produced a written mission media strategy which clearly states that the Dubai public affairs officer and the consul general may indeed talk with the press; they are only required to inform the

embassy's public affairs officer when and if such contact has been made. It was Embassy Abu Dhabi's understanding that this document had been distributed mission-wide. The OIG team suggested that Embassy Abu Dhabi's public affairs officer confirm that both the Dubai public affairs officer and the consul general had seen the document, and that both the embassy and the consulate general understand the correct procedures regarding media contacts.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

The mission consular team is performing admirably as it deals with infrastructure challenges and growing workload. Additional focus on referrals in Dubai and coordination of consular activities throughout will improve consular services.

As it proudly notes on its internal bulletin board, Embassy Abu Dhabi's consular section is a "3 FAM 1332" operation. The courtesy and respect that are the hallmark of 3 FAM 1332 are evident within the section and among the clients. Morale among the staff is excellent, and the activist consular section chief regularly goes into the public waiting area to ensure that his clients understand that he cares about them. The Department's customer service guidelines for visa applicants² are prominently displayed on the Embassy Abu Dhabi Web site.

² http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_2796.html

Best Practice: Prominent Display of Visa Customer Service Guidelines

Issue:

Visa services are often perceived as adversarial both inside and outside of the consular section: someone wins and some loses. The very act of refusing a visa is demeaning and insulting to many applicants. At most posts, the consular section has more visitors—foreign and U.S. citizens—than all other offices combined. The manner in which consular clients perceive their treatment in the section is often critical to their perception of America.

Response:

The Department created customer service guidelines for visa applicants³ that discuss the parameters for visa operations and assure clients that they will be treated with dignity and respect. These guidelines are an important public diplomacy tool, and a resource for consular sections seeking to better prepare visa applicants for their experience in the section.

An Internet search found that only four U.S. missions have posted the Department guidelines on their Web sites. Two have the guidelines buried in their informative Web sites (Tokyo and Ciudad Juarez), and two display the guidelines prominently (Lusaka and Abu Dhabi). Indeed, Abu Dhabi's link to the guidelines appears prominently on the pull-down menu for visas – where the public cannot miss it.

Result:

There is a palpable sense in Embassy Abu Dhabi's visa services section that treating everyone well pays dividends inside and outside the section. As they proclaim on the bulletin board, they are "a 3 FAM 1332 section." This portion of the FAM states: "Because people will generally treat each other the way they are treated, good customer service must begin with the way we interact with each other. It is the policy of the Department that our employees must treat each other, as well as our external customers, with proper respect and courtesy at all times."

³ Ibid.

In Abu Dhabi's consular affairs section, there is little in the way of standard documentation of procedures and no formal training or orientation plan or syllabus for newcomers. The section chief sends a customized email to each incoming officer, which, while laudable, is not as sure as having standard documents and procedures. There is a comprehensive tome on Iranian visa adjudication, but it is too big to be helpful. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai develop an effective and comprehensive training program for new consular employees.

According to the Bureau of Consular Affairs, neither the Abu Dhabi nor the Dubai consular section chief has the overall role or title of country coordinator. The FS-02 consular chief in Abu Dhabi believed that he was the consular coordinator, but added that he did not serve as rating or reviewing officer for the Dubai consular section chief, in part because that officer outranked him. On the other hand, the consular chief in Abu Dhabi has access to the front office. The FS-01 consular section chief in Dubai (and his deputy) also believed that the Abu Dhabi consular section chief effectively acted as the consular coordinator for the country. Indeed, on matters such as the implementation of the DS-160 online nonimmigrant visa (NIV) application form, coordination between the two sections is excellent.

Since the consular chief in Dubai now outranks the consular chief in Abu Dhabi, there are challenges posed by the Abu Dhabi chief serving as a formal consular coordinator. It is clear from the disparity in the two operations, however, that more coordination would be beneficial. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi look for ways to enhance coordination and communication between the two sections, such as adding each consular section chief to the other sections' email collectives, holding joint off-site planning and team-building meetings, and rotating staff between the two sections. In addition, a later recommendation addresses mission-wide chain-of-command issues.

Consular Affairs Office Space

The spacious consular section in Embassy Abu Dhabi is larger than presently required; it was originally designed to accommodate a combined workload from Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai. Embassy Abu Dhabi argued in May 2003 that full NIV consolidation did not make sense considering the resolution of staffing problems in Dubai, new post-September 11 NIV processing challenges, and an expanding U.S. corporate presence in Dubai.

On the other hand, the consular workspace in Dubai is horribly cramped and inconvenient. Consular section staff screen consular clients in a temporary cabin in the parking lot and then escort them through a side door, up two flights of stairs (designated for emergency egress), through the lobby to an elevator, and up to the 21st floor—where staff members scan their fingerprints and a vice consul interviews them. Along the way, security staff members search the clients three times: once when they enter the cabin, again when they enter the office building, and again when they enter the consulate general office on the 21st floor.

In addition, the waiting room splits the Consulate General Dubai consular section in two, physically isolating the NIV processing unit from the American citizen services unit. Morale and efficiency both suffer in Dubai, while the consular section in Abu Dhabi has abundant, convenient space. Indeed, many Emiratis travel from Dubai to Abu Dhabi for visas just to avoid the inconvenience of the Consulate General Dubai facility.

The OIG team agrees with Embassy Abu Dhabi's contention⁴ that full consolidation of NIV services was not appropriate in 2003, but there is now great value in better balancing consular workload and facilities. When the Department agreed⁵ to shelve U.A.E. visa consolidation plans, it requested that the decision "be reviewed periodically." Even with the new consulate general office building under construction in Dubai, a review of this topic needs to be undertaken now, with an eye to fully consolidating NIV services as soon as is practical.

One possible scenario for the abovementioned consolidation of NIV services would be to move resident third country national visa applicants from Consulate General Dubai to Embassy Abu Dhabi, while retaining Emirati and Iranian applicants at Consulate General Dubai. Another consideration would be to move Iranian immigrant visa processing from Embassy Abu Dhabi to Consulate General Dubai, to colocate all Farsi speaking employees and take advantage of the officers in Dubai who have better Farsi language skills than the officers at Abu Dhabi.

⁴03 Abu Dhabi 002211

⁵03 State 349939

Recommendation 2: Embassy Abu Dhabi should review consolidation of visa operations in Abu Dhabi and produce a plan that addresses the imbalance between visa workload and facilities and the scarcity of Iranian nonimmigrant visa appointments. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

American Citizen Services

The provision of American citizen services in the U.A.E. is challenging, as the country's modern-day appearance belies fundamental cultural differences. In addition, the local bureaucracy can be inefficient, causing frustration. U.S. citizens in the U.A.E. are requesting more and more services, from basic citizenship documentation to assistance with incarceration. Because debt and alcohol related issues are often considered criminal by the U.A.E., increasingly Americans are ending up in jail. While the cases are often resolved quickly, they do take time and resources.

Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai maintain contact with the growing American population through an active warden system and electronic communications. Warden emails are sent by two separate systems: the Bureau of Consular Affairs' ACS+ software and a commercial email list service. Two software programs are redundant, and the commercial system is wasteful, since it costs the U.S. Government money and does not feed data into the ACS+ system.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Abu Dhabi should discontinue using the commercial list service that duplicates the Department's American Citizens Services Plus software's consular warden notification system. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

One of the services that both sections perform is authentication of the U.S. seal on educational documents, contrary to guidance⁶ from the Bureau of Consular Affairs. The long-standing policy whereby the mission helps clients with U.S. educational documents may have created an expectation that may make it difficult to stop providing such services abruptly. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi explore alternatives to stop providing notarial services for U.S. educational documents as quickly as possible.

⁶ Authentication of American Academic Credentials for Use Abroad Circular (http://travel.state.gov/law/info/info_606.html)

The discussion of authentications of educational documents should give the embassy a segue and leverage to approach (possibly with other diplomatic missions) the U.A.E. Government to accede to the 1961 Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents (The Hague Legalization Convention). Should the U.A.E become a party to the convention, it would simplify the provision of notarial services at both Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai. The OIG team left an informal recommendation on the subject.

As noted before, living in the U.A.E. can be difficult. One way the U.S. Government can help is by giving U.S. residents useful medical information on living in the U.A.E. Embassy Abu Dhabi has a list of hospitals and clinics on its Web site with phone numbers, but without any information on the whereabouts of the facilities. Consulate General Dubai does not provide any information on medical resources. The “Living in Dubai” link on the consulate general’s Web site did not work during the inspection. Department guidance in 7 FAM 337 notes that, “an important consular duty is the production and updating of the list of doctors, dentists and other medical professionals, hospitals, and air ambulance services for distribution to U.S. citizens seeking medical care in the host country.” As the consular chief in Dubai noted, finding reliable medical care is not easy in the U.A.E. The embassy health unit evacuated a dozen employees last year.

Recommendation 4: Embassy Abu Dhabi should collect and publish useful information on medical resources in the United Arab Emirates on both of its Internet Web sites. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Visa Services at the Embassy

In the 12 months ending February 17, 2010, Embassy Abu Dhabi adjudicated 20,526 NIVs, representing 131 nationalities. The refusal rate was 33 percent. The largest group of applicants were Emiratis (9,236) followed by Indians (1,923). Visa applicants at the embassy are processed quickly in a clean, convenient, and welcoming environment.

The embassy processes all immigrant visas for the U.A.E.

Although the Department recently has agreed to add an additional American citizen services officer to the section, visa staffing is not adequate, as reflected in the consistent unavailability of Iranian NIV appointments. The consular chief believes that the American citizen services unit would benefit from another LE staff position. The OIG team believes that there is clearly a need for additional staff in that unit, but it is not clear if the abovementioned additional American citizen services officer will meet that need.

Despite the challenge imposed by the physical separation of the American citizen services and visa units of the Dubai consular section, the consular chief does not hold regular section-wide staff meetings. The OIG team made an informal recommendation on this point.

Employees in the consular section reported to the OIG team that their initial training in the section was ad hoc and not comprehensive. The senior NIV Foreign Service national recently created a training syllabus for new LE staff, but there is no similar effort for new vice consuls. The OIG team left an informal recommendation on this point.

Consular Affairs Space at the Consulate General

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) is building a new consulate general in Dubai, with occupancy scheduled for 2011. The consular working space in the new building is a massive improvement over the present section, but it will only increase the number of interview windows from 10 to 12. With Dubai's workload increasing steadily, especially for Iranian NIVs, the new facility likely will constrain consular operations by the time it opens.

In addition, the design of the space does not appear to include an office for an assistant regional security officer-investigator and its local investigator, or for elements of the Department of Homeland Security's visa security unit. (Both of these offices should be colocated with the consular section, in private

some more attention. In addition, signage inside of the waiting room is not clear, causing visa applicants to wander around looking for the finger scanning window. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that addresses both of these issues.

American Citizen Services at the Consulate General

Consular section employees provide American citizen services in Consulate General Dubai efficiently in a difficult environment. The section requested another officer position for the unit, and the Department recently approved it. This new asset will help meet the demands of this busy unit.

As discussed earlier in this report, Americans in Dubai's consular district are increasingly being arrested for relatively minor issues, such as having debt or being intoxicated. The OIG team counseled the section chief to be certain that the unit's staff promptly enters arrest data into the Bureau of Consular Affairs American citizen services transaction processing software to enable the Department to better track cases and workload.

Visa Services at the Consulate General

In the 12 months ending February 22, 2010, Consulate General Dubai processed 53,314 NIVs from 153 nationalities. The overall refusal rate was 51 percent, which is significantly higher than Embassy Abu Dhabi's refusal rate, reflecting a lower number of Emiratis and a large number of Iranians and Indians. The largest number of applicants were Iranian (22,103), followed by Indians (9,735), and Emiratis (3,714).

Visa processing at Consulate General Dubai runs smoothly from the applicant's perspective, despite the huge physical challenges. Visa applicants are accepted on one side of the section and then sent to the other for fingerprint scanning and interview. As noted before, the waiting room is spacious.

The processing within the visa unit also is streamlined, having benefitted from the consular section chief's improvements. In examining a small sample of the visa cases, some small issues arose. Adjudicating officers were not always putting objective information in the case notes, not carefully following naming conventions for data entry, not issuing full-validity visas when appropriate, and not ensuring that comments reflect the final adjudication.

The section uses a prerecorded telephone tree to disseminate information to consular clients who call requesting information about visa processing. In order to preserve resources, there are no scheduled times when callers can reach an employee of the consulate general. The OIG team informally recommended that Dubai establish a regular time when callers can speak to a consular employee.

Iranian Visas

It is difficult for Iranian citizens in Dubai to get NIV appointments. The appointment system for Iranians is separate from the others, as demand has outpaced Dubai's resources. During the month that the OIG team was in the U.A.E., no Iranian appointments were available through the online appointment mechanism.

The scarcity of Iranian NIV appointments creates financial incentives for travel agents to subvert the process by making appointments themselves and then selling them to Iranian clients. The consular chief noted that, in the past, Iranian travel agents had taken all of the free visa appointments and then sold them to travelers who were unable to find appointments on the Internet (a problem noted above). The travel agents' intervention also may be responsible for the high no-show rate for Iranians, which sometimes reaches as much as 50 percent. The section chief believes that the introduction of the DS-160 online NIV application form will diminish the travel agent's ability to set up appointments using phony data, and will reduce the no-show rate. However, the OIG team was able to make a non-Iranian NIV appointment using a fictitious bar code number. (It was impossible to test Iranian appointments as the slots for such appointments were unavailable.)

One possible solution to this problem would be to allow appointments only for people who have successfully completed the DS-160 online NIV application form. This would require coding the software to match each application with a specific appointment. The OIG team counseled the consular section to remain focused on the issue of Iranian appointment availability.

The Farsi speaking officers who interview the Iranian applicants do a commendable job. While the Iranian processing cell is somewhat separate from the rest of the NIV unit, it is well integrated and works smoothly.

(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)

Consulate General and the Visa Security Unit

The Department of Homeland Security's visa security unit in Dubai reviews many of the consular section's cases. According to the chiefs of the consular section and visa unit, the relationship with the Homeland Security staff is positive, and the visa security unit promptly examines and returns cases. The Homeland Security attaché in Dubai also believes that the relationship is productive, although he noted it would be good to increase informal communication between his office and the consular section in order to share information and expertise on visa security.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct- Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding (000s)
State – D&CP	75	4	34	113	\$5,898
State – ICASS	9	18	112	139	10,901
State – Public Diplomacy	11	1	18	30	1,778
State – Diplomatic Security	12	2	3	17	3,286
State- Marine Security Guard	8		3	11	267
State – Representation					120
State – OBO	3		10	13	10,887
Agriculture Department	1		4	5	394
Commerce Department	3	1	9	13	1,064
Defense Attaché Office	5	1	1	7	543
Office of Military Cooperation	35	1	3	39	4,901
Other Department of Defense	45		10	55	6,360
Homeland Security Department	12	1	4	17	1,272
Interior Department U.S. Geological Survey	3			3	700

Table continued on the next page

Table continued

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding (000s)
Drug Enforcement Admin	4		1	5	1,229
Legal Attaché	4			4	532
Dept of Treasury	2		1	3	397
Dept of Transportation	1		1	2	161
Totals	233	29	214	476	\$50,690

Management

The management section at Embassy Abu Dhabi is working hard to make the section more efficient and effective in the delivery of services to the embassy community, despite embassy growth from 98 U.S. direct-hire employees in 2005 to 149 today, an increase of 52 percent. The growth of the number of U.S. direct-hire employees without a commensurate growth of U.S. direct-hire service providers has adversely affected the ICASS customer-to-service provider ratio. The Department's standard is 19 U.S. direct-hire customers for every one U.S. direct-hire ICASS service provider. The NEA average for 2009 was 19.27 to one, and the worldwide average was 18.94 to one. For Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai combined, the ratio is 35.33 to one. The Department recently approved two general services officer positions (one for Embassy Abu Dhabi, one for Consulate General Dubai), which are expected to help the mission deliver better ICASS services to its customers.

Despite a lack of U.S. staff in the management section, Embassy Abu Dhabi is meeting the needs of its customers. The ICASS customer satisfaction survey results for Embassy Abu Dhabi show that the management section is above the NEA and worldwide averages in meeting customer expectations. The overall score for the embassy is 4.06 on a 5.00 scale. The overall average for NEA bureau is 4.04, while the worldwide average is 4.02.

Headed by an activist management officer, the section looks for better ways to deliver services at lower costs. It is considering a contract for leasing residential furniture locally, in lieu of purchasing it from the United States. Doing so would eliminate shipping charges and the attendant costs of managing and warehousing purchased furniture; it also would eliminate the long delays in delivery of these large shipments.

The embassy is exploring the lease of a warehouse located centrally between the embassy and Consulate General Dubai, to serve both sites. The lease will include other services, such as warehouse management and delivery of furniture and equipment, which will enable the embassy to focus on other tasks. The embassy is also looking at contracting out some car services and residential property work. The OIG team applauds the embassy's streamlining and cost cutting efforts.

One area of service delivery that the management section needs to focus on deals with the large amounts of U.S. Government time the LE staff spends doing personal work for U.S. direct-hire employees. This personal work includes tasks such as processing visas and renting cars for U.S. employees' personal travel, repairing their personal vehicles, handling their personal Federal Express shipments, or paying their personal bills (Internet or home/cellular phone bills, personal auto insurance, traffic fines, tolls, etc.) The embassy is looking for companies to provide these types of personal services so that U.S. employees can contract their services directly. Not only would this save significant amounts of embassy staff time; it also would alleviate the automobile liability concerns under 14 FAM 433.5, regarding whether local employees performing personal services are acting within the scope of their employment. The OIG team agrees with these efforts to take the embassy's LE staff out of the personal services business, and encourages the embassy to work with Consulate General Dubai to implement a similar program.

Another area on which the management section needs to spend more time is in coordinating its efforts with Consulate General Dubai. The management sections at Abu Dhabi and Dubai are often confused about which organization is responsible for initiating or completing actions. Consulate General Dubai's rapid growth, without a commensurate increase in support staff, has led to Embassy Abu Dhabi's management section providing support in some of the consulate general's management areas. The two entities have not always communicated well and there are no formal meetings between their respective management sections, leading to confusion as to which of them has primary responsibility for a given management task.

As a matter of good business practice, organizations frequently use a memorandum of agreement to coordinate efforts and facilitate efficient and effective administration of duties. Organizations also hold periodic meetings as

an aid to effective communication. Without a written statement of responsibilities and regular meetings between the management sections, some tasks will continue to fall through the cracks. The apparent unauthorized commitment in contracting for the travel management center in Dubai, an issue which is discussed later in this report, is a perfect example.

Recommendation 10: Embassy Abu Dhabi should negotiate and execute a memorandum of agreement between the embassy and Consulate General Dubai outlining the responsibilities for all management functions. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Abu Dhabi should schedule meetings between the embassy's management staff and Consulate General Dubai's management staff, at least twice a month, to discuss management issues of mutual interest. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Embassy Abu Dhabi does not maintain current, accurate ICASS standards, nor does it use them to measure performance of the ICASS service providers. Consulate General Dubai is deficient in the same ways. Both the ICASS council and the service providers appear not to have emphasized the importance of measuring performance. The regulations (6 FAH-5 H-213.3-4) state that, "the Council and the service provider(s) are responsible for ensuring that acceptable standards are established and that these standards are used as the basis for evaluating performance," and "[ICASS] standards should be reviewed at least annually."

It is difficult for the ICASS council and embassy management to make resource decisions without accurate standards against which to measure performance. It is also difficult for them to evaluate how well services are being delivered. In addition, inaccurate workload counts lead to inaccurate billing under ICASS. For example, the workload counts for motor pool services vary widely from FY 2009 to FY 2010. For example, in regard to the Department program account, the final FY 2009 modified workload count was 142,390, while the initial count for FY 2010 was 21,585. The workload count for the Department's ICASS account jumped from 192,190 at the end of FY 2009 to 325,644 at the start of FY 2010.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Human resources (HR) services received high marks in the Abu Dhabi ICASS customer satisfaction survey. The embassy's HR staff includes a U.S. direct-hire HR officer, two specialists, an assistant, and a clerk. The HR officer is on her first tour and has been at post for only four months, but has had experience working in HR sections at other embassies as an eligible family member.

There is a great deal of work for the HR section, particularly with regard to instituting HR policies and procedures and addressing issues with HR services for Consulate General Dubai. As previously mentioned in the management section, the HR office has no established ICASS service standards for HR services. There is no permanent HR presence in Consulate General Dubai, which needs more direct support to address American and LE staff HR issues.

Grading of Foreign Service Officer Positions

The number of U.S. direct-hires for all agencies in Embassy Abu Dhabi has increased by 54 percent from 2006 to 2010. The staffing at Consulate General Dubai has increased by over 100 percent during the same period. There has been no corresponding review of many of the Department position grades to account for the increased job duties or supervisory responsibilities for these positions.

For example, the political chief position is graded at the FS-02 level, but the political section is increasing in size because of additional positions allocated under Diplomacy 3.0. The same situation applies to the regional security officer and the public affairs officer. In Dubai, the consul general position for a post of this size and complexity normally would be Senior Foreign Service, and the deputy principal officer would be an FO-01. All three of the assistant regional security officer positions are graded at FS-04, but if one of these positions were upgraded to the FS-03 level, it would provide a better career track for a mid-level officer. Similarly, the embassy would benefit from upgrading the supervisory general services officer position to the FS-02 level, and adding a second general services officer.

According to 3 FAM 2615.5, the Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Resource Management and Analysis manages the Department's program for organizational review and approval process for grading positions and provides

guidance to embassies overseas. It also establishes and maintains the Department's organizational and position management policies and procedures, as outlined in 1 FAM 014 to ensure organizational consistency at all levels of the Department.

Recommendation 14: The Bureau of Human Resources should conduct an analysis of the grades of the U.S. direct-hire positions at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai, in order to properly grade all positions. (Action: HR)

Bilateral Work Agreement

The United States does not have a bilateral work agreement with the Government of the U.A.E. that would expedite the work permit process for family members in the host country by allowing them to work on the local economy. Previously, there was a de facto work agreement, but lately the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) is resistant to granting work permits because of the issue of diplomatic privileges and immunities accorded family members, particularly males, of female diplomats accredited to the embassy.

To increase opportunities for employment in foreign countries for family members of U.S. direct-hire employees assigned to an embassy or consulate overseas, the United States and the host country establish formal bilateral work agreements through an exchange of diplomatic notes.

To promote more opportunities for spousal employment the Family Liaison Office (FLO) established the Global Employment Initiative. The goals of the program as announced in 07 STATE 150504 addresses dual-career employment concerns by assisting family members of U.S. government employees abroad with their search for employment in the host country economy. Bilateral work agreements help expedite the work permit process for family members in the host county.

Recommendation 15: Embassy Abu Dhabi should consummate a bilateral work agreement with the Government of the United Arab Emirates. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Locally Employed Staff Allowances

The LE staff committee, representing staff in both the embassy and the consulate general, believe several LE staff allowances need to be increased, based on current costs—specifically, the housing, transportation, education, and severance pay allowances.

The embassy pays the housing allowance by contributing a certain amount of money toward the LE employee's rental and utilities expenses. It is not designed to cover all of the rental expense an individual employee might incur. This housing allowance has not increased in the past three years.

Paid to enable the employee to travel to and from work, the transportation allowance is not designed to cover all of the transportation expenses that an employee may incur. The transportation allowance has not increased since September 2005, and it has not kept pace with rising prices of gas and tolls.

There is no retirement plan for LE staff in the U.A.E., and the LE staff believe that severance pay is not sufficient. The current severance pay for 11 or more years of service is 43 calendar days for each year of service. Severance payments are computed on the basis of the employee's basic salary.

Lastly, the Department approved an education allowance for LE staff in 2003, but the embassy has not paid this allowance because of insufficient funding. The Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Overseas Employment is unable to authorize post to implement the education allowance based on a 2003 compensation review. The OIG team has concluded that a new review is required.

According to Department guidelines in 3 FAH-2 H-226, overseas posts should include in their local compensation plan allowances which are in accordance with local prevailing practice and consistent with the salaries and benefits paid by comparator companies. Benefits can include medical; retirement; unemployment insurance; time not at work benefits of paid leave for vacation; sickness; maternity; bonuses; or allowances that are separately documented; and conditions of work.

Recommendation 16: The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with Embassy Abu Dhabi, should analyze the results of the latest salary and benefit survey to ascertain the appropriate level of any justifiable increases for locally employed staff at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai. (Action: HR, in coordination with Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Locally Employed Staff Employee Performance Reports

At the beginning of the OIG inspection there were 27 delinquent LE staff employee performance reports, 22 from supervisors in Abu Dhabi, and five in Dubai. The HR office maintains a tracking system for monitoring submissions of performance reports and sends reminders to supervisors. The HR officer, by sending follow-up reminders, reduced the number of delinquent reports to nine. It will be important for the embassy to continually follow up with supervisors so that employee performance reports are completed on time, and notify the DCM of any delinquent employee performance reports.

According to 3 FAM 7584, before a within-grade increase can be authorized, the supervisor must certify in writing that the employee's performance is at the fully successful level, or better. Guidance in 3 FAH-2 H-312 b.(6)(a) emphasize the need for supervisors to prepare objective and timely performance reports. Within-grade increases are sometimes delayed by the late receipt of employee performance reports.

Recommendation 17: Embassy Abu Dhabi should complete all outstanding performance evaluations for locally employed staff of the embassy in a timely manner, and should require Consulate General Dubai to complete all such reports in a timely manner. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Post Orientation Program for Locally Employed Staff

There is no formal post orientation program for LE staff at either Embassy Abu Dhabi or Consulate General Dubai. The LE staff committee complained that HR does not have a comprehensive orientation program to brief staff on their allowances and benefits. At present, employees are only given forms to complete along with a copy of the FSN handbook. LE staff members do not receive any briefing on the U.S. mission goals and objectives or activities and operations of the embassy or the consulate general.

According to 3 FAM 7244, "all newly appointed FSN employees should be given assistance in adjusting to their employment and should be advised fully regarding the conditions of mission employment by means of a planned orientation program. This orientation briefing should be given as an integral part of the appointment process."

The new LE staff could benefit from having a sponsor, particularly in the first few months, to assist them in adjusting to working at the embassy or consulate general, and—if they are from outside the country—to assist them with the adjustment to living in the U.A.E.

Recommendation 18: Embassy Abu Dhabi should develop and implement a mission-wide post orientation program for all newly hired locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Human Resources Support for Consulate General Dubai

The consulate general does not have a continuous HR presence to help the embassy's HR officer provide personnel support services to U.S. and LE staff in Dubai. As noted prior, during the past five years, the number of U.S. direct-hires at the consulate general has increased by over 100 percent, from 39 to 82. ICASS staff support has not kept pace with this increase in staffing. The ICASS customer satisfaction survey for Consulate General Dubai scored HR services for U.S. direct-hire and LE staff at 3.33 and 3.22, respectively, well below the worldwide averages of 3.93 and 3.93. Local HR support is limited, and communication with the HR officer in Abu Dhabi is difficult given the distance between the two sites and the lack of a continuous HR presence in Dubai.

Department guidelines in 3 FAM 2610 establish the policies and assignment of responsibilities for the Department's position management system, which is designed to ensure that positions are structured and staffed in the most economic manner. It also underscores the need for coordination between operating managers, personnel staffs, management operations staffs, and budget staffs in position management implementation. Guidance in 3 FAM 7513.1 defines responsibilities for managers and supervisors of LE staff for structuring organizations and positions to accomplish mission objectives efficiently and effectively and determining the work in their organizations and creating positions for which there is a valid need.

Recommendation 19: Embassy Abu Dhabi should analyze the staffing needs of Consulate General Dubai and develop quantitative evidence documenting the need for a human resources assistant and request the new position in the its next Mission Strategic Resource Plan. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

According to the LE staff committee in Dubai, the LE staff do not understand the Computer Aided Job Evaluation system and how positions are graded. They are not aware of the criteria for different kinds of awards and want more training opportunities for professional development. The OIG team suggested that the supervisors at the consulate general conduct an off-site training session for LE staff, with team building exercises

There is no formal training program for LE staff at the embassy or consulate general, nor are there individual employee development plans. The mission's HR section does not maintain a master database to track each employee's record of training completed. Guidance in 13 FAM 011 a. states that the Department is fully committed to the career development of its employees, consistent with organizational needs. The OIG team informally recommended the creation of a database to serve this purpose.

Principal officers are required, per 3 FAH-1 H-2811.3, to ensure that work requirements statements for Foreign Service employees are formulated in a timely manner. Generally, the HR officer acts as the principal officer's agent, by maintaining work requirements statements in these employees' personnel folders at post. Only 30 percent of the mission's Foreign Service personnel folders contain work requirements statements. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that the HR section take responsibility for placing copies of work requirements statements in all of the personnel folders of the current rating period, to satisfy the requirement of 3 FAH-1 H-2811.3.

Most LE staff members are third country nationals. The embassy follows the Office of Overseas Employment's local employment recruitment policy for hiring, but given the local situation with third country nationals, the process takes more time in the U.A.E. and leads to unavoidable delays. The U.A.E. Government requires the embassy to pay for employee visas and requires all employees to have residence permits. Selected employees must receive their medical and security clearances before the embassy seeks a visa, which causes even more delays. The embassy advertises all vacant LE positions within and outside the embassy, and processes all applications electronically. The embassy recently received over 400 applications for a telephone operator position. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi advertise some vacant positions exclusively in-house, to provide more promotion and career development opportunities for existing LE staff.

Embassy Abu Dhabi would benefit from reviewing and possibly revising three additional areas in relation to the local compensation plan. LE staff question why the embassy's local compensation policy requires them to use all of their existing annual leave before being allowed to use annual leave restored from a previous leave year. Employees often lose carryover leave at the end of the year because, as stated in 3 FAM 7436 b., "annual leave restored under this provision must be scheduled and used by the end of the leave year in which restored." The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Abu Dhabi change this policy in its local compensation plan, subject to the approval of the Office of Overseas Employment.

The second issue concerns the carryover of annual leave. LE staff would like to see the "use or lose" policy changed, to allow unused leave to carry over to the next year. The OIG team suggested to the HR officer that the post submit this issue to the Office of Overseas Employment, for review in relation to prevailing practice among comparators.

Third, the embassy pays the LE staff housing allowance annually by voucher, even though the post's local compensation plan indicates that payments should be made through the FSN payroll system. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Abu Dhabi change the plan to permit payment of the housing allowance by voucher. In addition, the embassy requires LE staff to complete a certificate each year to verify their eligibility for the housing allowance. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Abu Dhabi conduct spot checks to confirm the validity of the employee housing allowance claims.

On occasion, there is a disconnect between the HR section and the financial management office regarding instances when U.S. employees are absent from post for more than 30 days under travel orders that do not authorize payment of travel per diem allowance. In these cases, Department of State Standardized Regulations require that the employee's per diem allowance be terminated "as of the 31st calendar day of absence from the post." (DSSR 224.2 b.) The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi establish written procedures for terminating post allowance when employees and family members are away from post for more than 30 days under travel orders which do not authorize payment of travel per diem allowance.

The current post report, dated August 2003, is outdated. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi update its post report.

The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi update and publish its motor vehicle policy, including a requirement that passengers sign the OF-108 or equivalent, and that the embassy require Consulate General Dubai to do the same.

Because taxis and rental vehicles are readily available and safe in Abu Dhabi, the embassy does not allow home-to-office transportation for any employees except the deputy chief of mission, who pays for this home-to-office transportation. However, the embassy made an exception to this policy for the chief of the political section, who departed post early.

Consulate General Dubai

The general services section at Consulate General Dubai works diligently to meet the myriad challenges confronting it. Despite the growth of the consulate general, general services staffing has remained basically static. The ICASS council has approved nine new positions for the section, including four LE staff positions to provide visitor support for the large number of Afghanistan and Pakistan related congressional delegations and other high-level visitors to Dubai. The Department has also approved a second general services officer position for Dubai. The section will be much better staffed when these additional employees are added.

Consulate General Dubai has been paying for travel management services since 2005, but has no evidence of a contract, purchase order, or other authorizing document. Because Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai do not always communicate well, Embassy Abu Dhabi may have thought that Dubai had issued a purchase order for these services, while Consulate General Dubai may have thought that Abu Dhabi has issued a contract. The financial management office in Abu Dhabi did not have a copy of the obligating document, but continued to pay invoices. Federal acquisitions regulations (FAR 4.101) state that only contracting officers shall sign contracts on behalf of the United States and 14 FAM 215 e. requires that unauthorized commitments “exceeding \$1,000 must be ratified by the Procurement Executive.” Limiting the ability to sign contracts to contracting officers is a vital management control to ensure that U.S. government funds are expended judiciously.

Recommendation 21: Embassy Abu Dhabi should report to the Office of the Procurement Executive the apparent unauthorized commitment of payments since 2005 for travel management center services in Dubai without a contract or other authorizing document. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

The interagency housing board consists of nine members representing all agencies at post. The housing board, regional security officer, and the post occupational, safety, and health officer (POSHO) approve properties before leasing them. While the housing board maintains some minutes of its proceedings, the post would benefit from better written records, including justifications for decisions as required by 15 FAM 212.3. In particular, the housing board must document decisions that are one time exceptions to policies, procedures, or regulations, such as the assignment of housing which is larger than warranted by family size. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi require Consulate General Dubai to maintain more complete written records of its housing board meetings and decisions.

Consulate General Dubai is not using the OBO model for short-term residential leases. In recent years, the real estate market in Dubai has had a shortage of appropriate housing. The only way the consulate general could rent residences was to agree to landlords' demands to use the "standard" Dubai lease. According to 15 FAM 341, the post must use the OBO model lease. OBO developed the model lease to protect the U.S. Government as much as possible from potential liability, and instructs posts to request waivers when they change the language in the model lease, since changes in wording could lead to a diminution of U.S. Government rights.

Recommendation 22: Embassy Abu Dhabi should direct Consulate General Dubai to submit the standard Dubai lease document to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the Office of the Legal Adviser for review and guidance. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

The consulate general recently created a full-time LE property management employee. Previously, a part-time employee performed these functions. The consulate general is performing its personal property management responsibilities admirably. It has not, however, designated in writing who should perform key personal property management functions, to ensure that these functions are carried out as required in 14 FAM 411. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Consulate General Dubai designate in writing the

distinct positions of property management officer, accountable property officer, property disposal officer, and receiving officer. The OIG team suggested that the mission select an employee of the embassy as the property disposal officer to ensure proper separation of duties.

The general services officer, the only contracting officer at the consulate general, has a contract warrant for \$250,000. His back-up is one of the contracting officers at Embassy Abu Dhabi. There is only one procurement clerk at Consulate General Dubai. The procurement section at Embassy Abu Dhabi handles all contracting actions for the consulate general. Consulate General Dubai does not have any blanket purchase agreements, despite the fact that it would cut down on the consulate general's workload. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi assist Consulate General Dubai in establishing blanket purchase agreements in accordance with the Department of State Acquisition regulations (DOSAR 613.303-2). As noted, Embassy Abu Dhabi would also benefit from bulk funding blanket purchase agreements and purchase card purchases.

As noted, Embassy Abu Dhabi is working with OBO to rent joint warehouse space for both the embassy and the consulate general. Presently, the consulate general stores property in a portion of a local moving company's warehouse; in effect, this space is the consulate general's warehouse. However, a purchase order is being used as the obligating document, which conflicts with 15 FAM 341, which requires that overseas posts use OBO's model lease, not a purchase order, when leasing space. The OIG team counseled the general services section of Consulate General Dubai to use the model lease when leasing space in the future.

The authorizing officer at post is required to issue individual or blanket travel authorizations for evacuation of official U.S. citizen employees in the event of an emergency in accordance with 14 FAM 535.2-1. The Department recommends that the embassy prepare these orders in advance. Embassy Abu Dhabi has prepared emergency travel orders for its official Department employees and their dependents at the embassy and at Consulate General Dubai, but it has not done so for the employees of other agencies. The OIG left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi prepare emergency travel orders for all official U.S. citizen employees at both posts.

Facilities Management

The previous facilities management officer departed Abu Dhabi in June 2009. A temporary-duty facilities manager arrived at the embassy in July 2009 and remained until December. Since December, the assistant general services officer has overseen this section. A replacement facilities manager is due to arrive in August 2010. While operations are running smoothly at Embassy Abu Dhabi, Consulate General Dubai needs assistance from an experienced, knowledgeable facilities manager, particularly in the areas of safety, health, environmental management, and fire protection. The OIG team urged Embassy Abu Dhabi to redouble its efforts in the coming months to secure a temporary-duty facilities manager to oversee facilities management at both the embassy and the consulate general.

Embassy Abu Dhabi's facilities management program, including its safety and occupational health and fire protection programs, are in excellent shape due in large part to the section's supervisory LE staff employee. This individual ably manages all facets of the section and makes sure that all required inspections, documentation, and reporting are performed in a timely manner.

Consulate General Dubai

The POSHO at Consulate General Dubai is the second-tour general services officer and does not have the time or the background to oversee this important area of responsibility. The OIG team encouraged Embassy Abu Dhabi to assist the consulate general in its safety and occupational health and fire protection programs, should it secure a temporary-duty facilities manager over the coming months. The OIG team also left an informal recommendation that Consulate General Dubai assist the POSHO by setting up a safety, health, and environmental management committee, as required under 15 FAM 933.1.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

There are ten positions in the financial management section, which is headed up by a third-tour financial management officer, who arrived at post in September 2008. Prior to November 2009, the officer also oversaw the human resources portfolio. The financial management section includes a financial specialist (with alternate certifying authority), three budget analysts, a senior voucher examiner, three voucher examiners, a main timekeeper/voucher

examiner, and a class B cashier. The section received high marks on the latest ICASS customer satisfaction survey.

The section has no formal voucher precertification process, as prescribed by 4 FAH-3 H-425.1c. The certifying officers conduct their own review prior to certification. The senior voucher examiner's position description includes duties related to precertification. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi institute the precertification process to streamline voucher processing and enable the financial management officer to devote more time to financial management and budgeting issues.

ICASS Temporary Duty Policy

Embassy Abu Dhabi is not charging agencies for basic ICASS support provided to temporary-duty personnel. Consequently, the embassy is not fully recovering ICASS costs from other agencies for long-term and short-term temporary-duty personnel. The embassy has not taken advantage of the ICASS temporary-duty module provided by the ICASS service center as a mechanism for charging other agencies. The guidance contained in 6 FAH-5 H-362 states that, at a minimum, each embassy is required to publish a written policy that explains which services to provide to temporary-duty personnel and the anticipated costs. Each post must work with its ICASS council to come up with a policy that is applied equally to all visitors.

Recommendation 23: Embassy Abu Dhabi should publish and implement a written policy for charging temporary-duty personnel for basic International Cooperative Administrative Support Services support. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Embassy Abu Dhabi does not have a representation plan reflecting events designed to meet MSP goals and objectives by section. In lieu of a formal representation plan, the financial management officer consults with the front office on the allocation of funds. The post also has no current policy on submitting representation claims with updated per capita limits. The OIG team informally recommended that Embassy Abu Dhabi develop a representation plan and issue a management instruction on submission of representation claims.

The IM officer, a U.S. direct-hire employee, oversees the mission's information systems and information programs centers. Other U.S. direct-hire staff in the IM section are: an information programs officer, an information systems officer, and an IM specialist. All four Americans are scheduled to depart the embassy in the next six months. Consulate General Dubai's IM unit is slated to have two U.S. direct-hire IM staff members, but for most of the past year it has operated with just one, an information programs officer. During the OIG inspection, the Regional Information Management Center-Frankfurt sent a temporary-duty IM specialist to assist the information programs officer in Dubai. The information programs officer is scheduled to depart in May 2010, but the Department has not named a replacement, nor has it filled the other U.S. direct-hire IM position. The embassy's nine LE staff members include three IM specialists, two telephone technicians, two telephone operators, and two pouch/mail room clerks.

Embassy Abu Dhabi's sensitive but unclassified OpenNet network supports approximately 320 users with 260 workstations and six servers. Consulate General Dubai operates its own OpenNet connection, separate from the embassy, with five servers and 130 workstations to support 171 users. The embassy and the consulate general recently became the first NEA posts to migrate to the Department's State Messaging and Archive Retrieval Toolset, and the general consensus throughout the mission is that the users are pleased with its features. Working with Diplomatic Telecommunications Service Program Office, the embassy and consulate general increased their bandwidth from 2 to 4 megabits per second.

Diplomatic Pouch

The government of the U.A.E. often tries to inspect the embassy's classified and unclassified diplomatic pouches arriving and departing from Abu Dhabi International Airport. In the past 14 months, there have been airport confrontations with the U.A.E. inspectors over their attempts to inspect the diplomatic pouch cargo of foreign governments. These disputes have meant that outgoing unclassified diplomatic pouch cargo is held, or incoming pouch

cargo is sent to another destination without unloading. In an attempt to resolve the problem, the embassy has sent diplomatic notes, and the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs and the Ambassador have met with the U.A.E.'s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Currently, while letting classified pouches leave the country unhindered, the U.A.E. Government insists on inspecting or x raying outgoing unclassified pouches. Inspecting diplomatic pouches is specifically prohibited in article 27, paragraph 3 of the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. The inconsistent application of the rules that the U.A.E. imposes on embassy pouches have negatively affected the embassy's ability to conduct business. As of March 2010, the U.A.E. government is not inspecting incoming pouches, but OBO is concerned that a future restriction may affect importation of building materials for the new consulate general building in Dubai.

Recommendation 24: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and Embassy Abu Dhabi, should develop a strategy for reasserting the U.S. Government's rights with respect to diplomatic pouches under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. (Action: NEA, in coordination with Embassy Abu Dhabi, DS, and L)

(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 25: (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)

QUALITY OF LIFE

Community Liaison Office

The community liaison office (CLO) coordinator at Embassy Abu Dhabi is new to the position, and is scheduled to receive formal CLO training in spring 2010. The CLO coordinator had no overlap with her predecessor, and at the time of the inspection was reviewing office files to determine what programs had worked well. She has initiated several special activity clubs based on the expressed interests of community members. The OIG team suggested that the CLO coordinator conduct a community needs survey, as suggested by the Department's family liaison office, to identify areas of morale concern that the CLO might address, an idea the coordinator readily accepted.

Orientation programs which introduce newly arrived staff to the work and services of the embassy and to life in the host country are important CLO functions. Previous orientations were half-day tours of the embassy, during which section heads gave ten-minute descriptions of their offices and responsibilities. While the embassy tour is a good idea, it does not provide practical information about personal security, the general services office, medical unit, or other entities that provide practical services to community members. The tour also fails to provide an introduction to host country culture and customs. The OIG team suggested that the CLO coordinator consider working with post management to expand the orientation program to a full day, with greater emphasis on these issues.

Consulate General Dubai

Two eligible family members share the CLO coordinator position at Consulate General Dubai, each working alone two full days a week and sharing Tuesdays. One co-CLO coordinator has received formal CLO training. The other has not, but since she is leaving the position soon she did not think training, at that point, would be beneficial for the post. Both co-CLO coordinators report to the consulate general management officer, and also receive direction from the executive office.

The Dubai CLO is disadvantageously located within the consulate general, separated from most of the rest of the offices by two (20-floor) elevator rides. This has the effect of discouraging drop-in visits by consulate general personnel. The co-CLO coordinators make a practice of daily "walkabouts" to

remind consulate general staff of their presence, and to encourage participation in CLO-sponsored events. Because the location of the consulate general does not lend itself to easy visits from spouses, the coordinators also arrange monthly coffees at the homes of community members to discuss problems and concerns.

Meanwhile, some community members complain that most CLO-sponsored activities are directed toward families with school age children, excluding single or unaccompanied officers at post.

The OIG team suggested that a community needs survey could be useful in determining which CLO services would be valuable to the consulate general community. The team also suggested that a CLO advisory board, made up of representatives from a cross-section of the community, could give the co-CLO coordinators a better sense of support and relieve them of having to guess what kinds of activities would be appealing to community members.

CLO activities are funded by the American Embassy Employees Association at Embassy Abu Dhabi. The Dubai CLO does not have a discrete budget; instead, the co-CLO coordinators submit their expenses reports to the association for reimbursement. If the association delays making reimbursements, it can mean that the co-CLO coordinators are making CLO expenditures out of pocket, sometimes for months. This funding arrangement also means that the co-CLO coordinators in Dubai have no financial guidelines to help them determine an appropriate activity level. The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi work with the American Embassy Employees Association and the Dubai co-CLO coordinators to establish an appropriate annual budget for the consulate general CLO.

Equal Employment Opportunity

The Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) counselor at Embassy Abu Dhabi takes her duties seriously and actively promotes the Department's EEO programs. For example, she recently held training for all country team members, using training materials supplied by the Office of Civil Rights. She has also scheduled similar EEO training in April 2010 for all employees at the embassy. The embassy has published the Secretary of State's Statements on

Discriminatory and Sexual Harassment and on Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity in mission-wide notices. The embassy also recently published information on the Federal Women's Program, including the name and contact information on the Federal Women's Program coordinator.

With 214 LE staff members at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai, the embassy would benefit from at least one non-U.S. LE staff liaison for EEO issues for the embassy and another for the consulate general, as encouraged by 3 FAM 1514.2. These LE staff liaisons could assist the EEO counselors at the embassy and the consulate general in reaching out to the LE staff community. The OIG team has left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi appoint at least one non-U.S. LE staff liaison EEO liaison for Embassy Abu Dhabi and at least one for Consulate General Dubai.

Consulate General Dubai

The recently appointed EEO counselor at Consulate General Dubai has prior experience as an EEO counselor. The counselor has received the obligatory 32-hour training program and certification (in 2006) but has not completed the annual eight-hour refresher training, as required to maintain his certification per 3 FAM 1514.1 c. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi enroll the EEO counselor in the refresher training course to maintain his certification.

The consulate general has one EEO bulletin board in the mailroom on the 21st floor. While accessible to U.S. citizen employees as required in 05 State 141556, the bulletin board is located where no one notices it. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that Consulate General Dubai relocate the EEO bulletin board to a more noticeable location, preferably to the 20th floor, where all LE staff can access it.

(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)
(b)(2)(b)(6)(b)(2)(b)(6)

The association manager is new and appears well organized and effective. There are two other employees of the association.

The OIG team has made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi ask the American Embassy Employee Association auditor to submit a management letter assessing the association's internal controls to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.

MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

The August 2009 annual chief of mission management controls assurance statement listed a significant deficiency with the cashiering operations at Consulate General Dubai. The U.S. disbursing officer found recurring problems with excessive number of cash payments over established limits, and a lack of internal controls for managing the subcashier's advance of funds. The lack of a permanent management officer in Dubai has further exacerbated these problems. Embassy Abu Dhabi took corrective actions within the past year to limit petty cash payments,

With the addition of a dedicated HR officer in Abu Dhabi, the financial management officer can spend more time monitoring cashier operations at the consulate general. The consulate general recently hired a property clerk to ensure the separation of duties from the receiving clerk.

Embassy Abu Dhabi has not conducted risk assessments of all sections, but it did conduct reviews of the general services section and conducted a "tabletop" exercise with the OIG questionnaires in preparation for the inspection. The reviews of general services disclosed the lack of a property survey board and the need for more controls on motor pool vehicle keys.

Credit Card Gas Purchases

Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai use a gas card system, by which individual cards are issued for each official vehicle. The embassy reviews the statements each month, but it does not link the gas consumption of each vehicle with the number of kilometers driven by that vehicle.

Embassy Abu Dhabi no longer uses the vehicle daily use record (OF-108), which has a section for recording mileage and gas consumption. Instead, the embassy uses a trip ticket system, which does not include a way to track gas consumption in relation to the number of kilometers driven. Consulate General Dubai has never had a motor pool supervisor, and has only three drivers for a fleet of 29 official vehicles. It does not fill out or maintain information from page two (the back) of the daily use record for any of its vehicles. Guidance in 14 FAM 436.1 requires that all chauffeurs and incidental operators of official

vehicles use the daily vehicle use record. The employee operating or servicing the vehicle must complete the form daily, except for passenger signatures. The responsible officer or employees must periodically review the OF-108, or an equivalent, for each vehicle; they also must check the accuracy of odometer readings. The embassy has no accurate way of checking that fuel usage tracks with the number of kilometers driven, which could lead to misuse of the official gas cards.

Recommendation 28: Embassy Abu Dhabi should amend its present trip ticket form to include an entry for the odometer reading at the time of each gas purchase to track the amount of fuel used against the kilometers driven. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 29: Embassy Abu Dhabi should direct Consulate General Dubai to complete page two of the Daily Vehicle Use Record, including completing the entry for odometer readings, to enable the embassy to monitor whether official gas cards are being used correctly. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Unliquidated Obligations

A large number (3,133) of open obligations from FY 2006 to FY 2008 totaling over \$6 million remain unliquidated, particularly in the diplomatic and consular program and public diplomacy allotments. Embassy Abu Dhabi has made progress in deobligating these funds, but it has additional work to do to clear out obligations for purchase orders that are no longer valid.

The financial management office does not regularly consult with the procurement office to determine whether open obligations are still valid. There is little coordination between the financial management office and the procurement office to clear unliquidated balances when a particular purchase order or contract is no longer valid.

In accordance with 4 FAM 082.7, the post financial management office is required to review its obligations and take necessary actions to deobligate funds that are no longer valid so they can be used for other like purposes. This requirement includes conducting a review prior to year-end close, which will facilitate completion of the fiscal year end certification that all open obligations are valid.

Recommendation 30: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish and implement procedures to review prior-year accounts and deobligate funds when obligations are no longer valid. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Outstanding Bills of Collection

The embassy routinely pays for the employees' personal cell phone, home telephone, and Internet charges, and then bills the employees for these personal charges. The financial management office maintains a working centralized accounts receivable ledger. This ledger enables the office to track all outstanding indebtedness, to make sure all bills are collected and to track employees who are delinquent. The section has sent repeated reminders to employees, but they have not resulted in employees paying their outstanding bills. Initially, the OIG team found 10 pages of unpaid bills totaling over \$32,000. Over the course of the inspection, the financial management section was able to reduce numbers of unpaid bills to seven pages totaling \$26,000. Consulate General Dubai has a similar problem collecting outstanding bills. Also, because of a vacancy in the telephone operator position, it is behind in billing employees. The consulate general has many outstanding bills.

According to 4 FAM 493.1-3 a., if the debtor does not respond to follow-up notices and telephone calls within 60 days of the initial notice, the post financial management officer will send a third notice to the debtor restating the information previously provided, including the cumulative interest, administrative charges, and penalties. The third notice will inform the debtor that all further collection action will be undertaken by the Global Financial Services office in Charleston.

Recommendation 31: Embassy Abu Dhabi should begin the process of documenting collection notices and referring outstanding debts from the embassy and Consulate General Dubai to Global Financial Services in Charleston for collection action in accordance with Department regulations. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Consular Cash Reconciliation

Cashiering in Consulate General Dubai's consular section is done well despite not having a class B cashier at post. A sample of accountability paperwork from the last year did not turn up any discrepancies. Notwithstanding the

fact that there were no problems, the length of time it takes to process routine financial paperwork is a concern. Each day there are consular fee services, the consular cashier delivers the U.A.E. dirhams and credit card receipts to an LE staff member in the general services section of the consulate general. The general services section employee deposits the cash at a bank and sends the bank deposit slip and the credit card receipts to Embassy Abu Dhabi.

The class B cashier in the financial management office in Embassy Abu Dhabi issues an OF-158 form for the cash and the credit card receipts. The cash OF-158 is issued to the Dubai general services office employee and the credit card OF-158 is issued to the consular cashier. The cash OF-158 typically is dated one to three weeks after the collection date, and the credit card OF-158 typically is dated on the day of the collection.

The monthly reconciliation of the daily accounting sheet for consular fees is even more problematic. Over the past 12 months, the average delay from the end of the month until the accountable consular officer signed the daily accounting sheet was 28 days. The average delay from the date that the accountable consular officer signed the daily accounting sheet until the financial management officer signed it was 21 days (although four of the daily accounting sheets had no date next to the financial management officer's signature and one had no date next to the accountable consular officer's signature). For the months that the daily accounting sheet was signed, 49 days passed on average before monthly consular receipts were reconciled. These delays are unacceptable, as they diminish the value of reconciliation. The OIG team left an informal recommendation that both the accountable consular officer and the financial management officer process consular reconciliations promptly and affix accurate dates to the paperwork.

Class B Cashier for Consulate Dubai

According to 4 FAH-3 H-322 b.(3), overseas cash and credit card collections are processed through class B cashiers at individual missions and posts, or through third party collection agents such as banks. The Bureau of Consular Affairs has the responsibility to establish fee collection procedures for consular officers per 7 FAH-1 H-722 . The class B cashiers receive the collections from consular cashiers (and, less commonly, from consular officers and consular agents) and process form OF-158 (General Receipt), in accordance with procedures noted in 4 FAH-3 H-396.4-2. Class B cashiers may also receive collections directly into the U.S. Disbursing Officer account from an offsite

collection agent or bank collecting nonimmigrant visa application fees (machine-readable visa (fees) and issue a corresponding Form OF-158.

Having a dedicated class B cashier will enable the post to deposit funds directly to the U.S. disbursing officer account and maintain the accountability for those funds directly with the servicing U.S. disbursing officer at Global Financial Services in Bangkok, instead of having to do it through Embassy Abu Dhabi. Doing this will enable the section to avoid the processing delays noted above. The cashier would have his/her own automated cashier system and could process not only the deposits but also the official collections through his/her accountability. The financial management officer in Abu Dhabi would maintain oversight responsibility for the cashier operations and would receive reports on consular collections as required.

Recommendation 32: Embassy Abu Dhabi should analyze the staffing needs of Consulate General Dubai and develop quantitative evidence documenting the need for a principal class B cashier, and request the new position in its next Mission Strategic Resource Plan. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Outstanding Interim Cash Advances

According to 4 FAH-3 H-394.4.b., overseas occasional money holders (such as a messenger or an employee in the general services office who is designated to buy small amounts of supplies) may hold funds for a period not to exceed three business days. During unannounced cash verification, the financial management officer found two long-outstanding interim advances of cash from the subcashier in Dubai that were not cleared within the required three-day period. One advance was made to the general services officer for a tablecloth for the consul general's residence, and another advance was made to a military unit for the registration of a vehicle. There is an evident lack of internal controls and follow up on outstanding interim advances, which is preventing timely receipts and settlements of cash advances. The consulate general needs to actively pursue settlement of these outstanding advances with the respective elements to clear them in a timely manner.

In accordance with 4 FAH-3 H-394.4.b., overseas occasional money holders may hold funds for a period not to exceed three business days. These outstanding advances have a negative impact on the cashier's accountability, because the funds were disbursed and the cashier is liable.

Recommendation 33: Embassy Abu Dhabi should instruct Consulate General Dubai to clear all outstanding interim advances that are more than three days old. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

LE staff overtime averaged 1,789 hours per month over the last six months. The embassy last issued a mission policy on overtime in 1998. The mission's forms for requesting overtime are inconsistent and do not always state the reason for requesting overtime as required by 4 FAH-3 H-521.2(b). The OIG team made an informal recommendation that Embassy Abu Dhabi reissue its management notice on the importance of requesting overtime in advance and using a standardized form for approval.

Consular Management Controls

Overall, consular management controls at the mission are good. Both consular sections recently completed their annual certification of consular management controls to the Department. Embassy Abu Dhabi did not report any compliance issues. Consulate General Dubai noted three issues, in addition to the adjudication review that follows. Two of them are covered in the consular section of this report. One minor issue in Dubai is that the alternate consular cashier does not have an advance or a lockable container in which to store it.

Nonimmigrant Visa Adjudication Review

During the 12-month period from February 23, 2009 to February 22, 2010 the consul general in Dubai did not review any of the consular section chief's 1,368 NIV adjudications. NIV adjudication review is a critical consular management control and is mandated by 7 FAH-1 H-648.1-3. In addition to this lapse, the section chief did not list this deficiency in the February 15, 2010 telegram (10 Dubai 000046), reporting to the Bureau of Consular Affairs the results of the review of consular management controls. Paragraph one of that message listed three other items that were not in full compliance. The section chief in Consulate General Dubai was counseled about the importance of accurately reporting the results of the consular management controls review.

Recommendation 34: Embassy Abu Dhabi should instruct Consulate General Dubai to perform required nonimmigrant visa adjudication reviews for all adjudications. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 8:

Recommendation 9:

Recommendation 10: Embassy Abu Dhabi should negotiate and execute a memorandum of agreement between the embassy and Consulate General Dubai outlining the responsibilities for all management functions. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 11: Embassy Abu Dhabi should schedule meetings between the embassy's management staff and Consulate General Dubai's management staff, at least twice a month, to discuss management issues of mutual interest. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 12: Embassy Abu Dhabi should require its International Cooperative Administrative Support Services council and service providers to review and update the embassy's and Consulate General Dubai's International Cooperative Administrative Support Services standards. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 13: Embassy Abu Dhabi should require its International Cooperative Administrative Support Services service providers, as well as those at Consulate General Dubai, to accurately measure performance against the International Cooperative Administrative Support Services service standards, as a way of evaluating performance levels and as a basis for making resource decisions. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 14: The Bureau of Human Resources should conduct an analysis of the grades of the U.S. direct-hire positions at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai, in order to properly grade all positions. (Action: HR)

Recommendation 15: Embassy Abu Dhabi should consummate a bilateral work agreement with the Government of the United Arab Emirates. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

- Recommendation 16:** The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with Embassy Abu Dhabi, should analyze the results of the latest salary and benefit survey to ascertain the appropriate level of any justifiable increases for locally employed staff at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai. (Action: HR, in coordination with Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 17:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should complete all outstanding performance evaluations for locally employed staff of the embassy in a timely manner, and should require Consulate General Dubai to complete all such reports in a timely manner. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 18:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should develop and implement a mission-wide post orientation program for all newly hired locally employed staff. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 19:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should analyze the staffing needs of Consulate General Dubai and develop quantitative evidence documenting the need for a human resources assistant and request the new position in the its next Mission Strategic Resource Plan. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 20:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish and implement procedures for bulk funding blanket purchase agreement and purchase card purchases at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 21:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should report to the Office of the Procurement Executive the apparent unauthorized commitment of payments since 2005 for travel management center services in Dubai without a contract or other authorizing document. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 22:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should direct Consulate General Dubai to submit the standard Dubai lease document to the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations and the Office of the Legal Adviser for review and guidance. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)
- Recommendation 23:** Embassy Abu Dhabi should publish and implement a written policy for charging temporary-duty personnel for basic International Cooperative Administrative Support Services support. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 24: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with the Office of the Legal Adviser, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and Embassy Abu Dhabi, should develop a strategy for reasserting the U.S. Government's rights with respect to diplomatic pouches under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations. (Action: NEA, in coordination with Embassy Abu Dhabi, DS, and L)

Recommendation 25:

Recommendation 26: Embassy Abu Dhabi should realign the duties of the information systems security officers to ensure the appropriate separation of information systems security officer duties. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 27:

Recommendation 28: Embassy Abu Dhabi should amend its present trip ticket form to include an entry for the odometer reading at the time of each gas purchase to track the amount of fuel used against the kilometers driven. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 29: Embassy Abu Dhabi should direct Consulate General Dubai to complete page two of the Daily Vehicle Use Record, including completing the entry for odometer readings, to enable the embassy to monitor whether official gas cards are being used correctly. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 30: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish and implement procedures to review prior-year accounts and deobligate funds when obligations are no longer valid. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 31: Embassy Abu Dhabi should begin the process of documenting collection notices and referring outstanding debts from the embassy and Consulate General Dubai to Global Financial Services in Charleston for collection action in accordance with Department regulations. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 32: Embassy Abu Dhabi should analyze the staffing needs of Consulate General Dubai and develop quantitative evidence documenting the need for a principal class B cashier, and request the new position in its next Mission Strategic Resource Plan. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 33: Embassy Abu Dhabi should instruct Consulate General Dubai to clear all outstanding interim advances that are more than three days old. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

Recommendation 34: Embassy Abu Dhabi should instruct Consulate General Dubai to perform required nonimmigrant visa adjudication reviews for all adjudications. (Action: Embassy Abu Dhabi)

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 onsite compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Executive Direction

The MSP is not used to manage mission activities throughout the year, and most employees have difficulty articulating mission goals.

Informal Recommendation 1: Embassy Abu Dhabi should develop and articulate a long range vision of mission goals.

Public Diplomacy

Embassy Abu Dhabi needs a mission-wide communication strategy.

Informal Recommendation 2: Embassy Abu Dhabi should take advantage of the anticipated arrival of an embassy information officer to develop a comprehensive, mission-wide communication strategy.

The IRC is not being used at a level anywhere near its full potential.

Informal Recommendation 3: Embassy Abu Dhabi should develop a plan to integrate the Information Resource Center more fully into the embassy's public diplomacy outreach effort, including exploring the option of establishing an American reference facility at a school, mall, or other publicly accessible location.

The embassy Web site does not properly reflect the full nature and scope of the embassy's engagement with the U.A.E.

Informal Recommendation 4: Embassy Abu Dhabi should send the Information Resource Center director, who is also the embassy webmaster, for formal webmaster training.

Because it is so difficult to enter the IRC in the embassy and the public diplomacy offices in the consulate general, the number of potential students receiving educational counseling is very low.

Informal Recommendation 5: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish a relationship with AMIDEAST to leverage their resources and their capability to interact directly with potential students.

The public affairs officer at Consulate General Dubai has contact with people in the northern emirates that can provide good anecdotal information about public attitudes in the U.A.E.

Informal Recommendation 6: Embassy Abu Dhabi should instruct the public affairs officer at Consulate General Dubai to contribute directly to the embassy's reporting efforts.

Consular Affairs

Consular sections in Abu Dhabi and Dubai are not training new consular employees effectively.

Informal Recommendation 7: Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai should develop an effective and comprehensive training program for new employees.

Consular coordination between Abu Dhabi and Dubai needs improvement.

Informal Recommendation 8: Embassy Abu Dhabi should look for ways to enhance coordination and communication between the two consular sections.

Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai are providing notarial services related to U.S. educational documents in contravention of Department guidance.

Informal Recommendation 9: Embassy Abu Dhabi should explore alternatives to authenticating the U.S. seal on U.S. educational documents, with the goal of ceasing authentication as soon as possible.

Authentication of public documents is complicated because the U.A.E. is not a party to the Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents (The Hague Legalization Convention).

Informal Recommendation 21:

The embassy lacks a comprehensive training plan, as promoted by the Department in 13 FAM 011, and does not maintain a master database of all training received by employees.

Informal Recommendation 22: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish a training plan for mission employees and maintain a master database of all training received by employees.

The majority of personnel folders of U.S. direct-hire employees do not contain current work requirements statements as required by 3 FAH-1 H-2811.3.

Informal Recommendation 23: Embassy Abu Dhabi should require that the personnel folders of American Foreign Service employees at the embassy and Consulate General Dubai include copies of current work requirements statements.

Mission policy is to advertise within and outside the mission for all position vacancies for LE staff.

Informal Recommendation 24: Embassy Abu Dhabi should advertise some vacant positions in-house to provide more promotion and career development opportunities for existing LE staff.

Embassy policy requires that LE staff use all their existing annual leave before being allowed to use annual leave restored from a previous leave year in accordance with 3 FAM 7436 . Employees often lose carryover leave at the end of the year because of this situation.

Informal Recommendation 25: Embassy Abu Dhabi should request the Bureau of Human Resources to change the policy to allow LE staff to use restored leave prior to annual leave.

The LE staff housing allowance is paid annually by voucher, contrary to the local compensation plan, which stipulates making payments electronically through the FSN payroll system.

Informal Recommendation 26: Embassy Abu Dhabi should request the Bureau of Human Resources to change the local compensation plan to allow payment of the housing allowance by voucher instead of through the Foreign Service national pay system.

The LE staff housing allowance is paid annually by voucher to each employee based on a certificate of eligibility completed each year by the employee.

Informal Recommendation 27: Embassy Abu Dhabi should conduct spot checks of certificates of eligibility for housing allowance to confirm validity of locally employed staff claims.

The post allowance for American employees who depart post is not always discontinued after being away from post for more than thirty days, which is against regulations (DSSR 224.2).

Informal Recommendation 28: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish a written procedure for terminating the post allowance of American employees who depart post for more than 30 days under travel orders which do not authorize payment of travel per diem allowance.

The current post report is dated August 2003, which is against regulations (2 FAM 172.1) which specify that post reports should reflect current local conditions and activities.

Informal Recommendation 29: Embassy Abu Dhabi should update the post report for both the embassy and Consulate General Dubai.

The embassy has not established a property survey board, as required under 14 FAM 416.5-2.

Informal Recommendation 30: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish a property survey board.

The accountable property officer does not conduct spot checks of expendable and nonexpendable inventory in the warehouse to verify the accuracy of property records, as required by 14 FAM 411.2-2(c).

Informal Recommendation 31: Embassy Abu Dhabi should conduct spot checks of property in the warehouse.

The embassy last issued its motor vehicle policy in 2005.

Informal Recommendation 32: Embassy Abu Dhabi should update and publish in motor vehicle policy for the embassy, and include a requirement that passengers sign the OF-108 or equivalent and to require Consulate General Dubai to do the same.

While the Consulate General Dubai housing board maintains some minutes of its proceedings, it needs to do a better job of maintaining written records, including justifications for decisions, as required by 15 FAM 212.3.

Informal Recommendation 33: Embassy Abu Dhabi should require Consulate General Dubai to maintain more complete written records of its housing board meetings and decisions.

Consulate General Dubai has not designated in writing who should perform key property management functions to assure that these functions are carried out, as required in 14 FAM 411.2.

Informal Recommendation 34: Embassy Abu Dhabi should direct Consulate Dubai to designate in writing a property management officer, accountable property officer, property disposal officer, and receiving officer.

Consulate Dubai does not have any blanket purchase agreements (Department of State Acquisition Regulation 613.303), despite the fact that it would cut down on the consulate general's workload.

Informal Recommendation 35: Embassy Abu Dhabi should assist Consulate General Dubai in establishing blanket purchase agreements .

While Embassy Abu Dhabi has prepared emergency travel orders for its official Department employees and their dependents at the embassy and at Consulate General Dubai, it has not done so for the employees of other agencies.

Informal Recommendation 36: Embassy Abu Dhabi should prepare emergency travel orders for all official U.S. citizen employees at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai, and hold them in readiness should an emergency occur.

Consulate General Dubai could also assist the POSHO by appointing a safety, health, and environmental management committee, as required under 15 FAM 933.1.

Informal Recommendation 37: Embassy Abu Dhabi should require Consulate Dubai to set up a safety, health, and environmental management committee.

The section has no formal voucher precertification process prior to the final approval of payments by the certifying officer, as required (4 FAH-3 H-425.1 c.).

Informal Recommendation 38: Embassy Abu Dhabi should institute the precertification process in accordance with Department regulations.

Embassy Abu Dhabi does not have a representation plan reflecting events to meet MSP goals and objectives by section, as required in 3 FAM 3246.1.

Informal Recommendation 39: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish a formal representation plan.

There is no current management instruction providing guidance on submission of representation claims, including updated per capita expenditure limits (DSSR 343, DSSR 344, and 4 FAH-3 H-443.4).

Informal Recommendation 40: Embassy Abu Dhabi should issue an updated written procedure on submission of representation claims to include guidance.

The voucher section does not maintain copies of all contracts, as required by regulations (4 FAH-3 H-423.5-1).

Informal Recommendation 41: Embassy Abu Dhabi should establish a procedure to maintain copies of all contracts.

There are certain recurring payments for final utility bills and U.A.E. visas that require payments in cash U.A.E. dirhams over \$500, which is not in keeping with regulations (4 FAH-3 H-394.2-3).

Informal Recommendation 42: Embassy Abu Dhabi should seek a waiver from the Bureau of Resource Management authorizing these recurring payments over established limits as prescribed in the regulations.

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

Informal Recommendation 43: Embassy Abu Dhabi should purchase a counterfeit detection machine for Consulate General Dubai.

There is no management instruction explaining the process for requesting and approval for R&R travel and ticketing.

Informal Recommendation 44: Embassy Abu Dhabi should issue a management instruction with written procedures on requesting and approval of R&R travel, which specifies that all requests from the consulate general must be routed through Embassy Abu Dhabi for approval.

Consulate General Dubai does not have a budget for Program, ICASS or Public Diplomacy for managing operations.

Informal Recommendation 45: Embassy Abu Dhabi should request Consulate Dubai to submit budget requests for all Department allotments to facilitate financial planning and manage funding to support Consulate operations.

The Community Liaison Officers at Consulate General Dubai have no discrete budget and submit their expenses reports to the American Embassy Employees Association for reimbursement, an arrangement which means the Dubai CLO coordinators are frequently out of pocket and have no financial guidelines to help them determine an appropriate activity level.

Informal Recommendation 46: Embassy Abu Dhabi should work with American Embassy Employee Association and the community liaison officers in Dubai to establish an appropriate annual budget for the Dubai community liaison office coordinator.

With 214 locally employed staff at Embassy Abu Dhabi and Consulate General Dubai, Embassy Abu Dhabi should identify at least one non-American LE staff liaison for EEO issues for the embassy and another for the consulate general as encouraged by 3 FAM 1514.2.

Informal Recommendation 47: Embassy Abu Dhabi should appoint at least one non-American locally employed staff liaison equal employment opportunity liaison for Embassy Abu Dhabi, and at least one for Consulate General Dubai.

The recently appointed EEO counselor at Consulate General Dubai has not completed the annual, eight-hour refresher counselor training, as required by 3 FAM 1514.1(c) to maintain his certification.

Informal Recommendation 48: Embassy Abu Dhabi should enroll the equal employment opportunity counselor at Consulate General Dubai in the eight-hour refresher training to maintain his certification.

The consulate general has provided for one EEO bulletin board in the mailroom on the 21st floor. While accessible to American citizen employees as required in 05 State 141556, the bulletin board is located where no one notices it.

Informal Recommendation 49: Embassy Abu Dhabi should request Consulate General Dubai to relocate the equal employment opportunity bulletin board to a different, more noticeable location, preferably to the 20th floor, where not only Ameri-

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

Position	Name	Arrival Date
Ambassador	Richard G. Olson	09/08
Deputy chief of mission	Douglas C. Greene	09/08
Chiefs of Section:		
Political	Vacant	
Economic	Susannah E. Cooper	08/08
Consular	R. Sean Cooper	08/08
Public Affairs	Steven L. Pike	08/07
Management	Kristi D. Hogan-Lahmar	07/09
Middle East Partnership Initiative	Frank W. Falzone	
Regional Security	James A. J. Rowe	10/07
Political/Military	Peter R. Enzminger	08/07
Other Agencies:		
Department of Commerce:		
Foreign Commercial Service	Laurie Farris	08/08
Department of Defense:		
U.S. Defense Representative	Maj. Gen. Henry C. Morrow	01/10
Defense Attaché Office	Col. Bret G. Rider	01/07
Defense Reutilization and Marketing Service	Richard L. Brunson	03/07
U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command	John A. Phillips	10/06
U.S. Liaison Office	Col. David A. Sprague	06/08
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Khaled M. Masoud	02/08
Marine Corps Embassy Security		

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

ABBREVIATIONS

AMIDEAST	America-Mideast Educational and Training Services
CLO	Community liaison office
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	U.S. Department of State
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FSN	Foreign Service national
FY	Fiscal year
HR	Human resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information management
IRPO	Iran Regional Presence Office
IRC	Information Resource Center
ISSO	Information systems security officer
LE	Locally employed
MEPI	Middle East Partnership Initiative
MSP	Mission Strategic Plan
NEA	Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
NIV	Nonimmigrant visa
OBO	Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
PAS	Public affairs section
POSHO	Post occupational, safety, and health officer

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 e-mail 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.