

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

Report of Inspection

Limited-Scope Inspection of Embassy Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Report Number ISP-I-08-50, August 2008

~~IMPORTANT NOTICE~~

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

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF THE INSPECTION

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

PURPOSE

The Office of Inspections provides the Secretary of State, the Chairman of the BBG, and Congress with systematic and independent evaluations of the operations of the Department and the BBG. Inspections cover three broad areas, consistent with Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980:

- **Policy Implementation:** whether policy goals and objectives are being effectively achieved; whether U.S. interests are being accurately and effectively represented; and whether all elements of an office or mission are being adequately coordinated.
- **Resource Management:** whether resources are being used and managed with maximum efficiency, effectiveness, and economy and whether financial transactions and accounts are properly conducted, maintained, and reported.
- **Management Controls:** whether the administration of activities and operations meets the requirements of applicable laws and regulations; whether internal management controls have been instituted to ensure quality of performance and reduce the likelihood of mismanagement; whether instance of fraud, waste, or abuse exist: and whether adequate steps for detection, correction, and prevention have been taken.

METHODOLOGY

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



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

Office of Inspector General

PREFACE

This report was prepared by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, Section 209 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, the Arms Control and Disarmament Amendments Act of 1987, and the Department of State and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, FY 1996. It is one of a series of audit, inspection, investigative, and special reports prepared by OIG periodically as part of its oversight responsibility with respect to the Department of State and the Broadcasting Board of Governors to identify and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement.

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 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
Acting Inspector General

Address correspondence to: U.S. Department of State, Office of Inspector General, Washington, D.C. 20522-0308

TABLE OF CONTENTS

KEY JUDGMENTS	1
CONTEXT	3
EXECUTIVE DIRECTION	5
POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	7
Political and Economic Reporting and Analysis	7
Public Affairs	8
Consular Affairs	9
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	11
Management Operations	12
Human Resources	12
Income Tax	12
Electronic Funds Transfer	14
Inflation	14
Defined Contribution Plan	15
Information Management and Information Systems Security	15
Security	16
FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS	19
PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS	21
ABBREVIATIONS	23

KEY JUDGMENTS

- Embassy Tashkent is successfully advancing U.S. policy objectives in the difficult environment of Uzbekistan. Under the leadership of the Ambassador and the deputy chief of mission (DCM), the mission is widening cooperation in areas welcomed by the host government, such as border security and counternarcotics, while continuing to advocate for progress in more sensitive areas such as democracy and human rights.
- Payment of income taxes to the Uzbek government by locally employed (LE) staff is a major morale issue. Until recently, LE staff collectively forwarded a partial, periodic income tax payment to Uzbek authorities. The embassy's recent reconsideration of initiating LE staff salary payments via electronic funds transfer (EFT), in line with Department of State (Department) policy, has raised LE staff concerns that such a move would make individual income levels transparent to local authorities and would result in full tax liability for retroactive and future payments. LE staff also expressed their belief that there would be difficulties in withdrawing their money from a local bank. Embassy management is seeking an equitable way forward.

This was a limited-scope inspection, part of an Office of Inspector General (OIG) effort to focus on major areas of interest rather than examining all the items covered in a traditional inspection. The inspection took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, between May 22 and June 11, 2008.

CONTEXT

Uzbekistan is in a potentially volatile region of recently independent central Asian countries coping with the legacy of the Soviet era, the continuing influence of Russia, and the conflict in neighboring Afghanistan. U.S. relations with Uzbekistan



are difficult, but are gradually improving from the worst period from 2005-2007 stemming from President Karimov's apparent belief that the United States was seeking regime change by promotion of democracy and human rights. During that period, access to the Air Base at Karshi-Khanabad to

support U.S. operations in Afghanistan was terminated, the embassy was forced to reduce its staff from 73 to 26 positions, and several other agencies departed. Uzbekistan is important to the United States because of its geostrategic location at the crossroads of central Asia, its energy resources, and its potential for cooperation with the United States in neighboring Afghanistan.

The mission in Tashkent moved into a new embassy compound in 2006. With the gradual improvement in relations, there are now 52 direct-hire American positions at post. In addition to the Department, four other agencies are represented. A resource chart is attached at the end of this report.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

The Ambassador is effectively leading mission efforts to turn around U.S.-Uzbekistan relations that reached their nadir during the period from 2005-2007. The hostility of the government during that period was such that the current Ambassador's predecessor was unable to meet with senior Uzbek officials and embassy officers were denied access to counterparts. Cooperation with the host government in all areas was virtually nil, and morale of the remaining embassy staff plummeted.

Around the time of the Ambassador's arrival, the government of Uzbekistan expressed a desire to rebuild relations. The Ambassador has led a well-organized team effort to capitalize on that opening over the past nine months since his arrival, making significant progress in improving relations. He motivates and sets clear guidance to all mission elements working to expand the gradually reopening window of cooperation with Uzbekistan. He enjoys the respect and support of the country team, which praised the chief of mission's leadership to the OIG inspectors. Mission officers described to the OIG team the turnaround in morale among American staff that has taken place over the past year.

During the time of the inspection, the OIG team observed the mission in action supporting three separate senior level delegations simultaneously. Mission leadership and facilitative support for each activity was excellent and well coordinated.

The DCM is completing a three-year tour at post, which included several months as chargé during the most difficult period when the Uzbekistan government was openly hostile. By all accounts he did an outstanding job of managing the crisis and continuing essential operations while coping with the downsizing of staff forced by the Uzbekistan government. Proficient in Uzbek and with extensive experience in central Asia, the DCM has been a pillar of support to the Ambassador and all elements of the mission in advancing U.S. policy efforts with Uzbekistan. The DCM's close oversight of daily operations was commented on widely to the OIG team, with a number of staff believing the degree of detailed supervision needs to be reduced.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC REPORTING AND ANALYSIS

The combined political/economic section at Embassy Tashkent includes an FS-02 head of section, four reporting officers, and an eligible family member assistant. The section has five LE staff, some of whom were transferred into political/economic affairs when the embassy was forced by the government of Uzbekistan to downsize and other agencies departed. As a result, the section is generously endowed with staff and well positioned to cover the additional workload which will ensue if the current gradual improvement in relations continues to progress. One other agency, the Drug Enforcement Administration, announced its plans to return to Tashkent during the OIG inspection.

Portfolios are clearly delineated and fairly distributed in the section among the American officers and LE staff. Reporting and analysis from the section is timely and well focused on U.S. policy priorities. Some Washington agencies expressed the desire for a greater quantity of reporting in some areas, such as leadership analysis, but they recognized the difficulty of this in Uzbekistan with its closed and secretive bureaucracy.

The section head manages well, providing overall guidance and direction without micromanaging. There are no regular political/economic section meetings or any with LE staff as a group. U.S. staff expressed to the OIG team their satisfaction with this arrangement, believing they were kept adequately informed, and did not see the need for section meetings in view of the number of coordination meetings at more senior levels. Morale among Americans in the section is generally good. LE staff, physically separated in another part of the chancery, indicated a sense of distance and occasional lack of direction from their American supervisors.

Uzbekistan remains a difficult partner with which to interact. All contacts and issues to be addressed to the host government must be transmitted by diplomatic note through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Not all contacts are approved and many diplomatic notes go unanswered. Adding to the workload is the large number of required annual reports, often overlapping and duplicative in nature. The section

has developed a draft telegram to Washington, which it has shared with neighboring posts, expanding on the problem and suggesting some remedies.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The public affairs section (PAS) administers an innovative and ambitious set of programs and activities in a restrictive host country environment in which there is no true way to measure public opinion. Moreover, participants, especially in exchange programs, are subject to government scrutiny and may face discrimination or retaliation. The staff includes three Foreign Service officers and 12 LE staff. The section is managed by an FS-02 management officer in an out-of-cone and stretch assignment, a tenured mid-level information officer, and an entry-level cultural affairs officer. Cautiously optimistic, they work tirelessly to expand outreach, to overcome obstacles to travel and contact work, and to engage key sectors in dialogue. The Ambassador and DCM give active and full support to the PAS program.

PAS plays an integral role in supporting Mission Strategic Plan goals through information, education, exchange, and cultural programs. With all media outlets under government pressure or control, PAS seeks to fill the void by holding monthly sessions called “Press Gaps.” Weekly “Chay Chats” featuring speakers in English regularly draw 80-100 participants. Democracy Commission grants, International Visitor programs, and news clips and articles posted on the embassy web site (in English and Russian) address human rights issues and the practice of journalism. The Information Resource Center, central to outreach, is heavily used. Almost all activities take place in the embassy because of Uzbek government restrictions on outside activities.

Because nongovernmental organization implementing partners were forced out of Uzbekistan in 2005-2006, PAS administers all aspects of the various student exchange programs. Most participants are from the capital region, because political constraints inhibit wider publicity. PAS has managed to keep the Future Leaders Exchange program alive, albeit under the radar in a new guise called Youth Educational Opportunity. An active alumni group of 3,000 stays in touch via a quarterly newsletter, alumni events, and projects. The Uzbekistan Fulbright Association complements alumni outreach. Both serve as force multipliers for public diplomacy. The in-house Educational Advising Center offers services to Uzbek youth who represent more than half the country’s population. The English-language outreach program, supported by the regional English language officer based at Embassy Astana, offers one of the few opportunities for regular travel and contact work and pays large dividends.

The various grants programs are well managed by the PAO and the information officer, both of whom hold grants warrants to \$100,000. LE staff members responsible for grants management are well trained. The Democracy Commission grant allocation under the Freedom Support Act totals \$200,000. A grant totaling \$31,680 from the Ambassador's fund for cultural preservation has been awarded for a project involving a museum collection. Freedom Support Act-supported micro-grants totaling \$50,000 to a wide array of recipients, while difficult to formally publicize, are making a positive difference in people's lives.

Critical LE staff needs for an Information Resource Center assistant and an English language program assistant are well on the way to solution, but belatedly in this fiscal year. Both are funded by a one-time FY 2008 supplemental allocation. PAS cited this need in the Mission Strategic Plan and is working with the Department to include these essential positions in its base for FY 2009.

CONSULAR AFFAIRS

The consular section provides the full array of consular services in a large, attractive, and well-appointed space in the embassy chancery. It is ably managed by an FS-03 section chief in a stretch assignment with a staff of two full-time and one half-time second tour tenured officers and nine LE staff. Another consular-coned officer provides backup when needed. All officers are Russian speakers. One is trained in Uzbek. The consular team provides prompt customer service with attention to pervasive fraud. Visits in July 2007 and April 2008 by the regional consular officer from Frankfurt have contributed significantly to improved consular management. His recommendations will be helpful as guidelines for further operational refinements.

Both nonimmigrant and immigrant visa services account for the bulk of consular operations. The nonimmigrant visa unit includes one officer plus three full-time and two part-time LE staff. The FY 2008 estimated case load is 10,000 cases. The nonimmigrant visa refusal rate is close to 70 percent, a reflection of the domestic political situation and stagnating economy. Officers and staff pay close attention to fraud indicators, particularly in temporary work categories such as the student Summer Work and Travel program.

A continuing challenge is the visa referral policy. Support is forthcoming from the Ambassador and DCM, but compliance remains inconsistent. Some sections, on occasion perceive the policy as an unnecessary bureaucratic exercise, and others try to lobby informally rather than submit the paperwork. Notwithstanding these lapses in understanding, the consular section strictly enforces referral procedures. To promote

best practices, the section chief conducts periodic “referral school” briefings, part of the mission’s check-in procedure for new arrivals and a requirement for receipt of referral privileges. A copy of the policy is posted on each officer’s desktop.

The section took over immigrant visa services from Almaty, Kazakhstan, two years ago. It has one officer and two full-time LE staff with assistance from other cross-trained LE staff members as needed. Immigrant visa work benefits from the close involvement of the fraud prevention unit, managed by the consular section chief with one LE staff. An increasing immigrant visa work segment is adoption cases, fraught with serious fraud concerns and the danger of baby selling. A recent meeting with Ministry of Justice officials made clear the lack of interagency communication within the Uzbek government, and the unawareness of the growing interest in adoptable Uzbek children by foreign prospective adopting parents. Post’s excellent reporting elicited a response from the Bureau of Consular Affairs in the form of a telephone conference call. Post has submitted a revised adoption flyer to be posted on the Department’s web site and is working on a proposal with neighboring posts for an adoptions workshop with Bureau of Consular Affairs participation.

Demand for American citizens services fell precipitously after the expulsion of nongovernmental organizations and the closure of the U.S. Air Base in 2005. Fewer than 200 American citizens are registered. Demand for passports, notarial, and citizen services is low. Services, provided by the section chief and one Foreign Service national, are hampered by the lack of direct access to police, immigration, and other governmental authorities. All consular requests for information or assistance must be channeled through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by diplomatic note.

One area of staffing remains of concern. Six of the nine consular LE staff positions are machine-readable visa-funded, subject to annual renewal based on availability of CA funding. This ratio differs from sections of similar size and workload in the region, the majority of whose positions are permanently funded. The regional consular officer noted this anomaly in his April 2008 trip report. The consular section chief has not reviewed machine-readable visa-funded staffing vis-à-vis workload to determine whether there is a need for permanent funding for some positions.

Recommendation 1: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should review the workload of those locally employed staff in machine-readable visa-funded positions and seek permanent funding for those positions determined to be essential. (Action: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with SCA and CA)

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

U.S. Embassy Tashkent, Uzbekistan Resource Chart

* post figures as of June 7, 2008

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff (EFM)	Locally Employed Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding
State - DC&P	19	1	12	32	\$949,958
State - MRV	3		6	9	\$169,627
State - ICASS	6	7	112	125	\$4,021,300
State - ICASS LGP			83	83	\$1,041,800
State - ICASS OBO				0	\$188,000
State - DS	3	1	48	52	\$755,336
State - PD	3		8	11	\$405,210
State - MSG	6		4	10	\$96,100
State - Representation				0	\$25,200
State - OBO	1			1	\$749,732
International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL)			1	1	\$35,000
Freedom Support Act Funds*			4	4	\$350,500
Defense Attaché Office	4		1	5	\$201,545
Office of Military Cooperation (OMC)			2	2	\$87,000
USAID****	3		8	11	
Export Control and Border Security (EXBS)**			1	1	\$42,500
Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA)**	1		2	3	\$118,550
Foreign Agriculture Services**			1	1	\$36,295
Justice – Criminal Division (RLA)**			1	1	\$84,000
Drug Enforcement Administration**	3		2	5	\$120,000
Center for Disease Control (CDC)			10	10	\$69,311
TOTALS	52	9	306	367	\$ 9,546,964

* PD funds

** Not post held allotments, estimates provided by agencies

*** USAID did not provide the funding information

****DEA office suspended 2007, restarted 2008

MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

The inspection of resource management and management controls revealed no identifiable weaknesses. Resources appear well managed. International Cooperative Administrative Support Services (ICASS) services scored well above average on the OIG quality of life questionnaires and on the recently completed ICASS Customer Service Survey. The new large embassy building is spacious, comfortable, and well maintained. An experienced FS-02 management officer supervises the human resources/finance officer, two general service officers, an information management officer, an information security officer, the facilities manager, and the community liaison office coordinator.

HUMAN RESOURCES

As a result of the deterioration in the U.S.-Uzbekistan relationship in 2005-2006, the mission's American staff was reduced from 73 direct-hire Americans to 26. Today there are 52 direct-hire Americans, with government of Uzbekistan approval for 60. Post has managed with the same budget levels using attrition to reduce LE staff by 76 positions; currently there are 306 positions. Combining Department/U.S. Agency for International Development motor pool and warehouse operations also caused some reductions. Management continues to review operations for further reductions as needed.

Mission quality of life centers around housing, a large school, and easy access to the mountains for winter and summer sports. Adding recreation facilities not included in the original embassy plan would improve morale. A major complaint is air transportation availability, with few airlines and limited schedules. Travel is difficult and expensive from this remote Central Asian country.

INCOME TAX

The issue of payment of Uzbekistan income tax has consumed considerable time and attention of management and LE staff over the past 18 months.

A November 2007 management notice clearly defined the income tax requirements, and post's employee handbook and personal service agreements contain guidance on the responsibility of employees to comply with local laws and fully discharge tax liabilities. Although LE staff members say they want to pay these taxes, which at current rates would be an estimated 25 percent, they want an offsetting salary increase. However, full local tax liability is already factored into post's Local Compensation Plan. To further complicate matters, the embassy received a government of Uzbekistan diplomatic note in February 2008 stating that, according to local law, the embassy is required to make income tax payments and pension fund contributions from LE staff salaries from the date of employment. A cable was sent to the Department requesting guidance (Tashkent 00025 dated February 21, 2008). No response had been received at the time of the OIG inspection.

In setting compensation levels authorized under the embassy's Local Compensation Plan, the Department has always factored in the full income tax obligation according to Uzbek tax laws. Prior to 2008, embassy LE staff, on their own initiative, collected partial income tax payments and paid them in a lump sum into a local bank account for the government of Uzbekistan tax authorities. This activity was never recorded in official embassy records. Because the tax collections took place at the embassy, many LE staff members have indicated that they believed this was an official embassy activity that met their personal income tax obligations. In view of this misinterpretation, OIG does not believe any further tax collections should take place at the embassy unless official payroll procedures are used.

Post is taking steps to resolve the tax issue, although there is no easy solution. The OIG team believes that post needs the Department's assistance and advice on resolution of the several issues surrounding payment of LE staff income tax.

Recommendation 2: The Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, the Bureau of Resource Management, the Office of the Legal Adviser, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should form a working group with a designated point of contact to advise Embassy Tashkent on the locally employed staff income tax issues. (Action: SCA, in coordination with DGHR, RM, L, and DS)

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER

In the minds of many LE staff, the tax issue is intertwined with the potential implementation of EFT. LE staff members fear consequent access to their salary data by government of Uzbekistan tax authorities. To date, Embassy Tashkent has received EFT waivers because the banking system has been unable to guarantee availability of EFT funds for withdrawals. One possible alternative is to implement EFT in steps, with partial deposit of salary into EFT for a one-year trial period. Post management is negotiating with several banks to guarantee access to the funds on the embassy compound, either via an ATM machine or a branch office. If access to funds cannot be guaranteed, post may request a waiver for another year. Post has not prepared a management notice but held an all-hands meetings to discuss the tax and EFT issues during the inspection.

INFLATION

According to figures from the International Monetary Fund, core inflation has increased significantly since the last LE staff wage increase in 2004. Although present salary levels are comparatively high, there has been a significant reduction in purchasing power due to inflation, in particular among the lower grades. Post should review current LE staff salary levels and, if warranted, request a new compensation survey.

Recommendation 3: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should review locally employed staff salary levels and, if warranted, submit a request for an off-cycle compensation survey to the Bureau of Human Resources. (Action: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with SCA and DS)

DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN

Post has a suspense deposit account of \$1.7 million. These funds, collected since 1992 from the Department and other resident agencies, were in excess of what was required to set up the LE staff defined contribution plan in January 2007. Post requested advice from the Department in January 2008 on how to clear the account balance. To date there has been no instruction.

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of Resource Management should instruct Embassy Tashkent on how to clear the suspense deposit account. (Action: RM)

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY

Embassy Tashkent operates an adequate information management and information systems security program. The information management officer manages the mission's information management and security requirements. The OIG team assessed standard operating procedures, infrastructure security posture, systems documentation, and performed random checks of post's files. The embassy's information technology security posture is adequate.

The embassy's information technology staff includes direct-hire American employees who provide telephone support, unclassified and classified systems support for approximately 310 workstations, 27 servers, and 483 user accounts. Five LE staff employees provide unclassified systems support, one LE staff provides radio support, and one LE staff provides telephone support. One LE staff assists in the mailroom and two part-time LE staff work at the reception desk.

Embassy Tashkent's local area network backup procedures are well documented and performed on a set schedule.

Recommendation 5:

Embassy Tashkent has not developed all of its required systems documentation for its networks and procedures. Specifically, an up-to-date contingency plan, standard operating procedures, post profiles, information resource management briefing notes, laptop policies, and inventory should be created or updated. These procedures, policies, and standard operating procedures should be updated annually or when major modifications occur to the systems.

Recommendation 6: Embassy Tashkent should create or update all information management documentation. (Action: Embassy Tashkent)

SECURITY

The security program at U.S. Embassy Tashkent is robust and well managed. The embassy compound, completed in 2005, is new and meets all current physical security standards. The regional security officer (RSO) directs a staff consisting of an assistant regional security officer (A/RSO), an eligible family member RSO assistant, three Foreign Service national investigators, a local guard force commander, a surveillance detection coordinator, a regional security technician, and a security program technician. The embassy has a local guard force of 133 personal service agreement guards who are well trained and dedicated to providing the embassy with the highest quality protective service. A Marine security guard detachment is also present at post and consists of a detachment commander and five watch standers.

The RSO receives high marks from both the embassy and LE staff. Open lines of communication between the Ambassador, the DCM, and the RSO facilitate the efficient sharing of information. The DCM has a weekly one-on-one meeting with the RSO and other informal meetings as required. The RSO is fully integrated into Embassy Tashkent's management team, and his input and insight are openly received.

The security program has strong administrative controls, and the RSO office is striving to make improvements. Currently, the security program technician is finalizing a Microsoft Access database that tracks security program components. The database has independent modules that contain data particular to the security program such as security suitability investigations and residential security surveys. The database is easily updated and monitored by individuals granted access to the modules. Once fully implemented, this database will be a valuable program management tool.

The RSO and A/RSO form an exceptionally strong team. While overall responsibility for Embassy Tashkent's security program resides with the RSO, the A/RSO is allowed to manage his areas of responsibility with minimal input or direction. Because of this management style, and the exceptional communication within the security office, the A/RSO is receiving excellent mentoring and is developing the management skills required to run a large security program.

Embassy Tashkent's emergency action plan is not current. The embassy is in the process of converting the plan into the online crisis emergency planning application; however, the process is time consuming and full of bottlenecks. The OIG team found that post waited an average of one month for the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to review and reject 34 Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs modules. At the time of the inspection, 25 modules were still pending Department review - 48 days after submission.

Recommendation 7: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should complete the update of the embassy's emergency action plan. (Action: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with DS)

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

~~**SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED**~~

FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and the Bureau of Consular Affairs, should review the workload of those locally employed staff in machine-readable visa-funded positions and seek permanent funding for those positions determined to be essential. (Action: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with SCA and CA)

Recommendation 2: The Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, in coordination with the Bureau of Human Resources, the Bureau of Resource Management, the Office of the Legal Adviser, and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should form a working group with a designated point of contact to advise Embassy Tashkent on the locally employed staff income tax issues. (Action: SCA, in coordination with DGHR, RM, L, and DS)

Recommendation 3: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs and the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should review locally employed staff salary levels and, if warranted, submit a request for an off-cycle compensation survey to the Bureau of Human Resources. (Action: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with SCA and DS)

Recommendation 4: The Bureau of Resource Management should instruct Embassy Tashkent on how to clear the suspense deposit account. (Action: RM)

Recommendation 5:

Recommendation 6: Embassy Tashkent should create or update all information management documentation. (Action: Embassy Tashkent)

Recommendation 7: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, should complete the update of the embassy's emergency action plan. (Action: Embassy Tashkent, in coordination with DS)

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Date
Ambassador	Richard Norland	09/07
Deputy Chief of Mission	Brad Hanson	07/05

Chiefs of Sections:

Administrative	Doug Ellrich	10/06
Consular	Rafael Perez	10/07
Political/Economic	Edward Burkhalter	08/07
Public Affairs	Carol Fajardo	08/07
Regional Security	Chris Phillips	08/07

Other Agencies:

Department of Defense	Jeff Hartman, Defense Attaché	06/07
Office of Military Cooperation	Lt. Col. Brian Swanland	03/08
U.S. Agency for International Development	James Bonner	09/04

ABBREVIATIONS

A/RSO	Assistant regional security officer
DCM	Deputy chief of mission
Department	Department of State
EFT	Electronic funds transfer
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
LE	Locally employed
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAS	Public affairs section
RSO	Regional security 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.