

~~SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED~~

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

Report of Inspection

Consulate General
Jerusalem

Report Number ISP-I-05-15A, July 2005

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KEY JUDGMENTS

- As the U.S. mission responsible for the policy relationship with the Palestinian Authority and for contact with 2.1 million Palestinians in Jerusalem and the West Bank, Consulate General Jerusalem plays a central role in supporting U.S. policy objectives in the region, including a new peace initiative. The mission also serves roughly 90,000 American citizens.
- Consulate General Jerusalem is neither a subordinate post of Embassy Tel Aviv nor accredited to Israel. It is fast becoming a full-fledged mission. The post should have its own post code for financial operations.
- Israel's planned disengagement from Gaza in mid-2005 provides the occasion to improve upon the present division of responsibilities between posts. The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA), together with Embassy Tel Aviv and Consulate General Jerusalem, should develop a plan to transfer responsibility for all territories under Palestinian control from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and for the placement of Gaza in Jerusalem's consular district.
- Jerusalem, like Tel Aviv, will soon face a serious security resource challenge due to stepped up U.S. government support for the truce declared between Palestinian Authority and Israeli forces. The mission is asking for additional armored vehicles and other resources to support the anticipated resumption of travel to the West Bank. As discussed in a separate classified report, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) and NEA must meet these requests expeditiously.
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- This mission has severe facilities problems. Both mission management and the Department of State (Department) need to devote immediate attention to interim repairs and improvements to existing buildings, while proceeding forthwith on the new Arnona annex.
- Sufficient resources have not accompanied the requirements Washington mandated on consular operations since 2001. While more space has been made available, it is imperative that the mission develop a plan for its efficient use.

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- The post should proceed to implement electronic funds transfer (EFT) as soon as possible. Communication with employees needs improvement, especially regarding the employee's obligation to comply with tax law.

- Information systems security and information management (IM) need attention to bring the post into compliance in several areas.

The consulate general should take immediate steps to resolve the unhealthy environment in the health unit caused by the growth of mold and should improve the unit by ensuring adequate staffing, proper equipment, and fresh, appropriate medical supplies.

- Both the community liaison and the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) offices need continued priority support from the consul general and his deputy to improve the quality of the workplace.

The inspection took place in Washington, DC, between January 3 and 28, 2005, and in Jerusalem between February 26 and March 18, 2005.

CONTEXT

Four years of bloody violence that took the lives of thousands of Israelis and Palestinians — and 46 American citizens — were interrupted in February 2005 when Israeli and Palestinian leaders agreed to renew joint efforts toward peace. This is one of the region's oldest and most complex conflicts, and one that provides the conceptual backdrop for other conflicts threatening security and stability throughout the Middle East. It is generally agreed that resolution of this conflict would sharply reduce the support for terrorist activities throughout the world.

While the world has repeatedly built up hopes of progress toward Israeli-Palestinian peace, only to see them dashed, there is nevertheless renewed hope that this most recent attempt may find traction. The U.S. administration quickly responded to the new initiative with a declaration of support for a viable, independent Palestinian state; with a commitment to increase direct assistance to Palestine; and with the appointment of a team lead by a U.S. Army Lt. General to help the Palestinians reform and equip their security services.

As the U.S. mission responsible for the policy relationship with the Palestinian Authority and for contacts with 2.1 million Palestinians living in Jerusalem and the



Consulate General Jerusalem

West Bank, Consulate General Jerusalem plays a central role in supporting U.S. policy objectives in the region and, in particular, in supporting this new peace initiative. The mission also serves roughly 90,000 American citizens, most of whom are dual nationals. An October 2003 terrorist bombing in

Gaza resulted in the deaths of three American security personnel and the imposition of strict travel restrictions that severely hamper the mission's ability to provide

services to American citizens in the West Bank, conduct official business with the Palestinian Authority, or interact with the public.

Consulate General Jerusalem, which predates the creation of Israel, is neither accredited to Israel nor a subordinate post of Embassy Tel Aviv. The consul general reports directly to Washington. The mission has 51 direct-hire American and 224 local positions. Total funding for operations in FY 2004 was approximately \$11 million. During the same period, U.S. direct and program assistance totaled approximately \$253 million.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Consulate General Jerusalem is a unique organization faced with a singular diplomatic mission in one of the world's most intractable political environments. Leading and managing this mission is a very special challenge for the consul general and a staff that is spread among six buildings and a construction site.

Consulate General Jerusalem starts with a misnomer. This mission is neither a subordinate post of Embassy Tel Aviv nor accredited to Israel. Instead this mission is the lead U.S. entity for the policy relationship with the Palestinian residents of Jerusalem and the West Bank. Since the 1994 creation of the Palestinian Authority, the consulate general is the mission charged with carrying out the policy dialogue with the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the Palestinian Authority. The consul general reports directly to Washington.

The Country Team and Interagency Relations

The country team is primarily composed of Department section chiefs, because most U.S. government agencies operating in Israel and the occupied territories are based in Tel Aviv. As exceptions to that rule, one U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) American staff member and the Broadcasting Board of Governors radio correspondent have offices in Jerusalem. The USAID representative participates actively in consulate meetings and activities. In accord with the memorandum of understanding between the Department and the Broadcasting Board of Governors, the consulate only minimally supports the Voice of America journalist and her one LES staff member.

Mission personnel would rarely see each other were it not for country team and other cross-sectional meetings such as the emergency action committee and various working groups. Besides their central purpose, these gatherings serve as vital opportunities for mission personnel to exchange information, coordinate activities, and coalesce on tactics. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) believes some of the meetings should be held in locations other than Post One in order to spread the benefits of cross-section contact more widely.

Chief of Mission Responsibilities

The Department of Defense, Department of Commerce, and USAID agency heads based in Tel Aviv not only recognize the consul general's chief of mission (COM) status but they make extraordinary efforts to coordinate their activities with mission officers. As the Palestinian Authority begins to exercise more effective authority and extend effective control over more and more parts of the West Bank and Gaza, it will become ever more important that all U.S. government activities are known to and coordinated by the COM. In this regard, OIG sees merit in moving to transfer responsibility for Gaza from Embassy Tel Aviv to Consulate General Jerusalem in synchronization with Israeli withdrawal from Gaza (see recommendation 1).

Cooperation Between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv

Relations between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv merit mention. Both are independent missions, reporting separately to Washington, with distinct geographic and political responsibility. In years past the two missions warred ferociously over turf as well as policy. The current COM in Jerusalem and his Tel Aviv counterpart have earned Washington's appreciation not only for putting an end to the feuding but for the productive and time-saving policy coordination that goes on routinely between their posts. Inevitably, some frictions exist. They can be managed as long as both chiefs of mission continually remind their subordinates to favor cooperation over competition.

The Mission Performance Plan Process

The Mission Performance Plan (MPP) for 2007 was completed just at the time of the inspection. The deputy principal officer (DPO), who enlisted drafting assistance from a new consular officer, managed the MPP process. There was input from and discussion among section chiefs and other U.S. government agencies. OIG witnessed the active, "hands on" involvement of the COM in the final draft.

The MPP includes the post's principal issues and gives first priority to stabilizing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict via a negotiated settlement and second priority to the needs of the 90,000 U.S. citizens in the consular district. The Jerusalem MPP is closely tied to the President's June 24, 2003 "roadmap for peace" (as adjusted subsequently). The roadmap itself offers clear phases, timelines, target dates, and benchmarks aiming at progress through reciprocal steps by the two parties in the

political, security, economic, humanitarian, and institution-building fields. The MPP adopts those timelines and benchmarks for the mission's own interim planning or performance review.

Attention to Security and Emergency Preparedness

The COM and the DPO make security a central part of their agenda, beginning each day with an all source review of incidents and potential problems. They communicate several times daily with the regional security officer (RSO) and his subordinates, especially in the process of developing a daily protective services schedule for travel the next day to West Bank locations. They are well aware that no current facility meets security standards, that daily mission operations put employees at risk, and that improvements in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process may even spark rejectionist terrorist activity in the near term. Concerns about security and terrorist activity have caused the mission to adopt an extremely cautious security posture and shaped the mission's ability to operate in the West Bank.

Security Resource Needs

Political developments unfolding immediately before OIG's inspection mean that the mission will soon face a serious security resource challenge. Current mission operations and official visitors already test the RSO's capacity. On February 8, 2005, a truce was declared between Palestinian Authority and Israeli forces. The United States promised a special U.S. security coordinator who began work during the inspection. There are certain to be more demands for security resources if these trends continue. The mission is asking for additional armored vehicles and other resources to support the anticipated resumption of travel to Gaza (Jerusalem 1010, 14 March 05). As discussed in a separate classified report, OIG believes DS and NEA must meet these requests expeditiously.

Emergency Preparedness

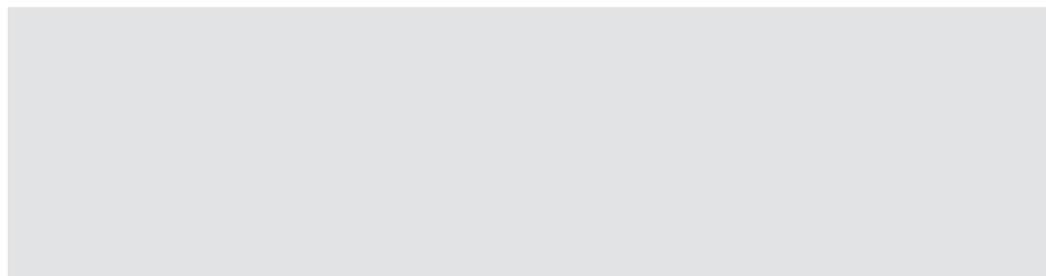
The post has equipped itself well for emergency preparedness. A visitor sees gear and supplies in almost every free space in every building. Emergency plans exist and they are exercised once per month, meaning that all facilities have about 12 exercises per year. City emergency response units have practiced only with RSO personnel until now, but a full mission exercise with local first responders will be held before summer.

up the highly charged issue of how Foreign Service national (FSN) pay is handled. OIG recommends they press forward to resolve the pay matter expeditiously. (See Recommendation 34.)

Gaza

At present Gaza lies within Embassy Tel Aviv's consular district, and the embassy has one political officer and one economic officer who follow and report on developments there. Neither speaks Arabic fluently. An Arabic speaking public diplomacy officer manages exchange and small grants programs in the region. One FSN provides support from a digital videoconference (DVC) equipped home/office in Gaza. The other areas with significant Palestinian populations, East Jerusalem and the West Bank, are within the consular district of the mission in Jerusalem. On a practical level the consulate general has contact with senior Palestinian officials who are from Gaza or who have responsibilities there, and Embassy Tel Aviv officers have contacts with others in Gaza.

However, it is difficult to keep the two posts' responsibilities disentangled. In fact, many Palestinian officials are confused by the present division of responsibilities, which is not mirrored in the practice of any other government with a consulate in Jerusalem. Moreover, the division seems at variance with U.S. efforts to promote unified, coherent governmental institutions in the Palestinian territories. Israel's planned disengagement from Gaza in mid-2005 provides the occasion to improve upon the present division of responsibilities. A movement of Tel Aviv's responsibilities for Gaza to Jerusalem, of course, would require additional office space and personnel in Jerusalem. A plan should be developed to transfer responsibility for Gaza to the mission in Jerusalem. The plan should include an examination of the staffing, including the shift of positions, and space implications as well as the optimal timing of the transfer of responsibility



Facilities

This is a post with vexing facility problems. In this 20 percent danger pay post, the Department's people are already working in "inhuman conditions," in facilities under security waivers, and in settings that would embarrass most Americans. Walls and ceilings leak, mold is making people sick, dirty carpeting and poor ventilation cause spikes in sick leave, and cleanliness is substandard. Consular operations are a jumble of ad hoc seating and desk arrangements; with the most photogenic (and occasionally dramatic) waiting rooms OIG has seen in a long time. New requirements connected to the resuscitated peace process are adding to the load.

Controlled access area (CAA) space is already at a premium, having been whittled out of an office suite atop the COM residence and a renovated guard-house at the front of Post One. Urgent and well-justified demands for additional positions to cope with the workload are continually postponed for the simple lack of a place to put an additional body. The most obvious and lowest cost solution is to rent a suitable COM residence in Jerusalem and convert the current attractive but small residential quarters into CAA office space.

The COM recently asked the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) and NEA to consider additions and changes to plans for a sorely needed annex for unclassified operations (Jerusalem 00763). The 22 million dollar Arnona annex is already underway, with five million dollars worth of site work due to be completed in September. The current building design intentionally lends itself to expansion. OBO has just notified the post (State 38779 of March 4, 2005) that - because the mission's needs are growing - OBO intends to finish the site work and then stop work, reassess the building plan, and seek more funding. OIG believes that suspending construction now will waste money already spent, incur extra costs, may provoke legal disputes, and will delay solving the mission's serious facilities problem.

In OIG's view, OBO needs to treat this post like a sinking ship: put all hands on the bilge pumps in the form of interim repairs and improvements to existing buildings, while keeping the throttle full speed ahead on the new Arnona annex. It can't be finished soon enough.

Attention to and Direction of Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy¹ is in mission management's inner circle and contributes substantially to achieving MPP goals through programs that reach into East Jerusalem and the West Bank. The COM and the public affairs officer (PAO) recognize that current security procedures are a necessary but regrettable handicap for public diplomacy programming and contact work. The PAO has developed, with the COM's support, an innovative proposal to establish a virtual office in Ramallah. This office would be collocated with the nongovernmental organization America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST). It will enhance the ability of mission personnel, especially FSN's, to carry out activities safely in Palestinian areas.

The public affairs office is working successfully with USAID to draw more public attention to American assistance to Palestinians (the U.S. government is the single largest donor of relief and developmental aid to the Palestinian people). OIG believes opportunities exist for the COM to reinforce U.S. policy goals *vis-à-vis* the Palestinian Authority through a higher public profile, one that will remind Palestinians and other Middle East observers of America's commitment.

Young Professionals Program

The DPO sees the morale, mentoring, and training of new officers and specialists as her special responsibility, and the employees praise her accessibility and support. New employees get assigned tasks during high level visits, post officers attend NEA new employee conferences, and Jerusalem and Tel Aviv continue a consular exchange program. Some young officers are able to participate in Tel Aviv's young professionals organization, but no one has created such an organization in Jerusalem.

These relatively new employees constitute almost a third of the total direct hire Americans at post. There is a dearth of experienced mid-career and senior officers available to serve as informal mentors. The DPO recognizes this challenge and gets high marks from the new employees for her accessibility and interest in their career development.

¹In this report, public diplomacy refers to the function of engaging, informing, and influencing key public international audiences. The public affairs section at an embassy directs public diplomacy.

On the basis of roughly quarterly discussions with the mission's first and second tour employees, the DPO schedules thematic brown bag lunches, roundtable discussions, and training events. Subjects are suggested by her or the new employees themselves and have included Department telegram drafting, career planning, note taking skills, and do's and don'ts for Congressional delegation control officers. Among the many visitors may be some willing to share their experience with new employees.

The new specialists and officers particularly feel the lack of a common meeting point or axis for social activities. A post that wants to encourage bidders on its jobs needs to ensure that schools, orientation programs, a rich Intranet site, and a broad community liaison program are given priority. The community liaison office (CLO) coordinator particularly needs continued encouragement and support from the management section and the front office.

POLICY AND PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

REPORTING AND ADVOCACY

The political and economic sections very capably support the COM in his efforts with the Palestinian Authority to advance an enduring and just peace between the Palestinians and Israel and to manage day-to-day crises between the two. They contribute effectively to the mission's pursuit of goals in its MPP. Those include reinvigorating the Middle East peace process through "roadmap" implementation, reducing the capabilities of Palestinian terrorist groups, and supporting the development of democratic practices in the Palestinian territories.

The economic and political sections work well together and enjoy a close relationship with the COM and DPO with whom the sections share a small office suite. The section chiefs attend the twice-weekly country team meetings and meet with the COM and DPO twice more during the week to discuss current developments and to "brainstorm." In addition, the section chiefs join the COM's weekly meeting with the USAID director, whose office is in Tel Aviv but who is under the COM authority of both the consul general and the Ambassador to Israel. Despite a very heavy workload, the officers in the two sections have high morale that derives from their work on matters of central importance to the United States.

Conditions particular to Jerusalem contribute to the workload. The volume of visitors from Washington is high. The Secretary of State and six Congressional delegations and one staff delegation visited Jerusalem during the first two and one half months of 2005, and several Congressional delegations were scheduled to arrive during the last half of March 2005. There are also frequent visits by sub-cabinet Administration officials. The number of official visitors to Jerusalem is likely to increase if the peace process gains momentum.

Israeli government restrictions on the visits of Palestinians to Jerusalem and prudent security measures governing the travel of American officials to the West Bank increase the time needed to accomplish political and economic work. To meet with Palestinian officials consulate general officers often have to travel to

Ramallah, the Palestinian Authority's headquarters. To do so requires a convoy of three fully armored vehicles with an assistant RSO and armed guards. All mission officers find contact work and the development of professional relationships especially challenging under circumstances that rarely permit spontaneous face-to-face meetings or casual social encounters.

POLITICAL SECTION

The political section produces a large volume of very high quality reports with a small staff. The FS-02 section chief leads three first-tour officers, two of them on one-year rotational tours, and a senior Palestinian FSN very ably. He is a sound, collegial manager who devotes considerable time to staff development.

The political section is involved in reporting on the full range of Middle East Peace Process issues. The section chief accompanies the COM to meetings with senior Palestinian officials and reports on those meetings and the results of U.S. advocacy on security and reform issues. He reports on Palestinian national politics and directs his staff in reporting on local politics, the construction and effects of Israel's separation barrier, Israeli land confiscations and settlements in Jerusalem and the West Bank, legal and judicial reforms, human rights and refugees, and the UN Relief and Works Agency, among other things. The reports are pertinent to U.S. policy interests and well focused in their comments. They reveal a wide range of contacts. The section chief stays in touch by e-mail with Washington consumers, who praised both the choice and the quality of the political reporting.

The political section's policy advocacy role, based on the roadmap, aims to encourage "the emergence of an independent, democratic, and viable Palestinian state." One key component is the building of Palestinian institutions, especially those responsible for law and order and an end to terrorism. A number of U.S. government programs can contribute to strengthening the professionalism and effectiveness of Palestinian Authority security and police entities. Among others, the mission can solicit antiterrorism assistance programs from the Office of Anti-terrorism Assistance in DS to improve the equipment, skills, and abilities of Palestinian Authority law enforcement officials.

The section coordinates and clears pertinent reporting with Embassy Tel Aviv. To accomplish their duties, the section chief and his officers work a substantial amount of overtime. The section's burden is likely to increase as one of the three subordinate officers will be detailed to the staff of the security coordinator for the

Palestinian territories. The productive and well- motivated FSN is especially valuable because he lives in the West Bank and enthusiastically uses his ability to travel and meet people whom the American staff cannot reach.

ECONOMIC SECTION

The economic section is active in economic policy formulation and execution, in coordination with USAID and other bilateral and multilateral donors, and in reporting on the macro-economy, economic reform, and development in the Palestinian territories. The FS-02 section chief capably directs a first-tour officer and a newly hired Palestinian FSN. She, like the political section chief, spends a good bit of time teaching and guiding her staff. She is the COM's liaison with the USAID mission in Tel Aviv, and in December she drafted the COM's proposal to Washington for assistance to Palestinians immediately after the Palestinian election in January. She also attends Embassy Tel Aviv's biweekly meeting on Israel's disengagement from Gaza.

While USAID's principal headquarters is in Tel Aviv, one American direct hire employee is based in Jerusalem and participates actively as a member of the mission's country team. USAID's efforts are entirely directed to relief and development programs for Palestinians. If the Gaza disengagement proceeds, and the Palestinian Authority develops as the "roadmap" envisions, it will make sense to move more USAID personnel to Jerusalem.

The section chief manages the mission's involvement in donor coordination and maintains good contacts with international organizations working in the Palestinian territories and with Palestinian economic officials. She supports the COM and DPO in their participation in the Local Aid Coordination Group and she is the COM's representative to the local Task Force on Palestinian Reform. (These international groups support the peace process.) She co-chairs with the International Monetary Fund's representative the Task Force's Financial Accountability Committee, while the first-tour officer sits on the Capital Markets Committee. The political section chief co-chairs with the European Union the Elections Committee and another political officer sits on the Judicial Reform Committee.

The economic chief stays in contact with key Washington agencies by e-mail. Washington consumers complimented the economic section's reporting, which is of high quality and supports policy goals. One agency was especially pleased with the section's help in the effort to win the Palestinian Authority's support for measures to stop money laundering and terrorist financing.

The U.S. Commercial Service office at the embassy in Tel Aviv maintains a presence in Jerusalem with two FSNs who are responsible for promoting U.S. exports to the Jerusalem area and the West Bank. The economic section has a cooperative relationship with the Commerce office and reports on trade regulations and conditions in the Palestinian territories. From time to time, the consulate general has worked with the embassy in Tel Aviv to protect U.S. business interests on the West Bank. A nascent Palestinian American Chamber of Commerce merits attention by the mission as opportunities for investment and trade improve.

The economic section's small staff is stretched to accomplish all of the missions assigned to it. The section chief regularly puts in 12-hour days and the subordinate officer works substantial overtime as well. In its FY 2007 MPP, the mission sought approval to establish a FS-03 2/2 Arabic language-designated position to enhance the section's ability to perform its MPP and reporting requirements. OIG endorses this request.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

As noted above, public diplomacy is well integrated into mission operations and the MPP process. Despite the distance between the offices of the public affairs (PA) section and the consulate (a 30 minute drive is the norm), the PAO and his staff are active participants in all policy and program meetings. The PA section is staffed by an experienced PAO, a second tour cultural affairs officer, a first tour public diplomacy officer, and nine FSNs. All three American officers speak Arabic, the PAO at the 4/4 level. The PAO began the past fiscal year with a two-day offsite involving all of the staff for team building, MPP orientation, and development of an annual program plan, which is reviewed quarterly. The full section holds a weekly staff meeting, which twice monthly includes a well-focused training session. One FSN recently completed the "seven habits of highly effective people" leadership course at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and presented a training session on the course to PA staff.

PA Jerusalem contributes regularly to overall consulate reporting on public diplomacy issues. During the inspection, two PA FSN staff members received special recognition from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research for the quality and timeliness of their media reaction reporting. PA Jerusalem manages an aggressive Arabic language book program, distributing free copies of up to 100 American titles in translation each year to 40 public and university libraries throughout the West Bank and East Jerusalem. The books are provided free of charge by

Embassies Cairo and Amman as part of a special Department funded book translation program. During FY 2004, PA administered approximately \$375,000 in small grants, 90 percent of which went to nongovernmental organization efforts in the West Bank. The PAO has grant certification and directly supervises one FSN in managing the program. The section coordinates the mission's very active involvement in the Middle East Partnership Initiative grant program. Records are maintained both in hard copy and electronic form and appear to be complete.

To provide additional space for consular operations, the PA section recently moved from its location of many years in East Jerusalem to a facility in West Jerusalem which also houses the management section. While this is seen as an interim solution until construction of the new building in Arnona is completed, operations are squeezed into very limited space that provides no options for expansion despite the growing possibility of program expansion, and the need for additional space and staff if the peace process gains momentum.

It should be noted that Embassy Tel Aviv operates an American Center in Jerusalem that is dedicated to serving Israeli Hebrew-speaking audiences. Although the American Center and PA Jerusalem consult with each other on virtually a daily basis, the fact that they serve two audiences that speak different languages and are in conflict has limited their ability to collaborate on programs. With the completion of the new consulate facility in Arnona, the American Center and PA Jerusalem will occupy contiguous offices and share common program space.

Digital Video Conferences

The travel restrictions to the West Bank are particularly challenging for the mission's public diplomacy effort. The PA team in Jerusalem is attempting to meet that challenge through the use of technology, particularly DVC, to communicate with West Bank contacts and audiences. DVCs have become a pillar of the public diplomacy effort in the region, for the most part replacing live speaker programs. During FY 2004, PA conducted four speaker programs involving live audiences and 20 DVC interactives. The majority of programs were tied to the highest priority MPP themes of conflict resolution (six programs) and interethnic coexistence (nine programs). The mission currently does not have its own DVC facility in the West Bank but has been able to collaborate with institutions in the West Bank that do. While PA staff members are able to inform target audiences where and when upcoming DVCs will take place, they often are not able to travel to the location to participate in the actual programs. With the assistance of the Bureau of International Information Programs, PA has been able to monitor DVC interactive

programs involving West Bank audiences through the use of “smart video” technology, which allows monitoring of the program via a special web site.

Contact Database

With the assistance of the Regional Support Center in Frankfurt, Consulate General Jerusalem recently converted its two separate and incompatible contact databases to one system. The PA distribution records system and the database maintained by the protocol FSN for other mission elements were combined into the new “contacts” database system developed by Frankfurt. Training was provided in system management and all mission personnel were briefed on the system’s use and encouraged by the consul general to take the program seriously. The mission has taken the program seriously, and all contact lists have been updated and integrated into one database. Work is now underway to provide all mission personnel read only access to the database on their desktops. The combined database now contains approximately 3,000 contacts and the system is being used for all information outreach and representational functions. According to Regional Support Center Frankfurt, fewer than a dozen missions worldwide have made a full and successful conversion to one contact system. It is a conversion requiring changes both in technology and thinking. OIG believes the successful Jerusalem effort is a best practice.

Best Practice: Combined Mission Contact Database

Issue: Following the outdated practice of most overseas missions, Consulate General Jerusalem maintained two separate and incompatible contact database systems, one for the public affairs section and a second for all other mission elements. The flow of information between the two lists was minimal. Public affairs information and programs relied heavily on the public affairs list and other mission programs relied almost exclusively on the list maintained by the protocol assistant.

Response: Consulate General Jerusalem enlisted the assistance of the Regional Support Center in Frankfurt to install the “contacts” database system that was developed for use by missions overseas. Mission personnel were trained in its use and urged to utilize the system in their contact and representational work. The database was installed on the OpenNet server and is being made available to all mission personnel on their desktops.

Result: Consulate General Jerusalem has successfully converted to one contact database for all mission public diplomacy and representational functions. Records for all individual mission contacts are maintained by a public affairs FSN and the mission’s protocol assistant based on input from individual staff members. All mission employees use the system for contact management.

Exchange Programs

PA Jerusalem manages a growing number of exchange programs. For the past two fiscal years the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has provided funding for 24 participants in the international visitor program. An additional 45 slots for the West Bank were provided each year by a special grant from USAID. All mission elements participate in the international visitor program, and the selection committee is chaired by the DPO. The section is also involved in a significant number of citizen exchange programs - over a dozen at any given time.

The Fulbright program currently provides funding for 15 Palestinian graduate students and eight senior scholars to study and conduct research in the United States. U.S. government funding for American academic travel to the West Bank and Gaza was suspended in FY 2001 because of the security threat. The Youth Exchange and Study program provided one-year study opportunities for 15 Palestinian high school students during FY 2004 and another 22 during FY 2005. The Humphrey program supports up to four mid-career professionals each year. PA receives support in managing the Fulbright undergraduate and Youth Exchange and Study Programs from AMIDEAST, which has offices in Ramallah. AMIDEAST also receives Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs funding to provide student advising and testing services and to operate a small American library facility. PA and AMIDEAST are currently working to organize a first ever program for Palestinian academic program alumni later this year.

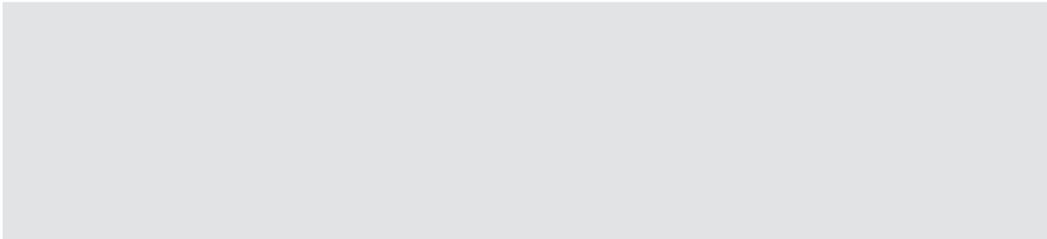
Planning for Ramallah Program Office and American Corner

As conditions warrant, Consulate General Jerusalem plans to establish a program office in Ramallah and an American Corner in one other city in the West Bank. Both initiatives enjoy the support of NEA. The Ramallah facility would be located in the same modern office building that currently houses AMIDEAST. While a permanent American presence at the facility is not currently contemplated, the office would serve as an excellent location for conducting the full range of mission business in the West Bank, including public diplomacy and some consular services. On September 9, 2004, State 203909 endorsed innovative methods for conducting modern diplomacy in key regions of a given country without a physical diplomatic presence. The cable outlined the virtual presence post concept, which combines systematic travel, intense media outreach, and development of a web site to accomplish approximately 50 percent of the workload of an actual consulate.

While numerous aspects of the mission's work already closely resemble the virtual presence post concept, OIG counseled the PAO to consider the cable's specific recommendations when designing and managing the Ramallah facility.

Information Outreach

The mission's information outreach effort is now being managed by one FSN working closely with the public diplomacy officer. The FSN is also responsible for monitoring the media and compiling the daily media reaction report, for providing DVC technical and Arabic translation support, and for maintaining the consulate's internet web site. Less than 25 percent of the FSN's time is devoted to providing information outreach services to increasingly important Palestinian contacts. Because of equally heavy workloads among the other PA section FSNs, redistribution of this important function is not possible. With the completion of the new facility in Arnona, the mission plans to add one information resource specialist FSN position who will join the American Corner information resource center staff to provide full-time information support to the mission's Arabic speaking Palestinian contacts. This position request is included in the current MPP. Given the weakness in PA Jerusalem's information outreach capacity, OIG believes the mission should fill the position immediately, even though the two facilities are not yet collocated. The American Center supports this initiative and has agreed to support the new position with space and training.



CONSULAR AFFAIRS

The consular section is in an old building that is totally inadequate for the staff and the heavy volume of public they serve. The separation of the section from the main consulate building adds to the staff's sense of isolation and lack of attention from mission senior management. The severe travel restrictions currently imposed on residents of the West Bank cause even greater frustrations for Palestinian Americans, as well as consular employees. Therefore, many employees come to work from a stressful outside environment to face the stress of cramped office space, and impatient clientele. Despite all these frustrations, the staff produces a tremendous amount of work.

Consular Resources and Management

OFFICES	FY 2004 Workload	Officers	Consular Associates	Local Staff
Chief of Section		1		1
Immigrant Visas	3383 adjudications; 1082 DHS services	1.5		5.5
Nonimmigrant Visas	200067 adjudications	2		7
American citizen Services	59 child protection; 6498 notarials/voting; 69 deaths; 52 arrests; 155 welfare/ whereabouts	1		2.5
Passports	9080 passport applications; 2077 reports of birth	1	1	4.5
Federal Benefits	2583 SSA assistance			1
Fraud Prevention	1359 investigations	.5		.5
TOTALS		7	1	22

The chief of the consular section arrived in August 2004. He has an easy, walk around style, and the staff feels comfortable conferring with him. He has given priority to enhancing staff cohesiveness and improving working conditions.

Recommendation 4: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Foreign Service Institute, should provide officers filling Hebrew language designated positions the opportunity to study Hebrew for four weeks at Ulpan in Jerusalem before they begin work at the consulate. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with FSI)

Before the busy summer season, the consular staff needs to revise the workflow and schedules for public hours in the entire section to reduce lines on the sidewalk. There is one waiting room downstairs for American citizens and two waiting rooms upstairs for visa clientele. The visa unit schedules around ten immigrant visa (IV) cases most mornings and approximately 80 nonimmigrant visas (NIVs) most afternoons. While there are Americans waiting in the courtyard and on the street to get in the downstairs waiting room, there are seats available in the waiting rooms upstairs.

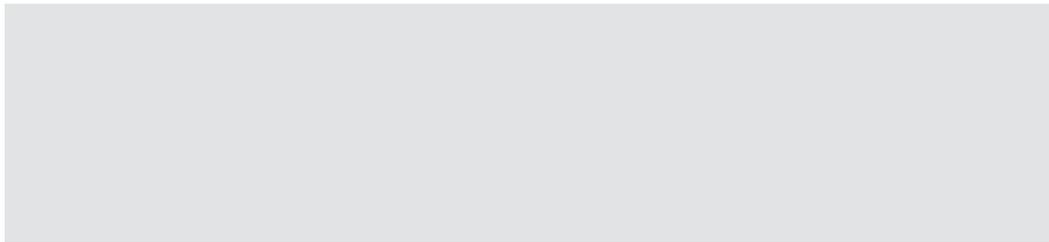
Space, Equipment, and Systems

Recently, the public affairs section moved out of the consular building to provide more space for consular activities. Even with this added space, as it is now configured, there is not sufficient room to adequately perform all necessary functions. The consular chief has approval to hire a much needed telephone operator but has no space for the new position.

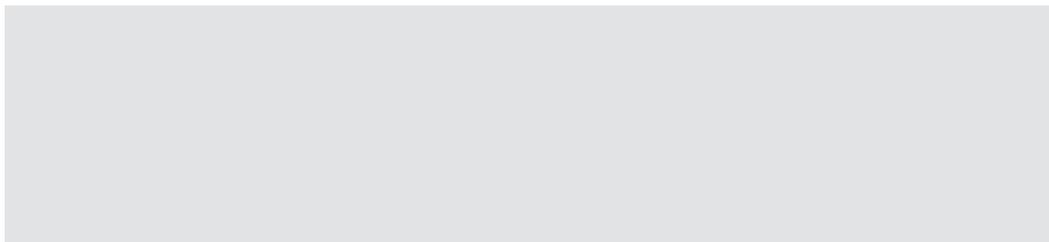
The consular building is a maze of little rooms and hallways. Employees are crowded into every nook and cranny and seated back-to-back and side-to-side. Documents are in boxes on the floor as there is no room on desks. During the

workday, the noise level can be deafening as the staff attend to the public and answer constantly ringing phones. Although the staff has made every effort to improve conditions, including installing a children's corner in the public area, the three waiting rooms are still too small. There are inadequate fire escapes and public access passages, and there is no handicap access for visa applicants. An informal recommendation was made that employees who answer the telephone regularly be given headsets.

For 50 years, consulate employees have attempted to turn a once charming old house into a proper office. Even though there are plans to eventually move consular operations to the new Arnona facility, it is imperative that the mission develop a plan for more efficient use of the space they are forced to use in the interim. The section needs new furnishings appropriate for the workflow and dividers that provide some degree of separation. The mission has funding for three additional interview windows but cannot proceed without further reducing work space. The consulate needs expert assistance to ensure that any new innovations are part of an overall plan to improve the entire section.

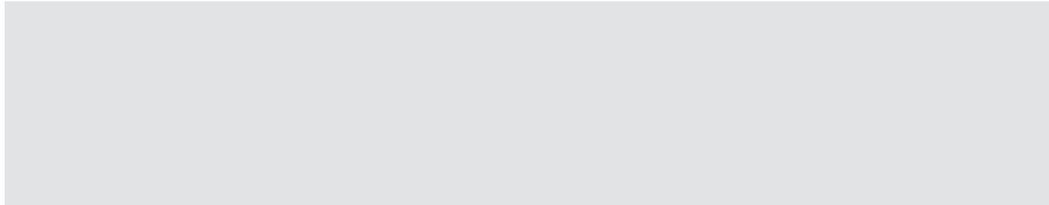


The extremely cramped working environment in the consular section is made worse by unclean and unhealthy conditions. Air circulation in the waiting room and work areas is poor and, according to the consulate nurse, is a factor for the consular section registering the most illnesses in the mission. Numerous maintenance requests have not been completed, and the section is in desperate need of new paint to relieve the current forlorn appearance. Carpets are filthy, and floors and steps are dangerously uneven. There is only one restroom upstairs and two downstairs for the entire 40-person staff plus the many local guard staff members assigned to the facility. There is a closet with water and drain piping upstairs that the section chief has asked to be converted to a restroom.



IM specialists are usually available to assist consular staff in a timely manner when problems arise. However, problems often arise that staff members could resolve themselves if they had minimal training. An informal recommendation was made for an IM specialist to provide consular staff training on how to resolve common systems problems that can be resolved without specialist assistance.

Two consular software programs are inadequate for consular requirements. American citizens services (ACS) must often prepare reports of birth (ROB) for many children from one family in one session. The ACS staff must enter all family information on each ROB form. This repeat data entry wastes valuable staff time that would be saved if the information from one form could be repeated on subsequent forms. According to the visa chief, tracking foil use for accountability is straightforward in the NIV software but difficult and confusing in the IV software. Also, NIV has software to make foil reconciliation and accountability reports for NIVs, but the IV program does not have similar software.



American Citizens Services

The ACS section is a passport, ROB, and social security mill. Americans are served on a first come, first served basis. Every morning the small ACS waiting room is filled to capacity with many large families from the Hasidic community. One day, a father came to register all 11 of his children. Citizenship work for this group is complicated by the lack of normal civil documents to prove an American citizen's required presence in the United States to pass on citizenship to a child born in the consular district. ACS officers and the consular associate work considerable overtime trying to keep up with ROB and passport adjudications. Once the waiting room is filled, the courtyard and sidewalk become crowded with more Americans waiting to enter the building. During the inspection, the ACS waiting room was usually full until well into the afternoon. One morning, a woman fainted from lack of air. The inspectors were told that the number of Americans surges later in the year during the "busy season."

There were approximately 500 more passports and 400 more ROB in FY 2004 compared to FY 2003. These numbers will increase if the peace process continues and more Americans return to this area. During the inspection, several families who should have gone to Embassy Tel Aviv came to Jerusalem because it was more convenient. ACS is hiring a summer helper, but more permanent staff will be needed if figures continue to increase.

There is one federal benefits employee who is overworked, even with assistance from the ACS staff. The benefits work load justifies an additional position. OIG informally recommended that the regional federal benefits officer in Athens should fund a summer helper who could assist with first-time applicants for social security cards and perform other clerical tasks.

Since September 2000, Jerusalem has been a principal target of terrorist activity and the ACS staff has worked tirelessly attending to the needs of over 80 wounded and deceased Americans involved in 54 acts of violence. Because 30,000 of the 90,000 resident Americans live in the West Bank with serious limitations on their personal freedom, the ACS has enhanced its outreach programs. Working with Embassy Tel Aviv and local officials, the consulate was able to improve on the timely notification of arrests of Americans, and both missions work closely to monitor claims of mistreatment of Americans.

The ACS staff must deal with the government of Israel officials through Embassy Tel Aviv but has by necessity developed a number of good working level contacts for emergencies. The senior FSN staff arranges meetings with various religious and other communities to better acquaint the consular staff with their specific needs. ACS does much correspondence by e-mail. An informal recommendation was made for the ACS officer to establish a list serve system to allow immediate dissemination of critical information by e-mail to the large American citizen community. Another informal recommendation encouraged ACS to start an aggressive public relations campaign with the public affairs section help to announce appointment hours for ROB and other information pertinent to American citizens and visa applicants.

ACS exerts a great deal of effort assisting Palestinian-Americans, who are either living in or visiting family in the West Bank. Working with Embassy Tel Aviv, they help them to obtain the numerous travel permits required to leave or enter the West Bank. During the summer months, one FSN position is devoted almost full time to requests for transit permits.

ACS officers cannot travel routinely into the West Bank, which represents 90 percent of the geographic area in the consular district. All trips must be cleared and scheduled by the RSO and made in a convoy of fully armored vehicles with armed security escorts. The planning of these trips makes it very difficult to respond on site to welfare/whereabouts and child custody inquiries, to conduct searches for missing persons, to intercede with Israeli authorities, or to view damaged property.

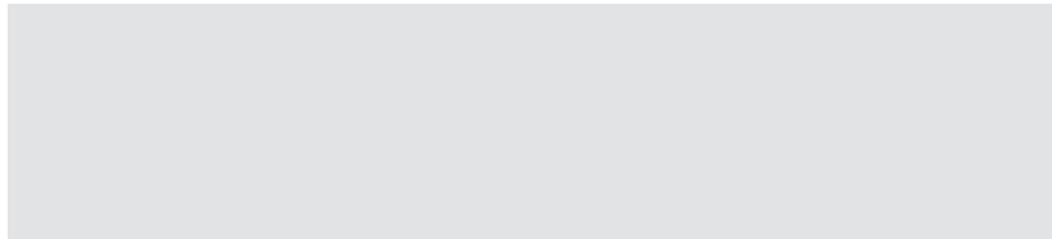
The consular staff hopes to be able to increase the number of trips to Ramallah when the public affairs section has an office there. OIG suggests that Consulate General Jerusalem consider the viability of establishing a consular agent in the West Bank to help overcome the obstacles in dealing with American citizens there.

Visa Section

Visa work is especially challenging in Jerusalem because almost all Palestinian applicants require special clearances. The wait for clearances, especially those involving fingerprints, generates a steady flow of public inquiries. Both NIV and IV applicants must obtain appointments. The NIV applicants submit their applications through a central travel agency that also makes appointments. On October 1, 2005, the consulate will shift to a web-based NIV application and appointment system. The visa section has two entirely different sets of clientele - Israelis and Palestinians. The staff must be familiar with three languages, two sets of laws and procedures that uniquely pertain to each group, and two issuers of civil documents. The staff must also maintain two parallel sets of contacts with local authorities.

Immigrant Visas

As detailed in the Tel Aviv inspection report, OIG believes the embassy should move its IV operation to the Consulate General Jerusalem as soon as the new consular building is complete. This consolidation will create one IV unit with staff and officer expertise instead of two within a 35-mile radius. Overall it will save significant officer and staff hours in Israel. Both COMs were consulted and cautiously agreed that consolidation of such a low profile function to one location could work, providing it is carefully managed and explained.



The IV staff processes over 1,000 immigrant petitions in a year. The visa chief commented on the need for more coordination with Department of Homeland Security in this and other matters. According to the visa chief, the regional Department of Homeland Security office in Athens is responsible for too many countries to give timely service to any single one. Waivers for immigrant applicants can take up to one year.

Nonimmigrant Visas

The most demanding aspect of NIV work is the large number of special clearances needed. The visa staff spends an inordinate amount of time producing, sending, tracking, and processing cases that require security advisory opinions. Frequently, a new “hit” has been entered by the time the first clearance comes through.

The consular officer who coordinates the visas viper program is particularly attentive to that program. Every morning he checks the newspapers for names that could be entered into the program. The officer has shown commendable initiative by obtaining and inserting Arabic names in Arabic script to eliminate errors caused when Arabic names are transcribed into English.

Fraud Prevention Program

Jerusalem is considered a mid-range fraud post. The visa section on occasion receives fraudulent documents supporting NIV and diversity visa applications. The antifraud FSN in visas has taken the fraud prevention course at FSI. The antifraud FSN in ACS maintains a detailed database on any suspicious lost, stolen, or mutilated passport. He works closely with the Department and RSO on these cases.

The fraud prevention manager is a first tour officer who recently attended the antifraud training at FSI and is committed to strengthening the fraud program. An informal recommendation was made that he and his staff develop standard operating procedures for the fraud program and for referring a case for investigation. An informal recommendation was also made that a visa validation study be conducted.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Agency	U.S. Direct-Hire Staff	U.S. Local-Hire Staff	Foreign National Staff	Total Staff	Total Funding US \$ 000
State	42	0	217	259	10,389
State – Marine Security Guards	6	0	4	10	240
Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO)	1	0	2	3	
Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG)	1	0	1	2	
U.S. Agency for International Development – Operating	1	4	0	5	
TOTALS	51	4	224	279	10,629

USAID Grants and Programs (FY 2004) -- \$251,548,420
 USAID FSN employees are on Embassy Tel Aviv rolls but receive ICASS support from Consulate General Jerusalem
 Data provided by Consulate General Jerusalem on 3/8/2005

Consulate General Jerusalem has grown since the inspection in 1999, and forecasts are for continued growth, especially with the need to support additional missions assigned to the area and with the increased peace initiatives in process. The most pressing need is for adequate and secure space for staff. Present working conditions, also noted in the 1999 inspection report, are abysmal. OBO's decision to stop work on the Arnona new office complex should be reviewed, available funding utilized, and the project completed as scheduled. Also requiring increased emphasis and attention is the need for formalized training programs for both the American and FSN staff. Direct involvement and oversight of the management section by the COM and DPO in order to compensate for a relatively weak management officer was also needed. The COM initiated decisive corrective action during the inspection.

REAL PROPERTY

Mission operations are spread throughout the city in six different locations. None are adequate or secure. The very worst facility is Post 2 in East Jerusalem where all consular operations are conducted. It was originally a residence that the United States has rented for over 50 years and used for nonresidential purposes. Annual lease costs are \$155,000. Working conditions in this building are deplorable. Were the property located in the United States it would be condemned as unfit for use as a nonresidential operation. The facility is an embarrassment to the United States and an insult to the staff and the public that need consular services.

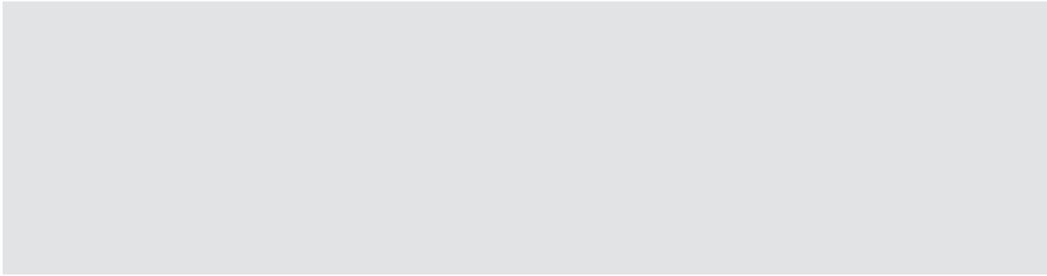
The other facilities including the government-owned compound (called Post One) that houses CAA and front office space, as well as the consul general's residence plus leased office and warehouse space, also cannot support present and, in all likelihood, future requirements. The inability to provide working space for the newly appointed security coordinator and his staff, for example, has placed a burden on Embassy Tel Aviv that it cannot easily alleviate. It has strained logistical support because of the additional commuting requirements to reach discussion and meeting areas closer to Jerusalem.

The Arnona new office complex would alleviate many of the inadequacies that now exist in Jerusalem. Basic site work is nearing completion. However, construction costs are now estimated to exceed funds budgeted for the project. In addition, the post (Jerusalem 00763, 25 Feb 05) asked OBO to revise the project, given the significant changes in the political situation, to include CAA space and further consolidate functions that would otherwise remain disbursed. CAA space cannot be included in the project at the present time. Rather than give less than requested, OBO advised post (State 38779, 4 Mar 05) of its decision to terminate the current construction effort after completion of the basic site work. OBO would then plan and develop the project to what is appropriate and request funds in the FY 2007 budget.

OIG believes that OBO should not terminate the project, but should continue construction with funds presently available. These should be sufficient to provide adequate operating space for those activities presently working in the worst conditions. The annual lease costs for the Arnona site of approximately \$800,000 will continue even if active work on the project is suspended. This is a lot to pay for a hole in the ground and not a good use of the taxpayer's money. Additional lease costs for facilities that Arnona would replace are another \$1 million a year. Stopping the construction bidding process, currently nearing completion, will incur

additional costs. Residential neighbors and city officials may seize upon any delay to raise new obstacles or change currently granted permits.

There are alternative measures available to increase CAA space. These measures would involve leasing an adequate residence for the consul general and converting the present residence that is government owned to office space to include additional CAA space.



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FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

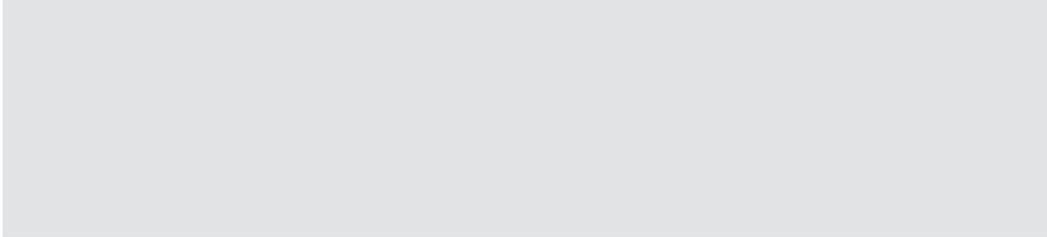
Financial management operations, overall, are satisfactory. A first tour professionally qualified specialist who must divide her time between financial management and human resources (HR) provides excellent oversight and management. The unit's workload and responsibility has increased considerably since the last inspection when more reliance had to be placed on support by Embassy Tel Aviv. The unit now provides a full range of cashiering services including accommodation exchange. The unit also performs budgeting and accounting functions. The vouchering function, however, could be more effective if Embassy Tel Aviv could be removed from the process. One benefit would be faster voucher processing and speedier payment of vendors. In order to change the process and eliminate Embassy Tel Aviv's involvement and enhance the consulate's independence, the Department (RM) would have to assign a unique post-code to Consulate General Jerusalem.

Recommendation 12: The Bureau of Resource Management should assign a post-code to Consulate General Jerusalem. (Action: RM)

Banking

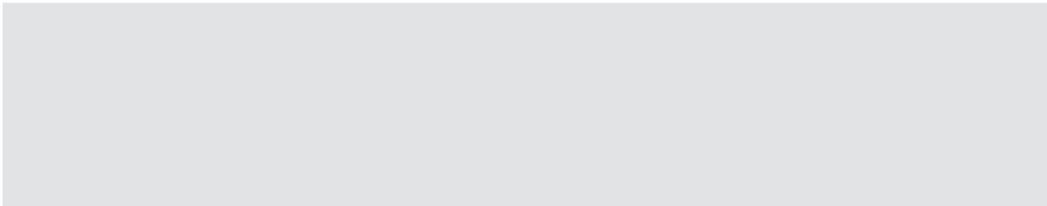
Consulate General Jerusalem is tied to the banking agreement executed by Embassy Tel Aviv. Limited banking services are provided by a commercial bank. Machine-readable visa fees collected outside or beyond West Jerusalem are processed through an agreement with the Cairo - Amman Bank. Fees collected in West Jerusalem are credited through an agreement between Embassy Tel Aviv and the Israeli post office. In the inspection of Embassy Tel Aviv, OIG pointed out that the arrangement with the commercial bank was based on an "Application to Open an Account" rather than an agreement negotiated by the embassy and recommended that Embassy Tel Aviv justify and request, and the Department should grant, authorization to compete the agreement for banking services in Israel.

employees were borrowing not only against their contributions but also against the government's portion. Embassy Tel Aviv conducted a survey of approximately 20 local companies, found the loan option was a prevailing practice, and submitted the review to the Department for approval. OIG contacted the Department for a status report and was told there had been a turnover in portfolios and was not able to track down the request.



Employee Financial Hardship

Employees who work from 3:00 p.m. to midnight are forced to incur excessive transportation costs because public transportation other than taxicabs is unavailable then. These employees are the lowest graded employees in the consulate and can least afford the extra cost. Regulation 6 FAM 228.1-2(D) provides for the use of taxicabs.



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Recommendation 17:

Evaluations and Work Requirement Statements

Consulate General Jerusalem does an excellent job managing employee performance evaluations. There were only a few isolated cases where supervisors had not completed evaluations. In one case, a supervisor departed post without completing the work requirement statements and evaluation for previously employed family members. During the inspection, work requirement statements were submitted late for both the current and previous CLO.

GENERAL SERVICES

The general services office (GSO), led by two first tour untenured specialists and supported by 50 FSNs, provides quality services to the mission, as evidenced by the high scores on OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaires and comments received from mission employees. Scores in virtually all areas of GSO operations were well above average. Suitability of housing as well as the suitability of household furnishings both scored higher than the overall management of the general services section. All three scores however, were in the top ten. There are some improvements that can be made in motor pool operations. Problems noted in the procurement of travel services and contracting for legal services are discussed in the Management Controls section.

Motor Pool

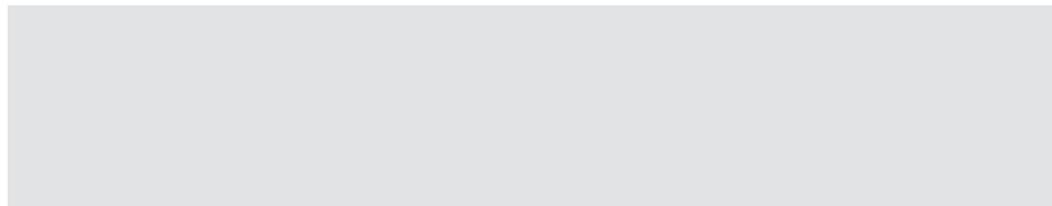
The motor pool operates a fleet of 61 vehicles that includes fully and lightly armored vehicles. Records are kept manually, although the mission is considering adopting the electronic tracking and record-keeping system that Embassy Tel Aviv uses.

The drivers' lounge is housed in a trailer that is cramped and uncomfortable. GSO started planning reconfiguration of the space outside the trailer that can be converted into a lounge area.

Initially, drivers selected their car for the day in a haphazard manner, making it difficult to hold them accountable for vehicle maintenance and upkeep. In some cases, drivers did not conduct the required daily preventive maintenance or properly complete necessary paperwork. During the inspection, the supervisor assigned each driver a car and the responsibility for upkeep and maintenance. OIG agrees that the Jerusalem mission should adopt the electronic motorpool tracking and record-keeping system developed by Embassy Tel Aviv.

There is no count of the annual number of visitors supported by the Jerusalem mission, but visitor support appears to be a significant burden on officers and staff. Certainly, efficiencies could be obtained in negotiating hotel rates, obtaining services, and expediting travelers through Ben Gurion Airport. In the inspection report for Embassy Tel Aviv OIG recommended that Embassy Tel Aviv, in coordination with International Cooperative Administrative Support Services member agencies and Consulate General Jerusalem, should develop a visitor/travel unit to achieve efficiencies and savings to the U.S. government. (Action: Embassy Tel Aviv in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem)

Consulate General Jerusalem's expeditors do not have passes allowing them full access through the airport to the runway and have to work their way around the system. The expeditors go to the airport daily, and often several times a day. There are three separate levels of clearance for tarmac passes. Embassy Tel Aviv maintains most of the allotted passes. Palestinian employees are often discriminated against, strip-searched, and harassed to the point of almost missing their flights. Without full access passes, consulate expeditors are limited in assisting consulate employees. The effectiveness of a full service visitor/travel unit would be enhanced if the consulate's expeditors had full access passes.



The DPO receives residence-to-office transportation. There is no written authorization on file for residence to office transportation as required by Department regulations (6 FAM 228.2-3(D)(6)).

Recommendation 19: Consulate General Jerusalem should review and justify in writing the need for residence-to-office transportation for the deputy principal officer. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS SECURITY

The mission in Jerusalem operates a comprehensive IM and information security program for more than 230 users. Although the information program center (IPC) and information services center (ISC) staff have been working diligently to improve the operations at the consulate and the information management officer (IMO) has been managing the IM and information systems security operations of the mission for five years, OIG identified some key areas where IM and information security must be improved. Given the significance and number of the areas for improvement, OIG judges that mission management must itself engage more directly in overseeing and benchmarking IM performance in the near future.

Specifically, the IM staff has insufficient technical training to ensure continued satisfactory information technology (IT) support for the mission. The IM staff also is not properly cross-trained to ensure continued satisfactory IT support. The IM help desk does not adequately track and resolve service calls. The mission has inadequately maintained hardware and software inventory records. Furthermore, the telephone frame and server rooms located in the consulate are not organized to ensure proper and timely maintenance by IM staff.

Information Management

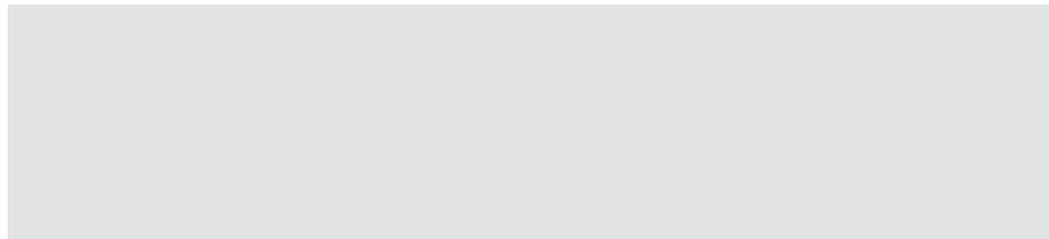
The IM program includes telecommunications, computer networking, telephones, radio, and mail and pouch services. The mission's IM section is comprised of three major program functional areas-IPC, ISC, and mail operations. The IPC is responsible for all classified data processing equipment and applications. The ISC is responsible for all unclassified data processing equipment, applications, and systems. The mail operation is responsible for operating an unclassified mail and pouch room and has access to the Embassy Tel Aviv army postal office.

The mission's IM staffing includes four full-time American positions and five LES that support four different sites in Jerusalem. The West Jerusalem compound (Post One) houses the executive section, political, economic, regional security office, USAID, Marine Security Detachment, IPC, and the consul general's residence. The East Jerusalem location (Post Two) houses the consular and ISC sections. The third facility is the GSO warehouse. The fourth facility, Promenade House, hosts the management section and the public diplomacy staff. Consulate General Jerusalem's OpenNet Plus unclassified local area network consists of 14 servers and 143 workstations supporting more than 230 unclassified computer users.

Training

The IM staff has insufficient management and technical training to ensure continued satisfactory IT support for the consulate. Inadequate funding for training and the current workload prevent IM staff from attending requested training. To ensure that IM staff would be considered for necessary training in FY 2005, the IMO provided consulate management with a list of required training for each IM staff member. In FY 2005, 11 courses are scheduled and \$28,000 set aside for training. Several staff members are scheduled for courses at FSI in Washington and at the Frankfurt training center, while some are taking distance-learning courses.

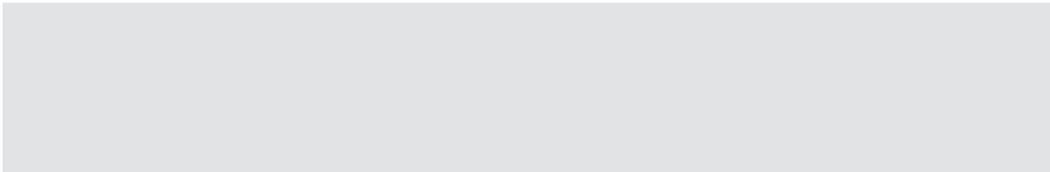
Further, the IM section does not have adequate cross training of job responsibilities to ensure a broad range of knowledge for its staff. The IMO has assigned a specific area of responsibility to each IM staff member, thus limiting opportunities for the staff to learn other areas within the scope of IM at the consulate. For example, a staff member may be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the telephone equipment, while another staff member may be responsible for information systems security issues. When an individual with assigned responsibility for a specific function is not available, consulate staff must wait for problem resolution which affects the quality and level of support provided. The limited experience gained by first-tour officers also can negatively affect their next assignments.



Help Desk Tracking of Service Calls

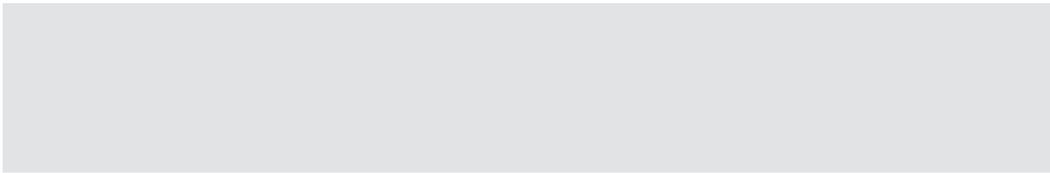
The IM staff's performance is negatively impacted because the staff is not using a tracking database to track and resolve service requests. The IM help desk is responsible for answering service calls, annotating the issues, and resolving the issue either by troubleshooting or transferring the issue to another technician. Some service calls are not resolved in a timely manner because the service request is misplaced. OIG heard a number of complaints from users about timeliness, responsiveness, and thoroughness of service. Management cannot ensure that the help desk provides quality customer service efficiently because they are unable to monitor the time spent resolving pending issues or to determine if the issue was addressed at all.

OIG noted that the universal trouble ticket, a tracking database system developed by the Department, is currently being used by seven bureaus, six embassies, and all four regional information management centers. Using a tracking database system would allow the IM help desk to open and track service calls, create reports, and track the service provided to consulate staff and make changes when necessary. IM management has begun preliminary discussions with the Department and plans to use the tracking system.



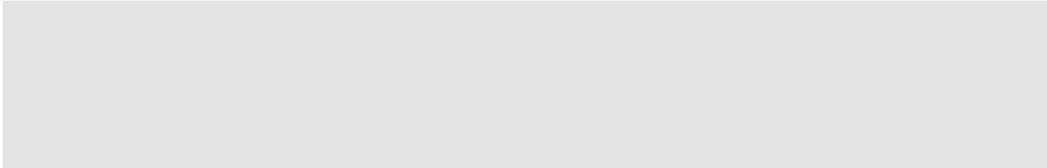
Equipment Inventory

The consulate does not have a complete inventory of its IT equipment and assets. According to 5 FAM 121, the IMO is responsible for the accountability of all IT equipment and assets.



Telephone Frame and Server Rooms

The telephone frame and server rooms located in the consulate are not maintained properly. These rooms have surplus wires in addition to unlabeled cabling. These conditions can result in wasted time when repairs need to be made because staff members spend time locating the needed cables. The amount of time spent maintaining the telephone frame and server rooms has increased and will remain an issue until proper action is taken.



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Recommendation 24:

Recommendation 25:

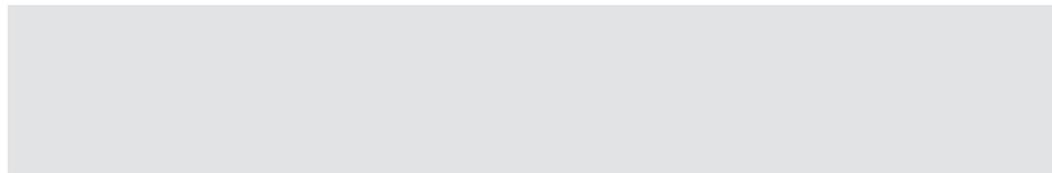
Recommendation 26:

QUALITY OF LIFE

MEDICAL UNIT

The recently expanded medical unit is welcomed by mission employees but has serious shortcomings that need immediate attention. Post originally operated its medical unit out of a small closet. A nurse from Embassy Tel Aviv's health unit visited once a week for approximately three hours and provided limited medical services. Post expanded the closet space in the summer of 2004 and hired a part-time local nurse in September 2004. Upon arrival, the nurse found that charts were not organized, and medical supplies were inadequate and mainly provided by Embassy Tel Aviv's nurse practitioner during the weekly visits.

The medical unit now serves as a primary caregiver for American employees and as a provider for occupational health needs of FSNs. Some employees complained that the medical unit was disorganized, and service took too long. For three months, the nurse saw patients, answered phones, and carried out other administrative duties by herself. However, the medical unit's workload of administrative duties, reporting requirements, and patient care is too much for one person. Furthermore, the nurse is always on call. The post hired a health unit secretary on a four-month part-time assignment to assist. This position is vital to the medical unit operation and the workload far exceeds a part-time temporary assignment.



..... Consulate General

Jerusalem has tried to create a purposeful medical unit. Although the unit is evolving slowly, significant improvements in the availability of medical supplies and the physical facility are urgently needed in order to provide quality service. The current physical condition of the medical unit is unhealthy. A serious problem of fungus growth from moisture in the walls has caused some to become ill and has ruined medical supplies. A dehumidifier, set up after the mold was discovered, was

ineffective. When the mildew smell from the fungus became overpowering, bleach was applied, creating another potential hazard that required the medical unit employees (both of whom had to go to the doctor) to wear masks while working in the area. The bleach application is only short-term, and unless the problem is attacked at its source with repair to the structure, the mold is certain to return. During the inspection, GSO began to attempt to remove the mold.



Medical unit employees wear masks due to potential hazard from bleach application for fungus and mold removal from health unit.

Some items of medical equipment, such as the examination table and scale, are estimated to be approximately 40 or 50 years old and need to be replaced. In addition, medical supplies on hand are insufficient, although replenishment request orders were placed with GSO in October 2004. GSO processed the orders in February 2005 during OIG's inspection. During an emergency, the nurse had to improvise ice packs (from

those used to ship medication) on an injured wrist because post did not have the basic instant ice packs that can be wrapped in elastic bandages.

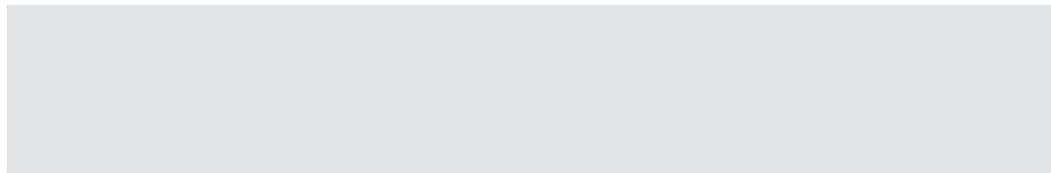
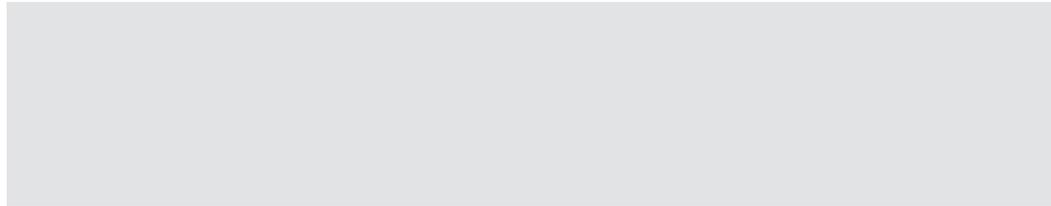
Recommendation 28: Consulate General Jerusalem should bring the medical unit facility, equipment, and supplies up to acceptable standards or relocate to a suitable facility. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In 1999, OIG found that Consulate General Jerusalem did not display EEO information and recommended immediate posting. Despite the recommendation, OIG again found that EEO material was not displayed. In accordance with 29 CFR 1614.102(b)(5), the information should be prominently posted throughout the workplace.

Post has designated two EEO counselors, but only one has received the required EEO training. The second counselor will depart post this summer. Post has not submitted required monthly reporting to the Department. OIG counseled the DPO on the mandatory duties and reporting requirements of the EEO counselor. Informal recommendations were also made to address these issues.

The mission FSN staff is greatly diversified, and there is an underlying tension present between Israeli and Palestinian staff members. Political and religious sensitivities run deep. The DPO asked for volunteers to coordinate a cultural awareness program. The HR officer and a consular officer will conduct the initial series. This important step will greatly benefit the mission. Likewise, the mission needs to take proactive steps with its EEO program.



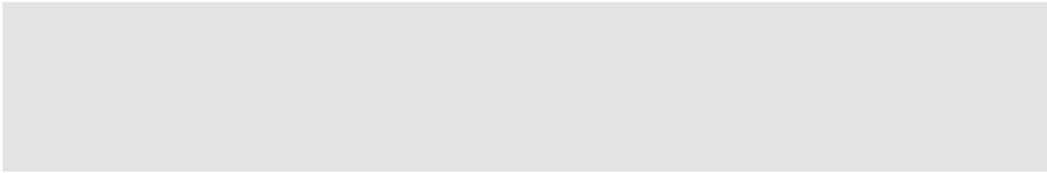
COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICE

The CLO received low marks on OIG's workplace and quality of life questionnaire in each related area, such as recreation activities and sponsorship program for new arrivals.

Many employees and some family members complained that there are insufficient community activities and expressed disbelief at the absence of holiday activities. Furthermore, the welcome kit and other information that should be periodically submitted to the Department were woefully out-of-date. Updating this material was top priority for the current CLO. During the inspection, the office hired an eligible family member to write the newsletter and help organize community events.

Many employees noted that Consulate General Jerusalem is a difficult post for the CLO and the community because of the political and religious sensitivities and security concerns. Others mentioned that there was a “disconnect” between management and the embassy community as well as between the CLO and management officer.

The DPO would be able to provide a higher level of attention that is needed to help bridge the gap and recharge the community if the CLO reported directly to the DPO.



MANAGEMENT CONTROLS

the COM reported the establishment of a health unit and receiving funding for the employment of a part-time medical professional (See Quality of Life). However, OIG found material weaknesses in the processing of payroll for the local national workforce and the procurement and contracting function.

PAYROLL PROCESSING

The mission goes through a very unusual payroll process for national employees. The practice has weak internal controls and is a potential embarrassment to the U.S. government because it enables the employees to avoid reporting taxable income. To circumvent requirements for salary payments by check or EFT, employees allotted their pay to the FSN employee association, which received funds transfers from the Bangkok Financial Service Center. The association then acted as paymaster for over 200 employees and prepared pay envelopes for each employee.

OIG found that very few of Jerusalem's employees have their full salary sent directly to a financial institution by EFT. Most national employees allot their salary to the FSN employees association. That entity, which has no legal standing in Jerusalem, Israel, or the United States, receives a global funds transfer from the Bangkok Financial Services Center and converts the payment to cash. Using consulate office space, the association then prepares individual pay envelopes for each employee. In the recent past, two pay envelopes went astray. The association covered the shortages.

The FSN employee association expressed concern about the potential OIG recommendation(s) regarding social security payments, EFTs, and improper payroll practices. The employees' concerns are valid. In a September 27, 2004, memorandum, the management counselor, Embassy Tel Aviv and the management officer, Jerusalem cited the underpayment of social security and taxes. In Tel Aviv for example, it was found that employees underreported their income. Rather than

claiming about \$205,000 in reimbursement for employer social security contributions, employees claimed slightly less than \$71,000. The memorandum goes on to state, "In the spring of 2004, LES staff at the embassy in large numbers (almost one in six to date) began to be audited by Israeli income tax authorities. Some LES staff at the consulate general were also audited. In some cases, the employees were required to make retroactive tax and penalty payments."

Some Jerusalem LES staff, on their own initiative, have started partial direct deposit of their salaries. However, there have been processing problems for those employees who have designated non-Israeli banks. At the present time, all employees regardless of where they live, religious and/or political affiliation, are paid in New Israeli Shekels. The Financial Services Center, Bangkok must transfer the funds to its Israeli bank who then transfers the funds to the employees' designated bank account, often in the Arabic-speaking West Bank. In addition to delays encountered in the transfer there are often processing problems because the transfers are made in Hebrew and according to the affected employees' bank, the transmissions become garbled. EFT of all employees' salaries is inevitable. In order to overcome processing problems for those employees who cannot maintain accounts in Israeli banks, an exception to the requirement established by 4 FAH-3 H-556.1 for payment in local currency should be granted.

The belief that salary levels are held artificially low by management stems in part from the opaque nature of the salary survey process. Employees attribute the high retention rate among FSN staff to the slump in the local economy. The employee association complains that comparative salary survey data upon which FSN pay is based is not made available or explained to them. The employee association argues that, because the tax burden for many will go up, any change, which results in full gross income reporting, must - in fairness - be accompanied by a salary increase. OIG is not persuaded that salaries were held artificially low. However, OIG believes mission management should make the FSN wage scale process more transparent.

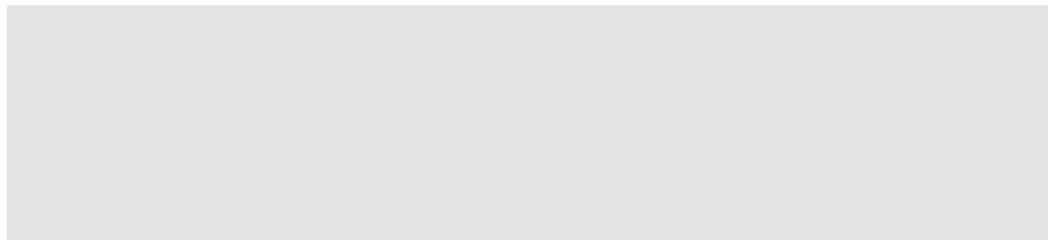
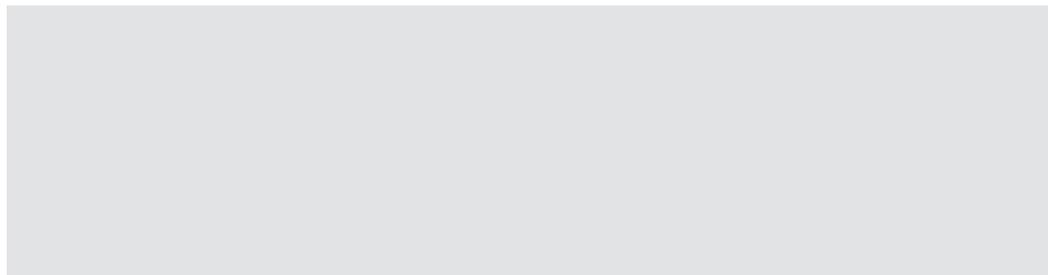
Faced with the inevitability of EFT, the FSN employee association asks for two things: (a) an increase in salary levels to offset the tax burden employees will begin to shoulder, and (b) gradual implementation with the EFT requirement in order to become fully compliant with Israeli revenue laws. OIG notes that both the employees and senior embassy management have had time to correct an identified material weakness in management controls.

Recommendation 35: Consulate General Jerusalem should confirm that the salary survey data used to establish Foreign Service national compensation levels is consistent with prevailing practice and help employees understand how salary levels are set. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING

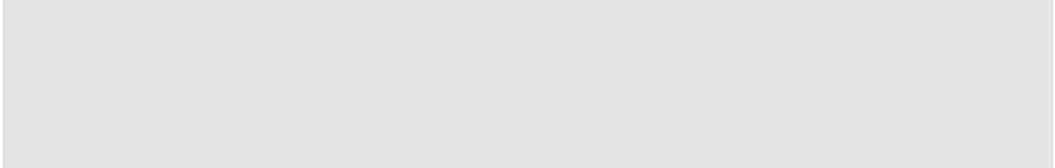
Unauthorized Commitments

Coordination between Consulate General Jerusalem and OBO needs to be strengthened to prevent a recurring problem in ordering legal services under labor hour contracts without ascertaining if funds are available at the time the orders are placed and costs for the services incurred. The Office of the Procurement Executive twice ratified transactions totaling over \$43,000 in 2003. However, the practice continued in 2004. Procedural controls were not strengthened even though LES repeatedly pointed out to OBO that sufficient funding was not available to pay for the services rendered under contract number SIS 400-03C-0005. OIG estimates that transactions valued at over \$160,000 took place without funds available at the time. These transactions will have to be ratified in accordance with paragraph 601.602-3, Department of State Acquisition Regulations.



Procurement of Travel Services

The mission obtains travel services from two travel agencies; one is located in East Jerusalem and the other in West Jerusalem. Annual volume is estimated at \$400,000. There is no formal agreement or contract with either travel agent. As a result, there is no assurance that the mission is obtaining optimal services at the lowest cost. The travel services should be competed and a contract(s) awarded to the successful bidder.



FORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem and Embassy Tel Aviv, should in advance of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, develop a plan to appropriately designate responsibility for the Palestinian territories. (Action: NEA, in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem and Embassy Tel Aviv)

Recommendation 2: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, should take immediate steps to fill the public affairs information specialist Foreign Service national position requested in the FY 2007 Mission Performance Plan. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with NEA)

Recommendation 3:

Recommendation 4: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Foreign Service Institute, should provide officers filling Hebrew language designated positions the opportunity to study Hebrew for four weeks at Ulpan in Jerusalem before they begin work at the consulate. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with FSI)

Recommendation 5: The Bureau of Human Resources, in coordination with the Foreign Service Institute and Consulate General Jerusalem, should allow entry-level officers to finish language training immediately prior to going to post. (Action: DGHR, in coordination with FSI and Consulate General Jerusalem.)

Recommendation 6: Consulate General Jerusalem should redistribute the workflow in all sections to gain most efficient use of all three waiting rooms by coordinating the public hours for visa and American citizens services schedules. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

- Recommendation 7:** Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should develop a comprehensive space plan to optimize use of the consular section and provide furnishings that are appropriate for efficient workflow. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with OBO)
- Recommendation 8:** Consulate General Jerusalem should draft and implement a comprehensive plan with a time line to address the air ventilation, safety, and cleanliness problems of the consular section. The plan should include construction of one additional rest room. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)
- Recommendation 9:** Consulate General Jerusalem should request that the Bureau of Consular Affairs improve the report of birth and immigrant visa software applications to allow more efficient use of staff time. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with CA)
- Recommendation 10:** Following completion of the new Arnona facility, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem and Embassy Tel Aviv, should consolidate immigrant visa operations in the Arnona facility. (Action: NEA, in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem, Embassy Tel Aviv, and CA)
- Recommendation 11:** The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem, should not terminate construction of the Arnona new office complex, but should complete as much of the project as present funding allows, lease a residence for the consul general, and convert the present residence to office space. (Action: OBO, in coordination with Consulate General Jerusalem)
- Recommendation 12:** The Bureau of Resource Management should assign a post-code to Consulate General Jerusalem. (Action: RM)
- Recommendation 13:** Consulate General Jerusalem should justify and request, and the Department should grant, authorization to compete the agreement for banking services in Jerusalem. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the U.S. Disbursing Office)
- Recommendation 14:** Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with Embassy Tel Aviv, should submit justifications extending the deadline for employees to use the excessive leave earned, and the Bureau of Human Resources should approve the extension. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with Embassy Tel Aviv and DGHR)

Recommendation 15: Consulate General Jerusalem in coordination with Embassy Tel Aviv, should resubmit a loan option request to the Bureau of Human Resources for approval. The Bureau of Human Resources should review the request and provide guidance. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with Embassy Tel Aviv and DGHR)

Recommendation 16: Consulate General Jerusalem should initiate a policy of reimbursement to employees of extraordinary transportation expense caused by work schedules that preclude the use of public transportation. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 17:

Recommendation 18: Consulate General Jerusalem should seek, and Embassy Tel Aviv should grant, full-access tarmac passes for the consulate expediter drivers. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with Embassy Tel Aviv)

Recommendation 19: Consulate General Jerusalem should review and justify in writing the need for residence-to-office transportation for the deputy principal officer. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 20: Consulate General Jerusalem should develop a formal rotation schedule of information management and information systems security responsibilities among its information technology staff. The plan should ensure that each staff member gains experience in all areas during tours at the consulate. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 21: Consulate General Jerusalem should use the universal trouble ticket for tracking all information management service requests. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 22: Consulate General Jerusalem should maintain a complete inventory of its hardware and software, and review and update the inventory on a regular basis. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 23: Consulate General Jerusalem should remove surplus wires from the telephone frame and server rooms and label the remaining cabling for clear identification. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

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Recommendation 24:

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Recommendation 25:

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Recommendation 26:

Recommendation 27: Consulate Jerusalem should convert the temporary health unit secretary position 97-059007 to a permanent position and hire the local nurse full-time. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 28: Consulate General Jerusalem should bring the medical unit facility, equipment, and supplies up to acceptable standards or relocate to a suitable facility. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 29: Consulate General Jerusalem should fully activate its Equal Employment Opportunity program and prominently display the policies and other information. The information should be printed in both local languages. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 30: Consulate General Jerusalem should routinely disseminate Equal Employment Opportunity policies and other general information as management notices. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 31: Consulate General Jerusalem should realign supervisory channels so that the community liaison office coordinator reports directly to the deputy principal officer. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 32: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the Bureau of Resource Management, should seek an exemption to Department regulations for payment in local currency for those employees that cannot maintain Israeli bank accounts. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with NEA and RM)

Recommendation 33: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, should present a schedule to the Department with measurable benchmarks, for complete conversion of all national employee payments to a system of individual allotments by electronic funds transfer to recognized financial institutions. The schedule should indicate achievement of 100 percent compliance in the shortest possible time. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with RM and NEA)

Recommendation 34: Consulate General Jerusalem should ensure that the Foreign Service national handbook, employee contracts, security clearances, and other relevant documents stress in the clearest possible language the employee's obligation to meet all legal requirements regarding the reporting of taxable income and payment of taxes. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 35: Consulate General Jerusalem should confirm that the salary survey data used to establish Foreign Service national compensation levels is consistent with prevailing practice and help employees understand how salary levels are set. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

Recommendation 36: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, should research and report to the Office of the Procurement Executive all transactions where procurement action was taken (services ordered) prior to availability and certification of funds. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with OBO and A/OPE)

Recommendation 37: Consulate General Jerusalem in coordination with the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations should implement controls to preclude the ordering of legal services prior to determining that funds have been provided to pay for the services. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem, in coordination with OBO)

Recommendation 38: Consulate General Jerusalem should formally solicit proposals for travel services and award a contract to the successful bidder. (Action: Consulate General Jerusalem)

INFORMAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Informal recommendations cover operational matters not requiring action by organizations outside the inspected unit and/or the parent regional bureau. Informal recommendations will not be subject to the OIG compliance process. However, any subsequent OIG inspection or on-site compliance review will assess the mission's progress in implementing the informal recommendations.

Consular Affairs

Consular staff members are not up to date on work issues, in large part because there are no regularly scheduled subsection staff meetings.

Informal Recommendation 1: Each subsection within the consular section should hold regularly scheduled staff meetings.

Consular section staff could benefit from training opportunities provided locally and via DVC.

Informal Recommendation 2: The chief of the consular section should organize local training using mission staff and video conferences.

Crowded workspace creates a noisy environment that makes it difficult to respond to public inquiries received by telephone.

Informal Recommendation 3: Telephone headsets should be provided to staff members who answer public inquiries regularly.

The consular staff must frequently request IM support for problems that they should be able to correct themselves.

Informal Recommendation 4: An information management specialist should provide training sessions on how to care for equipment and troubleshoot systems in the consular section.

The federal benefits' employee must take work home to stay current on social security applications. Other ACS staff members spend many hours assisting with this function.

Informal Recommendation 5: The regional benefits officer should request a summer helper to assist the federal benefits specialist during the busy season.

Communicating ACS information to large numbers of American citizens by regular e-mail is cumbersome and slow.

Informal Recommendation 6: American citizens services should contract a listserv provider for the dissemination of information to the American citizen community promptly and efficiently.

ACS cannot efficiently serve clientele who request service on a walk-in basis. Many Americans come to ACS without the necessary documents to receive reports of birth and passports.

Informal Recommendation 7: American citizens services in coordination with the public affairs section should develop an information outreach program to inform American citizens of documents and procedures required for various services.

The fraud prevention program does not have operating procedures or adequate guidelines.

Informal Recommendation 8: The fraud prevention staff should draft standard operation procedures for the fraud program and for referring cases for investigation.

Consular officers should have more criteria to make better-informed NIV decisions.

Informal Recommendation 9: The fraud prevention staff should perform a visa validation study to strengthen the criteria for visa decisions.

Human Resources

The LES handbook is out-of-date.

Informal Recommendation 10: Consulate General Jerusalem should update the locally employed staff handbook.

Female guards are not provided with uniforms that are made for women as required in 6 FAM 241.5b, but rather are given clothing made for men.

Informal Recommendation 11: Consulate General Jerusalem should provide female guards with uniforms made for females.

Motor Pool

First-aid kits are not in all official motor vehicles.

Informal Recommendation 12: Consulate General Jerusalem should place first-aid kits in all official motor vehicles in accordance with Department regulations.

Drivers were not conducting the daily preventive maintenance and properly completing the vehicle report.

Informal Recommendation 13: Consulate General Jerusalem should require drivers to conduct the required maintenance and properly complete the paperwork.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Post has not fulfilled the Department's EEO reporting requirements.

Informal Recommendation 14: Consulate Jerusalem should fulfill the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity reporting requirements.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS

	Name	Arrival Date
Consul General	David D. Pearce	09/03
Deputy Principal Officer	Maura Connelly	06/03
Chiefs of Sections:		
Management	Sylvie Martinez	06/04
Consular	Stuart E. Patt	08/04
Political	John Stevens	08/02
Economic	Amy Schedlbauer	08/04
Public Affairs	Charles Hunter	08/02
Regional Security	Keith Swinehart	07/02
Other Agencies:		
U.S. Agency for International Development	Barbara Belding	10/04

ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	American citizens services
AMIDEAST	America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.
CA	Bureau of Consular Affairs
CAA	Controlled access area
CAJE	Computer aided job evaluation
CLO	Community liaison office
COM	Chief of Mission
Department	Department of State
DPO	Deputy principal officer
DS	Bureau of Diplomatic Security
DVC	Digital videoconference
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
EFT	Electronic funds transfer
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
FSN	Foreign Service national
GSO	General services office(r)
HR	Human Resources
ICASS	International Cooperative Administrative Support Services
IM	Information management
IMO	Information management officer
IMS	Information management specialist
IPC	Information Program Center
ISC	Information Services Center

ISSO	Information systems security officer
IT	Information technology
IV	Immigrant visa
LES	Locally employed staff
MEPP	Middle East peace process
MPP	Mission performance plan
NEA	Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
NIV	Nonimmigrant visa
OBO	Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations
OIG	Office of Inspector General
PAO	Public affairs officer
ROB	Report of birth
RSO	Regional security officer
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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